

No Headline

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Diocese hasn't shown openness

Ellen Lynch, an attorney of record for the Rockford Diocese, provided a curious explanation for the diocese's refusing to appeal the 2nd District's opinion ordering the investigative file regarding Mark **Campobello** be turned over to the Kane County judge. She indicated that the decision to forgo an appeal was made out of the church's new spirit of openness.

Is she being serious?

First of all, it is an insult to the intelligence of any clear-thinking person to suggest that the decision not to appeal was made for a reason other than the Catholic Church's selfish motivation to prevent the Illinois Supreme Court from affirming the ruling and, thereby, making the ruling binding on every other diocese within Illinois. As it stands now, other bishops outside of the 2nd Appellate District are still able to manipulate the legal system, as the Rockford Diocese attempted, to further their misguided attempts to conceal and deny the release of records pertaining to abusive priests within their respective dioceses.

Second, if Lynch's statement is taken literally, it is an admission of how clueless Bishop Thomas Doran is to the requirements of reporting sexual abuse within the Catholic Church. Hasn't the Catholic Church been preaching openness for the past several years on the epidemic of sexual abuse within the church? Why has it taken until June 15, 2004, for Bishop Doran to become enlightened to this concept of openness?

I guess it takes longer for the news to reach Rockford. Had this "spirit of openness" dawned on Bishop Doran a few months ago, the parish would not have suffered through the endless denials of accountability, and thousands of dollars of parishioner's contributions wouldn't have been wasted on Lynch's efforts to suppress the information. Imagine how many years the parish food pantry could have been funded if Lynch's legal fees were used for such a purpose.

What an amazing coincidence ... an opinion by an appellate court slam-dunking the diocese, and within days the bishop is suddenly overcome with an overwhelming sense of "openness." It is just a coincidence ... yeah, and the story of the Easter Bunny is a documentary.

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