

NEW YORK TIMES FINDS GOOD NUNS



Bill Donohue comments on an editorial in today's *New York Times*:

The editorial, "Speaking the Truth to the Vatican," sounds so macho, especially coming from the unmanly *New York Times*. This time the editorial board is informing us that they have found some nuns they actually admire. Naturally, they are the dissident ones.

Though the internal affairs of the Catholic Church are no more the business of the *New York Times* than it is the business of the Vatican to police the newspaper's personnel matters (the Vatican would never show such chutzpah), if they are going to stick their nose in, they should at least be accurate.

It is not true that there are no "serious doctrinal problems" or "radical feminist" issues in the ranks of some orders of nuns. Want proof? Just pick up a copy of the *National Catholic Reporter* where they are celebrated.

It is not true that the Leadership Conference of Women Religious represents most of the 57,000 nuns—only 1,700 pay dues.

It is not true that "much of the Roman Catholic laity has registered outrage" about Vatican inquiries into rogue nuns; most could care less.

It is not true that there is a "pedophilia scandal" in the Catholic Church: there was a homosexual scandal, but its

heyday, the mid-60s to the mid-80s, is long gone.

If the *Times* wants to meet nuns who have never been the subject of Vatican concerns, it should do a story on any one of the orders that comprise the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious; all are loyal daughters of the Church. For that reason alone, though, they are not likely to attract the applause of the *Times*.

MAD MUSLIMS TARGET THE POPE



Bill Donohue comments as follows:

The pope will be lucky to get out of Lebanon unharmed. Mobs of mad Muslims have taken to the streets of Tripoli condemning Pope Benedict XVI. One person is already dead. So why haven't we heard anything from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton about this religious intolerance? Is it because she is too busy telling us what a "great religion" Islam is?

At a briefing with Morocco's foreign minister at the State Department, Clinton criticized the anti-Islamic film that is being tied to Muslim violence in the Middle East. She didn't mince words, saying, "It appears to have a deeply cynical purpose: to denigrate a great religion and to provoke rage." To which Melinda Henneberger in today's *Washington Post* says, "Amen." Similarly, from the editorial desk of the *New York Times*, we have these words of wisdom from Roger Cohen: "Since when was extreme bigotry that portrays the followers of one of

the world's great religions as child molesters an American value?"

This kind of sick tilting to Islam, all the while feeling free to bash Catholicism, is operative on the other side of the Atlantic as well. Roger Bolton, who ran religious broadcasting for the BBC for 12 years, said this week that the BBC is afraid to mock Islam but delights in bashing Christianity.

Ever since 9/11, those who claim to be horrified by religious extremism have shown nothing but deference to Islam—even though the mass murderers responsible explicitly carried out their carnage in the name of their religion. Meanwhile, they have shown nothing but contempt for Christianity. When is the last time our elites called Christianity a “great religion” deserving of respect?

Think you've heard it all? On the *New York Times* website today there is a story about the pope's visit to Lebanon. It says, “In a dark moment in his papacy in 2006, Benedict angered Muslims when on a visit to Germany he quoted a Byzantine emperor who had called Islam ‘evil and inhuman.’” Dark moment or moment of courage?

PROTECTING MUSLIM “FEELINGS”



Bill Donohue comments on the reaction to Muslim mob behavior in the wake of an anti-Muslim film:

It is hardly surprising to learn that many young Muslim men in the Middle East react like barbarians when insulted by a

movie, but it is rather incredible to learn of the way the Obama administration initially reacted to the release of the anti-Muslim film.

The U.S. Embassy's statement sounded more like something penned by Oprah than American diplomats. It said it "condemns efforts to offend individuals to hurt the religious *feelings* of Muslims." (My italic.)

Just this week, I wrote a news release explaining why a special jury award was given to a movie at the Venice Film Festival: it shows a woman masturbating with a crucifix. I also issued another release on an upcoming series on FX that portrays a sadistic nun who beats mentally insane patients in an evil Catholic institution. This is what we do at the Catholic League: we are constantly drawing attention to the Catholic bashing that takes place in the arts, the entertainment industry, the media, and elsewhere. Yet no one in the Obama administration has ever expressed the slightest interest in condemning anti-Catholic fare.

Hollywood specializes in trashing Catholic "feelings," yet we hear nothing about it from President Obama. That's because he has too many friends there. Just last month, Harvey Weinstein, who has produced more anti-Catholic movies than anyone, held a \$35,000-per-person dinner in his home for the president. In March, Bill Maher, who is the supreme Catholic basher, wrote a check to Obama's superPAC for \$1 million.

Yesterday, when Neil Cavuto on Fox News asked me how to make sense of all this, I said, "Hollywood respects Jews, fears Muslims and hates Catholics, as well as Evangelicals."

FX'S ATTACK ON NUNS



The second season of the FX show, "American Horror Story," begins October 17; the subtitle of this season's series is called "Asylum." Commenting on what to expect is Bill Donohue:

In my latest book, *Why Catholicism Matters*, I have a lengthy section on the contributions that nuns have made to the U.S. Their work with the dispossessed—the mentally and physically disabled, the poor, abandoned women and children—has no equal in American society. From running hospitals to launching schools, the role of nuns has been heroic. Why Hollywood still wants to bash them suggests a hatred that is pathological.

"American Horror Story: Asylum" is the work of Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuk; they worked together on "Glee" and "Nip/Tuck." Murphy is another angry ex-Catholic homosexual. Falchuk's mother is the past national president of Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization (one might have thought that at least he would have learned to respect other religions).

The plot is sinister. Sr. Jude, played by Jessica Lange, is a sadistic nun who beats inmates in a Massachusetts asylum. Set in 1964, Sr. Jude, who likes to wear red lingerie beneath her full habit, lusts after Msgr. O'Hara, who also has dark intentions. Inmates include a nymphomaniac, a lesbian, a degenerate bully, and Bloody Face (a serial murderer who wears the skins of his victims as a mask). We also meet Dr. Arden, a physician who is fond of torturing the mental patients; this explains why co-creator Murphy says of this character, "People think he's a Nazi."

There's more, but you get the point: FX has decided to portray Sr. Jude as a monster who runs an evil Catholic home for the

criminally insane.

Next month, before the show begins, we will have much more to say about this latest assault on Catholics, especially nuns. Every time we think Hollywood can't sink any lower, we're proven wrong.

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“CRUCIFIX MASTURBATION” FILM WINS



The Venice Film Festival awarded a special jury prize Saturday to “Paradise: Faith.” The film is part of a trilogy; Strand Releasing has acquired the U.S. rights and plans to release it early next year. Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments

as follows:

One of the hallmarks of cultural charlatans is the propensity to insult Christians, especially Catholics, and then declare their offense creative. If anyone wants to know why a special jury prize was given to “Paradise: Faith,” let me spare you the need to read about it: it won because it shows a devout Catholic woman masturbating with a crucifix.

The movie begins with the woman, Anna Maria, played by Maria Hofstaetter, whipping herself topless before a crucifix. A strange gal, she is shown walking around the house on her knees praying. She also likes to go door to door carrying a

two-foot high statue of the Virgin Mary; this is her way of getting new converts. She earns our empathy when we learn she is stuck in a lousy marriage with a Muslim in a wheelchair (he has no legs).

Hofstaetter, like the director, Ulrich Seidl, was raised Catholic. True to form, she admits that “as a youngster I rebelled against the authority of the Catholic Church” (authority problems are not uncommon with her ilk). Yet she says she has “profoundly Christian values,” the kind which, evidently, allow her to masturbate with a crucifix.

“Over the centuries,” Seidl says, “Catholicism has suppressed sexuality, and of course, this triggered a counter-movement.” This explains why he can say that “it is right to show her masturbating using a cross, as she is making love to Jesus. Just because it might be a taboo doesn’t mean that I won’t show it.” But how much courage does it take to insult Catholics?

In any event, Seidl is a liar. In his home country, Austria, they arrest those who disparage the Holocaust. Not that we would approve, but a real taboo-buster would take on that subject. However, don’t expect Seidl to do so—cultural charlatans don’t have the stomach for breaking unsafe taboos.

ASSESSING BISHOP FINN’S GUILT



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a judge’s decision yesterday finding Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn guilty in a case involving Father Shawn Ratigan:

Let's get rid of some myths. Bishop Finn was not found guilty of a felony: he was found guilty of one misdemeanor, and innocent of another. The case did not involve child sexual abuse—no child was ever abused, or touched, in any way by Father Shawn Ratigan. Nor did this case involve child pornography. Here's what happened.

On December 16, 2010, a computer technician found crotch-shot pictures of children, fully clothed, on Ratigan's computer; there was one that showed a girl's genitals exposed. The next day Ratigan attempted suicide. The Vicar General, Msgr. Robert Murphy, without seeing the photos, contacted a police officer about this matter. The officer, after consulting with another cop, said a single photo of a non-sexual nature would not constitute pornography. After a few more of the same types of photos were found, an attorney rendered the same judgment: they were not pornographic.

Finn then asked a psychiatrist to evaluate Ratigan. The bishop was given the judgment of a professional: the priest was not a risk to children (he was diagnosed as suffering from depression). Finn then placed restrictions on Ratigan, which he broke. When it was found that Ratigan was again using a computer, upon examination more disturbing photos were found. Murphy then called the cops (Finn was out of town) and a week later Ratigan was arrested. Yesterday, Finn was found guilty of one misdemeanor of failing to report suspected child sexual abuse.

The Catholic League supports harsh penalties for child sexual abusers, and for those who cover it up. But it also supports equal justice for all, and given what we know of what is going on in many other communities, religious as well as secular, we find the chorus of condemnations targeting Bishop Finn to be as unfair as they are contrived.

We would be remiss if we did not mention that only two newspapers in the nation put this story on the front page: the

Kansas City Star, understandably, and the *New York Times*.

THE POLITICS OF GOD'S RETURN



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the decision by the Democratic National Convention (DNC) to put the word “God” back into the Democratic National Platform:

The Democrats intentionally took the word “God” out of the Platform, took heat for doing so, failed to persuade delegates to put it back in, did so anyway by fiat, and then lied about the entire event.

The White House would have us believe that President Obama intervened to save the day, ordering the delegates to rediscover both God and the capital of Israel. But it was too late. Earlier, the Obama campaign told Politico that Obama had personally approved the Platform, choosing to intervene only after the pushback began.

Debbie Wasserman Schultz, the DNC chair, who has been caught in a string of lies this week, said the decision to excise God was “essentially a technical oversight.” David Gergen told CNN viewers the exact same thing. But someone, assumedly with the consent of others, threw God out. Moreover, even if the oversight process failed, it does not explain why the word “God” was initially deemed offensive, thus meriting deletion.

Former Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, who is in charge of the Platform committee, explained the revised wording by saying, “I wouldn’t call it an error. It was a clarification.”

Michelle Obama called the whole thing “a non-issue; and I think it’s a distraction.” It was nice to know that Obama’s faith-based director—of all people—Rev. Derrick Hawkins, also said the flap about God was “a non-issue.”

Terri Holland, a New Mexico delegate, disagrees with these assessments. She said the changes were made to “kow-tow to the religious right.” This is revealing: speaking about God in the Platform is not the kind of thing that thoughtful Democrats want to be associated with. Evidently, one has to be a right-wing loon to reference our “God-given potential.” Her honesty is very much appreciated.

DEMS LIE ABOUT EXCISING “GOD”



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how the Democrats are explaining the removal of the term “God-given” from the Democratic Platform:

Last night, CNN’s Piers Morgan asked Democratic National Committee (DNC) chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz why the Democrats excised the word “God” from its Platform. She dodged the question by saying, “We have a commitment through all faith traditions that our values are reflected in our policy. And that means that we should look out for the least of these, that we should fight for the middle class, that we should let everybody in America have an opportunity to be successful.”

To his credit, Morgan wasn’t buying it. “This is, somebody has deliberately taken out the word ‘God’ because it was in the last one,” he said. In response, Wasserman Schultz remarkably

said, “I can assure you that no one has deliberately taken God out of the Platform.” Morgan pressed her again, “So it was an accident?” She refused to answer.

Yesterday, noting that the Democrats are not exactly religion-friendly, I commended them for their “honesty and transparency” in excising “God” from the Platform. I was too kind—they couldn’t get past the day without lying.

As if we needed more proof, on Monday the DNC’s Faith Council met for a morning session. Though thousands were already in Charlotte, a grand total of 150 showed up at the event. Did they discuss faith-based solutions to social problems, or the role of religion in public life? No. According to christianpost.com blogger Paul Stanley, they were fixated on such issues as voter suppression and affordable healthcare.

Had the Democratic faithful, disproportionately comprised of atheists and agnostics, known that the Faith Council wasn’t going to talk about God, they could have packed the house.

DNC PLATFORM NIXES “GOD”



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the news that the word “God” has been excised from the Democratic Party Platform:

Why should anyone be surprised that the mere mention of the word “God” would send shivers down the spine of the Democratic faithful? After all, the same platform says it’s a good idea for two men to get married; the public needs to pay for all

abortions; there is no demand that Hamas stop terrorism against Israelis; the public must pay for a healthcare policy it manifestly rejects; the Catholic non-profit community must fork up money to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, etc.

The Obama administration has a “God problem.” On several occasions, President Obama has omitted the words “by their Creator” when citing the Declaration of Independence. He has also erroneously said that the national motto is “E Pluribus Unum”; it is “In God We Trust.” Now the Democratic Platform has deleted the word “God” when discussing our “God-given potential.” In 2008, the Platform spoke to the issue of having a government that “gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their *God-given* potential.” The italics, which I added, have been deleted from the 2012 Platform.

The Catholic League appreciates honesty and transparency, even when it signifies something pernicious. On this basis, we commend the Democrats for being so straightforward.

ANTI-CATHOLICS STAFF DNC PANEL



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a Democratic National Convention (DNC) event hosted by Catholics for Choice (CFC):

If the Ku Klux Klan were hosting a panel discussion on racial relations at the Republican National Convention, the Republicans would rightly be condemned for doing so. But no

price will be paid by the Democrats for allowing the most notoriously anti-Catholic organization in the nation, Catholics for Choice, to host a panel on religious liberty. "Keeping the Faith in the Democratic Party: Protecting Religious Liberty for Everyone" is scheduled to meet between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. today.

Catholics for Choice (formerly Catholics for a Free Choice) is not simply a pro-abortion group: it is decisively anti-Catholic. Twice condemned by the bishops' conference, its stated goal, according to its previous head, Frances Kissling, is to "overthrow" the Catholic Church. The current president, Jon O'Brien, has been equally vicious in his statements against Catholicism. He has been preoccupied this year opposing the religious liberty campaign organized by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Thus the perversity of having him command a panel discussion on religious liberty at the DNC.

In 1995, Marjorie Reiley Maguire, who for years worked closely with the leadership of CFC, branded it "an anti-woman organization" staffed by people who *never* go to Mass. Lavishly funded by the likes of the Ford Foundation, it would collapse if it had to rely on Catholic contributions—or even non-Catholic individuals—for support.

Speaking at today's event will be activists from a CFC-organized umbrella group, the Coalition for Liberty & Justice. Several of the groups that comprise this entity have hijacked the Catholic label in service of their anti-Catholic agenda. They include: CORPUS, DignityUSA, New Ways Ministry and the Women's Ordination Conference. An array of radical left-wing groups with a history of Catholic bashing will also be on hand.

In other words, the DNC's idea of religious liberty means welcoming anti-Catholic bigots to deliver their message of hate.