

Date: February 13, 2006

Page: 12

Section: News

Far too many good Catholics look away

I don't know what's more disturbing: the most recent allegations against Father McCormack of St. Agatha in Chicago, the sickening deposition transcripts from Bishop Imisch of the Joliet Diocese or that familiar, deafening silence from most Chicago area Catholics.

It has become painfully obvious that even with the Bishops' Charter on Sexual Abuse, bishops are not feeling any need to change the way they deal with sexual abuse allegations so long as the majority of Catholics sit on their hands and remain silent as our children's innocence is snatched away.

A reasonable assumption would be that the events of this past week would be a clue to Bishop Thomas Doran of the Rockford Diocese to cease his legal gamesmanship with the facts surrounding his handling of the Mark **Campobello** matter, and embark upon an enlightened campaign of openness and transparency.

Sadly, I feel like I have a better chance of striking oil in my back yard than in having our bishop experience such an epiphany.

The painful truth is that over the decades, the willful blindness of the flock has contributed to the Catholic Church becoming a safe haven for sexual predators.

The situation will not change unless and until the throngs of good, decent Catholics rise up and stop supporting the status quo.

By refusing to financially support these clueless bishops, you will get their attention. Catholics who remain silent and do nothing throughout this crisis are enabling the abuse and subsequent cover-ups to continue.

While the majority of Catholics are busy imitating ostriches by keeping their heads firmly implanted in the sand, our children continue to suffer.

So long as the pews are full and the coffers continue to be filled by those who blindly support their beloved dioceses, there is absolutely no incentive for the bishops to change their tune.

Evil triumphs when good people do nothing. Too many good Catholics are on the sidelines doing absolutely nothing.

The question isn't when the cover-ups will stop. The question is: When will the Catholic faithful remove their blinders and say enough is enough?

Frank Bochte

Geneva