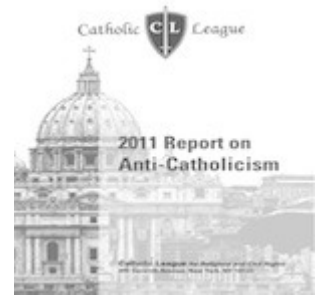


GOVERNMENT

February 23

Washington, D.C. – Attorney General Eric Holder wrote a letter to members of Congress announcing President Obama's decision not to defend the Defense of Marriage Act, stating that it was unconstitutional. The president, of course, is constitutionally bound to enforce federal legislation, and it is up to the courts, not the executive, to determine whether a law is constitutional or not. For us, the biggest problem with Obama's decision was his failure to support the institution of marriage as it has been understood from time immemorial.



February 25

New York, NY – A pro-life billboard reading, "The most dangerous place for an African American is in the womb," was taken down in New York City after pro-abortion government officials objected.

The organization responsible for the billboard, Life Always, which is run by an African American, sought to draw attention during Black History Month to the genocidal impact abortion is having in the black community. In New York City, 60 percent of black babies are killed in the womb; nationwide, more than a third of black babies are aborted.

The same censors in the New York City Council were also taking up a measure to punish crisis pregnancy centers for offering alternatives to abortion alleging that the advertising was deceptive. Bill Donohue wrote to City Council Speaker Christine Quinn asking her to consider legislation that would "require Planned Parenthood to advertise that they are primarily an abortion provider, and not an adoption-referral organization," pointing out that it performed 324,008 abortions in 2008 as opposed to only 2,405 adoption referrals.

She did not reply.

Calls for censoring the free speech of a private company were issued by agents of the state (e.g., New York City Public Advocate Bill de Blasio called for the billboard to be removed). Moreover, waiters and waitresses who worked in a restaurant where the billboard was posted were harassed, as if they had anything to do with it. Concerns that violence might ensue—as admitted by an official for the ad company—forced the decision to take down the billboard.

April

Concord, NH – New Hampshire House Majority Leader David J. Bettencourt venomously libeled Manchester Bishop John B. McCormack as a “pedophile pimp who should have been led away from the State House in handcuffs with a raincoat over his head” because the bishop gave a speech at a rally criticizing a state budget proposal. We addressed the situation by contacting every member of the New Hampshire House calling for a Resolution of Censure. As a result of our campaign, Bettencourt apologized for his assault

April 29

The National Review Board was established by the bishops’ conference to monitor priestly sexual abuse. Former interim chairwoman Judge Anne Burke engaged in gross distortions about the Philadelphia Archdiocese, giving fodder to anti-Catholics.

In mentioning 24 accused priests, she omitted one crucial fact: Most of them were previously investigated and allowed to stay in ministry precisely because the charges were unsubstantiated. The only reason they were reinvestigated was because the archdiocese decided this was the proper response to resurrected accusations made in a grand jury report published in 2011.

Burke made it sound as if the Archdiocese was comfortable with allowing molesters to walk the streets of Philadelphia and

gave the impression that all of these priests are guilty of some serious crime. In fact, none were found guilty of anything.

Burke went so far as to indict every bishop in the nation: "This makes me wonder what kind of people we are dealing with when we engage the bishops?" She also asked, "Are they ever to be trusted?"

These comments are on par with her 2006 statement justifying the removal priests from ministry on the basis of one unsubstantiated accusation: "We understand that it is a violation of the priest's due process—you're innocent until proven guilty—but we're talking about the most vulnerable people in our society and those are children." In other words, she cannot tolerate the idea that a priest is entitled to a fair trial.

May 14

Minneapolis, MN – Minnesota State Legislator Joe Mullery introduced a bill on "Catholic governance" which sought to give parishioners the right to vote on decisions that involved their parish. The Minnesota Catholic Conference condemned the bill, saying it "represents a gross intrusion of the state into the affairs and governance of a church. The bishop is responsible for the governance of his particular diocese. It violates that very core principle of Catholic doctrine and Catholic life and practice."

June 9

A United Nations panel, the Committee against Torture, asked the Irish government to investigate allegations of mistreatment of young women who used to work in Catholic laundries. The panel said that the alleged abuses in the so-called Magdalene Laundries, workhouses run by nuns from the 1920s to the mid-1990s, should be investigated with an eye toward prosecuting the guilty parties.

The Irish government correctly noted that it could not “rewrite its history or right the wrongs that were done.” Our objection was based on the highly political nature of the U.N. panel’s request, and the fact that no other nation was subjected to such a revisionist policy.

June 28

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was quoted saying that the State Department was “instrumental in sealing the deal” for Lady Gaga to appear at the June 11 Euro Pride concert—a homosexual event—in Rome. The fact that Lady Gaga, who has demonstrated anti-Catholic behavior, performed near the Vatican was apparently not a problem for the State Department.

June 19 – November 14

Catholic Charities branches in three different Illinois dioceses filed a lawsuit against the state of Illinois in order to continue providing foster care and adoption services to heterosexual, married couples, in accordance to Catholic teaching. The Illinois government ceased funding to the Catholic Charities in the dioceses of Springfield, Peoria, and Joliet because they would not grant adoption to same-sex or heterosexual unmarried couples. Thus did the government show contempt for the religious prerogatives of the Catholic Church, as well as a profound disrespect for the First Amendment provision on religious liberty.

With the counsel of the Thomas More Society, the three dioceses fought to prove that the premise of their policies on these issues are in accordance with Illinois law and should not be changed. After months of fighting, the Thomas More Society announced that it sought to dismiss the lawsuit because “the actions of the State have prevented the Charities from being able to obtain relief from the Illinois court system.”

July 20

Before homosexuals were given the right to marry in New York,

the religious rights of those who conscientiously objected were being threatened by two New York public officials, both self-identified Catholics: Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice.

When Cuomo was asked about the right of clerks, invoking their religious rights, not to issue marriage licenses to homosexuals, he said, "The law is the law. You enforce the law as is; you don't get to pick and choose those laws." Thus did he show no respect for the First Amendment rights of those who objected for religious reasons.

Rice went further by putting clerks on notice. In a letter she wrote to municipal clerks, she warned that not complying "may constitute official misconduct, a Class A misdemeanor."

August 1

The Obama administration mandated that all health insurance plans cover contraceptives and sterilization for women. The exemption it afforded was meaningless, and was nothing but a Hobson's choice for the Catholic Church: either stop serving and hiring non-Catholics or abide by the new rules. Of course, asking the Catholic Church to limit its medical and educational services to Catholics only was an insult. In short, the religious "exemption" was a fiction.

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Houston said this meant that "our institutions would be free to act in accord with Catholic teaching on life and procreation only if they were to stop hiring and serving non-Catholics." He was right: Catholic schools, hospitals and social service agencies have a long and distinguished record of serving everyone, regardless of religious affiliation; most even employ non-Catholics.

In other words, the Obama administration was playing Catch-22 with religious employers.

August 31

We addressed the controversy surrounding Mayor Michael

Bloomberg's denial of allowing religious speakers at the 10th anniversary ceremony of the 9/11 attacks. We noted that in 2010, Mayor Bloomberg sought to justify his support for building a mosque near Ground Zero by recalling the bravery of the firefighters on that fateful day. "In rushing into those burning buildings, not one of them asked, 'What God do you pray to?'" He added, "We do not honor their lives by denying the very constitutional rights they died protecting."

Thus, Bloomberg invoked the importance of defending religious liberty to justify his support for the mosque. Yet, he paid no homage whatsoever to the religion of those who perished defending such "constitutional rights" when he honored those same crucial First Responders on 9/11 in 2011. The first of the First Responders to die was Father Mychal Judge, and the vast majority of First Responders who died were Roman Catholic. Yet both First Responders and the clergy were censored from the events.

The clergy gag rule was instituted to avoid "disagreements over which religious leaders participate." But since when had that been an issue? Plenty of clergy, including an imam, spoke at an interfaith service at Yankee Stadium after the attacks, and they managed to pull it off without a problem.

"This cannot be political," Bloomberg intoned, yet it was the politicians—not the First Responders or the clergy—whom he invited to speak. Also, if President Obama attended an interfaith prayer service at Washington National Cathedral on the evening of the 9/11 anniversary, why couldn't Bloomberg allow a spot for a prayer?

Bloomberg said he didn't want to "take away from the solemnity, if that's the right word, of the occasion." That was the right word; it means "having a religious character."

September – December

Officials at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

ended funding to a program operated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) that assists victims of human trafficking. Their decision followed a lawsuit by the ACLU contesting the right of the USCCB not to refer trafficking victims to abortion and contraceptive services. The USCCB maintained that this evinced an anti-Catholic bias. Many HHS career staffers recommended that the USCCB program be funded; they cited scores by an independent review board. But in a highly politicized ruling, Obama appointees rejected the advice of these veteran civil servants.

In November, 27 U.S. senators sent a letter to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, asking for a “full explanation” of the grant denial: the letter asked if the “position regarding abortion referrals was a factor in your department’s decision making.”

On December 1, the House Committee on Oversight & Government Reform held a hearing titled, “HHS and the Catholic Church: Examining the Politicization of Grants” to discuss this decision. Many Catholics, including the Catholic League, believed that the politicized nature of the decision to defund the program demanded the hearing.

The USCCB grant proposal was awarded a score of 89, yet it was denied the grant. Two other organizations, with scores of 74 and 69, were given a grant. The hearing sought to determine whether the USCCB’s opposition to abortion referral killed its chances.

In his opening statement, George Sheldon, Acting Assistant HHS Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families, said that “HHS did not establish a preference for grantees that would require each individual subgrantees to provide referrals for family planning and the full range of legally permissible gynecological and obstetric care.”

The following exchange between Sheldon and Rep. Trey Gowdy

called into question Sheldon's veracity:

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "The truth be told, if the Catholic bishops had scored a 100, you still wouldn't have picked them."

George Sheldon: "That's not necessarily accurate."

Gowdy: "Well, would you have—if they scored a 100? Is an 89 not enough?"

Sheldon: "Well, I'm dealing with the facts in front of me."

Gowdy: "Assume this fact then: If they scored a 95, would that have been high enough?"

Sheldon: "I cannot without looking at the facts, the other applicants—I cannot respond to...."

Although the issue of abortion referral was on the table, the real issue was something more sinister: the pro-abortion community has its real sights set on mandated abortion coverage.

September 27

When we found out about the "Every Child Deserves a Family Act" we immediately issued a press release. Our release stated that the bill seeks to deny federal funds to any adoption agency that "discriminates" against prospective adoptive or foster parents on the basis of sexual orientation.

The proponents of the bill manifestly do not believe that every child deserves a family: only those lucky enough to make it to term qualify. Indeed, of the 69 cosponsors of the bill, 96 percent are pro-abortion. In other words, they deceitfully played the "pro-child" card while disguising their real agenda, which was to stick it to the Catholic Church.

Of all religions, the Catholic Church has the greatest network of adoptive and foster parent agencies. Like almost all other religions, the Church believes that marriage should be the

reserve of a man and a woman, the only two people capable of creating a family. This bill, however, did not recognize the legitimacy of this ancient verity. Worse, it sought to punish those who did not accept, as a matter of conscience, homosexuals as adoptive or foster parents.

October 3

The president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan, announced in October the establishment of the *Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty*; Bridgeport Bishop William Lori was named chair of the committee. The committee was established to defend the Church against the threats on religious liberty.

Besides the Department of Health and Human Services seeking to force private healthcare providers to carry contraceptive and sterilization services; it also wanted to force the USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services to provide "the full range of reproductive services." In addition, the federal government sought to force international relief programs to offer reproductive health services.

To show the seriousness of this issue, 20 national Catholic organizations signed a letter protesting the "preventive services" mandate that would force Catholic employers to pay for sterilization and contraceptives, including drugs that induce abortion. "As of now," the statement said, "a narrowly-written religious exemption to the rule would apply only to church institutions that hire and serve mostly Catholics."

At issue was the right of religions to practice their beliefs freely, without government coercion. That we had to even have to fight to exercise our First Amendment rights was dismaying. Fortunately, those who belong to other religions began to realize what is at stake, and joined with us to fend off these threats.

October 5

The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on a case that involves the “ministerial exception,” a provision that bars the government from making employment decisions regarding a church’s ministers. The position articulated by Leandra R. Kruger, who represented the Obama administration, was the subject of a revealing series of exchanges with the Justices.

After Kruger dodged a question by Chief Justice John Roberts on the specific religious nature of the case, Justice Antonin Scalia pressed her even further: “That’s extraordinary. That’s extraordinary. We are talking here about the Free Exercise Clause and about the Establishment Clause, and you say they have no special application?”

Later, Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan asked Kruger about this same issue. When Kruger indicated that the “ministerial exception” was not grounded in the First Amendment, Kagan, citing Scalia’s concern, said “I too find that amazing, that you think that the Free—neither the Free Exercise Clause nor the Establishment Clause has anything to say about a church’s relationship with its own employees.”

The Catholic Church selects only males to be its priests and no one had ever questioned this First Amendment right. At stake was the Church’s right to control the priesthood.

On January 11, 2012, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of “ministerial exception,” thus marking a major win for religious liberty.

October 8

Prior to his speech at the Values Voter Summit, Republican presidential candidate Gov. Rick Perry was introduced by Rev. Robert Jeffress, a Dallas pastor. Following the event, Jeffress made anti-Mormon comments. It was later revealed that he had previously made anti-Catholic remarks.

In 2010, Jeffress said the Catholic Church was the outgrowth of a “corruption” called the “Babylonian mystery.” He

continued, "Much of what you see in the Catholic Church today doesn't come from God's word. It comes from that cult-like pagan religion. Isn't that the genius of Satan?"

Perry quickly distanced himself from Jeffress for his anti-Mormon remarks, but we said it would be wise to break all ties with him.

Following the intervention of Catholic activist Deal Hudson, Perry called Bill Donohue at home. They spoke candidly about the Jeffress incident, and related matters. Perry was sincere: nothing that the pastor said about Catholicism represents his views.

The next day, Donohue released a statement saying, "I very much appreciate Gov. Perry's interest in getting this issue behind him in a responsible manner. He succeeded. Case closed."

November 25 – January 4, 2012

Minneapolis, MN – A legal memorandum, filed by lawyer Rebekah Nett in a bankruptcy case with the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota, contained bigoted comments against Catholics.

Nett was counsel to Naomi Isaacson, who wrote the memo that was filed. It called U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher "a Catholic Knight Witch Hunter" and also spoke of the "ignoramus bigoted Catholic beasts that carry the sword of the church." One bankruptcy trustee was called "a priest's boy," another was branded a "Jesuitess."

Not only did Nett enter into record the reprehensible comments of her client, she made her own sordid contribution in court. For her part, Nett called Dreher and other court personnel "dirty Catholics," adding that "Catholic deeds throughout the [sic] history have been bloody and murderous."

After we filed a formal complaint with the proper legal

authorities in both Wisconsin and Minnesota against attorney Rebekah Nett, her client, Isaacson—herself and attorney—continued the anti-Catholic rhetoric in a filing of her own.

Isaacson's filing contained many anti-Catholic slurs, a sampling of which follows below:

- She called U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher "Popess Dreher" and "a secret Catholic Knight Witch Hunter."
- She called U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Dennis O'Brien a "dastardly Jesuit."
- She called the court-appointed bankruptcy trustee a "mindless numbnut [who] would follow church orders with a vengeance."
- She accused judges and trustees of conspiring to liquidate the company's assets "for pennies," saying the proceeds will go "to members of the Catholic Church."
- She referred to a contempt-of-court order by Judge Dreher saying, "We may as well flush her papal bull order down the toilet."
- She said the court "is an arm of the church to force the minority to be converted or face the consequences just like during the Dark and Middle Ages."
- She called one trustee "Grand Inquisitor."
- She called the attorney representing the U.S. Trustee Program a "Papal Drummer."
- She said Judge O'Brien converted the case to Chapter 7 "on papal orders."
- She accused the Church of bringing illegal immigrants to America "so their population can outrun that of the

Protestants and they can turn the country into another Spain.”

- She said: “The Catholic Church has millions of Jesuits working undercover around the country to fulfill the church’s agenda. They give orders, pull the strings, and their puppets like Nancy Dreher jump like zombies.”

Isaacson even berated the media. When interviewed by the *Pioneer Press*, she lashed out at the newspaper and the Catholic Church. She asked if the paper was “owned by the Catholic Church or just a majority stockholder.” She described the Church as “dirty, filthy, and the most dangerous death cult in human history.”

On December 15, the Catholic League filed a complaint against Isaacson with the professional ethics board for attorneys in Minnesota.

Subsequently, the judge ordered Isaacson to pay \$5,000 in penalties. When Isaacson failed to show up for a hearing [on January 3, 2012], Judge Dreher ordered her arrest for contempt of court. The judge did not order the arrest of Nett.

December

Salt Lake City, UT – Three state agencies asked the Utah Highway Patrol Association (UHPA) to remove all memorial crosses on public land. There are 14 crosses, 10 of which are on state land. UHPA erected the white 12-foot-tall crosses bearing the UHPA logo to commemorate troopers killed in the line of duty.