

BERRY REPLIES

In the May *Catalyst*, we ran a short piece citing William Donohue's criticism of author Jason Berry. The article, "Put Up or Shut Up," took Berry to task for saying, "Theologians who question ancient church teachings on sexuality are routinely forced into silence." Donohue then publicly challenged Berry to identify who these people are.

Berry got back to Donohue naming three theologians and a few other prominent Catholics who were disciplined by the Vatican for their views. Unfortunately, when Berry was asked to shorten his response for *Catalyst*, he was unable to do so because of other commitments.

Donohue addressed this issue as follows: "From Jason Berry's correspondence, I feel confident that he is a loyal son of the Church. But I also think he overextends himself by making sweeping generalizations."

"The fact of the matter is," Donohue said, "the Catholic Church allows more dissent than currently exists among reporters at major newspapers." He cited the recent case of the 36 persons who were fired from the New York *Daily News*. As they were being kicked out, they were told not to violate the gag order that exists in their severance document. It reads, "The individual has not and will not in any way disparage, discredit, defame or belittle the company, its employees and practices."

This clause was rescinded when it was made public, but the fact remains that if the Vatican ever had something like this in a theologian's contract, accusations of an inquisition would follow. That is why Donohue differs with Berry. As important as anything, however, is the recognition that neither Donohue nor Berry wants anyone to think that they are trying to impugn the character of the other. This is just an

honest disagreement.