

# MICHAEL MOORE'S RELIGIOUS ODYSSEY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Michael Moore and his new movie, "Capitalism: A Love Story":

If the economic system that Michael Moore has successfully milked is "immoral" and "evil," then that would suggest that he is an immoral, evil man. But we'll let someone else make the final decision on that one. What we do know is that he is wearing his religion on his sleeve these days, telling Chris Cuomo how he believes "in the core Christian values." One wonders why, then, would this Catholic—whose role models are the rogue Berrigan brothers—would give money to an urban terrorist group right after they invaded St. Patrick's Cathedral during Cardinal O'Connor's Sunday Mass in 1989; some spat the Host on the floor.

More recently, Moore cited the oil giant Halliburton as emblematic of capitalism's evilness. What he didn't mention is that his Halliburton investments helped to make him filthy rich. Oh, yes, he also likes Sunoco.

Capitalism has been kind to Moore. He lives in a waterfront mansion with a private beach, one that is so lily-white that not a single black person lives there. This is not by accident. Though he exclaimed in his film "Stupid White Men" that he plans to "hire only black people," author Peter Schweizer found that of the 134 producers, editors, cinematographers, composers and production coordinators that Moore hired, only three were black.

Moore says it is anti-Christian not to divide the pie fairly. So what would that make him? Oh, yes, he does contribute to soup kitchens. Too bad he doesn't actually employ the poor—then he could shelve the Campbell's. In 2002, his

charitable donations amounted to \$36,000. Sounds like a lot until we learn that he made eight figures that year. One more thing: he ran his donations through his private foundation, a capitalist-created scheme designed to protect fat cats from paying their fair share of taxes.

The next time a social justice Christian brags about his commitment to the poor, ask him to open his own books. Transparency is so beautiful.

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## **DEMOCRATS ON COLLISION COURSE WITH CATHOLICS**

The amendments by Sen. Orrin Hatch that would ban abortion funding in the health care bill and ensure conscience rights protections for health care workers were defeated today by a margin of 13-10. Catholic League president Bill Donohue addressed its implications:

The Democrats are on a collision course with the nation's bishops, and the Catholic faithful in general. They cannot expect Catholics to pay for child abuse in the womb without reprisal. Nor can they expect Catholics to sit back and watch while Catholic doctors and nurses are punished for failing to cooperate in evil.

More than any group in America, Catholic bishops have been at the forefront of the movement for universal health care. But they never signed on to a health care reform package that made them violate their professed beliefs. Nor will they.

President Obama has said he will not support a bill that provides funding for abortion or denies conscience rights for

health care employees. If he is honest, then he should issue a public statement condemning what happened today. If he makes no attempt to change the outcome, then the only logical conclusion for Catholics to draw is that they have been lied to. One thing we know for sure: If all along Obama had shown a fraction of the interest on this issue that he is currently showing about winning over the Olympic Committee in bringing the games to Chicago, the Hatch amendment would have passed today.

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## MAD RUSH TO DEFEND POLANSKI

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the mad rush to defend Roman Polanski:

The Catholic League has long suspected that, in many quarters, the outrage over priestly sexual abuse has had more to do with the status of the accused than the crime itself. Now the evidence is indisputable: a child can be drugged, penetrated and sodomized—and the guilty can cut and run—and still maintain hero status. Provided he is a celebrity.

Actress Debra Winger showed up at the Zurich Film Festival “to honor Roman Polanski as a great artist, but under these sudden and arcane circumstances, we can only think of him today as a human being.” Either that or as a child rapist. She was not alone: the Zurich Film Festival jury proudly displayed red badges reading “Free Polanski.” It was also nice to know that Woody Allen, a man who speaks from experience, came to Polanski’s defense.

Whoopi Goldberg showed off her usual brilliance when she declared that Polanski’s crime “wasn’t rape-rape.” No, only priests are guilty of real rape. Noted photographer Otto

Weisser agrees: “He made a little mistake 32 years ago.” That’s right—it’s only a big mistake when priests do it. Richard Cohen of the *Washington Post* also notes that it’s been “over 30 years” since Polanski molested the girl. Similarly, movie critic Tom O’Neil exclaims that it is “mind-boggling why they’re still pursuing this.” Yet there is no statute of limitations afforded priests—men long dead have been accused of crimes extending back to the 1920s.

Harvey Weinstein is so noble: “We’re calling on every filmmaker we can to help fix this terrible situation.” The terrible situation, of course, isn’t what Polanski got away with—it’s his pursuit by the authorities. “To put him on trial or keep him in jail does not serve society in general or his victim in particular,” says journalist Anne Applebaum. She, and others, would carry more weight if the “he” included priests.

No wonder so many Americans look upon the celebrity worshippers with utter disdain. Double that for Catholics.

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## **BLASPHEMY                  DAY                  TARGETS** **CHRISTIANITY**

The Center for Inquiry will launch the first International Blasphemy Day on September 30, the anniversary of the 2005 publication of the Danish cartoons that so inflamed Muslims worldwide. Billed as a free speech event designed to oppose such things as a Muslim-sponsored U.N. resolution banning criticism of religion, the day has drawn the support of people like PZ Myers. Myers, a professor at the University of Minnesota known for intentionally desecrating a consecrated

Host, says the day was established to “mock and insult religion without fear of murder, violence, and reprisal”; he wants every day to be Blasphemy Day.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue spoke to this event today:

The Center for Inquiry is factually incorrect to say that “Free speech is the foundation on which other liberties rest.” Freedom of conscience is the first liberty, and it is inextricably linked to freedom of religion. Moreover, the whole concept of inalienable rights presupposes a belief in the Creator. In other words, atheists have the right to mock religion because our Christian Founding Fathers afforded them human rights.

They are all such phonies. The stated purpose of Blasphemy Day has nothing to do with any religion but Islam, yet there is not one scheduled event insulting Muslims. We can only guess why. So who have they chosen to mock? You guessed it—Christians.

Artist Dana Ellyn will wander to Washington, D.C. to show her masterpiece, “Jesus Does His Nails,” a portrait of Jesus polishing a nail jammed into his hand. In Los Angeles, there will be a film about a gay molesting priest and another about a boy who is so angry about being sent to bed that he asks God to kill his parents. Oh, yes, American Atheists will conduct “De-Baptisms” in New Jersey.

Nice to know that even the atheists know that Christians can be counted on to react to their antics like good Christians. Which is why there will be no violence.

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# OFFENSIVE JESUS POSTER REMOVED IN ROCKFORD

Catholic League president Bill Donohue received a letter today from Patrick W. Hayes, Legal Director, City of Rockford, Illinois, saying that his office asked the owner of the Northern Illinois Women's Center to remove the offensive poster of Jesus that we complained about yesterday. Donohue thanked Hayes for his intervention, but also took issue with him about some other matters. Below is an excerpt of his letter:

Your analogy between the poster in question and pictures of aborted children fails. The pictures are a representation of real life—they are not deliberately doctored. Nor are they a bigoted portrayal. Moreover, anti-war protesters regularly show pictures of combatants and innocents killed in war, yet no one seeks to compare them to hate speech. By contrast, depicting Jesus Christ telling Christians "F— You" is not only contrived, it is an in-your-face obscene provocation, coming dangerously close to "fighting words" ("fighting words" are not given free speech protection by the U.S. Supreme Court).

You are factually incorrect to say that American newspapers carried the *inoffensive* pictures of Muhammad: not only did none of the mainstream newspapers reprint them, not a single network or cable television station carried them. Indeed, a book about to be published by Yale University Press on the Danish cartoons is censoring a reprint of the cartoons in the same book! Therefore, there is something bizarre, if not insulting, about your parallel sympathies for Christians and Muslims in these two very different situations: none of the cartoons came even close to showing Muhammad telling Muslims "F— You."

The fact is that the Northern Illinois Women's Center is not

just another abortion mill: it is owned by a man who intentionally seeks to slander, mock and denigrate Christians. That he has been doing so for years makes his bigotry and vile behavior all the more appalling.

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## **CHRISTIANS PROVOKED IN ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue is making public a letter he sent today to Patrick W. Hayes, Legal Director, City of Rockford, Illinois. Here is the text of that letter:

I am aware that the Northern Illinois Women's Center has long been the subject of controversy in Rockford; the rights of pro-life demonstrators have allegedly been violated. That is an important issue, but that is not the reason why I am contacting you. My concern rests with the egregious provocation of Christians attendant to the enclosed graphic of Jesus Christ extending his middle finger; the inscription, "Even Jesus Hates You," appears below it. This graphic is currently being displayed in the window of the Center, in full view of adults and children; it has also been displayed, at various times, in the past.

Under Part I, Chapters 19-3 and 19-4, "Offensive Uses of Property" and "Permitting Offensive Use of Property," respectively, of the City of Rockford's Code of Ordinance, it is illegal to "disturb or destroy the peace of the neighborhood in which such building or premises are situated, or be dangerous or detrimental to health."

This incendiary picture, designed to inflame Christian passions by assaulting their sensibilities and denigrating their religion—in a vile and obscene manner—constitutes such an infraction. As such, I am requesting that you take appropriate action against the Center to put an end to such needless provocation. Thank you for your consideration.

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## OBAMA SCHOOL CZAR SAYS “SCREW YOU” TO GOD

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the appointment of Kevin Jennings to be President Obama’s Safe School Czar:

Kevin Jennings, the man selected to be the Director of the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, has a history of promoting homosexual conferences wherein unsafe sex practices are sold to underage kids. He is also a former drug user. As a counselor, he failed to notify the authorities of a sexual encounter between an adult gay man and a high school kid. And, not to be outdone, he has a history of bashing Christians.

Jennings, raised a Baptist by his minister father and non-believing, anti-Catholic mother, is known for lecturing the Catholic Church about its teachings on sexuality. He has also railed against the “hard core bigots” whom he says make up the “religious right.”

Jennings’ hatred of religion began at the age of 17, right after he masturbated at the thought of watching two “hot guys” take off their shirts in his home. We know this because this is exactly what he wrote in his book, *Mama’s Boy, Preacher’s Son: A Memoir*.



Following his masturbatory experience, Jennings revealed what happened next: “I developed a new attitude toward God as a result. Before, I was the one who was failing God; now I decided He was the one who had failed me.” Continuing, he wrote, “I decided I had done nothing wrong: *He* had, by promising to ‘set you free’ and never delivering on His promise. What *had* He done for me, other than make me feel shame and guilt? Squat. Screw you, buddy—I don’t need you around anymore, I decided.” [His italics.] He ends by saying that for many years he “reacted violently to anyone who professed any kind of religion.”

It just doesn’t get much more perverse than this. If this doesn’t prove the thesis of my new book, *Secular Sabotage: How Liberals Are Destroying Religion and Culture in America*, nothing does.

Contact Secretary of Education Arne Duncan: [arne.duncan@ed.gov](mailto:arne.duncan@ed.gov)

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## IS THE MET’S “TOSCA” SACRILEGIOUS?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on director Luc Bondy’s version of Puccini’s “Tosca,” which opened this week at the Metropolitan Opera in New York:

I did not go on opening night to see this gem—I snatched a ticket online to see the dress rehearsal on September 17. The only reason I went was because of reports that at the end of Act I there was an obscene sexual act that took place between Scarpia, the bad guy chief of secret police, and a statue of Our Blessed Mother. Alas, there wasn’t. Though perhaps some liberties were taken on opening night.

The *Vancouver Sun* reported that “the evil Scarpia fondles a statue of the Virgin Mary.” *Financial Times* says “the villainous police chief assaults a statue of the holy Virgin in carnal embrace.” The *New York Times* called it a “sacrilegious embrace,” while Bloomberg observed that “Scarpia paws” the statue. What I witnessed was an embrace, but there was nothing carnal about it. Nonetheless, what the *Wall Street Journal* reported was accurate: “Mr. Bondy added a little anticlerical joke in Act I by having the Sacristan...fill the holy water stoup and wash Cavaradossi’s brushes using water from the same bucket, and then gobble the painter’s lunch while reciting the Angelus.” Smart alecky, but not egregious.

The *New York Times* was right to say that the church setting as created by Richard Peduzzi had a “disorienting look.” Similarly, the *New Jersey Star Ledger* noted that “the church was cold, unadorned brick,” while the *Washington Post* said the church looked “almost like a postwar reconstruction of an ancient cathedral.” AP nailed it best: “The church in Act I is virtually devoid of religious trappings, and its looming arched brick walls make it look more like a prison than a place of worship.”

The best thing to happen on opening night was the eruption of boos that greeted Luc Bondy when he appeared on stage following the performance. I merely yawned. On the other hand, I bolted after Act I. Thank God I had tickets to see Aretha Franklin at Radio City the next night. I needed some relief. So, no, “Tosca” is not sacrilegious. It’s just a bore.

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# CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOC. DELIVERS: SUPPORT URGENT FOR HEALTH CARE STATEMENT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue strongly supports the statement released yesterday by Louis C. Breschi, M.D., president of the Catholic Medical Association [CMA]:

Catholic physicians who are loyal to the Magisterium are in a unique position to guide the Catholic community on health care reform. Led by Dr. Breschi, the statement just released, "Open Letter to Catholics and Catholic Organizations," deserves wide support and dissemination. It is a model of Catholic thought and insight.

The letter urges reform, but does so cautiously: it explicitly recognizes a "real *danger* that misguided legislation could make our current problems even worse." (Breschi's italics.) Furthermore, the CMA warns that a "government-controlled approach is flawed in principle and ineffective, if not dangerous, in practice." It implores us to affirm the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, noting that the government "has a very poor track record of managing large programs in a cost-effective manner."

Central to Breschi's concerns is the lack of respect the Obama administration has shown for respecting "the dignity of human life." It concludes by calling upon "all Catholics and Catholic organizations to reaffirm their support for the foundational ethical and social teachings of the Church which provide a framework for authentic health care reform, and to unite as one in an uncompromising commitment to defend the sanctity of life and the conscience rights of all providers as essential parts of health-care reform."

It is impossible to quarrel with this formulation from a

Catholic perspective, and that is why the Catholic League stands behind it without reservation. We urge others to do so, and to do so publicly.

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## **AMENDMENT TO BAR ABORTION IN HEALTH BILL; OBAMA MUST BACK IT**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue offered the following remarks today on the health care bill:

Last week, President Obama said he would not support any health care bill that provided for federal funding of abortion. On Sunday, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius underscored his pledge. Now an amendment that would bar abortion funding from H.R. 3200 has been drafted by Congressmen Bart Stupak and Joe Pitts. On September 10, they sent a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, Chairwoman of the Rules Committee, asking that they allow all members of the U.S. House of Representatives “the right to vote their conscience” on this amendment.

President Obama did not mince words on this subject, and neither did Secretary Sebelius. Accordingly, we look for the president to publicly endorse this amendment, urging Congresswomen Pelosi and Slaughter to facilitate a House vote. This is a critical juncture—the time for the president to deliver on what he pledged is now. The Catholic community, in particular, anxiously awaits his next move.