

POPE ON GAYS DRIVES MEDIA WILD



Bill Donohue comments on media reaction to remarks made by Pope Francis on homosexual priests:

The pope speaks about materialism for one straight week in Brazil before millions of people, and his formal comments garner 74 news stories on Lexis-Nexis. He speaks off-the-cuff about homosexual priests before a handful of reporters on the airplane going back to Rome and his remarks trigger 220 news stories. One might logically conclude that the pope broke some new ground with his comments on gay priests. But he didn't.

When asked about homosexual priests, Pope Francis said, "If a person is gay and seeks God and has good will, who am I to judge him?" He added that "The problem is not having this orientation. We must be brothers. The problem is lobbying by this orientation...."

Pope Benedict XVI, responding to the homosexual scandal in the Catholic Church (one more time—less than 5 percent of the cases of priestly sexual abuse involved pedophilia), did not make it impossible for gays to enter the priesthood; he simply made it more difficult for those who were practicing gays to enter. Pope Francis said nothing to contradict what his predecessor said. And by addressing the gay lobby, he was clearly speaking out against what the late Father Andrew Greeley called the "lavender mafia."

About ten years ago, I was interviewed by David France for a book he was writing, *Our Fathers*, about gays in the Catholic

Church. Here is a selection of what I said: "I don't think most Catholics would care if their priest is gay or straight, to tell the truth. I think the issue for them is whether he can live up to his vow of celibacy. I'd take a chaste gay priest any day over a promiscuous straight one."

France was ecstatic, much the way reporters are now with the pope. In both instances, their eudemonia is a reflection of the way they stereotype orthodox Catholics.