

NEW POPE WILL INFURIATE “PROGRESSIVES”

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on why the new pope will infuriate “progressive” Catholics:

“In November, 1997, before a packed house of ‘progressive’ Catholics at the annual Call to Action convention, Sister Maureen Fiedler exclaimed that ‘a lot of people in this Church are waiting for a person in this Church to pass away.’ Translated, this means they couldn’t wait for John Paul II to drop dead. Indeed, I have personally heard many disaffected Catholics, including quite a few nuns, say the same thing. Now that the conclave is about to begin, they think their moment has arrived. Watch for them to crash once the new pope is named.

“Whoever the new pope is, he will not turn the Church over to the Call to Action fringe. That’s because they represent a dying breed. Consider what happened in 1996-97.

“In April, 1996, Sister Maureen Fiedler of Maryland’s Quixote Center launched a petition drive aimed at getting one-million Catholics to sign a statement calling for radical changes in the Church’s teachings on women and sexuality. The campaign was dubbed We Are Church, and was well-greased by fat cats who hate the Catholic Church: the Ford Foundation, which funnels millions to Catholics for a Free Choice, used its ‘Catholic’ group to give big bucks to Fiedler. ‘We were blessed with substantial grants,’ Fiedler admitted. ‘We had organizing kits,’ she said, ‘we had grass-roots [efforts]; we did full-page ads [in newspapers]; we had massive mailings; we did public collections in front of cathedrals, like St. Patrick’s in New York.’ They even bribed kids by giving them a dollar for every signature they got. When the year was up, the campaign was such a bomb that it was extended for six months.

In the end, it netted only 37,000 signatures. It was at the Call to Action 1997 convention in Detroit that Fiedler reported the sorry results. She blew up at lay Catholics, saying that progressives overestimated their 'theological maturity'; she concluded by sounding her death wish for the pope.

"It is for reasons like this that the new pope is not about to turn Left, for to do so would be tantamount to going South."