

CLARIFYING OUR ROLE

William A. Donohue

Following the debacle with Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, I found it necessary to write a statement that would clarify what we do. There are some conservative Catholics, and others, who think we should give anyone in public life who is pro-life a pass, no matter what they say or do. If we did that, we would not only compromise our mission, we would become an enabler of the very thing we were founded to do—fight anti-Catholicism.

Greene has apologized to Jews and others for her offensive remarks, but not to us. She seems to think that because she is a cradle Catholic, and was married in the Catholic Church, that she has a right to condemn the entire Catholic Church.

She bolted from Catholicism to become an evangelical, which is fine, but unfortunately she found common cause with those anti-Catholics who are still present in some evangelical circles.

Greene tried to worm her way out of the jam she created by saying she was only attacking the bishops. As I point out below, those who “make sweeping condemnations of the clergy, blaming all priests and bishops for the miscreant behavior of some” are the mark of a bigot. Here are the comments that I released to the press explaining our position.

We are delighted with all the kind comments we have received from Catholics, clergy and lay alike, about our denunciation of Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene. Anyone who says the Catholic Church, or its leadership, is run by Satan is a bigot.

But we have our critics, too. There are those who hate the Catholic Church and therefore object to our comments about her. I am not interested in addressing these people—they are

haters. I am interested in addressing those who don't seem to know what we do.

Our primary mission is to combat anti-Catholicism. Secondly, we are strongly committed to religious liberty. These twin issues cover most of what we do. As a sociologist, I also write about issues that bear on the contours of our culture. After all, the Catholic Church does not exist independent of the dominant culture. Indeed, it is very much a part of it. This explains why we track the cultural currents of the day: they are bound to affect the Church.

We are not a wing of either the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, and we certainly are not in business to serve either of them. If we go after Democrats more than Republicans—and we do—it is because secularists tend to be Democrats and the more militant among them tend to be anti-Catholic.

We aren't a wing of the Catholic hierarchy. We are quite independent of them. To be sure, we are not some renegade Catholic organization—we are listed in the *Official Catholic Directory* as a bona fide Catholic entity. Just as the bishops don't tell us what to do, we don't tell the bishops what to do. We have neither the authority nor the will to do so. We know our place.

We do not go after critics of the Catholic Church who are upset with a particular public policy that it embraces. They have every right to do so. We only get involved when criticism spills into invective, into boilerplate, taking shots below the belt. We also object to those who make sweeping condemnations of the clergy, blaming all priests and bishops for the miscreant behavior of some. Those are the marks of a bigot.

It must also be said that we object to non-Catholics criticizing the doctrinal prerogatives of the Church: they

have no more business doing so than Catholics have a right to criticize the internal strictures of another religion. Fairly criticizing the Church for its position on abortion is one thing; criticizing its teaching on priestly celibacy is another.

Most Catholics, Jews, Muslims and Protestants are good people. But there are some within each group that are intolerant of Catholicism. Among the first two, it is the militant secularists within their ranks that are a problem; among the latter two, it is their extreme interpretation of their religion that is the problem.

Angry ex-Catholics and militant secularists within the Jewish community are consumed with hostility over the Church's sexual ethics. Practicing Catholics and observant Jews are not the problem—it is those who have lost their way.

When radical Muslims lash out at Catholics, it is usually the result of some twisted understanding of their own religion. Similarly, there is a strain of anti-Catholicism among Protestants, more commonly exhibited by extremists within the evangelical community.

Marjorie Taylor Greene belongs to two of these groups: she is an angry ex-Catholic and an extreme evangelical.

We do not give Republican pro-life politicians a break when they make remarks that are patently anti-Catholic and refuse to apologize. We denounce them. We don't cut corners for them because to do so would violate our mission. It is up to Republicans to get bigots like Greene into line—don't ever expect us to give anti-Catholics a break, no matter what their voting record is.

ELITES CELEBRATE WHAT DIVIDES US

Pluralism is a good thing, just so long as it is not pushed to extremes, because when it is, it becomes a separatist threat to cultural cohesion. Unfortunately, we live in a time when our society is more polarized and segmented than ever before. For example, we should be encouraging new immigrants to learn English; it makes it easier for them to assimilate.

In the 1980s, when I was a professor, a colleague of mine, a nun, introduced me to an Irish priest from Fordham who had written a book on Puerto Ricans. I was aware of the book—I assigned it to my students in a Minorities class—so I was pleased to meet him. In the course of our discussion, he and the nun said they were opposed to mandating that Puerto Ricans speak English in the schools, preferring a bilingual approach.

I disagreed with them, pointing out that when I taught in Spanish Harlem in the 1970s, the Puerto Rican parents were opposed to bilingual education, insisting their kids speak English. The priest was honest enough to admit that I was right.

We are hurting Spanish-speaking people, not helping them, when we don't hold them to the same standards as other non-English speaking people. Most of the immigrants who came here from Europe had to learn English as well, and in time they did.

So why did this learned priest, a sociologist whose expertise was studying Puerto Ricans not support the aspirations of the people he studied? No doubt it was because he believed that the Puerto Ricans were not enlightened. He, on the other hand, was, and therefore he need not respect their wishes. This is the way liberals think.

By enlightened, liberals mean that it's time to stop with the

chauvinistic adoration of America, or what most Americans would simply call patriotism. Thus do they incline to a more critical perspective. Mandating Puerto Ricans to master English carries with it, they say, the odious implication that there is something inferior about their heritage. They are clearly wrong about this, but don't try to reason with them.

My anecdote is illustrative of what was going on in higher education in the 1980s. That is when multiculturalism was all the rage. Multiculturalism does not celebrate diversity in a healthy way, such as promoting respect for different racial and ethnic groups, and the heritages they represent. No, it celebrates division.

We now have a well-paid Diversity industry, fully credentialized experts—most of whom are badly educated activists—who are busy telling employers that they need to embrace what makes us different, not what unites us. This, in turn, has led to a new wave of segregation, only this time it is heralded as a victory for social justice.

We have separate racial and ethnic dorms on campus, separate graduation ceremonies, and the like. Yet some wonder why there is so much racial tension on campus. It would be astonishing if we didn't witness polarization—we've done our best to nourish it.

What makes this so disconcerting is that we started out as a nation which boasted of its ability to unite people. As far back as the 18th century, a French student of the American colonies, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, wrote about this in his classic, *Letter from an American Farmer*. He had never seen such assimilation; the ability to “melt” disparate peoples into a new man was unparalleled. The idea of the “melting pot” had been born.

People like Horace Mann picked up on this idea in the early 19th century, and in his case he decided that the best way to

achieve a “melting pot” was the public schools. This was the best way to unite the multiplicity of racial and ethnic groups that came here. The goal was assimilation.

From the perspective of multiculturalism, and the Diversity industry, the “melting pot” idea is anathema. That’s because our ruling class is bent on dividing us, not uniting us. Most Americans find this hard to believe, thinking these people are simply misguided.

Americans, for the most part, are a good and honest people. They want the best for their country. They also want to be able to get along with everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity or religion. Subcultures, such as Chinatowns, are okay, but it is still important that we all seek to fit into society, and not live apart from it (the Amish are an exception), much less undermine it.

Unfortunately, even though most Americans want this, it is not being promoted in the schools or in the workplace. It is not unity the elites want; it is division. Some of those who are intentionally dividing us are motivated by ideological reasons: they hate America. Others are doing it because it is a lucrative business.

“E Pluribus Unum,” out of the many, one. Our nation’s motto is being attacked—the elites find it atavistic. It’s about time Americans realized that what we are witnessing is not a matter of misguided policies; rather, it is the result of what the “enlightened ones” are intentionally doing.

CANCEL CULTURE IS CANCEROUS

William A. Donohue

Technically speaking, censorship is something that only the government can do: it has the power to stop speech before it is uttered and prohibit the distribution of the written word. In a free society, such instances must be limited and well defined. For the most part, our society has done a pretty good job in ensuring freedom of speech.

Today we are faced with a cancel culture, a condition whereby some controversial ideas are being cancelled; in effect, they are being censored. But the censor is not government: it is the private sector. The social media corporations—Facebook, Google, Twitter—are the major culprits. These Silicon Valley behemoths are not interested in cancelling all controversial ideas, simply the ones they dislike.

The social media ruling class is not made up of liberals; they are Leftists. That's the difference between a moderate (liberal) and a radical (Leftist). As such, they don't believe in freedom of speech anymore than they believe in freedom of religion. To say they are a threat to our society is an understatement.

If it were the reverse—if speech that conservatives disliked was being cancelled by social media companies—it would be just as appalling. To be sure, the First Amendment provisions on speech and religion do not apply to the private sector; they are only limitations placed on the government. However, when the abuse of power exercised by private-sector titans is so overwhelming that legitimate views of a contrary nature cannot be expressed, then liberty is jeopardized. Facebook, Google and Twitter need to be broken up by government.

The origins of the cancel culture are traceable to the campus, not Silicon Valley. The professoriate has long favored freedom

of speech for some, but not for others. In other words, free speech for the Left, but none for conservatives.

Remember “Crossfire,” the CNN show that featured nightly debates on current issues? It started with Tom Braden and Pat Buchanan, on the left and the right, respectively; Michael Kinsley and Robert Novak also hosted the show. Then there was “Hannity and Colmes” on Fox News. Neither exists anymore.

I mention this because I cut my teeth on these shows. When teaching at a college in Pittsburgh, I flew to D.C. on a regular basis to do “Crossfire,” and when I came back home to New York in 1993 for this job, I continued to do the show. Three years later, Fox News was founded and I was a regular on many of the shows, including “Hannity and Colmes.”

These types of shows did not die because of low ratings (a subsequent “Crossfire” was a flop, owing to attempts to tamp down the debates), but because liberals lost almost every round. If the Left was cleaning the clock of conservatives, the shows would still be on the air.

Before I left academia, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute arranged for me to debate scholars on a range of issues, in many colleges and universities. In some cases, students tried to shout me down. What was true then—it is even more true today—was the total absence of conservative students shouting down left-wing speakers. It never happens. It’s always the Left that does the cancelling.

Sometimes the Left chooses to completely ignore challenges to its perspective. That is not as morally offensive, but it is very telling, nonetheless.

The first book I wrote, *The Politics of the American Civil Liberties Union*, was published in 1985 by Transaction Press, the largest and most prestigious social science publisher in the nation. It was founded by Irving Louis Horowitz, a Rutgers University sociologist who turned out to be a dear friend, he

told me that the New York Times asked him to send a copy so they could review it. He declined.

At first I was beside myself—why would he do that? Irving said that was because the paper had a lousy record of reviewing his books. Then the Times asked again, for a second time. He sent them the book, but they never reviewed it.

I later found out why. My book had been given to Ferdinand Lundberg, a liberal chronicler of the rich, and, surprisingly, he liked it. So the Times spiked the review.

Something similar is going on right now. My latest book, *The Truth About Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*, has been well received by many influential writers and commentators, including priests and bishops, but my usual critics on the Left, both in Catholic and secular circles, have ignored it. That's because it contains over 800 footnotes, taken from scholarly sources, and that doesn't give them much wiggle room to challenge me. They sure won't debate me, though they have been asked to do so.

As you can see from this issue of *Catalyst*, we have taken on Twitter again for cancelling speech it abhors (such as telling the truth about men and women). We will continue to do so. We may not be as big as Twitter, but our following is not small, either. There is too much at stake to lie low. We have no plans to do so.

PROUD TO DEFEND MOTHER

TERESA—AGAIN

William A. Donohue

Sometime in the spring of 2021, I was asked by a distinguished movie production company from the U.K. if I was interested in being interviewed for a documentary they were planning to do on Mother Teresa. I agreed, albeit with reservation.

I agreed because I was honored to be chosen as her number-one defender. I did so with reservation because it begged the question: Why would they want me, unless, of course, the film was going to be a hit job on Mother Teresa? Was I not being used to “balance” the documentary. After all, if the film were a positive portrayal of her, there is no end to the number of persons they could have contacted.

In the end, I knew that if I took a pass, they would simply find someone else. That didn't sit too well with me—I believe I can defend Mother Teresa better than anyone. Indeed, it was the sole reason I wrote my 2016 book, *Unmasking Mother Teresa's Critics* (Sophia Institute Press). The timing was deliberate: Mother Teresa was to be canonized on September 4, 2016, and I wanted to get out in front of her critics who might seek to exploit the occasion.

The documentary on Mother Teresa is scheduled to open this March in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany and Italy; it may open in the U.S. this spring, but in what format I do not know. Minnow Films, along with Sky Group Limited, both out of London, are bringing it to the big screen.

When I signed an agreement to do a series of interviews in July, 2021, the film was called, “Mother Teresa: For the Love of God.” The period at the end of the title has now been changed to a question mark. That's not a coincidence: it was done to suggest that maybe she had an ulterior motive. Hence, the need to bring me in to defend her.

How will the movie flush out? From what I have learned, the script offers both positive and negative accounts, with a nod to the latter. It is a three-hour series. I have yet to see it, though that will change shortly.

The interview I agreed to do was expected to last a day or two. Surprisingly, it turned out to be more like a week. The young men who did the shooting were extraordinarily cordial—even fun to work with—and very professional. Ditto for the young woman from England whom I conversed with about the project.

What is so controversial about Mother Teresa that she needs a defense? As I pointed out in my book on this saintly woman, her critics are mostly cranks, dabbling in conjecture and innuendo more than substance. Others are manifestly dishonest.

As recently explained to me, the first part deals with her childhood and her time in Calcutta. It explores the wide audience that she garnered, culminating in a Nobel Peace Prize. The next part covers her life in the 1980s. The third part examines her “dark night of the soul,” a period of time when she did not feel God’s presence and her dealings with a rogue financier is cited.

Evidently, I am featured quite often in the documentary. I certainly was given a lot of time to explain my position, and to vigorously rebut the many cruel myths voiced by her critics.

Mother Teresa’s most prominent, and unfair, critic was undoubtedly the late Christopher Hitchens. A video of our storied 2000 debate at the Union League Club in New York City is available online.

Why does anyone hate Mother Teresa? The reasons are varied, but much of what drives her critics is jealousy, pure jealousy. They are jealous that a diminutive nun was loved the world over for her selfless giving to the dispossessed. What’s

wrong with that?

Many of her most strident critics were both atheists and socialists (e.g., Hitchens). Her holy status does not sit well with atheists; her ability to serve the poor undermines the goal of socialists.

How so? Everything she did for the needy, the sick and the dying was voluntary, and she inspired countless others to follow in her footsteps. Socialists want the state to mandate programs for the poor, and do not look kindly on religiously motivated initiatives that work better than government welfare policies.

There is one other reason why she is despised. Her critics claim she did not try to conquer poverty. Guilty as charged. Her goal was to comfort the sick and dying in their waning years, not restructure society. Atheists and socialists cannot relate to that. That's their problem. It also shows how shallow they are—they need not have any skin in the game when government distributes goodies to the poor.

How ironic it is that the socialist ideas advocated by her critics have done more to promote poverty than any other policy prescription. More perverse, it was left to people like Mother Teresa to attend to their victims.

I am so happy I was given the opportunity to defend her—again!

CLERGY SCANDAL—20 YEARS LATER

On January 6, 2002, the Boston Globe began a series of stories on its investigation into clergy sexual abuse in the Archdiocese of Boston. It would prove to be the most damaging

report on the Catholic Church in U.S. history, shocking Catholic and non-Catholic alike. It also inspired reporters across the nation to take a close look at this subject, resulting in more bad news. The good news is that 20 years later, much has changed for the better.

Regrettably, most of the major media outlets are not exactly religion-friendly, and many are downright hostile, especially to Roman Catholicism. As I detail in my new book, *The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*, this explains why they have no interest in reporting on the progress that has been made.

In the 1970s, which was when priestly sexual abuse was at its height, there was an average of 6,155 accusations made against current clergy members. The average number of substantiated accusations made in the last ten years is 5.9. In other words, this problem is largely behind us. For the media not to report on this is scandalous.

When the Boston Globe broke this story, I wrote the following at the end of 2002: "It was a rare event in 2002 to read a newspaper account of the scandal that was patently unfair, much less anti-Catholic. The Boston Globe, the Boston Herald and the New York Times covered the story carefully and with professionalism."

Four years later I was just as impressed with the Boston Globe. I credited reporter Brian McGrory for slamming church-suing lawyer Mitchell Garabedian after the attorney twice sued a priest who was exonerated of all charges against him. The priest died in 2011, a broken man. McGrory said what Garabedian did was "a disgrace." I called Garabedian and asked him if he had any regrets about going after the priest. He responded like a maniac and blew up at me.

Over time, the Globe changed. Its once objective stance gave way to writing pieces about the Catholic Church that were more

of an editorial than a news story. The animus it sported was palpable. Worse, under McGrory, who was promoted to editor of the newspaper in 2012, the Globe became duplicitous.

On November 14, 2018, there was a front-page story in the Globe alleging more than 130 bishops, or about a third of those still living, had been accused of “failing to adequately respond to sexual misconduct in their dioceses.” It received wide media coverage, and it was released just prior to a bishops’ conference in Baltimore.

As a sociologist, I had some serious problems with the methodology of the study, and so I emailed the Globe about them. I wanted to see the data, but they said no. I asked several more times, limiting my scope each time. It made no difference.

This was the same newspaper that had won a Pulitzer Prize for its reporting on the Boston archdiocese—accusing the Church of not being transparent—now deciding that transparency does not apply to itself.

The hypocrisy extends beyond the newspaper: Boston’s liberal elites, in and outside the Catholic Church, are just as phony.

One of the most famous perverts in the Boston archdiocese was Father Paul Shanley. The “hippie priest,” who raped children and adults—provided they were male—was the darling of the Boston literati and political class. They loved his public defiance of the Church’s sexual ethics, and his rebellious character.

In the 1970s, when Shanley was on the prowl, Boston was home to some of the most pro-homosexual activist organizations in the nation, including the pedophile group, NAMBLA (the North American Man/Boy Love Association). Shanley attended its first conference in 1978.

Boston is a college town, and like most of them, it is proud

of its liberal politicians, including those known for their predatory behavior. The Kennedys are a prime example. John, Bobby, and Teddy made the rounds with celebrities and many others and never paid a price for it at the ballot box; they learned their ways from their father, Joe, who was another philanderer.

The voters were just as kind to homosexuals who bounced around with their lovers. Rep. Gerry Studds was censured by the House in 1983 for his sexual romp with a teenage boy, but he continued to be reelected. Rep. Barney Frank hooked up with a male prostitute in 1989, but that didn't bother his constituents, most of whom voted for him time and again with wide margins.

The Boston electorate also likes pro-homosexual legislation. In 2004, Massachusetts became the first state to recognize gay "marriage." It did so with the help of four priests who testified the year before against a bill that would define marriage as an institution between a man and a woman.

These same people—who voted for straight and gay promiscuous men, and who loved Shanley—went ballistic when the Globe published stories about sexually active priests. Apparently, there is nothing wrong with being sexually reckless, unless one is a priest.

The Catholic Church has cleaned up its act. Too bad its critics have yet to catch up.

ARCHBISHOP GOMEZ'S FINEST

HOUR

On November 4, Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez made one of the most brilliant addresses given in Catholic circles in recent memory. His speech was given at the Congress of Catholics and Public Life in Madrid, Spain.

Like so many other Catholic intellectuals, Gomez is rightly concerned about the radical secularization that has taken root in the Western world. Unlike most of them, he has also been in the trenches. I know that because the Catholic League has assisted him in his efforts to combat the agenda of secular zealots, made plain, for instance, in attempts to break the seal of the confessional.

Gomez takes direct aim at the ruling class, those who occupy the command posts in the United States and Europe. “In the elite worldview,” he says, “there is no need for old-fashioned belief systems and religions. In fact, as they see it, religion, especially Christianity, only gets in the way of the society they hope to build.” He offers as an example the “cancel culture” that is so prevalent.

There can be no denying the veracity of Gomez’s observation. Anyone who dares challenge the conventional wisdom, on issues ranging from critical race theory to gender ideology, is a candidate for censorship. It is not those who promote these pernicious views who are being silenced, it is those who challenge them.

Sociologists have long understood that when the dominant cultural strain in society atrophies, it is filled with an ersatz philosophical or religious variant. Power vacuums never last long. Thus, Gomez is right to call attention to the extent to which the de-Christianization of the West has been replaced by movements such as “social justice,” “wokeness,” “identity politics” and the like.

"They claim," as he perceptively notes, "to offer what religion provides." Indeed, they provide "a sense of meaning, a purpose for living, and the feeling of belonging to a community." This is exactly what the great sociologists have been saying for over a hundred and fifty years. Sadly, it is now happening in the United States.

Gomez's critics take umbrage at his comment that the reining movements function as a new religion. He properly notes that "Today's critical theories and ideologies are profoundly atheistic." Anyone who follows what the proponents of these ideologies espouse know that Gomez is right. Indeed, they don't even try to hide their animus against Christianity.

John McWhorter is a Columbia University professor and he understands what Gomez is talking about. An African American, he has written a new book, *Woke Racism: How a New Religion Has Betrayed Black America*. Both men call attention to identity politics and radical race theories—which judge people on the basis of their race, not their individual characteristics. These ideological currents are not only profoundly racist in themselves, they satisfy the religious yearnings of those drawn to them.

As a man of God, Gomez wants us to repair to the Gospel, not to "these new religions of social justice and political identity." But to his critics, many of whom are Catholic theologians, what he says is verboten. Some no doubt would like to cancel him.

Franciscan Father Daniel Horan is upset with Gomez for making a speech that exhibits a "shocking disconnection from reality." Too bad he never says what the disconnect is. He cites for support a left-wing Jesuit theologian, Fr. Bryan Massingale, who, according to Horan, said the problem is that bishops like Gomez "have the audacity to speak with unearned authority about issues they clearly do not understand."

It would be hard to find a more arrogant example of professorial elitism than this. Readers should know that Horan and Massingale spend much of their time writing and lecturing about homosexual and transgender issues. Gomez spends much of his time writing and lecturing about the Catholic Church: He is president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Thus he has earned the authority to speak about any issue of interest to the Catholic community.

Fr. Tom Reese wonders why Gomez “abandoned” the term “social justice” to those he considers the enemy of religion, especially when social justice has a place in the “long history of the church’s social teaching.” This is a serious misreading of Gomez’s address. He has not abandoned social justice—the term has been hijacked by those whose ideology sharply departs from the Catholic Church’s understanding of it.

The late Fr. Richard John Neuhaus wrote a seminal book, *The Naked Public Square*, that describes what happens when a society rooted in the Judeo-Christian heritage weakens. The cultural holes are destined to be filled with exactly the kinds of secular movements that Gomez alludes to in his speech. The only difference is that even someone as bright as Neuhaus did not envision how quickly and radically the transformation would be.

That is what makes Gomez’s presentation so valuable. He sees what is going on in the United States and Europe and beckons us to get back to basics, the basics as outlined by Jesus. If we do not resist the forces of decadence and division, the future will soon become unrecognizable.

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE WANES ACROSS THE BOARD

It is important in a free country for its citizens to have faith in their leaders, their institutions and each other. To be sure, there is nothing wrong with challenging the policies and perspectives of elites, or our fellow citizens—it can be quite healthy—but when skepticism turns to cynicism, that is another thing altogether. Recent survey data should give us pause: public confidence is waning, and it is widespread.

In October, Gallup released the findings of three surveys: they sought to measure public trust in the media; public trust in politicians; and trust in the judgment of the American people. The results are disturbing. Likely causes are media bias, lying politicians, and polarization in society, respectively.

The public's trust in the media reached its second lowest point since Gallup started tracking this variable in 1972. Only 36% of respondents said they had a "great deal" or "fair amount" of trust in mass media. Eleven percent of Republicans and 31% of independents trust the media; by contrast, 68% of Democrats do.

Why do 64% of the American people not trust the media, but 68% of Democrats do? Clearly most Americans see a bias that Democrats do not detect. We know from many studies done on the media elite, dating back to Stanley Rothman's work in the early 1980s, that those in command of the major media are overwhelmingly liberal-left in their politics. As a result, what the Democrats see and read mostly confirms their own ideological leanings, so of course they don't see that as a bias. Almost everyone else does.

To cite one example, I ran a Lexis-Nexis search of the number

of times the media used the term “Trump falsely claims” during the past year. When the number tops 10,000 it says, “10,000+.” That was his figure. When Biden’s name was inserted, the figure dropped to 2,200. More likely this reflects the bias of journalists, not the veracity of these men.

Public confidence in politicians hit its lowest mark in 2021, garnering a mere 44%. No one is surprised to learn that politicians lie, but the extent and seriousness of the lies today are extraordinary. When candidates for public office are smeared, and the ones who are responsible for the smearing are lying—and then they get away with it—that hurts public confidence.

When congressmen vote for an infrastructure bill that is over 2,600 pages, and they don’t read it, that lowers public confidence. Worse is when the public learns that only 25% of the goodies in the bill have anything to do with infrastructure. Fighting climate change is one thing, but jamming it into an infrastructure bill is offensive. And why is the infrastructure bill paying for some of Canada’s bridges and highways?

When we are told by politicians that our border is secure, and are then presented with pictures that prove otherwise, that erodes confidence. Similarly, when we are told that trillions of dollars in new spending won’t cost us a dime, we are dealing with more than lies—we are dealing with insult.

When only 55% of the public trusts the judgment of the American people—another new low—that is not a good sign. But given the high degree of polarization in our society, it is to be expected.

We are divided not only along several demographic lines, we are also divided within families. Thanksgiving is a time when ideally family members come together in harmony, but too often these occasions devolve into spats about politics. Expressions

of jealousy among relatives are commonplace during the holidays, but when disagreements about core moral values get nasty, that's hard to mend.

Our society is so polarized that we can't seem to agree that males cannot become females, and vice versa. Yet from the medical profession to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, we are pretending otherwise. We are being told to speak about "pregnant persons," not "pregnant women," as if men can become pregnant. Next we will be told that we can no longer talk about "men who have prostate cancer," adopting instead, "persons who have prostate cancer."

We need to regain trust of the media, but that can't come from us. It must begin with them. The men and women who work in the media, especially in senior positions, have got to stop editorializing the news. We need to get back to the time when there was a clear line between hard news reporting and opinion.

Politicians are not going to stop lying, so voters have to make the first move to regain our trust in them. This means we should stop tolerating lies told by those whom we like, not just those we dislike.

To regain the trust in the judgment of the American people, we need to begin with ourselves. Sniping at family and friends via email, Facebook, and other social media, is a disaster. There is no substitute for in-person interaction when it comes to settling disagreements.

If we don't turn this around, we will find ourselves in a state of mortal distrust. A free society is held together by bonds, and when they fray, we all lose.

ELITES ARE BENT ON DIVIDING US

The ruling class wants to divide us. They can't seem to get enough division, whether it be along racial, ethnic, class, or sex lines. Their favorite weapon is race, and they are very good at exploiting it.

The NFL began the new football season by dividing us along racial lines. They did not begin the first game between Tampa Bay and Dallas with the national anthem: they began by playing the black national anthem. All the players were told to lock arms, and they dutifully obliged.

The NFL has ordered every football game this season to begin with the Black national anthem. In other words, they believe that our allegiance to the nation is an anachronism, a relic from the past that must be discarded.

There is nothing that upsets the ruling class more than our national motto, "E Pluribus Unum." "Out of many, one" is seen as offensive by these people. What they prefer is "out of many, many." Unity is their enemy.

Where did NFL chief Roger Goodell get these ideas? From the grand wizards of higher education, of course. That's where anti-Americanism is seeded. It all starts with the Ivies.

Princeton University started its new academic year by mandating all in-coming freshman to sit through a barrage of presentations designed to make them hate the country, beginning with their own school. For example, they had to sit through a video that featured a Princeton professor, Daniel Padilla Peralta, who instructed them to "tear down this place." Why? Because President Woodrow Wilson was once president of Princeton and he is accused of being a racist.

Peralta told the students that free speech should not be seen as a First Amendment right; it should instead be seen as a "privilege." The only speech he approves of is "free speech and intellectual discourse that is [sic] flexed to one specific aim, and that aim is the promotion of social justice, and an anti-racist social justice at that."

It does not matter that this man is an illiterate: what matters is that he is seen by his white superiors as a useful idiot who is doing their bidding. His job is secure.

The graduating class of 2021 at Columbia University did not come together last spring to celebrate their achievement. Instead, multiple ceremonies were held, all designed to divide students. There were graduation events for Native Americans (whose ancestors migrated here like the rest of us), Asians, "Latinx" (the ruling class hates Latino and Latina, which refer to male and female, so they invented a sex-neutral term), and African Americans.

Columbia even had a ceremony for "first generation and/or low-income community" students. Nor did they forget homosexuals or the sexually challenged: they held a "Lavender" graduation for the "LGBTIAQ+" community. (So glad they inserted the plus.) The reason why southpaws didn't have their own event is because they have not been recognized as an aggrieved segment of society. But who knows what the future might bring?

Harvard was one of the first colleges or universities to hold separate graduation ceremonies for blacks. When Harvard is not busy denying Asian students admission because it has too many of them, it is concentrating on dividing white and black students. What it started has now been mimicked by dozens of colleges, and many offer segregated residential halls as well. "Separate but equal," which was once seen as racist, is now being seen as laudatory. No doubt the Klan would agree.

The quest for racial division has crept into the elementary

and secondary schools as well. It would be hard to beat the curriculum adopted by the public school system of Evanston, Illinois.

Students in grades three through five are told that "it is important to disrupt the Western nuclear family." Why? Because of the assumption that this is "the best/proper way to have a family." And you know where that idea came from—white people.

In the third grade lesson plans on "whiteness," students learn that "There is a belief that a 'normal' family consists of a mom, dad, son, daughter, and pet. We've learned that this isn't true." In other words, "broken homes" are as good as intact ones (that this is a cruel lie means nothing).

Why are they doing this? The deep thinkers sincerely believe that inequality can be overcome by convincing blacks, and others, that they are victims. The victimizers, naturally, are white people, especially white heterosexual Christian males. They invented sin.

Victimhood, however, does the very opposite of what the elites desire. It doesn't empower anyone to succeed—all it does is convince people that they are not responsible for their condition. But it does award them power of a sort: they can lay claim to special treatment, citing instances of discrimination that their ancestors endured.

This also empowers elites. It allows them to become social engineers, the ones who decide which group gets what. If Asians are too successful, adopt quotas to keep them in line. If African Americans are unsuccessful, adopt policies to push them ahead.

What we are witnessing is the ideological corruption of the ruling class. They are entitled to our wrath, not our respect.

WHY I WROTE MY LATEST BOOK

William A. Donohue

To be a good writer, it is important, at least for me, to have a passion for the subject. I brought my passion to bear in writing *The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*. The book is expected to be available from the publisher, Ignatius Press, in mid-September, and in early October from Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Catholic bookstores. They all accept pre-orders.

In the October issue of *Catalyst*, I will offer a synopsis of the book. First I'd like to explain why I wrote it.

It is usually the subtitle of a book that discloses what it is about. In this case, both the title and the subtitle offer an accurate representation. The title indicates that we have not been told the truth about the scandal. While there have been some good books on this subject, many have been written by those with an ax to grind, and none has been written by a social scientist.

It is my contention that we have had not one scandal, but two. Scandal I is the familiar one, namely the one brought about by molesting priests and their enabling bishops. Scandal II, which no one wants to acknowledge, was not caused by the Church: it was caused by those who have distorted the truth, lied about events, and have a vested ideological or economic interest in never letting go.

The subtitle of the book suggests that we have been duped. The guilty parties are many. Importantly, they either cannot, or will not, tell the truth about what happened. For example, they would have us believe that the Catholic Church is unique

in having had a problem with sex between adults and minors. As I show, this is patently false. This falsehood is what Scandal II is all about.

I expect that when the book comes out, there will be considerable blowback. After all, I challenge the most popular myths about the scandal. To cover myself, I have 823 footnotes detailing what, in fact, happened, and why it happened.

In some ways this book was a joy to write; in some ways it was troubling. It was a joy because it gave me the satisfaction of setting the record straight. Quite frankly, the conventional wisdom about this subject has been wrong almost every step of the way. It's time to clear the air and get to the heart of things. It was troubling because much of what I wrote about is not pretty.

There is much good news in the book. Scandal I is long over. What is being reported today about priestly sexual abuse are almost all old cases—very old cases. Much progress has been made. Those involved in Scandal II don't want to acknowledge this and indeed have tried to manipulate the public into thinking it is still ongoing.

Perhaps the most controversial part of the book will be my analysis of why Scandal I took place. There are many reasons for this, and you will have to read the book to get a full account. Without question, my discussion of the role that homosexual priests have played—they are responsible for most of the abuse—will cause many in the media and education to explode. Unfortunately, this will also be true of some members of the clergy, including higher ups.

I have told my staff many times that as president of the Catholic League, I'm not engaged in a popularity contest. Do I care what people say about me? Sometimes. It matters, in large part, who is saying it. I cannot tell you how many times I have been condemned to Hell, libeled, slandered, and dumped

upon in the most vicious and obscene ways—to say nothing of the death threats (and I mean real ones). They all want to silence me, one way or the other. This has been going on for decades.

These people are not so much critics as they are thugs, well educated though many of them are. Regrettably, I have never seen a time where there are more of them than today.

I say at the outset of the book that we as Catholics are “called to tell the truth, not shade it.” That explains why I wrote this book. In other words, just as we need an accurate diagnosis of our ailment from our doctor before we can be treated, we need an accurate diagnosis of clergy sexual abuse before we can make sure this never happens again.

Almost all priests have never had an accusation made against them, and most of them are good guys. Yet they are subjected to invidious stereotypes, innuendo and out-and-out lies. Many are humble and are reluctant to strike back. I get it. But lay people can be more aggressive in defending them.

It is my hope that Catholics who read this book will have a much better understanding of what happened and why, and will come to appreciate the enormous progress we have made. They will also learn how we’ve been played by those who don’t want it to end.

RIGHTS FOR TREES BUT NOT FOR THEE

Christopher D. Stone is not exactly a household name, but he clearly left his mark on the “rights” movement. The University

of Southern California law professor recently died. More well known was his father, I.F. Stone, whom the New York Times obituary on Christopher called a “crusading reporter.” They left out that he was also a Soviet agent.

Should trees have rights? Christopher D. Stone was convinced they should.

“I am quite seriously proposing that we give legal rights to forests, oceans, rivers and other so-called ‘natural objects’ in the environment—indeed, to the natural environment as a whole.” He specifically mentioned as worthy of legal rights “valleys, alpine meadows, rivers, lakes, estuaries, beaches, ridges, groves of trees, swampland, or even air that feels destructive pressures of modern technology and modern life.”

Stone made his case in a famous 1972 article, “Should Trees Have Standing?—Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects.” He has not been without success.

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas agreed with him, and cities such as Pittsburgh and Santa Monica have followed suit, offering legal protection to natural resources. New Zealand has gone further, declaring “all the rights, powers, duties and liabilities of a legal person” to a national park.

It is true that corporations are seen as legal entities deserving of rights, but they are made up of individuals.

If trees are deserving of rights, it seems logical that Stone would argue for the rights of the unborn. In fact he did not. In his classic article in the Southern California Law Review on the rights of trees, which was published the year before Roe v. Wade legalized abortion, he makes reference to abortion in a footnote.

He recognizes competing rights, but he never argues that the right of the baby to be born is paramount. The best he can do is offer a rather pedestrian observation. “The trend toward

liberalized abortion can be seen either as a legislative tendency back in the direction of rightlessness of the foetus—or toward increasing rights of women.”

Stone had a great influence on environmentalists, including John Holdren, who was President Obama’s science czar. He endorsed Stone’s thesis that trees have rights.

After Holdren was confirmed by the Senate, more was found out about him. His enthusiasm for population control led him to entertain plans to force single women to abort their babies or put them up for adoption. He also considered forced sterilization, even to the point of putting chemicals in food and water that would make people sterile.

Why is it that inanimate objects, along with animals, have gained the support of legal theorists and lawmakers but not unborn babies?

Consider, for example, a front-page story in the June 2nd edition of the New York Times about President Biden’s decision to suspend oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The area, the story notes, is “home to migrating waterfowl, caribou and polar bears.” The article continues inside featuring a picture of a polar bear in the area.

Biden has shown great interest in protecting the environment and showing respect for the rights of animals. When in the Congress, he co-sponsored legislation to label tuna “dolphin safe.” He urged the Canadians to end its commercial seal hunt. He supported legislation against commercial whaling and opposed some traps used to capture animals. He also co-sponsored a bill to prohibit some research practices on cats and dogs.

However, when it comes to the rights of the unborn, he says they have none. Zero. Some animal traps, he says, are “inhumane.” But not the practice of smashing the skull of a baby undergoing a partial-birth abortion.

There is nothing new to this line of thinking. Peter Singer is a Princeton University professor and the father of animal rights. He is also an atheist and a proponent of selective infanticide. He says that some defective children should undergo a trial period after birth while a decision is being made about putting them to death, and that in any event parents should be allowed to exterminate their disabled babies. He believes that "killing a newborn baby is never equivalent to killing a person, that is, a being who wants to go on living."

Interestingly, he maintains that there is absolutely no moral difference between killing a baby in the mother's womb and killing a newborn. If it is legal to kill an unborn baby, Singer concludes, it should be legal to kill infants. Just don't forget to protect the turkeys.

To show how far we've drifted, Singer wants to give the same rights that humans enjoy to chimps, bonobos, gorillas and orangutans. He is also of the opinion that bestiality is not necessarily a bad thing: he argues that "sex with animals does not always involve cruelty," and that "mutually satisfying activities" of a sexual nature should be respected.

Stone and Singer are known for their selective interest in the distribution of rights, and unfortunately this train of thought is now very much a part of our cultural and legal landscape.