

OBAMA NIXES “JESUS” AT GEORGETOWN

When President Barack Obama spoke at Georgetown University on April 14, the White House requested that all religious symbols and signage that might appear as a backdrop to where the president was to speak be covered up. Georgetown acceded to the request and made sure that the symbol “IHS,” a monogram of the name Jesus Christ, was not in sight.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue spoke to this issue today:

“The cowardice of Georgetown to stand fast on principle tells us more than we need to know about what is going on there, but the bigger story is the audacity of the Obama administration to ask a religious school to neuter itself before the president speaks there. No bishop who might speak at the White House would ever request that a crucifix be displayed behind him. Moreover, the same church and state fanatics who go nuts every time a polling place is set up in the basement of a Catholic school have been noticeably silent over this incident.

“Obama will be speaking at Notre Dame, and receiving an honorary award, on May 17. Will his advance team ask Notre Dame to scrub the campus clean of religious symbols? Or just the ones that might appear behind the podium? Obama is in enough trouble with Catholics—over his pro-abortion executive orders and appointees, his position on embryonic stem cell research and his war on the conscience rights of healthcare workers—that it seems almost suicidal for his administration to push the envelope one more time. This is getting old fast.”

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RANDALL TERRY LECTURES BISHOP D'ARCY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue issued the following remarks on a column by pro-life activist Randall Terry that appeared in yesterday's *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*:

"Three weeks ago, Archbishop Raymond Burke, the former St. Louis archbishop who is now working in the Vatican, publicly chastised Randall Terry for misrepresenting a meeting they had in Rome. Now Terry has stepped in it again, this time having the gall to lecture Fort Wayne-South Bend Bishop John D'Arcy for not contacting him before he called on Catholics not to demonstrate at this year's Commencement at Notre Dame; President Barack Obama will be given an honorary degree, something which D'Arcy strongly opposes. For some bizarre reason, Terry thinks Bishop D'Arcy should have checked in with him before he made his prudent decision.

"Terry doesn't know when to quit. This quote is a gem: 'D'Arcy has stepped far beyond his canonical authority by urging the faithful to abandon the babies—and thereby abandon Christ—and to honor Obama and Jenkins [the Notre Dame president] with our silent cooperation.' This is arrogance on stilts: Terry just became a Catholic in 2005 and now he is an authority on canon law. Worse, he accuses Bishop D'Arcy, who is strongly pro-life, of abandoning babies *and* Christ.

"The problem with pro-life zealots is that they expect everyone to line up single file and do exactly what they want. Thus do they play to the worst stereotype floated by the pro-abortion camp. Terry needs to take a deep breath and get off his high horse."

NY GOV. FORCE FEEDS GAY MARRIAGE

New York Governor David Paterson will introduce a bill legalizing gay marriage tomorrow. Commenting on this is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“In a Quinnipiac poll taken two weeks ago, New Yorkers resoundingly rejected gay marriage by a margin of 59-41 percent; even a majority of Democrats don’t support it. So why is Governor Paterson trying to force feed legislation the people don’t want? Moreover, this is not just another bill before the people—this is a bill that would radically alter the most basic and important institution in the nation.

“Paterson has received bad advice on many matters, and that is why his poll numbers are at record lows. But this advice is the worst yet. If two guys can get married, on what principle can the state deny three guys? It can’t. Marriage is not for men or women: its function is to provide for procreation and the establishment of a family. Nature limits that function to a man and a woman, and society ought to ratify nature, not try to best it.

“For all the happy talk about inclusion, gay marriage is positively exclusionary in its effects. How so? Next month we will celebrate Mother’s Day. How do two men tell their legally acquired children that they are excluded from celebrating this special day? How do two women tell their legally acquired children that they are excluded from celebrating Father’s Day? One way to do it is to ban these special days, and that is exactly what has already happened in some gay-friendly schools in New York City.

“So not only will New Yorkers be force fed gay marriage, they can look forward to the time when the despots censor Mother’s Day and Father’s Day in the schools. All in the name of tolerance, of course.”

SEBELIUS-TILLER CONNECTION IS SICK

The Associated Press reports that in documents it recently reviewed, President Obama’s choice to head the department of health and human services, Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius, received three times as much money from late-term abortionist Dr. George Tiller than she previously acknowledged.

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

“The name Dr. George Tiller is synonymous with death. By his own admission, he has performed over 60,000 abortions. His specialty is killing babies in utero who are nearly born, or are already partially born. He is a master at that. This is the same guy who lavished Kathleen Sebelius with cash when she ran for office in Kansas: he knew what he was buying—a public official he knew wouldn’t betray him. Now we know how really generous he was.

“Sebelius testified that she received \$12,450 from Tiller between 1994-2001. Here is what AP is reporting today: ‘What Sebelius left out: Campaign finance documents show that Tiller also contributed \$10,000 to Sebelius’ Bluestem Fund PAC in September 2000, and his clinic, Women’s Health Care Services, contributed \$8,000 to the PAC in December 2001 and another \$5,000 in March 2002.’

“The real problem is not Sebelius’ habitual underreporting (she also had to pay more than \$7,000 in back taxes): the real problem is the source of her PAC money. Tiller has to kill kids—he admits to killing 100 per week—in order to get the dough he needs to grease Sebelius. No wonder the last three archbishops of Kansas have publicly criticized her.

“If I were to inadvertently shake Tiller’s hand, I would immediately repair to the bathroom for a cleansing. I can’t imagine what kind of person would take tens of thousands of dollars from him, year after year, as well as throw parties for him in the Governor’s Mansion. Gives me the creeps just thinking about it.”

“ANGELS & DEMONS” DOUBLESPEAK

A new television promo for “Angels & Demons” features actor Tom Hanks, who plays Harvard professor Robert Langdon, discussing “the 400 year myth of the Illuminati”; he says they “have come for their revenge” against the Vatican. Commenting on the video, and some recent comments by Hanks, is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“Tom Hanks is on record saying he doesn’t believe in conspiracy theories. Yet that hasn’t stopped him from playing the lead role in two back-to-back conspiracy tales, both of which target the Catholic Church. ‘Conspiracy theories, I think...conjured up by people who can then sell their books about conspiracy theories,’ says Hanks. People like Dan Brown, author of *The Da Vinci Code* and *Angels & Demons*?

“Here’s more doublespeak. On Brown’s website he addresses the conspiratorial Illuminati: ‘It is historical fact that the Illuminati vowed vengeance against the Vatican in the 1600s.’

Wrong. It is an historical fact that there was no Illuminati until 1776; it folded in 1787.

“Were it not for savaging Catholicism, few would care about the duplicity of Brown and Hanks. But they are obviously not content to spin mysterious tales absent an anti-Catholic animus. That is why the Vatican denied them the opportunity to film on its grounds. It also explains the Catholic League’s on-going campaign to educate the public about their agenda.”

To learn more about the agenda of “Angels & Demons” see www.catholicleague.org

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART’S EASTER PRESENT: “THE POPE’S TOILET”

During Holy Week, New York City’s Museum of Modern Art featured the film, “The Pope’s Toilet.” Filmed in Spanish with English subtitles, the movie revolves around a visit by Pope John Paul II to the poor town of Melo, Uruguay near the Brazilian border. Anticipating the arrival of the pope, townspeople become vendors hawking food and drinks. One of them decides to cash in on the food consumption and sets up a pay public restroom. The film is the work of two Uruguayans: writer Enrique Fernández and cinematographer César Charlone.

This movie wouldn’t have caught our attention except for its venue and timing. The movie, which debuted two years ago, was deliberately shown during Holy Week and ended on Easter Monday. Also, it’s not as if it was being shown at some run-down theatre, it was showcased at the Museum of Modern Art.

The *New York Times* said the film takes an “oblique dig at a

church that, the movie suggests, may have failed its most disadvantaged followers.” When it was shown at a Toronto Film Festival, it was described as blending “the sacred and profane.” Which explains why V.A. Musetto of the *New York Post*—who has never found a Catholic-bashing flick he didn’t love—gave it three stars.

The person responsible for all of this is Laurence Kardish, senior curator in the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art. He didn’t choose this film without deliberation. Indeed, he admits to previewing “more films than there are hours in the year.” And “The Pope’s Toilet” beat out all competitors. We checked to see what Muslims were treated to at Ramadan and found that “Hollywood on the Hudson: Filmmaking in New York, 1920-39” was featured then. When Jews celebrated Yom Kippur, a movie about African patriarchy was shown, “Delwende.” Which makes his choice of “The Pope’s Toilet” at Eastertime take on greater meaning.

OBAMA APPOINTEE HARRY KNOX UNFIT TO SERVE

Harry Knox, director of the religion and faith program at the Human Rights Campaign, a gay rights organization, has been appointed by the Obama administration to serve on the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Catholic League president Bill Donohue explains why Knox is unfit to serve:

“On the home page of the Human Rights Campaign, it says that Knox was ‘denied ordination because he is gay.’ This is patently untrue. He was denied ordination in the United

Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ because he is a sexually active homosexual. Regardless, it is his open disdain for Catholicism that makes him a bad choice to serve on the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

“When Pope Benedict XVI recently said that condoms are not the answer to HIV/AIDS, he was simply voicing common sense: the promiscuous distribution of condoms has coincided with a precipitous increase in HIV/AIDS. But to gay activists like Knox, the pope is a liar. Indeed, he instructed the pope to ‘start telling the truth about condom use,’ holding the Holy Father accountable for ‘endangering people’s lives.’ He never explained how calls for abstinence could possibly jeopardize anyone’s life. Knox even went so far as to say that because the Knights of Columbus—like most Americans—oppose gay marriage, they are ‘foot soldiers of a discredited army of oppression.’

“Though Knox is not Catholic, he could not resist blasting the Catholic Church when it decided a few years back to ban homosexual candidates for the priesthood who ‘supported gay culture.’ He branded this commonsensical position ‘an attempt at mind control’ and a ‘dangerous and immoral’ stance. In other words, he wants the Catholic Church to accept candidates like himself, practicing homosexuals so radical that even liberal mainline Protestant seminaries turn them away.

“Catholics take note: the Obama administration would never appoint an anti-gay person to any post. But it has no problem appointing anti-Catholics.”

CONSCIENCE RIGHTS DEFEATED

Yesterday an amendment introduced by Sen. Tom Coburn to protect the conscience of patients and healthcare providers was defeated by a vote of 56-41. The amendment was proposed in light of the Obama administration's plans to rescind the rule, which was issued in December by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), that protects the right of healthcare workers at federally-funded facilities to refuse to perform or be involved in medical procedures that violate their consciences.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue spoke to this issue today:

"The failure of the administration and the Senate to protect freedom of conscience is an outrageous violation of human rights and a slap in the face to Catholics and other people of faith. No one in the healthcare field should ever be compelled by law to perform or assist in a procedure that violates his conscience. This should be an elementary right, yet there are those who want to trespass on it.

"Francis Cardinal George, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has called upon Catholics to let the government know that conscience protections are fundamental rights of Americans. He expressed concern that reversal of the current rule 'would be the first step in moving our country from democracy to despotism.'

"Failure to protect the right of conscience, combined with overturning the Mexico City Policy, supporting the United Nations Population Fund, funding embryonic stem cell research and nominating radical abortion rights supporter Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to be the Secretary of HHS, sends the message to Catholics that their concerns are not important.

"We implore all lawmakers to reconsider this issue with an eye

toward restoring the conscience rights of healthcare workers.”

PRO-OBAMA CATHOLIC DISRESPECTS BISHOPS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on an article by Michael Sean Winters posted on the blog site of *America* magazine:

“More and more bishops are publicly disagreeing with the decision by Notre Dame President Father John Jenkins to invite President Barack Obama to deliver the commencement address this year; Obama is also to be awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree.

“Michael Sean Winters not only disagrees with the bishops, he has written an attack piece that accuses them of ‘disrespecting’ President Obama by calling him ‘pro-abortion.’ He also accuses the bishops of being ‘out of touch’ with American culture.

“Catholics United, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, and Catholic Democrats join Winters in promoting the fiction that Obama is not pro-abortion. Consider the following: when Obama was in the Illinois state senate he championed a bill to deny health care to a baby born alive who survived an abortion; he condemned the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court outlawing partial-birth abortion; he has already signed executive orders overturning previous orders restricting abortion; he has appointed nothing but radical pro-abortion attorneys to his administration; he has consistently received a 100 percent approval rating from NARAL, the most extreme pro-abortion group in the nation; and he has told Planned

Parenthood he will sign the Freedom of Choice Act, the most dangerous pro-abortion bill ever authored.

“And yet, after all this, we are to conclude that Obama is not really pro-abortion. Worse, we are to believe that the bishops have been ‘disrespectful’ for telling the truth. Nice to know whose side Winters is on. Moreover, it is not the job of the bishops to be ‘in touch’ with the dominant culture when the conventional wisdom is morally wrong—it is their job to change it. But to Catholic journalists whose goal in life is to win the plaudits of their cohorts in secular circles, such a challenge is obviously too much to bear.”

PROGRESS MADE IN NY STATE ABUSE LAW

There are two bills before the New York State legislature dealing with the issue of amending the statute of limitations for cases involving the sexual abuse of minors. One bill, sponsored by Assemblywoman Margaret Markey, would allow those who were abused in a Catholic school a half-century ago to file suit; it would do nothing to change the privileged status of the public schools (the accused have only 90 days to file a claim). The other bill, sponsored by Assemblyman Vito Lopez, would apply equally to private and public institutions.

The Markey bill cleared an Assembly committee two weeks ago by a vote of 11-8. Yesterday, the Lopez bill passed by a margin of 18-1.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

“While this issue is not over, what happened yesterday was a

victory for those who want equal justice for private and public institutions. The big losers are those who want to discriminate against Catholic and Jewish schools while insulating the public schools.

“The losers include SNAP, a professional victims’ advocacy organization greased by steeple-chasing lawyers; attorneys who stand to profit from soaking the Catholic Church like Irwin Zalkin; attorneys who have a vested ideological interest in milking the Catholic Church like Marci Hamilton, a professor of law at Yeshiva University; and newspapers with an animus against Catholicism like *Newsday* and the *New York Times*.

“Those who support the Markey bill argue that her bill would apply equally to Catholic and public schools. They are wrong, and it isn’t a matter of opinion: in California, when a bill similar to Markey’s was passed, victims of public school abuse were turned away. Those who lost yesterday know this, but it doesn’t matter. That’s because they don’t believe in a level playing field.”

Thank Assemblyman Lopez: LopezV@assembly.state.ny.us