

Defending SNAP

Dennis Coday | Mar. 15, 2012 NCR Today

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, SNAP, [is in dire straits, basically broke](#) [1], still dogged by lawyers who want to pry deeply into that organization's files.

The national media has finally [caught up with that story](#) [2]. Defenders are [coming forward](#) [3]. Even [unlikely ones](#) [4].

Dominican Fr. Tom Doyle argues on our website that SNAP needs protection from the bishops' lawyers because SNAP meets the definition [of being "The People of God."](#) [5]

When news of the subpoenas broke late last year, *NCR* defended SNAP's right to confidentiality. We said in [a Jan. 20-Feb. 2 editorial](#) [6]: "This certainly looks like a fishing expedition aimed at dismantling the organization, and lawyers keep climbing on board." The subpoenas, we argued, were too sweeping and put at risk that very fragile confidence SNAP has with victims of clergy sex abuse.

With word now from SNAP director David Clohessy that the legal defense has financially strapped the organization, it seems our worst fears may be realized, that "the advocacy group will be irreparably harmed and victims of clergy sexual abuse will have lost a key ally in their fight for justice."

SNAP's fate is again in the hands of a Missouri county judge. I would hope she takes the full measure of SNAP's unique importance to defending victims against overwhelming adversaries and tell the lawyers that one deposition is enough.

Read *NCR's* editorial: [SNAP subpoenas harm key ally for victims](#)[7]

For more *NCR* coverage of SNAP's depositions, see:

- [SNAP director may be forced to testify in abuse case](#) [6], Dec. 29
- [SNAP leader: Testimony was 'fishing expedition'](#) [8], Jan. 3
- [SNAP receives second subpoena request for documents](#) [9], Jan. 5
- [SNAP, Catholic League leaders talk abuse scandal on radio show](#) [10], Jan. 6
- [Court documents reveal motives for deposing SNAP](#) [11], Jan. 23
- [Lawyers press for more SNAP documents, testimony](#) [12], Feb. 24
- [SNAP leader's deposition made public](#) [13], March 2

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Links:

[1] <http://ncronline.org/node/29096>

- [2] <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/13/us/catholic-church-pressures-victims-network-with-subpoenas.html?ref=us>
- [3] http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/14/opinion/hurting-advocates-of-victims-abused-by-priests.html?_r=1&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss
- [4] <http://www.now.org/press/03-12/03-13.html>
- [5] <http://ncronline.org/blogs/examining-crisis/snap-bishops-and-lesson-ecclesiology>
- [6] <http://ncronline.org/node/28237/>
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