

PRIEST ENVY ENGULFS MEDIA

On four Easter weekend talk shows, Catholic leaders were asked to discuss current events. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick was interviewed on March 29 on the Bloomberg show, "Political Capital with Al Hunt"; Cardinal Timothy Dolan was interviewed on Sunday by Bob Schieffer on the CBS show, "Face the Nation," as well as by George Stephanopoulos on the ABC show, "This Week"; and Cardinal Donald Wuerl was interviewed by Chris Wallace on Fox News.

Same-sex marriage was the subject of discussion in all four interviews, not surprising given that the U.S. Supreme Court just finished hearing oral arguments on two gay marriage cases. Bringing up women's ordination, however (which Hunt and Schieffer did), had nothing to do with current events. Schieffer was the worst: one of his questions managed to touch on the homosexual scandal, abortion and celibacy (as well as gay marriage and women's ordination).

Moreover, unlike marriage, which is a public policy issue, gender roles in the Catholic clergy are as much the business of outsiders as are the absence of female clergy among Orthodox Jews, Muslims, et al. Yet only Catholics are asked about this issue.

To demonstrate how engulfed the media are with this subject, consider the following: so far this year, a LexisNexis search of U.S. newspaper articles that mention either women's ordination, or women priests, in the Catholic Church turns up 426 articles; in all of last year, there were 323. Similarly, there have been 63 transcripts on this subject over the last three months; in 2012, there was a grand total of 21.

To say that the papal transition accounts for this wide gap is incomplete: it also reveals media bias. Let's face it, it's

not rank-and-file Catholics who suffer from priest envy; it's a small dwindling number of Catholics, and a politically motivated segment of non-Catholics.