

“THE VIEW’S” CATHOLIC OBSESSION CONTINUES

On ABC’s “The View” today, Barbara Walters, Joy Behar, Elisabeth Hasselbeck and guest co-host Whoopi Goldberg criticized the actions of a Catholic priest in Wisconsin. Having learned that his organist/choir director was selling sex toys, the pastor advised the woman that the products she peddled were incompatible with Catholic teaching. When she refused to quit her sales job, the priest removed her from her position.

During the discussion, Behar said, “She is selling [the sex toys] to married couples, which the Catholic Church wants you to procreate. How do they think we have been doing it all these years? With sex toys, that’s how.” Goldberg asserted that the woman now “can’t get a spiritual advisor” because she has “a different way of doing things.” Walters reinforced Goldberg’s notion by asking, “Why can’t someone who is a hooker at night...on Sunday go to whatever church or temple and try to get spiritual?” Hasselbeck questioned the merit of “probing into your private life in terms of how well you can do your job or keep your job.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented on the episode today:

“Here we go again. This is the fifteenth incident since September where ‘The View’ has revealed its overwhelming obsession with all things Catholic. The panelists’ disregard for the truth is bad enough—for instance, there is no report of the woman being denied spiritual advice, or even the sacraments, because of the nature of her job—but what is especially appalling is the co-hosts’ intrusion into the internal matters of the Church. Clergy of all religions make judgments about the moral propriety of their employees every

day, without attracting any attention. Yet when a Catholic priest does it, the ladies of 'The View' launch into a sophomoric rant questioning his right to run his parish as he sees fit.

"It has only been a matter of days since 'The View's' leading bigot, Rosie O'Donnell, left the show. Yet the assault goes on. The co-hosts will use any excuse to rip into the Church, even if they have to play fast and loose with the facts to do so. Thus we see that the true culprit isn't Rosie, it is co-owner and co-producer Barbara Walters. She's the captain of this anti-Catholic ship."

Contact ABC executive Anne Sweeney at 818-569-7700.

TIME WARNER NEEDS TO CHECK BILL MAHER

HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher" ran a show on May 18—repeated throughout this week—that began with an attack on the late Rev. Jerry Falwell and then devolved into an assault on Catholicism:

"And it's easy to start a religion! Watch, I'll do it for you: I had a vision last night! A vision! The Blessed Virgin Mary came to me—I don't know how she got past the guards—and she told me it's high time to take the high ground from the Seventh Day Adventists and give it to the 24-hour party people. And what happens in the confessional stays in the confessional. Gay men, don't say you're life partners, say you're a nunnery of two. 'We weren't having sex, officer, I was performing a very private Mass, here in my car. I was letting my rod and staff comfort him. *Take this and eat of it,*

[our emphasis] for this is my roommate Barry. And for all those who believe there is a special place for you in Kevin.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded this way:

“We are writing to the 14 members who sit on the board of directors of Time Warner (the parent company of HBO) asking each of them whether Maher’s gratuitous and highly offensive attack on Jesus Christ merits the same punishment afforded Imus for his racist remark. Maher is a serial anti-Catholic bigot who mocked the Eucharist as recently as April 16.

“Time Warner’s Standards of Business Conduct—revised last month by the board of directors—includes the following principle: ‘While our content may sometimes engender controversy, we want no one to question our character.’ We know Maher lacks character. What the public needs to know is whether Time Warner’s board has any.”

Click here to contact HBO.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST BARBARA WALTERS BEGINS

On today’s edition of “The View,” a discussion on the propriety of male nannies led Rosie O’Donnell to declare that she would never hire one to care for her adopted children. Barbara Walters asked her, “Are you worried about homosexual tendencies? Is that what you are saying?” O’Donnell replied, “No, pedophilia has nothing to do with homosexual” [sic]. To which Walters said, “Oh, pedophilia.” Shortly thereafter, O’Donnell asked Walters if she would have hired a male nannie for her daughter when she was growing up. Walters hesitated,

and before she could speak, Joy Behar interjected with the comment, "A priest perhaps?" O'Donnell grimaced and the audience roared with laughter.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue outlined his strategy as follows:

"It is obvious that Barbara Walters is begging for a fight with Catholics. Consider it done. Over the past year, the Catholic League has registered several complaints with Walters, who is co-owner of the show, executive producer Bill Geddie, and Anne Sweeney, co-chair, Disney Media Networks and president, Disney-ABC Television Group. None has replied. While the anti-Catholic bigots have either been Rosie O'Donnell or Joy Behar (today's culprit), the person most responsible for allowing this unrelenting assault on Catholic sensibilities is Walters.

"Accordingly, beginning in mid-June, we will commence a public relations campaign against Barbara Walters. When we're finished, so too will be her once stellar reputation. Today was the last straw."

JERRY FALWELL, R.I.P.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the death of Liberty University president Jerry Falwell:

"Rev. Jerry Falwell did more to mobilize evangelicals than any other leader in the nation. He not only inspired them to become active politically, he encouraged them to rethink their positions on a host of issues, especially abortion and school choice. In 1979, he established the Moral Majority, welcoming Roman Catholics into the organization. He also founded Liberty

University, an institution of higher education that quickly made its mark on American society.

“Jerry was a great fighter in the culture wars. He was both an exemplary evangelical and a renowned social activist, always exuding the kind of moral courage so often lacking in religious leaders of all faiths. He will be sorely missed.”

CATHOLIC DEMOCRATS CHIDE POPE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded today to the eighteen House Democrats who chided Pope Benedict XVI for allegedly saying he agreed with Mexican bishops for invoking excommunication in dealing with Catholic lawmakers who recently voted to legalize abortion:

“These Democrats are twice a disgrace. First, they have their facts wrong: no Mexican bishop ever invoked excommunication against any lawmaker for legalizing abortion. What happened was at first confusing, but was quickly clarified.

“On May 9, in his extemporaneous remarks aboard a plane going to Brazil, the pope initially gave the impression that he favored excommunication of the lawmakers. Shortly thereafter—on that same day—his remarks were amended, making moot the idea that he favored such a penalty. On May 10, the Vatican presented the pope’s official statement. That statement did not speak to excommunicating anyone—it simply restated Church teaching that Catholic legislators who advocate abortion rights should not go to Communion. Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman on the scene, said that ‘if the bishops haven’t excommunicated anyone, it’s not that the pope wants to do so.’

“The Catholic Democrats who signed this statement had plenty of time to get their facts straight. After all, Catholic News Service ran a splendid piece clarifying what happened on May 10. But in a defensive rush to judgment, they decided to take their game to the pope; thus did they disgrace themselves for a second time. ‘Advancing respect for life and for the dignity of every human being is, as our church has taught us, our own life’s mission.’ It is not easy to reconcile that position with their voting record on abortion, which includes (in many instances) opposition to the ban on partial-birth abortions. Evidently, respecting the life and dignity of every human being doesn’t extend to children who are 80 percent born.

“These Catholic Democrats need to hire some fact checkers. And while they’re at it, it might be good for them to hire a practicing Catholic bioethicist.”

DID THE POPE DEFEND VIOLENCE?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on media reports that in a speech the pope gave yesterday, he defended violence:

“In a story today by the Associated Press on Pope Benedict XVI’s address in Brazil yesterday, it says the pope ‘defended the church’s often bloody campaign to Christianize indigenous people...’ It is striking to note that in a story today by McClatchy newspapers, it says the pope ‘defended the Roman Catholic Church’s often bloody campaign to Christianize indigenous people.’

“There are several curious things about this matter. Did AP crib from McClatchy or vice versa? Or did they both rip a page from the same playbook? Secondly, it smacks of more than

interpretive journalism to make such an accusation—it reads like propaganda. Thirdly, what exactly did the pope say that allowed these two media giants to come to such a fantastic conclusion? Did the pope really defend violence?

“The two reporters, Alan Clendenning of AP and Jack Chang of McClatchy, were asked by the Catholic League to explain how they both wound up with the identical language; they were also asked to ‘pinpoint the part of the pope’s speech’ where he defended violence. Clendenning never spoke to the first issue; Chang said, ‘I came up with that line on my own, for better or for worse.’ Neither could pinpoint where in the speech the pope defended violence. That’s because he never did. By contrast, the *New York Times* ran a piece today on the pope’s speech and nowhere did it mention anything about the pope justifying violence against anyone. So how can the nation’s largest news organization (AP), and the nation’s third-largest newspaper publisher (McClatchy), manage to screw things up so badly?

“AP subsequently released a revised story that amended the initial one. Nonetheless, this is journalism at its worst. We will register a complaint at both media outlets.”

GIULIANI CLARIFIES NOTHING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds to Republican presidential contender Rudolph Giuliani’s speech today at Houston Baptist University:

“In 1960, Catholic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy went to Houston to clarify his position on church and state. Today, Catholic presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani spoke in Houston to clarify his position on abortion. Kennedy succeeded in

assuaging the fears of his skeptics. Giuliani failed.

“From the AP report on Giuliani’s speech, it is apparent that the former New York City Mayor broke no new ground. We know he believes that abortion is ‘morally wrong,’ and we know that he supports abortion rights in general. But he lacked the specificity today that he previously espoused. Consider how specific he’s been in the past.

“In 1987, Giuliani said, ‘I don’t equate abortion with murdering a child, which I guess puts me in conflict with the teaching of the Catholic church.’ In 1989, he said that if his own daughter were contemplating an abortion, he would try to dissuade her from doing so, but that if she held to her view, ‘I’d give my daughter the money for it.’ In 1992, he said, ‘I made a terrible mistake on abortion last time. I should have said I was pro-choice and stopped.’ In 1997, he answered affirmatively when asked, ‘Would you support legislation which would require Ob/Gyn graduate training hospitals to require training in abortion procedures?’ In the 1990s, he wrote several checks to Planned Parenthood, explaining today that he did so because he values the right of women to make choices. Yet there is no evidence that he ever wrote one check to support Crisis Pregnancy Centers, making clear what choice he really prefers.

“It is up to Republicans to decide whether Giuliani is the best candidate. But Catholics of both parties, as well as Independents, have a right to know—in great detail—how a Catholic candidate will decide on a matter the Catholic Church regards as ‘intrinsically evil.’”

MAKING RELIGION A CAMPAIGN ISSUE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on attempts to make religion an issue in the presidential campaign:

“There is a game being played in this presidential campaign about religion, but the players are not the candidates—the culprits are the pundits and activists. It started when Chris Matthews asked Gov. Mitt Romney during MSNBC’s Republican presidential debate, ‘What do you say to Roman Catholic bishops who would deny communion to elected officials who support abortion rights?’ The question was designed to get Romney to inject himself—as a prospective president—into the internal matters of the Catholic Church. But it didn’t work. Romney made it clear that the bishops ‘can do whatever the heck they want.’

“Now we have CNN’s Lou Dobbs trying to blame Romney for injecting religion into the campaign, simply because the Mormon candidate defended himself against the bigoted remarks by Rev. Al Sharpton. Last night, Dobbs commented, ‘To hear a discussion, this early, in a presidential debate, about religion, one or the other, casting aspersions, or having aspersions cast against their faith when there are so many important issues. It is truly remarkable.’ What is most remarkable is that the person responsible for making Romney’s religion an issue was sitting right in front of him, namely Dobbs’ atheist soul mate, Christopher Hitchens. It was Hitchens who attacked Romney’s religion, provoking Sharpton to say, ‘Those who really believe in God will defeat him [Romney] anyway.’ Hitchens, following Dobbs, then tried to pretend that it is amazing to see ‘people of other faiths denouncing each other,’ as if the ones leading the charge against Romney’s religion are Christians!

“Now some are calling upon Romney to have ‘a JFK moment’ and explain why the public should trust a Mormon as president. In 1960, JFK had to answer to anti-Catholic Protestants. Today, Romney is being asked to answer to anti-Mormon bigots, *most* of whom are secularists. And they call themselves enlightened, tolerant, inclusive and champions of diversity. They are anything but.”

DID RUDY GIVE TO CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS?

Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani told radio talk-show host Laura Ingraham yesterday that the reason he donated to Planned Parenthood in the 1990s was because he supports choices that pregnant women face when considering whether to give birth or abort.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue wants to know more:

“If helping pregnant women make choices is the supreme issue for Rudy Giuliani, then he should be able to document all the checks he’s written to support Crisis Pregnancy Centers—not just Planned Parenthood. If he can’t, it is logical to conclude that the only real choice he thinks is worthy of his money is the one which results in the death of innocent human beings. And that would make him a fraud.”

SHARPTON INSULTS MORMONS; WILL HE BE HELD TO THE IMUS STANDARD?

On May 7, Rev. Al Sharpton debated author Christopher Hitchens at the New York Public Library on the question of God's existence. In the course of the debate, Hitchens made a snide reference to a Mormon candidate for the Republican nomination (Governor Mitt Romney). When Sharpton had an opportunity to respond, he said, "As for the Mormon running for office, those who really believe in God will defeat him anyways, so don't worry about that; that's a temporary situation."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue spoke to this issue today:

"Rev. Al Sharpton says he has been preaching for 48 of his 52 years and that he was ordained a minister at the ripe old age of nine. Therefore, he should know better than to insult people of faith, independent of religious affiliation. What he said about Gov. Romney is reprehensible.

"Applying the same standard of justice Sharpton invoked against Imus for his racist quip, this should finish Sharpton's career. But will it? It is up to Senators Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John Edwards to denounce Sharpton. After all, they all condemned Imus and all of them recently spoke at Sharpton's National Action Network convention in New York City.

"Sharpton is more than a man of the cloth. He is a former presidential contender who is integrally tied to the Democratic party. Therefore, it is incumbent that he be held accountable for his bigoted outburst."