

Anna Quindlen column defends CFFC

In a column published in the *New York Times* on November 18, and syndicated nationally, Anna Quindlen took the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to task for having the effrontery of “attacking” Catholics for Free Choice.

Quindlen, a perennially disaffected “Catholic,” described the bishops’ denunciation of CFFC as a “gratuitous attack on a group of dissidents.” She went on to claim that CFFC was singled out because it was liberal but that organizations such as the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights were left alone because the League is a “conservative” organization that has not been branded “inauthentic.”

Catholic League president Dr. William A. Donohue in a letter to the *Times* (full text below) put Quindlen in her place by pointedly noting that “CFFC is to Catholicism what Nazis are to democracy.”

Dr. Donohue’s letter to the *New York Times*

Dear Editor:

Anna Quindlen has once again ventilated her alienation with the Catholic Church, this time by decrying the statement by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops branding as inauthentic Catholics for Free Choice (CFFC); she also mentions that the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights escaped any such labeling.

Herewith are a few facts for Ms. Quindlen to ponder. CFFC is nothing but a well-funded letterhead lacking any membership whatsoever. It has but one goal, and it isn’t abortion rights: it is to undermine the credibility of the Catholic Church. For proof I offer this: CFFC spokespersons have hit the airwaves trumpeting the unsubstantiated charges of Steven Cook against

Cardinal Bernardin. Those charges have nothing to do with abortion but they have everything to do with CFFC's mission of discrediting the Catholic Church whenever it can.

Ms. Quindlen seems to think that any organization that appropriates the title Catholic is entitled to recognition as such. Perhaps she thinks that the Peoples Republic of China actually represents the sentiments of the Chinese people as well. What the bishops did in denouncing CFFC was in strict accord with truth in advertising principles: the organization is a fraud.

As for the Catholic League, we have not been branded as inauthentic because we are conservative (the League has come to the defense of Cardinal Bernardin, and he is hardly a conservative) but because unlike the CFFC we are supportive of the Church's mission and fight to defend the civil rights of all Catholics, independent of political affiliation. But unlike Ms. Quindlen we do make distinctions: CFFC is to Catholicism what Nazis are to democracy.

Sincerely,

William A Donohue, Ph.D.
President, Catholic League