

ROGUE CATHOLICS UNWELCOME IN DETROIT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Detroit Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron's rebuff of this weekend's meeting of the American Catholic Council at Detroit's Cobo Hall:

It is with good reason that Archbishop Vigneron has warned local priests and deacons not to participate in the American Catholic Council event: many of those who will attend the event, and those who are on record supporting it, reject core teachings of the Catholic Church. Indeed, this loose confederation of Catholic senior citizens has long been in open rebellion with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

Scheduled for consideration at the June 11-12 event is a "Catholic Bill of Rights and Responsibilities." It begins by saying, "To be human is to have rights. These include life and freedom, together with rights necessary to sustain them: shelter and nourishment, health and work, education and leisure. None of these rights is absolute."

This is incorrect: the right to life is absolute. The Founders knew this, which is why Jefferson wrote that it was inalienable. Moreover, there is no such thing as a right to leisure, though it is revealing that the octogenarians are inclined to think so. Most important, since when have these folks become pro-life?

It is similarly incorrect to say that "Distinctions between clergy and laity are functional and arbitrary." They are indeed profound and substantive. But this does raise an interesting question: If there are no real differences between the clergy and the laity, then why do these dissidents lobby so hard to open the ranks of the clergy to married priests and women?

Perhaps most telling, the rebels speak of the right to

“participate in a Eucharistic community,” as well as the “fullness of the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.” Ironically, it is precisely because these activists are not in full communion with the Catholic Church that Archbishop Vigneron is not rolling out a welcome mat.