

DNC SEEKS TO WOO CATHOLICS

Both the outgoing chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), Terry McAuliffe, and his successor, Howard Dean, recently addressed the relationship between the DNC and the Catholic Church.

Catholic League president William Donohue took note:

“At last Thursday’s send-off gala for Terry McAuliffe, the departing head of the DNC took a parting shot at the Catholic Church: ‘I was very dismayed at the Catholic Church in last year’s election. The way they went into their pulpits and told people it was a sin to vote for John Kerry was nothing short of just outrageous.’ What is really outrageous is for this sore loser to cruelly caricature what the bishops said.

“Moreover, it was partly because of McAuliffe’s antics that I filed an IRS complaint against Miami’s New Birth Baptist Church last summer. On August 29, Baptist Bishop Victor T. Curry, Rev. Al Sharpton and Terry McAuliffe turned a religious service into a Bush-bashing exercise. Here’s what McAuliffe told the congregation: ‘Get out to vote and we’ll send Bush back to Texas.’

“On Saturday, Howard Dean said, ‘We have to remind Catholic Americans that the social mission of the Democratic Party is almost exactly the social mission of the Catholic Church.’ A case can be made for that position, but it must also be said that the DNC’s positions on abortion, stem-cell research, gay marriage and school vouchers are the mirror opposite of the Church’s teachings. So how does Dean expect to deal with these issues? He recently tried to calm the fears of the abortion-rights extremists in his party by saying there was no need for them to change their position, but ‘we can change our vocabulary.’

“If the DNC is going to bring Catholics back into the fold, it

will take a change in policies, not vocabulary. And it will have to be done without lecturing the bishops on what constitutes their episcopal authority.”