

BIDEN DIGS HIMSELF A HOLE

On September 9, Sen. Joseph Biden said that if the Republicans were serious about helping disabled children they would support stem-cell research. His comment was a clear shot at Sarah Palin; she chose to give birth to a Down's syndrome baby rather than have an abortion (the way 90 percent of women do when notified they are carrying a disabled baby).

Biden's remark, we pointed out, was not only inaccurate, it exposed his Catholic Achilles' heel once again. No one in public life has ever taken a position against all stem-cell research; adult stem-cell research is not ethically problematic. What millions of Americans object to is embryonic stem-cell research, and that is because it is impossible to do this kind of research without destroying the embryo.

"Now it may come as news to Biden that the embryo represents nascent human life," we said in a press release, "though it is not clear whether this would matter to a man who agrees with NARAL 75 percent of the time."

The Catholic Church, to which Biden belongs, is opposed to embryonic stem-cell research; McCain and Obama, along with Biden, are not. In this regard, Palin is more Catholic than Biden. "Not only does he look bad in comparison to Palin," we said, "it is coming at a time when Biden is being hit with a barrage of criticism from bishops angry with his 'Meet the Press' appearance where he declared abortion to be a personal matter."

Bishop Morlino of Madison, Wisconsin saw Biden on TV and quickly put aside the homily he prepared for Mass: he instead branded Biden's distortion of this issue as breaching church and state lines. Archbishop Chaput of Denver said it would not be wise for Biden to present himself for Communion. Biden, who hails from Scranton, was indirectly cited by Scranton Bishop

Martino: he said that "No Catholic politician who supports the culture of death should approach Holy Communion."

Biden's outgoing bishop, Wilmington Bishop Saltarelli, said that if Biden becomes vice president, he would bar him from speaking in Catholic schools. And Francis Malooly, the new Bishop of Wilmington, made it clear that he also has a problem with Biden. Indeed, he took sides with Philadelphia Archbishop Rigali and Bridgeport Bishop Lori, both of whom blasted Biden for contradicting the Church's teaching on abortion.

Biden not only embarrassed himself, he acted like a magnet for the bishops—they were drawn into this fight, just the way Pelosi beckoned them to act. It makes one wonder what side these two are really on. After all, common sense would seem to dictate that it is always foolish to pick a fight with the bishops. But common sense is apparently lacking. Either that or what we are witnessing is unsurpassed hubris.

As the only Catholic on either ticket, Biden could have been a real asset to Obama, but instead he has become a liability.