

Dems and Religion—Tricky Business

A new survey by the Barna Group shows that one-third of Americans are unchurched, meaning they have not attended a religious service in the past six months. Who are they? Liberals, mostly. 47 percent of liberals are unchurched, more than twice the percentage of conservatives (19 percent). This being true, attempts by Democrats to appeal to the faithful is tricky business—it may alienate their base.

97-year-old Catholic Woman Honored for Saving 2,500 Jewish Children from Holocaust

From the [Associated Press](#):

Irena Sendler saved nearly 2,500 Jewish children from the Nazis, organizing a ring of 20 Poles to smuggle them out of the Warsaw Ghetto in baskets and ambulances.

The Nazis arrested her, but she didn't talk under torture. After she survived the war, she expressed regret for doing too little.

Lawmakers in Poland's Senate disagreed Wednesday, unanimously passing a resolution honoring her and the Polish underground's Council for Assisting Jews, of which her ring of mostly Roman Catholics was a part.

Poland's government-in-exile set up the secret organization in 1942 to help save Jews from the Nazi-established ghettos and labor camps.

Anyone caught helping Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland risked being summarily shot, along with family members...

After smuggling the children out of the ghetto and placing them with non-Jewish families, Sendler wrote their names on slips of paper and buried them in jars in a neighbor's yard as a record that could help locate the children's parents after the war. The Nazis arrested her in 1943, but she refused despite repeated torture to reveal their names.

In 1965, Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial awarded Sendler one of its first medals given to people who saved Jews, the so-called "Righteous Among the Nations."

A Window into the Mind of the Left

[According to the Washington Post's Philip Kennicott](#), when Robert MacNeil addressed a recent gathering of Americans for the Arts, the journalist "lamented the influence of fundamentalism on science education, individual freedoms and the larger public dialogue about the hot-button moral and political issues of the day...And so, no surprise, he leapt to the defense of artists, in particular, from the influence of fundamentalism and the perils of the culture wars." Kennicott reports that MacNeil quickly turned his attention to what he called "the swing to Puritanism" that "gained energy when political consultants and lobbying organizations discovered the catnip (and the fundraising power) of pandering to those

who could be persuaded that art is decadent, or immoral, or homosexual, and destructive of finer values.” And he argued that the importance of real creative freedom in the arts has never been more important, given this country’s ideological battle with violent, fundamentalist Islam. He even went so far as to compare Islamic fundamentalism with Jewish and Christian fundamentalism. “I am not for a moment suggesting that our fundamentalists harbor any violent intentions,” he

[MacNeil] said, “but the initial psychology is similar to that which inspires Islamic reformers.” What is more interesting than MacNeil’s speech is Kennicott’s observation that “It was, perhaps, courageous of MacNeil to speak so bluntly, to an essentially liberal audience, about the threat he sees in fundamentalist Islam.” Yet the writer makes no comment on it being courageous to link Christians and Jews in this country with militant Islamic fundamentalists. That’s because such claims aren’t alien to many on the left.

Kissling Loathes Both Catholic League and Catholic Left

We wouldn’t expect Frances Kissling, recently retired president of the anti-Catholic front group Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC), to have any kind words to say about the likes of the Catholic League. Indeed, we would be concerned if she did. So we weren’t surprised to read an interview in the March 9 National Catholic Reporter in which Kissling whined, “The viciousness of the Donohues, the Deal Hudsons, the George Weigels and the

[Father] Richard John Neuhauses is soul-numbing.”

What was interesting, however, was to see Kissling lash out at the those so-called “Catholic” groups that, like CFFC, often work against the teachings of the Church. According to the National Catholic Reporter:

She dismisses the 30,000-plus Catholics Voice of the Faithful claims as members, calling it a “paltry number” driven by those “who have clicked on their Web site.”

“And then,” she continued, “you look at all the rest of us, Call to Action, ARCC [the Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church], Dignity, the Women’s Ordination Conference.” So small in number and influence, Kissling said, that “the movement doesn’t exist...”

Meanwhile, Kissling said, the progressive religious community’s efforts to ingratiate itself with the Democratic party works against the efforts of church reformers, especially feminists. “It is threatening because what the Democratic Party wants from religion is respectability and credibility. They want a rabbi with a yarmulke on his head, a minister who wears a collar or some religious garb. They want a mainstream respectable image of religion...”

The result, Kissling said, is “two patriarchal forces, politics and religion, converging on the progressive side, in which women and so-called marginal issues are excluded.”

Now if only Frances would tell us what she really thinks...

The article in National Catholic Reporter, titled “Kissling leaves, with barbs for the left,” is available only to subscribers. [Click here](#) to read some excerpts provided by Catholic World News.

John Edwards: Americans are Selfish

Presidential hopeful John Edwards recently told the website Beliefnet.com: "I think that Jesus would be disappointed in our ignoring the plight of those around us who are suffering and our focus on our own selfish short-term needs. I think he would be appalled, actually."

This is interesting coming from a millionaire who is so loathe to fork over his taxes.

From the July 31, 2003 issue of The [Washington Times](#):

Sen. John Edwards, North Carolina Democrat and 2004 presidential hopeful, is four months delinquent in paying the property taxes on his Georgetown mansion and owes the cash-strapped District more than \$11,000, city records show....

In at least eight instances during the past decade, the Edwardses have been so late paying property taxes on their Raleigh home and various automobiles that bill collectors assessed them penalties, according to records kept by Wake County in North Carolina.

In 1995, for example, they were more than two months late paying their taxes on a 1989 Mitsubishi and a 1991 Acura. That same year, they were nearly a month late paying taxes on their Raleigh home.

Last year, they were late paying their taxes on a 1998 Volvo and a 1998 Buick.

That did not include the dozens of times the Edwardses paid months past the due dates on their Raleigh tax bills but were not assessed late penalties.

Regarding the outstanding bill in Washington, Mrs. Daisley

said that even in cases where a tax bill is in dispute, the city requires owners to pay by March 31.

“You can protest the bill, but you must still pay your taxes on time, and we’ll reimburse you,” she said. “It’s the owner’s responsibility.”

If Mr. Edwards fails to pay his taxes, the city could sell his Georgetown mansion at auction in July 2004.

From the July 10, 2004 issue of [The New York Times](#):

The Kerry-Edwards Democratic presidential campaign released Mr. Edwards’s income figures in a statement yesterday in response to questions about the taxes he paid after he created a tax shelter in 1995.

Mr. Edwards paid \$9,353,448 in federal taxes on his income of \$26,869,496, but the shelter allowed him to avoid paying \$591,112 in Medicare tax, the figures provided by the campaign show...

The campaign said Mr. Edwards created the tax shelter, a so-called S Corporation, on the advice of his accountant, who cited its legal liability protections as well as its tax advantages, about two years after he left a larger firm to start his own practice with a partner.

Where’s the ACLU?

From the San Francisco Chronicle: “In response to the formation of the Gay and Lesbian Employees Association in 2002, Regina Regerford and Robin Christy put up a flyer on a bulletin board in January 2003 announcing formation of a ‘forum for people of faith’ to express their views ‘with

respect for the natural family, marriage and family values.'

"A supervisor in the city's Community and Economic Development Department removed the flyer six weeks later in response to an employee's complaint, saying it contained 'statements of a homophobic nature' in violation of Oakland's ban on anti-gay harassment in city employment.

Yesterday "...a federal appeals court ruled [that]...the city of Oakland did not violate two employees' freedom of speech when it removed" the flyer.

Edwards Discovers Hate Speech

On a scale of 1 to 10, what the two women bloggers who worked for John Edwards said about Jesus and Our Blessed Mother was a 10 in terms of hate speech. What Ann Coulter said about homosexuals was a lot lower on the scale. Yet Edwards branded Coulter's remark "hateful" and labeled the comments of Amanda Marcotte and Melissa McEwan merely "intolerant." Moreover, he forgave Marcotte and McEwan immediately.

Nice to know what passes as hate speech for John Edwards, and that which doesn't.

"Cold Case" on the Church

Catholic nuns in the 1960s who listened to Church teaching were cruel and showed little compassion for girls who got pregnant out of wedlock. Or so "The Good-Bye Room," the March

4 episode of the CBS drama "Cold Case," would lead viewers to believe.

In the show, a young pregnant girl named Hillary is sent to St. Mary's Home for Unwed Mothers in 1964. Hillary is killed the day after she gives birth, and an investigation is launched into the home and the religious sisters who run it. Though not responsible for Hillary's murder, the head of the home, Sister Margaret, sells illegitimate babies on the black market. She tells the pregnant girls they are not good people, and that they got pregnant because bad things happen to bad people.

When Sister Margaret is questioned in the present day about selling babies years ago, she blames her crimes on the Catholic Church. She claims, "The Church told us they were unfit mothers and would do it again if we did not reform them. I had to believe that to do what I did."

The Catholic League wouldn't object to the portrayal of a criminal nun, but when she is shown to turn to crime because she is motivated by what she is told by "the Church," it's a little too much. Add to that the fact that the show digs up the tired cliché about nuns hitting kids with rulers, and we have to ask CBS, is this what your network thinks of Catholicism?

"Christian" Bothers Edwards

Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards had this to say about America being a Christian nation: "There's a lot of America that's Christian. I would not describe us, though, on the whole, as a Christian nation...I guess the word 'Christian' is what bothers me, even though I'm a Christian."

When Dialogue Means Death

From Catholic News Agency: “Bishop Joseph Coutts, the Bishop of Faisalabad says that he is in the sites of Muslim extremists due to his continued efforts to establish inter-religious dialogue in his country. The bishop said that the increase in Muslim radical groups, coupled with his attempts to improve relations between Catholics and Muslims in Pakistan, have brought about numerous death threats since December....” [Click here](#) to read article.