

ARCHBISHOP DOLAN'S CRITICS FREAK OUT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the way some of the critics of New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan are reacting to his election yesterday as the new head of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

NPR is worried that Archbishop Dolan is “overtly conservative,” and Tim Rutten of the *Los Angeles Times* is fretting about his “confrontational approach.” Dissident Catholics are upset as well: New Ways Ministry says the vote “sends an ominous message”; Call to Action also sees his election as “ominous”; Sr. Maureen Fiedler says “we now have our very own Catholic version of the ‘Tea Party’ movement”; DignityUSA concludes that Dolan’s election means the hierarchy is “out of step” with Catholics. Similarly, the Human Rights Campaign, a gay secular group, says the vote means the hierarchy is “out of step.” Not to be outdone, the website of the *Tucson Citizen* accused Dolan of evincing an “arrogant” attitude in winning (it is true that he was caught smiling).

SNAP, the professional victims’ group, opines that Dolan’s “winning personality obscures his terrible track record on abuse.” Marian Ronan of Religion Dispatches says his election is “not a good sign,” and her colleague, Sarah Posner, concludes—and this really is ominous—that “the bishops are targeting families with loved ones who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.” The Internet site Lez Get Real calls Dolan “the Vatican’s spin-doctor,” and the website of *Time* has a headline which reads, “More Bad News for Obama 2012: Catholics Elect Dolan.” Edgeboston.com picked up the AP piece, but chose to give it a new headline: “Catholic Bishops’ Vote to Mean Harder Church Stance Against Gay Families.” And atheist Susan Jacoby is sweating over the fact that Dolan will be treated by the media “as if he is the voice of all American

Catholics.” She needs to get used to it.

Now it is tempting to conclude that some in the asylum have escaped. More likely, it means these are not good times for those who have sought—in many cases their entire adult life—to turn the Catholic Church, and America more generally, upside down and