

# OBAMA AND BIDEN MUDDY ABORTION ISSUE

Appearing yesterday on ABC-TV's "This Week," Sen. Barack Obama was asked to comment on his recent quip that he could not say when life begins because it was "above my pay grade." He called that response "too flip," offering, "All I meant to communicate was that I don't presume to be able to answer these kinds of theological questions."

On yesterday's "Meet the Press," Sen. Joseph Biden was also asked about abortion. "I'm prepared to accept the teachings of my church," he said. Biden stressed that "as a matter of faith" he accepts the position that "life begins at the moment of conception," but that he did not want to impose his religious judgment on others. He also referenced St. Thomas Aquinas, saying that the great theologian did not believe that life began "until quickening, 40 days after conception."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue jumped on this today:

"Obama and Biden have muddied the abortion issue further by pretending that it is not, first and foremost, a human rights issue. When life begins is a question answered by science, and that answer is not in doubt: life begins at conception. That's why atheists like Nat Hentoff are against abortion—because it kills! By casting abortion as a matter of religion, Obama and Biden are seeking to take an issue which has universal significance and turn it into a parochial quarrel.

"Biden would do well not to invoke Aquinas as giving support for his views. It is true that St. Thomas believed that ensoulment did not take place until 40 days after conception, but at no time did he ever seek to justify abortion—he knew it was a grave evil.

"Obama, who calls himself a Christian, yesterday referred to

his 'Muslim faith.' Why he said that is not known, but it is indisputable that Catholicism and Islam are both right on the scientific question of when life begins. It's time Obama and Biden saw abortion for what it is—the most fundamental civil rights issue of our time.”