

SHOULD BIDEN BE GIVEN COMMUNION?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the controversy over President Biden receiving Communion:

Should President Joe Biden be given Communion? That's not for the Catholic League to say.

Our job is to defend the right of the Catholic Church to proclaim the truth, to teach the faithful and to disseminate Church teachings. We have no theology: We are a watchdog, a civil rights organization that fights defamation and discrimination. We also monitor those who seek to deceive the public or distort the Church's teachings. Importantly, we know our place and are no substitute for the bishops or the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

Do others have a right to opine on this issue? Catholics do. If this were a matter of public policy, everyone else would, too. But this is an internal Church matter, and it is therefore no one's business but that of Catholics.

David Crary of the Associated Press, with whom I have publicly differed with, wrote a very fair piece on this subject that was widely picked up by many media outlets. He said the bishops will discuss what to do about offering the president Communion when they meet in June. Fair enough. It didn't take long, however, before the Church's critics took to the keyboard.

Michelle Boorstein wrote a story for the Washington Post contending that since Biden was elected, "the increasingly loud right wing of the church has made it clear that Biden cannot continue to expand abortion rights and call himself Catholic and go unchallenged."

There is nothing “right wing” about the bishops enforcing the Church’s teachings on any subject, whether it be immigration, the death penalty, school choice or euthanasia. Nor is there anything “right wing” about addressing public figures who boast of their “devout Catholic” status while constantly undermining what the Church teaches, especially on life and death issues.

They have in-house strictures at the Washington Post, don’t they? Are they not enforced?

Boorstein teed it up for some genius at the Washington Post who tweeted about “a rising group of right-wing U.S. Catholic bishops” who are clashing with our “very Catholic” president over abortion. A website that monitors conservative thought, conwebwatch, was incensed by what the bishops are considering; they took the opportunity to rip CNSNews for allegedly “bashing” Biden over its critical coverage of the president.

Catholics for Choice, an anti-Catholic pro-abortion letterhead with no members (it is funded by left-wing foundations), issued a statement saying it “condemns U.S. Bishops for Attacking Biden on Abortion.” New York Magazine asked, “Will conservatives weaponize the Eucharist?” In the U.K., The Independent urged Biden to stand fast against the bishops; otherwise he will “let down the people who turned up for him at the ballot box.”

If these people were just voyeurs looking into the Catholic Church, that would be one thing. But they are not. They have an agenda.

Not to be mistaken, writing about this subject is one thing; using it as ammunition to whip up public opinion against the bishops is quite another. That’s exactly what is going on.

The goal is to portray Biden as a loyal son of the Church—“look, he carries rosary beads”—while defending his lust for abortion rights. In other words, those who radically

dissent from the Church's teaching on the beginning of life, which is grounded in science as well as theology, are "very Catholic" and should therefore be emulated. In short, those who reject the Church's teaching on abortion are Catholics in good standing the same way those who accept it are.

Kansas City Archbishop Joseph Naumann, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, said it best. "He [Biden] doesn't have the authority to teach what it means to be Catholic—that's our responsibility as bishops. Whether intentional or not, he's trying to usurp our authority."

If we had a Catholic president who announced that he wants to make the death penalty a more common practice, or sought to weaken the laws against racial discrimination, he would not be called "very Catholic" by those who are convinced Biden is.

As we get closer to the June meeting of the bishops, we will have much more to say about this issue. Stay tuned.