

# POPE LEO XIV IN HIS OWN WORDS

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*There is so much to say about a pope besides his position on contemporary public policy issues, but since the media are focused on this subject, it is important to know exactly what our new pope has said.*

## Abortion

- As a student at Villanova in the 1970s, he helped found a pro-life group on campus. (The College Fix)
- “Western mass media is extraordinarily effective in fostering within the general public enormous sympathy for beliefs and practices that are at odds with the gospel, for example abortion, homosexual lifestyle, euthanasia.” (2012 address to the Synod of Bishops, Newsweek)
- “Let’s defend human life at all times!” (2015 tweet in support of the March for Life in Chiclayo, Peru, Newsweek)
- “We cannot build a just society if we discard the weakest—whether the child in the womb or the elderly in their frailty—for they are both gifts from God.” (2019 homily, Newsweek)
- “The Church must walk with all people, especially the most vulnerable, ensuring their dignity is upheld from the womb to the end of life, as this is the heart of Christ’s mission.” (2023 address to clergy in Peru, Newsweek)

## AI

- “[T]he Church offers to everyone the treasury of her

social teaching in response to another industrial revolution and to developments in the field of artificial intelligence that pose new challenges for the defense of human dignity, justice and labor.” (May 10, 2025, address to the College of Cardinals, Vatican)

- “I am thinking in particular of artificial intelligence, with its immense potential, which nevertheless requires responsibility and discernment in order to ensure that it can be used for the good of all, so that it can benefit all of humanity.” (May 12, 2025, address to the media, Vatican)

## **Assisted Suicide**

- On Twitter, he shared an article by Catholic News Agency condemning Canada for implementing assisted suicide. (2016 Twitter, Newsweek)

## **Euthanasia**

- “We cannot build a just society if we discard the weakest—whether the child in the womb or the elderly in their frailty—for they are both gifts from God.” (2019 homily, Newsweek)

## **Gender Ideology**

- “The promotion of gender ideology is confusing, because it seeks to create genders that don’t exist.” (2016 to local media in Peru, *National Catholic Register*)

## **Immigration**

- On X, he shared an article from *National Catholic Reporter* critical of Vice President Vance’s stance on immigration. (February 3, 2025 X post, @drprevost)
- On X, he shared an article from *America Magazine* critical of Vice President Vance’s stance on immigration. (February 13, 2025 X post, @drprevost)
- In an interview with the media, his older brother John

Prevost has indicated that he is “not happy with what’s going on with immigration” policy in the United States. (May 9, 2025, *The Guardian*)

## **LGBT**

- He criticized the media for portraying “alternative families composed of same-sex partners and their adopted children” in a positive light. (2012 address to the Synod of Bishops, *Newsweek*)
- “Pope Francis has made it very clear that he doesn’t want people to be excluded simply on the basis of choices that they make, whether it be lifestyle, work, way to dress, or whatever. Doctrine hasn’t changed, and people haven’t said yet, you know, we’re looking for that kind of change. But we are looking to be more welcoming and more open, and to say all people are welcome in the church.” (2023 interview with Catholic News Service, *National Catholic Register*)
- He has been ambiguous on *Fiducia Supplicans*. However, after the African bishops raised concerns about providing blessings to samesex couples, he suggested a compromise to allow the bishops to opt out. (2024, *CBCPNews*)

## **Ordaining Women**

- When asked about the possibility of ordaining women, he noted that “the apostolic tradition is something that has been spelled out very clearly.” (2023, Synod on Synodality, *National Catholic Register*)
- “Something that needs to be said also is that ordaining women—and there’s been some women that have said this interestingly enough— ‘clericalizing women’ doesn’t necessarily solve a problem, it might make a new problem,” (2023, Synod on Synodality, *National Catholic Register*)

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# SMEAR MERCHANTS ATTACK POPE LEO XIV

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**Bill Donohue**

Few things excite the media more than a juicy sex story about Catholic priests, no matter how half-baked the story is. The latest iteration of this phenomenon came on the day Cardinal Robert Prevost became Pope Leo XIV. Wasting no time claiming he is guilty of covering up priestly sexual abuse was SNAP (Survivors Network for those Abused by Priests).

On May 8, it slammed the new pope for the way he addressed accusations of priestly sexual abuse in the United States and Peru. Indeed, six weeks before he was elected, this totally discredited association of anti-Catholic activists filed a complaint with the Vatican saying that Cardinal Prevost “harmed the vulnerable.” The facts prove otherwise.

In 2000, when Father Prevost was the provincial supervisor in Chicago for the Augustinians, he allowed a suspended homosexual priest who had been accused of sexually abusing minors to reside at a rectory not far from a Catholic school. Father James Ray lived there with other priests and restrictions were placed on him.

Two years later, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued the Dallas reforms, new guidelines dealing with clergy sexual abuse. It was then that Ray was removed from the Augustinian residence, as well as from public ministry. He was

tossed from the priesthood in 2012.

Now it is legitimate to question the decision to place Ray near a school, but to jump to the conclusion that this was an egregious dereliction of duty is absurd. Had Ray been put up in a hotel in a deserted part of town, Prevost's critics would say he was left unsupervised.

The more intricate case is the one dealing with three sisters from Peru. SNAP says, "When Prevost was Bishop of Chiclayo, three victims reported to civil authorities in 2022 after there was no movement on their canonical case filed through the diocese." They claim he "failed to open an investigation, sent inadequate information to Rome, and that the diocese allowed the priest to continue saying mass."

None of this is true. Here's what happened.

In April 2022, three sisters made accusations about two priests to church authorities about sexual abuse (inappropriate touching) dating back to 2007 when they were minors. The bishop of Chiclayo was Msgr. Robert Prevost.

Contrary to what SNAP reports, the priest was removed from the parish where he worked and prohibited from exercising his ministerial duties.

Also contrary to what SNAP reports, Prevost met with the women in April 2022 and *encouraged them to take their case to civil authorities. Meanwhile he opened a canonical probe.* He also offered them psychological help.

In July 2022, Prevost contacted the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith after the investigation was completed. A Vatican probe found that the allegations lacked sufficient evidence to warrant further action. Moreover, the statute of limitations had long expired. In addition, the civil investigation was also dismissed for lack of evidence and because the statute of limitations had expired.

The women weren't satisfied and registered another complaint. The diocese responded by sending further documentation to the Vatican. (In April 2023, Msgr. Prevost was named Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops in Rome.)

In November 2023, Ana Maria Quispe, the oldest of the sisters, contended that both the civil and ecclesiastical courts were wrong. She started a social media campaign to keep her account alive.

The case was then reopened by the Apostolic Administrator in Chiclayo, addressing her complaint. Victims were summoned to meet but Quispe never showed up.

Meanwhile, there was another development happening, one which SNAP is deadly silent on.

In April 2024, after Archbishop José Eguren, a member of an ultraconservative movement, the Peruvian Sodalitium of Christian Life, was ousted—he was accused of abuse and financial wrongdoing—accusations of a Cardinal Prevost coverup percolated.

To understand why Prevost was being accused, consider the role that Fr. Ricardo Coronado played. In May 2024, Coronado, a canon lawyer, took up the women's cases. He was associated with this extremist movement and was widely believed to have engaged in corruption, violence and sexual abuse.

In August 2024, the Peruvian Bishops' Conference issued a public statement saying Coronado could no longer practice canon law. He was accused of having a sexual relationship with a consenting adult.

Off-the-record comments against Coronado continued to surface from Augustinian priests. They maintained that he "despised" Prevost and that he was guilty of "a pattern of sexually inappropriate and aggressive behavior."

In January 2025, Pope Francis and Cardinal Prevost met with one of the group's abuse victims. Weeks before he died, the pope dissolved the movement.

Pedro Salinas, a noted Peruvian journalist who knows this issue well, said Prevost played "an extremely important role" in ending it. In fact, he said, "The campaign of disinformation and discrediting Robert Prevost's career has always come from the source of Robert Prevost, Archbishop Egunen."

Having written a book on this subject, *The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*, I can say with confidence that the accusations of a coverup by Cardinal Prevost are false. If anything, Pope Leo XIV acted fairly and with dispatch.

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## DAVID HOROWITZ, R.I.P.

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*Bill Donohue offers a personal note to a personal friend.*

David Horowitz, the former radical turned conservative, died April 29 after battling cancer. He was 86. He was a good friend, a brilliant speaker and writer, and a man of tremendous courage.

David was born and raised in Queens. To this day, when I take the Long Island Rail Road leaving Manhattan, passing into Queens, I look out the window and see the sign for Skillman Avenue. I think of David—that is where he grew up, in Long

Island City.

His parents were diehard communists, and raised him as a “Red Diaper Baby.” Their indoctrination paid off, at least initially. In the 1960s and 1970s, he was a leader of the New Left, stoking anti-Americanism. He befriended Huey Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party, but later split with them once he learned they were involved in the death of a friend of his, Betty Van Patter.

David, and his friend, Peter Collier, founded Ramparts, a radical magazine that cheered for a communist victory in Vietnam. But as he watched what the communists did in Vietnam, his enthusiasm for Marxism soured. The final straw came in the late 1970s when Pol Pot murdered two-in-five of his fellow Cambodians. This shook him intellectually.

Then came the election of Ronald Reagan. This further triggered the reset: David became a rabid pro-American conservative. In 1987, he held a “Second Thoughts Conference” in Washington D.C. This is where he, and other ex-New Left activists, explained why they had had “Second Thoughts” about their political philosophy. Communist genocide has a way of shaking honest people up.

In the early 1990s, he and Peter founded Heterodoxy, a brilliant monthly that broke new grounds. Later in the decade, the David Horowitz Freedom Center was launched, and with it the influential publication, FrontPage magazine.

Peter had made such a turnaround that he called me at the Catholic League in the late 1990s to congratulate me on my work. More important, he said he made his way back to Catholicism.

It was about that time when David asked me to speak at a conference in Los Angeles that would assess the cultural impact that Hollywood was having. I was scheduled to be there anyway—Jeffrey Katzenberg invited me to review his yet-to-be

released movie, Prince of Egypt (which I applauded), so I agreed.

It was an enormous room— full of actors, producers and directors—and virtually all of the speakers put a positive face on Hollywood. Until I spoke. After I finished with my remarks, the man sitting next to me on the platform turned to me and said, “They are going to have to get extra security to escort you out of here.”

What did I say that upset the elites? I told them they were a bunch of phonies. One after another, I said, you came to the microphone to tell us that you don’t allow your children to watch the television shows that you make. No, you said, your children watch Nickelodeon. I asked, “So whose children are your shows good for?” They knew exactly what I meant. The room was dead silent. But David loved it.

David was fond of saying that many conservatives don’t get it. They are so nice. The problem with that is they seriously underestimate how vicious the Left is. They need to toughen up. They don’t understand how driven and malicious radicals are.

In more recent years, David wrote a blurb for one my books, and I endorsed one of his. He was always honest and full of energy.

As he grew intellectually, David, who was Jewish, became a staunch advocate of Christianity. He saw the cultural rot that militant secularism wrought, concluding that an ascendant Christianity was badly needed.

Not surprisingly, the Left turned on him, hating his slide to conservatism. But he didn’t care—all he cared about was telling the truth.

America has lost a great one. I was honored to have known David Horowitz as a friend. May he rest in peace.

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# VEILED THREAT?

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On April 30, Erik Loomis, a history professor at the University of Rhode Island, wrote, "David Horowitz is dead. Bill Donohue, one of the worst living Americans, is sad." That is how he began his screed attacking Horowitz. He concluded with what could be interpreted as a veiled threat.

"The good news is that evil people dominating America today will be dead one day. Of course so will we. But at least I have lived in a nation without David Horowitz. I didn't have Horowitz on my obit list. But at least this reminds me to put Donohue on the list."

The man is a coward. A true man would challenge Donohue to a debate.

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# POPE FRANCIS AND THE POOR

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Here's a thought experiment. There are two teachers. One is known for his compassion for struggling students, but he is not a gifted teacher, and as a result his students do poorly

in school. The other is known as lacking in compassion, but he is a gifted teacher, and as a result his students do well in school.

There are two doctors. One is known for his compassionate bedside manners, but he is not a gifted doctor, and as a result his patients suffer. The other lacks bedside manners, but is regarded as a gifted doctor, and as a result his patients thrive.

Ideally, we would all like to be served by compassionate and competent teachers and doctors, but when given the choices afforded by the thought experiment, who would really choose the compassionate yet incompetent teacher or doctor over their insensitive yet competent counterparts?

No one doubts that Pope Francis showed great compassion for the poor. Indeed, that is one of the most heralded aspects of his legacy. But his harsh criticisms of capitalism, and his affinity for socialism, must be taken into account.

It is undeniably true that capitalism has done more to induce upward social mobility and alleviate poverty than any economic system in history. It is also undeniably true that socialism has proven to be the greatest generator of poverty in the world.

In capitalist countries, the leaders may talk more about economic efficiency than the interests of the poor, yet their free market policies invariably prove beneficial to them. The leaders in socialist countries talk a great deal about the interests of the poor, yet their statist policies invariably prove harmful to the poor.

In short, rhetoric means little in the end if the policies that are pursued result in failure.

When Mao took over in 1949, he dressed like a peasant and talked incessantly about the plight of the poor. Meanwhile, he

owned 50 villas, and devastated the economy with his socialist policies.

When Fidel Castro, an affluent lawyer, took over in Cuba in 1959, he dressed down and talked incessantly about the plight of the poor. Meanwhile, he lived the high life and devastated the economy with his socialist policies.

When the Sandinistas took over in Nicaragua in 1979, they donned fatigues and talked incessantly about the plight of the poor. Meanwhile, they live in palaces and have devastated the economy with their socialist policies.

When Nicolás Maduro took over in Venezuela in 2019, he talked incessantly about the plight of the poor. Meanwhile, he is living a luxurious lifestyle and has devastated the economy with his socialist policies.

Pope Francis meant well in showing compassion for the poor. But his understanding of economics was not his strong suit, and the economic policies he championed did more to punish the poor than help them. On that score, the next pope has to do better.

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## MEDIA COVER FOR COMEY'S THREAT

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When patrons tell bartenders it is time to “86” that guy at the end of the bar, they mean he’s drunk and should be cut

off. In other contexts, it might mean to nix, or to cancel, someone. It might also mean something more serious.

When James Comey aligned seashells to read, 86 47, he knew what he was doing. He sent a message to those who loathe the man who has survived two assassination attempts. It is hardly a stretch to conclude that—given his well-known hatred of our 47th president—that this was his way of signaling his wish that someone try again. After all, this is not virgin territory for Comey: he is the former Director of the FBI and he knows what to “86” someone means; he surely wasn’t suggesting that the teetotaler be cut off at the bar.

Some in the media, still burning with rage that Trump won, are covering for Comey by pretending he is being misunderstood.

Many media outlets, including ABC News, are saying that Merriam-Webster defines to “86” someone or something means to “get rid of” someone or something. True enough. In this instance, the someone is the president of the United States. Comey needs to be asked: What did he think would happen if someone took him seriously and tried to “get rid” of Trump?

In some popular circles, to “86” someone is to kill him. Indeed, *Cassell’s Dictionary of Slang* says “to 86” means “to kill, to murder; to execute judicially.” Comey has previously shown himself to be an extremely embittered man. Now he has proven to be beyond reckless— he is salivating over the death of President Trump.

Those who think this is an exaggeration need to explain why a majority (55 percent) of self-identified “left of center” adults recently told Network Contagion Research Institute pollsters that murdering Trump is justified. Comey is playing with fire, and he knows it. He’s not a dumb man.

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# MOTHERHOOD YIELDS HAPPINESS

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It is inspiring to note that mothers are among the happiest persons on earth. Interestingly, this has nothing to do about being a woman: It is women who have families who are the happiest. Indeed, the obverse is also true: single women are among the least happy.

The most authoritative data on social wellbeing is found in the United States General Social Survey. Each year since 1972, it asks men and women how happy they are. What the researchers found is that women report being less happy each year. So what accounts for the change?

The feminist revolution in the 1960s explains a good part of this societal shift. It gave way to greater women's equality in law, education and the workplace. Indeed, the gains have been impressive. But why has this not translated into greater happiness? More pointedly, if women went forward in achieving educational and occupational success, why have they gone backwards in achieving happiness?

Neuroscience News reported on this subject in 2023, and what they found is startling.

"Something strange is going on in women's happiness research. Because despite more freedom and employment opportunities than ever before, women have higher levels of anxiety and more mental health challenges, such as depression, anger, loneliness and more restless sleep. And these results are seen

across many countries and different age groups.”

Equality before the law is a noble goal, but its relationship with happiness is tenuous at best. We know from a mountain of evidence that happiness is best achieved when people’s interactions with others are positive, and this begins in the family. To put it differently, social bonds matter more than stock bonds.

Women, in general, may not be as happy today as they were compared to women who lived before the 1970s, but it remains true that married women with children fare well. For example, we know from the results of the General Social Survey in 2022 that men and women who have the benefit of a spouse and children are the most likely to report being “very happy” with their lives.

Importantly, it was also revealed that among married women with children between the ages of 18 and 55, 40 percent reported they are “very happy,” compared to 25 percent of married childless women, and just 22 percent of unmarried childless women.

The idea that motherhood yields happiness is consistent with Catholic teachings. As Saint John Paul II said, women are called by their nature to be mothers; it is part of their “feminine genius” to serve their children. Furthermore, their calling is to “humanize humanity,” a task that signifies their unique abilities.

It is undeniable that the feminist revolution played a major role in accounting for the declining happiness of women. Not by accident was it led by women intellectuals who devalued masculinity and motherhood, often viciously so.

Betty Friedan led the way by deriding the housewife’s dependence on her husband; she contended that women lived vicariously through their husbands and children. Women had become so infantile, she said, that their passive existence

resembled a “comfortable concentration camp.” The feminine mystique, she maintained, “has succeeded in burying millions of women alive.”

Friedan, of course, lived a pampered lifestyle. She was bored and unhappy. But she was not representative of most women. Millions of women found happiness in suburbia, and millions of working-class and poor women desperately wanted to live in her “comfortable concentration camp.”

Other feminists at that time made Friedan look conservative.

Shulamith Firestone declared that “pregnancy is barbaric,” saying it is unfair that “half the human race must bear and rear the children.” Vivian Gornick contended that to be a housewife was to be in “an illegitimate profession.” Linda Gordon insisted that “the nuclear family must be destroyed.” Gloria Steinem pleaded that we have to “abolish and reform the institution of marriage.” And Kate Millett said we must abolish all “traditional sexual inhibitions and taboos.” No wonder she spent many years in the asylum.

All of these women lived dysfunctional lives and were miserably unhappy.

So what exactly was it about the feminist revolution that led to such a sharp increase in women’s unhappiness? For one, those who led it were more interested in women’s autonomy than they were in enhancing their happiness. Importantly, radical feminist ideas were not limited to the classroom—they found expression in law and public policy.

From this perspective, it was better for women not to be married so they could achieve success in the workplace. In other words, feminists cared not a fig about what made women truly happy. If they had, they would have encouraged them to get married and have a family. They did just the opposite.

It is a very bad sign for society that the marriage rate and

the birth rate have fallen. But at least for women who are mothers, and who put their children first, it is comforting to know they have a happiness advantage over the rest of us.

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## MISSION CREEP IN LEFT-WING ORGANIZATIONS

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What happens when an organization achieves its goal? It either folds or it develops a new one. The March of Dimes was founded to cure polio, and when the Salk vaccine proved effective, those who worked there could have declared victory and packed up their bags and left. But they didn't. Instead, they chose a new mission: combating birth defects and infant mortality.

When it comes to civil rights organizations, this situation is much trickier.

Prejudice and discrimination exist in many quarters of America. People are still treated unfairly on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, disability, and the like, but in almost every instance there has been much progress. A related, though separate, issue is the perception of progress. It is entirely possible for people of one demographic group or another to feel they are still treated unfairly when objective measures prove otherwise.

The progress made by minorities and women—in every aspect of society—is undeniably impressive. So much so that organizations founded to protect their civil rights have often

experienced mission creep. Flush with money, they find themselves treading into new territories, seeking to address the latest civil rights issue. It helps enormously when big bucks are involved.

A case in point is the discovery of LGBT rights by organizations that were never founded—even remotely—to deal with this issue. But the fact that they are spending so much more time addressing the gay and transgender agenda is a sign that they have made tremendous progress in achieving their original goal. But they will never admit it. Victim advocates need victims.

For a majority of these groups, their shift to LGBT issues began in the late 2000s and early 2010s. At this point, the issue of gay rights, particularly marriage equality, was beginning to become a major civil rights issue. Soon the issue of transgender rights took center stage.

The following organizations have drifted into the LGBT arena. They are listed chronological in terms of when they embraced gay and transgender rights.

#### *NAACP Legal Defense Fund*

–Year founded: 1940

–Original mission: To secure laws that advance racial equality.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 1990s.

–Actions taken: Starting in 1996, it filed amicus briefs in cases that affected the rights of lesbians and gay men. It later fought for marriage equality.

#### *Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*

–Year founded: 1950

–Original mission: The Conference’s original mission was “grounded in commitment to social justice and the firm conviction that the struggle for civil rights would be won not by one group, but through coalition.” It focused mostly on civil rights for African Americans.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 2003

–Actions taken: Its first foray defending LGBT rights came in 2003 when it applauded the Supreme Court’s decision in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which offered new rights for gays and lesbians.

### *NAACP*

–Year founded: 1909

–Original mission: To fight for racial equality.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 2008

–Actions taken: In 2008 the NAACP’s California state chapter opposed the state’s Proposition 8. It later defended marriage equality.

### *National Urban League*

–Year founded: 1910

–Original mission: To fight for racial equality.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 2009

–Actions taken: Its first goal was to fight for the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

### *ADL*

–Year founded: 1913

–Original mission: To combat antisemitism.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 2010

–Actions taken: It filed an amicus brief in a marriage equality case.

### *National Women's Law Center*

–Year founded: 1972

–Original mission: To fight for the rights of women.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 2012

–Actions taken: In October 2012, it released a fact sheet on Title IX protections for LGBT and gender non-conforming students. It later became more active in combating discrimination. The Ruth Bader Ginsburg Center for Liberty at the

### *ACLU*

–Year founded: In 1972, Ruth Bader Ginsburg founded the Women's Rights Project at the ACLU. In 2010, the Center for Liberty, which included the Women's Rights Project, was established. In 2020, the Center was renamed the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Center for Liberty.

–Original mission: To fight for women's rights, principally abortion rights. It has since taken up the cause of gay and transgender people.

–First mention of LGBT advocacy: 2015

–Actions taken: To fight for passage of the Equality Act.

It is one thing for sister organizations to form coalitions; it is quite another when they engage in mission creep. But when there isn't enough work for employees to do, they must find new avenues to explore. Add to this the lure of foundation money, and the temptation is irresistible.

One more thing. Notice none of these left-wing civil rights organizations ever experience mission creep by taking up the cause of anti-Catholicism. That is not a civil rights issue that exercises them.

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# IRS SHIFT ON NON-PROFITS IS WELCOME

[Bill Donohue](#)

July 15, 2025

The Catholic League welcomes the announcement that the IRS has altered its policy on non-profit organizations and their participation in political campaigns. We know from our own experience that the 1954 stricture, known as the Johnson Amendment, prohibiting 501 (c) (3) organizations from campaign activity, is both rife for mischief and impractical. But the changes will not have any substantial impact on the way we have been operating for decades.

On July 7, the National Religious Broadcasters, an association of Christian communications, and the IRS reached a settlement regarding their dispute over the IRS's authority to stifle the political speech of religious non-profits.

"When a house of worship in good faith speaks to its congregation, through its customary channels of communication on matters of faith in connection with religious services, concerning electoral politics viewed through the lens of religious faith, it neither 'participate(s)' nor 'intervenes' in a 'political campaign,' within the ordinary meaning of those words."

The motion said “this interpretation of the Johnson Amendment is in keeping with the IRS’s treatment of the Johnson Amendment in practice.”

That conclusion is way too generous. The IRS did in fact break new ground with its settlement agreement. Here’s the evidence.

Just weeks after Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, I was notified by the IRS that the Catholic League was under investigation for violating the IRS Code on political activities as it relates to 501 (c) (3) organizations. What the IRS did not realize is that I knew who triggered the investigation: Catholics United (now defunct), a George Soros-funded phony Catholic organization. We know it was a dummy Catholic group because of the 2016 Wikileaks files on John Podesta (former chief of staff for President Bill Clinton and chairman of Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign). He admitted to doing this.

When I received the November 24, 2008 IRS letter notifying me of a probe, I recognized how strikingly similar it was to a leaked copy of the Catholics United complaint. Just before I was scheduled to go on CNN on October 23 (three days after I wrote a news release, “George Soros Funds Catholic Left”), a CNN staffer leaked the complaint to me. She did so because the head of Catholics United, Chris Korzen, tried to stop me from being interviewed—he suggested that one of his allies take my place, claiming I was not “an authentic Catholic commentator.” CNN knew better and I went on TV that night.

The “evidence” against me was nothing more than news releases and reports that I had written during the presidential campaign on various issues. In other words, the IRS would not have taken action against the Catholic League if it were faithful to the rules that it now claims were always operative. In short, the new wording is welcome precisely because it alters its long-standing policy on religious non-profits.

What we went through—it lasted for about a year and a half before we were given a slap on the wrist—proves what I said about the IRS rule being rife for mischief: It allowed the Soros-funded “Catholic” group to persuade the IRS to start its investigation.

Another example of the mischief that the initial rule entailed was the disparate treatment given to African American churches. Not a campaign season goes by without political candidates speaking at black churches. In some cases, they have been endorsed by pastors; there are instances when collections have been taken up for them. If this happened at a Catholic church, the whole world would know about it.

I also said this stricture was impractical. What made it impractical was the enforcement mechanism.

How can a religious non-profit like the Catholic League be expected to combat anti-Catholicism, and fight for religious liberty, without addressing political figures who are responsible for these matters? We have a First Amendment right to freedom of religion and freedom of speech, so any encroachment on those rights is unconstitutional.

The IRS concluded that although the Catholic League had “intervened in a political campaign,” it was “unintentional, isolated, non-egregious and non-recurring,” and therefore our tax exempt status remained in tact. I told the IRS agent who contacted me that they were twice wrong: (a) we did not intervene in a political campaign and (b) what we did was intentional. Therefore, I said, we were not going to change course.

It is now indisputable: the Catholic League did not change—the IRS did.

We will continue to address policy issues that arise during a political campaign that are of interest to our mission. While we have no plans to endorse candidates for public office, we

will not hesitate to call out candidates who trespass on religious liberty. Quite frankly, once either the Republicans or the Democrats think they own you, they are free to throw you to the curb. We are happily independent.

So while we will not substantially change our stance, we are glad to know that we won't have the IRS looking over our shoulder for simply doing our job.

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## WHY IS IT VIRTUOUS TO BE NON-JUDGMENTAL?

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We've all dealt with scolds, highly judgmental finger-pointing people who are quick to call us out for some alleged moral outrage. They are annoying, to put it mildly. The corrective, however, is not to become the polar opposite, which is to be non-judgmental about practically everything. The extremes, as usual, are no good.

It is not the scolds who are the big problem these days; it's the non-judgmental types. Their smugness is sickening—they like to lord over us as the high priests of tolerance and open-mindedness. More important, there are times when to withhold judgment is not only not virtuous, it is morally offensive. To cite one example: If we can't summon the moral courage to unequivocally denounce genocide, then we need to reset our moral compass.

Artificial intelligence tells us that "Being non-judgmental

fosters understanding and improves relationships.” To be sure, this is true in some cases. But if the issue is incest, then fostering an understanding may actually impede our ability to condemn. More to the point, it is absurd to think that being non-judgmental about mother-son sexual relationships is virtuous.

Other internet sites imply that making judgments suggests a character disorder. “Why do you feel the need to judge? It’s time for some introspection. You need to be honest with yourself and unwrap why you feel the need to judge other people.”

So when parents tell their children it’s time to retire their phone, or turn off the TV, and start doing their homework, they need to look in the mirror and ask themselves why they feel the need to judge? The truth is parents who are *not judgmental* about such things are delinquent in their duties. And by the way, is not the decision not to judge a judgment call?

In some Catholic quarters, it is fashionable to cite Pope Francis as a beacon of non-judgmentalism. After all, they say, it was he who famously said about homosexuality, “Who am I to judge?”

Wrong. He never said that about homosexuality. Homosexuality is conduct, a behavior proscribed by the Bible and the *Catholic Catechism*, and the pope never said it wasn’t sinful. But being a homosexual is morally neutral—it is no more sinful than being a heterosexual.

Pope Francis was referring to the status of someone who is a homosexual, and in this particular case it was about a priest who had been accused, but not found guilty, of a sexual offense. To his credit, the pope chose his words very carefully. What he said before, and after, those five words, “Who am I to judge?”, matters greatly.

"If someone is gay *and* he searches for the Lord *and* has good will, who am I to judge *him*?" (My italics.) The qualifiers, and the object of his remark, provide a very different picture than the one falsely promoted by "non-judgmental" savants.

When non-judgmentalism becomes a crusade, it carries the seeds of moral relativism, one of the most destructive, indeed lethal, ideas in history.

In his classic book, *Modern Times*, Paul Johnson, the great English Catholic historian, argued that the astounding violence and cultural corruption that marked the twentieth century was a function of moral relativism, the notion that there are no moral absolutes, just opinions. It was after World War I, he said, that moral relativism triumphed. Notions of right and wrong were no longer seen as a cultural expression, grounded in our Judeo-Christian heritage. No, they were merely a matter of whim.

Hitler said, "There is no such thing as truth, either in the moral or in the scientific sense." He made good on his ethics. He killed with abandon, never flinching from his convictions. In this regard, he was following the wisdom of Nietzsche, who opined, "There are no facts, only interpretations." Once truth and facts are seen as mere opinions, it allows some to think that putting Jews into ovens is the right thing to do. After all, "Who are we to judge"?

The Institute for Historical Review (IHR) is a contemporary example of this view. It spends most of its time trying to belittle, if not deny, the Holocaust. It maintains that this is not an accurate account, but anyone who has read its work knows better. "The IHR does not 'deny' the Holocaust. Indeed, the IHR as such has no 'position' on any specific event or chapter of history, except to promote greater awareness and understanding, and to encourage more objective investigation."

Why lie? Why the need to put the word *deny* in quotes, as if it

were debatable? Similarly, any organization that takes no position on the Holocaust means it would not object if another Hitler emerged with his Final Solution plans.

The intentional killing of millions of innocent people is morally abhorrent. If that is being judgmental, so be it. There are times when being non-judgmental makes sense, but as a universal rule it is morally debased. Even deadly.