

RIGHTS OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS THREATENED

It was reported today that the Obama administration is planning to rescind the rule issued in December by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that protects the rights of health care workers at federally-funded facilities to refuse to perform or be involved in medical procedures that violate their consciences, such as abortion. The "conscience rule" went into effect last month.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue discussed the ramifications of this action:

"This regulation gives health care workers the right to be free from discriminatory edicts invoked by those who have no respect for their conscience rights. No one in the health care field should ever be compelled by law to perform or assist in a procedure that violates his or her conscience. This should be an elementary right, yet there are those who want to trespass on it.

"This would be another step in the wrong direction for an administration which is promoting abortion by overturning the Mexico City Policy, promising to support the United Nations Population Fund and considering the nomination of radical abortion rights supporter Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to be the Secretary of HHS. This action would be the most offensive since it compromises the rights of Catholics to act according to their conscience.

"It is imperative that President Obama not rescind this morally critical regulation. Catholics will be watching very closely."

2008 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE

The Catholic League's *2008 Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism* is now available. It covers anti-Catholic incidents in the following areas: activist organizations; the arts; business and workplace; education; government; media; and miscellaneous. In addition to the findings, William Donohue provides an executive summary, which places the incidents in perspective.

This volume also includes special sections detailing the Eucharistic desecration by Professor Paul Z. Myers; the controversy surrounding Pastor John Hagee's endorsement of Senator John McCain; and extensive coverage of the War on Christmas.

Copies of the report have been sent to many in the media, to educators, and to other interested parties. Those in the media who have not received a complimentary copy of the *2008 Annual Report* can contact our office to obtain one. The report is also available to the public for \$10.

MEDIA CIRCUS OVER VATICAN VOLUME; FROM U.K. TO "THE

VIEW"

On February 18, there was a news story in *The Times* (of London) about "a study approved by the Vatican" showing that men are more given to lust; women to pride. This story was reprinted in the *New York Post* on the same day. Both newspapers identified Wojciech Giertych as "the personal theologian" to the pope. The next day, ABC News referred to the work as a "survey."

On February 18, panelists on the ABC show, "The View," discussed these news reports and took the occasion to slam Catholicism. Bill Donohue responded with a news release criticizing what transpired. On today's show, Joy Behar said that Donohue "says in a letter that we read that Barbara [Walters] should be squelching us from this type of thing."

Donohue replies as follows:

"What a bunch of incompetents. First of all, there is no study that was approved by the Vatican on the subject. There is a book by Dominican Father Giertych, and it was not 'approved' by the Vatican: his comments appeared in a Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. He is not 'the personal theologian' to the pope; rather, he is theologian of the papal household. Moreover, he did not conduct a survey—he wrote a book. Both the terms 'study' and 'survey' suggest something scientific, and therefore distort the priest's work.

"What Behar calls a 'letter' was actually a news release. More important, I never said Walters should be squelching them. What I said was that after we hit her with a *New York Times* ad in 2007 for tolerating anti-Catholicism, 'she got the message and quieted her panelists.'

"What a media circus: inept journalists feeding anti-Catholic bigots. We contacted one of the two Brit reporters, Jack Malvern, about his story but he failed to reply. It's time he

heard from our side. Let 'View' co-producer Bill Geddie hear from you again."

Contact Malvern at j.malvern@thetimes.co.uk

Contact Geddie at bill.geddie@abc.com

ARCHBISHOP DOLAN—PERFECT FOR NEW YORK

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on news that Milwaukee Archbishop Timothy Dolan will be the new Archbishop of New York:

"What a perfect fit: Archbishop Dolan has the erudition, tenacity, affability and orthodoxy necessary for a leadership role in New York. My dealings with him have been extraordinarily positive.

"In the fall of 2007, the Catholic League launched a boycott and PR campaign against the Miller Brewing Company for its sponsorship of a vile anti-Catholic gay event, the Folsom Street Fair, in San Francisco. After six weeks of pounding Miller, we got what we wanted: an apology for four anti-Catholic incidents and a pledge not to sponsor the event again.

"During the course of the PR campaign, we had occasion to work with Archbishop Dolan and Chaldean Bishop Ibrahim N. Ibrahim. In both instances, their support proved to be encouraging and effective: the word went out that the Catholic community in Milwaukee, home of Miller Brewing, was seriously offended by the beer company's role in sponsoring the Folsom Street Fair.

“In other words, Archbishop Dolan did not hesitate to step up to the plate. He showed leadership from top to bottom. Which is why a man of his character is a perfect fit for New York’s rough and tumble milieu. We look forward to working with him.”

SEBELIUS SPINS HERSELF

Word that Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius might be tapped as the new secretary of health and human services has a lot of people talking. Catholic League president Bill Donohue is one of them:

“Kathleen Sebelius is a master at spinning herself. In 2002, she described herself as ‘a practicing Catholic.’ But not always. For example, she opposes capital punishment and animal abuse, but supports abortion. Evidently, being a ‘practicing Catholic’ allows her to protect serial murderers, cats and dogs, but not innocent unborn children. But she does not claim ignorance. In 2006, she said, ‘My Catholic faith teaches me that life is sacred. Personally, I believe abortion is wrong.’ She said this immediately after she vetoed a bill which would have strengthened her state’s ban on late-term abortions.

“Her spinning gets downright dizzy when one considers her close relationship with Dr. George Tiller. This is a man who boasts of performing over 60,000 abortions—he claims to do 100 a week—and who specializes in killing kids in the second and third trimester. In 2007, Sebelius invited Tiller and his staff to a party in her home, thanking him for his generosity for contributing to her campaign.

“Tiller knows exactly what he is doing. On his website, he cites that one of the ‘Three Rules of the Practice’ of late-term abortion care is *‘Time, patience, and the baby will*

come.' (His italics.) The *baby* will come?

"I've saved the best for last. Tiller's Women's Health Care Services advertises a chaplaincy program that provides 'sacraments such as baptism of the still born [*sic*] fetus and blessings for the aborted fetus.' Yet no one—including Tiller—offers baptism or blessings for shoes or salamanders. Just kids. We called and asked why the distinction between the baptism for the stillborn and blessings for the aborted baby. Chaplain Diane Warren just laughed and said they would do whatever was requested. But of course—it's all about choice! The kind of choice that Sebelius loves."

SEBELIUS—ENEMY OF THE UNBORN—TO HHS?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a front-page story in today's *New York Times* that says Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius is the president's top choice as secretary of health and human services:

"Almost all of those working in the Obama administration are pro-abortion, and the expectation is that almost all future appointees will be champions of abortion rights, as well. Fortunately, most are not in a position to affect abortion policy. One glaring exception is the secretary of health and human services. Unfortunately, Gov. Sebelius, a Catholic, may get the job.

"Sebelius' support for abortion is so far off-the-charts that she has been publicly criticized by the last three archbishops of Kansas City. In 1992, when Sebelius was a state legislator, Archbishop Ignatius Strecker rebuked her for leading what he

dubbed a 'death-march of the unborn.' When Sebelius became governor in 2003, Archbishop James Keleher, citing her abortion record, asked her to move her inauguration interfaith service from Topeka's Assumption Catholic Church. She refused. The current archbishop, Joseph Naumann, called her out on the issue: he challenged her to name one instance in her long legislative career where she supported limiting abortion rights. She could not. He subsequently asked her not to go to Communion.

"None of these archbishops overreacted. Not only does Sebelius support the now outlawed practice of killing babies who are 80 percent born, so-called partial-birth abortion, she has accepted donations from one of the most notorious practitioners of this Nazi-style act—Dr. George Tiller. Moreover, she even hosted a dinner for him in the Governor's Mansion.

"THE VIEW" RIPS CATHOLICISM—AGAIN

A news story in today's *New York Post* claims there is "a new study approved by the Vatican" on sin that concludes that "Men and women sin in different ways." Men are more given to lust; women to pride. This story was the subject of an exchange today on the ABC-TV show, "The View." Here is an excerpt:

Whoopi Goldberg: Realize the Vatican is the last word in all things that are god. For some folks. But explain how you suddenly can write new sins. You can't do that.

Joy Behar: The pope is supposed to be infallible. He can say whatever he wants and people believe it. That's how it goes.

Goldberg: But that doesn't make any sense.

Barbara Walters: What do you think is the biggest sin?

Behar: Lust amongst priests.

Elizabeth Hasselbeck: Pedophilia. They put that in the year after.

Goldberg: The biggest sin?...Intolerance.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

"After we blasted Barbara Walters in an op-ed page ad in the *New York Times* in June 2007 for sanctioning anti-Catholic bigotry on 15 occasions over the previous year, she got the message and quieted her panelists. But now they're back, expressing their ignorance as well as their hostility.

"Goldberg is wrong to say that the Vatican is writing new sins: The report quotes one monsignor about a study whose author remains curiously undisclosed. Behar, another ex-Catholic, is wrong to speak so sweepingly about the pope's infallibility: almost everything he says is of a fallible nature, and he has said absolutely nothing about this issue. And Hasselbeck, yet another ex-Catholic, was anxious to show that she also hates Catholics (she succeeded), paints priests as child molesters. How ironic it is to hear them say it is the Church that is intolerant. If only they could hear themselves speak."

Contact co-producer Bill Geddie at bill.geddie@abc.com

UNIV. OF GEORGIA APOLOGIZES

Earlier today, Catholic League president Bill Donohue wrote a news release about a poster placed in the dorms of the University of Georgia that misappropriated Christian iconography: it altered the Michelangelo painting of the Sistine Chapel that shows the hand of God reaching out to Adam to depict the exchange of a condom.

Donohue e-mailed a copy of his letter, which was the basis of the news release, to Dr. Rodney D. Bennett, Vice President for Student Affairs. Bennett subsequently called Donohue saying he had heard from quite a few Catholic League members about this episode. Donohue explains what happened:

"I am writing to the president of the University of Georgia, Dr. Michael F. Adams, to commend him for choosing Dr. Bennett as his Vice President for Student Affairs. Dr. Bennett was not aware of the offensive poster until we contacted him, but when he saw it, he reacted swiftly and responsibly: his apology was as sincere as it was thorough. He pledged to take 'corrective action,' doing what he can to stop this from happening again on campus. He not only conveyed his 'deepest apology' over the phone—he put it in writing.

"Too bad other officials, in and out of education, aren't as honest and diligent as Dr. Bennett. I am happy to say that this ends our dispute with the University of Georgia. Case closed."

UNIV. OF GEORGIA OFFENDS CHRISTIANS

As part of its Sexual Responsibility program, the University of Georgia has placed a poster in the dorms that misappropriates Christian iconography to promote condom distribution.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue sent the following letter today to Dr. Rodney D. Bennett, Vice President for Student Affairs:

“This letter is in response to a complaint that has come to my attention from a Catholic student on your campus. It concerns an offensive poster that has been placed in the dorms at the University of Georgia. As you can see from the enclosed, the famous Michelangelo painting on the Sistine Chapel ceiling that features the hand of God giving life to Adam has been hijacked to promote condoms.

“I understand that the University of Georgia has just finished having Sexual Responsibility Week. If condom distribution is to be part of that program, surely it can be done without needlessly offending the religious sensibilities of Catholics and Protestants.

“I hasten to add that the University of Georgia would *never* choose a depiction of Muhammad to hawk condoms. Indeed, only a few years ago an inoffensive depiction of this Islamic figure in a Danish cartoon led to murder and churches being burned to the ground. One can only imagine what would have happened had he been portrayed pushing condoms to youth.

“Thank you for your attention to this matter.”

To view the poster, click [here](#).

Contact Dr. Bennett at bennettr@uga.edu

DUPLICITY MARKS MARYLAND SEX ABUSE BILL

Bills have been introduced in both houses of the Maryland legislature that would amend the current law that allows alleged victims of child sexual abuse to file civil suit against the offender up until the age of 25. Under the bills sponsored by Sen. Delores Goodwin Kelley and C. Sue Hecht in the House, the age limit on the statute of limitations would be raised from 25 to 50 years old. The retroactive provision would open up a two-year window during which claims could be made.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue opposes the bills:

“If Maryland lawmakers are serious about combating child sexual abuse, they need to have one law for everyone. They do not, and under the proposed bills, they still will not. To be specific, these bills continue the outrageous insulation afforded the public schools: under the law claims are limited to \$100,000 in damages and alleged victims must give notice of a suit within six months. No such cap is afforded private institutions. In other words, both bills would ratify a dual system of justice.

“Sen. Kelley denies that her bill is targeting the Catholic Church, and she concedes that priests account for ‘less than two percent of perpetrators.’ Likewise, Delegate Hecht admits that priests account for ‘a miniscule number’ of offenses. That being the case, it suggests the real damage is being done elsewhere. And since we know that the sexual abuse of minors

is 100 times greater in the public schools than in the Catholic Church, justice demands that the law include public schools as well.

“Imagine, for just one moment, what the reaction would be if a law were proposed that would severely penalize public school teachers for sexual abuse but would give a slap on the wrist to Catholic teachers for the same offense. And imagine what would happen if there were a cap on the amount of damages a victim could extract from Catholic schools, but the public schools could be squeezed for millions.”

Contact Delegate Hecht: sue.hecht@house.state.md.us