

CHRISTIANS DENY CATHOLICS ADOPTIONS

The Mississippi branch of Bethany Christian Services, an adoption agency affiliated with the Presbyterian Church of America, denies Catholic couples the right to adopt children. The agency receives monies collected from "Choose Life" license-plate fees, some of which have been collected from Catholics. More than 40 Catholics have complained to the Catholic League about this practice.

Responding today is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"It is just as important to have the right remedy as it is to identify a real problem. In this case, the right remedy is not to grant government more police powers overseeing faith-based institutions.

"Currently, the extra fees collected from 'Choose Life' license plates are given to a non-governmental body, Choose Life Mississippi. This non-profit organization then distributes the private donations to appropriate pro-life centers; Bethany is one of 24 centers that receives funding. In the interest of fairness, it would make more sense to allow those who pay the additional fee the right to decide which of the approved pro-life centers should receive their donation. This kind of menu is common practice in the workplace and would insulate Bethany Christian Services from government oversight without asking Catholics to subsidize its work.

"In short, this remedy would not only allow for freedom of choice, it would also allow for diversity without sanctioning discrimination. This is precisely what I am recommending to the Mississippi lawmakers."