

March 2009

# SNAP Newsletter



## From the Editor

Dear Friends,

When the first articles ran in early 2002 about the clergy abuse crisis many felt that within a year or two the problem would be solved.

Survivors would have found justice and healing, predators would be behind bars and the hierarchy that shielded them would be in exile. Yet here we are seven years later still facing the same issues. With your help, we have made great progress but the battle is far from over.

SNAP continues to expose new predators. Our dedicated volunteers who answer the helpline hear from new survivors almost every day. Parishioners are learning about ways they can protect the innocent and the vulnerable. Books are being written by survivors, historians and psychologists. Laws are being changed to give survivors more time to report these crimes and the world is beginning to realize how widespread the problem has become.

I recently heard one of the characters on a sitcom say, "that would be as responsible as letting a priest babysit." While that is a very sad statement, it does testify to the fact that all your hard work has not been in vain. People realize that just because a person has a position that gives them trust and respect it does not mean they are incapable of molesting.

We hope to see you in Washington, DC this summer at our annual conference the weekend of August 7-9. It's going to be an amazing event with great speakers, informative breakout sessions and the chance to see old friends and make new ones. You can register online at [http://www.snapnetwork.org/snap-conferences/conference\\_2009/how\\_to\\_page.html](http://www.snapnetwork.org/snap-conferences/conference_2009/how_to_page.html) or fill out the registration form on page 6.

Barbara Dorris

## SNAP speaks out on the appointment of Archbishop Timothy Dolan as archbishop of New York City

By: *John Pilmaier*

New York City is one of the largest and most powerful dioceses in the United States, with 2.5 million parishioners and nearly 400 churches. Cardinal Edward Egan will retire and Archbishop Timothy Dolan will replace him on April 15th. Dolan has been described as a defender of Roman Catholic orthodoxy, a man known for his energy, wit and warmth.

SNAP immediately released a fact sheet with specific cases where Dolan had failed in his duty to protect the innocent and the vulnerable. Failed to reach out to survivors. Failed to follow the Pope's command to "to do everything in his power" to help survivors. Within 12 hours of the

announcement, SNAP held a press event on the steps of Saint Patrick's Cathedral helping to give the world a more balanced picture of the new archbishop. SNAP members from several states worked to gather information, documents, court records and media accounts of Dolan's record on clergy sex abuse. In early March Peter Isely, SNAP Midwest Director and John Pilmaier, a SNAP leader in Milwaukee again stood on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral with case after case where Dolan failed to take action even though he was aware of the cleric's history of abuse.

Dolan had served as a point-person for abuse claims in Saint Louis before



being made Archbishop of Milwaukee in 2002. While there, he lived in the same rectory with a credibly accused child molesting priest (Fr. Michael Campbell) and minimized Campbell's crimes by saying that "the inappropriateness (the predator) so owned up to was not with a child and that he trusts (the priest) so much that he has and will

## In just one month, SNAP exposes five new predators in Texas & Arizona

By: *Barbara Garcia Boehland*

Late last year, because of credible allegations of child sex abuse, officials quietly suspended two clerics: Fr. Charles H. Miller from a Texas university and Brother Richard Suttle from an Arizona elementary school.

The Suttle allegations

were publicly disclosed only at a SNAP news conferences in Phoenix and later in San Antonio, where the local archbishop quietly let Suttle move to and live at an unsuspecting parish. (The Phoenix diocese had posted small notices on their website and diocesan newspaper that two accused child molesting

clerics had been suspended: Father Loren Riebe and Suttle.) SNAP members were, of course, concerned that no real warning was given to the public.

The Miller allegations were publicly disclosed at SNAP events in St. Louis and San Antonio. He

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## SNAP speaks out cont.

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continue to go to him for confession.

Just a few months later the archbishop disclosed that the allegations against Campbell had, in fact, involved a child and had been substantiated. The other cleric, living with Dolan, is currently serving a 15 year prison sentence for abusing a then 10 year old child. Dolan wrote a letter to the judge asking for leniency for the predator.

His track record in Milwaukee is no better. He failed to forward to Wisconsin police direct admissions of guilt from clergy child rapists, even from clergy who were subsequently criminally charged and convicted. He

continues to leave known clerical offenders working or presenting themselves as clergy in good standing in the Milwaukee archdiocese, a direct violation of the Dallas charter. Virtually every single member of the senior management who plotted and executed the cover up of child sexual abuse under Dolan's predecessor, Rembert Weakland, are still in their chancery posts. According to Weakland, Dolan has not once talked with him about the 67 known clerical sex offenders in the archdiocese.

SNAP fears that given his past track record of failing to work with police and prosecutors, his willingness to shield predators and his lack of concern for the safety of the innocent and vulnerable that Dolan will not be

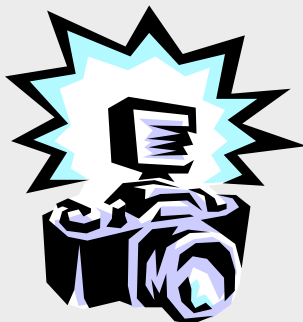
## Corporate Matching Gifts

SNAP depends on donations to sustain our work. Many corporations have matching gift programs. But they won't include us on their list of charity selections for employees unless an employee requests that our name be added. Do you or someone you know work for a corporation with this kind of program? Would you be willing to request that SNAP be added to the list for possible donations? If so, please e-mail the name of your corporation and your contact information to:

[SNAPdorris@gmail.com](mailto:SNAPdorris@gmail.com)

## Picture this

Do you have a photo of yourself at the age you were when you were abused? Willing to allow your childhood photo to be made public? SNAP uses these photos to remind people we are working to protect kids. Even if you believe that SNAP has your photo please consider sending it to us.



Do you have a picture of a predator? When doing media events we are often asked for a photo. Not only does this help the media it often helps people remember events and facts about the predator. It may also help other victims abused by your perpetrator. Frequently survivors find these photos in their family albums with graduation, First Communion, Confirmation and wedding photos.

If you have such a photo, mail a copy to SNAP, 700 North Green Street, #504, Chicago, IL 60642 or scan and send electronically to [SNAPadmin1@gmail.com](mailto:SNAPadmin1@gmail.com).

## Save a tree!

Postage and printing costs are increasing. The world needs more trees not more trash. SNAP wants to be good stewards of your donations and a good friend to the environment. If you are holding a copy of this newsletter in your hand consider sharing your email with SNAP, save a tree! If you have not received an email from SNAP recently, you might want to be sure we have your current email address. Please send your email address to: [SNAPadmin1@gmail.com](mailto:SNAPadmin1@gmail.com).

Please know that SNAP never sells nor shares our member list with anyone.



# SNAP Newsletter



## Spring Cleaning

Many of us have treasures we never use or even remember we own. Do you have a copy of The Official

Catholic Directory or a copy of your diocesan or parish directory? Please consider donating them to SNAP. These books are a valuable research tool, allowing us to research the work history of predators and their current positions in the church.

Please send to SNAP, 700 North Green Street, #504, Chicago, Illinois 60642.

## Donate to Help SNAP

Please consider becoming a sustaining member of SNAP. Sustainers pledge to send SNAP a set amount every month to help the organization grown in size and strength. Your donations allow us to protect the vulnerable and to heal the wounded. Your help will protect children. Sign up to become a sustaining member on our website [SNAPnetwork.org](http://SNAPnetwork.org) or you can join by filling out the enclosed envelope.

## Vatican case

*By: Peter Isely*

For the first time in history, a childhood victim of sexual assault by an American priest may be able to hold the Vatican accountable for policies, procedures and practices that have resulted in the widespread sexual abuse of children. In a landmark 59 page decision issued on March 2nd, a three judge panel in Portland, Oregon ruled that a man who was sexually assaulted in the 1960s by a priest can pursue his civil lawsuit for damages against the Holy See.

Attorneys for the victim successfully argued that "in a rigid hierarchy like the Catholic church, decisions come from the Vatican, so it's crucial that the Vatican be held responsible for on-going cover ups of clergy sex crimes." They say the ruling sends a clear signal that anyone who enables American children to be molested will face legal consequences: "It will help prevent future child assaults and cover ups of

those assaults. It also signals that the Vatican is not above the law."

The case involves Fr. Andrew Ronan, who is accused of molesting kids in his native Ireland. He was then sent to Chicago, where he allegedly abused three boys, and finally transferred to an Oregon Catholic school, where he reportedly assaulted the victim in this case.

Ronan is now deceased.

SNAP has long advocated that the child sexual abuse and cover up crisis in the United States has to be viewed as part of a much larger global phenomenon whose causes and consequences originate in the unique global structure of the Catholic Church, where only the Pope can hire or fire a priest. After all, it is the Vatican that assigns, re-assigns and appoints the bishops and religious order provincials who then transfer and conceal clergy sex offenders.

In 2004, SNAP submitted a "white paper" to the U.S. Department of

Justice asking for an investigation of the American bishops and the Vatican's practice of transferring known child molesters across state and international boundaries, using church funded and operated "retreat" or "treatment" facilities to essentially "launder" sex offenders in order to thwart and avoid criminal prosecution.

In April of 2008, when Pope Benedict XVI visited the United States, SNAP leaders called for global initiatives to investigate, disrupt and prosecute clergy sex offenders worldwide, starting with their immediate compliance by the Vatican with the UN Charter for the Protection of the Rights of Children.

Also during the Pope's spring visit, Cardinal William Levada, former archbishop of San Francisco and now head of the Vatican's powerful Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, told Time Magazine that so many child sex abuse cases from

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## SNAP exposes five new predators cont.

worked in both cities. A brave and persistent survivor fought for years to get his supervisors to admit, in writing, that he was credibly accused. SNAP used those documents to alert parents, parishioners and the public about him.

A few weeks later, San Antonio's archbishop finally disclosed to a few parishioners that Fr. Louis White, Fr. Larry Hernandez and Fr. David Zumaya also were credibly accused of molesting a boy. However, an archdiocesan staffer admits they've known about the report for at least

nine months (according to the San Antonio Express News). Church officials also admit they've heard other allegations against two of these priests. But they kept silent, warning no one about potentially dangerous predators who still walk free.

This on-going secrecy, SNAP feels, is unfair to parents and reckless to kids. It gives predators time to fabricate alibis, threaten witnesses, intimidate victims, destroy evidence and even flee the country (as apparently Zumaya has done, back to Mexico).

Suttle, Miller, Zumaya and Hernandez are still on the church's payroll. Suttle is a Claretian and Miller is a Marianist.

We are grateful to each person - survivor and supporter - who helped make these crucial disclosures possible.



Jeff Dion, the national director of the Crime Victims Bar Association, who has long worked with victims of violent crime, says that

“  
abuse happens in  
isolation, recovery  
happens in  
community.”

No truer words about what has caused this whole crisis and the key to recovery have ever been spoken. SNAP truly is a community of generous, dedicated volunteers. Thank you for all you do to support others on the healing journey.

## Grants, Foundations and Corporations

While individual donors always have and always will be SNAP's financial backbone, we are working harder to ensure the long term growth of our organization by seeking grants from foundations. If you know of someone who works for, has connections with, or is on the board of a foundation, please contact [SNAPdorris@gmail.com](mailto:SNAPdorris@gmail.com).



SNAP AWARDED  
“SEAL OF EXCELLENCE”

The Independent Charities Seal of Excellence is awarded to the members of Independent Charities of America and Local Independent Charities of America that have, upon rigorous independent review, been able to certify, document, and demonstrate on an annual basis that they meet the highest standards of public accountability, program effectiveness, and cost effectiveness. These standards include those required by the US Government for inclusion in the Combined Federal Campaign, probably the most exclusive fund drive in the world. Of the 1,000,000 charities operating in the United States today, it is estimated that fewer than 50,000, or 5 percent, meet or exceed these standards, and, of those, fewer than 2,000 have been awarded this Seal.



# SNAP Newsletter

## 2009 SNAP Board Members

Barbara Blaine—President

David Clohessy—Executive  
Director

Laura Barrett—Vice President

Mary Grant—Treasurer

John Shuster—Board Member

Frank Douglas—Board Member

Steve Theisen—Board Member

Esther Miller—Board Member



## How You Can Help SNAP

**Have you benefited from SNAP?** Would you be willing to write a brief letter of support explaining how SNAP has helped you? The letters will be used in our application packets sent to charitable foundations. We'd welcome letters from survivors, their families and supporters. Perhaps SNAP encouraged you to come forward. Perhaps a support group or a help line was a turning point. Or maybe you felt comforted by SNAP members who turned out when your predator was on trial. Letters should be limited to one-page, with the salutation, "Dear Board of Directors". Mail your signed letter to: SNAP Support Letter, 700 N. Green St., Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60622. Or scan and send a signed copy by email to: [snapadmin1@gmail.com](mailto:snapadmin1@gmail.com)

## Vatican Case cont.

around the globe are being forwarded to his office that there is a large "backlog" of cases.

Levada's stunning admissions establishes that top officials directly under the Pope are collecting, centralizing and archiving criminal evidence of thousands of child sex crimes committed by priests around the globe, raising disturbing and largely unanswered questions that are the heart of the Portland lawsuit: Why is the Vatican investigating child rape cases from almost every continent on earth? Why isn't the Pope immediately forwarding this evidence to national and international criminal authorities?

For the first time, in the Ronan case, Vatican officials may be required under oath to answer questions and deliver documents about their direct involvement with pedophile priests and their supervisors.

The number of now admitted clergy child molesters who have assaulted children over the past several decades in the United States is

reaching the 6,000 mark. Each year, in their annual self-reports, bishops and religious order provincials are acknowledging never before identified molesters. Using the percentage of U.S. clergy involved in child sex crimes and extrapolate that percentage to the number of clergy across the globe, it is estimated that some 30,000 priest pedophiles may be operating in parishes and schools around the world, the vast majority of them in countries not protected by even the most basic human rights provisions. These countries also happen to be where the church is on the increase, such as African or parts of Asia.

While the Vatican and the American bishops have desperately attempted to contain the cover up scandal to the United States, or at least Western countries, it is increasingly clear, as victims courageously begin to come forward in Mexico, Latin American, Africa, and Asia—from every corner of the globe—that the need for reform,

transparency and accountability for clergy sex crimes begins with and ends in Rome, starting with the Pope and extending to the entire global hierarchy of the church.

The defense attorney for the Vatican in the Portland case argued that the Holy See cannot be brought into a civil suit because it is a sovereign country and falls under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. The appeals court ruled that the actions alleged in the complaint are an exception to that act.

The case for the victim was brought by Jeffery Anderson of St. Paul, MN and argued by Professor Marci Hamilton of Philadelphia, PA, a Cardozo law school faculty member. Defending the Vatican was attorney Jeff Lena of Berkeley, CA.

The case is expected to be appealed by the Vatican to the U.S.



# 2009 SNAP National Conference

Have you registered for the SNAP national conference?

You do not want to miss Governor Frank Keating speaking about his experience as the first head of the bishop's national review board.

You don't want to miss Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune speaking about holding religious institutions accountable.

You do not want to miss a chance to meet with survivors and supporters from across the country.

You do not want to miss a chance to attend breakout sessions and attend a support group meeting.

You do not want to miss hearing experts from across the country discuss abuse, ways to heal and ways to prevent it from happening.

You do not want to miss a chance to spend a few days in our nation's capitol in a beautiful hotel at rock bottom prices.

The 2009 SNAP national conference will be held in Washington, DC this summer, the weekend of August 7-9. We will meet at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City. The hotel is just across the river from the national mall, museums and many attractions. There are restaurants within walking distance and free shuttle service to/from DC National Airport.

We have locked in a spectacular room rate of \$109 for either one or two people per room. Just mention you are reserving a room for the SNAP conference when registering at the hotel.

Don't live with regrets, register now while "Early Bird Discounts" are available.

Take advantage of our early-bird special! Up until May 1, 2009, a weekend pass is \$115 and a one day pass is \$100. Please make checks payable to SNAP.



## 2009 SNAP Conference Registration

Mail to: SNAP, P.O. Box 6416, Chicago, IL 60680

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, state and zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Whole weekend \$115 \_\_\_\_\_ One day pass \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

