

Paul Kengor: The ACLU's religious ignorance

Bill in the News (TribLIVE): The ACLU of Massachusetts is challenging a decision by the city of Quincy to erect two statues of Catholic saints outside the public safety building. The saints are Florian and Michael the Archangel, the patron saints of firefighters and police officers, respectively.

As Donohue notes, the ACLU knows religious statues adorn buildings in the nation's capital, including the Capitol, Supreme Court and Library of Congress, as well as public buildings throughout Massachusetts.

So why object to these statues? The ACLU explains in a letter to the Quincy city council: "the contemplated statue of Saint Michael ... depicts a figure stepping on the neck of a demon. Such violent imagery is particularly abhorrent in light of the murder of George Floyd and other acts of police brutality throughout the country." [READ MORE HERE](#)

NORTHWESTERN OFFERS ANTI-CHRISTIAN COURSE

The following letter explains why there is a problem at Northwestern.

March 27, 2025

Dean Adrian Randolph

Northwestern University
Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences
1918 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60208

Dear Dean Randolph:

It has been brought to my attention that a faculty member in the Department of Religious Studies at the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Lily Stewart, is using her class, "Introduction to Christianity," to engage in a frontal assault on the Catholic Church. How do I know this? The syllabus is a screed designed to distort and denigrate Christianity, thus feeding the appetite of anti-Christian bigots.

Having spent many years in higher education, and having served on the board of directors of the National Association of Scholars, I am well aware that academic freedom must be given great latitude. I am also aware that there is a difference between academic freedom and academic malpractice. What Stewart is doing is representative of the latter.

To illustrate my objections, simply compare the course outline of "Introduction to Christianity" to that of "Introduction to Islam."

Would not Muslim scholars object if the outline for the introductory class were to ask, "How many ways are there to be a Muslim? What counts as Islam, what doesn't, and who ultimately gets to decide?" Just substitute Christian for Muslim, and Christianity for Islam, and that is what the introductory class outline says about Christianity.

It should be noted that the introductory course outline on Islam is exemplary.

When we consider the syllabus, this issue gets much worse.

The syllabus for "Introduction to Christianity" says the class

“will explore histories of Christian colonialism, bigotry, liberation, and dissent.” Indeed, it says, Jesus “has been at the forefront of projects of colonialism, violence, and subjugation, but also peace, liberation, and revolution.”

If this were the way Islam and Muhammad were treated in the introductory course, would not Muslims find this objectionable?

Students are also put on notice. “Much of the material and topics that we are working with in this class include racist, ableist, Islamophobic, anti-semitic, transphobic, misogynist, homophobic, self-harm, murder, and sexual assault.”

In other words, brace yourself in class when I discuss the historical contributions of the Catholic Church.

Imagine again, if the course on Islam were to portray the religion and its adherents as an evil force. What would Northwestern do when students and Muslim scholars complained?

I have written many books, one of which is *Why Catholicism Matters*. It details the role the Catholic Church has played in maintaining the manuscripts from Antiquity, the founding of the first universities, the pivotal role it played in the Scientific Revolution, and the seminal role it played in virtually every technological breakthrough in history.

The Church’s contributions to art, architecture, and music are legendary. Moreover, its promotion of natural law and natural rights made possible the eventual abolition of slavery; St. Patrick was the first person in history to publicly condemn slavery. The work of nuns founding schools, foster care homes, asylums, hospitals, hospices, and the like, is historic.

It is to be expected that professors will develop an approach to their discipline that differs from that of others in their field. That is how it should be. But we are not talking about legitimate avenues of discourse or research. We are talking

about a frontal assault on a world religion.

Those who engage in vitriolic caricatures of demographic groups, be they religious, ethnic, racial, or sexual, may find expression in social media, but they have no business in academia.

If there are some who read this letter who are not convinced that Professor Stewart has crossed the line, consider that there is a depiction of Jesus in the syllabus, with the following inscription:

Hey girl.

*How about I turn that water into wine,
we put on some slow jams and just cuddle?*

#Hot.Jesus

This is not scholarship. It is hate speech with a scholarly veneer.

I look forward to hearing from you about this matter.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

cc: Michael H. Schill, President

Peter M. Barris, Chair, Board of Trustees

Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Chair, Department of Religious Studies

Lily Stewart, Professor Religious Studies

Barbara Gellman-Danley, President, Higher Education Commission

'Hot Jesus': Northwestern class is 'anti-Christian bigotry,' Catholic leader says

Bill in the News (The College Fix): Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, criticized the course in a statement given to The Fix. He also shared with The Fix a copy of the letter he plans to send Northwestern University leadership today, demanding answers about the class.

"The syllabus is a screed designed to distort and denigrate Christianity, thus feeding the worst appetite of anti-Christian bigots," he stated. "Indeed, it even includes a graph of 'Hot Jesus' that is downright obscene." [READ MORE HERE](#)

SATANISTS ARE SICK PUPPIES

Bill Donohue

The Satanic Grotto is not a well-known Satanic group but it is making a media splash in Kansas. On March 28, it is scheduled to hold a "Black Mass" on the grounds of the Capitol building. Christian protesters will be present and the police are gearing up for the event.

It's not just Topeka that is the site of Satanic activity. St. Patrick's Church in Wichita was recently vandalized: statues,

candles and glass fixtures were smashed, a Satanic website was inscribed on a wall, and an American flag was burned. It is uncertain whether the young male suspect acted alone or was part of a Satanic group.

A “Black Mass” often consists of a celebrant dressed in black vestments, holding forth in mockery of the Catholic Mass. The participants typically use the back of a naked woman as their “altar,” and they occasionally secure a consecrated Host to desecrate.

This ceremony has a long history, extending back centuries. One of its most famous proponents was the Marquis de Sade, the 18th century writer and madman whose obscene portrayals of Catholicism are legendary. Blasphemy is too weak a word to describe his work.

Satanism is often associated with Devil worship, and at one time manifested itself as witchcraft. Some Satanists see themselves as atheists who put their entire trust in reason; others perceive Satan to be real.

Satanism is spiking internationally, and it appears to flourish at Christmas and Easter. To what extent it is responsible for Christian persecution—the most prevalent form of oppression in the world—is unknown, but to say that the Devil’s hand is not at work is risible.

Today, there are two main branches of Satanism in the United States: The Church of Satan and The Satanic Temple (TST); they have no use for each other. The former was founded in 1966, and the latter in 2013. Both insist they do not believe Satan is a real being. The more influential of the two is clearly TST.

TST, unlike The Church of Satan, is officially recognized as a tax-exempt church by the IRS. Predictably, it is headquartered in Salem, Massachusetts, and has local chapters in parts of the country; its competitor has no headquarters and no

chapters. Most important, TST is a politically charged force that promotes abortion and gay marriage.

It is actually an understatement to say TST promotes abortion—it is obsessed with it. There is no issue that absorbs more of its time than abortion. It has even founded facilities that do nothing but kill kids.

On February 14, 2023, it opened “the world’s first religious abortion clinic” in New Mexico; it claims to have paid for over 100 abortions. More recently it founded a second abortion clinic in Virginia. It says its work proves its commitment to “compassion, empathy, and justice,” though the children who were killed might beg to differ.

It has a shop that sells abortion apparel, flags, pins, mugs, and the like. Its most famous item is “The Sam Alito’s Mom’s Satanic Abortion Clinic Unisex T-Shirt,” a reference to the Supreme Court Justice who wrote the majority opinion overturning *Roe v. Wade*. Its most despicable item is a cartoonist depiction of Alito’s mother saying, “If only abortion was legal when I was pregnant.”

TST proves that Satanic groups don’t have to literally believe in Satan in order to do his work. After all, to celebrate the intentional killing of unborn babies is something only devotees of Lucifer would do. Indeed, it takes really sick puppies to get their jollies by dancing on the graves of innocents.

ACLU sues West Virginia for

grant to Catholic trades college

Bill in the News (The College Fix): "In Everson v. Board of Education (1947), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that students who attended religious schools (in this instance they were Catholic schools) could receive public transportation without violating the Constitution," Donohue stated. "The high court ruled that the law had a 'public purpose,' which was the safety of the students." [READ MORE HERE](#)

FBI DOCUMENTS ON CATHOLIC PROBE NEED ANSWERS

The following letter explains why Catholics deserve to know why the FBI launched a probe of Catholics under the Biden administration.

March 24, 2025

Hon. Jim Jordan
Chairman
House Committee on the Judiciary
2056 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3504

Dear Chairman Jordan:

I am delighted that you issued a series of subpoenas to the FBI last month seeking documents on a number of serious matters, and that you recently obtained them. Of interest to

the Catholic League are those documents pertaining to the FBI's probe of Catholics. It appears there was an anti-Catholic cell group in the Agency during the Biden administration.

In 2023, I wrote ten news releases on this subject: four were open letters to you; one was a letter I wrote to FBI Director Christopher Wray; the rest were standard news releases. I issued three more statements in 2024, two of which were open letters—one to Wray and one to you.

As the president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization, I am committed to getting to the bottom of this issue. To that end, I would like to restate a series of questions that I previously posed to you on this subject; the last one is new.

1. On what basis did the FBI conclude that these Catholics [Radical-Traditional Catholics] warranted a probe? Do they have a history of violence? If so, where is the evidence? If not, why were they singled out?

2. On what basis did the FBI decide it was necessary to enlist "mainline Catholics" to spy on their fellow parishioners? Where is the evidence that ordinary practicing Catholics pose a security threat to the United States or to other law-abiding Americans? How common is it for FBI agents to infiltrate houses of worship—of any religion—employing "tripwire sources"?

Inspector General Michael Horowitz issued his report on this issue in 2024. He began by noting that the Richmond Field Office examined "a purported link between Racially or Ethnically Motivated Extremists (RMVEs) and 'Radical Traditionalist Catholic' (RTC) ideology." It was concluded that though the probe of Catholics "lacked sufficient evidence" to establish a relationship between the extremists and RTC ideology, there was no evidence of malice. It was also

concluded that FBI Analysts “incorrectly conflated the subjects’ religious views with their RMVE activities...:”

*3. This begs the question: Why did the Analysts think there was a relationship in the first place? It is one thing to concede that there are racial and ethnic extremists in every religious **and** secular organization; it is quite another to assume a nexus between a mainstream religious organization and violence, especially when the grounds for making such an assumption are spurious.*

The report said that the entire probe was based on *one* person, Defendant A. Not only was he identified as a violent bigoted thug, he did not even attend a Catholic church—he went to some breakaway church.

4. How could FBI Analysts embark on an open-ended investigation of mainline Catholics on the basis of an ethically compromised person who was not even Catholic? Was he used as a pretext to go after Catholics?

Hope this is helpful. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

IS THE ACLU CRAZY?

Bill Donohue

This article originally appeared in the [American Spectator](#) on March 20, 2025. It is an extended version of a piece Bill wrote earlier this week.

If there were a proposal to erect a statue of St. Michael the Archangel on a municipal building, it would be understandable if some objected. However, it would not be understandable to object on the grounds that a depiction of St. Michael stepping on the neck of the Devil ineluctably conjures up images of George Floyd. But that is exactly the position of the ACLU of Massachusetts.

Having authored a Ph.D. dissertation, two books, and a monograph on the ACLU, I am convinced that most of its board members and senior officials harbor a deep animus against religion. Nothing bothers them more than Christianity, especially Catholicism. This is much more than a phobia: religion is seen as a threat to liberty.

When the ACLU was founded in 1920 by Roger Baldwin (the ACLU today falsely claims that Baldwin was one of 10 who founded the organization), all the provisions of the First Amendment, save for religious liberty, were listed as part of their ten objectives. That was not an oversight: Baldwin was an atheist.

Still, the reasoning of the ACLU of Massachusetts is off-the-charts, even by ACLU standards. It is challenging a decision made by the mayor of Quincy to erect two statues of Catholic saints outside the Quincy Public Safety Building. Mayor Thomas Koch chose St. Florian and St. Michael the Archangel; they are the patron saints of firefighters and police officers, respectively. The ACLU says the statues violate the separation of church and state.

The ACLU is well aware that religious statues adorn many buildings in the nation's capital, including the Capitol Building, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, the Lincoln Memorial, and other public buildings. Even in Massachusetts, the Boston Public Library features the outstanding work of John Singer Sargent: his religious murals, including "Madonna of Sorrows," are classic. At the State House, there are statues and paintings of famous Christians,

clergy, and laity alike.

But none of this is enough to allay the fears of the ACLU.

In the ACLU's letter to Mayor Koch and the Quincy City Council, it said that "we note that the contemplated statue of Saint Michael is not only troubling ... it depicts a figure stepping on the neck of a demon. Such violent imagery is particularly abhorrent in light of the murder of George Floyd and other acts of police brutality throughout the country."

In other words, the revered saint who battled Satan and who is known as the guardian prince of Israel – he stood ready to defend God's chosen people – reminds the ACLU of a serial violent criminal who resisted arrest and was subdued by the cops; he had four times the lethal dose of fentanyl in his system. Maybe if St. Michael had been depicted as engaging in dialogue with the Devil, instead of crushing his head, the ACLU would have applauded.

Would Baldwin have agreed with the ACLU? Only in part.

When I interviewed him in his home in New York City in 1978, we discussed an array of issues. He was cordial and forthcoming. But when it came to religion, he was an extremist. Here is an exchange I will never forget (See my book, [The Politics of the ACLU](#): Transaction Press, 1985).

Donohue: The ACLU has even gone so far as to deny the right of people to voluntarily take the time during the day, as a schoolchild, to say a prayer.

Baldwin: Not on school time.

Donohue: Well, whose rights are being infringed upon if there is a silent prayer voluntarily said by a student?

Baldwin: If they don't say anything? You mean if they don't–

Donohue: Right. Are you afraid they are going to proselytize

the rest of the class?

Baldwin: Well, they've tried to get around it. They've tried to get around it even further than you by calling it meditation.

Donohue: What's wrong with that?

Baldwin: You don't say anything about God or religion or anything. I suppose you can get by with that but it's a subterfuge, because the implication is that you're meditating about the hereafter or God or something.

Donohue: Well, what's wrong with that? Doesn't a person have the right to do that? Or to meditate about popcorn for that matter?

Baldwin: I suppose that – it sounds very silly to me because it looks like an obvious evasion of the constitutional provision.

Back to St. Michael. Baldwin surely would have opposed erecting the statue, but he would have done so on conventional church and state grounds. Even if he were apprised of the George Floyd incident, he clearly would not have equated St. Michael stepping on the head of the Devil with a cop kneeling on Floyd. I spent many hours with him. He may have been an extremist on church and state, but he was not crazy.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AFFIRMED; ANTI-CHRISTIAN BIAS TO END

On February 6, President Donald Trump announced that he is forming a new Presidential Commission on Religious Liberty. To

accomplish this goal, he appointed Attorney General Pam Bondi to chair a task force to “eradicate anti-Christian bias.”

“The mission of this task force will be to immediately halt all forms of anti-Christian targeting and discrimination within the federal government,” Trump said.

Trump’s executive order was pointed. He accused the Biden administration of ignoring the violence, theft and arson against “Catholic churches, charities, and pro-life centers.” He specifically cited the FBI’s attack on “radical-traditionalist” Catholics; they were seen as a domestic threat.

“My Administration will not tolerate anti-Christian weaponization of government or unlawful conduct targeting Christians.” Trump pulled no punches nailing his predecessor.

“The Biden Department of Education sought to repeal religious-liberty protections of faith-based organizations on college campuses. The Biden Equal Employment Opportunity Commission sought to force Christians to affirm radical transgender ideology against their faith. And the Biden Department of Health and Human Services sought to drive Christians who do not conform to certain beliefs on sexual orientation and gender ideology out of the foster-care system. The Biden team declared March 31, 2024—Easter Sunday—as ‘Transgender Day of Visibility.’”

The task force will review the activities of all executive departments and agencies, seeking to purge any vestiges of bigotry against Christians. Information gleaned from this review will be widely shared; we will make good use of it. Periodic reports will be published and a final report will be given before the task force expires in two years.

Of great interest to us, the task force will “solicit information and ideas from a broad range of individuals and groups.”

More than any other organization in the nation, the Catholic League has documented anti-Christian prejudice and discrimination. There are other Catholic advocacy organizations, but none has a website chock full of data on this issue that can even come close to what we have detailed.

As soon as the executive order was issued, we started collecting a huge amount of information. Indeed, there is not a single issue mentioned by Trump that we have not led the way in combating. Our list of anti-Christian bias committed by the federal government is extensive.

The scourge of Christian bashing, which Catholics, in particular, have had to endure is astounding. While some Republicans have contributed to it, most of the attacks have come from the Democrats. We have the evidence and we will be happy to share it with the Trump administration.

POPE IS FAILING

When we went to press, Pope Francis was being hospitalized for double pneumonia and was not doing well. All scheduled events were cancelled. At 88, he appears to be failing.

He has long had respiratory problems. As a young man he had part of one lung removed due to an infection, leaving him susceptible to respiratory illnesses. More recently, he has appeared breathless in public.

Already there is wide speculation about his successor, but from what we learned when Pope Benedict XVI resigned, much of it is idle chatter. Those who will vote in the conclave are cardinals under the age of 80. There are 253 cardinals and 138 will partake in the voting process. Francis has appointed

approximately 80 percent of them.

We looked at media reports on who was likely to succeed Benedict and only one credible source mentioned the eventual winner, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio. But even then, it was said that “His ‘moment’ seems to be over.” Most Vatican observers mentioned Cardinal Angelo Scola as the most likely to succeed Benedict.

There are those Catholics who say we need to continue the legacy of Pope Francis and select another pope just like him. Others say we need to push the pendulum the other way, correcting the “progressive” drift that Francis espoused. Either way, there is only a limited amount of change that the Holy Father can deliver.

Our prayers are with the pope. We also pray for his successor.

CULTURAL CORRECTION LONG OVERDUE

William A. Donohue

Economists often note that the stock market occasionally goes into spasms, or sudden downturns that gets everyone nervous. But, they caution, such changes are often necessary: they amount to a market correction. Cultures change as well: wild swings of the pendulum typically abet a strong reaction.

We are now witnessing a cultural correction. But it is folly to think that all of those responsible for our cultural rot have gotten the memo. In other words, the Trump effect is real, but it would be foolish to overestimate the cultural correction.

It is gratifying to learn that those responsible for woke cultural ideas are on the defensive. DEI is now being panned in places few would have thought possible a year or two ago. Critical race theory is losing support, and elites are no longer lapping up to Black Lives Matter, a thoroughly discredited flash-in-the-pan entity. Compassion for those who entered the country illegally is now shifting to compassion for the victims of migrant criminal behavior. Those who succumbed to pressure from the Biden administration and engaged in censorship now regret doing so.

A New York Times/Ipsos poll released in February found that when Americans are asked what the Democrats stand for, most of them listed abortion, LGBTQ issues and climate change. The survey also found that most people are concerned about bread and butter issues and migrants crashing our border, not the ones Democrats are excited about. In other words, the Dems are seriously out of touch with most Americans. Look for some to change their ways.

Are these changes genuine? Some are, but many are not. No matter, even unprincipled shifts that move the right way are worthy of some applause.

While it is true that many members of the ruling class—the senior decision-makers in government, corporations, the media, education, the entertainment industry, and the like—are rethinking their political preferences, many others are not. They are lying in wait. It would be more accurate to say that some elites are in retreat than it would be to conclude that they have turned over a new leaf.

The New York Times recently slung arrows at Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg for saying he is putting an end to censorial Facebook policies. The esteemed “newspaper of record” said his company suffers from “a fundamental hollowness at its core,” and went on to berate him for caving into Trump’s influence. The Times was not altogether wrong. It does suggest a less

than principled stance, so there is an element of hollowness to Zuckerberg's moral compass. But at least he is not tone deaf.

Can Trump change the culture? To some extent he already has. He played a major role in putting the final nails in the DEI coffin (diversity, equity and inclusion). He has also turned the entire transgender industry upside down, putting an end to the federal role in what is surely the greatest child abuse scandal in American history. Mutilating genitals, chemical castration, puberty blockers—this is a shameful chapter in the history of the medical profession.

Trump has even scored overseas, beckoning Hamas to release the hostages. No sooner had he slapped Mexico with tariffs when our southern neighbor pledged to send 10,000 troops to seal our border. This is great news, but expectations of a glacial shift in the culture are wrongheaded.

It is true that culture affects every aspect of society, but it is also true that other sectors, such as the political and economic, affect the cultural landscape. Trump was elected in large part because the American people were fed up with excess: excessive inflation; excessive numbers of migrants crashing our border; excessive rights given to the accused and the convicted; excessive deference to the medical profession (e.g., Covid policies and transgenderism).

Trump can reverse some of these conditions, but the forces of resistance must not be discounted.

Most of those who work in higher education will do all they can to subvert Trump's agenda. The teachers unions who govern elementary and secondary education are not going to change their stripes. Neither will those who work in Hollywood. Many on Wall Street are not on his side—they gave lavishly to Harris. The mainstream media is almost as corrupt today as it was yesterday. Left-wing activist organizations will double

down. A new survey found that 42 percent of federal government managers in Washington, D.C. intend to work against the Trump administration. And disdain for our Judeo-Christian heritage is deeply embedded in elite and radical quarters.

To be sure, there will be progress, and that is because of the pressure being exerted from the bottom up. It was the average Joe who voted for Trump, not the ruling class.

It behooves those of us who want to push the pendulum back to a state of normalcy to be vigilant, keeping a close eye on those who say they are turning over a new leaf. As for those who won't budge an inch, they need to be outed and defeated. We plan to do our part.