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Bp Paprocki Blames the World

Michael Sean Winters | Sep. 10, 2013 Distinctly Catholic

My colleague Brian Roewe reported yesterday [1] on an interview given by Bishop Thomas Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois. There is much that is - how to put this as kindly as possible - jarring about the bishop's comments. His comparison of the situation of the Church today in America to that of the early Christians in imperial Rome was histrionic to say the least: Whatever one thinks of Obama, he is not Nero or Diocletian. Paprocki's comments on homosexuality exhibited a fifth grade understanding of the issue. But, what was most alarming were the bishop's remarks about the sex abuse crisis. Those who criticized the Church's handling of the issue are dismissed as anti-Catholic bigots. Many bishops have forthrightly confronted the issue of clergy sex abuse, to be sure. Others, not so much. And the Holy See has so far failed to establish a procedure for removing bishops who do not enforce the canonical norms that have governed the Church's response since 2002. Bishop Robert Finn is still the Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Archbishop John Myers is still the Archbishop of Newark. By refusing to admit any wrong-doing, but sweeping everything under the proverbial rug, by blaming the media for its coverage, Paprocki looks like no one so much as the tobacco executives who once insisted that smoking cigarettes had nothing to do with causing cancer. Paprocki is an embarrassment, not to me, but to his brother bishops and his cavalier comments and histrionic casting of aspersions on everybody else undermines the hard work of those bishops who really have tried to right the wrongs that were done and put the Church on a better path. He is like a character out of an opera - "the gods are against me!" - except, of course, this is not an opera, or even a stage, it is the Church.

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[1] http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/paprocki-anti-catholic-trends-parallel-persecution-early-believers