

OKAY TO MIX POLITICS AND RELIGION



Here is what Michelle Obama told members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Nashville, Tennessee yesterday: “And to anyone who says that church is no place to talk about these [political] issues, you tell them there is no better place—no better place. Because ultimately, these are not just political issues—they are moral issues.”

Bill Donohue comments on the First Lady’s remarks:

Michelle Obama followed in the footsteps of her husband yesterday when she called for the politicization of religion. President Obama has explicitly called for “congregation captains” to organize for his reelection.

George W. Bush was constantly branded a “theocrat” for simply discussing Christianity, and for naming Jesus as his favorite philosopher. But no such pernicious labeling awaits the Obamas, not even from militant secularists and civil libertarians.

Since the Obamas have taken the gloves off—in effect calling for Americans not to be restrained by separation of church and state legalisms—others should follow suit. I hope that the bishops, priests, evangelical ministers, and the orthodox members of all religions are taking note. We don’t have two constitutions: if the Obamas are giving the green light to those in their faith community to merge politics and religion, there are no more red lights left for anyone to obey.

OBAMACARE RULING AND CATHOLIC RIGHTS



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding ObamaCare:

The only way Catholic non-profits could have survived the encroachment of the federal government on their right not to buy insurance for services they deem immoral was if the entire ObamaCare legislation had been struck down. That did not happen.

The Supreme Court did not rule today on the constitutionality of the right of the Obama administration to force Catholic non-profits to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization in their insurance plans; this Health and Human Services (HHS) edict was issued after the high court accepted the ObamaCare bill. Eventually, this particular issue will reach the Supreme Court.

If the Supreme Court decision lacks clarity, the Catholic response will be anything but ambiguous: the battle lines between the bishops and the Obama administration are now brighter than ever. Fortunately, not only do practicing Catholics overwhelmingly support the bishops, tens of millions of non-Catholics also do.

ObamaCare may have survived, but it is by no means a lock that the HHS mandate will. It is one thing to levy a tax, quite another to level the First Amendment.

OBAMA'S RELIGION PROBLEM



Bill Donohue comments on President Obama's religion problem:

The more people get to know the president, the more they disbelieve him when he says he's a Christian. It does not exaggerate to say there's never been anything like this in presidential politics.

In March 2008, a Pew Research Center poll showed that 47 percent of the public said presidential-candidate Barack Obama was a Christian; 12 percent said he was Muslim and 36 percent said, "Don't Know." More than two years later, in August 2010, when asked about President Obama's religion, only 34 percent believed he was a Christian; those thinking he was Muslim grew to 18 percent, and 43 percent said, "Don't Know." The latest Gallup poll, released June 22, finds that he's still regarded by only 34 percent as a Christian; 11 percent say he's Muslim, and 44 percent say, "Don't Know."

The comparison with Mitt Romney is striking: a 2007 Pew Research Center survey found that 42 percent identified the Republican as a Mormon; in 2011, the number jumped to 48 percent; and a poll from March 2012 reported that 58 percent said he was a Mormon.

In other words, the more the public learns about Romney, the more likely they are to identify him as a Mormon. Education works. But education has no effect on the public's perception of Obama's religion. The fact that two-thirds of the public do

not believe the president when he says he's a Christian—and his claim has been reported over and over again—suggests there is something about his persona, and/or his policies, that give people pause.

Could it be that President Obama's war on religion explains why the public distrusts him when he says he's a Christian?

PHILLY JURY SAYS NO TO CONSPIRACY



The jury in the trial of two Philadelphia Catholic priests has reached a verdict. Msgr. William Lynn was acquitted of conspiracy; on the two charges of child endangerment, he was

acquitted on one of them, and found guilty on the other. The jury was deadlocked on two charges against Rev. James Brennan: one for attempted rape, and one for child endangerment.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

The witch-hunt has come to an end, and those who have been clamoring for blood lost big time. What made this a witch-hunt was the decision of former Philadelphia D.A. Lynne Abraham to summarily ignore what she was empowered to do in 2001: she was given the charge "to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations." Had she done so, those cases of minors who may have been sexually molested by ministers, rabbis, and others, would have been investigated. Instead, absolutely nothing was done about these cases.

On March 31, 2011, I sent Abraham a letter [click [here](#)] in the overnight mail asking her to identify which “religious organizations and denominations” she pursued other than the Roman Catholic Church. She never answered. After all, what could she say?

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), and church-chasing attorneys like Marci Hamilton, are today’s big losers. They never cared about getting Fr. Brennan, and they didn’t care a whole lot more about getting Msgr. Lynn on child endangerment. They wanted the big prize—they wanted to nail a high-ranking clergyman on conspiracy. Had they won on this count, they would have been in the driver’s seat to pursue other “conspirators” nationally. Looks like their car ran out of gas in Philadelphia.

VIACOM’S ETHICS



Bill Donohue comments on Viacom’s ethics:

When Comedy Central flashed a picture of a naked woman with her legs spread and a nativity scene ornament in between—what Jon Stewart called “the vagina manger”—Viacom’s executives weren’t the slightest bit offended (Comedy Central is owned by Viacom). But these same people got ticked off recently when Don Rickles cracked a joke about President Obama.

On June 7, Rickles performed before a Hollywood crowd at the American Film Institute tribute to Shirley MacLaine. He quipped, “I shouldn’t make fun of the blacks. President Obama is a personal friend of mine. He was over to the house

yesterday, but the mop broke.” When they show this event on TV Land (a Viacom network) on June 24, Rickles’ Obama joke will not be aired.

On May 8, we mailed a color photo of the “vagina manger” shot to Viacom’s directors; we asked them to direct Stewart to apologize. They refused. But it didn’t take anyone from the NAACP to ask Viacom to nix Rickles’ joke—they did it themselves.

Rickles’ PR man offered this lame comment soon after the decision was made to censor the joke: “Before all of this started, we knew Don’s spot would be cut a bit for time.” More honest is Rickles himself: “Some jerk-offs got offended.”

Such is the state of Viacom’s ethics.

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CAL STATE’S IDEA OF FREE SPEECH



Bill Donohue comments on the “Annual Student Art Exhibition” at California State University, San Bernardino:

This year Cal State, San Bernardino, is featuring the work of Humberto Reynoso, a student in desperate need of attention, as well as professional counseling. His ceramic figure, “Self Portrait,” depicts a man lying on his back with a red cross inserted in his anus. This beauty was first displayed on June

15 and will be on display until July 31.

There is a WARNING posted in the Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art that houses this “art.” It says, “This exhibition contains explicit adult content and works that may be disturbing to some. Viewer discretion is advised.” I think we know who wouldn’t be disturbed.

Perhaps most telling is the statement below the WARNING: “*Art is about many things, including—and especially—ideas; and a university is precisely the place for the free expression of ideas, especially controversial ones. CSUSB supports students’ rights to free expression.*” (Italics in the original.)

This statement is factually incorrect. The university is not about “the free expression of ideas”: it is about the pursuit of truth. Those who believe the earth is flat, or deny the existence of the Holocaust, should not be welcome at any college or university: such ideas have been fully discredited. Thus, to give their proponents a platform in higher education is to say that the pursuit of truth no longer matters. Should such crackpots be censored from speaking? Not at all—they belong in a public park, or in a private venue, e.g., an arena known for hosting the circus.

It would be interesting if the campus newspaper were to ask Mr. Reynoso why he didn’t choose to insert a crescent and star.

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RABBI WASKOW'S CATHOLIC PROBLEM



Bill Donohue responds to news stories about a private e-mail exchange [click [here](#)] he had with Rabbi Arthur Waskow that has now been leaked to the press:

It's time to set the record straight about a feud between Rabbi Waskow and me. I wrote to Waskow following his screed condemning the bishops for standing up for the First Amendment rights of Catholics [click [here](#)]. Not content to act civilly, he says of the bishops, "For these men, 'religion' happens only in the genitals." In the same article, Waskow cites "Vatican arrogance" for its inquiry into an internal Church matter, i.e., legitimate concerns over a minority of nuns who have gone "beyond Jesus."

My comment about Ed Koch saying Jews should not make enemies with their Catholic friends was a summation of Mayor Koch's statement made in January before a Jewish audience [click [here](#)]: "We're 13 million Jews in the whole world—less than one-tenth of 1 percent. And we need allies. The best ally we can have is the Catholic Church." On January 30, I publicly commended him for his remark [click [here](#)], adding, "The Catholic League is proud to stand with the Jewish community in this time of unrelenting attacks on both Catholics and Jews." I also said that Ed Koch was "one of the greatest friends that Catholics have ever had."

It is not just this one article by Waskow that is upsetting to

the Catholic community. In February [click [here](#)], he said that the bishops' opposition to the Obama administration's HHS mandate seeking to force Catholic entities to pay for abortion-inducing drugs in their health plans was "an outrageous attempt to impose sharia law on the U.S. government and the American public." Sharia law? So when the bishops defend constitutional rights they are, in effect, seeking to impose totalitarianism! Waskow has also said of Pope Benedict XVI [click [here](#)], "He was a villain before he became Pope, and he is a villain still."

It should be obvious that Rabbi Waskow has a Catholic problem.

IMPOSING THE GAY AGENDA



Bill Donohue comments on a class-action lawsuit filed on behalf of a lesbian employee of St. Joseph's Medical Center in Westchester, New York; she is seeking medical coverage for her

spouse:

It is not the Catholic Church that is seeking to impose its agenda on others, it is homosexual activists who voluntarily join a Catholic institution and then seek to upend its strictures. Whoever "Jane Roe" is (why the anonymity?—I thought the closet was taboo), she surely knew all along what the teachings of Catholicism are, so for her to file suit seeking to punish the Church for exercising its doctrinal prerogatives shows intolerance and a contempt for diversity.

Because St. Joseph's Medical Center is self-insured, it is not bound by New York State law that recognizes gay marriage; it

is therefore exempt from granting medical benefits to a “married” lesbian. That is why the attorney for Roe is challenging the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a federal statute.

What made this case possible were the political machinations of the pro-gay marriage lawmakers in New York State, along with Gov. Cuomo, President Obama, and the Justice Department. The New York State officials sought to impose the gay agenda by a) refusing to hold public hearings on homosexual marriage, and b) refusing to allow the voters to decide this issue in a referendum (the way most states have). President Obama is just as devious: though he is sworn to uphold congressional legislation, he directed his Justice Department not to enforce DOMA; it was signed into law by President Clinton without controversy in 1996 (only 14 Democratic senators opposed the bill).

So here’s where we’re at. Owing to sleuth, deception, and a wholesale disregard for the democratic process, the right of a Catholic entity not to recognize something that nature never ordained—the union of two people of the same sex as a married couple—has wound up in the courts.

CARDINAL DOLAN’S E-BOOK IS A HIT



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Timothy

Cardinal Dolan's new e-book, *True Freedom: On Protecting Human Dignity and Religious Liberty*, published by Image:

Any Catholic who won't spend a whopping 99 cents to get this e-book needs to get his head checked. *True Freedom* is a quick, insightful read. More than that, it is a statement that comes at the right time.

The rejection of natural law, Cardinal Dolan points out, has created all sorts of problems, the worst expression of which is the culture of death. He asks, "Can sustained human rights, those unalienable rights with which we have been endowed by our Creator, girded by law, survive in such a culture?"

Dolan calls pragmatism, utilitarianism, and consumerism the "trinity of culprits" that have eroded our culture and our laws. "In the pragmatist's world," he observes, "interpersonal and international relations inevitably become questions of power and domination, instead of dignity and justice, and we risk going back to Thomas Hobbes's state of nature—the 'war of all against all.'" Utilitarianism's cost-benefit analysis has worked against the rights of the unborn and the disabled. Consumerism prizes the fulfillment of our needs, but little else. What they yield is a culture where "*what I want, when I want, because I want*" dominates.

Dolan ends on a high note. There are signs that an unusual alliance of forces are coming together, and while their points of departure may differ, they have in common a concern for ecology, in all of its manifestations.

True Freedom challenges the reader to think in a way few other books do. It can be read again and again, with much intellectual profit.

(To order a copy of this e-book, click [here](#).)

SOROS-FUNDED GROUP SET TO NAIL BISHOPS



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

June 21 marks the beginning of the “Fortnight for Freedom” events, the campaign for religious liberty being conducted by the nation’s bishops. Fair-minded persons may disagree with this effort, but there is something unseemly going on when those who work for a George Soros-funded group are quietly providing talking points to the media.

John Gehring is an official at Faith in Public Life, and it is his organization that lives off the bounty of the left-wing atheist billionaire, Mr. Soros. On June 7, Gehring sent a memo to his buddies in the media (a copy of which was generously leaked to me—click [here](#)) instructing them on how to handle the bishops. They should begin by questioning the prelates why the Obama “accommodation” wasn’t good enough. “You have to ask why the bishops can’t take yes for an answer,” he wrote.

Teaching them how to handle the “war on the Catholic Church,” Gehring advises, “Several bishops have used inflammatory and irresponsible rhetoric that conflates a process of working through complex policy issues with a fundamental attack on the Catholic Church.” He also frets over the politicization of the religious liberty campaign, an effort made possible, he neglects to say, because of the politicization of religion by President Obama.

Not to be outdone, Gehring presses his lackeys to victimize the victim, beckoning them to ask the bishops—all of whom refuse to prostitute their principles—“Are you willing to sacrifice Catholic charities, colleges and hospitals if you don’t get your way on the contraceptive mandate?”

Finally, Gehring provides a go-to list of Catholic activists who can be counted on to subvert the bishops’ message. It’s what we would expect from a George Soros group.

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