

ACLU MYTHS ABOUT CATHOLIC HOSPITALS



Bill Donohue debunks ACLU myths about Catholic hospitals:

There is an article posted today on the Medscape website, "ACLU Says Catholic Hospitals Can Not Refuse to Perform Life-Saving Abortions," that repeats ACLU myths on this subject. It is written by Arthur L. Caplan, a professor who works in the Division of Medical Ethics at New York University's Langone Medical Center. Caplan agrees with an ACLU lawsuit that seeks to force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions; the hospitals follow the directives of the bishops.

Caplan writes that "The bishops' teaching on this [abortion] says you still cannot do an abortion, even if the mother's life depends on it." He also says that these hospitals should be required to "tell you where else you could go or refer you to places where you might be able to get the service you want, if not there." Catholic teaching is more complicated than this.

Yes, it is always wrong to intentionally take the life of an innocent person, beginning with unborn children. But the Catholic doctrine of "double effect" allows for an operation to save the life of the mother even if "the effect" is the death of the child.

Regarding the question of consent, #27 of the "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services," established by the bishops, says that "informed consent" is key and that the person or the person's surrogate should be

appraised of “any reasonable and morally legitimate alternatives, including no treatment at all.” It should be noted that just this year, in one of the ACLU’s lawsuits attempting to force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions (it lost in federal court), it never mentioned this directive in its lawsuit. Why complicate things?

The U.S. has the most liberal abortion laws in the world, but that is not enough to satisfy the ACLU, or people like Caplan. They want to jam their secular values down the throats of Catholics. And this has to be said: There is no such thing as a “life-saving abortion.” Indeed, that’s a classic oxymoron.