

DEMOCRATS, CATHOLICS AND ABORTION

The anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* provides us an opportunity to make a public comment on the subject of abortion. This year we decided to focus on the Democrats. Here is what we said:

“Now that we’re on the eve of the 33rd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the time is apropos to investigate whether the Democratic Party is (a) making an effort to reach out to Catholics, and (b) rethinking its position on abortion.

“After a majority of Catholics voted for a Protestant over a Catholic in the 2004 presidential election, it was widely reported that the Democrats were going to initiate new efforts to reach out to Catholics. To see if this was happening, I went to the website of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) today and typed the words ‘Catholic outreach’ into its search engine. One item turned up: a statement opposing a voucher program designed to help Catholic schoolchildren who were devastated by Hurricane Katrina. So this is what the Democrats mean by ‘Catholic outreach’—sticking it to innocent Catholic kids.

“On the home page of the DNC’s website, there is a section called ‘Interview with Eleanor Smeal on Samuel Alito.’ Smeal is the same person who, on October 31, warned her fellow feminists that if Alito were to become a Supreme Court Justice, ‘the majority of the Court would be Roman Catholics, which would underrepresent other religions, not to mention nonbelievers.’ And this is the person the DNC decided to highlight—an anti-Catholic.

“It’s not just the DNC that doesn’t get it. Consider that the following members of the Senate Judiciary Committee have already declared their opposition to President Bush’s Catholic

nominee to the high court: Dick Durbin, Ted Kennedy, Patrick Leahy and Ken Salazar. All are Catholic and all are Democrats. Following Smeal's logic, are there too many Catholics on the Senate Judiciary Committee?

"Catholic outreach and rethinking abortion—this is what the Dems preached after they got whipped in 2004. So far, nothing has changed."

Who is to blame for this affront to Catholics? Howard Dean, obviously. As the head of the DNC, he is strategically situated to affect change. But he won't. He shuns the advice of people like James Carville and Paul Begala, both Catholics, who have tried to get fellow Democrats to reach out to the Catholic community.

The problem for the Democrats is that they cannot win the White House without currying favor with pro-life Catholics, but they won't get the money from the fat cats to fund their campaigns if they do. The time has come for them to make some tough decisions. We hope they make the right one.