

CATHOLIC BASHERS SMEAR BROWNBACK

A letter is being circulated among evangelicals in Iowa asking them not to split the Christian vote between former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee and Kansas Senator Sam Brownback; they are urged to vote for Huckabee, an evangelical, over Brownback, a Roman Catholic.

The letter stems from Walnut Creek Community Church in Windsor Heights. It says that unlike President George W. Bush, and his father, both of whom had to learn “how to speak to evangelicals,” Governor Huckabee is “one of us.” The missive continues as follows: “I know Senator Brownback converted to Roman Catholicism in 2002. Frankly, as a recovering Catholic myself, that is all I need to know about his discernment when compared to the Governor’s. I don’t know if this fact is widely known among evangelicals who are supporting Brownback.”

This issue was addressed today by Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“Discernment. Evangelicals have it, and Catholics do not. But are those evangelicals who express themselves this way capable of discerning the difference between persuasiveness and abrasiveness? Do they really think all Catholics are rote-minded robots who let the Vatican do their thinking for them? We thought we’d gotten beyond such nonsense, but apparently some stereotypes are proving hardier than others.

“Like Sam Brownback, Mike Huckabee is a man of character, and as such he would never choose to be associated with such bigotry. The blame for this incident lies squarely with Rev. Tim Rude, pastor of the church. Unfortunately for him, he has now compounded his problem by saying that he did not intend his e-mail to be made public, and that in any event, ‘All I

was trying to say is that Protestants should vote for Protestants.' Great. But now that his gig is up—everyone knows about his stealth campaign against Brownback—the time has come for Rev. Rude (what a great name!) to fess up and apologize. He might also take this opportunity to explain his lack of confidence in the ability of Protestants to discern whom they should vote for in the election.”

FX’S “RESCUE ME” RIPS CATHOLICISM

In last night’s episode of the FX drama “Rescue Me,” Denis Leary’s character had an exchange with a new firefighter about the Bible. He said the Bible is to Catholics what “The Godfather” is to the Mafia. Continuing, Leary blasted the Catholic Church for being corrupt, maintaining that the 12 years he spent in the Church was effectively like being in prison. The biggest gangster on the face of the planet, he contended, was the pope.

Later in the episode, another firefighter returns to his apartment, one he shares with his girlfriend, a former nun. He finds her having sex—while wearing a habit—with his cousin.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

“Imagine what would happen if every Catholic priest, nun, brother and lay person in the United States who volunteers his or her time in hospitals, clinics, hospices, after-school programs, camps, soup kitchens, day care centers, mental institutions and the like were to go on strike for one day. Would the Denis Learys of this world still be painting them as corrupt and oppressive, led by the world’s biggest gangster?

Or would they suddenly realize the yeoman work these selfless people do every day?

“One more thing: What kind of creative genius at FX is responsible for portraying an ex-nun having sex with her habit on? Do they know of any ex-Muslim women who have sex wearing their hijab? For that matter, do they know of any imams who would make Al Capone look saintly? Why is it always us? Don’t these guys believe in diversity? Or could it be that they know, deep down in their hearts, that we are the one, true religion? After all, that would account for their dismissive attitude toward all the other competitors.”

DISNEY BANS SMOKING: WILL IT NOW BAN CATHOLIC BASHING?

Disney president Robert Iger wrote a letter today to Rep. Edward Markey, chairman of the House Telecommunications & Internet Subcommittee, regarding smoking in its films. Here is an excerpt:

“We discourage depictions of cigarette smoking in Disney, Touchstone and Miramax films. In particular, we expect depictions of cigarette smoking in future Disney branded films will be non-existent.”

As a result, Iger also said that Disney “will place an anti-smoking PSA [Public Service Announcement] on DVD’s of any future film that does depict smoking. In addition, we will work with theater owners to encourage the exhibition of an anti-smoking PSA before the theatrical exhibition of any such film.”

The Catholic League takes note of this development, especially as Disney owns ABC, the network that airs the anti-Catholic show, 'The View.' And under its Miramax label in the past, Disney has given us such anti-Catholic movies as Priest, Dogma, Butcher Boy, 40 Days and 40 Nights, The Magdalene Sisters and Black Christmas.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue said today that it would be refreshing if Iger would issue a similar letter today, only this time targeting anti-Catholicism. He even penned a model for him:

"We discourage depictions of Catholic bashing in Disney, Touchstone and Miramax films. In particular, we expect depictions of Catholic bashing in future Disney branded films will be non-existent. We will place an anti-Catholic bashing PSA on DVD's of any future film that does depict Catholic bashing. In addition, we will work with theater owners to encourage the exhibition of an anti-Catholic bashing PSA before the theatrical exhibition of any such film."

Donohue said that if Iger accedes to his request, there will be no fee for his service.

JAY LENO'S OBSESSION

In the past five weeks, the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno" has ridiculed priests six times and the pope once; all of the priest jokes were sexual in nature and painted priests as molesters.

- June 18: Robin Williams gets into an extended diatribe about priests as pedophiles
- June 20: Leno cracks a joke about priests as pedophiles

- June 21: Leno makes a joke about a drunken pedophile priest
- July 12: Leno ridicules the pope for restating Catholic doctrine on salvation
- July 18: Leno portrays all priests as pedophiles
- July 23: Leno jokes about priests using the Harry Potter books as “bait” to lure kids
- July 23: Leno tells a story about a priest who pays to see a male stripper at a gay nightclub and jokes that the priest was cheating on his altar boy

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

“Hypocritical priests make for good script, but in the world Jay Leno apparently lives in, priests have a monopoly on hypocrisy. This would seem to suggest that either he is clueless about other expressions of hypocrisy, or there is a strong animus against Catholicism at work. If it’s the former, the Catholic League can be of assistance—we track lots of hypocrites, many of whom live in Leno’s Hollywood backyard. If it’s the latter, we suggest he knock it off.”

HOUSE COMMITTEE OKAYS RESOLUTION: NEW YORK ARCHDIOCESE HONORED

A few hours ago, the Catholic League issued a news release criticizing efforts to delete Cardinal Edward M. Egan’s name from a resolution commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Archdiocese of New York; we contacted hundreds of media outlets and thousands of our supporters. We have now learned that the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, chaired by Rep. Henry Waxman, has passed the resolution as it

was initially introduced by Rep. Vito Fossella; Waxman called Fossella to tell him the news. The resolution now goes before the entire House for a vote.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

“As a result of the latest news, there will be no showdown with those who wanted to manipulate Rep. Fossella’s splendid resolution. Now it is up to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to make sure that this fine statement honoring the New York Archdiocese proceeds without delay or revision. We are contacting her office today and we fully expect her to accede to our request.”

Contact Rep. Pelosi at sf.nancy@mail.house.gov

RESOLUTION HONORING NEW YORK ARCHDIOCESE: VOTE SHOULD BE UNANIMOUS

On May 2, New York Congressman Vito Fossella introduced a House Resolution commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Archdiocese of New York. The nonbinding resolution has now run into trouble: aides to Congressman Henry Waxman (he chairs the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee) are reportedly saying that New York Archbishop Cardinal Edward M. Egan’s name must be removed from the resolution if it is to be passed.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue weighed in today on this issue:

“We are writing to every member of Waxman’s committee

requesting that the Fossella resolution be passed without emendation. This is a defining moment for those who claim to be 'religion friendly': they can put up or shut up. The last thing any sitting congressman needs to do is to get into a fight with Catholics over this issue.

"It smacks of hubris for any public official to micromanage a resolution honoring the Archdiocese of New York. Moreover, it is only right that Cardinal Egan be mentioned in this resolution, and it is outrageous to even suggest that his name be deleted. If there is some congressman who wants to debate this issue with me, he or she should step forward now: I'll arrange for a debate on TV. Otherwise, we look forward to a speedy unanimous vote on this resolution as it was written."

SAN DIEGO MINUTEMEN DRAW BIGOTED SUPPORT

The decision of a suburban San Diego Catholic Church, St. Peter's in Fallbrook, to welcome day laborers has unleashed an anti-Catholic response on the part of the San Diego Minutemen (an independent Minuteman group). We have asked for all parties to the dispute to exercise civility. Unfortunately, some of our critics are now unleashing their own hate-filled screeds. Herewith is a sample of the invective that has reached our office:

- "I'd be putting a mine field on the border—warn them of course and then do it."
- "You compound your embarrassing blindness by attacking the messengers of these facts with petty name calling, and even go so far as to call for a 'Catholic Jihad' against those who are

concerned about the impact that these very real issues will have....”

- “I don’t understand how the Catholic League can support a church that is harboring felons.”

- “I am also very angry that you’re issuing your news releases in Spanish! Why does the Catholic League need to explain itself to these people!”

- “South America and Mexico are pushing on my country and as an American citizen...It is against the law for churches to help day labor services because of the separation of church and state.”

- “By this sweeping and arrogant elitist attack on the people who oppose the illegal invasion of our country from the south, you are putting yourself in the same league with the overwhelming leftist, gay-friendly, California Amchurch hierarchy which hopes to replenish its dwindling flocks with illegal Mexicans.”

- “I also wanted to register my total shock and annoyance at your first-time ever, as far as I’m aware, use of Spanish as if it were incumbent on Catholics to explain to Mexicans in America in their language various situations as opposed to them learning, understanding and speaking English.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

“Fair criticism of the Catholic Church’s position on any public policy issue is welcomed. This kind of nativism is not.”

SAN DIEGO MINUTEMEN GIN UP

CATHOLIC BASHING

Yesterday, the Catholic League criticized the anti-Catholic bigotry displayed by the San Diego Minutemen against St. Peter's Church in Fallbrook, California. The anti-illegal immigrant group is protesting the cooperation that the church's pastor, Father Edward "Bud" Kaicher, has shown in helping day laborers find employment in the San Diego suburb.

Today, the group accused the Catholic League of creating "hatred amongst Catholics nationwide against Americans standing up for what's right and legal." It also accused the illegal immigrants of increasing "crime and disease in our communities," and said that the "corrupt Catholic church" was committing "outrageous crimes and deeds."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

"We have learned that the San Diego Minutemen are unaffiliated with either the Minuteman Project or the Minutemen Civil Defense Corps. As such, our comments are solely directed at the San Diego Minutemen.

"The Catholic League is calling upon non-Latino Catholics in Southern California to join with Latino Catholics to condemn the flagrant anti-Catholic bigotry of the San Diego Minutemen. Regardless of whether one is sympathetic or not to the plight of illegal immigrants—and/or the grievances of legal immigrants—there is one issue that all fair-minded persons should be able to agree upon: there is no role for bigotry in this dispute.

"We are prepared to work with other Catholic organizations in the San Diego area to put an end to the Catholic bashing. To think there can be a realistic chance of achieving reconciliation without first addressing the issue of anti-Catholicism is pure nonsense."

SAN DIEGO MINUTEMEN HARASS CATHOLICS

The San Diego Minutemen have chosen to target St. Peter's Church in Fallbrook, California, and some of the protests have been accompanied by anti-Catholic bigotry. Catholic League president Bill Donohue explained today why the league is joining the issue on the side of the church:

"Father Edward 'Bud' Kaicher, pastor of the suburban San Diego parish, has extended a helping hand to day workers seeking employment in the area, and for this he has been [displayed in effigy as Satan](#). Worse, the right-wing brigade of Minutemen has harassed Catholics going to church, used bullhorns to spout their invective, have uttered patently anti-Catholic remarks at parishioners and have even stooped so low as to intimidate little kids on the day of their First Communion.

"Showing how incredibly debased and uncivil they are, the San Diego Minutemen have sought to paint all priests as pedophiles and have pledged to continue their incivility all summer long. To top it off, the xenophobes are illiterate. 'With all the pediphelia [sic] problems going on in the church,' a posting on its Internet site says, 'it makes no sense to have 50 loitering men watching little children playing on the playground each morning.'

"There are legitimate ways to protest. This is not one of them. By succumbing to anti-Catholic bigotry and harassment, the San Diego Minutemen have discredited their cause and have no moral grounds upon which to make their appeal. They should be opposed not only by Latino Catholics, but by all Catholics."

BUFFALO CITY COUNCIL REGROUPS

Last week, the Buffalo City Council passed a resolution criticizing the decision by the Diocese of Buffalo to close some schools and churches. When local officials accused the diocese of “ethnic cleansing,” they were roundly criticized by Buffalo Bishop Edward Kmiec, the Catholic League, the *Buffalo News* and many others.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on reports that the city council is reconsidering its resolution:

“Sober heads among the Buffalo City Council are now arguing that the use of the term ‘ethnic cleansing’ needs to be dropped from the resolution. That is the bare minimum that needs to be done. A better way to handle this mess is to withdraw the resolution altogether and appoint a task force to sit down with diocesan officials to discuss their concerns. Among the participants should not be Councilman David A. Franczyk: he disgraced himself initially when he invoked the invidious language and he further disgraced himself by refusing to apologize.

“If the leader of any religious body in Buffalo were to bash the city council for not providing sufficient funding for local schools, he would be blasted for using intemperate language and for crossing church and state lines. The same rules should apply in reverse, and that is why the resolution should be withdrawn.”