

In the Vineyard March 22, 2012

News from National

### **Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne Burke to Speak at VOTF 10<sup>th</sup> Year Conference**

Throughout her long career in public service as a children's advocate and legal professional, Justice Anne M. Burke of the Illinois Supreme Court's First District has endeavored to provide a voice to society's most fragile citizens. This tireless protector of children will be a keynote speaker during VOTF's 10<sup>th</sup> Year Conference in Boston. She will address attendees during dinner on Friday, Sept. 14, which is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Marriott Boston Copley Place Hotel. ([Click here](#) for a conference agenda.)

After serving on the Illinois Appellate Court, Justice Burke was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court in 2006 and then elected in 2008. Before serving on the Appellate Court, she provided key leadership in reshaping and improving the Illinois juvenile justice system. Her judicial career began in 1987 when she became the first woman appointed to the Illinois Court of Claims.

Before her appointment to the judiciary, Justice Burke was a leading advocate on behalf of Chicago's most vulnerable young people. As a physical education teacher with the Chicago Park District, she worked with children with disabilities. She went on to found the Chicago Special Olympics in 1968. She later served as a director of that organization as it grew to become the International Special Olympics represented in more than 160 countries.

For more than two years, serving as Interim Chair, Justice Burke directed the efforts of the National Review Board of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops investigating the causes and effects of the clergy abuse scandal and helping to establish guidelines and policies for effectively responding to this scandal.

Justice Burke is a Dame of the Sovereign Order of Malta and a Dame Commander of the Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem.

She received her law degree from IIT/Chicago-Kent College of Law and has received numerous honorary degrees from schools like the Catholic Theological Union, the College of the Holy Cross, DePaul University, St. Ambrose University, Loyola University Chicago School of Law, The John Marshall Law School and Marquette University.

We are honored that she will be helping us celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> year.

## **VOTF Disappointed at Elevation of Bridgeport, Conn., Bishop William Lori to Archbishop of Baltimore**

Although Bishop Lori in many ways has acted to shore up child-protection policies and institute reforms in those policies, on the question of transparency he has fallen short.

Bishop Lori has supported measures to protect children from clergy sexual abuse, has instituted child protection measures in his Bridgeport diocese and was a key participant in the drafting in 2002 of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' national Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. He also has apologized to those abused by priests.

Despite this, Lori for years opposed disclosure of diocesan documents alleging clergy sexual abuse, refused to remove priests from ministry who lost civil suits in which the diocese paid settlements to victims and has been taken to task by SNAP (Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests) for not honoring his promises of full transparency about priests and deacons removed from ministry up to date.

“We will never rid our Church of the clergy sexual abuse scandal and all its effects until we have complete and total transparency and accountability,” said Mark Mullaney, VOTF president. “We do not think elevating clerics whose actions demonstrate a preference for secrecy is the proper road toward healing.”

## **E-Mail Thank You Letters?**

You may be wondering why you are receiving e-mail letters thanking you for your financial support, rather than the postal letters we used to send. We have a couple of reasons. First, our e-mail letters don't kill any trees, so we're going “Green,” and second the e-mails eliminate our printing and postage costs so that more of your donation dollars support actual VOTF programs. If you have not received a “thank you” e-mail that you were expecting, we may have an incorrect e-mail address for you. The only way we know if your e-mail address has changed is if you tell us, so keep us up-to-date by letting us know whenever you change your e-mail address.

Note that this change affects those who donate by mail—our online donors already receive automatic thank-you's as soon as the donation is submitted.

## VOTF Stands with SNAP to Fight Against Forceful Disclosure of Confidential Information About Sexual Abuse Victims.

Earlier this month, VOTF representatives stood with SNAP at a press conference to express the view that the Church's recent legal attacks, in the words of SNAP, "are crippling our work to protect the vulnerable and heal the wounded."

Catholic Church lawyers defending clergy in child sexual abuse cases in Kansas City and St. Louis are demanding that SNAP hand over 23 years' worth of confidential information, even though SNAP is not a party to the law suits.

VOTF agrees with law professor and victims' advocate Marci Hamilton, as quoted in the *New York Times*: "If there is one group that the higher-ups, the bishops, would like to see silenced, it definitely would be SNAP. And that's what they're after. They're trying to silence SNAP."

Earlier this year, VOTF joined nine other victims' advocacy groups and the Missouri Press Association in a friend of the court brief asking the court to deny defendants' requests to compel SNAP to turn over confidential information.

The brief argued that anonymity and confidentiality are vital to the well-being of any sexual abuse victims' group in order to work successfully with victims. SNAP executive director David Clohessy has since been deposed in an apparent "fishing expedition" for information beneficial to the defense. A Kansas City court hearing April 20 will determine whether SNAP will be compelled to turn over subpoenaed documents.

"The Church, whether in the guise of a couple of bishops or several, seems to be bent on continuing its protection of the institution rather than emphasizing compassion for child victims who speak out as adults about how devastating abuse is, not only in their own lives, but also in lives of all around them," said Mark Mullaney, VOTF president. "The Church's assets are important to its mission and many charitable activities, but not at the expense of atonement for the perpetration and cover-up of crimes against children. We need to get to a constructive way of healing."

**Voice of the Faithful Focus, March 22, 2012**

*Highlighting issues we face working together  
to Keep the Faith, Change the Church.*

### **Pope Mexico Trip Clouded by Documents That Show Vatican Knew of Legion Founder's Abuse**

Pope Benedict XVI arrives in Mexico this week to a very public reminder of one of the [Catholic Church's most egregious sex abuse scandals](#): A new book says internal Vatican documents show the Holy See knew decades ago of allegations that the Mexican founder of the disgraced Legion of Christ religious order was a drug addict and pedophile.

### **Belleville Diocese Settles 3 Sexual Abuse Lawsuits Involving 2 Priests**

Three lawsuits settled on Tuesday in St. Clair County Court involving two priests of the Catholic Diocese of Belleville brings to at least five the number of victims of [sexual abuse of a minor by a priest](#) of the diocese that have resulted in monetary damages.

### **Dutch Church Is Accused of Castrating Young Men**

The Dutch Church has been accused of some of the worst sexual abuse that can be performed on young men. Decades ago, while in the care of the Roman Catholic Church, at least 10 boys were surgically castrated because they either had complained about [sexual abuse](#) or they were being protected from [homosexuality](#). This recent discovery only adds to the scandal engulfing the church there.

[Read the rest of this issue of Focus here...](#)

## **Affiliate News**

### **VOTF Bridgeport Annual Conference Featuring Bishop Robinson for Keynote**

Voice of the Faithful in the Diocese of Bridgeport proudly announces its 10th annual conference on Saturday, March 24, 2012, at Fairfield University's Oak Room.

The conference, entitled "Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church," features Bishop Geoffrey Robinson of Australia as keynote speaker. His topic is "Reclaiming the Spirit of Jesus."

Co-sponsored by Fairfield University Center for Catholic Studies, the conference will open for registration at 8:30 a.m., be called to order at 9 a.m., and close at 1:00 p.m. The cost is \$35, which includes brunch.

To make reservations, send a check made out to "VOTF March 24 Conference." Please include your name, address, and email, and send to **VOTF-Bridgeport**, 191C Main St., New Canaan CT 06840.

For further information, please see the Bridgeport website, [www.votfbpt.org](http://www.votfbpt.org) or call Jamie Dance at 203-801-9532.

### **Chicagoland - Voice Of The Faithful Presents Dr. Pauline Viviano: What Vatican II Means Today**

**Sunday, April 22 at 1:30 pm  
St. James in Arlington Heights**

(at the O'Brien room in facility across from the church)



Dr. Viviano is one of the most popular progressive Catholic speakers in the country. She is a Professor of Theology at Loyola University Chicago. She received her doctorate from St. Louis University, and is author of numerous scholarly articles and books. She is currently working on a volume about the Books of Jeremiah.

Beloved for her captivating speeches, Dr. Viviano has been the keynote speaker at many national events and has a unique way of explaining why the Old Testament is still relevant to Vatican-II Catholics. Dr. Viviano gave a different talk last year at a C-VOTF event, and affiliate members are delighted to have her return as part of their 2012 speaker series!

“Conversations with My Molester: A Journey of Faith”

St. Paul Parish in Cambridge will host a play about reconciliation and the power of healing, written by Michael Mack, on **Thursday, March 29, at 7 p.m.**

Mr. Mack, who was molested by a priest as a young man, wrote the play after meeting his molester many years later.

The presentation is part of Lenten reflections at the parish, 10 years ago after investigative reporting by *The Boston Globe* revealed the problems of sexual abuse and cover-ups in the Boston Catholic Church. Barbara Thorp, from the Boston Archdiocese's Pastoral Outreach & Child Protection Office, will serve as commentator in the discussion that follows the performance.

Three groups in the parish are sponsoring the production: The St. Paul Artist Group, Caring for the Soul: Faith in Recovery, and The St. Paul Laity Group.

For more information, contact Carol at 617-666-2855 or visit [www.michaelmacklive.com](http://www.michaelmacklive.com) on the web.

The suggested good-will donation for the event is \$15, to help cover production costs.

Address: St. Paul Catholic Church, Harvard Square, 29 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge MA 02138 (in the DiGiovanni Hall).

*Supported by VOTF members in the Cambridge area.*