

CHOICE OF ALITO CROSSES RELIGIOUS LINES

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on what it means to people of faith that President Bush has chosen Samuel Alito to be on the U.S. Supreme Court:

“Nothing brings people of faith together more than the culture wars, and that is why traditional Catholics, evangelical Protestants and Orthodox Jews are already coming together in support of Samuel Alito. Whatever theological differences they have pale in significance compared to their joint interest in religious liberty. Add to this the prospect of having someone on the high court who is sympathetic to the public role of religious expression, and the fight is joined at the hip.

“Already, People for the American Way is asking its members to contact their senators to oppose Alito; the petition mentions Alito’s rulings on religious liberty as a problem. Americans United for Separation of Church and State is also sounding the alarm, calling President Bush’s nominee ‘an acerbic opponent of church-state separation.’

“Unlike those who would erect an impenetrable wall between church and state, Alito is not hostile to every religious symbol that sits on government property. Nor does he share the enthusiasm that church-state fanatics have for censoring the rights of Christian students in the public schools. In short, it is precisely because Alito is a voice of moderation that the secular left is opposed to him.

“Some are already commenting that if Alito is confirmed he would be the fifth Catholic on the Supreme Court. For example, the Associated Press ran a story at 7:45 a.m.—before Bush formally announced his choice for the high court—with the

headline, 'Alito Would be the Fifth Catholic Justice on Supreme Court.' So what? Currently, Jews comprise 22 percent of the Justices, even though they are only 1 percent of the population. Is that a problem?

"The next time the 'Catholic' issue is raised, it would be wise to remember that both Sen. Kennedy and Sen. Santorum are Catholic."

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY DELETES BIASED REMARK

On August 1, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote to Cathy Gorn, executive director of National History Day (NHD), about the contents of a flier promoting its 2006 program. What Donohue objected to was the following remark: "The student might choose an NHD topic involving a situation where a person or group failed to take a stand when they might reasonably have been expected to act. For example, what were the circumstances leading to Pope Pius XII's decision not to oppose Adolph Hitler before and during World War II?"

Donohue labeled this comment "outrageous." He provided evidence from two wartime editorials from the *New York Times* that singled out Pope Pius XII for being "a lonely voice" in a world marked by "silence" over Hitler's genocide. He also noted the new book by Northwestern professor Laurel Leff, *Buried by the Times*, that is highly critical of the *New York Times* for its nonresponse to the Holocaust. And he mentioned the new volume by Rabbi David Dalin, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, that defends Pius against his harshest critics. "Interestingly," Donohue said, "the students were

not asked to consider 'what were the circumstances leading to the *New York Times*' decision not to oppose Adolph Hitler before and during World War II?'"

Professor Gorn, who teaches at the University of Maryland, wrote to Donohue on October 26 apologizing for what happened; the letter was received today. "I most sincerely regret that a leading statement found its way into the information for our 2006 program," she said. She further stated that the remark in question has been deleted from NHD's website.

Dr. Donohue commented on Dr. Gorn's letter today: "This settles the matter. How such an irresponsible statement found its way into the 2006 NHD program in the first place, I do not know. But what matters at this juncture is that Dr. Gorn responded to our complaint without being at all defensive. Indeed, her response is nothing if not professional."

GAYS SHOULD DUMP GLAAD CHIEF

Catholic League president Bill Donohue explained today why gay activists should dump the president of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD):

"Two weeks ago today, GLAAD president Neil Giuliano issued an alert asking his members to contact NBC's 'Today' show protesting its decision to invite me on the program on October 13. Giuliano accused me of defaming gays and using 'malicious smear tactics.' My 'malicious smear tactics' included saying that '79 percent of the victims [of priestly sexual abuse] in Los Angeles are male,' and that '81 percent, according to the John Jay study a few years ago [of victims nationwide since 1950] were male.' I also said that, according to the study, 'almost 80 percent are post-pubescent.' My conclusion? 'It's

homosexuals.’ I added, ‘I’m not saying homosexuality causes someone to be a predator, that would be malicious. But I am saying this: We have a problem within the Catholic Church of some homosexual men who are putting their hands on the kids. They’ve got to be thrown out.’

“There is nothing defamatory or malicious about anything I said, but there is something malicious about Giuliano’s attempt to defame me. So when I was called by a CBS producer to appear on Viacom’s gay cable network, Logo, I told him on October 24 that I would go on providing he could arrange a debate between Giuliano and me. GLAAD has been called by CBS several times this week asking for Giuliano to debate me, but he refuses to do so.

“It’s time for gays to demand that Giuliano resign. The man is not a leader. He is a rip-off artist getting rich by exploiting gays: he wants them to think that he’s their hero, when in fact he runs away from a fight.”

NYC MUSEUM CHIEF DEFENDS POLICY ON HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

On October 25, we issued a news release regarding the way the Children’s Museum of Manhattan treats the holidays of Hispanics, Jews, Muslims and African Americans, and how it differs from the way it treats Christian holidays. A copy was sent to Andrew S. Ackerman, executive director of the museum, asking for a reply. He did so today. Catholic League president William Donohue replied to Ackerman immediately.

MADONNA'S SECRET: SHE HATES DIVERSITY

Madonna's new documentary, "I'm Going to Tell You a Secret," is a behind-the-scenes account of her "Re-Invention Tour." One part of the film, in particular, caught the eye of Catholic League president Bill Donohue. Here's what he had to say about it:

"Madonna is a mess. The same woman who brags about her journey from Catholicism to Kabbalah, and who warns young people that they will 'go to hell' unless they renounce their 'wicked behavior,' makes a film that not only takes a stab at Catholics and Jews—it delivers an attack on diversity. That it took her an entire year to make this movie suggests that her creative talents have dissipated: some in the asylum could have done it in a week.

"The scenes that touch on religion are more pathetic than offensive. The film opens with Madonna reading from the Book of Revelation, and she later tells us that our modern culture is the 'Beast' of Revelation. For Catholics, this is at least an improvement: Catholic-hating Christians have long told us that we're the Beast. Then there is the scene that caricatures Orthodox Jews and shows a woman dressed as a nun revealing her undergarments. Worse still is the man dressed as a Cardinal grabbing his crotch and giving the finger with both hands.

"It is not Madonna's quip about 'most priests are gay' that is the most telling commentary in this documentary. No, it is what she says to men and women wearing various religious garb: She informs us that 'religion breeds fragmentation' and that

'these religious costumes, for most people, end up separating everybody.' She then endorses getting rid of religious garb 'so you can be one consciousness, OK?'

"In other words, Madonna hates pluralism (a.k.a. diversity) and loves uniformity (a.k.a. inclusion). She belongs teaching multiculturalism at a local college; her increased nuttiness would make her a sure bet to win tenure."

NYC MUSEUM HONORS MINORITY HOLIDAYS; "FRUITY FONDUE" SERVED FOR CHRISTMAS

The Children's Museum of Manhattan is honoring the holidays of Hispanics, Jews, Muslims and African Americans, but not Christian ones. Catholic League president William Donohue commented on this development today:

"October is Hispanic Heritage Month at the Children's Museum of Manhattan and that means a *Go, Diego, Go! Festival*, and other related events. Children have also been able to listen to stories about Islamic traditions during October's *Ramadan in New York City Festival*. But there were no Columbus Day events for the city's Italian Catholic community. In November, there will be an *Eid in New York City Festival* for Muslims, but Christians will get nothing for Thanksgiving. Jewish and African-American holidays will be celebrated in December when the museum honors Hanukkah with a 'Bananukah' performance by Danna Banana, and a 'Magbana Drum and Dance' performance for Kwanzaa. But there will be nothing for Christians at Christmas. Well, not quite: there will be a 'Festive Fruity Fondue.' For the uninformed, this means the

kids will learn how to melt chocolate fondue berries sprinkled with shredded coconut.

“The majority of New Yorkers are Christian and the nation is 85 percent Christian. But one would never know this by the way elites react to Christian holidays. Those who think this is the logical outgrowth of radical secularism are wrong: If that were true, then Jews and Muslims—who together comprise 2 percent of the nation (see *Newsweek*, 9-5-05)—would be suffering the same fate as Christians. But they are not. Their holidays, along with the holidays of racial and ethnic minorities (e.g. blacks and Latinos), are being given high profile. No, what this is all about is eradicating our Christian heritage. Look for the attacks on Christmas this year to be more vicious than ever before. But there is good news: increasingly, Christians are protesting these attacks in the courts and in the court of public opinion.

“We are lodging a complaint with the museum’s executive director, Andrew S. Ackerman*.”

***NOTE:** Should you wish to contact Mr. Ackerman via email, write to him at ebblack@cmom.org

NEVADA WEIGHS PHARMACIST CONSCIENCE RULES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue offered the following remarks today on the right of Nevada pharmacists to deny a prescription for a drug they cannot morally endorse:

“On October 26, the Nevada Board of Pharmacy will consider the issue of allowing pharmacists the right to deny a prescription

for medication they cannot in good conscience fill. At stake is the right of patients to obtain prescribed medication from their local pharmacist versus the right of pharmacists to abide by their moral or religious convictions. Justice demands that the rights of pharmacists be honored. It is one thing to be inconvenienced by having to shop around, quite another to have one's religious convictions violated by the state. Put differently, there is no constitutional right to being conveniently serviced, but there is a constitutional right to religious liberty. And all religious liberties begin with the right of conscience.

"We are contacting the Nevada Board of Pharmacy about our concerns today."

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS DESERVE FEMA FUNDS

The decision by the Bush administration to help rebuild those areas hardest hit by Hurricane Katrina includes awarding public monies to parochial schools and other religious institutions (exclusive of houses of worship).

Catholic League president Bill Donohue endorsed this plan today:

"On both moral and legal grounds, the Bush administration made the right decision to provide federal funds to parochial schools in those areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Morally, it makes sense to help all institutions affected by a natural disaster, but constitutionally it could prove to be problematic to include houses of worship.

“Regarding this last point, granting emergency relief even to churches could be easily justified: President Thomas Jefferson provided \$300 in federal funds for the purpose of building a Catholic church for the Kaskaskia Indians.

“More recently, the U.S. Naval Academy received \$1.8 million in federal funds to build a Jewish Center, and in the facility there is a synagogue. Though Commander Rod Gibbons, Director of Public Affairs at the academy, called our office to say that none of the federal funds were spent on the synagogue, he has not replied to a letter I sent to him three weeks ago demanding evidence for his position. Moreover, he cannot explain why a huge Star of David has been erected on public property (it is in the atrium of the building—not in the synagogue). So as not to be misunderstood, we publicly supported the decision to give public monies for this enterprise: all we want is equal treatment.

“The Seattle Hebrew Academy received more than a half-million dollars in a federal grant in 2002 to rebuild after being hit by an earthquake. That was the right decision then, and it is the right decision now for the government to help rebuild parochial schools in New Orleans.”

DISPUTE WITH KOMO-TV ENDS

The Catholic League has been involved in a dispute with the ABC-TV Seattle affiliate, KOMO. The controversy began when KOMO-TV commentator Ken Schram effectively indicted all Catholic priests when he said that artwork depicting a naked man and a naked boy “might as well be called the priest and the altar boy.”

After we complained, KOMO took the offending article off its

website, but it would not offer an apology. We therefore took our complaint to the station's owner, Fisher Communications. Today we received a letter from Fisher's new president and CEO, Colleen B. Brown, that puts an end to the dispute.

In her letter to Catholic League president Bill Donohue, Brown recounts an article written by Schram that was posted on KOMO's website after Donohue mailed a letter to Fisher officials. This time Schram made it clear that there are "a lot of good priests" who are "dedicated to their parishioners and their religion." He ended his piece by saying that priests "were entitled to a more thoughtful reflection from me."

In her letter, Brown says this commentary "clearly expressed that it was not Ken Schram's intention to perpetuate a stereotypical image and that priests were entitled to a more thoughtful reflection from him."

We therefore consider this matter closed. We only wish that KOMO-TV had acted sooner to quell this controversy.

ATLANTIC MONTHLY DEFAMES PADRE PIO

In the November issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, there is a brief article by Tyler Cabot titled, "The Rocky Road to Sainthood." Of Padre Pio, one of the most revered priests in recent history to have been canonized, Cabot writes, "Despite questions raised by two papal emissaries—and despite reported evidence that he raised money for right-wing religious groups and had sex with penitents—Pio was canonized in 2002."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue blasted the article today:

“The short summaries of eight persons who were either beatified or canonized was written by a man with an obvious ideological agenda: Tyler Cabot hates the Catholic Church. That alone would not make him all that unusual these days, but what is surprising is that in a highly regarded magazine like the *Atlantic Monthly* someone as ignorant as Cabot would be published.

“In the September 24, 1998 edition of the *New York Times*, there was an article on Padre Pio that said he was the subject of 12 investigations commissioned by Rome; he died in 1968. One of the last investigations was a 1960 report by Rev. Carlo Maccari alleging that Padre Pio had had sex with female penitents twice a week. One of Padre Pio’s fellow monks was so upset with such allegations that he actually snuck a microphone into his rooms (including, apparently, the confessional), but in the end yielded nothing. Now here’s the clincher, not reported by Cabot: Father Maccari, who became an archbishop, later recanted his story and wound up praying to Padre Pio on his deathbed.

“In his lifetime, Padre Pio was the object of great jealousy by some Vatican officials. Some, like Maccari, even went so far as to defame him. And now we have ideologues like Cabot trying to do the same thing. As for Padre Pio raising money for ‘right-wing religious groups,’ our only disappointment is that the Catholic League was not founded until five years after he died. Otherwise, we might have asked him to do a fundraiser so we could fight bigots like Tyler Cabot.”