

DEMOCRATS HAVE A POPE PROBLEM



Bill Donohue comments on the two political parties and Pope Francis:

There is a front-page story in today's *New York Times* titled, "For G.O.P., Visit by Pope Comes with Tensions." Last month the *Times* ran a front-page story, "Pope's Position on the Climate Tests the G.O.P."

The *Times* is not alone in promoting the idea that Pope Francis has left the Republicans in a jam. Politico, Huffington Post, The Atlantic, Salon, the Economist, CNN, The Week, and the *Washington Post* have done similar stories. Indeed, last month the latter ran a story on this issue that was an echo of its March 19, 2013 piece, "Republicans Have a Pope Francis problem."

There is not a single story explaining why the Democrats have a pope problem. Yet an examination of the most prominent public policy issues addressed by the Church suggests it is the Democrats who have the bigger problem.

The following Catholic public policy issues tend to favor the Republicans: abortion; embryonic stem cell research; euthanasia (doctor-assisted suicide); human cloning; same-sex marriage; religious liberty (conscience rights); and school choice (vouchers).

The following Catholic public policy issues tend to favor the

Democrats: the death penalty; climate change; workers' rights (unions); immigration; and healthcare.

Judging from this list, it seems that Pope Francis is slightly more a problem for Democrats than he is for Republicans. In fact, he is a much bigger problem: not all issues are of equal moral weight. For example, abortion, embryonic stem cell research, human cloning, and euthanasia are all declared by the Church to be "intrinsically evil." None of the issues that favor the Democrats merit such a designation.

If the media were honest, it would start asking what the Democrats are going to do about their Pope Francis problem.