



Lawyers of the Roman Catholic Church and priests accused of sexual abuse in two Missouri cases have approached the court to compel the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests to disclose more than two decades of e-mails including correspondence with victims, lawyers, whistle-blowers, witness, police, prosecutors and journalists.

Though the SNAP is neither a plaintiff nor a defendant in the litigation, it has been subpoenaed five times in recent months and its national director, David Clohessy, was interrogated by a full battery of church lawyers for more than six hours in 2012.

The SNAP claims that the coordinated legal action against the group from courts in Kansas City and St. Louis is integral to the Catholic Church's campaign to silence victims of priestly sex abuse.

Marci A. Hamilton, a law professor told the media, "If there is one group that the higher-ups, the bishops, would like to see silenced, it definitely would be SNAP. And that's why they're going after. They're trying to find a way to silence SNAP."

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, New York said that targeting SNAP was fully justified as "SNAP is a menace to the Catholic Church." Mr. Donohue further added that the leading bishops he knew about have resolved to fight back aggressively against SNAP. He said, "The bishops have come together collectively. I can't give you the names, but there's a growing consensus on the part of the bishops that they had better toughen up and go out and buy some good lawyers to get tough. We don't need altar boys."

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