

# CRITICS OF THE POPE EMERGE



Bill Donohue comments on some of the issues that are gripping the critics of Pope Francis:

Pope Francis has captured the goodwill, indeed the love, of millions around the globe, and the response is hardly confined to Catholic circles. However, his critics are emerging, though none with any luck.

Sex is always a good subject for Catholic haters. Their goal—sex without consequences (kids and diseases)—is threatened when religious leaders counsel the virtue of restraint. Similarly, we have the lament of people like Mary Johnson, a former nun, who told the MSNBC audience how “marginalized” gay and lesbian Catholics are. Catholic-bashing lawyer Marci Hamilton chimed in, commenting about the “sex abuse scandal that has scandalized the church over the past decade.” Any high school fact checker knows better: the timeline of the homosexual scandal was the mid-60s to the mid-80s.

*Washington Post* opinion writer Eugene Robinson wants to know “what did the newly chosen Pope Francis do” about the right-wing dictatorship in Argentina’s “Dirty War”? We have an answer from Adolfo Perez Esquivel, the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize winner: he said the pope “was no accomplice of the dictatorship.” Indeed, he firmly concluded, “He can’t be accused of that.” Others have written books praising the pope for his yeoman efforts in undermining the junta.

Miguel A. De La Torre, a professor at the School of Theology in Denver, condemns the pope for not changing “the social structure that creates poverty.” Guilty as charged. Nor did the pope cure insanity; if he did we would not be subjected to such crazy talk.

Sadly, more than a few evangelicals are showing how insecure they are. Bethany Blankley is particularly exercised over Fox News anchor Megyn Kelly and Fox News executive editor John Moody for saying God was at work in selecting the pope. Of course He was. Too bad she never learned of the Holy Spirit in Sunday School.

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## CONGRATULATIONS, POPE FRANCIS



Bill Donohue comments on the new pope:

The humbleness that Pope Francis exudes is inspiring, and his commitment to the least among us, starting with the unborn, is equally impressive. Moreover, his strong embrace of core moral principles, especially as they touch on sexual matters, adds to his appeal.

When Catholics celebrate St. Patrick's Day this weekend, we'll all be Irish. But today we're all Latino.

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## A NUN FOR POPE?



Bill Donohue comments on those who say they want a nun for pope:

MSNBC contributors E.J. Dionne and Katrina vanden Heuvel say they want a nun to be named the next pope. No they don't. They don't want Mother Agnes Mary Donovan of the Sisters of Life. Nor do they want Mother Mary Assumpta Long of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist. In fact, they don't want any of the nuns who belong to orders associated with the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious.

That's because all of these women are faithful daughters of the Catholic Church. Quite unlike dissident nuns, these sisters accept the teachings of the Magisterium. Indeed, those who say they want a nun as pope would clearly prefer a cardinal who shares their views before they would ever want to see one of these nuns selected as pope. So why don't they just be honest about it?

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# BAY STATE SCHOOL HOSTS BIGOTED PLAY



Bill Donohue comments on the performance of Paul Rudnick's, "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told," March 15-17, at the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School in Northampton, Massachusetts:

Scott Goldman, who runs this charter school, boasts that putting on Rudnick's play proves how "intellectually rigorous" his community is. It does nothing of the sort. If anything, it exposes how low-class it is. Nor is it accurate to say that the play is a "gay-friendly Biblical spoof." In fact, it is an exercise in obscenity and Christian bashing.

When the play opened in 1998, I described it as featuring "full-frontal male nudity, filthy language, discussions of body parts, butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, ranting against nature, damning God for AIDS, etc."

Some sage from the ACLU, William Newman, defends all this by saying, "The highest function of art is to make people think and talk and consider and be challenged." Despite the fact that the ACLU should have no dog in this fight—no one is threatening to stop the play—Newman would never defend a gay-bashing performance, even though it would no doubt make people "think and talk and consider and be challenged." No, it would never be scheduled. Christian sensibilities, of course, don't matter to deep thinkers and civil libertarians.

Springfield Bishop Timothy McDonnell got it right when he said, "I didn't know it was the responsibility of charter schools to teach religious bigotry." That is why all this

chatter about tolerance and inclusion is nothing but hot air. Tolerance and inclusion for whom?

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## CARDINAL PELL SHOULD SUE FOR LIBEL



Bill Donohue comments on stories in Australian newspapers maintaining that Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, will not be named pope because of his tainted record of sexual abuse:

No cardinal should ever have to endure the vicious mudslinging campaign being conducted by an embittered radical ex-priest, dishonest reporters, discredited victims' groups, and incompetent Catholic journalists. But this is exactly what Cardinal Pell has had to endure this week. Not without reason is he thinking about suing the culprits.

The source of the smear campaign is Dr. Paul Collins, an ex-priest who resigned in 2001 after clashing with the Vatican. Collins has a long record of defending every dissident, in and out of the Catholic Church, on a wide range of subjects. That he would float the idea that Cardinal Pell has "long [been] dogged" by accusations of sexual abuse suggests that the charges against Pell are still unresolved. This is a pernicious lie.

In 2002, Cardinal Pell was completely exonerated of allegations that he abused a teenager in the 1960s. Yet reporter Barney Zwartz, whose story was picked up in *The Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, led readers to believe that

Pell's name was not fully cleared. Amazingly, here is what Zwartz said in 2010, *but did not say yesterday*: "Cardinal Pell stood down as Archbishop of Sydney in 2002 after he was accused of abusing a teenager at a church camp in the 1960s, but an independent investigation by a retired non-Catholic judge cleared him."

Piling on Cardinal Pell is the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP), the most discredited and dishonest so-called victims' group in the U.S. Finally, we have what is perhaps the most inexcusable aspect of this smear campaign: *CathNews*, a prominent Australian Catholic media outlet, picked up this trashy story in its print and online editions. Now it has apologized for doing so, admitting that it made "unfair, false and seriously defamatory allegations against Cardinal Pell, who has worked hard to eradicate the evil of sexual abuse." Looks like sexual abuse isn't the only evil matter attendant to this story.

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## QUINNIPIAC POLLSTERS MISLED THE PUBLIC



Bill Donohue comments on how the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute misled the public on a serious issue:

On March 8, I issued a news release on the findings of a new Quinnipiac survey of Catholics. In particular, I took aim at a subject that was the source of much media interest, namely the

finding that Catholics support same-sex marriage by a margin of 54-38 percent.

After observing that Catholics were asked 14 questions, with responses broken down on the basis of church attendance, I took note of the one exception: the poll did not disaggregate the data on the basis of church attendance regarding same-sex marriage. Predictably, the media gave this “finding” top billing. In fact, it was the source of much conversation on radio and TV over the weekend, all of which was based on misleading data.

After our news release was distributed, reporters from CNSNews.com contacted Quinnipiac. What they admitted totally alters the outcome: 55 percent of Catholics who are regular church-goers are opposed to gay marriage, and only 38 percent favor it. This is important because Quinnipiac’s Peter A. Brown was cited all over for claiming that “Catholic voters are leading American voters toward support for same-sex marriage.” Nonsense.

Catholic News Agency spoke to Brown about this matter. He wants us to believe that “we only have so much space, and can only do so many things up front.” But they had plenty of space to record the difference between practicing Catholics and nominal Catholics on whether the next pope should come from the U.S. or not.

Adding to Quinnipiac’s problems is this: even now, after admitting that it misled the public, it still hasn’t corrected the record on its website. Its credibility as a serious survey house has thus been compromised.

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# CANADIAN ATHEISTS RIP MOTHER TERESA



Bill Donohue comments on an article published by Serge Larivée et al. in a Canadian journal, *Studies in Religion*, on Mother Teresa:

This attack on Mother Teresa is a rehash of a book written by the late atheist, Christopher Hitchens, *The Missionary Position*. Indeed, no one is cited more in this piece than Hitchens. Not surprisingly, the lead author, Serge Larivée, is a devout atheist, as is at least one of the co-authors.

The authors write of Mother Teresa's "rather dubious way of caring for the sick, her questionable political contacts, her suspicious management of enormous sums of money she received, and her overly dogmatic views regarding, in particular, abortion, contraception, and divorce."

Atheists have no reference base to assess someone who comforts the dying, which is why Mother Teresa perplexes them (their way of comforting the dying is to euthanize them). They also don't understand why anyone would say the terminally ill "are suffering like Christ on the cross." Her contacts with dictators like Duvalier of Haiti were entirely justified; they provided her with access to the sick and dying. It is true she took money from the rich, and her clients were delighted she did so. It is also correct to say she was dogmatic in her crusade to defend the civil rights of innocent unborn children.

The authors attack me for lacing Hitchens. In my review of his



book [click [here](#)], I said that it “is a 98 page essay printed on eight-and-a-half by five-and-a-half inch paper,” and that it “contains no footnotes, no citations of any kind.” For them to depend so heavily on a book that provides not a scintilla of evidence speaks volumes (I told Hitchens to his face that if he were one of my students he would have been given an “F”).

What drove Hitchens to hate Mother Teresa, and what accounts for the assault by these atheists, is her altruism. The University of Montreal news release touting the article says the goal is to dispel the “myth of altruism” surrounding her. They failed. Finally, on four occasions the release spells her name “Theresa.” News Flash: the saintly nun had no “h” in her name. So much for accuracy, as well as credibility.

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## STEWART GETS INTO THE GUTTER AGAIN



Bill Donohue comments on last night’s episode of Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show with Jon Stewart”:

Jon Stewart’s legacy is stained with anti-Catholic bigotry, a tradition he continued to uphold in last night’s episode of the “The Daily Show.” What started off with jabs against the cardinals and their chances of election began to devolve when a “Vatican Correspondent” called Communion a “cracker and juice ceremony.”

The segment continued its descent into the gutter with a

vicious “report” on the Conclave that was full of double entendre; Stewart’s “Senior Vatican Correspondent” Samantha Bee likened the papal election process to the stages of sexual abuse.

Bee called the gathering of cardinals a “grope,” who took part in a “molestation,” which she claimed was the “liturgical name” of the voting process. That process, Bee said, was not complete until the cardinals reached a “fellatio,” (an “oral consensus”) culminating in “white smoke rising from the chimney.” When Stewart asked Bee if that was called an “ejaculation,” she mockingly responded with the word’s authentic definition, a short prayer.

Stewart’s return to the gutter is of no surprise, but perhaps he should get his facts straight about the homosexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church: it ended almost three decades ago. If he wanted to be current, he would rip on the sexual abuse taking place in Brooklyn’s ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. But no, he saves his vitriol for Catholics.

Contact Comedy Central spokesman Steve Albani:  
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## QUINNIPIAC POLL ON GAY MARRIAGE



Bill Donohue comments on a poll by Quinnipiac University that was released yesterday:

The media are ecstatic: Catholics are pro-gay marriage. Indeed, Peter A. Brown, the assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, says, "Catholic voters are leading American voters toward support for same-sex marriage." His conclusion is based on the finding that Catholic voters favor gay marriage, 54-38 percent, while the figures nationally are 47-43 percent.

Leaving aside the not insignificant fact that the sample size of Catholics was a mere 497, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.4 percent, there is something so bizarre—that would be the kind word—about a much more problematic methodological issue: Quinnipiac asked Catholic voters 14 questions on issues of interest to them, and on all but one the survey disaggregated the answers on the basis of church attendance. The one exception was on same-sex marriage.

In other words, we know how Catholics think on issues ranging from celibacy to whether the new pope should come from the U.S. or not; we also know how they split on these subjects on the basis of church attendance. But all we know about the issue that is receiving top billing in the media—gay marriage—is the aggregate figure.

This takes on added significance when we consider that 4 in 10 of the Catholics sampled do not practice their religion (28 percent go to church "a few times a year" and 11 percent say they "never" attend). That these nominal Catholics are precisely the biggest fans of gay marriage is a sure bet, though the poll fails to disclose the results.

The Quinnipiac Polling Institute has some explaining to do.

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# SNAP IS IN PANIC MODE



Bill Donohue comments on attempts by the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP) to smear papal candidates:

David Clohessy, the head of SNAP, rails against the Catholic Church for not reporting suspected sexual abusers to the police, yet he has admitted that he himself failed to call the cops when he learned of a priest who molested a male youth. He accuses the Church of lying, yet he has admitted under oath that he has lied to the media about his work. He says the Church lacks transparency, yet he refuses to disclose the source of his funding. He says the Church failed to give adequate counseling to victims, yet he acknowledges that SNAP offers no counseling services. Moreover, in 2007, his organization spent \$593 for “survivor support” (Clohessy, who has no counseling license, holds counseling sessions at Starbucks), yet in 2008 he spent \$92,000 on travel. And so on.

SNAP is broke. Less than two weeks ago, it sent an e-mail to its donors pleading with them, “We are barely meeting our everyday expenses.” That’s because they have nothing to do. The homosexual abuse scandal ended almost three decades ago, leaving few of their rapacious lawyer friends who have been suing the Church to grease them anymore. This explains their latest stunt.

Yesterday, Clohessy released SNAP’s “dirty dozen” list of cardinals who may be named pope. It’s a sure sign they are in panic mode; they need to kick-start their operations once again. It was revealing, too, that they are furious about those “who pretend the worst is over.” They have to say that. They have no other choice but to lie.

On March 1, the *Washington Post* ran a story on the current state of the “survivors” movement. One activist confessed that the energy level “has diminished quite a bit,” noting that attendance has plummeted among the “gray-haired folks.” Another reluctantly admitted that the movement has “run out of steam.” Which means SNAP’s best days are behind it, and Clohessy knows it.