

# A NOTRE DAME WITNESS FOR LIFE

Bill McGurn

*This article is an excerpt from a recent speech given by Bill McGurn to Notre Dame's Center for Ethics and Culture*

Good evening...

The precipitate cause of our gathering tonight is the honor and platform our university has extended to a President whose policies reflect clear convictions about unborn life, and about the value the law ought to place on protecting that life. These convictions are not in doubt. In July 2007, the candidate spelled them out in a forceful address to a Planned Parenthood convention in our nation's capital.

Before that audience, he declared that a woman's "fundamental right" to an abortion was at stake in the coming election. He spoke about how he had "put Roe at the center" of his "lesson plan on reproductive freedom" when he was a professor—and how he would put it at the center of his agenda as president. He invoked his record in the Illinois state senate, where he fought restrictions on abortion, famously including one on partial-birth abortion. He said that the "first thing" he wanted to do as President was to "sign a Freedom of Choice Act." And he ended by assuring his audience that "on this fundamental issue," he, like they, would never yield.

So tonight our hearts carry a great sadness. But we do not come here this evening to rally against a speaker. We come to affirm the sacredness of life. And we come with a great hope: That a university founded under the patronage of Our Lady might be as consistent in the defense of her principles as the President of the United States has been for advancing his. In a nation wounded by Roe...in a society that sets mothers against the children they carry in their wombs...we come here tonight because however much our hearts ache, they tell us this: Our

church, our country, and our culture long for the life witness of Notre Dame.

What does it mean to be a witness? To be a witness, an institution must order itself so that all who look upon it see a consonance between its most profound truths and its most public actions. For a Catholic university in the 21st century, this requires that those placed in her most critical leadership positions—on the faculty, in the administration, on the board of trustees—share that mission. We must concede there is no guarantee that the young men and women who come here to learn will assent to her witness—but we must never forget that the university will have failed them if they leave here without at least understanding it. That is what it means to be a witness....

For most of her life, Notre Dame has served as a symbol of a Catholic community struggling to find acceptance in America—and yearning to make our own contributions to this great experiment in ordered liberty.

If we are honest, however, we must admit that in many ways we—and the university that nurtured us—are now the rich and powerful and privileged ourselves. This is a form of success, and we need not be embarrassed by it. But we must be mindful of the greater responsibilities that come with this success.

For years this university has trumpeted her lay governance. So what does it say about the Notre Dame brand of leadership, that in the midst of a national debate over a decision that speaks to our Catholic identity, a debate in which thousands of people across the country are standing up to declare themselves “yea” or “nay,” our trustees and fellows—the men and women who bear ultimate responsibility for this decision—remain as silent as Trappist monks? At a time when we are told to “engage” and hold “dialogue,” their timidity thunders across this campus. And what will history say of our billions in endowment if the richest Catholic university

America has ever known cannot find it within herself to mount a public and spirited defense of the most defenseless among us?

In the past few weeks, we have read more than once the suggestion that to oppose this year's speaker and honorary degree is to elevate politics over the proper work of a university. In many ways, we might say that such reasoning lies at the core of the confusion. As has become clear with America's debates over the destruction of embryos for scientific research, over human cloning, over assisted suicide, and over other end-of-life issues, abortion as a legal right is less a single issue than an entire ethic that serves as the foundation stone for the culture of death.

Twenty-five years ago, on a similar stage on this campus, the then-governor of New York used his Notre Dame platform to advance the "personally-opposed-but" defense that countless numbers of Catholic politicians have used to paper over their surrender to legalized abortion. Eight years after that, the school bestowed the Laetare Medal on a United States Senator who had likewise long since cut his conscience to fit the abortion fashion.

Today we have evolved. Let us note that the present controversy comes at a moment where the incoherence of the Catholic witness in American public life is on view at the highest levels of our government. Today we have a Catholic vice president, a Catholic Speaker of the House, a Catholic nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services, and so on. These are America's most prominent Catholics. And they have one thing in common: The assertion that the legal right to terminate a pregnancy—in the chilling euphemism of the day—must remain inviolable.

For those who think this a partisan point, let us stipulate for the record one of the curiosities of the Republican Party. Notwithstanding the party's prolife credentials, at the level

of possible Presidential contenders, the most prominent pro-choice voices in the GOP arguably belong to Catholics: from the former Republican mayor and governor of New York, to the Republican Governor of California, the Republican former governor of Pennsylvania, and so on. Notre Dame must recognize these realities—and the role she has played in bringing us to this day by treating abortion as a political difference rather than the intrinsic evil it is.

In his writings, Pope John Paul II noted the awful contradiction of our times, when more and more legal codes speak of human rights while making the freedom to deprive the innocent of their lives one of those rights. Several times he uses the word “sinister” to characterize the enshrinement of abortion as a legal right. And he states that all pleas for other important human rights are “false and illusory” if we do not defend with “maximum determination” the fundamental right to life upon which all other rights rest.

Maximum determination. Ladies and gentlemen, the unborn child’s right to life represents the defining civil rights issue of our day—and it ought to be a defining civil rights issue on this campus.

Those who say that as Notre Dame engages the world, she cannot expect her guests to share all her beliefs are right. But that is not the issue. The issue is that we engage them. Think of how we would have treated an elected Senator or President or Governor whose principles and actions were given over to seeing that segregation enjoyed the full and unqualified protection of American law. We would have been cordial...we would have been gracious...we would have been more than willing to debate...but we would have betrayed our witness if ever we brought them here on the idea that all that divided us was one political issue...

...[I]magine the larger witness for life that would come from putting first things first. So often we find support for

abortion rights measured against decisions involving war, capital punishment, and so on. All these issues deserve more serious treatment. But the debate over these prudential judgments loses coherence if on the intrinsic evil of abortion we do not stand on the same ground. What a challenge Notre Dame would pose to our culture if she stood united on this proposition: The unborn belong to no political party...no human right is safe when their right to life is denied...and we will accept no calculus of justice that seeks to trade that right to life for any other.

Let me end with a story about one of our family. His name is John Raphael; he belongs to the Class of '89; and he's an African-American who runs a high school in New Orleans. He's also a Josephite priest.

In his ministry, Father Raphael knows what it is like to answer the knock on his office door and find a woman consumed by the understandable fears that attend an unplanned pregnancy. He says that one of the greatest lessons he learned about how to respond to these women came from a friend of his, who had come to him in the same circumstances. The woman was an unmarried college student, and she told him what had surprised and hurt her most was how many friends greeted her news by saying, "Oh, that's terrible."

"That young lady taught me something," says Father Raphael. "She taught me that what these women need first and foremost is to have their motherhood affirmed. For too many women, this affirmation never comes. We need to let these mothers know what their hearts are already telling them: you may have made a mistake, but the life growing within you is no mistake. That life is your baby, waiting to love and be loved."

My young friends, this night I ask you: Make yours the voice that affirms life and motherhood. Be to those in need as the words of our alma mater: tender...strong...and true. And in your every word and deed, let the world see a reflection of the

hope that led a French-born priest in the north woods of Indiana to raise Our Lady atop a dome of gold.

I thank you for your invitation. I applaud your courage. And as we go forth this evening, let us pray that our beloved university becomes the Notre Dame our world so desperately needs: a witness for life that will truly shake down the thunder.

God bless you all.

*William McGurn is a columnist for the Wall Street Journal, a former chief speechwriter for President George W. Bush, and a member of Notre Dame's Class of 1980.*

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# HUMAN RIGHTS STOOD ON ITS HEAD

William A. Donohue

On January 23, President Barack Obama rescinded the Mexico City Policy that barred federal funds from being used to promote or perform abortions overseas. He was immediately congratulated by every pro-abortion organization in the nation.

The next day he won their plaudits again when he said that "It is time that we end the politicization of this issue. In the coming weeks, my Administration will initiate a fresh conversation on family planning, working to find areas of common ground to best meet the needs of women and families at home and around the world." He ended by saying that "I look forward to working with Congress to restore U.S. financial

support for the U.N. Population Fund.”

In other words, Obama intends to accomplish his goal of ending the politicization of abortion by spending federal dollars to support a pro-abortion agency of the U.N., namely the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This begs the question: If President George W. Bush was guilty of politicizing abortion by cutting off federal aid to UNFPA—this is exactly what the pro-abortion industry accused Bush of doing—then why is Obama not similarly guilty for reinstating the funds? Apparently, only those opposed to abortion are guilty of politicizing the issue; those in favor of it bring people together.

UNFPA claims that it is not pro-abortion. It says that it merely supports “reproductive rights,” by which it means “the right to decide the number, timing and spacing of children,” etc. It does not rule out any means to accomplish this end. Which means it has absolutely no problem with abortion. More than that, it works tirelessly to work with pro-abortion groups to limit births, and nowhere is it more active than in poor, non-white nations around the world.

No one knows what a fraud UNFPA is better than Steve Mosher, president of the Population Research Institute. A good Catholic, Mosher says that despite this U.N. agency’s alleged concern for “safe” abortions, it is “just a euphemism for legal abortion.” Indeed, he argues that “The United Nations Population Fund would like to see abortion legalized worldwide, including in the 114 countries where there are significant restrictions on abortion, and it works to that end.” He emphasizes that “this is an organization that is devoted to aborting and sterilizing and contracepting as many women as possible.”

One way UNFPA accomplishes its goals is to manipulate public opinion by selling the idea that it works well with some segments of the Catholic community. More accurately, it works well with a few stray dissidents, and it works very well with

anti-Catholic front groups.

Thoraya Obaid, the executive director of UNFPA, has admitted that “The Catholic Church can only discuss abstinence, but we have some relationships with a few priests who will refer women for other family planning options. This is what I have done in Latin America.” In Brazil, for example, the pro-abortion group works with “certain progressive branches” of the Catholic Church.

The so-called progressive Catholics that UNFPA teams up with are none other than the Catholic bashers at Catholics for Choice (previously Catholics for a Free Choice). Frances Kissling, who was president of the letterhead group for decades, was the darling of UNFPA during Dr. Nafis Sadik’s reign as its executive director. Sadik said it all when she explained that “I was very happy to find in Frances Kissling an ally who not only shared my passion for sexual and reproductive health and rights but had a passion of her own, for her church and its mission.” Kissling once admitted that it was her mission to “overthrow the Catholic Church.”

No wonder the pro-abortion enthusiasts at UNFPA loved Kissling—she bailed them out when they were in hot water with the U.S. State Department for cooperating with the Communist Chinese government’s “one child” policy.

Following a 2002 State Department investigation of UNFPA’s ties to China’s pro-abortion policies, Secretary of State Colin Powell wrote, “I determined that UNFPA’s support of, and involvement in, China’s population-planning activities allowed the Chinese government to implement more effectively its program of coercive abortion.” It was for reasons like these that the Bush administration denied U.S. funding of UNFPA, monies that Obama wants to reinstate.

Kissling’s role in whitewashing China’s monstrous anti-human rights policies was to give it a clean bill of health when she



and other “religious leaders” visited China in 2003. “We believe that UNFPA has been unequivocally committed to providing informed and voluntary family planning,” she offered.

Predictably, Kissling was dutifully congratulated by Sadik’s successor, Ms. Obaid: “I am extremely grateful that the religious leaders who visited China have affirmed that UNFPA is promoting voluntary choice in the Chinese family planning program and is not involved in any way with coercive practices.” Perhaps she doesn’t think that having the government track the menstrual cycle of women isn’t coercive, or the practice of ordering them to have an abortion.

One scholar who wasn’t fooled by this was the late Julian Simon, a professor of population economics at the University of Maryland. Here is how he described what was going on in China: “Its ‘family planning’ one-child policy is pure coercion. It includes forcing IUDs into the wombs of 100 million women against their will; mandatory X-rays every three months to insure that the IUDs have not been removed, causing who knows what genetic damage; coercion to abort if women get pregnant anyway, and economic punishment if couples evade the abortionist.”

Beijing’s one-child policy began in 1979, with support from UNFPA: it gave China \$50 million over the first five years of the program. According to Mosher, the policy led to widespread female infanticide, something which was once practiced in poor areas of China. “But when the one-child policy came into effect we began to see in the wealthy areas of China,” he says, “what had never been done before in history—the killing of little girls.”

This imbalance, in turn, led to a massive wave of human trafficking: in 2005, an estimated 800,000 people—80 percent of whom were women—were being trafficked from across China’s borders. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 350 million girls

are now said to be missing from the Chinese population. And yet UNFPA—which is heavily staffed by former Planned Parenthood workers—has never objected to any of this.

UNFPA concentrates heavily in places like Vietnam, Nigeria and Peru, promoting policies similar to those in China. When the genocidal maniac from Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, wanted to tame his people, he invited UNFPA to help reduce the population of Kosovo; Milosevic said Kosovar women were “baby machines” that needed to be stopped. UNFPA did not disappoint him—it responded with a huge contraception and abortion campaign.

It is one thing for UNFPA to act irresponsibly, quite another to tap American taxpayers for money to support its agenda. Moreover, UNFPA gets a boat-load of cash from the establishment. For instance, John D. Rockefeller III, the nation’s foremost population control guru, was responsible for getting UNFPA off the ground in 1969. And today it is lavishly funded by the likes of Microsoft billionaire Bill Gates and Wall Street tycoon Warren Buffett (he is also a generous contributor to Catholics for Choice). Yet Obama says this isn’t enough, even in a recession.

The Obama supporters are trying to cast this issue as a matter of human rights. They’re right about that, but only in a perverse way. Women’s rights are at stake, but it is not their right to family planning that is being jeopardized, it’s their right to be free from government agents seeking to police their private behavior. It’s also their right to be free from punitive policies that victimize them for wanting to expand their family. And it’s the right of children to be born—a right UNFPA never addresses.

No one can improve on what Pope Benedict XVI said on December 8, 2008: “Poverty is often considered a consequence of demographic change. For this reason, there are international campaigns afoot to reduce birthrates, sometimes using methods

that respect neither the dignity of the woman, nor the right of parents to choose responsibly how many children to have; graver still, these methods often fail to respect even the right to life. The extermination of millions of unborn children, in the name of the fight against poverty, actually constitutes the destruction of the poorest of human beings.”

The pope’s indictment applies perfectly to UNFPA. In the name of women’s rights, it undercuts women. In the name of eradicating poverty, it eradicates the poor. If this wasn’t bad enough, those who support UNFPA often seek to malign Catholicism.

In the mid-1990s, speaking of the Catholic Church, Professor Julian Simon wrote that it is “up against a deep-rooted anti-Catholicism that is triggered by the population issue and distorts the thinking of even the clearest-minded people.” This was quite a statement, especially coming from a Jew. By the way, not long before he passed away, Simon called me to say how much he appreciated the work of the Catholic League. He said that while he did not want to become a member, he wanted to make a \$100 donation. We could certainly use his insights, and his courage, today.

Since Simon wrote those words, nothing has changed. What fires the population crowd is hatred of Catholicism. They hate the Church’s teachings on sexual ethics, preferring a full-blown liberationist agenda where everything goes. They also want to limit the number and type of persons who make their way to the U.S., having grave reservations about the influx of Catholic Latinos.

The pro-abortion forces have been galvanized the likes of which we haven’t seen since the Clinton administration. This does not bode well: If the Freedom of Choice Act that threatens Catholic doctors and hospitals ever makes its way through the Congress, Obama has pledged to sign it. Meanwhile, we can expect to see more executive orders that restrict

abortion overturned, and more abortion-happy judges appointed to the federal bench.

It is all so sick. At the same time that the world's most dangerous terrorists are being bestowed with new rights, innocent children are losing the few they once had. Thus has human rights been stood on its head.

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## **I'M CATHOLIC, STAUNCHLY ANTI-RACIST, AND SUPPORT DAVID DUKE**

*The following is Bill Donohue's tongue-in-cheek reply to Nick Cafardi's serious article, "I'm Catholic, Staunchly Anti-Abortion, and Support Obama." Donohue's article first appeared on [insidecatholic.com](http://insidecatholic.com) and is reprinted here with permission. We wanted to run Cafardi's piece side-by-side but we were unable to do so, and that is because the National Catholic Reporter (where Cafardi's article was printed) never responded to our multiple requests asking permission to reprint it. It seems the dissident Catholic newspaper lacks both orthodoxy and a sense of humor.*

*Cafardi stunned orthodox Catholics, as did another Catholic constitutional scholar before him, Doug Kmiec, when he made public his support for Barack Obama. Cafardi served as Dean of Duquesne Law School and on the bishops' National Review Board. When he aligned himself with Obama, it created a problem at Franciscan University of Steubenville, on whose board of trustees Cafardi served. In short order, he resigned after it became obvious that he had alienated his base of support.*

*What Donohue did, in essence, was to use almost the identical language that Cafardi used to show his support for Obama and flip it around to show how David Duke could be supported. Where Donohue writes of racism, Cafardi wrote of abortion.*

I believe racism is an unspeakable evil, yet I support David Duke, who is pro-racism. I do not support him because he is pro-racism, but in spite of it. Is that a proper choice for a committed Catholic?

As someone who has worked with minorities all his life, I answer with a resounding yes. Despite what some say, the list of what the Catholic Church calls “intrinsically evil acts” does not begin and end with racism. In fact, there are many intrinsically evil acts, and a committed Catholic must consider all of them in deciding how to vote.

Last November, the United States bishops released “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” a 30-page document that provides several examples of intrinsically evil acts: abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem-cell research, torture, racism, and targeting noncombatants in acts of war.

Duke’s support for racist rights has led some to the conclusion that no Catholic can vote for him. That’s a mistake. While I have never swayed in my conviction that racism is an unspeakable evil, I believe that we have lost the racism battle—permanently. A vote for Duke’s opponent does not guarantee the end of racism in America. Not even close.

Let’s suppose the 1964 Civil Rights Act is overturned. What would happen? The matter would simply be kicked back to the states—where it was before 1964. Overturning the 1964 Civil Rights Act would not abolish racism. It would just mean that racism would be legal in some states and illegal in others. The number of racist incidents would remain unchanged as long as people could travel.

Duke’s opponent has promised to appoint “judicially activist”

judges who would presumably vote not to overturn the 1964 Civil Rights Act. But is that sufficient reason for a Catholic to vote for him? To answer that question, let's look at the rest of the Church's list of intrinsically evil acts.

Both Duke and his opponent get failing marks on embryonic stem-cell research, which Catholic teaching opposes. The last time the issue was up for a vote in the Senate, both men voted to ease existing restrictions.

There's another distinction that is often lost in the culture-war rhetoric on racism: There is a difference between being pro-choice [e.g., the right to choose racist practices] and being pro-racism. Duke supports government action that would reduce the number of racist incidents, and has consistently said that "we should do everything we can to avoid unprovoked confrontations that might even lead somebody to consider racist behavior." He favors a "comprehensive approach...where we teach the tenets of civility to our children." And he wants to ensure that therapy is an option for bigots who might otherwise choose to commit a racist act.

What's more, as recent data show, racist incidents drop when the social safety net is strengthened. If Duke's economic program will do more to reduce racism than his opponent's, then is it wrong to conclude that a Duke presidency will also reduce racism? Not at all.

Every faithful Catholic agrees racism is an unspeakable evil that must be minimized, if not eliminated. I can help to achieve that without endorsing the immoral baggage associated with the Party of Duke's opponent. Sustaining the 1964 Civil Rights Act is not the only way to end racism, and a vote for Duke is not somehow un-Catholic.

The U.S. bishops have urged a "different kind of political engagement," one that is "shaped by the moral convictions of well-formed consciences."

I have informed my conscience. I have weighed the facts. I have used my prudential judgment. And I conclude that it is a proper moral choice for this Catholic to support David Duke's candidacy.

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# REMEMBERING A CATHOLIC HEROINE

By: Dr. Richard C. Lukas

Most people had never heard of the tiny, blue-eyed lady until she passed away at ninety-eight years of age in Warsaw on May 12, 2008. Those who were aware of her inspiring story knew that she was a moral giant.

Irena Sendler had been raised a Roman Catholic by a father who taught her to respond to the needs of the poor and oppressed. "When someone is drowning," he said, "extend a helping hand." He practiced what he preached. At the risk of his own life, he treated poor Jews and Poles in the town of Otwock for Typhus when other physicians refused to do so. He died of the disease in 1917.

When the Germans defeated and occupied Poland in 1939, they forbade Polish welfare assistance to Jews who were locked up in ghettos and separated from gentiles. In the Warsaw Ghetto, malnutrition, disease, lack of medical assistance and overcrowding took the grim toll of 5,000 lives every day. There weren't enough gravediggers to keep up with the corpses.

Despite the fact that Poland was the only German-occupied country where aiding a Jew carried the death penalty, Sendler risked her life to help Jews.

She headed the Children's Bureau of Zegota, the code name for the Rada Pomocy Zydom (Council for Aid to Jews), an underground organization that the Poles established exclusively to aid Jews. This group was provided with funds mostly from the Polish government, forced into exile in Great Britain by the German invasion.

Sendler witnessed the special hell the Nazis created for the Jews. "The worst [hell] was the fate of the children, the most vulnerable human beings," she said. Disguised as sanitation workers from the city of Warsaw, she and her close associate, Irena Schultz, entered the Warsaw Ghetto to rescue Jewish children from certain death.

There were four ways to exit the ghetto, all of them dangerous for the children and their rescuers. Two of them included escorting the children through a labyrinth of cellars of buildings on both sides of the ghetto and through the corridors of the Polish Court that straddled the ghetto and Warsaw itself. Another way was to get older children to a tram station near the ghetto, where a member of Zegota drove them to safety. The fourth method was by an ambulance, also driven by a Zegota operative, who took the children out of the ghetto in gunnysacks, body bags and even in coffins. Sometimes, children had to be drugged to stifle their sad cries.

Once outside the ghetto, countless numbers of altruistic Poles helped to make Sendler's operation a success. "I couldn't have done it alone," Irena admitted, observing that it took ten Poles to save one Jewish child. Some people provided temporary safehouses, others more permanent homes for the children. When German suspicions were aroused about a family, Zegota had to move the Jewish child to another home. One Jewish boy had to be moved so often that he tearfully asked Irena, "How many mothers is it possible to have because I'm going to my thirty-second one."

Sendler's incredible operation resulted in saving



approximately 2,500 Jewish children, few of whom even knew Irena's name because she, like other Zegota members, used a nom de guerre. Sendler's was "Jolanta."

Sendler had written the names of her rescued children on narrow pieces of tissue paper. She kept them in a bundle near her bed at night, intending to throw it out the window to a garden below if the Gestapo paid an unexpected visit. But on the night of October 20, 1943, the Gestapo suddenly burst into her apartment before she had the chance to throw the list of names out the window. She managed to throw the list to her friend, who was visiting her that evening. She had the wit to hide the incriminating information in her undergarments.

Imprisoned and beaten at the infamous Pawiak Prison, where hundreds of Poles had died, she refused to reveal anything to the Gestapo. Thanks to a well-placed bribe by Zegota, a Gestapo officer freed Irena on the way to her execution. She went underground, retrieved the list of names, and buried it in a bottle under an apple tree in a friend's garden. She dug up the list after the war and gave it to the Jewish Committee, which took charge of the children.

Because of the hostility of the postwar Communist regime toward any person or group which had been involved in the pro-western and anti-Communist Polish Underground, Sendler's story remained largely unknown until the 1980's and 1990's, when Poland became a democracy. Many belated honors came to her, including a Nobel Peace Prize nomination in 2007.

Irena Sendler deserves an historian and a filmmaker such as Spielberg to tell us her compelling story of sacrifice and courage. We desperately need her and other exemplars of good to teach all of us about goodness. Irena Sendler not only saved Jewish children but also humanity's soul.

*Dr. Richard C. Lukas is a retired professor of history. He has taught at universities in Florida, Ohio and Tennessee and is*

*the author of eight books. Two of his most acclaimed books are: The Forgotten Holocaust and Did the Children Cry?*

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## **TRIBUTE TO POPE PIUS XII**

By: Sister Margherita Marchione

The career of Eugenio Pacelli ended when people were awakened in Rome soon after dawn, Thursday the 9th of October 1958. Pius XII died at 3:51 a.m., in a plain white iron bed, overhung with a white canopy, in his room on the second floor of the Papal villa in Castelgandolfo, his summer residence.

During the hours he lay in state in Castelgandolfo, mourners filled the main square in front of the building as well as roads leading from the countryside.

The Italian Government ordered three days of national mourning in Rome. Not only were Italian flags at half-staff, but all theatres and amusement places were closed.

A motorcade proceeded along the Appian Way. Pius XII's body was taken first to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the Pope's titular church in his capacity as Bishop of Rome. Then it was taken in solemn procession to the Vatican where he laid in state for three days under Michelangelo's gigantic dome in the Basilica of St Peter.

Deep emotion was evident and many shed tears as mourners passed near Pope Pius XII's corpse. People of all races knelt in prayer. Nine solemn funeral Masses were sung in St Peter's Basilica. On the 13th, the doors were closed at noon to prepare for the funeral ceremonies which began at 4 p.m. Diplomats accredited to the Holy See and representatives from

governments around the world were present, as well as his family and Sister Pascalina, who served him for forty years. A final tribute was read and buried with Pius XII: "With his death a great light went out on earth and a new star was lit in heaven."

Fifty years later, in spite of five decades of misinformation and calumny, Catholics throughout the world continue to venerate Pius XII whose efforts during World War II saved thousands of Jews from the Holocaust.

Pius XII was not a "silent pope." He explicitly condemned the "wickedness of Hitler" citing Hitler by name, and spoke out about the "fundamental rights of Jews." The wisdom of his words and actions is supported by the evidence. In his testimony at the Adolf Eichmann Nazi War Crime Trials, Jewish scholar Jeno Levai stated: "Pius XII—the one person who did more than anyone else to halt the dreadful crime and alleviate its consequences—is today made the scapegoat for the failures of others."

Pope Pius XII's peace efforts, his denunciation of Nazism and his defense of the Jewish people have been clearly documented. Albert Einstein concluded in *Timemagazine* (December 23, 1940): "Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing the truth." Countless expressions of gratitude, on the part of Jewish chaplains and Holocaust survivors, give witness to the assistance and compassion of the Pope for the Jews before, during and after the Holocaust.

Rabbi David Dalin states that "to deny the legitimacy of their collective gratitude to Pius XII is tantamount to denying their memory and experience of the Holocaust itself, as well as to denying the credibility of their personal testimony and judgment about the Pope's role in rescuing hundreds of thousands of Jews from certain death at the hands of the Nazis."

Personally and through his representatives, Pius XII employed all the means at his disposal to save Jews and other refugees during World War II. As a moral leader and a diplomat forced to limit his words, he privately took action and, despite insurmountable obstacles, saved hundreds of thousands of Jews from the gas chambers. Broadcasting in German in April 1943, Vatican Radio protested a long list of Nazi horrors, including "an unprecedented enslavement of human freedom, the deportation of thousands for forced labor, and the killing of innocent and guilty alike."

Throughout World War II, Pius XII so provoked the Nazis that they called him "a mouthpiece of the Jewish war criminals." Jewish historian and Holocaust survivor, Michael Tagliacozzo, wrote a letter to the daily newspaper *Davar* (Tel Aviv, April 23, 1985) which states: "Little known is the precious help of the Holy See. On the recommendation of Pius XII the religious of every order did their best to save Jews."

All experts who witnessed that era agree that if Pius XII had stridently attacked the Nazi leaders, more lives would have been lost. Fifty years later, I interviewed Carlo Sestieri, a Jewish survivor, who was hidden in the Vatican. In a letter to me he suggested that "only the Jews who were persecuted understand why the Holy Father could not publicly denounce the Nazi-Fascist government. Without doubt—he stated—it helped avoid worse disasters."

Pius XII's virtuous life speaks for itself. On December 13, 1954, a picture story entitled "Years of a Great Pope," appeared in *Life* magazine. The author states that Pius XII was deserving of the title "Great Pope" because he sought "peace for the world and the spirit" during World War II.

He was truly a "Great Pope," and it is high time everyone gave him his due.

*Sister Margherita Marchione is the author of many books and*

*articles on Pope Pius XII. She is one of the world's foremost authorities on the subject.*

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# IN DEFENSE OF CATHOLIC SEXUAL ETHICS

*By: Bill Donohue*

In the mid-1990s, Father Andrew Greeley released a book wherein he argued that “Catholics have sex more often than do other Americans, they are more playful in their sexual relationships, and they seem to enjoy their sexual experiences more.” Was he right? Who knows? One thing is for sure: at least he challenged the conventional wisdom that Catholics are plagued with sexual hang-ups. It is also worth noting that if Catholics are so guilt-ridden about sex, it needs to be explained why they have such large families vis-à-vis the adherents of most other religions.

The time has long past when Catholics should be defensive about Catholic sexual ethics. After all, it is not those of us who put a premium on restraint who are ruining their lives with psychological and physiological problems of a mountainous sort—it is those who have chosen to do the opposite and abandon restraint altogether. Let me share with you an anecdote on this subject.

The last group debate of “Firing Line” that Bill Buckley did was on the merits of the ACLU. Held at Bard College several years ago, I was one of the participants on Bill’s side. The upstate New York college has a reputation for being cutting-edge radical, so it was not surprising that when ACLU president Nadine Strossen attacked me for being against sex

education, the earrings-in-the-nose crowd smirked. But their smile didn't last long: I quickly informed them that I was not unequivocally opposed to sex education (there are responsible curricula available), and then I hit them with a question that literally wiped the smile off their faces. I asked them why, if restraint is so bad, do they spend so much time going to funerals. There wasn't a peep.

Sexual license—the very opposite of what the Catholic Church teaches—kills. It kills psychologically, socially, spiritually and physically. For instance, the reason why legions of heterosexuals and heterosexuals wind up with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) is because they don't value restraint. As a result, some die young. Which explains the funerals.

Of all the killer STDs, none is worse than AIDS. But like all other STDs, it is (with some exceptions) behaviorally induced; promiscuous drug use, especially when combined with dirty needles, and reckless sex, straight or gay, accounts for most of the AIDS cases. It follows that because the disease is behaviorally induced, it is behaviorally preventable. Those who don't take drugs are not going to get AIDS. Those who don't engage in dangerous sex acts, and those who don't sleep around, are not going to get AIDS. But those who rebel against an ethos of sexual reticence are not so lucky—they are precisely the ones who suffer. It really isn't too hard to figure out.

The reason we have AIDS, and other STDs, is because we have made restraint a dirty word. So instead of telling people to slam on their brakes, we counsel research, technology and education. Never mind that all three have proven to be a monumental failure, and that only a return to Catholic sexual ethics will save us from ourselves, our society appears to have learned absolutely nothing.

In 2006, the U.S. spent an average of \$48 per diabetes patient

on research. We spent \$144 for those suffering from Alzheimer's and \$154 for those suffering from Parkinson's. For AIDS patients, we spent \$3,084. And what are we told is the answer to AIDS? More research. The tragedy is that those with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's did nothing voluntarily to cause their malady.

Technology, in the form of condoms, pills and the like, are also supposed to save us. But they never do, and no one has demonstrated this better than Edward C. Green, director of the AIDS Prevention Research Project at the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies.

In a piece he recently co-authored in *First Things*, Green concluded that "In every African country in which HIV infections have declined, this decline has been associated with a decrease in the proportion of men and women reporting more than one sex partner over the course of a year—which is exactly what fidelity programs promote." He adds, "The other behavior that has often been associated with a decline in HIV prevalence is a decrease in premarital sex among young people." As for the utility of condoms reducing HIV/AIDS, he properly calls it a "myth."

In other words, in countries like Uganda, which have adopted Catholic sexual ethics, AIDS is declining. In the wealthy and well-educated countries in southern Africa, where condoms are promoted and restraint is shunned, AIDS is taking a terrible toll. Which raises the question: Why are the educated so dumb?

In 1987, six years after AIDS was discovered, gay journalist Randy Shilts wrote a provocative and startling honest book about the gay lifestyle. He said that the two segments of the homosexual community who refused to change their behavior were the most educated and those who frequented the bathhouses. The latter was easy to understand—it was in the bathhouses where lethal sex practices occurred. But the well educated? Shilts said it was their sense of invincibility that led them not to

change.

The learned ones still don't get it. Thanks to a recent national study of STDs among young girls, we know that approximately 20 percent of white teenage girls and 50 percent of African-American teenage girls are infected with at least one of four STDs. The situation is so sick that in Leflore County, Mississippi, health officials are offering 9-year-olds vaccines for the most common STD, the human papillomavirus.

In response to this study, Chicago talk-radio host Laura Berman spoke for many when she said, "we as a country have allowed our school system to limit sex education in the classroom." Really? Never before have more boys and girls learned at such a young age the entire panoply of the sexual experience, including practices that are as dangerous as they are disgusting. Never before have more young people been indoctrinated with the most "value-free" propaganda about the wonders of condoms, pills and other devices. And yet the rates of STDs continue to skyrocket.

The entire failure of "progressive" sex education started in Sweden in the 1950s, and it was instituted at a time when illegitimacy rates were declining; they've been cresting ever since. In short, when adolescents knew the least about sex, they engaged the least in it. Now that they've all become sexual Einsteins, they're burdened with unwanted pregnancies, abortions and diseases. Does this mean that the answer is to keep kids ignorant? No. It means that sex education programs must stress the 3 "R's"—responsibility, respect and restraint; they should also stress that the proper context is the institution of marriage.

If you really want to see stupidity at work, consider New York City. In 2006, the government gave away 17 million free condoms. The result? The rate of syphilis went through the roof (in that same year, the rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis nationwide broke all previous records). So what did



New York City do last year? It more than redoubled its efforts: it distributed 36 million free condoms. By the way, it also embarked on a new advertising campaign, the theme of which is "Get Some."

The biggest losers in this totally mindless sex-crazed crusade are young women. Think about it. What segment of society has *always* been the most irresponsible—in any society? Young men. They account for more violence and predatory behavior than other demographic group. And who are their sexual victims? Young women. So when government workers are telling guys on the street corner to "Get Some," we shouldn't be surprised if they do just that. Without their trusty condoms, it needs to be said.

And why, if condoms are so available, do matters not improve? Several years ago I debated a health official on the "Today Show" about this issue. He made the point that laboratory studies show that if used properly, condoms can save lives and stop unwanted pregnancies. He had no response when I told him that the real laboratory was the back seat of a Chevy. He looked positively dumbfounded when I said that the Centers for Disease Control says there are about 15 steps that must be taken for condoms to work, and that the average teenage boy doesn't have enough discipline to do his homework on time—never mind faithfully execute the 15 steps.

So what is the answer? We didn't get kids to stop smoking by simply preaching abstinence in the classroom. We got Hollywood to stop glorifying smoking. When I was growing up, TV talk-show hosts and their guests smoked on the air, and there was hardly a detective or a bad guy in a drama who didn't light up as well. Now almost no one is seen smoking. If Hollywood exercised half as much restraint in dealing with sexuality—from TV commercials to the big screen—we wouldn't be drowning our kids in this sexual swampland.

The only way to curtail the negative consequences of

promiscuity is to deal with sexuality the way we've dealt with smoking, and that means a full-court press involving every segment of society. Right now we are sexually engineering young people from K-12, using sexual situations in advertisements, television, newspapers, magazines and movies to lure them. Indeed, we have eroticized the culture to such an extent that it would be mind-boggling if we didn't suffer from a surfeit of sexually driven problems.

Hollywood and Madison Avenue, of course, are not likely to cooperate. The cultural and corporate mavens are infinitely more concerned about the effects of second-hand smoke and trans fats than they are illegitimacy, abortion and disease. As long as the sex is consensual, they preach, that's all that matters. But bribery, the drug market, prostitution and dueling are all consensual acts, yet we outlaw them all, never mind fail to give our blessings to them. In other words, consent is not an absolute moral good.

In short, Catholic sexual ethics is what works. What doesn't work is the rejection of it. Because the evidence is so clear that the current approach—the one that stresses research, technology and education—has done nothing but increase sexual problems of all sorts, it is incumbent on Catholics to stand up and proudly promote Catholic teachings on this subject.

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## NEW FILM EXPOSES SUPPRESSION OF SPEECH

*Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed," Motive Entertainment.  
Opens nationwide on April 18.*

A new documentary hosted by Ben Stein, "Expelled: No

Intelligence Allowed," examines whether academic freedom and freedom of speech are being suppressed at our nation's universities and bastions of "big science." The film argues that those who broach the subject of intelligent design often invoke the wrath of their colleagues and superiors. In many cases, they are silenced or even drummed out of their positions.

Such strong reactions on the part of evolutionists to the suggestion that mankind is the work of a Creator is not unexpected. Many also responded harshly on July 7, 2005 when Christoph Cardinal Schonborn, the Archbishop of Vienna and member of the Congregation for Catholic Education, published an op-ed piece in the *New York Times*. His aim was to clear up lingering confusion about Pope John Paul II's stance on evolution. The late pontiff was, and still is, widely quoted as calling evolution "more than just a hypothesis." Schonborn acknowledged this statement, but also reminded readers that His Holiness also said, "All the observations concerning the development of life lead to a similar conclusion. The evolution of living beings, of which science seeks to determine the stages and to discern the mechanism, presents an internal finality which arouses admiration. This finality which directs beings in a direction for which they are not responsible or in charge, obliges one to suppose a Mind which is its inventor, its creator."

This essay came shortly after newly installed Pope Benedict XVI declared, "We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God." No one with any familiarity with Catholic teaching should have been surprised by the idea that the Church teaches God is the source of all life. As the cardinal also pointed out, the Catechism explicitly states, "We believe that God created the world according to his wisdom. It is not the product of any necessity whatever, nor of blind fate or chance." The International Theological Commission was even more

straightforward in 2004 (under the leadership of then-Cardinal Ratzinger), when it released a statement reading: “An unguided evolutionary process—one that falls outside the bounds of divine providence—simply cannot exist.”

Yet the cardinal’s piece provoked quite a troubling reaction. What was troubling were the almost hysterical cries from those—both inside and outside of Catholic circles—who labeled the cardinal’s take as backward or even anti-science. Georgetown University theologian John F. Haught, writing in *Commonweal*, declared Schonborn’s essay to be “a setback in the dialogue of religion and science.” British astrophysicist Sir Martin Rees, a member of the Pontifical Academy of Science, looked for the academy to distance itself from the cardinal’s piece. Liberal critic Andrew Sullivan charged, “And so we return to the 19th century.” Additionally, several leading Catholic scientists appealed to the pope to clarify the cardinal’s words.

Cardinal Schonborn clarified his own (rather clear) words a few months later, saying. “I see no difficulty in joining belief in the Creator with the theory of evolution, but under the prerequisite that the borders of scientific theory are maintained.” This seemed to quell some of the loudest protestors, but the question remained: Why did His Eminence’s article cause such a fuss? Why were his words met with such strong resistance, and in some cases, loathing?

The producers of “Expelled” wouldn’t be surprised at the uproar over Cardinal Schonborn’s essay. The film presents viewers with a number of well-credentialed scholars and scientists who were driven out of their offices or universities for similarly expressing hesitation about the atheistic neo-Darwinian theory of evolution that is so prevalent in education.

Host Ben Stein is a man of many talents—he’s known as much for comedic roles in films as for his days as a White House lawyer

and speechwriter. Stein sets the tone for the project: entertaining, but with a strong foundation of scholarship. The film kicks off with an address by Stein to an audience of students. Speaking of the importance of freedom, Stein says he was disturbed to learn that academic freedom is far from guaranteed at many of our nation's most prestigious campuses. As he continues that it is frightening how worthy professors have been silenced by those Darwinian advocates who want to suppress other ideas, viewers may find the interspersed images of West Germany and the Berlin Wall more than excessive. However, as the filmmakers unleash tale after tale of woe met by earnest men and woman who have dared to question the status quo, it becomes clear that the metaphor—while heavy handed—is apt.

Many of those interviewed in the film have histories of being drummed out of their careers after making even the slightest suggestion that the theory of intelligent design should be taken seriously. The case of Richard Sternberg, who was interviewed for the film, may be the most widely known due to media coverage that surrounded his story. Sternberg, a prominent researcher at the National Museum of Natural History (a division of the Smithsonian), served as managing editor of the journal *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*. When Sternberg published a peer-reviewed article by a proponent of intelligent design, he quickly met the wrath of his colleagues and superiors. A Catholic, he even was warned that Christians should keep their faith quiet and was eventually banned from his office.

Skeptics would naturally suspect that something else must have happened to warrant Sternberg's dismissal. After all, it's the job of a publisher to run peer-reviewed articles in scholarly journals—they don't get fired merely because some articles are more controversial than others. But as "Expelled" shows, Sternberg's is no isolated case. Many others have dared to bring up the subject of intelligent design, only to be labeled

Creationists and find themselves pushed to the fringes of the academic community. Even at schools like Baylor in Texas, the world's largest Baptist university, professors have found themselves mocked and penalized for treating intelligent design as a theory worthy of study.

The problem of suppression of views that counter Darwinism, however, isn't limited to higher education and advanced scientific think tanks. A number of Darwin's advocates are working hard to ensure that American kids are not presented with any alternatives to their theory in the classroom. One such advocate interviewed is Eugenie Scott, head of the National Center for Science Education (NCSE). The NCSE, an activist group, opposes any attempts to introduce the theory of intelligent design to students in public schools. They follow cases where parents and school boards express an interest in broadening the scope of the scientific materials with which students are presented. When so-called "attacks on evolution education" pop up in communities across the country, the NCSE comes in with offers of help for like-minded locals. This help can include talking points and legal assistance should they wish to pursue litigation. Scott defends the practice, noting for good measure that Catholics support evolution. (This is exactly the sort of thinking Cardinal Schonborn tried to clear up.)

Not every story of supposedly persecuted scholars comes across as proof of an anti-intelligent design cabal operating in the scientific community. An Iowa State professor was denied tenure after his views became known, but the film presents no proof to counter the university's claim that he simply did not meet the qualifications they seek in those to whom tenure is granted. However, taken as a whole, it does seem apparent that there is a strong bias against those whose views differ from the strictly Darwinian.

Most compelling are the attitudes shown by the anti-intelligent design advocates in the film. Richard Dawkins,

well known British atheist and biologist (he has written books such as *The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design* and *The God Delusion*) seems barely able to contain his anger as Stein peppers him with questions about the origins of life. Though Dawkins is unable to explain to his interviewer how, exactly, life started, he's sure it didn't start with a god. A gleeful Stein enjoys gently prodding Dawkins, tripping his subject up and leaving him sputtering for answers. Stein repeatedly questions him on his atheism. Is Dawkins an atheist when it comes to the Muslim god? To the Hindu gods? To the God of the Old Testament? Dawkins, routinely protesting that he doesn't believe in any god, can't figure out why Stein needles him so incessantly. The answer appears to be that Stein just likes to have a good time, and needling Dawkins is a hoot.

Stein's occasional boyish jocularly serves as a welcome break among some of the more horrifying subject matter. To underscore the results that can arise when we reject the idea of man as a unique creation of God, the film highlights the eugenics movement, and takes viewers on a tour of the German prisons where Nazi doctors performed their cruel experiments on humans they saw as being of lesser races. Stein is careful to clarify that he isn't charging belief in Darwinism inevitably leads to such ends, but that Darwinian theory has been used to justify appalling acts.

According to spokesmen for the film, when Stein was first approached for this project, he accepted because he loathes any attempts to suppress speech. He did, however, express his feelings that intelligent design is a load of nonsense. But making the film influenced his view. Stein's change in attitude is evident in the contrast in the tone he takes with different interview subjects. The skeptical questioner yields to a man convinced that the theory of Darwinian evolution has huge gaps that are being ignored.

Overall, "Expelled" makes a compelling case for the argument

that higher education and “big science” are no bastions of academic freedom. What the typical viewer can do to change things is left unstated. But checking out this thoroughly enjoyable documentary is a good start.

*Kiera McCaffrey is the Catholic League's director of communications.*

For more information, visit [www.GetExpelled.com](http://www.GetExpelled.com).

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## THE POLITICAL POWER OF CATHOLICS: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

*Onward, Christian Soldiers: The Growing Political Power of Catholics and Evangelicals in the United States*, Simon & Schuster, March 11, 2008

There have many books about the so-called Religious Right in American politics. What makes *Onward, Christian Soldiers* distinctive is my exploration of its Catholic dimension. What is usually treated as exclusively an Evangelical movement is closely intertwined with the travails of the post-Vatican II era in the United States. I look not only at the Catholic contribution to the beginning of the movement in the 70s but also the specifically Catholic controversies that arose along the way involving figures like Joseph Cardinal Bernadin, Gov. Mario Cuomo, Sen. John Kerry, Father Robert Drinan, S. J., Father Frank Pavone, Archbishop Raymond Burke, and, of course, John Cardinal O'Connor.

Catholics don't consider themselves part of the Religious



Right. When I give lectures, I often ask Catholic audiences a series of questions. First, I usually ask, "Raise your hand if you consider yourself a social conservative." I remind them that a social conservative is someone who votes primarily on issues such as abortion, the defense of marriage and the family, opposition to euthanasia, and the need for traditional values in education. Most of the Catholics I talk to raise their hands.

Then I ask how many consider themselves religious conservatives. "Are your socially conservative attitudes rooted in your Catholic faith?" Again, most will raise their hands. But then I ask, "How many of you consider yourselves members of the political movement known as the Religious Right?" The number of raised hands drops at least to half, sometimes there are only a few still raised.

Even those Catholics whose voting behaviors, and the reasons for it, are identical to their Evangelical counterparts resist being stuck with the Religious Right label. One of the stories I tell in *Onward, Christian Soldiers* is how Catholics were integral to the dramatic increase of religious conservative influence in American politics. I also explain why Catholics fail to recognize that fact.

Catholics still haven't quite become comfortable with Evangelical piety, as evinced recently in the weak Catholic response to the candidacy of former Baptist minister, Gov. Mike Huckabee.

More importantly, at the very moment Evangelical leaders were forming groups like the Moral Majority, the Catholic bishops were marching to the political left, using the then newly-created United States Catholic Conference as their political mouthpiece. The late 70s and early 80s began the migration of Catholics from the Democratic to the Republican Party. Alienated by the McGovern revolution, put off by the feminist agenda of the Carter administration, and attracted to the traditional patriotism of Ronald Reagan, Catholics started

becoming loyal Republicans at the very moment their bishops ramped up their efforts to mobilize them for "social justice."

While the effect of the Reagan presidency was to legitimize and empower Evangelical leaders like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, the effect on Catholics was to leave them caught between their newly-discovered regard for the Republican Reagan and their respect for the authority of their bishops. These same bishops made it clear that Reagan's domestic and foreign policies were at odds with Catholic social teaching as interpreted by their Conference. The problem for the bishops in their constant diatribe toward Reagan was the looming presence of the new pope, John Paul II, who obviously respected Reagan in spite of his low esteem among American bishops.

Although John Paul II helped to bolster the regard for Reagan among Catholics, the bishops' message had its influence. With their pastoral letters, such as "Economic Justice for All" (1982) the bishops made many Catholics who voted for Reagan wonder if they should return to the Democratic Party of their parents and grandparents. They hoped the Democrats would eventually produce leaders who, like Reagan, wanted to protect unborn life, defend women who wanted traditional family roles, and raise the banner of patriotism and American exceptionalism. Those Catholics, often called "Reagan Democrats," are still waiting. Some have waited so long they have grown comfortable with calling themselves "Republicans," even though they draw the line at being called members of the Religious Right.

Many of the Catholics who voted for Reagan over Carter and Mondale, George H.W. Bush over Dukakis, and George W. Bush over Gore and Kerry, were motivated by their religious conviction—life, family, and traditional values—which they saw best represented by the GOP and its candidates. Both their voting behavior and the convictions behind them made many of these Republican Catholics part of the religious conservative

movement that made the GOP the dominant party between 1980 and the present. These Catholics were part of the Religious Right, whether they liked it or not.

It came as no surprise to me to be told by Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Ralph Reed, and Don Wildmon that Catholics made up as much as 30% of the membership in their organizations. Catholics had nowhere else to go if they wanted to be politically engaged outside of a political party. Those who were specifically motivated by the pro-life issue were convinced Evangelicals were doing more to overturn *Roe v. Wade* than their own bishops.

In *Onward, Christian Soldiers*, I document the surprising role of Catholics in the creation of the religious conservative movement. Paul Weyrich, a member of the Melkite Greek Orthodox Church, gave Jerry Falwell the idea for organizing the Moral Majority, as well as the name itself. The anti-ERA organizing effort of Phyllis Schlafly, a Catholic attorney from St. Louis, was the first time religious activists were brought together to oppose the liberalizing trends of the 70s. Weyrich and Schlafly are, without any exaggeration, the godparents of the Religious Right.

Another important Catholic figure in the founding of the Religious Right is Dr. Jack Willke, the first president of National Right to Life (NRTL). It was Catholics like Dr. Willke who made the abortion issue important for Evangelicals. Dr. Willke explained to me that it was predominately Catholics who participated in the early days of the pro-life movement. It was the Catholic involvement among religious conservatives in the late 70s and early 80s that put abortion to the forefront. Evangelicals were originally motivated to get organized by an IRS threat, during the Carter administration, to strip private Christian schools of their not-for-profit status for reasons of racial discrimination. When critics of the Religious Right call it a one-issue movement they are missing the broader concerns, all centered around the

protection of the Christian family, that led to the frustrations creating the mobilization of pastors across the country, not just in the South.

The pivotal role of Catholics in the abortion fight during the early 70s was also the result of the pro-life office of the United States Catholic Conference led by Monsignor James McHugh. McHugh had helped organize National Right to Life under the auspices of the bishops. Within a few years the bishops allowed the lay leaders of NRTL to take the organization under lay control. At the same time, the bishops were moving away from their focus on abortion—they were adopting the social teaching of the “seamless garment,” in which abortion became one issue among others.

The McGovern revolution occurred in 1972, and by 1976 it was firmly ensconced not only in the Democratic Party but in the United States Catholic Conference. The political left in the Catholic Church has remained at the head of most significant Catholic institutions. They have attempted on several occasions to generate a Religious Left to offset the influence of the Religious Right, but to little effect. There is little or no religious vitality to support the Religious Left—religious groups who have embraced liberal political causes have been in decline for decades.

In addition, the Religious Left has not challenged the Democratic Party in the same way the Christian Coalition and the Moral Majority impacted the GOP. Religious Left leaders have simply provided religious justification for the feminist and homosexual activism in the Democratic Party, while the Republican Party was forced to embrace a pro-life, family values platform considered extreme by its traditional mainstream Protestant leadership.

As I predict in the last chapter of *Onward, Christian Soldiers*, the Democratic Party will do its best to appear more faith-friendly in time for the 2008 election, a challenge for

which Sen. Barack Obama seems custom made. The Republican Party has already dodged the bullet of a Rudy Giuliani nomination which would have destroyed the religious conservative coalition, but there will always be pressures within the GOP to limit the influence of the pro-life Catholics and Evangelicals, as I found out myself as chair of Catholic outreach in the 2000 and 2004 Bush campaigns.

The Religious Right has been pronounced “dead” many times, 1992, 1998, and, most recently, 2006. What these eager prognosticators refuse to recognize is that the vitality of American religion, especially among Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and orthodox Catholics, continues to fuel the movement. Take away the growth of these Christian groups and the Religious Right would come to an end. As long as there is growth among these groups who believe the Scriptures and the Christian tradition that teaches an objective truth about morality and society, there will be people of faith in politics who oppose the use of law and government to drive religious influence out of American culture.

*Deal Hudson is the president of the Morley Institute and the former editor-in-chief of Crisis Magazine. He runs a Catholic website and is a Catholic activist.*

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## **BILL DONOHUE INTERVIEWS DINESH D’SOUZA**

*Dinesh D’Souza, a member of the Catholic League’s board of advisors, is the author of the recently published book, What’s So Great About Christianity. Bill Donohue spoke to him by phone about his new book. Here is an excerpt of their*

*conversation:*

**Bill:** You talk about the resurgence of atheism at the same time that you note the global triumph of Christianity. How do you account for this kind of bipolar response?

**Dinesh:** We have two trends that on the surface seem to be contradictory. One is the rise of atheism, and there's certainly a rising militancy of atheism, and on the other hand, the sort of triumph of religion, and specifically Christianity, worldwide. Many people think that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, but in reality it's Christianity. Islam is growing mainly through reproduction or through Muslims having large families. Christianity is growing both through reproduction and through conversion.

I see the militancy of the new atheism as a sort of a backlash against the realization that religion isn't going away and there's a sort of almost explicit atheist campaign now to say, "Okay, we can't do much about the current generation, let's go after the minds of the younger generation through the schools and through the universities. So we lost this round but maybe we can do better in the future."

**Bill:** To one extent, 9-11 triggers in one's mind what is going on with the radicalization of Islam, yet so much of militant atheism comes down to thrashing the Catholic Church on matters having nothing to do with Islam and terrorism, but sexuality. Could you comment on that?

**Dinesh:** Yes, I think that on first glance, it seems strange that people in the West who are liberal or secular in their values would see Christianity as a bigger threat than Islam. The reason this is odd is because Christianity has a lot to do with forming the central institutions and values of the West, including values secular people cherish. In fact, one of the themes of my book is to show how institutions like democracy, even science, certainly human rights, the concept of just war,

the idea of compassion, which has become such a powerful value in our culture—these ideas are rooted in Christianity.

**Bill:** Ahmadinejad was at Columbia University recently and he was cheered by a certain segment of the student population. The only time they booed him was when he said that they didn't have any homosexuals in Iran. So the sexuality aspect of this really seems to be more troublesome to some people than the threat of terror.

**Dinesh:** Well, here you're putting your finger on something very critical and that is that Islam is viewed as a threat, you may say over there, but Christianity is viewed as a threat right here. In other words, Islam may want to impose the burqa and the rest of it on people in Afghanistan and in Iran, but Christianity is seen as interfering with the moral freedom of people here in the West, in other words, in Paris, in Boston, in San Francisco and so on. But this is why Christianity is the enemy—it's not even so much a theological enemy—it's a moral enemy. People don't object to the Trinity or transubstantiation, as so much as what they object to is the Ten Commandments, the sort of moral code. This is very important because very rarely is the objection to Christianity explicitly stated in that way.

What's the motive for atheism? Why are people attracted to it? Think about it his way: I don't believe in unicorns but I don't go around writing books about them. Why are guys like Hitchens on a secular crusade against Christianity and against religion? I think that their objection ultimately isn't so much rational as it is a kind of objection that says that the idea of God puts moral judgment on the world. What the atheists want to do is get rid of moral judgment by getting rid of the judge.

**Bill:** In your book you made a very insightful comment about the effect of Darwin on today's militant atheists. How do these people account for the very existence of morality?

**Dinesh:** Morality is a massive problem for Metaphysical Darwinism, and by Metaphysical Darwinism I mean the people who believe that evolution is not simply a theory of how life from A gave rise to life from B, but rather it is a comprehensive key that is the clue to unlocking how the entire universe, and certainly all of life, functions. The problem for the Darwinians is simply this: evolution is based fundamentally on survival, reproduction, and self-interest. As Kant noted a long time ago, it's the very definition of morality to check self-interest. "I would like to do this but the little voice says no," or "I'm inclined to do that but the commandment says no," so the essence of morality is ultimately to militate against self-interest. Now, why would such a quality evolve? The Darwinians have been now for several decades beating their heads to the ground to try to find an adequate evolutionary account for morality. They essentially have to show that what seems to be unselfish, what seems to operate against self-interest is actually a disguised form of self-interest that is simply not obvious to us. So for example, a mother who jumps into the car to save her son is actually just trying to perpetuate her own genes. She may not be aware of that but that's the reason she's doing it. That's the evolutionary fraud that's pushing her in that direction.

The evolutionists have had modest success in trying to explain why people who share the same genes might act for the welfare for each other. But, of course, as I get up to give my seat to somebody on a bus, I don't know that person. There's no reason to believe that they would ever help me. Or if I donate blood, or if I am a soldier giving my life for my country. Here these are sacrifices of strangers, or Mother Teresa, or Maximillian Kolbe, and so on. You can go on and on down the list as a whole domain of human morality that cannot be reduced to simply, "I'm just doing it because this person is, in some sense, related to me."

**Bill:** It's funny you mention that, because the fixation on



Mother Teresa that Christopher Hitchens has lies to some extent with the fact that he thinks that the state ought to salvage the poor. He doesn't accept the idea of altruism and so he looks at this little Albanian nun as almost a threat to everything that he stands for.

**Dinesh:** I think that is part of it but there's another part of it that is much deeper than that, and it's the following: Mother Teresa, at one point, was hugging a leper, at which point someone said to her, "I wouldn't do that for all the money in the world." And she replied, "I wouldn't either, I'm doing it for the love of Christ." Now what this suggests is that Mother Teresa's motivation goes way beyond secular explanation. Ultimately a certain level of human goodness requires transcendent motivation. This is what gets Hitchens. They can say, "Obviously one does not have to be a believer to do good." And that's true. But the question is, "Does the kind of life that Mother Teresa represented, can that occur with a purely secular outlook? What would be its rationale? Why would you act that way if you didn't have her motive?" I think this is what makes Mother Teresa a supreme example of human goodness. That's why it's so important for the atheists to pull her down.

**Bill:** You mention also in your book about Darwin, how he lost his faith at least in part because he rejected Christianity's concept of eternal damnation. I can't help but think there is almost an infantile rejection of authority that we are working with here, or a kind of narcissism. The concept of do's and don'ts, and eternal damnations, and the Ten Command-ments—this is positively threatening to these people, and particularly when it gets into the realm of sexuality.

**Dinesh:** Yes, I think we're seeing a new phenomenon that's occurred in the West really since World War II. This is the idea that the only guide for how I should act is my inner self, an inner self in pursuit of unceasing self-fulfillment and self-expression. My point is that what happened in the

1960s was that this morality went mainstream. And so we began to see, if you will, not only an attack on traditional morality as sort of constraining this quest for self-fulfillment, but a sort of new morality that adopts self-fulfillment itself as a moral ideal and sort of turned against traditional morality as being nothing more than a disguised form of hypocrisy. This is why whenever people espouse moral values and fall short of them, there's almost a gleeful howl that goes through the culture: "Look, you espouse A but you do B." And so hypocrisy has now become our cardinal virtue. And why? Because in this code of self-fulfillment, the only value is be true to yourself, and to be true to yourself means, "Don't say one thing and do another." In a sense, you may say that the standard is lowered to bring it into line with human desire.

**Bill:** Atheists talk about how religion poisons everything, yet when atheism is embraced by the nation-state—we've seen this in the twentieth century with Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao—it always winds up with blood. How can they logically even begin to say that the secular crusade embraced by these totalitarians in the twentieth century is somehow triggered by some religious impulse?

**Dinesh:** Well, this is where the atheists are on very weak ground. They try to show that religion is the source of most of the mass murders and conflict in history, but the reality, of course, is that the atheist regimes are. And so people like Dawkins and Hitchens do backwards somersaults to try to show that totalitarianism, even if it is explicitly secular, arises out of a mindset that is very similar to that of religion. And so, for example, their extremely convoluted efforts to show that communism was just another name for a certain kind of religion. So the idea here is to blame religion not only for the crimes of religious people but also for the crimes of atheists.

**Bill:** It's been great talking to you. Congratulations on your

splendid book.

**Dinesh:** Thanks, Bill.

*Dinesh D'Souza's What's So Great About Christianity is published by Regnery.*

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## AN ANTI-CATHOLIC LAW'S TROUBLING LEGACY

As they went to the polls on November 7, 1922—85 years ago this month—the voters of Oregon were asked to approve an amendment to the state's education laws that read in part:

*"...Any parent, guardian or other person in the state of Oregon, having control or charge or custody of a child under the age of 16 years and of the age of 8 years or over at the commencement of a term of public school of the district in which said child resides, who should fail or neglect or refuse to send such child to a public school for the period of time a public school shall be held during the current year in said district shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and each day's failure to send such a child to a public school shall constitute a separate offense..."*

Translation: if you send your child to a private school instead of a public one, you face a fine, imprisonment, or both.

Nowhere in that law was the word "Catholic" mentioned, but the goal was clear: to shut down all Catholic schools and to steer their students into public schools, where threatening "papist" views could be safely blanching from the youngsters' minds.

The law was championed by the Ku Klux Klan and other zealous nativists who believed that Catholic immigrants threatened to bring bolshevism to America after World War I. Grand Dragon Fred Gifford, a chief advocate of the school statute, believed that "the American public school, non-partisan, non-sectarian, efficient, [and] democratic," was "for all the children of all the people." (By "non-sectarian," he meant "non-denominational Christian;" public schools, though drenched in religion at the time, were of a "non-sectarian" type.) Gifford went so far as to say that immigrants ("mongrel hordes") "must be Americanized. Failing that, deportation is the only remedy."

Anti-Catholic nativists believed that Catholics could overthrow the government at a moment's notice, turning Americans into knaves of the Roman pope. They believed that only by attending a government-controlled school could children learn to be true Americans, and become properly grounded in American history and the principles of liberty.

The campaign for the Oregon law included a mix of hysteria and grand theater. An ages-old anti-Catholic device—lectures by an "escaped nun"—was trotted out. "Sister Lucretia" was taken around the state, sometimes speaking in public schools themselves, to denounce Catholicism and stir up audiences against the Roman church.

An anti-Catholic, pro-public school booklet entitled *The Old Cedar School* was circulated as well. This allegorical tale included the story of a farmer's son who converts to Catholicism and sends his children to the "Academy of St. Gregory's Holy Toe Nail," where they study "histomorphology, the Petrine Supremacy, Transubstantiation, and...the beatification of Saint Caviar."

The story isn't content to merely ridicule Catholics and what they believe. It paints a picture of a Catholic bishop who actually burns down a public school.

The message was hardly subtle—Catholics and their schools were not just threats to the public schools, but a mere matchstick away from destroying them entirely. It was no wonder, then, that the King Kleagle of the Pacific Klan declared that the battle for the Oregon School Law was about “the ultimate perpetuation or destruction of free institutions, based upon the perpetuation or destruction of the public schools.”

In short, if you sent your kids to private schools, particularly Catholic ones, you were against public schools and against what America stood for.

Ironically, though the nativists feared bolshevism, their insistence on one government-controlled school system actually smacked of the very communism that they sought to avoid, a point made by Archbishop Michael J. Curley of Baltimore. “The whole trend of such legislation,” wrote Curley, “is state socialism, setting up an omnipotent state...on the principles of Karl Marx.”

Catholic defenders felt compelled to point out the obvious—that Catholic schools were absolutely American, that English was the language spoken in the schools, and that even their mottos were American (“For God and country”).

These arguments failed to persuade. Oregonians passed the law by a vote of 115,506 to 103,685.

But the arguments continued, this time in the courts of law, where Catholic plaintiffs challenged the new law as unconstitutional.

The lawyer for the state of Oregon told one court that juvenile delinquency had increased as attendance at non-public schools increased. Thus, he said, forced attendance at public schools was the only way to ward off “the moral pestilence of paupers, vagabonds, and possibly convicts.” He, like the anti-Catholic nativists who had championed the law, also warned of bolshevism. Children educated in private schools would be

inclined to adopt the principles of “bolshevists, syndicalists, and communists,” he contended. And he went on to warn that if the law was not upheld, cities across the country would be dotted with “elementary schools which instead of being red on the outside will be red on the inside.”

Despite such heated rhetoric, reason eventually prevailed. On June 1, 1925, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that “the child is not the mere creature of the state,” overturning the Oregon law and settling once and for all the question of whether Catholic schools had a right to exist in America.

In the unobstructed view of retrospect, it’s hard to understand the fear-mongering that led to the passage of the Oregon law. Even if one were to accept the preposterous claims of the law’s anti-Catholic supporters—that Catholics, out to destroy the Republic, were using their schools to advance their plan—Oregon’s demographics should have put nervous xenophobes at ease.

At the time, fewer than 10 percent of Oregon’s inhabitants were Catholic, and only 13 percent were foreign-born. Of the students attending school, 93 percent were in public schools already.

But the Oregon law was only the tip of a much larger iceberg that had been gaining heft for nearly a century.

From the mid-1800s until the battle for the Oregon law, the very formation and growth of America’s public school system was intertwined with an unsavory nativist movement that sought to use the newly-formed “common schools” to turn immigrants—mostly Catholics—into true Americans. Unfortunately, these reformers’ vision of what made a true American didn’t include the tenets, the rituals, the prayers, or even the Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. Instead, they wished to inculcate children with a non-denominational brand of Protestant Christianity.

In these new common schools, Catholic children were forced to recite Protestant prayers, sing Protestant hymns, and use the King James, rather than the Douay, version of the Bible. Resisting students were punished, and the punishment was upheld by the courts.

Not surprisingly, this led to the blossoming of the Catholic school system; Catholic schools became havens for new immigrants. And while English was the language spoken in the schools, some classes were also offered in the immigrants' native tongues. My father's Catholic elementary school in Baltimore, for example, taught religion classes in Polish.

While the Oregon School Law might have died in 1925, the anti-Catholic sentiments that spawned it still leave a troubling legacy. Today, the only K-12 schools that are cost-free to students in America are public ones. Unlike our post-secondary system, where students can use public funds in the form of grants, scholarship, GI Bill money, and the like at the institutions of their choice, the only schools automatically getting public funding at the K-12 level are public ones.

Nativist entanglement with the school law also led to the passage of so-called Blaine Amendments in several states. Enacted in the late 1800s, these amendments prohibited the use of public funds for sectarian schools or institutions. For all practical purposes, "sectarian schools" was code for "Catholic schools." As explained previously, "non-sectarian" meant the non-denominational brand of Protestant Christianity taught in public schools.

Even today, Blaine Amendments still stymie voucher and school choice advocates in the courts. And even in states without such amendments, courts will sometimes interpret state and federal law as if Blaine Amendments were on the books.

In addition, today's voucher opponents, when making their case, often unwittingly use the language of the proponents of

the Oregon law, by asserting claims about the necessity for enshrining the public school in a special place in American life because such schools teach us how to be Americans.

Even a current mainstream organization that attempts to block voucher programs has some roots in a movement to stop Catholics. Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a prominent voucher opponent in the public square and in the courtroom, started out with a different name—Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. Formed in 1947, the organization didn't change its name until 1971.

This is not to say that those who oppose vouchers today are anti-Catholic. But they might be surprised to learn that they are standing shoulder-to-ideological shoulder with an unsavory cadre from history—those who, 85 years ago, sought to make the public school the preeminent educational institution in America by quashing diversity and stifling Catholics.

Making education free and available to all children was a noble goal. Had it not been overrun by distasteful political forces, parents might have been allowed to choose where that education would take place, without incurring a financial penalty.

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