

NY TIMES WAGES WAR ON CATHOLICISM

By Bill Donohue

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On Feb. 27, The *New York Times* ran a front-page story raising questions about some cardinals who will soon vote for the new Pope. Some of the cardinals have had accused priests serving under them, while others have been the subject of criticism by the Survivors Network for those Abused by Priests (SNAP).

However, the story by Laurie Goodstein contains factual errors, blatant omissions, and many sources who have damaged credentials.

Goodstein writes that the Pope “put children at risk by failing to report pedophiles or remove them from the priesthood.” This is thrice incorrect: (a) many priests have been removed from ministry under Pope Benedict XVI (b) children have not been put at risk and (c) pedophiles have never been the problem.

Rev. Marcial Maciel is rightly cited as “a pathological abuser and liar,” but for Goodstein to mention his name, while at the same time contending that the Pope never removed a molesting priest from ministry, is positively astonishing. Who does she think dumped Maciel in 2006? Moreover, the Pope not only removed him from ministry, he put the entire order of priests he founded, the Legions of Christ, in receivership.

Goodstein’s claims that children have been put at risk under the Pope, and that pedophilia is the problem, have been undercut by many scholars, including one she cites, psychology professor Thomas G. Plante. In his research on this subject, he found that “80 to 90 percent of all priests who in fact

abuse minors have sexually engaged with adolescent boys, not prepubescent children. Thus, the teenager is more at risk than the young altar boy or girls of any age.”

In other words, the scandal – which ended more than a quarter-century ago (most of the abuse took place between the mid-60s and mid-80s) – rarely involved children. This finding is consistent with the work of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice: it found that less than 5 percent of molesting priests have been pedophiles. In almost every case, it has been homosexual priests hitting on teenage boys, the most common offense of which has been “inappropriate touching.”

Unfortunately, for politically correct reasons, even those who honestly collect the data, including Plante and the John Jay professors, are reluctant to discuss the role that homosexual priests have played in molesting minors. In fairness, it is important to keep in mind that while most of the molesting priests have been homosexuals, not pedophiles, most homosexual priests have never been molesters. That said, one of the reasons why this problem is almost non-existent today is because this Pope has made it very difficult for practicing homosexuals to enter the priesthood. The results are in the numbers: in the last 10 years, the annual average number of credible accusations made against over 40,000 priests has been in the single digits.

Goodstein says that “three priests and a former priest” accused Cardinal Keith O’Brien of Scotland of “making sexual advances.” This is correct. What is not said is that the accusers will give neither their names nor the details of what allegedly happened, and that the unconfirmed offenses – all denied by O’Brien – are said to have occurred more than 30 years ago.

This particular part of the story carries added significance when we consider Mark Thompson’s baggage. On November 12, Thompson took over as the president of *The New York Times*

Company. He did so following a trail of accusations that when he was the BBC chief, he failed to report on child rapist Jimmy Savile, the BBC icon who worked there for decades.

Thompson denies he ever heard about Savile's predatory behavior. Yet last September, Thompson told his lawyers to write a letter on his behalf threatening *The Sunday Times* with a lawsuit if it ran a story implicating him in the Savile scandal. Most astoundingly, he then claimed he knew nothing of the letter's contents! So when it comes to pointing fingers about a sexual cover-up, the Times should be the last to do so.

One of the most irresponsible critics of the Catholic Church on this matter is Judge Anne Burke. She is quoted by Goodstein as blaming every single cardinal for this problem. "They all have participated in one way or another in having actual information about criminal conduct, and not doing anything about it." Ideally, she should be sued for libel. But she knows that no cardinal is going to do that. So she continues to throw mud.

In 2006, Burke said priests are not entitled to constitutional rights. She argued that priests should be removed from ministry on the basis of one unsubstantiated accusation.

Anticipating an obvious wave of criticism, the judge said, "We understand that it is a violation of the priest's due process – you're innocent until proven guilty – but we're talking about the most vulnerable people in our society and those are children." But her alleged interest in child welfare did not allow her to say whether non-priests should be denied their civil liberties when accused of wrongdoing.

Goodstein drops Terry McKiernan's name as a credible source. He is the director of a website that tracks abuse cases. At a SNAP conference in 2011, he said, without a shred of evidence, that New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan was "keeping the lid on

55 names” of predator priests. This is an out-and-out lie: Dolan is not covering for any priest.

If Dolan were guilty, then McKiernan should be willing to disclose the names of these 55 priests. But he refuses to do so. This is typical of him. As with Burke, he has a different standard for accused priests: he said in 2011 that accused priests should be removed from ministry before an accusation is even investigated. Not surprisingly, when the John Jay study was released two years ago, McKiernan condemned it the day before it was issued.

The last critic mentioned by Goodstein is SNAP director David Clohessy. In today’s *New York Daily News*, he is quoted saying, “We’re trying to keep this issue front and center.”

He needs to – he’s broke.

On Feb. 23, SNAP sent a desperate e-mail to its donors saying, “We are barely meeting our everyday expenses.”

One of the reasons why SNAP is in bad shape is because Clohessy has had to come up with big bucks to pay for his lawyers after being sued for refusing to turn over SNAP records about his allegedly shady operations. While he demands transparency from the Church, Clohessy refuses to disclose his source of funding (we know that much comes from Church-suing lawyers like Jeffrey Anderson).

Clohessy was asked before a Missouri court in 2011, “Has SNAP to your knowledge ever issued a press release that contained false information?” He didn’t blink. “Sure.”

For decades, Clohessy has been lobbing rhetorical bombs at the Catholic Church, arguing what a crime it is for anyone in the Church not to report a suspected molester. But when it comes to himself, it’s a different story. In the 1990s, he knew about the predatory behavior of a molesting priest and never called the cops. That priest was his brother, Kevin. This is

not a matter of conjecture – he’s admitted it.

No one with any sense of dignity should ever seek to defend the behavior of a molester. It must also be said that when such a serious issue like this is being discussed, no one with any sense of dignity should be making irresponsible charges or sweeping generalizations. Moreover, no one engaged in this conversation should come to the table unless his own hands are clean. Had these strictures been applied to Goodstein’s piece, she wouldn’t have had a story.

Dr. William Donohue is the president of and CEO of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization. The publisher of the Catholic League journal, Catalyst, Bill is a former Bradley Resident Scholar at the Heritage Foundation and served for two decades on the board of directors of the National Association of Scholars. The author of five books, two on the ACLU, and the winner of several teaching awards and many awards from the Catholic community, Donohue has appeared on thousands of television and radio shows speaking on civil liberties and social issues.

WHY OBAMA GAVE HOLLYWOOD A PASS

By Bill Donohue

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In his Jan. 16 remarks on gun violence, President Obama said, “As soon as I’m finished speaking here I will sit at that desk and I will sign a directive giving law enforcement, schools,

mental health professionals and the public health community some of the tools they need to help reduce gun violence.”

In doing so, the president addressed two of the three key issues – guns and mental health – but said nothing about Hollywood’s role. Indeed, he never mentioned TV or the movies, limiting himself to a throw-away line on how “Congress should fund research into the effects that violent video games have on young minds.”

Every honest social scientist who has looked at this issue already knows the answer to the proposed research: violent video games have little effect on girls, and little effect on most boys; however, young men from dysfunctional backgrounds are more likely to engage in violence. So after the study is done, and we learn what we already know, who is going to do what about it?

When Vice President Biden met with Hollywood leaders on Jan. 10, he correctly said there were many “stakeholders” involved in the issue of gun violence. He also made sense when he concluded, “There is no single answer.” Looks like his boss agrees, in part: Obama gave us 27 answers (23 Executive Orders and four legislative proposals), but not one touched on Hollywood’s responsibility. Whatever happened to their “stakeholder” role?

Hollywood was not given a pass because of the delicacy of the Constitution: there are First Amendment considerations in trimming the rights of the mentally ill, and there are Second Amendment rights involved in gun control. Hollywood was given a pass because it greases Obama.

To be specific, Hollywood dumped millions into Obama’s coffers in both elections. In return, Obama’s stimulus package included a \$246 million tax break for Hollywood movie investors in big budget projects.

Christopher Dodd, head of the Motion Picture Association of

America, picked up another \$430 million in tax breaks for Hollywood studios in the recent fiscal cliff deal. Not surprisingly, Dodd said he would not yield a bit in getting Hollywood to curb violent fare. Why should he? There are no penalties for not cooperating.

It's not just Dodd who is obstinate. Nina Kessler, president of CBS Entertainment, says of TV programming, "nothing that is on the air is inappropriate." It appears there is nothing inappropriate on the big screen, either. When Quentin Tarantino of "Django Unchained" fame was recently asked, "Do you ever go through a period when you lose your taste for movie violence," he blithely answered, "Not for me."

Anyone who is truly interested in maintaining free speech protections is bound to be sensitive to the issue of censorship. But it would be wrong to say that Hollywood's refusal to curb violence is a function of its fidelity to the First Amendment. Quite frankly, it can be bought.

Hollywood is so desperate to crack the Chinese market that it is willing to do whatever the communists tell it to do. On January 15, *The New York Times* ran a detailed front-page story on how Hollywood prostitutes itself by bowing to the dictates of its communist Chinese bosses. Not only are Hollywood producers summoned to appear before the tyrants in their offices, communist agents jam movie sets offering instructions. Does Hollywood complain? Not on your life.

It's even sicker than this. Two subjects that the Hollywood free-lovers regularly agree to cut and splice are sexuality and religion. Yet if a Catholic or evangelical leader in the U.S. speaks out against Hollywood for its irresponsible sexual depictions, or its Christian-bashing scripts, he is called a fascist. When Communist government officials order them to make cuts, they supinely oblige. The communists do not approve of films that harm "social morality" or suggest that "religion is darkness."

Billions are at stake, which is why Hollywood shuts its mouth. Indeed, it does more – it cheers censorship! For example, filmmaker Steven Soderbergh said he was delighted that Chinese censors took interest in his work.

“I’m not morally offended or outraged. It’s fascinating to listen to people’s interpretations of your story,” Soderbergh said. Of course, those “people” are agents of the state, communist employees who come not to offer their “interpretations” – they come to dictate content.

If President Obama were sincere, he would hold a press conference in Hollywood asking his friends to be at least as obsequious to his recommendations as they are to Chinese edicts. But that will never happen: Obama is more concerned about dreaming up his 24th Executive Order on gun control.

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SATANISM LINKED TO SERIAL

CRIMES

By Bill Donohue

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“Jimmy Savile beat and raped a 12-year-old girl during a secret satanic ritual in a hospital.”

This is the opening line in an English newspaper’s story on Sunday about BBC child rapist Jimmy Savile. The BBC icon, who died in 2011, is believed to be responsible for abusing at least 450 males and females, aged 8 to 47.

Dr. Valerie Sinason, president of the Institute of Psychotherapy and Disability in the U.K., revealed that the aforementioned girl told her in 1992 what happened to her in 1975.

Savile wore a robe and a mask while he abused the girl in the basement of a hospital; during the rape, Savile and his cohorts (also pedophiles) chanted, “Hail Satan” in the candle-lit room. Five years later, Dr. Sinason says, Savile abused another girl during a Black Mass ceremony; she, too, heard Latin chanting and witnessed a group of men wearing Satanist regalia. Neither girl knew one another and lived in different parts of the country.

Trevor L. Todd was a classmate of the Newtown, Conn. mass killer, Adam Lanza. He says Lanza was a devil worshipper who had his own website on the Internet. Indeed, he says the website “had the word ‘Devil’ on it in red Gothic-style letters against a black background. It gave me the chills. It was just so weird.”

Is there a Satanic connection that helps explain the serial rapes of Jimmy Savile and the serial killings of Adam Lanza? We don’t have enough evidence at the moment to say with

certainty. But we do know that the media have shown very little interest in exploring this line of inquiry.

While issues like gun control, mental illness and violent video games are worthy of serious discussion, not to research the role that Satanism may have played is simply irresponsible. It is worth recalling that Charles Manson once told the press, "I am the Devil."

It begs the question: What exactly are the media afraid of?

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KATHY GRIFFIN CROSSED THE LINE ON CNN

By Bill Donohue

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On CNN's New Year's Eve broadcast, comedian Kathy Griffin bent down and kissed Anderson Cooper's crotch. She was so happy with her act that on New Year's Day she told CBS host David

Letterman that "If you think this is the part where I'm gonna apologize for trying to go down on Anderson Cooper, you are sorely mistaken."

Perhaps the biggest story related to Griffin's stunt was the almost deadening silence it engendered from any quarter. Aside from Newsbusters and the Parents Television Council (thank God for Brent Bozell), and a story in the *Baltimore Sun* and the *New York Daily News*, there wasn't much in the way of criticism (predictably, Perez Hilton took offense at the Parents Television Council for having the audacity to call out Griffin).

Does it matter what Griffin did? Would it matter if next year she actually puts her mouth on Cooper's penis? To put it more generally, does what we see and hear have any effect on our behavior, particularly the behavior of young people?

Hollywood obviously thinks that what we see and hear matters, otherwise it wouldn't intentionally ban actors from smoking on television. The movies are no different. There are, of course, a few exceptions. But those exceptions do not go unanswered. Remember when Julia Roberts smoked incessantly in "My Best Friend's Wedding"? Hillary Clinton went ballistic. Now anyone is free to disagree with Clinton's reaction, but no one can maintain that her concern was baseless. She wants to see less smoking on the screen so less people will be induced to smoke.

Lately there has been much discussion about the prevalence of violent video games and their impact on disturbed young men. While such commentary gets Hollywood nervous, no one there is prepared to say that extended exposure to these sick games is without effect.

After the killings at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin last year, liberal groups such as the ADL and the Southern Law Poverty Center called attention to the lyrics of hate-rock bands. The ADL even went so far as to see a direct cause and effect.

“Hate music does sometimes create direct effects,” wrote Lonnie Nasatir. “Incidents of hate crimes being committed by people who had just been at a hate music event have been reported.”

In 2009, investigators at the University of Pittsburgh concluded that those young people who listened the most to sexually degrading lyrics were far more likely to have sex at an early age than those who did not. From a 2008 study published in *Pediatrics*, we know that “Teens who were exposed to high levels of television sexual content were twice as likely to experience a pregnancy in the subsequent three years, compared to those with lower levels of exposure.”

Of course, we are not just talking about kids having sex at an early age: We are talking about the *consequences* of young people having sex.

The evidence is overwhelming that sex at a young age is tied to poverty, dropping out of school, abortion, out-of-wedlock births, infant mortality, crime, infertility, depression, and disease.

What does this have to do with Kathy Griffin? No one thinks that all by herself Griffin will induce young people to have sex, or to suffer the ineluctable consequences. But she is not all by herself. That’s the problem—Hollywood is hell-bent on degrading our culture. To the extent, however, that Griffin seeks to glorify recreational oral sex—she seems intent on being its poster girl—then she must be held accountable for her behavior.

Here are a few facts. In 1950, it is estimated that 7 percent of white American girls were sexually active by age 16. In 1982, the figure jumped to 44 percent; the greatest increase occurred in the 1970s. In 2005, the National Center for Health Statistics reported that among teens aged 15 to 19, 55 percent said they had experienced oral sex. In 2012, the same agency

said that 66 percent of females and 65 percent of males between the ages of 15 and 24 had had oral sex.

Does it matter? According to the Centers for Disease Control, “Even though the risk of transmitting HIV through oral sex is much lower than that of anal or vaginal sex, **numerous studies have demonstrated that oral sex can result in the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).**” (The bold type is in the original.)

In other words, people can get chlamydia, gonorrhea, genital herpes, genital human papillomavirus, syphilis, and other STDs by having oral sex. This is important because numerous studies have shown that many young people still think they cannot get an STD this way.

Again, Kathy Griffin is not *causing* any of this. But she is clearly contributing to an increasingly coarse and debased culture. And that’s not good for anyone, especially boys and girls. If I’m wrong, then bring back the smokers to TV and film and stop all the negative chatter about hate-rock bands.

WE ’RE WINNING WAR ON CHRISTMAS

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published at Newsmax.com on December 19, 2013.

The “War on Christmas” began in earnest in the 1980s when the American Civil Liberties Union was filing one lawsuit after another attempting to ban manger scenes on public property.

In the 1990s, the Christmas wars morphed into the multicultural agenda of the nation's schools, affecting curricula and school concerts. Worse, even the private sector began a campaign to neuter Christmas in the workplace.

But after peaking circa 2005, there has been increasing evidence – especially in the past three years – that the anti-Christmas activists are losing.

The “War on Christmas” has always been a top-down phenomenon, led by such militant atheist organizations as American Atheists and the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF). By contrast, it's mostly been a grassroots effort to maintain Christmas traditions, and this has certainly been the case in more recent years.

While there have been many organizations fighting the foes of Christmas – the Catholic League, the Thomas More Law Center, the Alliance Defending Freedom, the American Family Association – without the participation of men and women in our nation's towns, villages, and cities, we wouldn't be winning. Here are a few examples:

Last year, FFRF sent a threatening letter to city authorities in Faribault, Minnesota complaining about a nativity scene in the local library. This year the Faribault City Council voted unanimously to display a crèche on public land. As one council member put it, “This really bugs me. I mean, one person complained. There are 17,000 members [of FFRF] in the whole nation. That's really a minority. We're the majority here.”

In October, FFRF lost in a bid to have its hate-filled display erected alongside a nativity scene on the grounds of the Henderson County Courthouse in East Texas.

The Thomas More Law Center scored an impressive victory when a nativity scene that was built by a local resident was returned to its longtime home on a median in Warren, Michigan.

Thanks to Alliance Defending Freedom, students at Western Piedmont College in Morganton, N.C., were allowed to use the word “Christmas” to sell – you guessed it – Christmas trees.

The Catholic League moved quickly to restore a Christmas tree to a residence of senior citizens in Newhall, California after learning that the private company that owns the home ordered the Christmas tree removed on the imbecilic grounds that it is a religious symbol.

FFRF took it on the chin again when a judge told them to take a walk after the atheists sought to ban a nativity scene on public grounds in Crockett, Texas.

The mayor of Woodcliff Lake, N.J. rightly said, “There’s no controversy. There’s no story. It is a Christmas tree and Menorah lighting.” His strong response was to another attempt by the New Jersey chapter of the ACLU to censor Christmas celebrations.

The citizens of Oskaloosa, Iowa turned out in large numbers to attend a city council meeting on whether to keep a nativity scene in the city’s public square. The city council voted to keep it.

Last year, FFRF complained about a manger scene on the town property of Woodbridge, N.J., but this year the city council preempted another strike by affirming the right to erect the crèche.

When the authorities of Santa Monica, Calif. took the easy way out by banning Christian and atheist displays alike, local residents made a cultural statement of their own when they reenacted the Christmas story with a live performance.

To be sure, our side did not win every battle, and nativity scenes continue to be vandalized in many parts of the nation. But Newsweek/Daily Beast wasn’t far off when it concluded, “The War on Christmas Is Over” and “Christmas Won.” One thing

is for sure: there is little doubt that the vector of change has moved our way.

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'Politics of Empathy' Lifted Obama Over Romney

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published at Newsmax.com on September 26, 2013.

Perception is not necessarily reality, but it often functions that way. Ask those who voted for Barack Obama why they did so and in short order it will be revealed that the president, quite unlike Mitt Romney, really cares about people. How do they know? Probing doesn't help – there's not much there. Just listen to what they say.

For example, last summer comedian Dennis Miller was discussing the presidential race with Jay Leno. Speaking of Obama, Miller said to Jay, "I know you like him. What am I missing over the last four years? It just does not seem that good to me." Leno

was sincere when he replied, "Well, I think he has compassion for regular people."

Leno was wrong about one thing: he should have said, "I *feel* he has compassion for regular people." Thinking is for people who exercise the faculty of reason and who make voting decisions based on policy; those who allow compassion to direct their vote are expressing their feelings.

We can debate policy prescriptions, and we can assess data. But we can't measure who is the most caring or compassionate of the candidates. Even if we could, reasonable people might wonder why these intangibles should matter so much. That they do is indisputable.

In a Fox exit poll, when voters were asked which candidate is "in touch with people like you," Obama won 53 percent to 43 percent. Even more important, voters looking for empathy in a candidate voted for Obama 81 to 18. That's what counts. Here's more proof: On the issue of which candidate shared the voter's values, Romney won 55 to 42; Romney also won among those who wanted someone with a vision for the future, 54 to 45.

Too bad Romney wasn't seen as caring and compassionate – then the man with the right values and vision might have won. When factoring in Obama's high empathy quotient, it makes intelligible why voters blamed George W. Bush for the *current* economic problems by a margin of 53 to 38. Indeed, Bush is also being blamed for the "fiscal cliff" condition: 53percent fingered him while only 29percent blamed Obama.

It's not just economics where empathy counts. Fully 68 percent of those who said Obama's handling of Hurricane Sandy was important to them also voted for him. What the president actually did for those who live on the Jersey Shore, Staten Island, and Long Island is unclear, but unlike Bush who looked out a window on Air Force One to see what happened after Katrina, Obama got off the plane. That showed he cared.

It does not matter that a record 50 million people are living in poverty today under President Obama. It's Bush's fault. It does not matter that 47 million are on food stamps. It's Bush's fault. But it would be a mistake to say that what is driving this phenomenon is Bush alone. What's in play are mental gymnastics: Obama can't be blamed because he cares. That leaves Bush.

While Obama is surely benefiting from the empathy factor, he is only the latest president to do so. Take Carter and Reagan. To this day, many credit Carter with caring more about the poor. Why? Remember all those photos showing Carter building houses for the poor once he left office? Where were the pictures of Reagan with hammer in hand? That Carter made more people poor doesn't matter: What matters is that he cared about his victims.

The same is true elsewhere. There is no shortage of people who still look with affection toward Castro and the Sandinistas. No amount of evidence demonstrating how they punished the poor seems to matter. That is because they both knew how to play the empathy game. To wit: they successfully adopted the right rhetoric about championing the poor while simultaneously blaming Romney-like capitalists for their problems.

Fatigues matter. Castro lived the life of a robber baron and ripped off the poor, but he knew enough to trade in his lawyer's suit and tie for army fatigues. The Sandinistas lived in the palaces of the Somozistas, did nothing for the poor, but cunningly sported their fatigues in public. Mao Zedong owned 50 villas, murdered 77 million of his own people, but learned to dress down. It still works: why else would a famous Chinese restaurant in Times Square continue to display an enormous picture of this monster?

These "masters of empathy" have had particular success with professors in the social sciences, humanities, and law schools. One might think that professors would be swayed by

empirical evidence, not emotion, but this view is sadly mistaken. Indeed, virtually every mass murderer in the 20th century – Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot – was vigorously defended by professors and intellectuals, in general (Pol Pot's advisers earned their Ph.D.'s from the Sorbonne).

Our “masters of empathy” are at least non-violent. In the 1980s, left-wing activist Mitch Snyder showed up on TV and at congressional committees demanding more support for the homeless. Liberals lionized him. Not surprisingly, he always wore fatigues. That he never supported his own family is also true. But at least he cared.

There is little doubt that Obama is our “master of empathy” today. Consider how Tamar Birckhead, a professor of law at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, explained to her young daughters why she voted for the president: “Democrats care about the poor. Republicans care about themselves.” How does she know? Probing doesn't help – there's not much there.

In essence, all the number-crunching, policy recommendations, demographic advice, charts, power point presentations, and the like, are not going to change things for the Republicans. If they don't find someone who appears to care, and learns the lexicon of compassion, it won't matter in the end.

Can empathy be learned? Some seem to think so. The Obama team hired Susan T. Fiske of Princeton to advise them on what matters most to voters: competence and *warmth*. Romney possessed the former attribute, but he did not exude the latter. Coaching may have helped, but only marginally. The bottom line is clear: a candidate who cares, or at least pretends to, is at a decided advantage.

Empathy may be a seriously overvalued property, but unless it is taken seriously by Republicans, all the outreach efforts won't matter in the end. Perception is not necessarily reality, but it often functions that way.

Dr. William Donohue is the president of and CEO of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization. The publisher of the Catholic League journal, *Catalyst*, Bill is a former Bradley Resident Scholar at the Heritage Foundation and served for two decades on the board of directors of the National Association of Scholars. The author of five books, two on the ACLU, and the winner of several teaching awards and many awards from the Catholic community, Donohue has appeared on thousands of television and radio shows speaking on civil liberties and social issues.

CENSORING OF CONSERVATIVES PROVES LIBERALS' INTOLERANCE

By Bill Donohue

This article was originally published at Newsmax.com on October 5, 2013.

In the course of just one week, I had my speech squashed on three different occasions by the cultural elites. Though I've been slapped by the censorial hand of liberals many times before, never have I experienced it so forcefully within such a short period of time.

On September 27, I held a press conference outside the Edward Tyler Nahem gallery in midtown Manhattan to protest an exhibit by Andres Serrano featuring "Piss Christ," the infamous photo of a crucifix submerged in a jar of the artist's urine. After addressing the media, I sought to see the exhibit but was stopped in the building's lobby by gallery officials. I was the only person denied. My offense? They objected to the

content of my remarks to the media.

Last month we learned that beginning on October 17, FX will air "American Horror Story: Asylum." The entire series depicts a habit-wearing promiscuous nun who beats inmates in a home for the criminally insane; for good measure, a doctor tortures his patients in this evil Catholic institution.

I decided to write a full-page ad critical of the series, seeking to place it in *The Hollywood Reporter*. We were led to believe that everything was fine, including our credit card info, but then we learned via an email on October 1 that the ad had been rejected. Lynne Segall, the publisher, nixed it saying the ad's message "was not appropriate."

The next day, October 2, we contacted *Variety*. Once again, everything from the initial exchange to our credit card info was deemed just fine. But then we learned via an email that the ad had been rejected because of its "mudslinging" title ("FX Trashes Nuns"). I refused to amend it (*Variety* has run many stories with the word "trashes" in its title), thus there will be no ad.

None of this would matter so much if it were not for the myth that liberals are tolerant, and conservatives are intolerant. Wherever liberals dominate – in the artistic community, Hollywood, the media, education, publishing – there is no shortage of attempts to muzzle the speech of conservatives. They are the masters of intolerance.

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awards from the Catholic community, Donohue has appeared on thousands of television and radio shows speaking on civil liberties and social issues.

RYAN, BIDEN, AND THE BISHOPS

The following article is adapted from Bill Donohue's article on this subject that was posted on Newsmax.com on September 26, 2012.

The conventional wisdom holds that both vice presidential candidates, Rep. Paul Ryan and Vice President Joe Biden, are roughly equal in terms of their Catholic standing: Ryan is good on the life issues, but weak on social justice; the reverse is said to be true of Biden. But is it a draw? Not even close: only one of these Catholics—Biden—has been criticized, reprimanded, and sanctioned by the bishops. Make that 17 bishops.

Before detailing all the trouble Biden has gotten into with the bishops, some debunking of the conventional wisdom is in order. Sister Simone Campbell, executive director of NETWORK, a Catholic dissident organization, is responsible for much of the mythology about Ryan.

Sister Simone began her speech at the Democratic National Convention saying, "Good evening. I'm Sister Simone Campbell, and I'm one of the 'nuns on the bus.'" The fact of the matter is there were hardly any "nuns on the bus" (only two made the entire trip, and at no time were there more than six). In other words, the "nuns on the bus" story was a colossal media scam.

Sister Simone made more news when she said, "the United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops stated that the Ryan budget failed a basic moral test, because it would harm families living in poverty.”

To put it politely, Sister Simone overreached. There was one bishop, Stockton Bishop Stephen Blaire, who wrote a letter on April 16 to two congressmen, Rep. Frank D. Lucas and Rep. Collin C. Peterson, leaders of the Committee on Agriculture, asking them to resist “unacceptable cuts to hunger and nutrition programs.” Nowhere in the letter is Rep. Paul Ryan’s name mentioned.

Bishop Blaire is the chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and he did speak on their behalf. But by saying on national television that the bishops had condemned the Ryan budget, Sister Simone was, in the words of theologian George Weigel, being “either woefully ignorant or willfully malicious.”

After distorting the record, Sister Simone proclaimed, “We agree with our bishops.” What is so remarkable about this statement is that it comes from the leader of NETWORK, a group hardly known for practicing fidelity to what the bishops say. In fact, when Sister Simone was asked at the Democratic National Convention if she supports laws that ban abortion, she took a page from her hero, President Obama, and replied, “That’s beyond my pay grade. I don’t know.”

NETWORK was founded in the early 1970s by radical nuns professing a strong belief in social justice but no interest whatsoever in abortion. It is so radical and disrespectful of what the bishops say that it has butted heads many times with the Church hierarchy in the U.S., as well as in Rome. In 1983, it took the side of a dissident nun who refused to denounce publicly funded abortions; when the nun refused, the Vatican stepped in to force her to leave her order. The very next year, Sister Marjorie Tuite, a founder of NETWORK, was herself

threatened with expulsion from her order for her pro-abortion activities. I mentioned all of this to Sister Simone on a radio show earlier this year but she refused to comment on it.

In other words, it is not Rep. Ryan who has been called out by the Vatican for his dissident views—it is Sister Simone's group.

The nonsense that Ryan's budget was condemned by the bishops was floated by Dana Milbank in the *Washington Post* on April 27, just eleven days after Bishop Blaire's letter was released. In his article, Milbank said, "the bishops sent letters to Congress" about Ryan's budget. But the link he provides is only to Blaire's letter. Similarly, on August 11, Melinda Henneberger wrote in a *Washington Post* blog that "the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops took the unusual step of repudiating the deep cuts envisioned in Ryan's budget"; the link is to Milbank's piece. Then on August 20, Robert P. Jones did an article for the same site saying "the bishops sharply repudiated the Ryan budget"; predictably, he linked to Henneberger's post.

The Washington Post earns an "A" for getting its talking points down with precision; too bad it fails the test for accuracy. Their grade is actually worse than this: not only is it inaccurate to suggest that more than one bishop was upset with Ryan's budget, it is intellectually dishonest not to mention those bishops who have spoken favorably about the Wisconsin congressman's work. And unlike Bishop Blaire, Ryan's supporters mentioned him by name.

Just before Milbank got the anti-Ryan train running, Ryan's own bishop, Robert Morlino of the Diocese of Madison, wrote a column commending him. Bishop Morlino cited Ryan's "accomplishments as a native son, and a brother in the faith." In a subsequent radio interview, he said Ryan is an "excellent Catholic layman of the very highest integrity," adding that he "understands the principles of Catholic social teaching" and

applies them “very responsibly.”

More recently, Bishop Thomas J. Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois spoke in Green Bay, Wisconsin, saying, “Congressman Ryan is undoubtedly correct in asserting that the preferential option for the poor...does not entail ‘a preferential option for big government.’” Similarly, the president of the USCCB, Timothy Cardinal Dolan of the Archdiocese of New York, has written favorably of Ryan’s commitment to Catholicism.

When it comes to Vice President Joe Biden, it’s a different story. To put it mildly, he has incurred the wrath of the bishops, and on more than one occasion.

Biden got into big trouble with the bishops after his infamous 2008 appearance on “Meet the Press.” Tom Brokaw asked Biden if he agreed with the Catholic Church on abortion. “I’m prepared as a matter of faith to accept that life begins at conception. But that is my judgment. For me to impose that judgment on everyone else who is equally and maybe even more devout than I am seems to me is inappropriate in a pluralistic society.” He also said that in the Catholic Church there has long been a “debate” on when life begins.

Following the interview, the bishops weighed in with vigor:

- Cardinal Justin F. Rigali, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Pro-Life Activities, and Bishop William E. Lori, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Doctrine, issued a joint statement “to correct the misrepresentations” of Church teachings advanced by Biden. Indeed, they argued that “the Senator’s claim that the beginning of human life is a ‘personal and private’ matter of religious faith, one that cannot be ‘imposed’ on others, does not reflect the truth of the matter.”
- Speaking explicitly of Biden, as well as those Catholic politicians who share his position, Bishop Samuel

Aquila of Fargo, North Dakota said, “they really should not be presenting themselves for Holy Communion because it is a scandal.”

- Bishop Gregory Aymond of Austin released a statement by the bishops’ Administrative Committee, the highest authority of the USCCB outside the conference’s plenary sessions, affirming support for the position as outlined by Cardinal Rigali and Bishop Lori. “As teachers of the faith, we also point out the connectedness between the evil of abortion and political support for abortion.”
- Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput said of Biden that “I certainly presume his good will and integrity and I presume that his integrity will lead him to refrain from presenting himself for Communion.”
- Bishop Paul S. Coakley of Salina said, “Senator Biden confused the matter [of abortion] further by saying that he ‘knows when (life) begins for me,’ but that this is a ‘personal and private issue.’ That life begins at conception is a scientific fact, not a personal or subjective or philosophical or religious opinion.”
- Denver Auxiliary Bishop James D. Conley joined with Chaput in accusing Biden of “poor logic” and “bad facts.”
- Milwaukee Archbishop Timothy Dolan accused Biden of taking it upon himself to “explain Catholic teaching on abortion to the nation—and blundered badly.”
- Bishop W. Francis Malooly of Wilmington labeled Biden’s position “simply incorrect.” He said, “The Didache, probably the earliest Christian writing apart from the New Testament, explicitly condemns abortion without exception.”
- When Bishop Joseph F. Martino of Scranton was asked what he would say to Biden, he restated his position that “No Catholic politician who supports the culture of death should approach Holy Communion.” He added, “I will be truly vigilant on this point.”
- Bishop R. Walker Nickless of Sioux City slammed Biden

for using a “false argument to justify [his] cooperation with evil.”

- Boston Archbishop Sean Cardinal O’Malley complained that he finds it “disturbing when politicians and others try to dismiss us [the bishops] as people with merely an ecclesiastical or religious sectarian point of view or opinion.”
- Bishop John Ricard of Tallahassee-Pensacola said Biden’s position indicated “a profound disconnection from [his] human and personal obligation to protect the weakest and most innocent among us: the child in the womb.”
- Bishop Edward Slattery of Tulsa blasted Biden for his “erroneous beliefs” about the beginning of life and for creating a “division” between “privacy and social responsibility” that was “tenuous.”
- Archbishop Donald Wuerl of Washington chastised Biden for not recognizing that “When life begins is not a matter of faith, but a matter of science.”

These 15 bishops are not alone. Prior to the “Meet the Press” fiasco, Biden was banned by his own bishop from speaking in Catholic schools. In 2006, Wilmington Bishop Michael A. Saltarelli also intervened to stop a building that was to be named after Biden at the Catholic high school he attended. In 2008, he said that if Biden were to become Vice President, he would still be barred from speaking at Catholic schools.

Subsequent to his “Meet the Press” interview, Biden was told in 2010 by Bishop Emeritus Henry Gracida of Corpus Christi that he “crossed the line as a Catholic” when he lobbied for a pro-abortion law in Kenya. Referring to Biden’s two aneurysms, the bishop said, “Perhaps God, who knows whether or not Biden’s brain was permanently damaged by his brain surgery, will not judge him too harshly, but the Church, which does not have that kind of knowledge should certainly speak out and reprimand him.”

The record is clear: there is absolutely no comparison between

the Catholic standing of Rep. Paul Ryan and Vice President Joe Biden. Biden's public defiance of Catholic teachings has gotten him into hot water with the bishops. Ryan, on the other hand, has never been punished by the bishops, and has indeed won the plaudits of many.

RECONSIDERING THE DALLAS CHARTER

June Catalyst 2011

Fr. Michael P. Orsi

The following recounts what happened to an innocent priest from New Jersey in the wake of the bishops' conference that took place in 2002. Just a few months after it was exposed that the Boston Archdiocese was deeply involved in a cover-up of priestly sexual abuse, the bishops assembled in Dallas. The June meeting was held in a hostile environment: calls for quick and lasting reforms were made from many quarters, and the media had a field day with it. While much good came out of the meeting, it is clear now that on some very important matters, there was a rush to judgment. Nothing was more hastily considered than the due process rights of accused priests. One of those victims was Msgr. Bill McCarthy.

Justice demands that the guilty pay, but it also demands that the innocent not suffer. On June 15-18, the bishops will meet in Seattle, and one of the items they are expected to address is the issue of accused priests and fairness in dealing with them. It is only fitting that the documented case of Msgr. McCarthy be given due consideration. Sadly, he is not alone.

Bill Donohue

Monsignor William McCarthy is a retired priest from the Diocese of Paterson, New Jersey. After a stellar, four-decade pastoral career, he is a priest in good standing. However, for almost five years he wasn't. In *The Conspiracy: An Innocent Priest, A True Story*, McCarthy recounts the ordeal that resulted from a false accusation that he abused two young girls.

A 2003 complaint—made anonymously some 23 years after the incidents were alleged to have occurred—subjected McCarthy to the provisions of the *Dallas Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, enacted by the United States bishops in 2002 to address the highly publicized and damaging reports of child abuse. He is straightforward in his negative assessment of this draconian measure. He also criticizes the ineptitude of some bishops, the unchecked bureaucracy of diocesan chancery offices, the vendettas carried on by some of the laity against priests, the corruption of some law enforcement officers, and the arduous process and long wait faced by priests seeking justice from the Church. Hop to laicize him immediately. Instead, the future pope ordered a canonical trial at which McCarthy was completely exonerated.

Some of the situations addressed in this book are chilling. About the vindictive nature of some people who have a gripe (real or imagined) against a priest, McCarthy writes:

“Leaders of even simple ordinary positions such as pastors of local churches are not without their adversaries who will go to any extent to hurt them. During the ‘pedophile’ eruption in the USA, the media was inundated with countless accusations of priests. People were bombarded with this phenomena, it was in the ‘air’ as it were. Consequently, anyone with a grudge against a priest was motivated to seize the opportunity to make a hit.”

The motive of an accuser (or a purported witness) should be thoroughly investigated as part of the inquiry process whenever an allegation arises. Yet, this is rarely considered a top priority. Instead, ever since the Boston debacle caused by Cardinal Bernard Law's mismanagement put the issue of recidivist abusers in the nation's headlines, accused priests are automatically presumed guilty by their bishops, with very little scrutiny of those making the accusations.

The judgment of guilt is generally affirmed in the court of public opinion, since the priest has already been removed from his ministry. Out-of-court payoffs to plaintiffs, which have become a common practice, exacerbate the problem. People assume that the exchange of money automatically proves there was something wrong, creating a no-win situation even for a priest who is ultimately found to be innocent.

Therefore, unless incontrovertible evidence can be shown that abuse occurred, each case should be litigated aggressively by the priest's diocese (this is as true in the case of dead priests). The system, as it stands now, encourages false accusations, has led to bankruptcy in many dioceses, and left the Church, its bishops and priests more vulnerable than ever.

McCarthy paints a dreary portrait of his former bishop and chancery staff that is, unfortunately, all too common. Instead of an organization guided by Christian principle, we see a group of confused and desperate people whose behavior illustrates such key insights from business management as, "Personnel is policy," and "Like brings on like." Concerned only with self-protection, they are only too willing to throw a priest "under the bus." As McCarthy explains:

"In my case, my former bishop writes an official letter to the Pope demanding my immediate laicization, ex officio; this time not even a trial or personal discussion of any kind. No recourse of any sort was allowed me. No communication was possible—I was shunned by the diocese and my brother priests.

My name erased from the official records. My life was essentially evaporated.”

Infuriating as it may be, Canon Law enables bishops to act as little potentates in their dioceses. Inadequate bishops, fearful of public opinion, tend to isolate themselves from those who think differently than they do, and confront issues in a dictatorial manner. Bishops who allowed known serial pedophiles to continue in the priesthood should have been removed. So too those who sacrificed innocent priests for expediency, hiding behind the non-binding *Dallas Charter*. But the Vatican has no mechanism for removing them (even for evaluating them), unless immoral behavior, heresy, or financial mismanagement can be proven. And so, many of them continue to exercise their office in good standing. No wonder the outrage!

It seems to be part of our psychological make-up to trust law enforcement personnel and think of them as good people. We also tend to believe that telling the truth will clear us of an allegation. McCarthy jarringly demonstrates that this trust is misplaced. He chronicles the emotional abuse suffered at the hands of a police detective, and discusses the use of such dubious investigative practices as a rigged lie detector test and proposing “suppressed memories” to alleged victims. He recounts the testimony given by a police detective at his canonical trial:

“Then [the detective] testified—the one who began this whole sham. The one who convinced the girls that ‘Father McCarthy molested you when you were children,’ even though they denied having any memories whatsoever of such a thing happening. He invoked the technique prevalent in the seventies called ‘suppressed memory.’ He had said to them, ‘You don’t remember it because it was so painful and awful that you just buried it...but he did molest you.’ After several intense barrages at them, they allowed themselves to become convinced those awful things actually happened to them.”

McCarthy rightly advises any priest facing a sexual abuse charge to get a civil and canon lawyer before answering any questions, either from the bishop or from the police—especially the police. He notes how the conviction of an abusive priest is viewed as a feather in a police officer's cap—career-wise.

So much is said about abuse victims—and rightly so—but little is said about the priests falsely accused, either those living or those who have died. Least discussed of all is the truth that, in some cases, Satan is acting on the minds and imaginations of those people who lend themselves to the task of destroying an innocent priest. The Evil One knows that to cripple the priesthood is to strike at the heart of the Church. That's why every effort must be made to protect the innocent, for their good and for the good of the Body of Christ.

McCarthy shows his readers the entire process, civil and canonical, which he endured. His story is an invaluable education for those not familiar with the usual course of events involved in these cases. He says:

“Unquestionably there needs to be positive meaningful change to the ecclesiastical tribunal system. They have never been truly challenged. It is time for priests around the world to speak out for major reform. It needs to change so that innocent priests like me can get a fair shake—and I'm going to keep fighting until it is done. If I don't keep up the struggle, my life's work will be in vain.”

McCarthy acknowledges the importance of his lay friends and brother priests who supported him during his long ordeal. They were, he says, essential to his survival. He praises his new bishop for treating him with dignity and respect, and reports a reconciliation with his now-retired bishop and the Vicar-General who processed the case against him. McCarthy says he has forgiven all those involved in his crucifixion but, he

says, he will never forget. Nor will anyone who reads McCarthy's account.

The Conspiracy is a combination diary, spiritual journal, and exercise in self-analysis, and it includes a bibliography of other books McCarthy found helpful during his ordeal. It is self-published, and so doesn't have all the polish of a work edited and produced by a major publishing house. In a sense, that enhances its effectiveness. This is a raw account of one man's ordeal, capturing both the torment inflicted on an innocent priest and the joy of his vindication.

Despite the successful outcome of his case, the physical and psychological wounds McCarthy sustained have left permanent scars. Yet the depth of spiritual growth which he reports has enabled him to identify with the innocently crucified Lord. Perhaps that's the most important point the book makes.

This story should be read by every priest and every lay person, because the priest scandal is a sad episode in the history of the Church which effects everyone. McCarthy has performed an invaluable service by giving us his story in the form of an insightful memoir. His account puts the sensationalism surrounding the crisis in a different light, bringing into focus those priests who are being abused by an unjust system. And he offers words of hope to any of his fellows who may be experiencing the pain he endured:

"Finally, may I dare say, if there is one message I want to leave from this journal, it is if there is a priest out there who is falsely accused, I want you to know, that you are not alone, and with perseverance and hopefully with patient endurance, you can make it to the other side of darkness."

Fr. Michael P. Orsi is Chaplain and Research Fellow in Law and Religion, Ave Maria Law School.

Partial Transcript of “The View”

Whoopi Goldberg: Now, Congressman Patrick Kennedy said he was asked by a Rhode Island bishop to stop receiving communion because of his stance on abortion. The Church has been sparring with lawmakers about restrictions in the health care bill. But, is this the right tactic to do? To say that you cannot come and take communion? When on one hand...

Joy Behar: You know, Teddy, his father, Teddy Kennedy was pro-choice. And Teddy Kennedy was divorced. And they all, the bishops and whatever all went to his funeral. He was not denied communion. So this all seems political to me. I don't get it exactly.

Sherri Shepherd: He was asked not to take communion in 2007. So why is he bringing it up now?

Joy Behar: Why is he bringing it up now? Because he's running for office.

Elisabeth Hasselbeck: Somebody brought it up again. This is my home state. I've done breast cancer walks with Patrick Kennedy before. And you know, I'm not, uh, the Catholic Church in terms of communion, I remember one of my friends who got divorced, they asked her not to go up and take communion. And for me, communion is the opportunity for someone to take part in and enjoy the sacrament as well, so I never, even from a young age, I never appreciated it when someone was not allowed to go up and receive communion with the rest of the church.

Joy Behar: You're supposed to be without sin.

Sherri Shepherd: But who is without sin?

Joy Behar: What you're supposed to do as a Catholic, you go to confession. You get the absolution and then you can receive communion. That's the way it works. But it doesn't always work that way. I mean, they don't allow divorce. Yet, if you're married 25 years and have 5 kids and you have a lot of money, you can get an annulment. So, I mean, there is a lot of hypocrisy in every religion.

Whoopi Goldberg: I thought in the Catholic Church, that in the Bible, at least as I remember it and I could be fuzzy on this, but I thought that God pretty much says to you, you don't have to talk to anybody but me. You don't have to talk to anybody but me. And I'm the one. I'm the one you go to. You don't need a liaison. Now, great, if you happen to go into the Church, but basically your relationship with God is personal and, and, very clear. So I don't think anybody is supposed to tell you what you can't participate in. I don't remember that as being part of the deal.

Barbara Walters: It's interesting that he's bringing it up.

Elisabeth Hasselbeck: Political season.

Barbara Walters: Yeah, and it is certainly for Catholic's...

Whoopi Goldberg: Do you know why he brought it up?

Barbara Walters: Well, I don't know why he brought it up.

Whoopi Goldberg: Because they recently clashed over the Church statement that they won't back the health care overall without tighter restrictions on abortion. That's why it coming up now.

Barbara Walters: So there is a political overtone to it.