

CATHOLIC CHURCH CONFOUNDS NEWSWEEK



Bill Donohue comments on the September 10 cover story in *Newsweek*:

To say the Catholic Church confounds *Newsweek* is an understatement: they just don't know what to make of it. The article begins by praising Pope Francis as a progressive, then goes on a lengthy rant against San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, only to finish with a mixed review of the Holy Father. In other words, the good pope is compared to the bad archbishop, but instead of hailing the pope at the end, it closes by noting its uncertainty.

The comparison fails. Cordileone's criticisms of gay marriage and Bruce-Caitlyn-Jenner are actually quite mild when contrasted to what the pope has said. Pope Francis has called gay marriage the work of "the Devil." He has also warned against "gender ideology," and attempts to "cancel out sexual difference." In fact, he holds, "Gender ideology is demonic!"

It is also false to claim that there is a difference between Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis on homosexuality. Both of them have expressed their allegiance to the Church's teaching: the act of homosexuality is an "intrinsic moral evil." Therefore, to rail against Cordileone for expecting Catholic teachers to uphold this teaching makes *Newsweek* look plainly stupid. It is just as dumb to say the Bible doesn't condemn homosexuality.

The article says with glee that in 1968 Benedict gave primacy to conscience over papal authority. More homework would have disclosed that in 1991 he explicitly noted that to say "the

judgment of conscience" is "always right" would "mean that there is no truth." Indeed, he warned against "the identification of conscience with superficial consciousness," which reduces "man to his subjectivity."

This confused piece ends by commending the pope for being "a superb communicator" but is unsure who he really is. In point of fact, Francis and Cordileone have more in common than *Newsweek* is willing to acknowledge.

Contact the writer, Alexander Nazaryan:
a.nazaryan@newsweek.com