

FEC CHAIRMAN IS WRONG ABOUT THE BISHOPS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by the head of the Federal Election Commission:

Trey Trainor, the chairman of the Federal Election Commission, is accusing the bishops of refusing to partake in electoral politics because they are more interested in receiving federal funds than they are in mobilizing Catholics. He even goes so far as to say that priests should disobey their bishop.

Trainor says, "the bishops are using their non-profit status as a shield to hide behind from having to make a decision about who to support." Why? Because they want federal dollars. "To look at the amount of money the Church receives for social services, I would say that they have a big fear of provoking the government into pulling money away from activities the Church is involved in."

In actual fact, the bishops have always been reluctant—properly so—to tell Catholics who to vote for in an election. We don't go to church to get lectured to by priests who are Republicans or Democrats.

To be sure, priests are entitled to discuss public policy issues that the Church supports, such as laws that restrict abortion or statutes that support school choice. But priests who go beyond this are crossing the line. None of this has anything to do with money—it has to do with prudence and respect for the conscience of parishioners.

Worse is Trainor's comments on priests and bishops. "When a priest takes the vow of obedience to the bishop, it's in the area of faith and morals, but they have a higher duty to Our Lord. If the bishop is putting out something that is not right, then the priest has an obligation to the faithful to

correct it because he has the higher duty to Our Lord.”

Arrogance is commonplace among Washington officials, but this one is a gem. Since when is it the job of the chairman of the FEC to offer theological instructions to Roman Catholic priests? What mantle of authority does this bureaucrat have to tell priests that they should disobey their bishops?

One would think that with all the hullabaloo about fraudulent ballots being cast, and all the chicanery about mail-in voting, that the head of the FEC would have better things to do than to tell the Catholic clergy what their responsibilities are. Trump needs to rein this guy in right away.