

SPINNING SURVEY RESULTS TO ATTACK BISHOPS

Catholic League president William Donohue offered the following remarks today on a new poll released by Catholics for a Free Choice:

“The purpose of this poll, authorized by the nation’s leading anti-Catholic organization, is to persuade the public that a) Catholics are not concerned about abortion b) what the bishops say doesn’t matter and c) church-going Catholics are not influenced by their religious practices. It fails on all counts.

“To begin with, the survey concludes that Catholics are more concerned about the war on terrorism and the situation in Iraq than anything else. Which makes Catholics about as remarkable as, say, Eskimos.

“The poll also says that 70 percent of Catholics say it is not very important to them what the views of the bishops are in deciding whom they should vote for. The predicate of this question is flawed: the bishops not only do not tell Catholics who to vote for, they themselves are deeply divided. And with regard to public policy issues, few are as clear-cut as abortion. For example, the bishops implore Catholics to help the poor, but how they should do so is left for individual Catholics to decide. The same is true of issues like the environment, health care, etc.

“The poll discloses that the more Catholics attend Mass, the more likely they are to vote for Bush. This is not surprising—it confirms what all the other surveys have said. But because this is greeted as bad news, the spin doctors who wrote the summary statement say that among liberal Catholics who are frequent church-goers, most of them will vote for

Kerry. What they conveniently left out is that the proportion of frequent church-goers who are liberal is quite small. Nice try.

“Frances Kissling, the director of the group that commissioned the poll, has previously said that it is her goal to ‘overthrow’ the Catholic Church. Given her latest effort, it is clear that she has her work cut out for her.”