

BECERRA IS NO VICTIM OF BIGOTRY

Given his anti-Catholic record, it was not a surprise that Xavier Becerra's nomination as Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) ran into trouble. Unfortunately, he got help from a nun. Sister Carol Keehan, the former head of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, came to his defense.

NBCNews online picked up an op-ed by Keehan alleging that Becerra is a victim of anti-Catholicism. Though she deplored those who were "attacking his Catholicism," she failed to offer a scintilla of evidence. The best she could do was to cite a remark by Senator Mitch McConnell last January noting that Becerra's healthcare experience was limited to suing those "who dare to live out their religious convictions."

McConnell's observation was correct. The Senate Minority Leader was referring to Becerra's role in crafting the Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare), a central part of which is the HHS mandate forcing the Little Sisters of the Poor to pay for abortion-inducing drugs in their healthcare plan. That is what he was referring to, and there is nothing bigoted about it.

Keehan adores Becerra so much that she says his character "is rooted in his Catholic upbringing and values." Really?

- When Becerra voted as a congressman against a ban on partial-birth abortions—the child's skull must first be crushed—was that an example of his "Catholic upbringing and values"?
- When Becerra voted against a ban on transporting minors seeking an abortion to states with relaxed abortion laws—a form of human trafficking—was that an example of his "Catholic

upbringing and values”?

- When Becerra voted against a bill that would criminalize the killing of unborn babies during the commission of another crime, was that an example of his “Catholic upbringing and values”?
- When Becerra, acting as California Attorney General, sought to put crisis pregnancy centers out of business, was that an example of his “Catholic upbringing and values”?
- When Becerra brought felony charges against those who filmed Planned Parenthood officials trafficking in aborted baby parts, was that an example of his “Catholic upbringing and values”?
- When Becerra said that the conscience rights of Christian business owners who objected to paying for birth control in their healthcare plans need not be respected, was that an example of his “Catholic upbringing and values”?
- When Becerra relentlessly pursued the Little Sisters of the Poor, trying to force them to violate Catholic teachings, was that an example of his “Catholic upbringing and values”?
- When Becerra co-sponsored the Equality Act—the most radical assault on Christianity ever broached in the Congress—was that an example of his “Catholic upbringing and values”?

Becerra is no victim of anti-Catholicism. In fact, he is a master sponsor of it.

CUOMO COOKED HIS OWN GOOSE

Gov. Cuomo is finished, and everyone knows it. The investigative reports on the nursing home scandal, along with a probe of accusations of sexual harassment, will detail his deadly decisions and his sexual misconduct. If he were prudent, he would resign. But his unrelenting arrogance will

not allow him to do so.

Regarding the latter charges, it is now clear that Cuomo's campaign for a new law on sexual harassment in the workplace backfired. Indeed, he cooked his own goose.

Cuomo started 2019 bragging how New York will enact legislation on sexual harassment that will be the strongest in the nation. In mid-February, when the first public hearings were held, he said, "I am very proud that New York is the most aggressive state in the country on women's rights. Anything I can do on sexual harassment we will do."

One month later, after championing what he said was the gold standard on sexual harassment legislation, Cuomo was asked by Karen DeWitt, a reporter for NPR, about a recent high-ranking official in his administration who had to resign amid a sexual harassment probe. That set Cuomo off.

According to one news story, "Cuomo got extremely testy." Another report said he "scolded" DeWitt. Her crime? She asked what he was going to do different about this problem in his state government. "When you say it's state government," the governor said, "you do a disservice to women, with all due respect, even though you are a woman. It's not government; it's society."

In June, state lawmakers passed the new law. Cuomo was delighted that the bar was set very low. "We will make it easier for claims to be brought forward and send a strong message that when it comes to sexual harassment in the workplace, time is up." The New York Times weighed in, saying, "The legislation eliminates the state's 'severe or pervasive' standard for proving harassment, which advocates said had allowed judges to dismiss claims of inappropriate comments or even groping as insufficiently hostile."

Cuomo signed the legislation in August. When it went into effect in October, he said something that came back to haunt

him. "The ongoing culture of sexual harassment in the workplace is unacceptable and has held employees back for far too long. This critical measure finally ends the absurd legal standard for victims to prove sexual harassment in the workplace and makes it easier for those who have been subjected to this disgusting behavior to bring claims forward."

As it turns out, multiple women have accused Cuomo of sexual harassment, and one of them, Lindsey Boylan, specifically accused him of creating "a culture within his own administration where sexual harassment and bullying is so pervasive that it is not only condoned but expected." Isn't that what Cuomo explicitly said was "unacceptable"?

Cuomo said at a press conference on March 3rd, "I never touched anyone inappropriately. I never touched anyone inappropriately."

This is contradicted by four of his accusers. Boylan says Cuomo kissed her on the lips without her consent and touched her lower back, arms and legs. Anna Ruch (unlike the others she did not work for Cuomo) said he put his hands on her lower back and cheeks and asked to kiss her. Karen Hinton said that after he embraced her, she tried to pull away, but he pulled her back. Ana Liss says he touched her lower back and kissed her hand, calling her "sweetheart."

Only Charlotte Bennett has not accused Cuomo of "inappropriate touching." However, she said he asked her about her sex life, and whether she ever slept with older men, making her feel uncomfortable. "I thought he was trying to sleep with me," Bennett told Norah O'Donnell in a CBS interview. As the New York Times noted about Cuomo's new law, offenses include "inappropriate comments."

Now it can be argued that some of these offenses are more infractions than they are serious cases of sexual misconduct.

However, when he was giving the green light to lawyers wanting to pursue old cases of alleged clergy sexual abuse, Cuomo knew that many of the accusations involved “inappropriate touching.” So why should we give him a break now?

No one is saying Cuomo is guilty of doing what President Bill Clinton did with Monica Lewinsky. But according to his own relaxed standard of what constitutes sexual harassment in the workplace, he is guilty as sin.

CUOMO HAD A DIFFERENT STANDARD FOR PRIESTS

Now that Gov. Cuomo has been accused of being a serial predator, he is insisting that his due process rights be respected. Yet when it came to accused priests, Cuomo sang a different tune.

Cuomo has a different standard for himself. When asked about the charges against him, he said, “You can allege something, might be true, might not be true. You may have misperceived, there may be other facts.”

If this is his best defense, the man is in trouble. Nevertheless, what he said was accurate. Not all allegations are true. Misperceptions are not uncommon. There may be other facts that have yet to surface. That’s why the accused, including him, are entitled to due process.

However, when it came to allegations against priests—for offenses alleged to have happened decades earlier—Cuomo showed no respect for their due process rights. He was happy to sign legislation that gave rapacious lawyers out to sunder the

Catholic Church all the leeway they wanted.

Just as important, Cuomo knew these lawyers would focus on the Church and not pursue claims against public school teachers. Given the generosity of the teachers' unions at election time, he was not about to demand that their sordid record of child rape be prosecuted.

When Cuomo signed the bill aimed at the Catholic Church in 2019, he called out the Church for fighting the legislation. What he said was as ignorant as it was cruel.

Cuomo accused Catholic Church officials of "threatening" those who were not supportive of their opposition to the bill. He said, "I believe it was the conservatives in the Senate who were threatened by the Catholic Church. And this went on for years."

When teachers' unions oppose a bill it is called lobbying. When bishops oppose a bill it is called a threat. Cuomo's double standard, and his animus against the Catholic Church, could not be more plain.

What he failed to note is that for over a decade, bills targeting the sexual abuse of minors did not apply to the public sector. It took the bishops, and the Catholic League, to demand that the bill be made inclusive of all entities. We didn't threaten anyone.

Our major concern was the due process rights of accused priests. Most of the allegations took place a very long time ago, making it difficult to determine innocence or guilt. We know that memories fade and witnesses die, which is why we have statutes of limitations in the first place. There is nothing "threatening" about opposing bills that gut this fundamental due process provision.

If we had said about accused priests, "You can allege something, might be true, might not be true. You may have

misperceived, there may be other facts,” would Cuomo have agreed? Not a chance.

In fact, on the day he signed the bill that the Church opposed, he blithely assumed that all of the accused priests were guilty. “I want to start by applauding these victims/advocates who went through a horrendous violation in life and an aggravated defilement because it was a person in authority, a person who was supposed to be respected.”

So there we have it. The accusers are to be believed and the accused is guilty. If Cuomo’s standard for priests were applied to himself, then his accusers are telling the truth and he is guilty. And if that is the case, why is he still in office, especially now that he is accused of sexual assault?

WILL AMAZON CENSOR THE POPE?

Ryan T. Anderson was recently named president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a respectable conservative think tank in Washington, D.C. He is a brilliant social commentator who spent several years at The Heritage Foundation. One of his books, “When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Movement,” is no longer available on Amazon. That’s because it is a critical analysis of this phenomenon.

If Anderson is too controversial for Amazon, then it is only a matter of time before Pope Francis is censored. That actually would be great—it’s time the cancel culture mavens had their tyrannical powers blow up in their faces.

Available on Amazon is a book, “San Giovanni Paolo Magno,” authored by Father Luigi Maria Epicoco and Pope Francis, that was published last year in Italian. In it the pope condemns

gender theory—the idea that men and women can switch their sex—as “evil.” The pope made it clear that he was not referring to “those who have a homosexual orientation.” Rather, he was referring to “an attack on difference, on God’s creativity, on man and woman.”

Is Amazon going to censor this book? If so, where will it stop? If not, why not?

This was hardly the first time Pope Francis denounced gender ideology. In 2015, he called this novel idea “ideological colonization,” saying that it preys on children. Indeed, he said it was analogous to “the Hitler Youth.” In 2014, he went further, arguing that “Gender ideology is demonic.”

Now if these remarks by the Holy Father were to appear in a book, would Amazon carry it?

The appetite for censorship on the left is at a fever pitch. Those responsible for this assault on free speech need to be subjected to much greater scrutiny on the part of Congress than has been true to date.

CUOMO ISN'T THE ONLY “PRO-WOMEN” PHONY

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is accused by multiple young women of sexual misconduct. He is also a rabid supporter of abortion-on-demand, including partial-birth abortions.

At the end of his press conference on March 3rd, after defending himself against these charges, he touted his “pro-women” record. “We have more senior women in this

administration than probably any administration in history.” His top aide, Melissa DeRosa, agreed, saying, he is a big proponent of “reproductive health.”

Cuomo is not alone among Democrats who have been accused of sexual misconduct, yet brag how “pro-women” they are. Here is a sample.

Joe Biden – President

- Accused of sexually assaulting a staff assistant in 1993
- “The Biden administration is committed to codifying Roe v. Wade and appointing judges that respect foundational precedents like Roe.”

Bill Clinton – President

- Accused of sexual assault and misconduct by four women: One woman accused Mr. Clinton of raping her in 1978; another accused him of sexually assaulting her in 1980; a third woman accused Clinton of exposing himself to her in 1991 and sexually harassing her; and a fourth accused Clinton of groping her without her consent in 1993.
- “The Government simply has no right to interfere with decisions that must be made by women of America to make the right choice.”

Eric Schneiderman – Former Attorney General of New York

- Accused of sexually and physically abusing four women and forced to resign from office
- “No state law can restrict a woman’s constitutional right to make her own reproductive health choices. This opinion makes crystal clear that all women have a constitutional right to an abortion, irrespective of inconsistent state law.”

Anthony Weiner – Former Congressman (D-NY)

- Accused of sending sexually suggestive images to several women over his career and forced to resign from office

- In response to the Supreme Court ruling on partial birth abortions, Weiner asked for “a hearing so that we can move to overturn the underlying ban on a certain type of late-term abortion.” He called the ruling “an affront to women across the country.”

Al Franken – Former Senator (D-MN)

- Accused of groping or forcibly kissing more than 10 women and forced to resign from office
- In a speech to NARAL, Franken said, “a woman’s right to choose is never fully won. It must be won anew every day, every year, every Congress, and every generation.”

John Conyers – Former Congressman (D-MI)

- Accused of sexually harassing staffers and firing those women who complained and forced to resign from office
- Conyers voted against a ban on partial birth abortions and for federal funding of abortions

Eliot Spitzer – Former Governor of New York

- Accused of soliciting sex from an escort service and forced to resign from office
- “I want to make it clear from the start that if the new Supreme Court turns its back on women’s privacy and limits or overturns Roe vs. Wade, I will do everything in my power to preserve that right here in New York.”

Bobby Scott – Congressman (D-VA)

- Accused of sexual misconduct by a former staffer who claims he dismissed her after she refused his advances
- In a 2020 letter to Nancy Pelosi, Scott joined other legislators in saying, “As proud members of the first pro-choice majority in the House of Representatives, we unequivocally oppose efforts to roll back access to reproductive health services, including abortion....”

These men all have a clear conscience. They are convinced they are champions of women's rights, thus making moot their sexual misconduct.

As long as they have a pro-abortion record, they can treat women any way they want. The sad thing is how many voters, including women, agree with this assessment.

For Catholics, abortion is as anti-women as it is anti-child, thus it is not surprising that those who champion it would be accused of sexually abusing women.

CATHOLIC CHURCH'S ROLE IN ENDING SLAVERY

During Black History Month, the subject of slavery was discussed in many forums. In some cases, treatment of the Catholic Church's role has been misrepresented.

Slavery is one of the most ubiquitous and historically accepted institutions in history. There is not a place on the globe where slavery did not exist, and protests against it have been extremely rare. The Hebrews, Greeks and Romans saw nothing wrong with it, and neither did the Africans, Chinese and Japanese. Aristotle thought slavery was a normal way of life.

It is important to recognize that, notwithstanding the American experience, slavery has almost never had anything to do with race: people of the same race, ethnicity, tribe, or clan enslaved each other. Moreover, it was not uncommon for former slaves to enslave others. That slavery still exists today in parts of Africa (which did not make it illegal until

the 1980s) is proof of its tenacious legacy.

If slavery was considered normal throughout most of history, when, and for what reasons, was it finally seen as objectionable? We can credit Western civilization with that honor: It was the first civilization to condemn slavery. The driving force behind it was Christianity.

The first person in history to condemn slavery publicly was Saint Patrick. A former slave himself, he enunciated the wisdom of natural law without specifically invoking it. All men were created equal in the eyes of God, he said, and should therefore be treated as equals in law. It was this quintessentially Catholic concept—all humans possess equal dignity— that eventually proved to be triumphant.

In antiquity, slavery was so common that Pope Pius I in the second century and Pope Callistus I in the third century were slaves. It wasn't until the fourth century that a bishop rejected slavery, and that was Gregory of Nyssa.

In practice, the Church's opposition to slavery began with its objections to the inhumane treatment of slaves; only later did it condemn the institution itself. But by protesting maltreatment, it did more to lay the groundwork for the eventual demise of slavery than any other institution, secular or religious.

Given the Church's role in opposing slavery it was troubling to read a recent Washington Post article posted online by Shannen Dee Williams, a professor of history at Villanova University. Apparently unaware of Saint Patrick and Gregory of Nyssa (who later became a saint), she claims the Church played "the leading role" in the history of slavery. She even goes so far as to say that the Catholic Church was "the first global institution to declare that Black lives did not matter."

This is not simply an example of shoddy scholarship—it is a vicious lie. To make her case, she cites papal bulls by Pope

Nicholas V in 1452 and Pope Alexander VI in 1493 as evidence that “the Catholic Church authorized the perpetual enslavement of Africans and the seizure of ‘non-Christian lands.’” This account is seriously flawed.

Nicholas V’s “Dum Diversas” was a response to those who sought “to extinguish [the] Christian religion.” The pope argued that the King of Portugal had a right to protect his people and to hold in “perpetual servitude” the Saracens (Muslims) and pagans who threatened Christianity. The pope did not make a sweeping statement about enslaving Africans, as Williams contends.

Pope Alexander VI’s “Inter Caetera” awarded colonial rights over newly discovered lands to Spain and Portugal. Nowhere in his papal bull does the pope even mention slaves or slavery. For Williams to imply otherwise is scurrilous.

Had Williams dug a little deeper she would have cited Pope Paul III’s decision to forbade slavery in the New World under penalty of excommunication. This was in 1537, at a time when no other leader, secular or religious, was denouncing slavery. In 1839, Pope Gregory XVI also condemned slavery, but it was Pope Leo XIII in 1888 who took the most authoritative steps to abolish this institution.

It was the Catholic Church’s teaching on natural law—all humans possess equal dignity and equal rights—that proved to be determinative in the end. Aristotle may be the father of natural law but he thought it was normal for slaves to obey their masters. The Church disagreed. It invoked natural rights—our equal rights come from God, not government—thus making the case to undermine slavery.

An honest historical account of the role played by the Catholic Church in ending slavery is not being taught in the schools, at any level. This has less to do with scholarship than it does politics.

To cite one example, how many college students are aware that the first prominent sociologist in American history, George Fitzhugh, was known as a progressive and a strong defender of slavery? In the 1850s, he maintained that because blacks were intellectually and morally inferior to white people, they could never successfully compete with whites in a capitalist society and were therefore better off as slaves. This is what happens when natural law and natural rights are jettisoned.

It is time for those in education, and for the publishers of elementary and secondary textbooks in history and the social sciences, to render an accurate depiction of the Catholic Church's role in ending slavery.

MEDIA BLACKOUT OF NAZI-LIKE EVENT

In the 1930s, Nazis routinely invaded religious services at synagogues. There have been many copycat events in the United States since that time, most of which have taken place in Catholic churches. The latest incident took place on January 22, the 48th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion-on-demand.

The venue was St. Joseph Cathedral in Columbus, Ohio. While Columbus Bishop Robert Brennan was celebrating a pro-life Mass, a group of protesters stormed the cathedral. They held up pro-abortion signs and chanted anti-Catholic slogans, leaving Catholics in attendance in a state of shock.

Bishop Brennan thanked the Columbus Police for acting swiftly to restore order and before anyone was hurt. He also expressed his admiration and thanks to those who endured this event.

There are two major stories here. One is the decision by anti-Catholic protesters to crash the Mass; the other is the media blackout.

One TV station, 10WBNS (the local CBS affiliate), covered this story. One local paper, the Columbus Dispatch, made mention of what happened. Catholic News Agency, LifeSite and Breitbart also did a story on the protest. That was it.

Where were the major media outlets in Ohio? Where was the Associated Press? Where were the cable TV news stories?

When a Nazi-like event takes place in 2021, and the media respond with a yawn, it means either they don't care what happens to Catholics or they find it vaguely amusing. That would be the generous view.

A less generous interpretation would be that the church busting was deserved. The media are on a roll demonizing what they call White Christian Nationalists, an ill-defined group of people who are allegedly seeking to take command of America. So when fascists crash a Catholic Mass—especially one that honors pro-life Catholics—it is hard for the media to get worked up about it.

A recent poll shows that less than half the public trusts the media. That lack of trust is a function of distorted news stories, instances when editorializing is substituted for hard news. It is also attributable to glaring instances of omission. Add what happened at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Columbus to the latter list.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL FALSELY ACCUSED

It was a quick turnaround. We protested a false story and it was immediately corrected.

Maggie Baska was named a reporter for PinkNews, a gay media outlet from the UK, on January 27, 2021. She no sooner was hired when she proved to be a total incompetent, falsely accusing a Catholic school of something it never did.

On that same day, Fox23News reported that an eight-year-old girl had been expelled after she told another student that she had a crush on her. The story was accurate. The school was Rejoice Christian School in Owasso, Oklahoma. Two days later CNN ran a column on this news story. It, too, was accurate.

On February 1, an article on this story was posted on the website of pinknews.co.uk by Maggie Baska. The headline read, "Eight-Year-Old Expelled from Catholic School after Telling Another Girl She Had a Crush on Her."

False. Rejoice Christian School is not a Catholic school. The error was not limited to the headline: the story said the girl "was expelled from her Catholic school..." This bogus account was picked up by other media sites.

Even a secular reporter should know that Catholic schools typically identify as Catholic, not "Christian." That should have been the first clue that something was wrong.

PinkNews labels itself "the brand for the global LGBT+ community and the next generation. Our mission is to inform, inspire change and empower people to be themselves." How about just getting news stories right?

We asked PinkNews to correct its story. It did. Thanks to

those who emailed the UK media outlet.

DEMONIZING WHITE CHRISTIANS

Much to the chagrin of the Christian left, they have never been able to gain traction. This accounts, at least in part, for their animus against conservative Christians, who, unlike those on the left, carry significant political and cultural weight. The most recent manifestation of the Christian left's hostility to conservative Christians is their invention of Christian nationalism.

It always helps to have a bogeyman. Christian nationalism was not discovered—it was created out of used cloth. Formerly known as the “Religious Right” or “Christocrats,” today's bad guys are different in that they evince a strong racist edge. White people are the problem. To be more specific, it is white conservative Christians, many of whom are Trump supporters, who are an existential threat to our democracy.

Who believes this nonsense? Americans United for Separation of Church and State believes it. It blamed Christian nationalists for the Capitol riot of January 6. So did several True Believers in Christian nationalism, including professor Andrew Whitehead, one of the more prominent exponents of this fiction.

Christianity Today columnist Tish Harrison Warren is also on board. The violence, she said, can be “laid at the feet of the white American church.” The “white American church?” Who speaks this way? Is there an “Asian American church?” Or a “people of color American church?”

David French is a white evangelical critic of Christian

nationalism, but unlike most of these partisans, he hasn't gone off the deep end. For example, he doesn't seem to know what the "white American church" is anymore than the rest of us. "It is rare to find an outright Christian nationalist church. There's not a huge wave of Christian nationalist churches."

This seems odd. If we can't locate where the bogeyman hangs out, isn't it possible he doesn't exist? After all, communists were reliably found hanging out at the offices of the Communist Party. Why can't anyone locate the address of Christian nationalists? Whitehead suggests that's because they're everywhere. "Christian nationalism is pervasive across all segments of U.S. society," he says. Still, it doesn't make sense that no one can find their headquarters.

Paul D. Miller was featured last month in an interview he gave to Christianity Today on this subject. He is a professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service; he is also finishing a book on Christian nationalism. Those are impressive credentials. Too bad he can't get his facts straight.

Miller cites a book by Whitehead and Samuel Perry on Christian nationalism, "Taking America Back for God." They contend the country is split between advocates and detractors of Christian nationalism. They call the most rabid advocates of Christian nationalism "ambassadors," saying they make up 19.8% of the population. In his interview, Miller said the authors contend that "52% of all Americans are what they call ambassador."

How could Miller screw this up? It's not hard to figure out. In his enthusiasm to show how omnipresent the bogeymen are, he conflated the ambassadors with the "accommodators," the less rabid supporters of Christian nationalism; they constitute 32.1% of the public. That's how Miller concluded that the majority of Americans are radical Christian nationalists.

If someone believes that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are divinely inspired, does that make him a Christian nationalist? Whitehead and Perry say it does. Miller goes so far as to say “that put[s] you high up on the scale of Christian nationalism.”

That would seem to make Thomas Jefferson, not exactly a practicing Christian, a Christian nationalist. The author of the Declaration made four references to God in our founding document. He spoke of “the laws of nature and nature’s God”; “the Creator”; “the supreme judge of the world”; and “the protection of Divine Providence.” And, of course, he said our inalienable rights come from our “Creator,” not government.

Was the U.S. Supreme Court giving voice to Christian nationalism in 1892 when it declared, “This is a Christian nation”? Or was it simply making an historical observation? No matter, to advocates of the cancel culture, such a remark needs to be excised.

Are those who sing patriotic songs Christian nationalists? What about those who display the American flag? Or how about those who say the Pledge of Allegiance? Miller says all three are examples of Christian nationalism. He just indicted most Americans.

What about left-wing Christians who pledge their allegiance to the poor? Are they Christian nationalists? No, insists Miller. What about Christians who are pro-life or who defend religious liberty? According to Miller, they are true Christian nationalists.

Looks like David French is a Christian nationalist after all. The mild-mannered critic of Christian nationalism maintains, “I haven’t changed my perspective on things like being pro-life or believing in strong religious freedom protections.”

Miller was asked what pastors can do to help stop Christian nationalism. His answer was precious. They can ask the

faithful, “How much time are you spending a day listening to Fox News and talk radio?”

Who knew that Rush was the real bogeyman all along?

RESISTANCE TO POPE’S PLEAS GROWING IN U.S.

There is nothing new about the Catholic Church’s opposition to abortion or human trafficking, but what Pope Francis said about them on February 8 is worth a closer look.

The pope decried the fact that many nations are retreating on these key life issues. What he said bears application to the vector of change apparent in the United States.

The pope said “it was painful” to observe that “under the pretext of guaranteeing presumed subjective rights, a growing number of legal systems in our world seem to be moving away from their inalienable duty to protect human life at every one of its phases.” Calling the right to life “a foundational human right,” the Holy Father said, “If we deprive the weakest among us of the right to life, how can we effectively guarantee respect for every other right?”

Among those other rights, he noted in a separate forum, is the right to be free from exploitation. He pointedly mentioned the plight of those who suffer from human trafficking, the most vulnerable among us. He encouraged all of us to continue “praying and fighting together” in hopes of ridding ourselves of this horrendous condition.

Unfortunately, in the United States we are going backwards on

both issues.

President Biden is determined to be the most pro-abortion president in American history. He spent his first few weeks in office rolling back many restrictions on abortion enacted by the Trump administration. Moreover, never has Biden, or anyone on his staff, called the right to life “a foundational human right.”

Just as disturbing are the Biden administration’s policies governing border security. Let’s be honest: He is bent on relaxing the strictures that worked to stop the caravans of Central Americans from crashing our borders. Now they are back. Who is leading them? Human traffickers. They traffic in women, children and drugs.

Biden professes to be a “devout” Catholic, and it would be unfair to question his personal relationship with God. But he can be judged on his abortion policies, and on that score he fails miserably. As for human trafficking, no one champions its cause. But that matters little. What matters is whether the policies being promoted act as a deterrent or a lure.

Pope Francis has a right to expect more fidelity to his teachings from those who wear their Catholicism on their sleeve than from those who do not. And he certainly should expect more from them than those who are not Catholic.