



As everyone now knows, for decades church superiors repeatedly chose to ignore complaints about pedophile priests. In many instances, accused clerics were quietly bundled off to distant congregations where they could prey anew upon the children of unsuspecting parishioners. This practice of denial and concealment has been so consistently pursued in diocese after diocese, nation after nation, as to leave the impression of being a deliberate policy set by church authorities.

And indeed it has been. Instructions coming directly from Rome have required every bishop and cardinal to keep matters secret. These instructions were themselves kept secret; the cover-up was itself covered up. Then in 2002, John Paul put it in writing, specifically mandating that all charges against priests were to be reported secretly to the Vatican and hearings were to be held in camera, a procedure that directly defies state criminal codes. Rather than being defrocked, many outed pedophile priests have been allowed to advance into well-positioned posts as administrators, vicars, and parochial school officials---repeatedly accused by their victims while repeatedly promoted by their superiors.

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