

Kane County  
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**Bill  
Page**

## Blind faith

One might say St. Peter Catholic Church in Geneva has had a bit of a rough go in the image department lately, what with a former priest ready to stand trial on charges he molested a 14-year old girl and their most recent music director denying charges he murdered a man five years ago. Given these two apparent lapses in sound hiring practices, it would be understandable if parishioners were angry and upset — and it turns out they are, just not at who you would expect.

If you read the Letters to the Editor in the past few weeks, you had to come across a diatribe written by one of the St. Peter faithful. However, the target of their anger was not the aforementioned priest or music director or any of their parish hierarchy, but a fellow churchgoer by the name of Frank Bochte.

Bochte has earned their scorn because he had the nerve to take St. Peter's leadership to task for their actions in the case involving the former priest, Mark Campobello, and for suggesting parishioners who wish to protest the decisions should consider diverting their church donations to another suitable charity. Bochte is upset the church is supporting the Rockford Diocese in its refusal to provide prosecutors certain records in the Campobello case, despite being ordered by the courts to do so.

From their reaction, Bochte's detractors seem to feel his assault on the parish's finances is more serious than having on staff people who end up in front of judges, and light years worse than withholding information in a sexual abuse case. More than that, there also is evident in their attacks a refusal to face reality; a return to the old days of the church where no decision made by the leadership was ever to be questioned by those in the pews.

Frank Bochte is a tough enough guy, and he certainly doesn't need me to run interference for him. However, I have followed the Campobello case, and I am as appalled as Bochte by the maneuverings of the Rockford Diocese. Their refusal to release the information

might have a serious effect on the state's ability to prosecute the case effectively.

Forgotten by too many people supporting the diocese and their decision is what is at the center of this case. Bochte hasn't forgotten, and has been gutsy enough to stand up and remind everyone that this case is not about the bruised feelings of a few church leaders, but about a girl who might have been the victim of the most despicable abuse.

The letter writers would do well to remember her and not focus on a few coins in the collection plate.

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Tuesday night was somewhat bittersweet because it marked the last time I would see my oldest son perform as a member of the St. Charles East Jazz Workshop. For the past four years I have had the absolute pleasure of watching him and the other young men and women go from freshmen just learning how to play to seniors who are skilled musicians. It has been a singular joy to attend their concerts, but none of it would have been possible without the dedication of a few wonderful teachers.

Gil Wukitsch, and Ben Oswalt until he was transferred, brought them along for the first two years; then when they joined Jazz Workshop they came under the tutelage of Jim Kull. I really don't have words of praise strong enough for this trio; their love of jazz is palpable, and they have created one of the best programs in the nation.

There was no encore at their last performance, so indulge me as I call one now for the graduating seniors of the St. Charles East Jazz Workshop. Take a bow Greg Eakins, Josh Kline, Ryan Lee, Mike Miller, Krista Mueller, Sam "Bear" Nese, Ben Page, Andy Schlinder, Scott Schwab, Ryan Thomson, Dan Tolczyk and Dave Woerhle. Thanks for the tunes; thanks for the memories.

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