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TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2005

## Cardinal Law -- Given Cold Shoulder By US Cardinals

by Michael in New York on [4/12/2005 03:15:00 AM](#)

Finally, someone in Rome realizes Cardinal Law is a source of shame for the Church, however dearly the departed Pope considered him. According to the LA Times, **six out of the seven US Cardinals avoided Law's mass**, where he was given the honor due to his ceremonial position at the Vatican and allowed to say a mass for the Pope and -- crucially -- give a homily where he could try and shape or influence the debate about who should be the next Pope.

Now most of the other cardinal also skipped the mass on a rainy afternoon, but their motives are unclear. (The story doesn't report the level of attendance by cardinals at the other memorial masses.) Three of the US cardinals had schedule conflicts or chose not to attend when they found out it wasn't expected or mandatory.

But three of the US cardinals specifically avoided the mass and those close to them let it be known why -- it was because of the sex abuse scandals where Law played a key role in protecting priests who raped little boys and did so for decades, knowingly and inhumanely shuttling the priests from parish to parish where they could molest again, lying to others about the priests and generally betraying every sense of grace and compassion that Jesus embodied.

The three Cardinals who stayed away to snub him were Egan of NY (thank God for that), George of Chicago and Mahoney of LA (who is generally dismissed by Vatican watchers for being unimportant because he's such a hippie -- ie. doesn't hate women, thinks raping kids is bad, etc.) One cardinal -- Rigali of Philadelphia -- was the only US cardinal present at the Vatican to attend the mass. Anyone from Philly? Rigali should be chided and shamed and demanded to make amends for associating with Law by the people of his parish. Like all sinners, Law can be forgiven, but he must show repentance and pay his debt to God and man. Clearly, a cushy high-paying job in the Vatican and voting on the next Pope is hardly a sign of sorrow.

I hate to disagree with Chris in Paris who saw Law's participation as a deliberate snub to those who criticized the Church over this issue. But in fact, it's much worse than that. The child sex abuse scandal -- which has gone on for decades (if not centuries) and which is hardly contained to the US (recent scandals have broken out in Ireland and Austria and elsewhere) -- is not even remotely on the radar for the Vatican or most cardinals from around the world. It barely registered on their consciousness and when it did it was simply as an example of the US's bizarre fixation on sex (a la Clinton's affair) and a lamentable case of Church leaders caving in to

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