

GIULIANI CLARIFIES NOTHING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds to Republican presidential contender Rudolph Giuliani's speech today at Houston Baptist University:

"In 1960, Catholic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy went to Houston to clarify his position on church and state. Today, Catholic presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani spoke in Houston to clarify his position on abortion. Kennedy succeeded in assuaging the fears of his skeptics. Giuliani failed.

"From the AP report on Giuliani's speech, it is apparent that the former New York City Mayor broke no new ground. We know he believes that abortion is 'morally wrong,' and we know that he supports abortion rights in general. But he lacked the specificity today that he previously espoused. Consider how specific he's been in the past.

"In 1987, Giuliani said, 'I don't equate abortion with murdering a child, which I guess puts me in conflict with the teaching of the Catholic church.' In 1989, he said that if his own daughter were contemplating an abortion, he would try to dissuade her from doing so, but that if she held to her view, 'I'd give my daughter the money for it.' In 1992, he said, 'I made a terrible mistake on abortion last time. I should have said I was pro-choice and stopped.' In 1997, he answered affirmatively when asked, 'Would you support legislation which would require Ob/Gyn graduate training hospitals to require training in abortion procedures?' In the 1990s, he wrote several checks to Planned Parenthood, explaining today that he did so because he values the right of women to make choices. Yet there is no evidence that he ever wrote one check to support Crisis Pregnancy Centers, making clear what choice he really prefers.

"It is up to Republicans to decide whether Giuliani is the

best candidate. But Catholics of both parties, as well as Independents, have a right to know—in great detail—how a Catholic candidate will decide on a matter the Catholic Church regards as ‘intrinsically evil.’”