

ANTI-CATHOLIC ROOTS OF ROE v. WADE

As we approached the 40th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, we recalled the anti-Catholic roots of this infamous decision.

What paved the way for *Roe* was NARAL. Founded by Lawrence Lader in 1969, he knew he had to take down the greatest defender of the unborn, the Catholic Church. One of his close colleagues was Dr. Bernard Nathanson (he would later become both pro-life and a Catholic). Speaking of NARAL's early years, Nathanson said the original members all agreed that anti-Catholicism was "probably the best strategy we had."

Lader, in fact, referred to the Catholic Church as "our favorite whipping boy," making it plain that his goal was to "bring the Catholic hierarchy out where we can fight them." Ever blunt, he added, "That's the *real* enemy." Lader's animus against the Church was so deep that he called it "the biggest single obstacle to peace and decency throughout all of history."

Looking back at those days, Nathanson, who passed away in 2011, said, "I was far from an admirer of the Church's role in the world chronicle, but his [Lader's] insistent, uncompromising recitation brought to mind the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. It passed through my mind that if one had substituted 'Jewish' for 'Catholic,' it would have been the most vicious anti-Semitic tirade imaginable."

NARAL officials shared Lader's hatred and decided to launch a propaganda campaign against the Church. According to Nathanson, they concluded, "it was an easy step to targeting the Catholic Church in its opposition to abortion as making opposition to abortion a pro-fascist, reactionary position."

What NARAL did paid big dividends. Writing for the majority in

Roe, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun cited favorably eight times a book by Lader titled, *Abortion*. The nexus of the ruling was born of bigotry and blood.