KERRY'S STEM CELL POLICY LACKS COHERENCE

Senator John Kerry criticized President George W. Bush yesterday on the subject of embryonic stem cell research. He said the president was "turning his back on science in favor of ideology," and that his position was emblematic of how he "makes decisions" and how he "sees the world."

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed Kerry's remarks as follows:

"Senator Kerry is correct to say that President Bush's decision to put limits on federal funding of embryonic stem cell research tells us something about the way he makes decisions and sees the world. It also tells us something about those who want no restrictions whatsoever. This is what Kerry said yesterday: 'I will stop at nothing to get stem cell research moving in this country.' Which means there are no ethical concerns that give this man pause about destroying human embryos. This tells us volumes about the way he sees the world, beginning with nascent human life.

"Kerry says that to put limits on embryonic stem cell research is to 'sacrifice science for extreme, right-wing ideology.' But Kerry knows full well that right-wing ideology has no more to do with this issue than left-wing ideology—the issue is one of biology, pure and simple. Either one believes that life begins at conception, or one does not. If life begins at conception—and the scientific evidence is overwhelming that it does—then there is only one defensible moral position to take: embryos must be protected. And since embryonic stem cell research cannot take place without destroying embryos, logic dictates that we should pursue adult stem cell research and not toy with embryos.

"Kerry has boxed himself in. On the one hand, he says he is a 'practicing and believing Catholic' who believes that 'life begins at conception.' But on the other hand, he says he will stop at nothing to allow the killing of human embryos for the purpose of research. This is not just another flip-flop—it's a morally incoherent position about the most salient of issues."