

FLAWED JUDGE NOMINEE QUIT; CAMPAIGN SUCCEEDS

On June 11, Michigan attorney Michael Bogren withdrew his nomination for the federal bench. The Trump nominee was being considered for a seat on the U.S. District Court for Western Michigan. The Catholic League fought his nomination from the get-go, and we were very pleased with the outcome.

We were particularly pleased to note that the *Detroit News* flagged our campaign against him. We twice contacted key senators, and enlisted the support of our base. Bill Donohue discussed this issue on Fox News radio, and his statement was featured on the front page of Newsmax.com. Here is how our effort unfolded.

On May 22, during a hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Bogren said there is no difference between Catholic farm owners refusing to rent their property for the purpose of a gay wedding and the Klan's right to discriminate against blacks. When asked to clarify what he meant, he stuck to his guns: the teachings of Christianity on marriage are morally equivalent to the Klan's racist ideology.

On May 23, we contacted every member of the Senate Judiciary Committee expressing our concerns about the propriety of having someone like Bogren become a federal district judge. We asked that Bogren retract his vile analogy.

On June 5, we issued a news release asking the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject Bogren. We did so in support of Sen. Ted Cruz and Sen. Josh Hawley, both of whom pledged to reject his nomination. Donohue also wrote to Sen. Lindsey Graham, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, urging him to join Cruz and Hawley in voting against Bogren. We asked our supporters to contact Graham (listing an email contact).

As Donohue pointed out in a news release on June 5, Bogren's logic was deeply flawed. Worse, he had a chance to clear his name by insisting that he was only making a legal analogy and in no way was making a moral comparison between the teachings of Catholicism on marriage and the Klan's racist ideology. His decision not to do so was not a wise choice.

After withdrawing his name, Bogren defended himself, protesting that he is not a bigot. We never called him one. The reason we didn't want him on the federal bench is because his judgment is impaired. The Catholic Church is deserving of religious liberty guarantees as encoded in the First Amendment because it promotes freedom; the Klan is a hate group that practices terrorism against blacks, Jews, and Catholics. There is no legitimate comparison.

This was an important victory, and we are pleased the media recognized the prominent role that we played.

MEMORIAL CROSS VICTORY

On June 20, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 7-2 decision, rendered an important First Amendment victory by upholding the right of patriots to erect a Christian symbol on public lands. Militant secularists, led by the American Humanist Association, wanted it demolished.

One hundred years ago, family members of those who died in World War I drew up plans for a memorial. Six years later, in 1925, the American Legion erected a 40-foot cross in Bladensburg, Maryland on state property. It was meant to give recognition to all those who perished.

Here is what the plaque says: "The Memorial Cross Dedicated to

the Heroes Of Prince George's County who gave their lives in the great war for the liberty of the world."

Writing for the majority, Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito admitted that the cross is "undoubtedly a Christian symbol, but that fact should not blind us to everything else that the Bladensburg Cross has come to represent." He cogently observed that "destroying or defacing the cross that has stood undisturbed for nearly a century would not be neutral and would not further the ideals of respect and tolerance embodied in the First Amendment."

Alito was being kind. It could also be said that destroying the cross would be an expression of intolerance: It would be an assault on the free speech rights of those who erected it and those who support it today.

Score one for our side today in the ongoing culture war.

PA LAWMAKER BULLIES WOMAN; CENSURE AND PROBE NEEDED

On May 7, we contacted every member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. We sought their support for our call to censure Rep. Brian Sims for his bullying and his vicious anti-Catholicism. Two days later we called for a criminal probe. We were encouraged by the response we received.

What Sims did on May 5 was outrageous. Unprovoked, he accosted an elderly Catholic woman who was praying the rosary outside a Planned Parenthood clinic in Philadelphia and started bullying her.

For eight uninterrupted minutes, Sims badgered her, telling her to go pray at home. When she asked him to stop, he followed her around and threatened to make her home address public so that others could harass her.

On a previous occasion he became equally aggressive attempting to intimidate three teenage girls. He even offered \$100 to anyone who would identify the girls, hoping to have protesters show up at their house to badger them.

On May 7, Bill Donohue sent a letter in the overnight mail to PA Rep. Frank Farry, Chairman of the Committee on Ethics, asking him to formally introduce a resolution calling for the censure of Sims. The LGBT activist and lawmaker refused to apologize; he has a history of unethical behavior, having been investigated for several instances of financial improprieties.

His latest stunt is far worse. There is no place in public office for any person who bullies innocent women and girls for peacefully exercising their First Amendment right to freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

On May 9, Donohue asked PA House members to support Pennsylvania State Republican Chairman Val DiGiorgio in his quest for a criminal probe. He also wrote to Philadelphia D.A. Larry Krasner asking him to launch a criminal investigation of Sims; such a probe was already under review.

U.S. Senator Al Franken was driven from office after revelations of sexual misconduct. What Sims did was worse. Franken's offenses took place before he was elected to the Senate—Sims committed his offenses while in office. Justice demands that no public official be permitted to get away with such obscene conduct.

Sims should not only resign, he should be investigated for his conduct. If found guilty, he should be given the maximum sentence. He is not a private person—he has violated the public trust by violating the Constitutional rights of four

females, placing all of them in danger. We made it clear that this is not simply a Pennsylvania issue—it is a national issue.

Pennsylvania lawmakers contacted our office pledging their support. They also asked us to cooperate with them. We certainly will.

PENCE GIVES GREAT ADDRESS

On May 11, Vice President Mike Pence spoke at Liberty University's Commencement, offering a stirring address. "The truth is," he said, "we live in a time when the freedom of religion is under assault." He cited Christian persecution worldwide as Exhibit A.

Pence also talked about attacks on religion in the United States. He said that "we live in a time when it's become acceptable and even fashionable to ridicule and even discriminate against people of faith." He cited as an example the reaction on the part of "the media and the secular Left" to his wife's teaching at a Christian elementary school earlier this year; she was vilified for doing so.

The vice president was right to say that "these attacks are un-American." He was also right to say that "Some of the loudest voices for tolerance today have little tolerance for traditional Christian beliefs."

He didn't hold back in his admonition to the graduating class. He warned that "you're going to be asked not just to tolerate things that violate your faith; you're going to be asked to endorse them. You're going to be asked to bow down to the idols of the popular culture."

Pence does not exaggerate. Just read this issue of Catalyst for proof. Indeed, our website provides all the evidence one needs to demonstrate the veracity of Pence's remarks.

Congrats to Vice President Mike Pence for telling the truth about the unhealthy state of religious liberty.

BENEDICT HITS A NERVE; CRITICS GO BALLISTIC

On April 11, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI released a 6,000-word essay on the origins of the clergy sexual abuse crisis. While many Catholics praised it—we certainly did—his familiar foes went bonkers.

Who are his familiar foes? Mostly left-wing Catholic intellectuals, pundits, and activists who are in a constant state of rebellion against the Church's teachings on sexuality. That so many of them teach theology at Catholic colleges and universities shows how deep the crisis is.

The critics focused on several issues. They were all united on one thing: Benedict should just shut up. They kept citing his pledge to "remain hidden to the world," and accused him of undercutting the authority of Pope Francis. All of a sudden their professed interest in dialogue withered.

In fact, all that the retired pope did was complement what the February summit in Rome did—he balanced the subject of clergy abuse by addressing its causes; the summit focused on the role of bishops in enabling the scandal. Of course, the sitting pope knew exactly what was about to be published; he was not undercut.

Bill Donohue released an 1,100-word defense of Benedict on April 17, taking on sixteen of the retired pope's critics.

The critics are living in a state of denial. They do not want to even mention the word "homosexual," much less probe the relationship between homosexual priests—who committed 80% of the abuse—and what to do about it.

They also want to negate the effects of the radical changes in our culture, which began in the 1960s. Indeed, they act as though the scandal happened in a social vacuum. Some argue that sexual abuse occurred before the 1960s, which of course it did, but they fail to mention that its incidence was miniscule—the explosion occurred during the time of the sexual revolution.

Benedict's foes want to focus exclusively on the enabling bishops, and not the abusing priests. That's because it is impossible to dodge the issue of homosexuality when discussing the latter. All they want to do is talk about clericalism, which has never motivated anyone to sexually assault another human being.

Left-wing critics of Benedict also deny that moral theology collapsed in the 1970s. Not only did it happen, it was their ilk who promoted it.

The failure of Benedict's critics to address the spiritual dimension of the scandal is another problem. This is inexcusable. Benedict nicely outlined the diminution of respect for the Eucharist, and other matters.

The attacks on Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI are unfair. We are honored to defend him.

IS FOX NEWS CHANGING?

On April 15, shortly before Neil Cavuto's show on Fox News aired at 4:00 p.m. ET, Bill Donohue was asked if he would go on with him, by phone, to discuss the Notre Dame fire. He agreed.

Here is what Bill said. He was trying to put the issue in context.

"Well, Neil, if it is an accident, it's a monumental tragedy, but forgive me for being suspicious. Just last month, a 17th century church was set on fire in Paris. We have seen Tabernacles knocked down, crosses have been torn down, statues have been smashed."

Neil said, "Bill, we don't know that, we don't know. So if we can avoid what your suspicions might be, I do want to look at what happens now."

After another exchange, Bill went back to his point saying, "I'm sorry, when I find out that the Eucharist is being destroyed and excrement is being smeared on crosses—this is what's going on now." Neil cut him off saying, "Wait a minute, Bill. I love you dearly, but we cannot make conjectures about this so thank you, Bill. I'm sorry, thank you very, very much."

The next day, Bill released the following statement to the media.

"I have known Neil for a long time. He's a good guy. But what he did yesterday was unfair. My guess is he was following the marching orders from above."

We hope Fox News is not losing its nerve. We sure don't need another politically correct voice on TV.

BIGOTRY IN THE CONGRESS; RELIGION IS THE NEW TARGET

Religious bigotry has replaced racial bigotry among congressmen. Both the House and the Senate have shown a spike in religious bigotry, the targets being mostly Catholics and Jews.

A few months ago, two U.S. senators, Kamala Harris and Mazie Hirono, showed their anti-Catholic colors by attacking a Catholic nominee for a job on the federal bench because of his membership in the Knights of Columbus.

Brian Buescher, who was nominated by President Trump to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska, was badgered by these Democrats for belonging to an “all male society,” one that just happens to oppose abortion and gay marriage. It is undeniable that Buescher was attacked because he belongs to a Catholic group.

In January, Bill Donohue contacted the House Ethics Committee asking for sanctions against Rep. Ilhan Omar after she lied about students from Covington Catholic High School. She accused them of making fun of rape—“it’s not rape if you enjoy it”—and for racism (they were accused of taunting five black men). None of this was true, which is why she deleted the remarks from her website. She never apologized, which is what we would expect.

Donohue wrote to Ethics Committee chairman Rep. Ted Cruz and Ranking Member Kenny Marchant asking them to invoke Rule XXIII, Section 1, of the Code of Official Conduct which addresses civility.

More recently, Omar went on a rampage against Jews, accusing them of buying votes and putting the interests of Israel ahead of the U.S. She rolled out the familiar anti-Semitic tropes to the applause of extremists in the Democratic Party.

When a resolution was introduced in the House calling for a statement condemning anti-Semitism, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, the House Speaker, caved in to Omar and her ilk by diluting the resolution; it condemned virtually every expression of bigotry. We labeled it a “sham.”

This led Rabbi Aryeh Spero of the National Conference of Jewish Affairs, who is a good friend of Donohue’s, to stage a sit-in at Pelosi’s congressional office. We supported it and some Catholic League members participated in it.

Religious bigotry is no more acceptable than racial bigotry. Regrettably, we now have to fight to get this voice heard. The good news is we have some key allies to work with.

LOCKWOOD R.I.P.

Robert P. Lockwood passed away March 4. He was one of the most prolific Catholic journalists of our time, writing columns and books for Our Sunday Visitor for decades. He was also the president of Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, a company he brought to a new level of excellence. His last post was as director of communications for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Bob served with distinction as a member of the Catholic League’s board of directors for many years. He later served as the league’s director of research and was then named to the league’s board of advisors.

Bill Donohue has many fond memories of Bob. “There was nothing Bob wouldn’t do for the Catholic Church, or the Catholic League. He never turned down an assignment and worked diligently on every project he undertook.” Indeed, some of his work can be found on the Catholic League’s website.

Lockwood was a native New Yorker who moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana to take command of Our Sunday Visitor. He moved back to Fort Wayne after his job in Pittsburgh.

Donohue recalls him as “an astute writer, editor, and publisher. He was fun to work with, and he loved a new challenge. Gregarious and good humored, he was the kind of person every organization would love to have on staff. He never put his own interests above the best interests of the Catholic League.”

God bless Bob Lockwood. He left us too soon; he was 69.

OXFORD, COVINGTON, ABORTION; ALL MERIT STRONG RESPONSE

Since the last edition of Catalyst, we addressed more than twenty important issues, ranging from anti-Catholicism in the arts to insulting politicians, but none commanded our attention more than three subjects: the Oxford Union, Covington Catholic High School, and the new abortion laws in New York and Virginia.

We garnered significant press coverage for all three issues. There were newspaper stories in the U.S. and the U.K., internet articles, radio interviews, TV appearances, YouTube videos—our role was noted in many key venues. As always, some

of the coverage was fair, and some was biased. We drew the applause of many, and the enmity of others.

If there was a connecting thread that bound these issues together, it was lying. The Oxford Union, after inviting Bill Donohue to participate in a debate, disinvited him, and then lied about it. Many of the critics of the Covington students lied about what happened (others were merely mistaken). The governors of New York and Virginia had a hard time telling the truth about their cruel abortion laws. We exposed all of them.

This edition details how these issues unfolded.

Donohue made himself available to the media in England, answering all questions. Everyone associated with the Oxford Union—officials and debating participants alike—refused to speak. This included Marci Hamilton, the Church-bashing lawyer who was invited to take Donohue's place *defending the Catholic Church!*

Unlike so many others, we did not rush to judgment on the Covington Catholic students. When the facts emerged, we weighed in defending the innocent students and taking on the Indian and black bigots who were responsible for the fracas.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo from New York and Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam both promoted late-term abortions and beyond: they justified no penalties for infanticide. We graphically told what they were endorsing and unmasked their lying agenda.

Here's the good news.

The Oxford Union never expected the kind of blowback we initiated. The fact that they could not defend themselves was not lost on the English media or the public. By contrast, we came out on top by extending ourselves to the press.

The critics of the Covington students either apologized or were made to look like fools. We were quick to acknowledge the

apologies and just as quick to note the anti-Catholic bigots who sided with the instigators.

Cuomo and Northam took it on the chin. They expected that their bloody abortion laws would amount to no more than a one-day story. We helped ensure that did not happen.

Our response was quick and fair.

POPE NAILS CUOMO

Pope Francis didn't mention New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo by name, but his remarks nailed him anyway.

Last month, Cuomo implored Albany lawmakers to "follow the leadership of Pope Francis" by passing the Child Victims Act. Indeed, he wore his Catholic credentials on his sleeve, boasting of his allegiance to the pope on several occasions. He even had an enormous photo of the pope shown on a screen behind him as he ignited the audience.

Cuomo is a fraud. He champions infanticide. Pope Francis sent him a message on February 3rd.

Speaking of the unborn, the pope said, "they are children of the entire community, and their being killed in large numbers with the backing of the state constitutes a grave problem that undermines the foundations of the building up of justice, compromising the correct solution for every other human and social problem."

Then the Holy Father took dead aim at Cuomo's position. He took the opportunity to offer "an appeal to all politicians, regardless of each person's faith belief, to treat the defense of the lives of those *who are about to be born and enter into*

society as the cornerstone of the common good.”

Pope Francis made his pointed comments, which, of course, were ignored by most of the media, just after Cuomo celebrated his bloody abortion bill, one that legalizes the very acts that got Dr. Kermit Gosnell convicted.

We are delighted that the Holy Father checkmated Cuomo.