

# ST. PAT'S NYC PARADE STILL BANS PRO-LIFERS

[Bill Donohue](#)

Eleven years after the first gay group marched in New York City's St. Patrick's Day Parade, pro-life Catholics are still not allowed to march. The elites who run the parade are once again showing how little respect they have for the parade's origins, which are rooted in Catholicism.

From 1762 to today, no homosexuals were ever barred from marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Beginning in the early 1990s, it was gays who *falsely claimed victim status* because they were not allowed to march *under their own banner*. Neither were any other demographic or ideological group, including pro-life Catholics. This explains why from the mid-1990s to the mid-2010s, I went on radio and TV saying the parade was no more anti-gay than it was anti-pro-life (I had been asked by parade officials to be the their unofficial spokesman). That all changed in 2015.

In the late summer of 2014, I was asked by parade organizers if I would object if a gay group were allowed to march under its own banner in 2015. It was their parade, I said, but I had my integrity to protect: If gays can march under their own banner, then pro-life Catholics must be treated the same way. I was told by John Fitzsimons, a lawyer whom I considered to be a friend, not to worry—they would be included as well.

John lied. In short order, John Lahey, president of Quinnipiac University and vice chairman of the parade committee, announced that OUT@NBCUniversal, a group of gay NBC employees, would be marching (the chairman of the parade, John Dunleavy, a retired transit worker, was pushed aside by the elite sharks on the committee).

Lahey said other gay groups could also apply. More important, he said that no pro-life groups would be marching. Having been double-crossed, I pulled the Catholic League contingent from marching; we had been doing so for two decades.

So how did OUT@NBCUniversal get a monopoly on marching, when other gay groups wanted in? The NBC group never had to apply—it was selected. All the others were denied. The NBC group was chosen because another member of the parade ruling class, Francis X. Comerford, was the chief revenue officer at NBC and NBC televised the parade; he was also a former grand marshal of the parade. He made sure he got his boys to march, and no one else.

Why, after all these years, are pro-life Catholics not allowed to march under their own banner? John Aidan Byrne is the head of Irish Pro-Life USA. For the last decade he has petitioned the organizers of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City to allow his group to march under their own banner, but he has been summarily denied. He did so again recently. One parade organizer told him, "Ask City Hall."

This is a deceitful dodge. City Hall does not run the parade. As the Supreme Court said in 1995, in a unanimous decision, this is a private parade and the organizers set their own rules. End of story. Or at least it should be. The only reason it is not the end of the story is because parade elites see no PR bounce from letting pro-life Catholics march. But they will lay down with gays, and in doing so they get what they really want—the applause of secular elites, whom they emulate.

In other words, although the parade celebrates its Irish Catholic origins, the potentates who run it want to neuter its Catholic roots. This explains why they don't want pro-life groups to march, but are fine with gay groups. They know, as well as everyone else, that no religion has stood more consistently for the rights of the unborn than Catholicism. That's why they distance themselves from pro-life Catholics—it

invites secular elites to think they are like them. And that is not something they can stomach.

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# MET MUSEUM OF ART BOWS TO MUSLIMS

[Bill Donohue](#)

The Catholic League supports the accommodation of religion, whether it be in public or private venues. But we find it bizarre, if not troubling, when venues not known to accommodate religious expression decide to do so by singling out one religion. This is what the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City has done. The religion it is singling out is Islam.

On the first floor, in Room 961 of the Robert Lehman Collection, in between paintings of the Virgin Mary with baby Jesus, there is a [standup sign](#) that reads as follows:

For the month  
of Ramadan  
we invite you  
to use this space  
for prayer and  
reflection

All are welcome

We have a hard time imagining the Met welcoming Catholics. But if we are wrong, it's not too late for them to erect the following sign.

For the 40 days

of Lent,  
we invite you  
to use this space  
for prayer and  
reflection

All are welcome

What makes the Muslim-only policy even more inexplicable is how out-of-character it is. While the Met has long featured religious iconography, it also has a reputation of promoting raunch.

In October 2023, the Great Hall of the Met displayed gay bondage and sado-masochistic imagery. It used obscenities, and slogans such as, "May you fill yourself with lust," to describe what the *New York Post* said were "images of seemingly naked males with their genitals blurred out and men standing over other men who appear to be wearing dog collars."

One woman who spotted this "artistic creation" said, "I saw a wasteland 'Mad Max' scenario with people dressed in S&M gear and others who looked as if they were fornicating with the earth." She said a portrayal of women was so sick that "It looked Satanic and demonic to me."

Leaving aside the Met's fondness for gay sexual expression, why does it feel obliged to welcome Muslims during Ramadan but not Catholics during Lent? Is this its idea of multiculturalism? We have long known that this ideology has less to do with paying tribute to religious and ethnic groups outside our Judeo-Christian heritage than it does in devaluing it.

The Met's elite must feel very good about themselves. Their goal, no doubt, is to showcase their commitment to inclusion and diversity. But bowing to Muslims, by excluding Catholics, shows how morally bankrupt their commitment really is.

Contact Max Hollein, CEO of the Met: [max.hollein@metmuseum.org](mailto:max.hollein@metmuseum.org)

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# WHAT QUALIFIES AS BEING “MORALISTIC”?

[Bill Donohue](#)

A new Pew Research Center survey of 25 countries found Americans are “especially likely to view fellow citizens as morally bad.” Indeed, 53 percent of U.S. adults say Americans “have bad morals and ethics.” Is that a good thing or a bad thing? Much depends on the behavior being judged, as well as the judges.

At the top of the list, more Americans view married people having an affair to be morally unacceptable than any other behavior in the survey. It was followed by using marijuana, viewing pornography, gambling, having an abortion, homosexuality, drinking alcohol, getting a divorce or using contraceptives, in that order.

The authors of the survey use terms like being “moralistic” in reference to being judgmental. Similarly, they say such persons “are inclined to judge various behaviors to be immoral or sinful.” Though they do not say so explicitly, it is commonplace in liberal circles to speak negatively of those who are particularly “moralistic.”

Now it is true that some people are extremely judgmental about any behaviors they find unacceptable. At the other extreme, where is the virtue in not being “moralistic” about anything? Take abortion.

The public is split on this issue: 32 percent find abortion to be morally unacceptable; 30 percent say it is morally acceptable; 21 percent believe it is not a moral issue. All are judgmental, including those who judge it not to be a moral issue. But in elite quarters, which are overwhelmingly liberal, the moralizers are the ones who find it to be morally unacceptable.

In 1920, Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, wrote that the “most merciful thing that the large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it.” Would that be scored as “moralistic”? If not, why not?

A few years ago, we were ordered to wear masks, even though many who crafted this edict refused to do so themselves. District attorneys ordered those who committed serious crimes to be released as soon as they were caught. Illegal aliens invaded our country, a direct result of public policy. The movement to decriminalize prostitution is gaining. Teachers who call a girl who falsely calls herself a boy as “she” or “her” are punished.

Are those who made these decisions paragons of virtue, or are they guilty of being “moralistic”? We know what the mainstream media think, but were they right?

Being excessively judgmental is problematic, but making highly judgmental decisions, while pretending not to be “moralistic,” is nauseating. At issue is not the behaviors being judged; it is the ideological makeup of the judges.

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# “The Viktor Frankl Podcast”

Bill discusses New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani's hostility towards Jews and Catholics and his new book, *Christianity in the Crosshairs: Ruling Class and Radicals Find a Common Enemy*, with Rabbi Daniel Schonbuch on “The Viktor Frankl Podcast.” To watch, click [here](#).

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## IRISH QUEERS EXPLOIT ST. PAT'S PARADE

[Bill Donohue](#)

On March 1, Irish queers marched in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Sunnyside, Queens, and in doing so they made a mockery of the parade's origins. Quite frankly, it's really a gay parade, with an Irish veneer.

The first St. Patrick's Day Parade in Sunnyside was held in 2000. After being denied the right to march under their own banner in the 1990s in the big parade in Manhattan, and having lost in the Supreme Court in 1995 trying to crash the parade, Brendan Fay, who founded two Irish gay groups, ILGO and Lavender and Green Alliance, succeeded in taking his gay cause to Sunnyside.

At the first Sunnyside parade was New York senatorial candidate Hillary Clinton. Also in attendance was Fr. Mychal Judge of St. Francis of Assisi in Manhattan (he was killed during the attack on 9/11). Since then, it has become a big draw for radical gay groups and left-wing activists.

There is nothing Catholic about the Sunnyside parade. But this year was special—they stuck it to law enforcement and Jews.

“ICE OUT” and “SMASH ICE” signs were in abundance. What does this have to do with honoring St. Patrick? Nothing. What it proves is that this event has become a left-wing soiree, a time to celebrate the latest radical causes. Standing up for the “rights” of people who have crashed our borders means more to these people than anything related to the Irish Catholic roots of the parade.

Some of the marchers celebrated Palestinian rights by holding signs that said, “International Law is with Palestine + Iran.” Ironically, as the St. Patrick’s Day marchers were celebrating Iran, young people in Iran were dancing in the street after the United States and Israel killed their savage leaders. Are the Sunnyside marchers that clueless? Yes, they are just as clueless as the “Queers for Palestine” geniuses are. They should study how gays are treated in Palestine before applauding them.

On the West Bank, there are no legal protections for LGBT people. Indeed, when a Palestinian LGBT organization tried to hold a meeting in 2019, the West Bank’s governing body, the Palestinian Authority, declared it “harmful to the higher values and ideals of Palestinian society” and deployed the police to keep them from meeting.

The West Bank also does not recognize same-sex marriages. More than that, just being gay is dangerous. In October 2022, a gay Palestinian was beheaded in Hebron. He was awaiting approval to seek asylum after receiving death threats over his sexual orientation.

It’s worse in the Gaza Strip. Since Hamas took control in 2006, LGBT Palestinians face arrest, torture and execution. Gay marriage is banned and public lashings and honor killings are commonplace. Even Hamas gays do not get a pass. In 2016, a

Hamas commander was murdered after being detained and tortured for over a year after being accused of homosexual behavior.

Defending illegal aliens, condemning ICE, hating Jews, and praising those who brutalize homosexuals—in an event that purports to celebrate an Irish Catholic saint—makes no sense to the average person. But it does to those who organize this parade, and to many of the participants. By and large, they are angry radicals who look to exploit every opportunity they can seize to advance their agenda.

The gay groups that march in Sunnyside don't even bother to apply to march in the big parade. In fact, only two do: OUT@NBCUniversal and the Lavender and Green Alliance. Why don't others seek to march?

The parade up Fifth Avenue is so enormous that the units that march—almost all of which are faithful to the Irish Catholic origins of the parade—clearly overwhelm those who seek to hijack it for political purposes. Therefore, since gay activists can't dominate, they look elsewhere where they can. They found a home in Sunnyside. It's relatively easy to stand out there, and nothing pleases these gays more than drawing attention to themselves and their left-wing causes.

In short, gay narcissism, which is a serious attribute shared by so many of them, explains why the Sunnyside St. Patrick's Day Parade has become such a sham.

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## **PLAYING THE RELIGION CARD**

[Bill Donohue](#)

*It is true that we can never truly know what is in another*

*person's heart, but when a politician makes his religion a central aspect of his public persona, yet pursues policies that inherently contradict his faith, it raises serious questions. The following Democrats are clearly guilty of playing the religion card when it suits them.*

*In Catholic circles, former President Joe Biden and former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi are the poster children of this duplicity. Meanwhile, New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani and Representative Ilhan Omar do the same for Islam.*

## **Being Religious**

### **Biden**

"My religion defines who I am." He added, "I've been a practicing Catholic my whole life. And it has particularly informed my social doctrine."

### **Pelosi**

"I'm a Catholic, a devout, practicing Catholic. I take great comfort in my faith, come from a very Catholic family, largely pro-life."

### **Mamdani**

"I am Muslim, and I refuse to apologize for this." He added, "I will not change who I am...I will not change the faith that I am proud to belong to."

### **Omar**

"I think my faith as a Muslim is very important."

## **Catholic Church on Abortion**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church clearly states: "Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable."

## **Biden**

He started out having mixed feelings about abortion, but in time he adopted the far-left position. His views began changing in earnest in 2007 when he criticized the Supreme Court decision upholding the ban on partial-birth abortion, calling it “paternalistic.” As president, his administration used every available resource to promote abortion, even exploring novel ways to circumvent state laws restricting the barbaric practice.

## **Pelosi**

She opposes laws that ban the killing of babies who are 80 percent born (partial birth abortion), and she has even won Planned Parenthood’s highest award. Furthermore, she has frequently clashed with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Her extreme position on abortion, along with other major departures from Catholic teachings, earned her a ban on receiving the Eucharist from San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone.

## **Islam on Abortion**

In general, the Islamic view favors the sanctity of human life over abortion. Most Muslim scholars apply the Quran’s passages against the taking of innocent human life to the issue. This is true across many different schools of Muslim thought, and both Sunni and Shia Muslims generally disapprove of abortion.

## **Mamdani**

He opposes any restrictions on abortion. That is why his voting record consistently receives a 100 percent score from Planned Parenthood.

## **Omar**

She has been a co-sponsor of the Women’s Health Protection Act in the last three sessions of Congress. This legislation seeks

to remove most restrictions on abortion and removes religious exemptions. Following the Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* decision in 2022, which overturned *Roe v. Wade*, Omar stated that the decision was "devastating for millions of women and pregnant people across the country."

### **Catholic Church on LGBT Issues**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church clearly states that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered," and are contrary to the natural law. Further, the Catholic Church rejects transgenderism, which Pope Francis called "demonic."

### **Biden**

In 2016, as vice president, he officiated a "gay wedding." As president, he championed transgender procedures for minors and rescinded conscience protections to force Catholic doctors to perform these procedures.

### **Pelosi**

She has supported legislation that would redefine marriage and has even gone so far as to say that same-sex marriage is "consistent" with Catholic teaching. Additionally, she champions transgenderism, including gender "reassignment surgeries" for minors.

### **Islam on LGBT Issues**

In Islam, same-sex relationships are considered taboo. In 34 Muslim-majority countries, homosexual activity is illegal, and none of the 47 Muslim-majority countries recognize "gay marriages."

### **Mamdani**

He is a huge advocate of the radical LGBT cause. He supports transgender rights across the board and disagrees with the Islamic belief that there are only two sexes. He regularly

attends gay events, including parades. He wants the LGBT curriculum to be mandatory in all New York schools, making no allowance for private or parochial schools. Mamdani has also pledged that he will spend \$65 million in taxpayer money for sex-reassignment surgery, puberty blockers, chemical castration and genital mutilation for minors.

## **Omar**

She supports men competing in women's sports and is proud to march in the Twin Cities Pride Parades. She favors ending conversion therapy, calling it "a form of torture." In 2023, as Muslim parents joined with their Christian and Jewish neighbors in Montgomery County, Maryland, to protest the school district's decision to compel their children to participate in lessons which promoted LGBT themes. She co-sponsored a resolution condemning their response.

*Biden, Pelosi, Mamdani and Omar like to wear their religion on their sleeves while working to undermine core religious teachings on marriage, the family and sexuality. The media should hold them accountable but too often they give them a pass.*

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# **CHURCH INVASIONS ARE NOTHING NEW**

[Bill Donohue](#)

The invasion of Cities Church in St. Paul, Minnesota rightly triggered a visceral response on the part of people across religious communities. These Nazi-like tactics have also taken place in Catholic churches and Jewish synagogues. If there is

one Catholic church that is singled out for protest, it is St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

Here is a list of some of the famous invasions. We are not counting incidences committed by mentally disturbed people.

**“Stop the Church” AIDS/abortion protest (December 10, 1989):**

- During a Sunday Mass celebrated by Cardinal John O'Connor, members of the militant homosexual activist group ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), and the Women's Health Action and Mobilization (WHAM!), infiltrated the cathedral as part of the “Stop the Church” demonstration. They disrupted the service by shouting slogans against the Church's opposition to abortion and sex education policies in public schools. They lay down in aisles, chained themselves to pews, and desecrated a consecrated Eucharist. Cardinal O'Connor was forced to abandon his sermon. Dozens of protestors were inside the church, and over 4,500 protesters demonstrated outside; over 100 were arrested.

**Radio stunt (Aug. 15, 2002):**

- “Shock jocks” Opie and Anthony encouraged listeners to have sex in risky places, and two of them had sex during the day in St. Patrick's Cathedral, on a holy day of obligation, in front of men, women and children. It was a staged event, arranged by the radio hosts: they had comedian Paul Mercurio inside the Cathedral so he could give a graphic description of the stunt on his cell phone. The Catholic League contacted the FCC and Viacom, the media giant that owned the host station. In due course, the radio show was cancelled and the “shock jocks” were fired.

**Animal-rights activists (March 27, 2016):**

- Six animal rights activists from the group Collectively

Free interrupted the noon Easter Sunday Mass during a moment of silence. They stood up and chanted "Easter is a time for love! No more shedding animal blood!" to protest animal exploitation and the consumption of Easter ham. One of the protesters was arrested.

### **George Floyd Protests (May 30, 2020):**

- During the Black Lives Matter protests, protesters spray-painted the F-word, "BLM," "NYPDK" along with the phrase "no justice, no peace" on the facade of the Cathedral. One of the stairs was also spray-painted with George Floyd's name. Two people were charged the following month for the crime.

### **New Year's Protest (January 1, 2021):**

- On New Year's Day 2021, police officers responding to a protest on Fifth Avenue found the acronym "ACAB" tagged on the cathedral. Video from the scene shows protesters blocking two NYPD cruisers and banging on the hood of one, and shouting expletives at officers. No arrests were made.

### **Transgender Funeral (February 15, 2024):**

- Cecilia Gentili was a man who falsely claimed to be a woman. He was also an illegal alien, a drug addict, a prostitute, a trans activist, and an atheist. At Gentili's funeral service at St. Patrick's Cathedral, transgender activists dressed as hookers, disrupted the Mass by dancing in the aisles, sang "Ave Cecilia" when "Ave Maria" was sung, and shouted, "St. Cecilia, Mother of All Whores." Cardinal Dolan ordered a Mass of Reparation be held as a response to this vile incident.

### **Gaza ceasefire protest (March 30, 2024):**

- Three pro-Palestinian protesters affiliated with Extinction Rebellion interrupted the Easter Vigil Mass

by standing front and center, unfurling a banner reading, "SILENCE = DEATH." They shouted "Free Palestine" and demanded a ceasefire in Gaza. They were dragged out by security, and all three were arrested.

There have also been incredibly obscene incidents like the 1994 parade up Fifth Avenue marking the 25th Anniversary of the Stonewall riot. Men and women went naked in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral, masturbated in the street, engaged in Satanic dances and extended their middle finger at the Cathedral.

Catholics who are angry about some issue do not act this way. But militant secularists have no respect for boundaries, do not believe in dialogue and are not averse to using violence to further their goals. They are a menace to society, and too many members of the ruling class refuse to condemn them.

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## **"Catholics in the Crosshairs"**

*Bill in the News (Catholic Connection): Bill discusses his new book, Christianity in the Crosshairs: Ruling Class and Radicals Find a Common Enemy. To listen, click [here](#).*

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**NON-ACCOUNTABILITY      DEFINES**

# OUR CULTURE

[Bill Donohue](#)

Many children enjoy testing adults, whether at home or in school; they like to see what they can get away with. If there are few consequences for acting out, it's a sure bet they will continue. Adults are no different: when criminals are not held accountable—when they are caught and released—they have no reason not to offend again.

This was apparent when President Biden intentionally allowed 15-20 million illegal aliens to crash our borders. They kept on coming because the Biden administration all but invited them to break the law. There were no consequences for their behavior.

Minneapolis was recently in a state of crisis. It is a “sanctuary city,” the effect of which allows local law enforcement not to cooperate with ICE agents seeking to deport illegal aliens, two-thirds of whom have a criminal record. Left-wing agitators capitalized on this state of lawlessness by obstructing federal agents from doing their job, putting them and their doxxed families in harms way. There are no consequences for their behavior.

Not long ago, during the “Summer of Love” in Portland, portions of neighborhoods were seized by domestic terrorists, creating so-called autonomous zones. There were no consequences for their behavior. In New York City, thugs shoved innocent persons into subway tracks, and they did so repeatedly. There were no consequences for their behavior.

Occasionally, there are attempts to rein in this culture of non-accountability, but it is hard to put the toothpaste back in the tube.

In 2023, New York Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani, now Mayor of New

York City, lobbied for free bus fare along certain routes. A pilot program was launched, one in each of the five boroughs, for low-income people. When they discontinued the program a year later, half the riders still refused to pay. Why should they? There were no consequences for their behavior.

Mamdani plans to reinstitute the program, but not right now. Reportedly, he is upset that currently more than half of all bus riders refuse to pay—sometimes whole groups barge in without paying. They are not acting irrationally: they are just getting a jump on his upcoming no-fare policy. There are no consequences for their behavior.

Under the Biden administration, there was a moratorium on student debt. Under Trump, they have reversed this rule, but it is too late. Fully three-in-four with student debt refuse to pay. Why should they? There are no consequences for their behavior.

The student debt crisis was started by President Obama with his signature ObamaCare legislation, the Affordable Care Act of 2010. He wanted to cut out the “middleman,” meaning the banks which were underwriting the loans; the government would now provide loans directly to students. Not only did this gambit not save money, rapacious colleges saw an opportunity to bleed students and hiked tuition to record highs, knowing Uncle Sam would come to their rescue when they defaulted. Student debt skyrocketed. There were no consequences for their behavior.

Many other examples could be made, but the point is the same. A country that does not hold its citizens responsible for their behavior cannot survive, not if it covets liberty. Civility depends on citizens who internalize proper codes of conduct, and when the elites who govern no longer insist that these strictures be observed, they threaten the social order.

This should be common sense. Unfortunately, we need to relearn

why it is important to abide by elementary rules of civility. But this will come to naught unless those in positions of authority hold everyone accountable. A norm, or a law, that is not enforced, is virtually useless.

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# NOTRE DAME'S PROBLEM IS NOT UNIQUE

[Bill Donohue](#)

The University of Notre Dame is not only one of America's best institutions of higher education, it is also seen, for the most part, as an authentically Catholic institution.

That is why it was so disconcerting to read that a professor, Susan Ostermann, was named director of the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies. She is not someone who happens to be "pro-choice"—she is a pro-abortion zealot.

Any person who falsely claims that the pro-life movement has "its roots in white supremacy and racism," and condemns crisis pregnancy centers as "anti-abortion propaganda sites," belongs working at Planned Parenthood, not Notre Dame. Planned Parenthood, of course, was founded by a bona fide white supremacist, Margaret Sanger.

Ostermann didn't get the job by mistake. She got it with the approval of the president, Fr. Robert Dowd, provost John McGreevy and the dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs, Mary Gallagher. Dowd claims he was "blindsided" by the appointment. That's strange. Did he not know that his predecessor, Fr. John Jenkins, publicly rebuked Ostermann for championing the pro-abortion cause? Surely McGreevy and

Gallagher must have known.

The good news is that the blowback was ferocious and ultimately forced Ostermann to go back to the classroom. Led by the brilliant historian, Fr. Bill Miscamble, and the courageous Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Kevin Rhoades, the case was made to reject her appointment. Some twenty bishops, including Archbishop Paul Coakley, president of the bishops' conference, joined the fight, as did many students and alumni; those who have been given awards at Notre Dame also registered their objections. So it ended well. But problems remain, and Notre Dame is not unique among Catholic schools.

I taught at a nominally Catholic college for 16 years, and witnessed firsthand how uncommitted many administrators and faculty are to the teachings of the Catholic Church. In fact, some were openly hostile to Catholicism, and this included the nun who ran the school. But La Roche College in Pittsburgh (now a university) is not atypical.

Georgetown University, a premier Catholic institution, has two pro-abortion student clubs on campus. Moreover, student government officials have sought to punish students who accept the Church's teachings on marriage. It also employs a professor who justifies rape and slavery, provided the rapists and slavemasters are Muslim.

Thankfully, Notre Dame is not like Georgetown. But its central problem is still extant. There are two main reasons why a pro-abortion extremist came close to being promoted: one is ideological and the other is a matter of identity.

While it is oversimplified to say there are social justice Catholics and pro-life Catholics, there is more than a measure of truth to it. Catholic teachings on the poor, the needy, the rejected, and immigrants are seen as being in the liberal camp; those that stress abortion, euthanasia, marriage, the family and sexuality are seen as being in the conservative

camp. Both are expressions of Catholicism.

It has become abundantly clear that social justice Catholics are soft on abortion. That's being kind. Quite frankly, many of them—indeed most—do not regard abortion as “intrinsically evil,” which is the way the Church defines it. They see it as unfortunate. The Church also says racism is “intrinsically evil.” On that they agree. In short, racism upsets them infinitely more than abortion.

Are there Catholics in the conservative camp who are soft on racism? No doubt there are, but in my experience there are far fewer of them than there are liberal Catholics who are soft on abortion.

The other problem is not ideological; it is matter of identity. Unfortunately, many Catholic professors and administrators are uneasy being identified as Catholic in higher education circles. To be exact, they have a deep-seated need to win the affirmation of secular elites. At bottom, they are not comfortable in their Catholic skin.

They know the way secular elites look at Catholics of a more traditional stripe, and they are scared to death of being thrown in with them. In other words, their reluctance to defend conservative moral teachings—even when they don't disagree with them—is done to win the blessings of secular elites, in and out of education. That's how insecure they are about their Catholic identity.

Christian Smith, a Notre Dame sociologist, recently wrote an article in *First Things* explaining why he left the school. He says the Catholic identity problem is due to three things, one of which is a strong desire to secure “mainstream acceptance by ‘peer institutions’: Duke, Northwestern, Vanderbilt, Washington University in St. Louis, Emory, Rice, Stanford, NYU, and the like.” He says “Notre Dame desperately wants to belong to this club.” Regrettably, this leads many to low ball

their Catholicism.

Notre Dame will be challenged again, and it will come from within. But as long as it has enough faculty, students and alumni who are vigilant—and there is no question about that—it will never lose its reputation as a truly great Catholic institution of higher learning.