

CRITICS LOVE VAMPIRE PRIEST FILM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the filmmaker and movie reviewers of "Thirst," which opened today in select theaters:

This movie, the work of a Korean ex-Catholic, Park Chan-wook, is about a Roman Catholic priest turned vampire. It is strewn with blood and gore, but that hasn't stopped film critics from loving it.

The *Los Angeles Times* commended Park for "constructing beautifully composed images of aestheticized violence." Too bad Mel Gibson didn't study under Park: when "The Passion of the Christ" was released, the *L.A. Times* blasted it for its "overwhelming level of on-screen violence."

The *San Francisco Chronicle* admitted that "Park dwells on disgusting images, from the priest's throbbing boils to his sucking of victims' blood through medical tubes, to gory vomiting and various scenes of bone-smashing violence." But, wait, "There's a sense of glee in all the mayhem that helps mitigate the shock effects—at least a bit." This same newspaper found no glee in Mel's classic, labeling the violence "numbing."

Stephen Whitty of the *Newark Star-Ledger* liked the "giddily surreal stuff" of Park's violence, but saw no fun in "The Passion": he slammed it for showing the crucifixion of Christ in "literally nauseating detail."

A.O. Scott of the *New York Times* praised Park for his "undeniable knack for choreographing bloody, sensual set pieces." Moreover, Scott noted the "elegantly presented servings of sex and gore." But he chided Mel, saying that he "exploited the popular appetite for terror and gore." That's

right—Mel never learned how to serve his violence with elegance.

Finally, V.A. Musetto of the *New York Post* predicted that the “windbags at the right-wing Catholic League” would call the film “Catholic bashing.” Not really. It’s actually junk designed to seduce guys like him into thinking it’s art.

RIGHTS OF BABY CUT FROM WOMB UNCERTAIN

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addresses the uncertainties surrounding the eight-month old baby who was cut from her mother’s womb in Worcester, Massachusetts:

When Barack Obama was in the Illinois state senate, he led the fight to deny health care to babies born as a result of a botched abortion. It is not certain what he would say if asked whether the baby who survived being cut from the womb of Darlene Haynes should be attended to by physicians.

Nor is it certain what one of his science advisors would say. John P. Holdren, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, co-authored a book in the 1970s wherein he maintained that an unborn child “*after birth, will ultimately develop into a human being.*” (My italics.) This would seem to indicate that this baby, in particular, isn’t a human being. Holdren is also on record saying that he supports the right of trees to sue: In the 1970s, he wrote that “natural objects” like trees should be given standing in court. He maintained that by allowing trees to sue, it would have a “most salubrious” effect on the environment.

In other words, it is questionable whether kids who survive an abortion or a murderer's knife are entitled to health care, but it is about time we granted rights to weeping willows. And this was supposed to be the most ethical administration in American history. It just doesn't get any sicker than this.

EUTHANASIA AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue discusses Section 1233 of H.R. 3200, the health care reform bill that was introduced in the House:

There is language in this section of the bill that implies that the federal government may become involved in euthanasia. So over the past two days, July 27-28, Catholic League staff contacted the following persons, committees or offices looking for clarification:

Rep. Nancy Pelosi; Rep. John Dingell; Rep. Rob Andrews; Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr.; Rep. Charles Rangel; Rep. Pete Stark; Rep. Henry Waxman; Rep. George Miller; Rep. Dale Kildee; Rep. Carolyn Maloney; Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius; HHS Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives; HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Aging; HHS Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation for Discretionary Health Programs; HHS Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation for Mandatory Health Programs; HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation; HHS Congressional Liaison Office; HHS Office of Human Services Policy; HHS Office of Disability, Aging and Long-Term Care Policy; HHS Office of Planning and Policy

Support; HHS Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation for Human Services; Ways and Means Committee; Education and Labor Committee; Energy and Commerce Committee; Oversight and Government Reform Committee; Budget Committee; White House Health Reform Office.

No one with whom we spoke said the government is entering the business of euthanasia. But this is not enough. We need to know exactly what is meant by the following: “An explanation by the practitioner of the continuum of end-of-life services and supports available...” We also need to know exactly what is meant by “The Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register proposed quality measures on end of life care and advanced care planning...” The public has a right to know exactly what is meant by terms like “end-of-life services” and “quality measures.” Now is the time to settle this issue.

Contact healthreform@hhs.gov

TONY ALAMO, VETERAN BIGOT, GOING TO PRISON

Evangelist Tony Alamo was convicted today on all counts of transporting minors across state lines for sex. Catholic League president Bill Donohue is delighted:

Tony Alamo Christian Ministries Worldwide was the name of his organization, and “World Pastor” was his name. Now this child-abusing, tax dodging, viciously anti-Catholic bigot is finally being put away for good. Convicted of having sex with girls as young as 9, and of multiple “marriages,” this supreme exploiter was convicted of tax evasion in 1994 and sent to prison while heading a multimillion-dollar business.

Had the blasphemy laws still been on the books, Alamo would have been sent to the slammer long ago (and many young girls would have been saved). Not surprisingly, we have a fat file on him at the Catholic League. Here are some of his more infamous remarks:

- “The Vatican is posing as Snow White, but the Bible says that she is a prostitute, ‘the great whore,’ a cult (Rev. 19:2).”
- “The cult (the Vatican) is very close to replacing our U.S. Constitution with her one-world, satanic canon laws of death to the ‘heretic’ (anyone who is not Roman Catholic).”
- “His [President John F. Kennedy’s] assassination was ordered by Rome, then planned and carried out by Jesuits, just as President Lincoln’s was. Anyone who knew too much about Mr. Kennedy’s assassination was taken care of too.”

No wonder Alamo blamed the Vatican for conspiring against him in the trial that just ended—he’s possessed with hatred of the Catholic Church. And he made a pretty good living off of it, as well. Moreover, he found no problem getting his hateful message across. Just last November he published a Catholic-bashing ad in the Fort Smith, Arkansas *Times Record*, and in December he published one in the *Long Island Press*.

Alamo’s attorneys said the government went after him because it didn’t like his “Christianity.” Lucky for them we don’t send all kooks to the asylum.

“COMMON GROUND” SHOWDOWN

Representative Mike Pence has an amendment to the Labor-HHS appropriations bill that would bar Title X money to Planned Parenthood; a vote will be taken on it today. It is the subject of a news release by Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

This is it. We are now at *the* defining moment. All the chatter about “common ground” on abortion will come to a conclusion today. Will those self-identified anti-abortion Catholic individuals and groups that have abandoned legal strategies to combat abortion take the position that Title X money should not wind up in the pocket of Planned Parenthood? While Title X does not provide funding for abortion, everyone knows that money is fungible: by giving Planned Parenthood Title X funding, it effectively underwrites its abortion clinics.

SECULAR LITMUS TEST FOR NIH APPOINTEE?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the reaction to President Barack Obama’s recent pick of Francis Collins to head the National Institutes of Health:

Francis Collins is the former director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, and by all accounts he was an excellent administrator. He is also an evangelical. *Science* magazine does not exaggerate when it says that “some are concerned about his outspoken Christian faith.” Among those concerned are Univ. of Chicago outspoken atheist Jerry A. Coyne, outspoken atheist anthropologist Eric Michael Johnson,

Harvard psychologist and outspoken atheist Steven Pinker and the Univ. of Minnesota's outspoken atheist, PZ Myers.

Coyne gives Collins high marks as an administrator, but that's not enough. "Certainly, *private* expressions of faith are absolutely fine, but Collins has chosen to make his views public...." In other words, it's okay by him if Collins limits his religious expression to praying at home—just don't talk about it in public. Similarly, Johnson says, "I don't doubt Collins's skills as a scientist or as an administrator," but notes nonetheless that his religion "makes some researchers uncomfortable." Yes, and some researchers are uncomfortable working with atheists.

Pinker is not bothered by Collins being "a devout Christian," but he does object to his alleged "public advocacy," offering that he does not want "an atheist-litmus-test for science administrators." One is immediately reminded of Richard Nixon saying he is not a "crook," or Bill Clinton saying he never had sex with "that woman." Fact: When President Bush's Council on Bioethics had several Catholics on it, Pinker accused the president of seeking to impose "a Catholic agenda on a secular democracy." In other words, Pinker is no stranger to intolerance. Furthermore, his subjectivism undercuts his scientific credibility.

Myers, of course, is most well known for desecrating a consecrated Host. It would take something miraculous for believers to take him seriously.

So they don't like Collins' beliefs. This may not be a blacklist, but we Catholics have some advice for our atheist buddies: be careful of placing yourself in the near occasion of sin.

ABORTION AS HEALTH CARE: OBAMA WANTS US TO PAY FOR IT

White House budget director Peter Orszag was asked yesterday whether “no taxpayer money will go to pay for abortions” under proposed health care legislation. “I’m not prepared to say explicitly that right now,” he said.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue picked up on that remark:

There was no reason for Orszag to sound tentative—everyone who has been following this issue knows that President Barack Obama has been very explicit about his support for abortion, as well as his desire to make the public foot the bill. Yes, he says he wants “common ground,” but there is absolutely no evidence of his budging on this issue when it gets to the policy stage. And that is the only stage that matters in the end.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, another champion of abortion-on-demand through term, commented yesterday about health care reform saying, “There are basically five different plans in Congress right now and there are a variety of ways.” Is there even one plan that explicitly says abortion will not be subsidized? We know that the Democrats, following the party line adopted by the White House, have killed every amendment that would bar public funding of abortion. So who is kidding whom?

If the Bush administration had said that it wants to seek “common ground” on gun control, and then decided to subsidize handguns in high crime areas, it would have been condemned from high heaven. The Obama administration’s game of playing footsy with the abortion industry should similarly be condemned. Indeed, it represents the audacity of duplicity to

dialogue about abortion and then send the public an invoice for killing kids in utero.

NEW YORK TIMES FEATURES McCOURT INSULT

In today's *New York Times*, there is a lengthy article about the death of Irish author, Frank McCourt. As a sidebar, there is also a short excerpt from his book, *Angela's Ashes*, about the author's First Communion. Part of what the *Times* selected reads as follows:

"Then he [the priest] placed on my tongue the wafer, the body and blood of Jesus. At last, at last. It's on my tongue. I draw it back. It stuck. I had God glued to the roof of my mouth. I could hear the master's voice, Don't let that host touch your teeth for if you bite God in two you'll roast in hell for eternity. I tried to get God down with my tongue but the priest hissed at me, Stop that clucking and get back to your seat. God was good. He melted and I swallowed Him and now, at last, I was a member of the True Church, an official sinner."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue wasn't amused:

During his lifetime, Frank McCourt made any number of insulting remarks about Catholicism, all to the applause of his sophomoric fans. That the *New York Times* selected this chestnut about Holy Communion reveals what some might say is the newspaper's dark side. This conclusion, however, would be unwarranted: the *Times* has no other side when addressing

matters Catholic.

Contact public editor Clark Hoyt at public@nytimes.com

“CHOICE” FOR D.C. MOMS: ABORT OR ENROLL IN P.S. 109

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the fate of African American women, and their children, in the nation's capital:

Following the lead of President Barack Obama, the House of Representatives passed a bill yesterday that would allow the District of Columbia to fund abortions. Also following Obama's wishes, the same bill affirmed the earlier congressional decision to end school vouchers there.

Something doesn't add up. Last night in New York, Obama spoke at the 100th anniversary celebration of the NAACP, saying, "No one has written your destiny for you." That's certainly true of the crowd "clad in tuxedos and ball gowns," as the *New York Times* described them. But what about the African American children in the nation's capital about to be born? Thanks to what happened yesterday, the road is being paved to insure that publicly financed abortionists will control the destiny of a large segment of the black poor.

Here's what it comes down to: indigent African American pregnant woman in D.C. will be told that if they decide to abort their baby, the government will pay for it. But if they persist in bringing their baby to term, the government will not help them to avoid the same lousy public schools that Barack and Michelle shunned for Sasha and Malia.

Either way, this sounds like a death warrant. That this cruel concept of choice—public funds for aborting the children of the poor but not a dime for school choice—is coming from the “champions” of the poor is all the more despicable. By contrast, they make ordinary rednecks look positively harmless.

HEALTH CARE BILL: FREEDOM OF CHOICE ACT BY OTHER MEANS?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the proposed health care legislation favored by the Obama administration:

On July 17, 2007, President Obama told his pro-abortion fans at Planned Parenthood that “the first thing I’d do as president is sign the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA).” Two years later, FOCA has yet to be reintroduced. But there are no signs that Planned Parenthood is disappointed, and that’s because Obama is delivering FOCA by stealth.

The principal reason why FOCA was not reintroduced was due to opposition from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Under the tutelage of Francis Cardinal George, head of the USCCB, and Justin Cardinal Rigali, head of the pro-life committee of the USCCB, the bishops made it clear that they would fight tooth and nail any attempt to get FOCA signed into law. Obama got the word, as did the bill’s sponsors, Rep. Jerry Nadler and Sen. Barbara Boxer. But that didn’t derail the pro-abortion forces from trying some back door maneuvering.

The USCCB believes, as does the Obama administration, that

health care is a human right. The health care bills that have been served up by supporters of Obama, however, have provisions that mirror the most draconian elements found in FOCA. To be specific, in the past week, an amendment by Sen. Mike Enzi explicitly denying abortion coverage was defeated. When Sen. Orrin Hatch asked Sen. Barbara Mikulski if she would clarify her amendment so that abortion services would not be mandated, she said no; the amendment passed.

In other words, stealth politics is at work. No, FOCA is not on the table, but central provisions of it have made their way into the health care reform bills. What is most disturbing about all of this is that the public is being hoodwinked: most have no idea of the games that are being played. All the more reason why a national discussion on this issue needs to begin immediately.