

What to Enshrine at the "Shrine?"

Maureen Fiedler | Apr. 21, 2010 NCR Today

Today's *Washington Post* offered yet another dimension of the sex abuse scandal. It seems that Cardinal Darío Castrillón Hoyos of Colombia, who once praised a French bishop for not telling police about a priest who had sexually assaulted children, is scheduled to celebrate a Pontifical Latin Mass at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington April 24. That Mass is sponsored by the Paulus Institute, an organization that promotes the traditional Latin Mass.

Here is the *Post* story in a nutshell:

Castrillón, the former head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy, made headlines last week when a 2001 letter he wrote to French Bishop Pierre Pican surfaced in the French press. In it, he praised Pican for not reporting the pedophile priest to police, despite being mandated to do so under French law.

"I congratulate you for not denouncing a priest to the civil administration," Castrillón wrote, after Pican was convicted of failing to report sex crimes against children. "You have acted well, and I am pleased to have a colleague in the episcopate who, in the eyes of history and of all other bishops in the world, preferred prison to denouncing his son and priest."

At the time the letter was written, the priest, the Rev. René Bissey, had been sentenced to 18 years in prison for repeatedly raping a boy and for sexually assaulting 10 other children.

Needless to say, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) protested vigorously, demanding that Pope Benedict and Washington Archbishop Donald Wuerl condemn Castrillón's remarks and replace him as the celebrant of the Mass.

It gets worse. Last Saturday, Castrillón claimed that Pope John Paul II, had not only approved of his letter but also had instructed him to send copies to bishops worldwide.

If we are looking for proof positive that bishops and other officials were putting institutional interests above the welfare of abuse victims, this supplies it.

Source URL (retrieved on 07/25/2017 - 18:17): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/what-enshrine-shrine>