

## Background to the Story

On July 23, 2019, Michael Voris' *Church Militant* (CM) organization published a rather shocking headline: "[Is the SSPX Sheltering a Sexual Predator?](#)" To briefly recap its contents, the author - James Baresel, "a freelance writer with degrees in philosophy and history" (CM's description) - accused the leadership of the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) of gross negligence (at best) and deliberate cover-up (at worst) in relation to Fr. James McLucas, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York accused of sexual abuse of an adult woman in 2012, and who has since assisted the SSPX in the U.S. on occasion due to his interest in traditional doctrine and liturgy.[\[1\]](#)

Those who read the article and have followed the ensuing social media debate know that the headline was a rhetorical question, since it is obvious that both the author and *Church Militant* presume guilt on the part of Fr. McLucas, despite a lack of hard evidence (accusations ≠ evidence) and the absence of a guilty verdict from either a diocese or court of law (settlements ≠ admission/finding of guilt). (Both the author and CM also clearly harbor a strong bias against the SSPX, which could be the real motivation behind their efforts - more on this later.)

Having now reviewed in detail the court records related to Fr. McLucas - available online from the [New York State Unified Court System](#) ("Search as Guest" for "James McLucas") - and having done further research into his history, my purpose in this article is twofold: (1) to present a fuller picture of Fr. James McLucas and the known facts of his case; and (2) to point out several deficiencies in *Church Militant's* method of prosecuting what can rightly be dubbed '*Church Militant v. Fr. McLucas & SSPX*' before the '*Supreme Court of Church Militant*' and in which *Church Militant* acts as the jury.

## Fr. McLucas and the Known Facts

In order to accomplish the aforementioned objectives, we must establish several basic facts about Fr. McLucas and his case, all of which are matters of public record. *Church Militant*, as we shall see, provided only *some* of the following facts in their articles, omitting others and employing innuendo with those they did present, apparently for the purpose of leading readers to presume guilt on the part of Fr. McLucas. For an organization that routinely harps on the deceitful tactics employed by sinister bishops and the mainstream media, this sort of shoddy journalism on their part is difficult to understand.

### **Fact #1 - Fr. James McLucas was accused and sued in 2012 by Maureen**

**Nysewander, an adult woman. He denied her allegations. The case was settled out of court in 2013.**

This lawsuit, which commenced on July 13, 2012 and concluded on September 23, 2013 with a private settlement (including a confidentiality agreement), is the primary subject of James Baresel's [initial article](#), wherein he summarized:

“In 2012, McLucas was sued by Maureen Nysewander, who [alleged sexual and physical abuse](#) by the priest between 2007 and 2009, when he acted as her counselor. McLucas claimed the statute of limitations had expired, and the suit was eventually settled out of court. Both parties signed a confidentiality agreement not to disclose the contents of the lawsuit, but court documents are available online.”

Baresel provides a link to the initial “Summons and Complaint” filed by Nysewander’s lawyer on July 13, 2012 (an [“Amended Complaint”](#) was filed six days later), which includes Nysewander’s core accusation: “On or about July of 2007 to December of 2009, Plaintiff Maureen Nysewander was sexually abused, attacked and harassed by Defendant James McLucas” (para. 17).

Notice how Baresel states in passing that “McLucas claimed the statute of limitations had expired, and the suit was eventually settled out of court.” While this information is true, it is not the whole story.

First off, Fr. McLucas did more than simply claim “the statute of limits had expired,” a phrase no doubt employed by Baresel to imply guilt. In the [“Notice and Affirmation of Motion to Dismiss”](#) (Sept. 11, 2012) – Father’s official response to Nysewander’s allegations – his lawyer states on his behalf, “While Fr. McLucas *vehemently denies* committing any of the intentional torts [i.e. abusive acts] alleged in the complaint, plaintiff’s complaint must nevertheless be dismissed as it was filed beyond the one year statute of limitations applicable to the intentional torts alleged therein” (para. 2). And again, in the same document, “While Fr. McLucas *vehemently denies* the salacious allegations that plaintiff has made against him, plaintiff’s complaint must nevertheless be dismissed against Fr. McLucas, as it was filed on July 19, 2012 [the “Amended Complaint”], more than three years following the last date [i.e. Dec. 2009] upon which Fr. McLucas was alleged to have committed the last intentional tort referenced in the complaint” (para. 5).

Secondly, it must be understood that the statute of limitations *had in fact expired*, as Fr.

McLucas' lawyer explains in detail in the "Affirmation of Motion to Dismiss" and other subsequent court documents. It is not that Fr. McLucas merely "claimed the statute of limitations had expired," as Baresel wrote, but that *it had actually expired*. A respectful insistence on that fact by Fr. McLucas' lawyer cannot and should not be used as 'evidence' of guilt, which would not only be false but also dishonest.

In short, we know that Fr. McLucas has vehemently denied Nysewander's allegations *from the beginning*, contrary to *Church Militant's* false claim that "McLucas has never denied that he engaged in sexual relations with [Nysewander]." (See CM's anonymously authored "[SSPX Defends Sexual Predator](#)" article in response to the [SSPX press release](#) of July 24. Similarly, CM's editor-in-chief Christine Niles has repeated this false claim multiple times on social media.)

Similarly, CM's assertion that "the court failed to dismiss the case" on the basis of the statute of limitations argument, and that "McLucas chose to settle the lawsuit out of court instead of go to trial," is also false (again, see "[SSPX Defends Sexual Predator](#)" and Niles' comments on social media). In reality, Nysewander chose to settle out of court *while the motion to dismiss was pending* (awaiting a decision) before the court.

And furthermore, we also know that the one-year statute of limitations on the alleged abuse *did in fact expire* in December 2010, roughly 18 months before Nysewander chose to file suit. Concerning this latter point, there is no contradiction between innocence on Fr. McLucas' part and insistence on the statute of limitations having already expired. Only an incompetent lawyer would neglect to make use of the simpler-to-prove legal argument about the statute of limitations. Moreover, if that were truly Fr. McLucas' only argument, he would not have *vehemently denied* the factual allegations as well.

**Fact #2 - Fr. McLucas sued Maureen Buckley (formerly Nysewander) in 2015 for allegedly breaching their confidentiality agreement, which is what caused him to be inaccurately included in the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report.**

Neither Baresel nor *Church Militant* say a word about this second lawsuit, which was filed on January 21, 2015 and settled out of court on April 7 of the same year. This is quite curious, considering that both parties addressed Fr. McLucas' inclusion in the [Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report](#) (released Aug. 14, 2018), which dealt exclusively with cases of *child* sexual abuse. And yet, the following is all that Baresel mentions in his [article](#):

"Resigning his editorship [of *The Latin Mass* magazine] after a few years, he disappeared from public view, until turning up as chaplain to a Carmelite convent

devoted to the old liturgy in Elysburg, Pennsylvania. It was while he was serving in that assignment that the convent's mother superior learned he was engaged in a sexual relationship and reported the matter to ecclesial authorities."

Again, notice how Baresel presumes guilt by asserting without evidence that Fr. McLucas "was engaged in a sexual relationship," as if Nysewander's allegations in and of themselves prove guilt. Baresel also omits some crucial details found in the grand jury report's [one-page summary](#) on Fr. McLucas, which begins:

"In 2014, Father James McLucas was a priest in the Archdiocese of New York living in Elysburg as the Chaplain to the Monastery [i.e. the Carmel of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph]. The Archdiocese of New York sent the Diocese of Harrisburg a testimonial letter of good standing for McLucas."

Note well that Fr. McLucas was held to be in "good standing" by both his own archdiocese (New York) and the Diocese of Harrisburg *after the 2013 settlement*. Is it plausible that this would have been so, had the Archdiocese of New York known Fr. McLucas was guilty of the allegations?

Moreover, note that in 2014 - *after the settlement* - he was serving as chaplain to the Carmelite nuns in Elysburg, PA *with the express permission of his Ordinary* (as evidenced by the "testimonial letter of good standing"). And why was he there? Most likely, because that community "[p]rimarily use[s] the Extraordinary Form of the Holy Mass and the Divine Office," according to its [website](#). Considering his past position as editor-in-chief of *The Latin Mass* magazine (published by [Keep the Faith, Inc.](#)) and past involvement with the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP),<sup>[2]</sup> both of which Baresel mentions, it makes sense that Fr. McLucas would want an assignment involving the traditional Mass and Office.

Sadly, the grand jury report goes on to erroneously claim that Fr. McLucas "had sexually abused a 14 year old [sic] girl," an inaccurate description of Nysewander's 2012 allegation that somehow found its way to the monastery's mother superior, who then "called the Diocese of Harrisburg" and effectively ended Fr. McLucas' chaplaincy. (We know from Nysewander's 2012 "[Affidavit](#)" that the alleged abuse, which Fr. McLucas *vehemently denies*, did not begin until "the summer of 2007," when she was 20 years old. Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York acknowledged this fact in his [statement](#) on the grand jury report.)

The question is: How did the mother superior find out about past allegations against Fr. McLucas in the first place? If the 2013 settlement included a binding confidentiality agreement, which it did, then how did a third party obtain legally protected information?

The answer is found in Fr. McLucas' "[Summons and Complaint](#)" (Jan. 21, 2015) filed against Maureen Buckley (formerly Nysewander, who had since gotten married), in which he alleges that Buckley herself is the one who breached confidentiality, thus causing Fr. McLucas to lose his position as chaplain and be expelled from his residence at the monastery:

"6. On or about July 16, 2012, the Defendant, Maureen A. Buckley, commenced a lawsuit in the Supreme Court of the State of New York against the Plaintiff [Fr. McLucas] herein (hereinafter to be referred to as 'the Action').

7. On or about September 23, 2013, all parties to the Action entered into a Confidential Settlement Agreement and Release (hereinafter to be referred to as 'the Agreement') that was not filed with the Court.

8. The Agreement provided for the discontinuance of the Action with prejudice [i.e. the allegations against Fr. McLucas are never allowed to be litigated again].

9. The Agreement provided that the Defendants [Fr. McLucas, Archdiocese of New York, and Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter] disputed the validity of the claims asserted by the Plaintiff [Maureen Nysewander, aka Buckley] in the Action [note: *another denial of Nysewander's allegations*].

...

13. The Agreement has been breached by the Defendant [Buckley, formerly Nysewander] as the allegations made in and information related to the Action were disclosed to several third parties and has thereby caused severe and irreparable injury to the Plaintiff [Fr. McLucas]."

The "Complaint" goes on to allege that sometime in October 2014, Buckley<sup>[3]</sup> "disclosed the allegations in the Action [2012 lawsuit] and the settlement (hereinafter 'confidential information') to and with Catherine Bauer," as well as "to Mary Bauer," Catherine's mother and a monastery employee, who then "disclosed confidential information to other third parties," no doubt including the mother superior.

According to Buckley's "[Answer with Counterclaims](#)" (Mar. 16, 2015), she became close friends with Catherine Bauer "[w]hile at college in 2005" and remained so "to the present." Buckley admitted to having disclosed confidential information, couching it in terms of having "properly alerted and warned certain persons" - namely, Catherine and Mary Bauer - "of risks of harm to them or family members" (Verified Amended Answer, para. 13), a course of action she apparently deemed acceptable despite the confidentiality agreement into which she had freely entered with Fr. McLucas in 2013.

Ultimately, she justified her actions by claiming that Fr. McLucas was well aware of her close friendship with Catherine Bauer and that the only reason he sought and obtained the chaplain position at the monastery was to "re-insinuate himself into Maureen Buckley's life and to resurrect his dominion over and sexual relationship with Maureen Buckley" (Verified Counterclaims, para. 27). (In essence, she was attempting to re-litigate her original allegations against Fr. McLucas, a prerogative she freely surrendered as part of the 2013 settlement and confidentiality agreement.)

My point in descending into this minutia is to demonstrate that Fr. McLucas' case is much more complex and involved than James Baresel and *Church Militant* led their readers to believe. And further, to stress that if Fr. McLucas is innocent - and this should be our presumption until proven otherwise, as a matter of natural justice - then he has suffered not only the loss of an honorable name but also "irreparable damage to [his] current and future prospects of obtaining employment," as his 2015 "Complaint" against Buckley emphasizes (para. 1).

### **Fact #3 - In response to the 2018 Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report, Fr. McLucas again denied "each and every allegation in the strongest possible terms."**

Another crucial statement largely ignored by Baresel and *Church Militant* is Fr. McLucas' response to the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report, found in the lengthy "[Report Responses](#)" document published by the PA Attorney General's Office (see pp. 208-209; 213-214 according to the PDF page numbering).

As mentioned above, the grand jury report's one-page summary provides an inaccurate description of Nysewander's allegations (she made it clear in 2012 that the alleged sexual relationship between herself and Fr. McLucas did not begin until she was 20 years old). Unfortunately, Baresel contributed to the confusion by stating in his [article](#), "The initial accusation claimed that he had been having sexual encounters with a girl since she was 14 years old." This is patently false, as evidenced by the 2012 court records. Those who have thoroughly reviewed said records know that the accusations against Fr. McLucas came exclusively from an adult woman, not a 14-year-old girl.



With that in mind, let us review Father's [official response](#) to the grand jury report, submitted on his behalf by his lawyer:

“Father James McLucas respectfully requests that interested persons read and consider this response before forming any final conclusions about the shocking and horrible accusations that have been leveled against him in the report issued by the 40th Statewide Investigating Grand Jury. ***These allegations must have been based upon half-truths, false assumptions, and/or innuendo and are categorically false.*** Any individual that provided information that could have led to such conclusions by the Grand Jury was misinformed, sought to mislead the Grand Jury, or was mistaken. It is unknown what evidence was presented to the Grand Jury; what is known, however, is that Father McLucas was never asked to testify or given an opportunity to present evidence on his own behalf.

While Father McLucas was not charged with any crime, the shocking and horrible accusations in the report - without published evidence, without trial, and without due process of law - will nevertheless blacken his reputation and destroy him in his profession. In this regard, the report so offends traditional notions of fairness that ***Father McLucas is compelled to publicly make this response denying each and every allegation in the strongest possible terms.*** (Emphasis added)

And yet, in the face of this clear and comprehensive denial, *Church Militant* [would have us believe](#) that “the reason for his objection to being named in the Pennsylvania grand jury report” was solely because the report “only dealt with abuse of *minors*, not adults,” and likewise, “McLucas has never denied the allegations in question, namely[,] having sex with a young woman he had been counseling from a young age.” Christine Niles has personally pushed this false narrative on social media, commenting to myself and others on the *Catholic Family News* Facebook page (Aug. 1, 2019):



**Christine Niles** As is explained in our reports, father McLucas only denies that he had sex with her as a minor. He has never denied that they had sex as adults. His attorney's wording is referring to one sentence that includes sex as a minor into adulthood. That's what is denied. Notice that the attorney deliberately failed to specify the allegations being denied and kept the wording general, so as to lead people to believe McLucas was denying the adult sex. He was not.

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Comment on the *Catholic Family News* Facebook page (Thursday, August 1, 2019 at 2:50 PM)

In reply, I asked her:



**Matt Gaspers** Christine Niles Why should the rest of us just take your word for it that Fr. McLucas' formal response -- that he denies "each and every allegation in the strongest possible terms." -- 'really' means an admission of guilt?

Like · Reply · 1w · Edited



Comment on the *Catholic Family News* Facebook page (Thursday, August 1, 2019 at 2:57 PM)

Niles did not respond to my question.

**Fact #4 - Fr. McLucas has never been declared guilty by a diocese or court of law, whether civil or ecclesiastical.**

Finally, we come to the imperative question: Has Fr. McLucas ever been declared guilty by a diocese or court of law, whether civil or ecclesiastical? Baresel and *Church Militant* concede the absence of a guilty court verdict, but both parties seem bent on assuming that the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Harrisburg consider Fr. McLucas guilty of Nysewander's accusations. Their 'evidence' for this assumption is the fact that Fr. McLucas is currently suspended and without an assignment.

Baresel, for example, [mentions](#) in passing (and links to) "[a list of accused priests](#) published by the Archdiocese of New York," which includes Fr. McLucas and a brief note about his case. Baresel then uses this fact to accuse the SSPX of negligence for allowing a



priest “suspended for sexual misconduct” to assist them on occasion and asserts, “Basic vigilance on the part of the SSPX would by now have led the organization to cease its association with McLucas.”

The irony is that the “Update on the Sexual Abuse Crisis” published by the Archdiocese of New York emphasizes:

***“The inclusion of a cleric’s name on the list does not state or imply that he is guilty of a crime or liable for any civil claim. The criminal justice system presumes that a person who has been indicted by a grand jury, or otherwise accused of or charged with a crime, is innocent until proven guilty. Similarly, a defendant in a civil action is not liable unless a plaintiff proves otherwise. Where an allegation involving an archdiocesan cleric resulted in a civil settlement, there was not a finding of liability against the archdiocese or the cleric, as is typically the case with civil settlements.”***  
(Emphasis added)

Perhaps Baresel skipped over this introductory section. Whatever the case may be, he maintains in his [follow-up article](#), “Father McLucas’ diocese has announced that he is permanently suspended following an investigation.” (When and where, precisely, has that announcement been made?)

For *Church Militant*, the ‘conclusive evidence’ appears to be the following remarks of Cardinal Timothy Dolan (Fr. McLucas’ Ordinary) found in his [official response](#) to the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report (Aug. 15, 2018):

“Fr. James McLucas was alleged to have sexually abused a 14 year old [sic] girl. However, we have an affidavit from the woman involved who states that a sexual relationship did not begin until she was in her 20’s and in college. This does not excuse the behavior in any way, which is unquestionably and categorically wrong, but it is not a case of abuse of a minor. McLucas has not had an assignment since this came to our attention.”

Although it may sound conclusive, Cardinal Dolan’s statement contains a major inconsistency. Notice how he says, “McLucas has not had an assignment since this [i.e. Maureen Nysewander’s accusation] came to our attention.” But according to the grand jury report, Fr. McLucas *was on assignment* at the Carmelite monastery in Elysburg, PA in 2014

- several months after he and Nysewander had settled out of court (Sept. 23, 2013) - with “a testimonial letter of good standing” from the Archdiocese of New York!

If Fr. McLucas was indeed in good standing in 2014, then why is he currently suspended? In hopes of answering this question, I decided to contact both the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Harrisburg.

I reached out to Joseph Zwilling, director of the Archdiocese of New York’s [Office of Communications](#), and Rachel Bryson, executive director of the [Secretariat for Public Relations](#) of the Diocese of Harrisburg. In my emails to each of them, my essential line of questioning was: *Has your diocese found Fr. James McLucas guilty of the sexual abuse allegations leveled against him in 2012? If yes, when/where has that conclusion been made public? If no, why is he currently suspended?* I also mentioned Christine Niles’ [assertion](#) on Twitter that Fr. McLucas has been “booted from two dioceses [i.e. New York and Harrisburg] that found him guilty of sex w/her [Maureen Nysewander, aka Maureen Buckley] as an adult”.

Mr. Zwilling of New York responded via email (Aug. 6), “We will have no additional comment on Father McLucas beyond what you have in the August, 2018 statement from Cardinal Dolan, and the April, 2019 Update on the Sexual Abuse Crisis. I will note that Fr. McLucas continues to be suspended and without an assignment.” Translation: he will neither confirm nor deny the reason for Fr. McLucas’ current suspension.

Ms. Bryson of Harrisburg, who assured me over the phone (Aug. 6) that she and her team were actively looking into my questions, has declined to respond via email or acknowledge my voicemail (Aug. 9).

Despite the ambiguous (and lack of) response I received, the fact remains that neither New York nor Harrisburg has ever publicly declared Fr. McLucas guilty of Nysewander’s allegations. (If someone has evidence to the contrary, please publish it.)

My hunch is that his current suspension has something to do with his strong attachment to Tradition, which has apparently caused him problems in the past. For example, in his [final letter to readers](#) as editor-in-chief of *The Latin Mass* (Spring 2007 issue), Fr. McLucas shared, “As of February 11 of this year [2007], I entered into my fifth year of the battle to restore my canonical faculties [note: *five years prior to Nysewander’s allegations*]. During this time I have been unable to exercise publicly the functions of an ordained priest of the Roman Catholic Church. The final disposition of this situation remains unresolved. Ultimately, this condition, more than any other, has led me to the reluctant decision to resign as editor-in-chief of *The Latin Mass*.” He went on to observe, “The attempt to

eliminate the ancient Mass from the liturgical life of the Church is at the heart of the present calamity - and the ancient Mass will be at the heart of the eventual authentic 'counter reform.'"

Between his attachment to the Traditional Latin Mass and his hard-hitting 1998 article, "[The Emasculation of the Priesthood](#)," it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out why Fr. James McLucas found himself suspended under the late Cardinal Edward Egan (1932-2015), the ninth Archbishop of New York (2000-2009) and Cardinal Dolan's immediate predecessor. In fact, the following [eyewitness account](#) makes it crystal clear:

"[Benedict XVI's] *Summorum* came too late to save that community in Poughkeepsie. In the New York Archdiocese as then ruled by Cardinal Edward Egan, the offense of saying this Mass [i.e. TLM] and [publishing](#) tracts in its favor [note: a link to Fr. McLucas' aforementioned article] was treated as a far more serious crime and scandal than clerical pederasty. Cardinal Egan suspended my Poughkeepsie priest [i.e. Fr. McLucas], and effectively exiled him from the life of the [C]hurch. Priests who knew about the situation observed darkly that if he had raped children instead of saying this Mass, his career would have been better off."

## Conclusion - Ongoing Bias Against SSPX

To conclude this lengthy treatment of a complex case (I strived to be as concise as possible), allow me to pose one final question: *Why, in 2019, did Church Militant choose to target the Society of St. Pius X?* I don't recall them going after the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP) last November when the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio [announced](#) that Fr. Denis G. Bouchard, FSSP had been placed on "administrative leave" due to "an allegation of inappropriate behavior with a minor," a story [reported](#) by the local press.[\[4\]](#)

The answer, I believe, is found in the derogatory phrases employed by James Baresel and *Church Militant* in their recent articles against the SSPX: "renegade organization," "'traditionalist' apostolate of a disobedient or schismatic nature," "formal disobedience," and "theologically malformed priests of the SSPX". In response to such obvious bias, one refreshingly honest blogger - a self-identified "paid subscriber to Church Militant" with no personal connection to the SSPX whatsoever - [summed up](#) what many observers have rightly concluded: "Church Militant appears to have a real hatred for the SSPX and I honestly don't understand it. The Catholic Church does not share CM's view of the SSPX."[\[5\]](#)

This is indeed the crux of the matter. The animosity on display in 2015 ([here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) is alive and well in 2019. As such, I will close by reiterating what I said at the end of my [recent interview](#) on *The Mike Church Show* concerning this subject: I have no personal animosity towards Michael Voris, Christine Niles, or *Church Militant*. All I ask is that they provide accurate information and apply an equal standard of justice to all the cases they choose to discuss.

*For further commentary on this subject, CFN recommends watching the following video by our friend and brother-in-arms Michael Matt of [The Remnant](#):*

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[1] As a point of clarification, Fr. McLucas is not currently, nor has he ever been, a member of the SSPX. Due to his longstanding attachment to the Traditional Mass and doctrine, he is known to have attended SSPX events on occasion and to have helped individual SSPX priests from time to time. In this respect, he is no different than many other Conciliar priestly casualties who have occasionally turned to the SSPX for assistance. Archbishop Lefebvre desired the Society he founded not only to form new traditional priests but to come to the aid of diocesan priests in need during this now decades-long crisis of faith and morals in the Church.

[2] As [initially reported](#) by *Church Militant's* Christine Niles on Twitter (July 26) and independently verified by this author (Aug. 1): "According to a statement by Nancy LaRoza, administrative assistant at FSSP U.S. District headquarters, 'Fr. McLucas was only temporarily incorporated ad annum with the FSSP from 1997 to March of 2000, with the permission of the Archdiocese of New York. He left in March 2000 and has had no association with the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter since then.'" (*Church Militant*, "[SSPX Defends Sexual Predator](#)", updated 7/26/19). Prior to contacting the FSSP, however, Niles responded to a [question](#) I posed to her and Michael Voris with the following rash assertion (which she has since [deleted](#)): "The FSSP booted McLucas when they learned of his abuse" (July 25 tweet), a comment which the FSSP receptionist with whom I spoke called "an ignorant statement." In an attempt to gloss over her "ignorant statement," Niles [retorted](#) that the reason she contacted the FSSP was because I was supposedly "blaming them [FSSP] as complicit in sheltering McLucas." In reality, I simply [observed](#) that the FSSP was listed as a defendant (with Fr. McLucas and the Archdiocese of New York) in the original "[Summons and Complaint](#)" document from the 2012 lawsuit. In response to my observation, Niles contacted the FSSP and updated *Church Militant's* "SSPX Defends Sexual Predator" article to include: "Although the 2012 lawsuit by Nysewander names the FSSP as a defendant, the court eventually removed the FSSP as a defendant and the organization was

not held liable for McLucas' abuse." (Note the presumption of guilt at the end of her sentence - "McLucas' abuse.")

[3] In the interest of full disclosure, please note that Fr. McLucas' "[Summons and Complaint](#)" (Jan. 21, 2015) against Maureen Buckley incorrectly states in paragraphs 19 and 20 that "the Plaintiff" (Fr. McLucas) breached confidentiality, whereas the rest of the document - indeed, the rest of the lawsuit - clearly indicates that the *Defendant* (Buckley) is the one who allegedly breached confidentiality.

[4] For the record, I sincerely hope Fr. Bouchard is innocent and will presume him as such unless proven and declared otherwise according to the due process of law.

[5] This is especially true in light of Pope Francis' extension of faculties to SSPX priests for the sacraments of Confession (2016 Apostolic Letter [Misericordia et Misera](#), n. 12) and Matrimony (2017 PCED [Letter](#)).