

# Catholic League Report: Biden Administration and Thought Control

*This is the article that appeared in the May 2024 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).*

*No administration in American history has tried harder to promote thought control than the Biden administration. Orwellian at its finest, the goal is to induce the public to accept its highly politicized vocabulary as a means of controlling its thought patterns. Here are some examples of how this is being done. (Links to the evidence are available on the website version of this report.)*

## *Gender Identity*

“President Biden has long promised that he would be an advocate for the LGBTQ community should he be elected president. Now, just hours into his presidential term, Mr. Biden’s White House website allows users to choose their pronouns, a change that drew swift praise from advocates. As part of the website revamp that occurs during presidential transitions, the White House changed its contact form. The form now allows individuals to select from the following list: she/her, he/him, they/them, other, or prefer not to share. Those who select other also have the option to write-in what pronouns they use. People can also choose which prefix they use: Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr., Mx., other, or none.”

“In August, the department rolled out new guidelines titled, ‘Updated Department Guidance Regarding Transgender Employees in the Workplace’ and mandates that all employees and applicants should be addressed ‘by the name, pronouns, and

honorific (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss, Mx., etc.) that they themselves use in everyday interactions, and as they choose to communicate to their supervisor/manager and colleagues.’ ‘Continued intentional use of an incorrect name, pronoun, and/or honorific – also known as misgendering – could, depending on its severity and pervasiveness, contribute to a hostile work environment allegation, and constitute misconduct subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation or removal,’ the guideline states.”

“The EEOC’s newly proposed guidance similarly includes ‘Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity’ as the basis for prohibited ‘sex-based discrimination’ under Title VII and asserts that ‘sex-based harassment includes harassment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, including how that identity is expressed.’ ‘Harassment,’ according to this guidance, includes epithets and physical assault as well as ‘intentional and repeated use of a name or pronoun inconsistent with the individual’s gender identity (misgendering).’ Also included as a form of harassment is ‘the denial of access to a bathroom or other sex-segregated facility consistent with the individual’s gender identity.’”

“‘All employees should be addressed [by] the names and pronouns they use to describe themselves,’ an HHS email sent to employees and shared with CNA read. The mandate is part of the department’s new Gender Identity and Non-Discrimination Guidance, which was established to outline ‘employee rights and protections related to gender identity,’ according to the email.”

“An internal U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) memo obtained by the Heritage Foundation’s Oversight Project and shared with Fox News Digital prohibits agents from using ‘he, him, she, her’ pronouns when initially interacting with members of the public. ‘DO NOT use ‘he, him, she, her’ pronouns until you have more information about, or provided by, the individual,’ reads the memo obtained by Heritage via

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)."

"The transgender policy deployed by Interior leadership in September urges employees to 'use gender-neutral language in broad communications to avoid assumptions about gender identity.' Examples of 'pronouns,' according to the policy, are 'they, them, theirs, ze/hir/hirs, ze/zir/zirs, xe/xem/xyrs.' Bathroom use is up to personal discretion, it says, and those who refuse to abide by departmental policies are warned of retribution for 'unlawful discrimination.' 'Repeated, intentional refusal to use the employee's affirming name/gender/pronouns, and/or repeated reference to the employee's dead name/gender/pronouns by supervisors/managers, or coworkers is contrary to the goal of treating all employees with dignity and respect,' the policy states. 'Such intentional conduct could constitute unlawful discrimination.'"

"The USDA issued a May 12, 2022, memo stating how it planned to comply with a Biden executive order issued on Jan. 30, 2021, to prevent discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sexual orientation. The May 2022 memo on Biden's executive action also called for developing 'gender-inclusive language in agency internal and external communications,' to include 'the proactive use of pronouns in the workplace.' It also included a plan to 'update USDA Style guide for email signatures and business cards to include and encourage pronoun use.'"

"The Federal Reserve conducted diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings in which staff members learned that 'correct pronoun usage is a civil right' and were told to acknowledge their 'white privilege,' documents obtained by the Washington Free Beacon show. The Fed held at least four DEI training sessions in the spring and summer of 2021, the documents reveal. During the training sessions, staffers learned to use 'inclusive language,' like 'Latinx,' and were shown an illustration of a transgender gingerbread man that

could have a woman's brain and male reproductive organs. Staffers were also told to refer to Federal Reserve chairman Jerome Powell as 'chair,' an example of 'gender-inclusive language.'"

### *Illegal Immigration*

"Acting U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) head Tracy Renaud reportedly directed officials to overhaul their language in all official documents, outreach efforts and other communications, in a memo first reported Tuesday by Axios and confirmed by BuzzFeed News. Suggested terminology swaps reportedly include using 'noncitizen' or 'undocumented noncitizen' instead of 'alien' or 'illegal alien,' and referring to the 'integration' of immigrants into society instead of 'assimilation,' which has been criticized as racist."

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) employees must use gender-neutral language when addressing border crossers, according to documents obtained by the Heritage Foundation's Oversight Project.

At his 2024 State of the Union address, President Biden referred to an illegal alien accused of murdering a 22-year-old woman as an illegal alien. After being criticized by Democrats, he later said he regretted using this term.

### *Health*

The Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health published a new style guide focusing on promoting "non-stigmatizing" language; it offered more "inclusive" alternatives. Below are several examples:

- "Convict/ex-convict" becomes "People who were formerly incarcerated"
- "Disabled" is replaced by "People with disabilities/a disability"

- “Drug-users/addicts/drug abusers” should now be called “Persons who use drugs/people who inject drugs”
- “Homeless people/the homeless” and “Transient populations” should be referred to as “People experiencing homelessness” or “Clients/guests who are accessing homeless services”
- “Poverty-stricken” now becomes “People with lower incomes”
- “Crazy” is replaced by “People with a pre-existing mental disorder”
- “Asylum” is changed to “Psychiatric hospital/facility”
- “Illegals” should be called “People with undocumented status”
- “Elderly” should be replaced with “Older Americans”
- “Afro-American” should now be referred to as “Black or African American persons; Black persons”
- “Rural people” are now “People who live in rural/sparsely populated areas”
- “Homosexuals” should be called “Queer”
- “Transgenders/transgendered/transsexual” is replaced by “LGBTQ (or LGBTQIA or LGBTQ+ or LGBTQIA2)”

### *Aviation*

“The FAA has had much to say about the system under [Transportation Secretary Pete] Buttigieg’s watch, but not for matters relating to its functionality or upkeep. Rather, the agency announced in December 2021 that it had changed the system’s name from ‘Notice to Airmen’ to ‘Notice to Air Mission,’ a ‘more applicable term’ that the agency said is ‘inclusive of all aviators and missions.’ ‘The language we use in aerospace matters,’ the FAA tweeted from its official account. ‘We’ve begun to adopt gender-neutral and inclusive aviation terminology as part of our agency-wide initiative.’”

“The air safety system’s name change came months after an FAA advisory committee issued a report in June 2021 recommending the agency replace a wide swath of words and phrases with gender-neutral terms. The updated language, the advisory committee said, would help combat unintentional bias and

reflect a 'more modern recognition that gender can be binary.' Recommendations included replacing 'airman' with 'aircrew,' 'manned aviation' with 'traditional aviation,' and 'cockpit' with 'flight deck.'"

### *Government Accountability Office*

"Leaked internal memos obtained by DailyMail.com show the Government Accountability Office (GAO) forbids employees from using male and female terms."

"The 'style guide' demands an end to 'non-inclusive terminology' and said the GAO's 3,100-strong army of bureaucrats should avoid 'wording that diminishes anyone's dignity.' It was posted on the GAO site, bans staff from using words such as 'man-made' or 'manpower' in official communications. The document suggests alternatives such as 'artificial' or 'workforce' instead."

### *State*

Secretary of State Antony Blinken issued a memo instructing State Department employees to refrain from using what he deemed to be "problematic" language. Blinken's memo notes that gender is a social construct and a person's gender identity "may or may not correspond with one's sex assigned at birth." He goes on to say that assuming someone's gender identity based on their appearance or name is not only "problematic" but also could convey a "harmful, exclusionary message." Blinken further instructs staffers not to "pressure someone to state their pronouns." Instead, he offers a list of commonly used pronouns including "she/her, he/him, they/them, and ze/zir" explaining that people use a variety of pronouns. Regardless of what pronouns someone chooses to use, he states that "is a personal decision that should be respected."

Additionally, Blinken identified other common terms that State Department employees should avoid using. Instead of saying "manpower," he suggests substituting "labor force." "You guys"

and “ladies and gentlemen” should be replaced by “everyone,” “folks,” or “you all.” Rather than saying “mother/father,” staffers should say “parent” instead. Likewise, “son/daughter” should be replaced with “child.” Meanwhile, “spouse” or “partner” should be used in place of “husband/wife.”

Finally, Blinken tells staff they should “use more specific language” to “avoid using phrases like ‘brave men and women on the frontlines.’” He recommends more precise wording such as “brave first responders,” “brave soldiers,” or “brave DS agents.”

---

# **THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH**

**Fr. D. Paul Sullins**

For years, as a faithful Catholic social scientist, I have experienced embedded, irrational opposition to the expression in scientific settings of evidence and truths that support the Catholic faith or the natural law. Like today’s often-noted two-tier system of justice, more permissive for progressives and more rigorous for conservatives, there are two tiers of academic review for scholarly research.

Studies whose findings advance the progressive causes favored by today’s trenchantly liberal scholarly associations, especially issues of sexuality and gender, are put on a fast track to publication. For these studies, the standards of normal science are often relaxed or overlooked altogether. The result is a body of weak, biased research published under color of science but without the credibility and rigor usually ascribed to scientific findings. Nevertheless, they are

typically lauded as definitive scientific evidence, with favorable commentaries and many citations and popular publications. More propaganda than science, I call this the Propaganda tier.

In direct contrast is the Challenge Tier, studies whose findings challenge or obstruct one or more points of the dominant progressive orthodoxy. The same processes that encourage the appearance of Propaganda studies work in reverse to present a gauntlet of opposition to Challenge studies. Editors often dismiss them out of hand, without even sending them to peer review, because they don't want the findings to become more widely known or cannot imagine that the findings could be correct. Reviewers amplify minor weaknesses or limitations to reject the study. If they do get published, they are ignored and rarely cited, or are met with angry scholarly denunciation and specious calls for their retraction, which increasingly are successful.

Increasingly, the scholarly world is moving from merely discouraging and impeding Challenge studies to openly censoring them altogether. I am going to illustrate this trend with two stories from my own experience.

In May 2016 I published an analysis of late-onset depression among children with same-sex parents using data that interviewed the same individuals at age 15 and age 28. Three Propaganda studies had used the age 15 data to show that such children were not more depressed than those raised by man-woman parents. I found that although there was no difference at age 15, by age 28 such children had developed three times the risk of depression as the general population. A gay activist who ran a website promoting the idea that children were no worse off with same-sex parents wrote a negative editorial full of falsehoods about the study in Slate magazine, and some pro-family media ran positive stories about the study. In August the gay activist submitted his editorial as a letter to the journal editor, to which I wrote a response



refuting the multiple false statements therein.

There things sat until August 2017, over a year after initial publication, when my article was unexpectedly cited by a lurid anti-gay poster during the referendum debate on gay marriage in Australia. The poster pictured an abused child, used a pejorative term for gay persons, and referenced a data table in the article that the rate of all-cause child abuse, meaning the sum of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, reported by the children raised by same-sex parents was very high: 92%. Although notably high, this statistic was a minor point that did not figure into the main argument of the article, and had not been mentioned by any previous commentary on it pro or con. It appeared for only a few hours at a single location in Melbourne before it was taken down, but not before some photos of it had been posted on social media. (It came out later that the unsigned poster had most likely been placed by pro-gay sources in an attempt to discredit my study. Think about it. How many street posters include detailed academic citations?)

Within 24 hours I was contacted by several Australian news organizations and the journal publisher for comment. I made a statement denouncing the use of my scholarly findings for anti-gay bigotry, and I offered to join in such a statement with the publisher. But on one point I could not satisfy them: I was unwilling to retract the finding itself. As unattractive as it may be, the poster accurately cited my paper, which in turn accurately reported the finding in the data. The publisher then issued an official notice of concerns about a scholarly study, which implies some form of dishonesty and is usually a prelude to retraction. This statement, however, recounted an earlier attempt by the publisher, in June 2016, to have the study retracted amid concerns from "some readers" over several features of the study, including "the potential conflict of interest implied by the author's position as a Catholic priest." At that time, however, the journal editor pushed back, telling the publisher that he "believed that the

article's reviewers addressed these concerns, and the author made sufficient revisions to the article to address these flaws." This was why, the notice explained, the publisher had subsequently invited the negative editorial, so that "the criticisms of this study [could] become part of the scholarly record."

This treatment, of course, was patently unfair. The notice was entirely unwarranted, unfairly stigmatizing my study as if it had involved some misconduct. It did not seem to matter to anyone that I had no knowledge or control over how my published results were used or misused in public debate. No one was willing to publish or even acknowledge my statement denouncing anti-gay bigotry. I had not been made aware of the initial effort to retract my study, what the concerns were and from whom: all of which violates publication ethics.

No one from the publisher was willing to explain exactly what conflict of interest was implied by being a Catholic priest. This didn't surprise me. This was little more than thinly disguised religious bigotry, which they were unlikely to admit or perhaps even recognize. The "conflict" was simply that the Catholic faith upheld a view—the importance of a child being raised by his or her own biological parents (see *Donum Vitae* 2; *Amoris Laetitia* 176)—which they could not tolerate. In their eyes, my challenge to a point of progressive orthodoxy itself constituted a form of misconduct, stemming from my Catholic faith commitments, which they were barely restrained by a stalwart editor from erasing. By the time of my second story six years later, however, the censorship of scientific findings simply because they may affirm Catholic teaching rather than the politics of progressive orthodoxy was openly advocated.

In late 2022 I published a rebuttal to a series of studies by LGBT scholar-activists who were attempting to establish that therapies to help persons sexually attracted to persons of the same sex try to reduce or avoid acting on those attractions,

commonly called “sexual orientation change efforts” (SOCE), increased the lifetime risk of gay suicide and therefore should be banned by law. Due in part to the effect of these studies, SOCE has already been banned in over 20 U.S. states, in prohibitions drawn so broadly they could also inhibit Catholic pastoral care. Titled “Sexual orientation change efforts do not increase suicide: correcting a false research narrative,” my study re-analyzed the strongest of these studies, using the same data it had, and pointed out a disabling error: in its measure of “lifetime suicidality,” the study had included suicide attempts and thoughts that had occurred before the subject had undergone SOCE therapy.

This was not an inconsequential error. Obviously, to avoid overstating harm from an intervention, a study must find out whether the harm may have already been there before the intervention. When I took suicidality before SOCE into account, the effect was dramatic. For persons undergoing SOCE, it turned out, not just a little, but the majority of reported suicidality happened before undergoing the therapy. Almost two-thirds (65%) of suicidal thoughts preceded the therapy, with the result that the rate of suicide ideation following therapy was lower than for persons who had never undergone SOCE. Predicted suicide attempts were strongly reduced, under real life conditions, following SOCE. My corrected results suggested that the LGBT activist scholars had confused the cause of the problem with what was, at least in part, a cure for the problem.

As my study’s conclusion put it:

Imagine a study that finds that most persons using anti-hypertension medication have also previously had high blood pressure, thereby concluding that persons “exposed” to high blood pressure medication were much more likely to experience hypertension, and recommending that high blood pressure medications therefore be banned. This imagined study would have used the same flawed logic as [the studies

claiming that SOCE caused suicide], with invidious consequences for persons suffering from hypertension.

In normal scientific discourse, the exposure of such a serious error would lead to the reconsideration or restatement of the flawed studies involved. Instead, my study was met with a series of angry editorials by the most prestigious scholars of the topic calling for its retraction, even suppression. The authors of the study I critiqued, who were affiliated with the Williams Institute, a research center formed to advance gay rights, doubled down on their false reasoning, refusing even to acknowledge that an effect cannot logically precede a cause. Others resorted to conspicuous falsehood about their own earlier research findings. One commentary clearly illustrated the anti-science bias involved.

Two European public health scholars wrote that, even if my findings were true, their publication was “egregiously problematic ... for the simple reason that the problem with SOCE is not just about outcomes and well-being but primarily about rights and autonomy so that a methodological analysis seeking to undermine causation is just irrelevant.” Regardless of their effect on suicidality, for these theorists the mere attempt to change someone’s sexual orientation violated their bodily autonomy and sexual rights. Thus “the potential for these conclusions drawn by Sullins to be used nefariously in political and legislative debates can put sexual minority individuals in real danger if legislation allowing for these harmful practices is implemented or just debated.”

“Or just debated.” For these scholars, the assertion that sodomy is as morally acceptable and normal as heterosexual relations is not simply an opinion with which others may reasonably disagree, but has the status of a rigid article of faith, the denial or even debate of which cannot be tolerated. Evidence that may impede the advance of the gay rights agenda is “nefarious” and must be suppressed, even if it is true, by preventing its publication and dissemination.

Unlike the Catholic faith, which welcomes doubt and debate from all quarters because it believes its teachings to be demonstrably true and wants persons to come to believe them, the secular articles of faith are not open to question or debate. For a long time now, those who dare to question them have risked being ignored or discredited. Increasingly they risk being censored outright.

*Father Paul Sullins, Ph.D., taught sociology at The Catholic University of America and is a Senior Research Associate at the Ruth Institute.*

---

## 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

*This is the article that appeared in the January/February 2024 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).*

***Michael P. McDonald***

For 50 years the Catholic League has led the charge in every major cultural battle, and in 2023, we continued this tradition.

We started the year off with a bang when we released our documentary, “Walt’s Disenchanted Kingdom: How Disney is Losing its Way.” The film explores how the once family-friendly media titan devolved into a woke behemoth promoting the most radical elements of the LGBT agenda.

The movie was made available on several different platforms. We reached an enormous audience and generated multiple friendly radio and TV interviews.

Further, "Walt's Disenchanted Kingdom" won critical acclaim earning recognitions at major film festivals. At the L.A. International Short Film Festival, we won four prestigious awards. Additionally, our movie was nominated for honors at The Prisma Film Festival in Rome, Italy; The Perth Christian Film Festival in Australia; and The Arizona Faith and Family Film Festival.

The biggest sign of our success was the troubles that plagued Disney. We had no illusions about taking down Disney. We wanted to educate the public and inspire Disney to reconsider its woke programming. Nevertheless, Disney had a rough year, and "Walt's Disenchanted Kingdom" helped contribute to their woes.

We followed up this success with a major fight with the L.A. Dodgers. In mid-May, the Dodgers announced they intended to honor the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a group of virulent anti-Catholic men who dress up as nuns, at the team's Pride Night.

We sent a letter to the head of Major League Baseball (MLB) about this outrage, and on the following day, the Dodgers disinvited the "Sisters." But then gay and trans activists, along with local government officials, besieged the Dodgers. Soon after, the Dodgers reinvited the "Sisters," offering them an apology, thus endorsing anti-Catholic bigotry.

We anticipated that the "Sisters" could be reinvited, and Bill Donohue personally prepared a report documenting their bigotry. We called on Catholics in the Los Angeles area to boycott the game to send a message to the Dodgers, and MLB, that anti-Catholicism cannot be tolerated.

We sent Bill's report to over 300 parishes in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, asking pastors to support the boycott. In the following weeks, we contacted other important Catholic stakeholders in the area. We expanded our reach by including

prominent individuals of other religions and Latino business owners. In every case, we sent the report and our plea to boycott Pride Night.

We also hit the public airwaves. For the two weeks before the game, we ran scores of ads promoting our boycott. Our media blitz on KABC radio caught the eye of the *Los Angeles Times*. Moreover, we gave multiple TV, radio, newspaper, and internet interviews on the controversy.

Almost no one showed up for the ceremony honoring the "Sisters," and we drove down the game's attendance by 3,500.

On the heels of this win, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the First Amendment rights of a Colorado woman, Lorie Smith, must be respected when it comes to forcing her to express beliefs that are contrary to her conscience. This was a great victory for free speech and freedom of religion. We submitted an amicus brief in this case, *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis*. We are delighted with this outcome and to have played a role in it.

In 2023, the most serious threat to religious liberty came from the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) set its sights on Catholics.

We first learned of the anti-Catholic FBI caper when a whistleblower disclosed a memo from the Richmond Field Office investigating "Radical-Traditional Catholics." The memo drew heavily on anti-Catholic sources, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center. We weren't convinced this was a limited probe and publicly asked if orthodox Catholics were next.

We were right. It soon came to light that the FBI had looked into "mainline Catholic parishes" and "local diocesan leadership." We wrote to FBI Director Christopher Wray asking him to release those documents related to the memo. He didn't reply, but we didn't give up.

The House Judiciary Committee was also looking into the FBI

for this. Although the Committee had some documents from the FBI, they were heavily redacted. When Wray testified before the Committee in July, he told Chairman Jim Jordan that the probe was contained to the Richmond Field Office and agreed to send less redacted documents.

Unsatisfied with Wray's response, we wrote to Jordan asking him to find out why ordinary Catholics were being investigated. The following day, the FBI finally gave the Committee less redacted documents, and we learned that it was not "a single field office." Rather, the memo grew out of work from several offices.

We wrote Jordan several more times proposing a series of questions that Wray needed to answer, and the Committee was very receptive.

The Committee produced a report in December revealing the FBI violated important procedures and safeguards. Further, the report exposed the FBI had no interest in dissident, left-wing Catholics. They had their sights on Catholics who are "pro-life, pro-family, and support the biological basis for sex and gender distinction as potential domestic terrorists."

We thanked Jordan and offered our support in the fights to come. In total, we wrote 11 letters to hold the FBI and DOJ accountable. We will keep at it as long as necessary. Ultimately, it will only end once the anti-Catholic element is purged from the FBI.

Unfortunately, this trend is not limited to the DOJ and FBI. Across the Western world, people of faith, mostly Christians, are being harassed and arrested by government agents at an alarming rate. The most common reason why they are bullied is their biblical objection to the LGBT agenda and opposition to abortion. Their rights are being trounced.

No one received a greater public flogging than House Speaker Mike Johnson. The all-out assault on him is meant to



discourage younger Christian conservatives from running for office and to discredit the Founders and our Judeo-Christian heritage. We warned Catholics that the same people behind these vicious assaults against Speaker Johnson hate the religious principles upon which America was founded and those who cherish them.

Some lambasting Catholics were exposed as frauds in 2023. For years, we heard from activists that the residential schools in Canada, some of which were run by Catholics, amounted to genocide against indigenous people. This reached a fevered pitch last year when it was alleged that mass graves had been discovered. In 2023, when these grave sites were excavated, no bodies were found. We issued a report showing this was a hoax.

This year the Biden administration announced a new rule requiring foster parents to affirm LGBT children. This gives all the power to kids and tramples the religious liberty rights of parents.

This rule implies that foster children would do better in the affirming care of transgender parents. We examined this claim and found that the transgender community is predisposed to violence. Particularly when it comes to "intimate partner violence," transgenders are more prone to this than any other demographic. We compiled a report highlighting this.

Transgender violence is not just limited to themselves. This year, we witnessed a wave of trans domestic terrorism. We documented these attacks in a report. The biggest of these was the shooting at Covenant Christian School in Nashville. A woman pretending to be a man targeted the school and killed six people, including three children. Although police recovered a manifesto indicating the shooter's motive, the authorities continue to keep its contents a secret.

Another critical front in the culture war was education. We prepared a report on the many ways in which public schools are

deliberately sexualizing children.

The endemic radicalism in education stems from years of Christian bashing on campus. We documented how “Christian Privilege” classes, workshops, and lectures have been in vogue at universities across the country.

This now permeates into the lower grades. We contacted over 80 public officials in Washington State after a teacher called parents concerned about the sexual indoctrination “Christofascists.” Even more troubling, Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, lambasted parents who support school choice claiming they had a “particular Christian ideology to dominate the country.” We called on her to resign.

The Biden administration rescinded a rule created by Trump that protected the religious rights of students on campus. We issued a report on how prior to Trump’s rule religious students regularly had their rights eroded.

In 2023, a report by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops confirmed that the clergy sexual abuse scandal ended long ago and is now practically non-existent. The number of credible allegations against the clergy consistently fell between 2004 and 2022. This is good news, and we will keep flagging this.

During the “Synod on Synodality” we issued a report highlighting the successes of Catholic communities that adhere to orthodoxy and decline of those that embrace heterodoxy. Additionally, we kept tabs on the dissidents, who tried to hijack the proceedings.

On October 7, Hamas launched the deadly attack on Israel. The radicals in this country rallied in support of the Islamic terrorist group. We noted that Israel had met the requirements for a “just war,” as defined by the Church and called out the radicals for celebrating the attack and promulgating anti-

Semitism.

We continued displaying our life-sized nativity scene in Central Park. Building on this tradition, this year we also had a huge digital billboard celebrating Christmas in Times Square. It was shown four to six times an hour for the two weeks before Christmas. We played off the theme of “diversity” turning it back on the people that use it as a cudgel to marginalize Catholics.

After the atheists at the Freedom From Religion Foundation forced a small town in Iowa to take down a crèche on public property, government officials added some secular symbols and the nativity scene was restored. We begged the atheists to sue us for displaying our own crèche in Central Park, and the bullies refused to do so.

2023 was a milestone year for the Catholic League, marking our 50th anniversary. First founded in 1973 by Fr. Virgil Blum, the league has grown into the largest Catholic civil rights group and remains one of the last grass-roots advocacy organizations in the country.

We celebrated this occasion on April 27, at the New York Athletic Club. Many prominent clergy and lay people were in attendance. Raymond Arroyo served as the Master of Ceremonies, and Walter Knysz, Cardinal Dolan and Bill Donohue gave remarks. It was a great evening.

Bill also released his book [War on Virtue: How the Ruling Class is Killing the American Dream](#) and marked his 30th year as president and CEO of the Catholic League.

This year perfectly encapsulated our last 50 years. We had major accomplishments and scored critical victories. What the next 50 years will bring is anyone’s guess. But with dedicated supporters, the Catholic League will surely keep winning in the years ahead.

*Michael P. McDonald is Director of Communications at the Catholic League.*

---

# WHO WANTS ABORTION WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS?

**Bill Donohue**

Most Americans are conflicted about abortion: they don't want it banned in all circumstances, but they also don't support abortion for any reasons and at any time of pregnancy. In other words, most Americans want abortion legal but restricted. Most but not all. There are some who favor abortion unlimited—for any reason and at time of gestation. The media will tell you this isn't true. They're lying.

In September, Vice President Kamala Harris was interviewed on "Face the Nation" by Margaret Brennan. Brennan made the point that Republicans are saying they support abortions "up until, you know, birth." Harris replied, "Which is ridiculous." Brennan agreed, saying, "Which is statistically not accurate."

Republican candidate for president, Chris Christie, told Mika Brzezinski on MSNBC that in his state of New Jersey abortion is legal "up to nine months." She disagreed, saying, "It's not an abortion at nine months. And there's not a doctor that would do it. And it only happens in extremely severe circumstances."

"The claim that Democrats support abortion up until the moment of birth is entirely misleading." That's what former White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said on her MSNBC show.

Jim Acosta of CNN took issue with a family leader on this subject, saying, "Democrats are not in favor of abortion right up until birth."

On "Meet the Press," former President Donald Trump said that some Democrats support abortion up to "nine months and even after birth you're allowed to terminate the baby." The NBC host, Kristen Welker, said, "Democrats are not saying that."

Steve Benen, an MSNBC producer for "The Rachel Maddow Show," also took issue with Trump's claim that some Democrats support "after-birth" abortion. "There is no such thing. The claim is simply insane."

All of these people who defend the Democrats on this issue are wrong. I will prove it.

Let's first remember that the entire case for abortion was initially built on a string of lies. Don't take my word for it—read what Dr. Bernard Nathanson and Lawrence Lader said about this when they were plotting their strategy to legalize abortion. They were key players in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

They coined phrases such as "Freedom of choice" and "Women must have control over their bodies." Nathanson said, "I remember laughing when we made up those slogans. We were looking for some sexy, catchy slogans to capture public opinion. They were very cynical slogans then, just as all these slogans today are very, very, cynical."

(Nathanson, who performed thousands of abortions, finally came over to our side. He even converted to Catholicism.)

Nathanson and Lader, working with feminist Betty Friedan, knew that in the days before abortion was legalized public opinion polls would not support their cause. "Knowing that if a true poll were taken, we would be soundly defeated, we simply fabricated the results of fictional polls. We announced to the media that we had taken polls and that 60 percent of Americans

were in favor of permissive abortions. This is the tactic of the self-fulfilling lie. Few people care to be in the minority.”

They also lied about the data. They did so by “fabricating the number of illegal abortions done annually in the U.S. The actual figure was approaching 10,000, but the figure we gave to the media was 1 million. Repeating the big lie often enough convinces the public. The number of women dying from illegal abortions was around 200-250 annually. The figure we constantly fed to the media was 10,000.”

Late-term abortions, contrary to what some say, are more common than are reported. Perhaps no one performed more of them than Dr. George Tiller. In 1995 he told his fans, “We have some experience with late terminations; about 10,000 patients between 24 and 36 weeks and something like 800 fetal anomalies between 26 and 36 weeks in the past 5 years.”

Ron Fitzsimmons used to tell the media that partial-birth abortions—where the baby is 80 percent born—were extremely rare. Then in 1995 he went on national TV and admitted that he “lied through [his] teeth,” saying he was just spouting “the party line.”

In 2019, the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute admitted that at least 12,000 late-term abortions take place annually in the U.S. In 2023, a fact checker at the *Washington Post* conceded that at least 10,000 late-term abortions take place each year.

New York Mayor Ed Koch and New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan were both abortion-rights defenders, but they drew the line when it came to partial-birth abortions. Moynihan properly called it “infanticide.”

Today, there are Democrats such as Pennsylvania Senator John Fetterman who believe in no restrictions on abortion. When asked during a debate, “Are there any limits on abortion you would find appropriate,” he answered, “I don’t believe so.”

In 2015, when Debbie Wasserman Schultz, chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, was asked if she was okay “with killing a 7-pound baby that’s just not born yet,” she replied that she supports “letting women and their doctors make this decision without government getting involved.” Senator Rand Paul rightly noted, “Well, it sounds like her answer is yes, that she’s OK with killing a 7-pound baby.”

In 2020, when Vice President Mike Pence called out Democrats for supporting abortion without restrictions, he was challenged by Jane Timm of NBC News. “Elective abortions do not occur up until the moment of birth,” she said.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, rebutted her argument. “Believe it or not, 22 states—*almost half*—allow birth day abortion. And in seven of those, women don’t need a reason. A pregnant mom at 39 weeks can literally walk into a willing clinic and ask for an abortion, no questions asked.”

Perkins knows what he is talking about. Quite frankly, under *Roe v. Wade*, abortion-on-demand, while not a *de jure* right (it was not permitted after viability except in limited cases), was a *de facto* right. For proof, consider *Doe v. Bolton*, the companion case to *Roe*; it opened the door to abortion-on-demand.

In *Roe*, the high court said the states may outlaw abortion “except where it is necessary, in appropriate medical judgment, for the preservation of the life or health of the mother.” The ruling in *Doe* defined what an “appropriate medical judgment” was. It entailed the “physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the women’s age—relevant to the well-being of the patient.”

Not surprisingly, every state law that attempted to limit post-viability abortions to those necessary for the *physical* health of the women failed in court when challenged. In

effect, the joint decisions in *Roe* and *Doe* legalized abortion up until birth. So when Democrats say they simply want to codify *Roe*, what they are saying is they want to make all abortions legal, at any time during pregnancy.

In fact, in 2022, the Democrats sought to pass the Women's Health Protection Act, which would further ensure that abortions through term be honored, but it was narrowly defeated.

Some Democrat governors actually favor allowing a baby who is born alive from a botched abortion to die unattended.

On January 22, 2019, New York State Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed legislation that allows premature babies who survive a chemical abortion to be denied treatment. Shortly thereafter, the Democrat Governor from Virginia, Ralph Northam, signaled he was not content to allow abortion up until birth.

If a baby survived an abortion, he said, "The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that's what the mother and the family desired, and then a discussion would ensue between the physicians and the mother."

It was so thoughtful of Gov. Northam, who is a pediatrician, to assure us that the baby would be "kept comfortable" before they put him down or let him die.

In 2019, New York U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand told a reporter, "Infanticide does not exist." This was *after* Cuomo and Northam okayed it. In fact, when she said this, Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, a Democrat, had just vetoed a bill that would have required children born alive who survived an abortion to be treated like any other person.

At the federal level in 2019, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act was blocked by Senate Democrats. Presidential candidates Senators Bernie Sanders, Amy Klobuchar and Elizabeth Warren voted to stop the bill from being



considered. Filibuster tactics killed the bill.

On January 11, 2023, all but two congressional Democrats voted to kill this same bill. They said there was enough legislation on the books already to protect against infanticide. As we have seen, this is patently untrue. Even so, when it comes to laws against discrimination, Democrats can never get enough legislation on the books.

One Democrat who has been a longtime proponent of allowing kids who survive an abortion to die unattended is Barack Obama. When he was in the Illinois state senate, he opposed bills in 2001, 2002 and 2003 that would secure medical care for these children.

Joe Biden entered the U.S. Senate in 1973, the same year as Roe. The next year he said this decision went “too far” and that a woman seeking an abortion should not have the “sole right to say what should happen to her body.”

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, he voted against public funding of abortion and even introduced the “Biden Amendment” in 1981 prohibiting foreign-aid funding of biomedical research involving abortion. In the 1990s, Biden voted consistently to ban partial-birth abortions, and continued to do so in 2003.

Then he pivoted. In 2007, Biden criticized the Supreme Court decision upholding the ban on partial-birth abortion, calling it “paternalistic.” The next year he said he opposed overturning Roe. In 2012, he opined that the government does not have “a right to tell other people that women, they can’t control their body.”

In 2019, Biden said that for the first time he opposed the “Hyde Amendment” that bans the federal funding of abortion. In 2020, he came clean, saying he supports abortion “under *any* circumstances (my italic).”

In 2021, President Biden said, “I respect those who believe

life begins at the moment of conception. I don't agree, but I respect that." He never indicated when he thought life begins or why he disagrees with science. This past June he said he's "not big on abortion," never saying why not. But he did say he supports *Roe*.

So there we have it. Contrary to what the media and the Democrats have been saying, there are plenty of Democrats who support legalized abortion through nine months of pregnancy and for any reason whatsoever. There are even some who have signed legislation allowing babies to die without medical treatment if they survive a botched abortion. Moreover, bills to secure treatment for these children are blocked by Democrats.

The defense of the indefensible is immoral enough, but when public officials lie about their support for abortion-on-demand, often including infanticide, they are beyond the pale. But as I said in the beginning, lying about abortion has been routine from the get-go of this movement.

---

## CHURCH MALIGNED IN CANADA AND USA

*This is the article that appeared in the November 2023 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).*

**Bill Donohue**

In the 1980s, Jeane Kirkpatrick, foreign policy advisor to President Ronald Reagan and the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, was fond of saying that the critics of the United

States *always blame* the U.S. for whatever was going wrong in the world. Similarly, I can say that in the over three decades of doing this job, I continue to be impressed by the number of critics of the Catholic Church who *always blame* the Church for whatever is going wrong in the world.

There is much more than gullibility going on here. To be gullible is to be easily persuaded. The most consistent and severe critics of the U.S. and the Catholic Church are not naïve: they are hateful and vindictive. They are willing to believe the worst because, from the get-go, they have been seriously ill-disposed to these two titans.

Regarding Catholicism, the latest proof that critics of the Church have gone off the rails took place in Canada. Accusations that the Church's handling of indigenous peoples in Canada made big news in 2015. It was accused of "cultural genocide," if not wholesale genocide. Suffice it to say that a number of scholars, including myself, mounted a strong challenge to this rendition.

Then in 2021, the Church was accused of creating "mass graves" for indigenous children in the residential schools. That was debunked in 2022. But in 2023, new accusations of "mass graves" surfaced. More recently, that, too, has been debunked. As it turned out, both stories turned out to be a hoax. However, like vicious rumors that turn out to be false, it is hard to erase the initial perception that wrongdoing was committed.

### *The Report*

In 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established. It was mandated to report on the history and the ongoing legacy of the Canadian government's residential schools for indigenous peoples, many of which were run by Catholic and Protestant churches. In 2015, its findings were published. Titled "Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the

Future," it will be referred to as the Report.

The Report found that 150,000 indigenous children were taken from their homes and forced to attend schools that would assimilate them into the dominant culture. It was the Canadian government that made this decision.

The most serious charges that initially surfaced said that the residential school system was guilty of "cultural genocide." In due course, commentators shortened this to "genocide."

As I pointed out in my 2022 analysis of the Report, neither genocide nor cultural genocide occurred. It's all a cruel myth.

The Report cites not a single person who was killed in the residential schools. There are two testimonials of killings in the Report, and one was made by an indigenous woman who said she witnessed her older brother kill one of her other brothers when she was nine. The other cites a 2014 document that claims that "1,017 Aboriginal women and girls were killed and 164 were missing." But these killings took place between 1980 and 2012. The residential schools were closed in 1969.

There were no instances of torture listed in the Report. The one instance of whipping was committed by a government teacher in 1895. Corporal punishment did exist—disobedient boys had their hair cut off—but this was common throughout the world at this time in both secular and religious schools. No doubt there were cases of abuse, but it trivializes what has happened to true victims of genocide to pin this label on conditions in the residential schools.

The Report claims that "cultural genocide" was committed against the indigenous population. Yet on p. 6 it offers evidence that contradicts this claim. "Although Aboriginal peoples and cultures have been badly damaged," it says, "they continue to exist." By definition, cultures that continue to exist have not been wiped out.

This is not to say that ethnocentrism didn't exist. Of course it did. The lifestyle of the indigenous population was clearly perceived to be culturally inferior to Europeans. Missionaries being missionaries, they were obviously convinced that converting these peoples was in their best interest. Looking back at this from today's perspective, there is room for criticism. But to judge the past by contemporary standards is not a mature way of understanding history. To indict everyone is to indict no one.

The Report cites several instances that demonstrate the noble intent of the Catholic-run schools. Catholic officials insisted that they were better able to deal with Aboriginal students than those who ran the public schools. Their Christian training afforded them a better understanding of how to deal with these students. They also criticized the public schools for their racist attitudes. Given their impoverished condition, these students were also more likely to feel inferior to public school students than they would in a Catholic-run school.

There were other advantages to these children being served by Catholics, as opposed to Protestant and government-run schools. "The Roman Catholic schools could draw staff from a number of Catholic religious orders," the Report notes, "whose members had made explicit vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. In the spirit of those vows, they would be obliged to go where they were sent, would not expect payment, and would have no families to support."

The Report even says that "Former staff and the children of former staff members have expressed the view that much of the discussion of the history of residential schools has overlooked both the positive intent with which many staff members approached their work, and the positive accomplishments of the school system." Indeed, many of these Catholic staff members continued "teaching, cooking, cleaning, farming, and supervising children" long after they completed

their assignment (which lasted a year or two).

The Report is replete with criticism about the “Doctrine of Discovery” that provided legal justification for granting rights to land discovered by European colonizers. What it doesn’t say is that idea was never a doctrine or a part of the teaching of the Catholic Church. It also doesn’t say that the so-called “Doctrine of Discovery” was officially repudiated by the Catholic Church in 1537.

### *“The Mass Grave Hoaxes”*

The Report said nothing about “mass graves” being erected on Catholic property. That accusation surfaced in May 2021.

Who was responsible for spreading the hoax? Scholars, Indian activists and the American media.

In May 2021, a young anthropologist, Sarah Beaulieu, after assessing the land near a former Catholic residential school with radar, hypothesized that there was a “mass grave” there. This position was shared by Chief Rosanne Casimir, who maintained that “ground-penetrating radar” discovered the remains of 215 children in a mass grave on the grounds of the school in British Columbia.

As Canada’s *National Post* reported in September 2023, “One of the first mentions of the term ‘mass grave’ came from the *New York Times*.” In fact, this is where Chief Casimir’s claim was made public; it appeared in the May 28, 2021 edition of the paper.

The Associated Press (AP) issued a similar story the next day, claiming up to 6,000 indigenous peoples died during the residential school years. No source was given. This was strange given that in the same news story, it said the Report put the number who died at 3,200. More important, AP did not say why there were so many deaths. But as the *National Post* reported, they were “mostly due to disease.” And as the Report

documents, it was tuberculosis that claimed the lives of more children than any other disease.

Authoritative articles debunking the “mass grave” thesis began appearing in January 2022. Jacques Rouillard, professor emeritus in the Department of History at the University of Montreal, questioned, “After seven months of recrimination and denunciation, where are the remains of the children buried at the Kamloops Indian Residential School?”

“In the wake of unsubstantiated claims by Aboriginal Indians,” he wrote, “several media outlets amplified and hyped the story by alleging that the bodies of 215 children had been *found*, adding ‘thousands’ of children had ‘gone missing’ from residential schools and that parents had not been informed (his *italic*).”

John Daniel Davison, senior editor at The Federalist, wrote that “In the seven months since this shocking news broke, not one body has been found, and not a single shovel-full of dirt has been excavated from the site in question.”

Tom Flanagan and Brian Giesbrecht in the Dorchester Review slammed the initial reports for the “lies” that were told. They also wrote that much of the criticism reflects the “anti-Christian sentiment [that] has been largely directed at the Catholic Church and the Catholic religious orders which operated and staffed many residential schools,” despite the fact that “Catholic-run institutions comprised only 43% of all Indian residential schools in Canada.”

While the hoax was exposed, the damage done to the Catholic Church’s reputation was severe. It also led to violence.

In retaliation to the bogus story, 68 Catholic churches were desecrated, damaged or destroyed. This includes ten churches that suffered significant damage from arson. Some, like St. Ann’s on the Chuchuwayha reserve in British Columbia, were set on fire and burned to the ground. The worst of the violence

took place between June 21 and July 9, 2021.

A second round of accusations emerged in the summer of 2023 when excavations of the “mass grave” began. In August, the National Post reported that “No evidence of human remains has been found during the excavation of a Catholic church basement on the site of a former Manitoba residential school.” Again, the body count was zero.

Neither the *New York Times* nor AP has run a news story about the two hoaxes. One of the sources cited by the *Times*, Chief Casimir, was briefly mentioned in January 2023, but this was before the second hoax was exposed. In essence, both media outlets have shamelessly allowed their false stories to go unchecked.

In fairness, there were some Indian activists, such as First Nation Chief Cadmus Delorme, who were cautious about making wild generalizations from the beginning. He said that the “mass graves” were actually plots within a larger Catholic cemetery whose headstones had been removed by Catholic authorities. “This is not a mass grave site. These are unmarked graves.” Too bad the American media weren’t as honest.

### *Conclusion*

Smearing the Catholic Church is commonplace, especially among elites in Western nations. What is particularly galling is the rank hypocrisy of the ruling class.

In 2017, in the wake of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s appeal to Pope Francis to apologize for the mistreatment of indigenous peoples, I wrote him a letter, which I made public, that requested an apology from him for “the Canadian government’s oppression of Indians, Africans, Asians, Jews, Protestants, and Catholics.” The victimization of Catholics continues to this day in Canada, making my plea all the more urgent.



In 2022, I accused Trudeau of “cultural genocide” by shoving his radical LGBTQ agenda down the throat of Third World nations. There are many such examples.

If the truth were told, the world would come to realize the great good that Catholic missionaries have done. They would also conclude that the Church’s biggest critics don’t have a moral leg to stand on.

---

## HIGHER EDUCATION IS IN DIRE STRAITS; JESUIT-RUN SCHOOLS INCLUDED

*This is the article that appeared in the September 2023 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).*

**Bill Donohue**

*As college students head back to school, parents should know more about what they are paying for, including Catholic colleges and universities.*

The public appears to be souring on higher education. The level of confidence that Americans have for colleges and universities today is at its lowest level, as determined by Gallup. It is also true that confidence in 16 other institutions has been waning. But the big drop is scored by higher education.

In 2015, Americans’ confidence in higher education was 57 percent; in 2018, it dropped to 48 percent; in 2023, it is at

36 percent. Why this is so varies by political party.

Among Democrats, previous Gallup polls found that concern over exorbitant costs was the big factor. For Republicans, the big concern is over the rampant politicization of education. But since the biggest decline in confidence for higher education, as recorded by Gallup, was among Republicans—it dropped by 20 points to 19 percent—it would have made more sense to conclude that politics, not rising costs, “likely play a significant role.”

Democrats are more likely to support student loan forgiveness than Republicans, so of course rising costs figure prominently for them. What needs to be addressed is why the issue of the politics, raised by Republicans, played a more prominent role in driving down the overall public confidence in higher education. There are several factors at work.

In the last several years, the decline in free speech on the campuses has worsened. Critical race theory—the lie that all white people are inherently racist and that all existing racial disparities are due solely to racism—has been institutionalized. Gender ideology—the lie that the sexes are interchangeable and that there are dozens of genders—is now almost universally acknowledged.

These three factors alone—censoring speech, critical race theory and gender ideology—will continue to drive down public confidence in higher education unless college administrators buck up. But that is not likely given the fact that administrators tend to be even more left-wing than the faculty.

The left-wing faculty are doing much more harm than this.

Survey data reveal that the most intolerant people in America are unquestionably young liberals. Why this is so needs to be probed, but first the data.

The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) studies free speech on college campuses, and its 2022-2023 "College Free Speech Rankings" is particularly insightful. In a survey of almost 45,000 college students from 201 schools, the University of Chicago was rated the top spot; Columbia University was rated the least respectful of free speech of any institution of higher education in the country.

Overall, the degree to which free speech is prized on campus was among its most alarming findings. Liberals, not conservatives, are the problem.

Opposition to allowing controversial conservative speakers on campus ranged from 59 percent to 73 percent, depending on the speaker. However, opposition to controversial liberal speakers on campus ranged from 24 percent to 41 percent, depending on the speaker.

Is it acceptable to shout down a speaker? For liberals it is: 76 percent approve. For conservatives, the figure is 44 percent.

Is it acceptable to block entry to a campus speech? Almost half of liberals (47 percent) agree. Among conservatives, 25 percent agree.

Is it acceptable to use violence to stop a campus speech? A quarter (25 percent) of liberals approve. For conservatives, the figure is 16 percent.

Not surprisingly, liberals are more comfortable expressing themselves on campus than conservatives are. As we might expect, 53 percent of college students describe themselves as "left of center"; only 20 percent identify as "right of center."

When students were asked which subjects were the most difficult to have a conversation about on campus, they mentioned abortion, racial inequality, Covid mandates and

transgender issues as the most difficult. With the exception of Covid restrictions, this reflects the Left's obsession with sex and race.

A recent survey conducted for Newsweek found that 44 percent of those aged 25-34 want to make "misgendering" a person—using the "wrong" pronoun to describe a transgender person—a criminal offense. Among those aged 35-44, 38 percent support treating this as a crime. The overall figure for Americans is 19 percent.

Only in times of war has there traditionally been support for muzzling free speech. But we are not at war, so there is no need to balance free speech with national security. What we are witnessing today is unlike anything we've seen before.

There has been next to zero media outcry over this condition. Yet the assault on the First Amendment is palpable.

The reason for this situation should be obvious to those not drugged by ideology: it is young liberals, indoctrinated by teachers, especially professors, who are the most intolerant, and those who work in the media are so thoroughly politicized these days as to be unmoved by what is happening.

All this talk about "Christian nationalists" being a threat to free speech is a ruse. The real threat is coming from the Left, the very same persons guilty of blaming their favorite bogeyman—Christians.

Unfortunately, many Catholic colleges and universities are not doing a good job ensuring freedom of speech on campus, either. Especially notorious are Jesuit-run institutions of higher education.

In the 2022-2023 survey by FIRE, Georgetown was rated #200. Only three schools out of a total of 203 were rated worse; Columbia University was dead last. The Catholic school with the best free speech rating was the University of Notre Dame.

Georgetown shows such contempt for free speech that it merited a special section in the study. Three specific cases, all very serious, were cited.

In 2022, Ilya Shapiro was suspended over a tweet thread in which he criticized President Biden's pledge to nominate a black woman to the Supreme Court. Dean William Treanor issued a statement denouncing the tweets, insisting that Georgetown is committed to "inclusion, belonging, and respect for diversity." [Note: Treanor said nothing about Georgetown's commitment to academic freedom.] Shapiro was eventually reinstated, but the damage was done; he subsequently resigned.

In 2021, Sandra Sellers was fired over a viral video in which she was unknowingly recorded talking to her colleague, David Batson, about the relatively poor performance of black students in her class. Dean Treanor condemned the two of them, pledging commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Batson later resigned following the backlash.

In 2021, Timothy Wickham-Crowley made jokes in class that evoked racial stereotypes and for dropping the n-word when reading aloud from a course textbook. He was investigated by the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Affirmative Action. While it was determined that his conduct was not "severe or pervasive," he was no longer asked to teach again.

These incidents say nothing about the way students, especially conservative students, feel about freely expressing their thoughts on campus. But Georgetown didn't earn a lousy rating on the basis of muzzling the free speech of faculty alone.

It should be pointed out that Georgetown's fidelity to Catholic teachings has long been questioned. It has two pro-abortion clubs on campus: H\*YAS for Choice for undergraduates, and Georgetown Law Students for Reproductive Justice. It has no racist clubs on campus—nor should it—but it has no problem allowing pro-abortion clubs. For liberals, racism is clearly

more offensive than child abuse in the womb.

The FIRE survey taken in 2021, which included over 37,000 students at over 150 colleges and universities, found that among Catholic institutions, none were in the top twenty. In fact, none were in the top one hundred. But there were three among the worst: Fordham was tenth from the bottom (#145); Boston College was fourth from the bottom (#151) and Marquette was second to last (#153). All three are Jesuit-run institutions.

While Fordham is a disgrace, it is clear from reading the report that Boston College and Marquette are much worse. Free speech is so under fire at Marquette that the FIRE survey gave it special mention.

“For two years running—in 2015 and 2016 (for the years 2014 and 2015)—FIRE named Marquette one of the ten worst colleges for free speech because of its attempts to revoke the tenure of Professor John McAdams and then terminate him. It took more than three years, but McAdams ultimately won his lawsuit against the university and was reinstated to his faculty position in the fall of 2018.”

What did McAdams do that made a faculty panel recommend sanctions against him? He complained when a graduate instructor tried to muzzle the free speech of a conservative student. In November 2014, McAdams criticized Cheryl Abbate for telling a student she would no longer tolerate his position objecting to gay marriage in her ethics class. McAdams was subsequently fired. He sued.

In July 2018, Marquette said it would comply with a court order from the Wisconsin Supreme Court to reinstate McAdams. Abbate was not just a graduate student—she was paid as an instructor by the university.

It was the free speech of McAdams that was endangered, not Abbate's. Indeed, she was the one who was guilty of stifling

free speech, and by a student who defended the Church's teachings on marriage at a supposedly Catholic university!

Previously, in 2014, the Catholic League criticized Marquette for telling employees at an "anti-harassment" training presentation that merely voicing objections to gay marriage may be considered discriminatory; they were urged to report such offenses. At that time, I raised the following question. "Would they bring the pope up on charges following a speech on marriage?"

What's going on at these Jesuit schools? Why are they breeding such intolerance? All four of them are known for their progressive policies, yet when it comes to free speech they are among the most regressive in the nation.

Just as with secular colleges, these Jesuit schools appear to get exercised over the free speech of its conservative students. What makes this so perverse is that typically these students hold to orthodox Catholic teachings on abortion, marriage, the family, and sexuality. Yet it seems that dissident students are more protected discussing their views than are conservative students.

I know from my 20 years teaching in Catholic schools the great good that many loyal faculty members have done. But I also know from first-hand experience that many administrators and faculty—not just a few—have no interest in furthering Catholic objectives and are indeed intolerant of them. They operate as termites within these schools, undermining the mission of Catholic education.

The time has come for those who run Georgetown, Fordham, Boston College and Marquette to have a campus-wide forum on the root causes of Jesuit intolerance for freedom of speech. Ditto for all those non-Jesuit schools that are more respectful of dissident voices on campus than they are in protecting the free speech rights of orthodox Catholic

students and faculty.

---

## 50th ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER PHOTOS

To view photos from the Catholic League's 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner click [here](#).

---

## DONOHUE INTERVIEWED ABOUT DISNEY FILM

*Bill Donohue was interviewed by Virginia Allen of The Heritage Foundation on January 26. The following is an excerpt from the "Daily Signal Podcast."*

**Allen:** Well, it's been fascinating to watch some of the events that have just taken place within the last year in regards to Disney.

And we've seen this shift that for so many years, for decades, Disney had these four guiding keys that they told their employees, that their mission, the foundation of what they were about was about safety, courtesy, show, and efficiency. Those were their four guiding principles, but then they introduced a fifth key. Talk a little bit about that fifth key and that shift that we've seen at Disney, really, I would say, over a number of years, but maybe put on warp speed within the last one to five years.



**Donohue:** Well, their idea of diversity, of course, is something which is very controversial. By the way, this is not just Disney. I've been doing this job here at the Catholic League now for about 30 years. We've always seen this kind of a, they didn't use the term woke culture, woke politics, left-wing politics. We've always seen it in the media and education, entertainment industry, the arts, nonprofit activist organizations.

Only in the last few years, in the last, I'd say, three to five years have we seen the elite at the top in the military, the health care industry, and the corporate world—and certainly Disney's in the corporate world—go down this road.

**Allen:** So what do you think the motivator is for Disney with all of this? We know that they have adopted a lot of these really, really radical ideologies, but why?

**Donohue:** Well, a lot of the people in the financial industry now, BlackRock and others with this entire idea of equity, are pushing this. A lot of it has to do with just being chic. They want to show that they have a moral perch, that they are better than the rest of us.

They're trying to say, "We're not like everybody else." Basically what they're saying is that, "The working class people are the problem. We're not that problem," which is why they don't mind raising the rates for their theme parks because they really don't want the working class. They don't want middle-class people. They prefer the more well-educated people.

And if you take a look at the surveys, the more well-educated people, particularly those with post-graduate education, they're the most Left of any segment of American society. Sure. Why shouldn't they be? They live in neighborhoods where they have gated communities. They have their own private security. Their kids go to private school, they don't go to the public schools, and we know that.

So they're aloof from the consequences of their own ideas. And until people have to live with the consequences of their

ideas, they have an escape valve and that's going on at Disney.

**Allen:** One of the things that I found really interesting and that I really appreciated about the documentary "Walt's Disenchanted Kingdom" is that you-all actually talked to Disney employees, to people that have watched this shift in change. What is the perspective from those on the inside? How do they feel about the direction that Disney's headed in?

**Donohue:** Well, once again, we see the same kind of phenomena. The average American wants to go out on the golf course or go bowling or go to a movie or take a vacation or go out with their kids, go to a park, go to a picnic. They don't get involved in politics. A tiny minority have always been involved in politics, but today it's gone to such extremes that they are misrepresenting the average person.

From what we've learned, and I can't prove this, but from what we've learned, the average Disney employee is not a political animal. They are not motivated by some animus against the family or religion. A lot of this is an attack on Christianity, let's face it. But they're not represented. They don't have a voice. They're not organized. And those people who are organized, the old adage about the squeaky wheel has always been true, but now it's more true than ever. And unless the rank and file begin to push back—by the way, that's what this movie is about.

This movie is not about making money for the Catholic League, if anything, it's costing us a lot of money. We went into this for one purpose, to be a cultural marker, to get to hit a cultural nerve in our society, to get people jacked up.

The average person—look at all those great women out there, the mothers who learned, through COVID, what was going on in the classroom. That's very much related to this. That's how we found out about what's going on in the classroom and what DeSantis was doing.

Getting kids at the age of 5, 6, 7, and 8 to question, "Are you happy, satisfied being a boy or a girl?" What is the

purpose of this? This is sexual engineering. It's child abuse. It's exploitative. They shouldn't be teaching the kids about gay or straight, anything to do with sexuality at those ages. They should let kids be kids. But the loud minority now has spoken up.

**Allen:** Well, what are the implications on Disney? Because we see at an increasing number Disney's willingness to put gay characters, to put trans characters into their movies. We saw last year with the film "Lightyear" that it included a scene with two women kissing. What is the tangible effect that we know or do we know if there's a bottom-line effect that Disney is feeling?

**Donohue:** Well, the whole idea here of sexualizing children and then getting to question about whether they're happy being a boy or a girl is to play into this idea that there's no such thing as human nature. And if there's no such thing as human nature, there's no such thing as nature's God. Everything is fluid.

Well, I have a doctorate in sociology from New York University, and I've written and spoken on this subject for decades, quite frankly, there is such a thing as truth. There is such a thing as reality. All right? I'm not a woman. I can't get pregnant. And unless we speak up and speak the truth, this thing's only going to get worse. And that's what's going on. The Left would have you believe—and this is what's driving this whole thing here with Disney—that life is nothing more than a social construct. No, that's not the case.

As a matter of fact, if you look at human universals, those characteristics are true across cultures throughout all of history. There are hundreds of them. Then the society and the culture takes its cues from nature. That's why we have, for example, the mother taking care of the child more than the father. They're taking cues from nature. This is what they don't want. They want the idea that there's no fundamental difference between the sexes. Everything is fluid. Everything is a rolling social construct. That's simply a lie.

There is truth. There's an anthropological difference between men and women and an anatomical difference between men and women. Biological differences between men and women. They want to erase it and it's madness on stilts.

**Allen: One thing that you discuss in the documentary is Disney's relationship with China, which I found very fascinating. How is Disney approaching and navigating their relationship with China?**

**Donohue:** Well, China, of course, is potentially the biggest audience for Hollywood. I say potentially, not right now, but they're looking to get that way. Bob Iger, who's the new CEO, he was the previous CEO before [Bob] Chapek, he came in there now and he got China to accept the Marvel Comics. OK, that's one thing.

But the Chinese communists as well as the Muslim nations of the Middle East, they are not exposed to sexual engineering of the likes that we were complaining about. Getting to the kids and questioning their sexuality ... they're being spared that because there's a pushback on the part of the communists and part of the Muslim-run nations. They don't afford us in America and in Western Europe the same courtesy.

**Allen: Is Disney going to course-correct?**

**Donohue:** Oh, I think there's no such thing as an iron law in history. That's a fable. So things are reversible. Big institutions do change. Sometimes they change quickly. Sometimes it's like turning the Queen Mary. But I do know that there is a bottom line, not just with money, but people have to be concerned about their image.

I've been fighting Disney for a long time. I fought with them back in 1995 when the Disney-owned distributor, Miramax, the Weinstein brothers, they put out this invidious movie about a Catholic priest, the name of the movie, it was called "Priest." And I'm not going to go through all that right now, but we pushed back on that and we saw some changes.

All I'm saying is this, the average person is not an activist.

They're looking to people like myself and many, many others. Many of them are in this movie to be leaders, to be the warriors. But we alone are like the generals. We don't win wars by ourselves. We need troops and the troops need the generals.

And if this culture war is up for grabs, I am not saying at all that our side is winning. I am not saying that the other side has won. But at some point, this clash between cultures, the secular militants and those who believe in traditional moral values, we just can't live in a bifurcated society any longer. One side will triumph over the other, and it's my hope that those people that believe in traditional moral values will succeed.

**Allen:** Before we let you go, could you just take a moment to explain what you-all do at the Catholic League and how making documentaries like "Walt's Disenchanted Kingdom" fits into your mission?

**Donohue:** That's an excellent question. Our primary goal is to fight anti-Catholicism and to fight against infringements on religious liberty affecting any particular group. But we're primarily involved with Catholics and Christians in a more general sense. But the reason we want the voice of the Catholic Church to be out there despite some failures on the part of the leaders, the teachings have always been solid. The teachings of the Catholic Church have been solid and we want that voice to be heard.

So the documentary is tapping into what's going in our culture. We're trying to get support for traditional moral values as understood by practicing Catholics, observant Jews, evangelical Protestants, most Mormons and Muslims. We should never leave these people out of the equation. They have kids. They're concerned as well. And I dare say, people who are unbelievers, if you've got kids, you've got to be concerned about the direction of our culture. That's what we're trying to do here with this documentary.

---

# 2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

*Michael P. McDonald, Director of Communications*

The forces working to undermine the Catholic Church and our Judeo-Christian values doubled-down in 2022. One might expect a traditional-minded organization to focus on mitigating losses; however, the Catholic League went on the offense undertaking many bold projects and played a significant part in the major culture war victories of the last year.

The biggest of these projects was the making of our documentary “Walt’s Disenchanted Kingdom: How Disney is Losing its Way.” It has a star-studded cast, and Jason Meath, the film’s director, did a magnificent job. We anticipate it will garner a wide audience when it is released in January 2023.

Another major undertaking was a survey of Catholics for the 60th anniversary of Vatican II. We did this to counter the narrative that Catholics were largely dissatisfied with the Church and wanted to see changes. To this end, we contracted McLaughlin & Associates to conduct the poll. They did great work, and the results will greatly help us set the record straight for years to come.

We also filed an amicus brief in *303 Creative LLC v Elenis*. This case involves a Christian web designer, Lorie Smith, who launched a preemptive strike against the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act: it would require her to build wedding websites for “gay marriages.” Represented by the Pittsburgh law firm of Gallagher Giancola, we support Lorie Smith in her quest to maintain her First Amendment rights. The Supreme Court will rule on this in 2023.

While we undertook these bold projects, there were several key

victories before the high court. One case involved the religious rights of a football coach, who lost his job because he prayed on the field following games. The other involved the state of Maine discriminating against religious schools.

While both of these victories are important, the most critical decision from the Supreme Court in 2022 was the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. After nearly 50 years of determined efforts by Catholics across the country, Justice Samuel Alito, writing for the 5-4 majority in *Dobbs v. Jackson*, held that “*Roe* was egregiously wrong from the start. Its reasoning was exceptionally weak, and the decision has had damaging consequences.” That is why, he said, “It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people’s elected representatives.”

Many organizations, particularly the Catholic Church, kept the fight for life going over the years, and in doing so, they contributed to this victory. We, too, played an active role in keeping this issue in front of the public through scores of media appearances.

Even before the ruling came out, the pro-abortion fanatics desecrated two of the most prominent Catholic churches in the nation. On January 20, 2022 during the Vigil for Life at the National Basilica in D.C., Catholics for Choice used a light projector to broadcast their anti-Catholic message.

Two days later, another anti-Catholic outfit, New York City for Abortion Rights, projected “God Loves Abortion” and other vile slogans on the exterior of St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Supporters of the group shouted obscenities at pro-life Catholics entering and exiting the Cathedral.

Then in May, when a draft decision was leaked suggesting the Supreme Court was prepared to overturn *Roe*, the pro-abortion fanatics began to increase their violence. When the court ultimately ruled in June, things reached a fever pitch.

We put together a representative list of the incidents of violence against Catholics so we could call for action from the proper authorities.

To this end, we sent a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland asking him to investigate Jane's Revenge, a radical pro-abortion group that uses domestic terrorists' tactics. Rather than take action against physical violence perpetrated against Catholics, the leadership of the overtly politicized Department of Justice (DOJ) chose to target pro-life activists instead.

On September 23, a Catholic pro-life activist, Mark Houck, was arrested by two dozen FBI agents—they came into his house with guns drawn—for allegedly violating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act.

This kind of overreaction for a minor infraction of the law is deeply troubling, and it becomes even more troubling when paired with the DOJ's under-reaction to attacks on the pro-life side.

We wrote to the FBI and DOJ about this, but when they did not get back to us, we contacted several congressional leaders calling on them to hold the FBI and DOJ accountable.

While it is troubling enough for Federal law enforcement to target Catholics, equally disturbing was the silence of prominent Catholics in Washington when pro-abortion radicals attacked Catholics. Both President Joe Biden and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, "devout Catholics," remained mute on these instances of violence.

For his part, Biden has grown more radical over the years in his support for abortion. This is evident in the people he has working around him. Six of the eight Catholics in his cabinet have long track records of championing abortion. Another prominent figure in Biden's White House is John Podesta, who previously tried to orchestrate a "Catholic Spring" to



encourage Catholics to revolt against Church teachings.

In the aftermath of the *Dobbs* decision, even the corporations decided to join the radicals on the abortion issue. We made a tally of the companies that announced they would pay for abortions in their healthcare plans, thus short-circuiting states with laws protecting the unborn.

In addition to abortion, transgenderism—the dangerous idea that the sexes are interchangeable—was another major flashpoint in the culture war in 2022.

While it is bad enough that the Biden administration is promoting this fantasy, it took steps to thwart efforts by the states to protect children and promote the truth. Fortunately, several governors, particularly FL Gov. Ron DeSantis, pushed back against Biden's tyrannical tactics.

But Biden's most dangerous proposal was the effort to amend Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (a.k.a. ObamaCare) to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex to include "sexual orientation and gender identity." This would utterly shatter the religious liberty protections of Catholic hospitals and force them to provide transgender services. Beyond infringing on the First Amendment rights of Catholics, it would threaten the well-being of children.

During the public comment period, we asked Catholic League members to register their complaints by strongly emphasizing this threat to religious liberty. While this might not have been enough to totally deter Biden from his objective, it sent a strong message to Washington.

While the Biden Administration was promoting transgenderism and actively undermining religious liberty, the courts were pushing back. Two appellate courts ruled that other Biden initiatives could not force Catholic hospitals and doctors to perform transgender procedures.

Additionally, corporations joined in promoting transgenderism in the past year. Twitter was one of the worst offenders. This prompted us to send a letter to Twitter after the company began sanctioning people for complaining about a male University of Pennsylvania swimmer competing on the women's team.

But perhaps the biggest promoter of transgenderism was academia. We even had to call out the U.S. Air Force Academy for promoting it. Many prestigious private schools, too, taught this twisted ideology to young students behind their parents' backs.

The most egregious incident occurred at Tennessee Tech when a drag performer partnered with a student group to put on a display of anti-Catholic bigotry. Fortunately, the university president condemned this outrage cancelling all campus events by the groups involved. He said that he was "also offended by disparaging mockery toward any religious group."

In addition to being heavily involved in the fight against abortion and transgenderism, we had to contend with expressions of anti-Catholicism that we thought were long over.

We had to confront Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene. She insulted Catholics by saying "Satan's controlling the Church." We called for an apology. When she refused, we sent a letter to the House Ethics Committee calling on them to levy sanctions against her for her anti-Catholic remarks. Greene is an outspoken Republican, and this exchange highlighted our independent streak.

Additionally, we had to call for an investigation of a DOJ lawyer who labeled organizations promoting religious liberty "hate groups."

We had to intervene after Bridget Fleming, a member of the legislature for Suffolk County, Long Island, introduced a

resolution that would have forced all prayers before official business to be “neutral.” We quickly sprung into action and within hours, Fleming’s resolution was dead. We were happy to help because this resolution was in response to an invocation led by Msgr. Robert Batule, who is on our board of directors.

We also had to get involved when the assistant principal of a school in Connecticut was caught on camera saying he would never hire a Catholic teacher “because if someone is raised hardcore Catholic, it’s like they are brainwashed.” We wasted no time contacting officials across the state to hold him accountable.

The media have long been an antagonist of Catholics, and 2022 was no exception. In the fall the Associated Press published a hit piece complaining about the confessional seal. It had no evidence to back up its claim. When we asked the authors to see their evidence, they never got back to us.

The forces seeking to undermine our Judeo-Christian heritage love attacking Christmas, and this year was no exception. In Massachusetts, a human rights commissioner was forced to resign after making anti-Christian statements when residents wanted to display a Christmas tree in the town’s public library.

We contacted over 350 Catholics associated with Cardinal Newman chapters at colleges and universities asking them to let us know of any anti-Catholic activities around Christmas.

We condemned a play at Harvard that reimagined Jesus as a “gay Asian.” We sounded the alarm over several bloody horror movies with Christmas settings. We confronted government officials in King County, Washington seeking to limit their employees’ abilities to display Christmas decorations. We also called out a Christmas parade in Texas that included drag queens.

In a more tasteful salute to the season, we continued the decades-long tradition of displaying a nativity scene in

Central Park. We do this every year not only to honor the birth of Christ, but also to help educate others who wish to display a crèche on public property about the rules.

In 2022, we were delighted to learn our work continues to earn recognition.

Bill Donohue was featured in a documentary on Mother Teresa that originally aired in May on Sky in the U.K. and Ireland; it was also seen in Israel and Australia.

Donohue also received an Honorary Doctorate of Law from Ave Maria Law School. Additionally, the *Catholic Herald* named him as one of the top Catholic Leaders in the United States for 2022.

While the forces working against the Catholic Church and traditional Judeo-Christian values were in overdrive in 2022, we responded with equal vigor. We undertook several major projects and played a part in the important victories in the culture war this year.

---

## **“WALT’S DISENCHANTED KINGDOM”**

# "WALT'S DISENCHANTED KINGDOM"

Bill Donohue



"We're talking about little kids. Disney wants them to question their sexuality — they just got off their tricycle!"—Bill Donohue



"Without question Disney is a political organization."—Tony Perkins



"There's something disturbing lurking in the Magic Kingdom these days."—Mercedes Schlapp



Jason Meath



"It's all about trying to seize the minds of children as early as possible."—Miranda Devine



"Everybody has equal rights. Nobody has extra rights."—Dr. Ben Carson



"It's more than Disney being anti-parent. It is Disney being anti the nuclear family."—Brent Bozell



"Disney repeatedly critiques alleged injustice here in the United States without saying a peep about actual human rights...in China."  
—Vivek Ramaswamy



"They're taking kindergartners and first graders—teaching them that they're gender fluid."—David Horowitz



"They desperately want to crack the Chinese marketplace. It's a booming market."—Christian Toto