

# **LIZ SMITH IDENTIFIES CATHOLIC, BUT NOT JEW**

In her syndicated column of June 30, gossip columnist Liz Smith said that the affair between Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky reminded her of the affair between John F. Kennedy and Judith Exner. Noting that Smith identified JFK's lover as "the Catholic Judith Exner," Catholic League president William Donohue opined as follows:

"We're disappointed that the lesbian Liz Smith didn't identify the Jew Monica Lewinsky the way she did the Catholic Judith Exner."

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## **HBO SPECIAL ON "CELIBACY" MALIGNS CHURCH**

The HBO series "America Undercover" aired a special documentary, "Celibacy," on June 28. It purports to be an examination of celibacy as it is practiced in the world's religions. After a cursory glance at celibacy in eastern religions, it focuses almost exclusively on Roman Catholicism. The overall theme is voiced at the outset: "The worldwide crisis in the Catholic Church begs many questions: Is sexual denial healthy? Or can it become something dangerous? Is there any link between enforced celibacy and an apparent epidemic of child abuse by the clergy?"

Here is what Catholic League president William Donohue said about it today:

“It is not for nothing that the term ‘enforced celibacy’ or ‘imposed’ is repeated constantly. By doing so, the message of coercion is made explicit. For example, we learn that the Catholic Church formally invoked the discipline of celibacy in 1139 as ‘a powerful tool for controlling its army.’ Similarly, we discover that ‘The need to suppress the most powerful drive on this planet is the key to understanding many Catholic practices and rituals.’ To drive the point home, a bloody video of self-flagellating Filipinos on Good Friday is shown.

“The viewer is also treated to the perspective of an embittered ex-priest, Richard Sipe, who asserts that homosexuals and sociopaths are drawn to the celibate priesthood, a comment that should go over big in the gay community. Moreover, stories of sexual abuse are described in graphic detail, if only to contrast them with happy tales of priests who bolted and married. Then there is Robert, a pedophile priest who admits that castration set him free.

“Finally, there is Archbishop John Foley, a Vatican official who is set up to appear foolish. After distorting the travails of Galileo, the clincher question is delivered: ‘How long will it take the Church to come to terms with the nature of human sexuality?’ The video cuts immediately to Archbishop Foley, who says, ‘I do not see any connection between mandatory celibacy and inappropriate sexual activity.’

“In short, the HBO special on ‘Celibacy’ is to truth telling about the Catholic Church what Michael Moore’s ‘Fahrenheit 9/11’ is to truth telling about the U.S.-Iraqi war. Both are masterpieces of deception and propaganda.”

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# ARCHBISHOP O'MALLEY TARGETED BY MEDDLERS

Boston Archbishop Sean O'Malley has come under increasing criticism for his decision to close sixty-five parishes in the archdiocese. Addressing this issue today is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"No one wants to see a parish closed. The ties that Catholics have to their parish are thicker than blood, and it is for this reason that no bishop takes any delight in restructuring his parishes. But in the real world of demographic changes, financial constraints and a shortage of priests, tough decisions must be made. To suggest there is another way is almost always delusional.

"It is one thing for long-time members of a parish to experience anguish when they are about to lose their church, quite another when meddlers intervene to foster their own agenda. This is exactly what is happening in Boston: Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), and Massachusetts Secretary of State William Galvin, are obstructing the process to score political points.

"It is obvious to just about everyone that VOTF is spent: it is an organization in search of a mission. Born of the homosexual scandal in the Church, the group has been left in the lurch ever since the Church started to reform itself. Furthermore, it does not exaggerate to say that Archbishop O'Malley's brilliant leadership has functionally disabled VOTF, making it an increasingly irrelevant body. That is why it is seizing on the issue of church restructuring—one that has absolutely nothing to do with its alleged interest in combating sexual abuse. Things have descended so far that VOTF must now resort to fielding endorsements from notorious Catholic bashers (e.g., Steve Gushee of the *Palm Beach Post*).

“Regarding Secretary of State William Galvin, some clerk needs to introduce him to the establishment clause of the First Amendment. For a state official to busy himself in the internal affairs of the Catholic Church is to tread on dangerous grounds. As a private citizen, and as a Catholic layman, Galvin has every right to opine on any religious matter he wants. But he had better keep his status as a government official at bay.”

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## JEWISH NEWSPAPER RIPS CATHOLIC BISHOPS

The lead editorial in the June 25 edition of the *Forward*, a prominent Jewish weekly newspaper, accuses Catholic bishops of being a threat to democracy. Commenting on the editorial is Catholic League president William Donohue:

“Never have I read a more anti-Catholic editorial in my life. It is the height of arrogance and intolerance for a Jewish newspaper to lecture Catholic bishops on the propriety of denying Communion to pro-abortion Catholic politicians. At issue is not a matter of public policy; on the contrary, it is purely an internal matter. As such, it is none of the *Forward's* business what disciplinary measures the bishops decide.

“This is how the editorial begins: ‘The threat by Catholic bishops to withhold communion from politicians who uphold abortion rights is an affront not just to democracy, but also to the best moral teachings of Catholicism.’ This is the oldest canard in the arsenal of anti-Catholics—to accuse them of being a threat to democracy. Not only that, the editorial

presumes to know better than the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops what the best moral teachings of the Catholic Church are.

“And there’s more—just read this astounding comment: ‘Where democracy is affronted is at the point where a church—the nation’s largest single church, as it happens—attempts to impose its views from above by threatening to withhold what its believers consider an essential religious rite. That’s nothing more than bullying, trying to bludgeon believers into substituting obedience for conscience. It’s unfair to believers and unfair *to the system*.’ (My italics.) Talk about chutzpah!

“The editorial ends by saying the bishops have failed to abide by their own creed because they ‘dishonored [the] doctrine of life’ by not condemning ‘free-market fundamentalists’ and the like. Which makes me wonder: What is more egregious—the ignorance or the bigotry?

“If the bishops threatened sanctions against anti-Semites, the *Forward* would congratulate them. In any event, Catholics are owed an apology.”

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## RELIGION AND POLITICS: BISHOPS SPEAK WITH CLARITY

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the statement by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Catholics in Political Life,” that was issued June 18:

“The bishops spoke with convincing clarity on the subject of

politics and religion. Though there are many public policy issues that Catholics are rightfully concerned about, none is more important than the killing of innocent human life. That is why this statement, which gives priority to abortion, is so important: it says that issues like the minimum wage are morally inferior to abortion. As a corollary, it also suggests that shutting down a soup kitchen is not morally analogous to shutting down an abortion clinic. That this even needs to be said shows how morally bankrupt many Americans, including Catholics, have become.

“The statement also shows due respect for the autonomy of the bishops. The question of denying Holy Communion to pro-abortion politicians is something every bishop should decide for himself. In this regard, a one-size-fits-all strategy would be a mistake.

“It is great news to learn that the bishops look askance at Catholic institutions that honor pro-abortion public figures. For too long, Catholic colleges and universities have bestowed honors on those who have worked overtime to advocate abortion rights, including partial-birth abortion. They would never honor someone associated with anti-Semitism or racism, but when it comes to abortion, too many have let radical feminists on the faculty rule the day.

“Finally, the bishops correctly note that ‘The separation of church and state does not require division between belief and public action, between moral principles and political choices, but protects the right of believers and religious groups to practice their faith and act on their values in public life.’ That remark is cogently written and without a single flaw. It should be widely disseminated to public officials and the law schools.”

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# KERRY'S RELIGION OUTREACH DIRECTOR SILENCED

In an article in today's *Washington Times*, reporter Julia Duin says that Mara Vanderslice, the Kerry campaign's director of religious outreach, is no longer permitted to talk to the press. Vanderslice was exposed on June 14 in a Catholic League news release as being a far left-wing activist who has spoken at rallies held by the notoriously anti-Catholic group, ACT UP. The Kerry campaign is now reportedly in a "panic mode" over this revelation.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"It is disingenuous of the Kerry campaign to blame me for simply disclosing who Mara Vanderslice is. But that's how Kerry spokeswoman Allison Dobson is spinning it: 'It is extremely unfortunate and regretful,' she says, 'that John Kerry's political opponents would attack a person of faith in this way.' They just don't get it. The Kerry campaign hires a 29 year-old ultra-leftist who consorts with anti-Catholic bigots and the Catholic League is supposed to take this lying down? And if Vanderslice is so innocent, why have they gagged her? How is a director of outreach supposed to function if he or she is being muzzled?

"The larger issue remains: the Kerry campaign is treating religion the way a sick kid treats lousy-tasting medicine—as something that simply must be swallowed. Why is it that this Catholic senator has no problem with 'gay speech'—he knows how to talk the talk with transgendered types—but stutters every time he engages in 'religion speech'? Are people of faith so

distant from him as to be virtual pariahs?

“To top it off, Kerry is now taking advice from the discredited priest, Father Robert Drinan. Drinan, who says he is part of Kerry’s ‘kitchen Cabinet’ on religious matters, was forced in 1997 to retract an outrageous *New York Times* op-ed column he wrote the year before supporting President Clinton’s veto of a ban on partial-birth abortion. If this is the kind of Catholic Kerry is listening to, he’s in deep trouble.”

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## **CATHOLIC LEAGUE WINS IN “PLEDGE” CASE**

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn a lower court ruling that declared the words “under God” to be a violation of the First Amendment:

“Last year, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights filed a joint friend-of-the-court brief with the Thomas More Law Center supporting the right of public school students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The ruling today by the U.S. Supreme Court, though made on grounds that the plaintiff lacked standing, upholds the constitutionality of the Pledge.

“It is too bad that the substantive issue of whether recitations of the Pledge in school are legal wasn’t addressed. It is regrettable only because there is a concerted effort in this country, led by organizations that are openly hostile to religion, to eliminate all public vestiges of our religious heritage. This movement, which is at root totalitarian, seeks to impose a radical secular agenda on all Americans. It must be stopped dead in its tracks if



religious liberty is to survive.

“This is not a good day for the radical secularists. Which is why it is such a good day for everyone else.”

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## **KERRY’S “RELIGION OUTREACH” DIRECTOR IS A GEM**

Mara Vanderslice has been appointed Senator John Kerry’s Director of Religion Outreach. Catholic League president William Donohue finds her a curious choice:

“Here’s what we know about John Kerry’s religious outreach person. Mara Vanderslice was raised without any faith and didn’t become an evangelical Christian until she attended Earlham College, a Quaker school known for its adherence to pacifism. When in college, Mara was active in the Earlham Socialist Alliance, a group that supports the convicted cop killer Mumia Abu-Jamal and openly embraces Marxism-Leninism. After graduating, Mara spoke at rallies held by ACT-UP, the anti-Catholic group that disrupted Mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in 1989 by spitting the Eucharist on the floor. In 2000, she practiced civil disobedience when she took to the streets of Seattle in a protest against the World Trade Organization. In 2002, she tried to shut down Washington, D.C. in a protest against the IMF and the World Bank.

“At first, John Kerry was considered too moderate for Mara, which is why she became Howard Dean’s Religion Outreach Director. She admits that she was a freak in the Dean campaign: her colleagues dubbed her the ‘church lady,’ informing her that Dean was liked precisely because he didn’t

talk about religion. 'How in the world did you get hired?' is how one staffer put it. Unfazed, Mara contends we have a 'collective commitment to protect the integrity of God's creation,' specifically citing the needs of the 'least of these.' Yet she supports John Kerry, a man who has never learned of an abortion he couldn't justify.

"All the polls show Kerry getting whipped badly by Bush among practicing Catholics, Protestants and Jews. Moreover, the latest edition of *Time* magazine reports that only 7 percent of likely voters think Kerry is a man of strong religious faith. Given all this, his choice of Mara Vanderslice as his religious point woman is confounding. Her resume is that of a person looking for a job working for Fidel Castro, not John Kerry. Just wait until Catholics and Protestants learn who this lady really is."

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## STEM CELL ISSUE REACHES A HOT POINT

The day before former President Ronald Reagan died, 58 senators sent a letter to President George W. Bush urging him to permit embryonic stem cell research. The senators are now insisting that with the death of President Reagan, the issue has taken on greater urgency. They cite the support that Nancy Reagan has shown for this type of research.

Catholic League president William Donohue cautions against any change in the current rules even as the issue reaches a hot point:

“Senator Orrin Hatch, an advocate of embryonic stem cell research, has said of Nancy Reagan’s support for this procedure, ‘I believe that it’s going to be pretty tough for anybody not to have empathy for her feelings on this issue.’ That’s true enough, but it doesn’t settle the issue: what ultimately matters is whether embryonic stem cell research is the intentional destruction of human life. Since every person ever born began as an embryo, and since embryonic stem cell research is predicated on the acknowledgement that embryos are human (otherwise the research would be meaningless), it is incumbent that our society not sanction it.

“The same day the 58 senators sent their letter to President Bush, Pope John Paul II admonished Americans to reject such things as abortion, same sex unions, pornography and prostitution as ‘self-centered demands’; he could easily have chosen to add embryonic stem cell research to this list. The pope, who suffers from Parkinson’s Disease, might arguably have benefited from embryonic stem cell research had it been previously allowed. But the Holy Father recognizes, as all of us should, that it is immoral for one person to have his life extended at the expense of someone else’s right to life.

“One of the senators who signed the letter to President Bush is John Kerry, a man who calls himself a ‘practicing and believing Catholic.’ Given the fact that he supports partial-birth abortion and embryonic stem cell research, it would be instructive to know when Senator Kerry believes human life begins.”

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# DURBIN'S SCORECARD GETS AN "F"

Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois yesterday released a report, "Evaluating the Votes and Actions of Public Officials from a Catholic Perspective," which ranks the twenty-four U.S. Catholic senators based on their votes in three areas: domestic, international and pro-life. The issues were taken from a publication issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Faithful Citizenship." Referring to bishops who have said they may deny Communion to pro-abortion politicians, Durbin said they "cross the line in terms of what most Catholic Americans find acceptable regarding the relationship between their church and their government."

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today:

"To say that a senator votes better on Catholic issues because he has voted to increase the minimum wage while voting against a ban on killing a baby who is 80 percent born is ludicrous. Senator Durbin has done the same as some House Democrats last month, lumping together policy issues that do not have the same moral weight. The Vatican's recent document on Catholic politicians, echoing the pope, states that Catholic lawmakers have '*a grave and clear obligation to oppose any law that attacks human life*' [emphasis in original]. The U.S. bishops, in the very same document used by Durbin to form the scorecard, call this '*the fundamental moral measure of their [lawmakers'] service.*' Saying otherwise is a disgraceful misrepresentation of Catholic teaching.

"Durbin has even gone so far as to say that the '*right to religious belief and the separation between church and state*' may be '*compromised*' by bishops who impose sanctions on pro-abortion lawmakers. This is ironic, coming from the senator who on the Judiciary Committee enforced a *de facto* religious

test barring pro-life Catholics from the federal bench. The fact of the matter is that the bishops have not only the right but the duty to speak on moral issues that play out in the public sphere; and Durbin's inflammatory rhetoric is a blatant attempt to muzzle them."