

Political Correctness Leaves Christians Out

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On Sept. 29, Kansas City Chiefs safety Husain Abdullah, who is a Muslim, incurred a penalty in his game against the New England Patriots for sliding in the end zone after he scored a touchdown; he then bowed in prayer. He is man enough to admit that he was properly penalized not for praying, but for sliding. He has learned his lesson. It's okay to pray on the field after doing something heroic, as long as you, "Stop before you drop."

The problem is not Abdullah, it is his Muslim-fawning defenders.

Dozens of commentators have rushed to anoint him a "devout Muslim," and quite unlike the reaction afforded Tim Tebow, a Christian who dropped to his knees after scoring, they invoked the adjective as a compliment, not as a statement of derision.

When Tebow was playing, reporters were typically snide, or much worse:

- "Sunday, as expected, a national TV audience could see pious Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow taking a silent devotion." – Cathy Lynn Grossman, USA Today, Oct. 20, 2011.
- "We don't know when, or if, he [Tebow] will start multiplying his loaves and fishes." – Bill Dwyre, Los Angeles Times, Nov. 27, 2011.
- "Most of us have learned to live with boundaries—to avoid thrusting our religion into arenas where it is unexpected or unwelcome." "Should Tebow be so flamboyant about his faith?"— Joel Mathis, Scripps Howard News Service, Dec. 10, 2011.

- “There are a lot of LGBT people in New York City who are also football fans,” and that “the new, possibly, starting quarterback for the New York Jets wants them to move backwards 30 or 40 years.” – Dave Zirin, quoted by the Media Research Center, March 12, 2012.
- “If Tebow wins the Super Bowl, against all odds, it will buoy his faithful, and emboldened faithful can do insane things, like burning mosques, bashing gays and indiscriminately banishing immigrants.” – Rabbi Joshua Hammerman, quoted by the Media Research Center, March 26, 2012.

Now contrast this reaction to the fawning over Abdullah:

- “This kid [Abdullah] playing against New England gave a brief and private, dignified prayer and he was penalized for it. Tim Tebow became an icon of prayer in the end zone. Two sets of rules.” – Jesse Jackson, politics.blog.ajc.com, Oct. 2, 2014.
- “Abdullah” is “a godsend.” “We should be cheering and applauding special men like Abdullah who are a phenomenal credit to their faith and inspire Americans to give gratitude to God.” – New York Observer, Sept. 30, 2014.
- “The penalty is another example of America’s religious bias.” “Freedom of expression and religion are important tenets of American life. But in an age when corporations have the right to impose what they call Christian values on their secular work force, we should wonder if a Muslim boss would be granted the same permission. Considering the move of some states to ‘ban’ shariah law, we can probably guess the answer to that.” – Erika Stutzman, Daily Camera, Oct. 1, 2014.
- “It [the penalty Abdullah incurred] propels us to war. You have to rally the country in order to bomb a country

that did nothing to you and you need to rally them and so that's what I think that was." – Rosie O'Donnell, "The View," Sept. 30, 2014.

- "For anyone wondering why angry Muslims join ISIL, this whole saga could easily make the list." – Ahmed Tharwat, Star Tribune, Oct. 1, 2014.

We live in a country that is approximately 80 percent Christian and 1 percent Muslim.

Why, then, is Tebow bashed and Abdullah admired?

Our cultural elites have decided that Christianity, which is the font of freedom, is repressive, and Islam, which is the font of repression, is unfairly stereotyped.

The furniture of the mind is fixed. Christians are victimizers and Muslims are victims.

Don't look for either logic or intellectual honesty – it's all about political correctness.

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Religion Is Losing Its Clout

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The Pew Research Center's latest survey on religion discloses that 72 percent of Americans think religion is losing influence. This is not a welcome development: A majority of Americans see this as a negative outcome; only the unaffiliated are happy with this result. While the study does not explicitly say why this is happening, the data offer much ground for discussion.

One of the reasons why religion is losing its influence is the extent to which people of faith feel uncomfortable with their status. For example, 34 percent of evangelical Christians, including 42 percent of evangelical Protestants, and one in five Catholics (18 percent), say "it has become more difficult to be a member of their religious group in recent years."

Now compare this finding to those who have no religious affiliation: only 8 percent say "it has become harder to be a person with no religion in the U.S. in recent years, while 31 percent say it has become easier."

This may be the study's most salient finding, though it is not being reported this way. It must be asked: When in American history have people of faith found it more difficult to be a member of their religion than their faithless counterparts? Has it not always been the other way around, a tribute to the dominance of our Judeo-Christian ethos? The survey does not follow up on this issue, but in fairness to the researchers, they cannot be faulted; they cover a wide range of subjects. Still, it is worth exploring.

We know from several studies, dating back to the 1980s, that our elites, particularly in education, the media, the publishing industry, the entertainment sector, and the arts,

are overwhelmingly secularists. This matters because they are the ones who disseminate ideas – it is they who shape public opinion. One would be clueless not to conclude that elites have had much to do with creating the conditions that make people of faith uncomfortable with their public presence. Concurrent with this condition is the obverse: A more receptive milieu has been crafted for agnostics and atheists.

A culture that is not religion-friendly induces reticence on the part of the faithful, and this is precisely the kind of environment that causes religion to lose its influence. To be exact, many believers feel intimidated from expressing their views in public: Whether in the workplace or at a community forum, God-talk is considered the new taboo.

Americans sense something is wrong, which is why there has been a marked increase in the percentage who believe that churches and other houses of worship should express themselves on political and social issues; the figure jumped by 6 points since 2010 to 49 percent (statistically that is quite a leap in a short period of time). Moreover, six in 10 say members of Congress should have strong religious beliefs. Consistent with other data, the Republican Party is seen as much more religion-friendly than the Democratic Party. Significantly, only 30 percent of the public report that the Obama administration is friendly toward religion.

When religion loses its clout, everyone loses. That is the inescapable conclusion of social science research over many years. As such, we need to find ways to make our society more religion-friendly, not less. The problem is that those who are in a position to do so, namely the elites, are one of the main reasons we have this condition in the first place.

It is up to the clergy, and lay activists in religious circles, to embolden the faithful. Pope Francis spoke for many, of all religions, when he implored us to exercise a more robust public expression of our faith.

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The Rioting in Ferguson Is Senseless

by Bill Donohue

This article was originally published by Newsmax on August 19, 2014.

Many commentators are making the mistake of searching for the “root causes” of the Ferguson riot. The nightly outbursts are obviously not a reflection of poverty and discrimination, because both conditions have receded dramatically in recent decades.

Admittedly, there is frustration with perceived police injustice, as well as anger at not moving forward economically as fast as other segments of society. But there are other factors at work as well, and they have nothing to do with oppression.

In 1969, University of Pennsylvania professor Edward Banfield published a controversial book on urban unrest, "The Unheavenly City." He challenged many myths, among them the notion that riots are entirely the result of socio-economic causes. For example, he titled one of his chapters, "Rioting Mainly for Fun and Profit."

Banfield identified several "accelerating causes" of riots, all of which are in play in Ferguson. TV coverage, he said, acted to recruit agitators from afar, and it also encouraged young men to enjoy the fun of smashing windows, setting fires, and throwing rocks. "The rioters knew that they had little or nothing to fear from the police and the courts," he adds. Finally, a sense of not getting what they deserved fueled the anger.

What Banfield said is relevant today. Ferguson Mayor James Knowles observed that "a lot of people aren't even from our town, but they came in and stole from our businesses and left our town in ruins."

Similarly, Capt. Ron Johnson of the Missouri State Highway Patrol said that some of those arrested came from as far away as New York and California. The police, he stressed, "came under heavy gunfire," and the shooters knew the cops would not retaliate in kind.

The role the media are playing is central to the rioting. Here is how an MSNBC reporter put it: "The [Ferguson] residents have been pushing media back. They've been urging media to fall back. They're saying that the media and the attention [are] encouraging some of the more violent reactions here."

What's changed since "The Unheavenly City" was published is the social media: It is no longer just TV that acts as bait for rioters; Twitter and other sources spread the word like wildfire.

Rioting is also seasonal. Consider the worst race riots in

recent times:

- Watts (Los Angeles), August 1965
- Chicago, Cleveland, Atlanta, San Francisco, Summer 1966
- Newark, July 1967
- Detroit, July 1967
- D.C., Chicago, April 1968
- Miami, May 1980
- Brooklyn (Crown Heights), August 1991
- Los Angeles, April-May 1992
- St. Petersburg, October 1996
- Cincinnati, April 2001
- Ferguson, August 2014

Why is there is no such thing as a winter riot? Because it's cold outside. Quite frankly, it's not fun to riot when it's freezing. Moreover, when the temperature rises, so do the passions. Heat also makes it likely that young men – it's mostly young men – will take to the streets to act out.

Race, it needs to be said, has nothing to do with the seasonal aspect of rioting. The worst riot in American history, the New York City Draft riot, had racial overtones, but most of the thugs were Irish.

The riot that took place at the Chicago Democratic Convention, and the Stonewall riot in New York, were populated mostly by whites. The former took place in July 1863, and the latter two occurred in August 1968 and June 1969. It gets hot in June, July, and August.

If it were possible to control the weather, then producing heavy rain at night in high crime neighborhoods would work well. Absent that, while it is important to recognize the societal conditions that allow for urban violence, it makes no sense to overanalyze race riots. Some of what is driving the mayhem is nothing more than a debased appetite for “fun and profit.”

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Media Passionate About Anti-Catholic Bias

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published by Newsmax on May 29, 2014.

Every demographic group can cite instances of media bias against them, but no group is more unfairly covered, on a consistent basis, than Catholics. Here are three examples drawn from news stories published on May 29.

Whenever a Catholic does something good, such as a police officer or firefighter who risks his life for someone, his religion is never mentioned. Nor should it be. But when he does something bad, we all learn of his religious affiliation.

To wit: Lukas Iorio went on a drunken rampage on the Jersey Shore last Sunday – he was arrested for carjacking, assault, burglary, driving under the influence, criminal mischief, and

resisting arrest. Here is how the media played it:

- “Former Bergen Catholic Wrestling Star Charged with Assault, Carjacking in Manasquan.” Star-Ledger
- “Ex-Bergen Catholic High School Wrestling Star Lukas Iorio Accused of Wild Rampage on Jersey Shore.” The Record
- “Former Bergen Catholic Wrestler Charged with Attacking 5 in Jersey Shore Rampage.” Cliffviewpilot.com
- “Manasquan Charges ex-Bergen Catholic Wrestler with Beach Carjacking, Wild Behavior.” Myfoxny.com

All the italics were added. To its credit, CBS reported it fairly: “New Jersey High School Wrestling Champ Accused in Bizarre Rampage.” It is not biased to mention in a news story that Iorio went to a Catholic school, but to put it in the headline is a different story.

“Female Catholic Priest Celebrates Mass at St. Francis House” is the headline in today’s *Columbian Missourian*. Of course, this never happened. What happened is that yet another woman – a senior citizen, of course – played make-believe and had herself “ordained.” The Harbor Country News ran a story billed as “Wife, Mother & Now Priest.”

MLive, a blog post, told readers, “Michigan’s First Woman Priest in Dissident Catholic Sect: ‘My Job is to Give Witness.’” At least it mentioned “dissident Catholic Sect.”

The *Columbian Missourian* not only ran the most dishonest headline, it ran a totally biased story. The caption to her photo begins by saying, “Janice Sevre-Duszynska, a female priest, led a mass at St. Francis House.”

The first paragraph of the story said: “In the middle of a living room, a table is set like an altar, with wine and bread prepared for Holy Communion. At the head is a priest dressed in a black shirt, jeans and sandals, hair tied behind the head revealing a gold earring hanging from her ear. She has a

purple stole around her neck, which rests on her lap as she sits.”

In the next paragraph we learn that she is “an ordained Roman Catholic priest with one exception: The Roman Catholic Church does not recognize her status as a priest.” Of course, the only thing that counts is the “one exception.” It could also be said that the Roman Catholic Church does not recognize those who dress up as the Pope on Halloween to be the Pope.

The media game, naturally, is to whip up public sentiment against the Catholic Church for its teaching on ordination. It never does the same with regards to the role of women in the Orthodox Jewish community, or in Islam.

It was reported today in the New York Times that New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio spoke before an Orthodox Jewish gathering on Tuesday night. He singled out for praise a lawyer who is chief counsel to Agudath Israel. Now it is true that David Zwiebel has a good record of interfaith dialogue with Catholics, but it is also true, as reporter Michael Powell said, that he has played a pivotal role in arguing that those who learn of rabbis in the Orthodox community who sexually molest minors should not report these crimes to the authorities.

The extent of this scandal, and the reprisals taken against those who break ranks and go to the authorities, is huge, yet receives comparatively little media coverage.

Can anyone imagine de Blasio congratulating a prominent Catholic lawyer in the Archdiocese of New York for instructing Catholics not to report cases of priestly sexual abuse to the authorities? More important, Zwiebel’s advice is, in fact, followed. So why aren’t the media all over this? If Cardinal Dolan said that all such allegations will be handled in-house, and not reported to the authorities, it would be front-page news around the world.

These are just three examples from today. All the Catholic League has ever wanted is a level playing field. We are nowhere near achieving it.

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Holocaust School Assignment Gone Awry

By Bill Donohue

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After it was learned that a Southern California eighth-grade class was asked to debate the reality of the Holocaust, a firestorm ensued.

Apologies followed, and pledges were forthcoming from the Rialto Unified School District not to let this happen again. While it may not happen again in this school district, it will certainly happen again elsewhere. Why? Because this is hardly

the first time something like this has happened.

More important, the critics of the assignment don't seem to understand what is really driving this issue.

The Rialto students were asked to respond to the following: "When tragic events occur in history, there is often debate about their actual existence. For example, some people claim the Holocaust is not an actual event, but instead is a propagandizing tool that was used for political and monetary gain." This was supposed to be an exercise in critical thinking.

Immediately, the Anti-Defamation League said this assignment has "no academic value," saying it "only gives legitimacy to anti-Semites." The Simon Wiesenthal Center complained that the Holocaust "is the most documented monstrous crime in history."

One of the Center's speakers, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, wondered what is "broken" in the school district. All of these statements are true, but they miss the most salient point: What leads people to second-guess the reality of the Holocaust is not bigotry; rather, it is the proposition that moral absolutes do not exist.

The idea that truth is a fiction, and that all moral precepts are equally valid, has been the reigning wisdom in academia for decades. It is not just deconstructionists who cast doubt on the plain meaning of words; rather, it is those who fancy themselves as critical thinkers. When students are told, over and over again, that what appears to be reality is nothing but a social construct, certain outcomes follow. Nowhere is this more deeply entrenched than in the humanities and the social sciences; the law schools are just as bad.

In the 1990s, Hamilton College professor Robert Simon said that while his students acknowledged the reality of the Holocaust, 10 to 20 percent of them refused to condemn it.

"Of course I dislike the Nazis," one student told him, "but who is to say they are morally wrong?" At about the same time, professor Christina Hoff Sommers recalled how a student at Williams College took this issue a step further. "Although the Holocaust may not have happened, it's a perfectly reasonable conceptual hallucination."

The late James Q. Wilson encountered the same phenomenon. When discussing the Nazi genocide of Jews with his students, he found that "there was no general agreement that those guilty of the Holocaust itself were guilty of a moral horror."

These are more than anecdotes: in 2002, a survey of college students found that 73 percent believed that "what is right and wrong depends on differences in individual values and cultural diversity." More recent studies show no departure from this perspective.

It would be a mistake to think that none of this matters. The great English historian Paul Johnson sought to uncover the causes of mass murder under the regimes of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao. He concluded that "Moral relativism in monstrous incarnation" is what undergirds totalitarianism. Think of it this way: When morality is reduced to personal predilections, and when objective standards give way to subjectivism, anything can be justified.

"There is no such thing as truth, either in the moral or in the scientific sense." Those are the words of Adolf Hitler. This proposition is the etiological basis upon which doubts about the Holocaust are based. Morality becomes a free-for-all once objective standards of right and wrong, such as the Ten Commandments, are jettisoned. Indeed, the moral relativism of the Weimar Republic is what made Hitler possible. To be exact, it was moral ennui that resulted in the gas chambers.

If we are to break open students' minds about the horror of the Holocaust, we need to spend more time educating the

educators on the dangers that are inherent in an ethics of moral relativism. Then they might be able to teach their students that there are truths, among them being that the Holocaust not only existed, but that it was a moral monstrosity.

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Gay Parade Organizers Thinly Hypocritical

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published by Newsmax on March 26, 2014.

My bid to march in The Heritage of Pride parade, New York City's annual gay event, has occasioned many patently false statements. It's time to set the record straight.

Mid-afternoon on March 20, I was interviewed by Steve Malzberg on his Newsmax Internet show about this issue. I was surprised [when Steve asked me](#) to respond to the news that the

organizers of The Heritage of Pride parade had agreed to allow my proposed unit, "Straight is Great," to march. This was the first I had heard of it. Moreover, no such invitation was ever made to me.

Steve was referring to a Newsmax article by Bill Hoffmann, which was posted at 1:53 p.m. that day, titled, ["Donohue Gets Green Light to March in NYC Gay Parade."](#) This was false, but neither Steve nor Bill were to blame. Here is exactly what happened.

On March 19, at 1:09 p.m., I made my initial request to march; I emailed Chris Frederick, the parade's managing director, about my bid. Shortly after midnight (at 12:16 a.m.) an email was sent to me by David Studinski, the march director. He said I had to register, adding, "you must attend Group Leader training to participate."

I didn't field Studinski's late-night email until the morning of the 20th. When I responded at 9:56 a.m. asking questions about participating, little did I know that literally six minutes earlier – at 9:50 a.m. – an article would be posted on the website of Gothamist saying I was welcome to march. But there was a hitch: conditions were announced by Frederick. "He [Frederick] emphasized that Donohue and his fellow Catholic Leaguers can join in what is certainly one of NYC's most joyful parades 'as long as he's not infringing' on other people's beliefs."

Let's stop right there. Studinski never told me what he told Gothamist, but someone, presumably either he or Gothamist – told GLAAD President Sarah Kate Ellis; she put out her own statement shortly after the Gothamist piece appeared.

At about the same time, Ivan Pereira of amNewYork was also quoting Studinski. The next day, Newsday carried the amNewYork story, and, more important, The Associated Press also carried the amNewYork story, citing Newsday.

None of these people ever contacted me. The AP reported, falsely, "Gay-Marriage Foe to March in NYC Gay Pride Parade."

Never mind that I never agreed to march; I find it ironic that the parade organizers were insisting on certain conditions.

First, I must attend their "training sessions," and second, they announce their right to check my speech.

Not to be misunderstood, I have no problem with parade organizers insisting that marchers refrain from "infringing on other people's beliefs." This is exactly why the St. Patrick's Day parade organizers do not allow gays, or pro-life Catholics, to march under their own banner: It infringes on the message of honoring St. Patrick.

The hypocrisy is incredible. It should be obvious that these gay activists were only proving my point: all parades have strictures; their content may vary, but house rules are universal.

Adding to the hypocrisy were lesbian writer Jamie Manson and gay activist Michelangelo Signorile. She wrote that I would be carrying a "Gay is Great" sign, which, of course, I never agreed to. He advised parade organizers to insist on celebrating LGBT pride, "so perhaps Donohue has to tweak that banner a bit to say, 'Straights Who Support Gays Are Great,' or 'Catholics Who Support Gays Are Great.'"

Again, this is not what I agreed to. Gays were making up conditions as they went along, and they weren't even associated with the parade.

On March 21, I emailed Studinski saying, "Regarding the requirement that I attend a gay training session as a condition of registration, I object. I don't agree with your rule. Please advise." He wrote back saying this requirement was "mandatory."

Thus did they prove my point, once again. Gay parade organizers have rules just like everyone else, and when someone objects to them, they rightfully refuse not to honor the objections.

Truthfully, I don't care a fig about "training" sessions – if that is what they want, it is their business, not mine. But they have no right to claim victim status when their bid to get others to alter their rules falls flat. Nor do they have a right to misrepresent how this story unfolded.

One more thing. One of the gay parade rules reads: "Nudity. The law prohibits nudity below the waist. Police will be present at The March and it is assumed that they will enforce the law."

Perhaps gay officials can explain why this is the only parade in New York City that feels compelled to issue such a rule. I know why – I have the pictures from the 1994 march – but that is for another time.

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Gays Bent on Crashing St. Patrick's Day Parade

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published by Newsmax on March 12, 2014.

On June 19, 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 9-0 that Boston's St. Patrick's Day parade was a privately run operation that could write its own rules for participation.

Writing for the high court, Justice David Souter noted that gays and lesbians had never been barred from marching in the parade; they were banned from marching under their own banners. The court's unanimous ruling was a victory for the First Amendment right to freedom of assembly.

Once this decision was reached, gay and lesbian groups in many cities, including New York, were angry, and some tried, unsuccessfully, to march without a permit on the same day as the big parade.

The protests quickly fizzled: Only a very small contingent of gays and lesbians showed up in subsequent years. Now the fight has been rekindled, thanks to New York Mayor Bill de Blasio: He is not marching in the parade because gays and lesbians can't march under their own banner. Other public officials have followed suit.

It must be noted that the organizers of the parade, the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, do not allow pro-life Catholics to march under their own banners. Nor are NRA Catholics allowed. But just as gays can march, so can pro-lifers and NRA members; they simply must blend in like everyone else. No one feels victimized save for homosexuals.

Besides the huge march up Fifth Avenue, there are many local St. Patrick's Day parades; they are usually held on the weekends prior to the big one. On March 2, Mayor de Blasio marched in the Sunnyside, Queens "St. Pat's for All" parade, organized by gay Catholics.

He looked lovely with his arm around Pandora Panti Bliss, an Irish drag queen. In one sense, this was a plus: It showed exactly what the goal of these gay activists is. They do not want to honor St. Patrick – they want to draw attention to themselves.

Mayor de Blasio looked even more foolish when his spokesman said the reason his boss would not march in the St. Patrick's Day parade in the Rockaways, held the day before the Sunnyside one, was because gays were banned from marching in their own unit.

This was false – they can. More likely, he was afraid of being booed by those who live there. The Rockaways are home to legions of Irish cops and firefighters. For the same reason, the mayor also didn't march in the parade held on Staten Island, though the ban on a separate gay contingent didn't stop him from marching as a public official before he became mayor.

Adding to de Blasio's confused approach to the St. Patrick's Day parade was his decision to cancel the annual breakfast at Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence. I have publicly accused him of not wanting to associate with Irish Catholics; apparently such criticism has had an effect because the breakfast has been reinstated.

What is particularly disturbing about this contrived controversy is the reaction of gay activists and public officials. The Stonewall Democrats have accused the parade of "breathing hate." The following have levied the charge "bigoted" at the parade: City Councilman Daniel Patrick Dromm;

Irish Queers; the Irish Independent; and Denis Hamill of the Daily News. Moreover, dozens of New York notables have signed a statement accusing the parade of discrimination.

People such as Brendan Fay, an Irish gay activist, Niall O'Dowd of the Irish Central, and even Father Brian Jordan OFM, are proposing various "solutions" and attempts to "mediate" this issue. But there is nothing to solve – they lost.

They lost in the U.S. Supreme Court, and in the court of public opinion. Quite frankly, there is nothing to mediate with those who are bent on crashing the parade. If there is any doubt about this, consider that the organizers of the Boston St. Patrick's Day parade approved a bid this year to what they thought was a gay veterans' group, but had to rescind their invitation after they found out they were lied to. It is not a legitimate veterans group, and the marchers intended to wear gay T-shirts.

The New York City St. Patrick's Day parade is as Catholic as it is Irish: it begins with a mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Over 200,000 march in the world's largest St. Patrick's Day parade, and they have been doing so every year since 1762.

Those who truly believe in diversity and tolerance love the parade for what it is – a celebration of St. Patrick and Irish heritage. That some want to deny Irish Catholics their constitutional rights, when no one is stopping them from having their own parade, is a sad commentary on the state of our culture.

A little over two months ago, de Blasio won in a landslide election, yet his approval rating today stands in the 30s. His arrogance is on a par with his contempt for the St. Patrick's Day parade.

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Why Is NYC Mayor de Blasio Punishing the Poor?

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published by Newsmax on March 5, 2014.

When the Marxist Sandinistas ousted the Somoza family in Nicaragua in 1979, they dressed in Castro-like fatigues to show their solidarity with the poor. They wound up crushing them, while conveniently living in the same mansions as the Somozas.

Helping to raise money for the Communists, and working alongside them in Nicaragua, was a young man whose birth name was Warren Wilhelm, Jr. He would later change his name twice, settling on Bill de Blasio.

This is the same man who lied to his own children about where he went on his honeymoon: he went, illegally, to Cuba, to show his solidarity with the Communists. Now the New York City mayor has repaired to his roots, rhetorically championing the poor, while punishing them with his public policies.

The poor are striking back. On March 4, busloads of inner-city African Americans and Latinos showed up in Albany to protest the mayor's decision to kill three charter schools that had been approved by the Bloomberg administration.

There were actually two rallies in Albany: the one led by de Blasio, and the one led by Eva Moskowitz, a former New York City councilwoman who runs Success Academy Charter Schools. He drew 1,000 supporters, mostly union teachers; she drew 11,000, mostly non-union teachers, parents, and students. No one of any significance spoke at the mayor's rally, but Governor Andrew Cuomo spoke at the charter-school rally.

Moskowitz won the backing of de Blasio's predecessor, Michael Bloomberg, and it is no secret that the Marxist Mayor hates them both. But aside from the teachers' unions, which are perpetually frightened of competition, few New York notables are on the mayor's side.

In addition to Cuomo and Bloomberg, de Blasio has incurred the wrath of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and the editorial boards of *The New York Times*, *New York Post*, and the *Daily News*. Attacking de Blasio from the left are two of the most wild-eyed elected officials in the nation, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, and Public Advocate Letitia James: They want to destroy all the charter schools.

"There's little question that New York has one of the nation's most successful charter school systems," is how the *Times* put it. The *Post* posed the right question: "Why are these charters under attack? Mostly because they show poor and minority children can learn if given a good school."

The *Daily News*, which is the paper of choice for most blacks and Latinos, said, "The charter school sector has been a high-wattage bright spot in New York City public education of late. The de Blasio administration's crusade against it is an ignorant insult to a decade-and-a-half of progress on behalf

of children.”

The facts are indisputable: 93 percent of charter school children in the city are black or Latino. Moskowitz explains why New Yorkers support charter schools by a margin of 56-34 percent (much higher among minorities): “We’re in the top 1 percent in that state of New York in math and we’re in the top 7 percent in reading and writing. And that is all schools. And our students in Harlem, in the South Bronx, in Bed-Stuy are significantly less socio-economically advantaged.”

There are 50,000 kids on a waiting list for charter schools, all a direct result of the abysmal failure of traditional public schools in poor areas. These are the schools the mayor is attacking. So which schools does he want to keep open? According to the *Times*, when he was campaigning for mayor, de Blasio said “he would end the practice of closing low-performing public schools.” To top things off, charter schools cost \$5,549 less a year per student than district public schools.

Why is de Blasio punishing the poor? There are three reasons, two of which are easy to pinpoint: He is a petty man bent on paying back Bloomberg and Moskowitz, and he is totally committed to the unions.

To understand what is really driving him, however, we need to consider why he supported the Sandinistas and Castro. Control. It’s all about control.

De Blasio is not a liberal: He is a hard-core left-wing ideologue. Charter schools represent independence, and that is not something that those who lust for power can tolerate, much less the notion of an independent public school. He is not interested in helping the poor – he is interested in owning them. He sees himself as the Grand Custodian of the dispossessed, but in reality he is acting more like their Master.

Those outside of New York who are looking to de Blasio as a model of “progressive” success better keep their eyes open. He is shaping up to be the biggest disaster New York City has ever experienced.

Dr. William Donohue is the president of and CEO of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization. The publisher of the Catholic League journal, Catalyst, Bill is a former Bradley Resident Scholar at the Heritage Foundation and served for two decades on the board of directors of the National Association of Scholars. The author of five books, two on the ACLU, and the winner of several teaching awards and many awards from the Catholic community, Donohue has appeared on thousands of television and radio shows speaking on civil liberties and social issues. Read more reports from Bill Donohue – [Click Here Now.](#)

UN Wants to Control Catholic Church

Bill Donohue

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The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has just released a report on the way the Vatican has responded to the sexual abuse of minors by priests. The 15-page report contains not a single footnote, endnote, or any other mode of attribution. But it does provide plenty of evidence as to its real agenda.

The U.N. panel is using the sexual abuse of minors as a pretext for its true objective: it wants the Vatican to submit to its authority, and not just in instances involving international law—it wants the Catholic Church to change Canon Law and to adopt a secular sexual ethics. As such, it is one of the most ambitious power-grab efforts ever undertaken by a U.N. committee. The panel is also profoundly ignorant of the data.

On p. 3 of the report, the panel says the Holy See should “undertake the necessary steps to **withdraw all its reservations and to ensure the [U.N.] Convention’s precedence over internal** laws and regulations.” (Its emphasis.) It is quite explicit: “The Committee recommends that the Holy See undertake a comprehensive review of its normative framework, in particular Canon Law, with a view to ensuring its full compliance with the Convention.”

In other words, the teaching body of the Catholic Church, the Magisterium, i.e., the pope in communion with the bishops, should yield to the U.N. This would be the equivalent of asking the United States Congress to make sure its laws are in compliance with U.N. strictures. Hubris is too mild a word to describe this unmitigated arrogance.

On pp. 12-13, the panel says it wants the Catholic Church to change its teachings on abortion and contraception; it also says the Church needs to do more about HIV/AIDS.

It is painfully obvious that these panelists have not thought through this issue. To wit: if everyone followed the Church’s teachings on sexuality, we would not have this problem in the first place. To be exact, those who acquire HIV/AIDS typically do so because they live a reckless life, in sharp contradistinction to the Church’s plea for restraint.

The panel is so intent on policing the Church that it demands a Canon Law change in the use of the term “illegitimate

children.” It also directs the Vatican to order Catholic schools to change its textbooks, getting rid of alleged “gender stereotypes.” Not only is this another example of its abuse of power, the panel provides not a single piece of evidence to buttress its claim. Someone should also tell these experts that the Vatican does not tell Catholic schools what textbooks, or curricula, it should adopt. But to control freaks, delegation is a difficult concept to grasp.

The panel lectures the Vatican on the need for “awareness programs,” urging “systematic training” for those who work with minors. Just who do they think started these initiatives? We’re not the ones who lack mandatory training programs—the guilty parties are found in other religious communities, and in the public schools. This explains why sexual abuse *is not a problem in Catholic communities today the way it is elsewhere*. The panel needs to get up to speed, assuming it has any real interest in this issue.

On p. 8, the panel instructs the Vatican to end corporal punishment, saying it must amend “both Canon Law and Vatican City State laws.” Ironically, the U.N. has now detailed how 10,000 Syrian children have been killed and tortured in the last three years.

Syrian kids are being raped and beaten “with metal cabals, whips and wooden and metal batons”; they are also being subjected to “electric shocks, including to the genitals.” Their fingernails and toenails are being ripped out of them, and they are being lacerated with cigarette burns. Most of these barbaric acts are being conducted by government agents, yet there is no demand that Syrian officials yield to the U.N. It is too busy wondering if Sister Mary Alice is taking a ruler to a miscreant student.

The one attempt at providing evidence is a colossal failure: on p. 7 it cites the Magdalene Laundries as an institution that forced girls “to work in slavery like conditions and were

often subject to inhuman, cruel and degrading treatment as well as to physical and sexual abuse.” This is a bald-face lie: the McAleese Report, an investigation authorized by the Irish government, shows that none of this is true. To read my analysis, “Myths of the Magdalene Laundries,” see the “Special Reports” section on the Catholic League website. The panel’s report is libelous.

Finally, the report says the Church needs to end the practice of “baby boxes.” In many countries, there are drop boxes next to orphanages; they are placed there to entice girls who are pregnant out-of-wedlock, and who cannot care for their babies, to allow others to raise their child. It is a humane practice, one that is widely practiced in South Korea. What is not humane is to kill babies in utero, which is precisely what this U.N. panel recommends.

For sheer demagoguery, this report cannot be beaten. It is as malicious as it is inaccurate.

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Inequality Not Squared by Soaking the Rich

Bill Donohue

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When Pope Francis speaks about our “throwaway” abortion culture, or comments on marriage as a union between a man and a woman, he wins no points from those on the left. But when he speaks about income inequality, he is praised by the likes of President Barack Obama and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. However, these three men are not speaking from the same page. What is driving Obama and de Blasio is envy; what is driving the pope is justice.

The Catholic Church considers envy to be one of the seven capital sins. It is not identical to jealousy. The jealous want what others have; the envious want to deprive others of what they have.

The Austrian-German sociologist, Helmut Schoeck, contended that envy was inherent in human nature and had to be contained. He credited the Catholic Church for taming envy, saying it played a decisive

role in the advancement of civilization. But it had a way of springing back with a vengeance, especially in the hands of left-wing politicians.

Schoeck's book, *Envy: A Theory of Social Behaviour*, released in the 1960s, was a clarion call against the exploitation of envy for political ends. "The time has surely come when we should stop behaving as though envious man was the main criterion for economic and social policy," he said.

Obama and de Blasio exemplify Schoeck's concern. Both of them are consumed with tapping into a debased appetite for envy, driving a wedge between the classes. De Blasio, for instance, promised to raise taxes on the rich to pay for his prekindergarten classes. Governor Andrew Cuomo agreed that this is a good idea (forget the fact that all the evidence shows that Head Start-type programs have no lasting effect on students), but he said he would pay for it out of state funds. No way, said de Blasio, he still wants the rich to pay more. Thus, the mayor's prime interest was to "get the rich."

Obama is so obsessed with leveling the classes that even his former economic advisor, Larry Summers, spoke out against his policies at the World Economic Forum in Davos. "The rhetoric of envy and the rhetoric of tearing down, I don't think, is the right rhetoric for America's leaders," he said. Summers advocates policies that grow the economy for everyone; otherwise, he said, we would be left with a "stagnant pie."

So irrational is the politics of envy that its proponents don't really care whether the policies it is supposed to fund work at all. Take economist Rick Newman. In a burst of honesty, he admits that "getting the rich" is more important than policy outcomes. Writing for Yahoo Finance, he said, "let's just say it—the rich can afford a tax increase, even if the money is used for some dim-witted redistributionist scheme that doesn't incentivize work."

Such a depraved vision of society has nothing to do with Pope Francis' concerns. In the pope's statement to those meeting in Davos, he sounded more like Summers than Obama or de Blasio. He did not evince a trace of envy in his plea to the rich: "Those who demonstrated their attitude for being innovative and for improving the lives of many people by their ingenuity and professional expertise can further contribute by putting their skills at the service of those who are still living in dire poverty."

Pope Francis wants the rich to use their skills to help the poor; he is not baiting the masses to demand that the rich pay more in taxes so that they can pay less. It's the difference between a genuine interest in helping the needy, and soaking the rich.

The politics of envy does nothing to address the conditions of the poor, but it does foster divisiveness. Worse, it allows shallow politicians to beat their breast in a false demonstration of compassion, while delivering nothing but resentment and stagnation. If that is what they want, so be it, but they have no right to pretend that they see eye-to-eye with the pope.