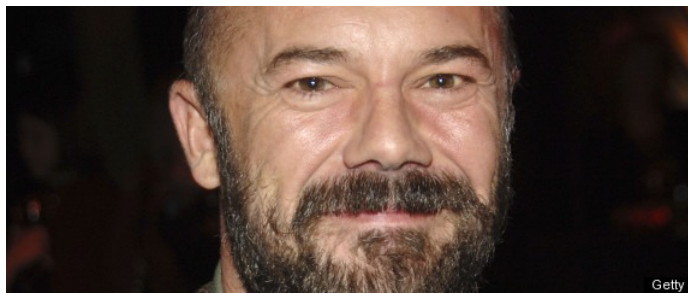


ANDREW SULLIVAN'S JESUS



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on *Newsweek's* cover story by Andrew Sullivan, "Christianity in Crisis"; it is also available at the

website of The Daily Beast:

Newsweek, ever fond of Christians, decided to roll out the venerable Andrew Sullivan to do its Holy Week special. It was quite a choice. Like many on the left, Sullivan has a problem with hierarchy (save for when he and his ilk are in charge).

Sullivan likes the teachings of Christianity (well, some of them) but not its teachers. He has an aversion to organized religion, but nowhere does he say how religion can be expected to survive absent an organizing structure. What attracts him to Christianity are its affective elements, and not much more. But watch out: his childish embrace of the affective explodes in anger when the discussion turns to Christian strictures governing sexuality; this is a subject that is very, very dear to him.

Sullivan's heroes are Jesus, St. Francis and Jefferson. They shouldn't be. Jesus, after all, was not content to be a street preacher—he commanded Peter to build his Church (back to hierarchy!). St. Francis was a supreme organizer: after founding his order, he founded several others, reaching out to women and the laity. As for Jefferson, his reduction of the New Testament to Jesus' actual teachings is of no relief to Sullivan either: there are too many passages to make a narcissist quiver.

The Jesus that Sullivan has created—"calm, loving, accepting," and, of course, "homeless"—is what happens when "Occupy Wall

Street" becomes mistaken for Catholicism. Worse, Sullivan's "Etch A Sketch" Jesus accounts for his remarkable conclusion that "the cross was not the point" of Jesus' life.

Sullivan's article reads like a public confession. It is not the Catholic Church that is obsessing about people's sex lives, as he alleges. No, it is people like him. He wants a Catholic Church without Catholicism. And I want cotton candy without cavities.