

HHS MANDATE REVISIONS FAIL TO SATISFY



Bill Donohue comments on the latest revisions to the HHS mandate:

On Friday, the Obama administration announced new revisions to its HHS mandate that requires Catholic institutions to pay for abortion-inducing drugs as part of their health plans. The federal government revealed that it considers these new rules a “work around” for groups that object to providing coverage for sterilization, contraception and abortifacients. The new revisions allow Catholic non-profits to distance themselves from the objectionable services, but they still fail to satisfy.

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), is likewise unsatisfied by the new rules. The archbishop notes that these new revisions still do not allow those who have “sincerely held religious objections to the mandate” to opt out. Furthermore, he notes that under the new regulations the “religious employer” exemption will not be broadened. The existing “accommodation” would only be modified. The Catholic League continues to support the USCCB’s request for a broad exemption for all religious employers.

The second problem with the updated requirements is even more

serious. The federal government still thinks it can reinterpret what constitutes a Catholic entity. The Obama administration continues to enforce the HHS mandate under the premise that a Catholic organization is not a Catholic organization in terms of exemptions if it hires and serves people who are not Catholic. That is the heart of the problem.

CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES COMPROMISED



Bill Donohue comments on a decision by the administration of California Governor Jerry Brown forcing Catholic universities to pay for abortion in their health plans:

Governor Brown and his administration caved into requests from pro-abortion groups and reversed an earlier decision that allowed Santa Clara and Loyola Marymount universities to exclude coverage for “elective” abortions in their previously approved health insurance plans. Both schools are now being told to include coverage for all abortions.

“Abortion is a basic health care service” said the health department’s director, Michelle Rouillard. She said the exemptions violated a 1975 state law that required health plans to cover all services that were “medically necessary.” She did not say why electing to kill children *in utero* was “medically necessary.”

As part of the exemption both schools had already agreed to

cover abortions when they were needed to save the life of the mother, or prevent serious health damage. Loyola Marymount even allowed employees to pay extra if they wished to have “elective” abortions included in their health insurance plans as well. But this was not enough to satisfy abortion-rights zealots.

Catholic universities have a right and a duty to uphold the tenets of their faith in everything they do. Paying for abortions is in direct conflict with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Not only is this decision morally obscene, it violates the religious liberties of Catholic institutions. The universities should now sue on First Amendment grounds. Perhaps a judge can educate the Brown administration on the need to keep church and state separate.

“BLACK MASS” NIXED IN OKLAHOMA CITY



There was to be a “Black Mass” performance at the Oklahoma City Civic Center on September 21, using a consecrated Host. But after Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley succeeded in getting a judge to issue a restraining order, on the grounds that the Host had been

stolen, the attorney for the Satanic group returned the Host to a Catholic priest. The archbishop then dropped his lawsuit.

Here is how the story played out over the summer. When we learned of this scheduled performance, we issued a news release on July 2 calling attention to what a “Black Mass” entails. We quoted directly from the website of the Satanic group: “The consecrated host is corrupted by sexual fluids then it becomes the sacrifice of the mass. The blasphemy remains intact along with corruption of the Catholic Mass.” The person who was to lead this obscene event is Adam Daniels, a registered sex offender.

Bill Donohue quickly put the authorities on notice: “Oklahoma City had better think twice about this. The Civic Center is funded by the taxpayers, many of whom are Catholic, and they are not obliged to pay for attacks on their religion. Moreover, there are strictures that must be respected. To be specific, performances at the Civic Center are not permitted if they violate ‘community standards,’ including works that are ‘illegal, indecent, obscene, immoral or in any manner publicly offensive.’ One does not have to be Catholic to know that if Catholics believe that a consecrated Host is considered sacrosanct, then public displays of desecration meet the criteria as outlined.”

Donohue also warned that Oklahoma City was setting itself up for a lawsuit, calling attention to the 1984 *Lynch v. Donnelly* decision. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Warren Burger explicitly said that the Constitution “affirmatively mandates accommodation, not merely tolerance, of all religions, and *forbids hostility toward any*” (our italics).

Kudos to Archbishop Coakley on a great victory.

KANSAS CITY STAR TARGETS BISHOP FINN AGAIN

✖ Bill Donohue comments on the latest assault by the *Kansas City Star* on Kansas City-St. Joseph Bishop Robert Finn:

Last week a judge agreed with the finding of an arbitrator that Bishop Finn violated a 2008 agreement mandating that suspected child abuse be reported immediately to the authorities. The *Kansas City Star* says it is “still waiting for the bishop and the Catholic Diocese to do the right thing,” by which it means he should resign. The *Star* has been waiting for a long time: this is its sixth call for Finn’s resignation in three years. They must be slow learners—few seem to care what it says.

Here are some fast facts that the *Star* doesn’t want the public to know:

- In 2010 a computer technician finds disturbing crotch-shot photos of girls fully clothed on the computer of a priest; there is one naked photo of a non-sexual nature
- A police officer and an attorney are contacted by diocesan officials
- After the priest attempts suicide, he is sent for psychiatric analysis: it is determined that he is depressed, but he is not a pedophile
- When it is learned that restrictions placed on the priest are violated, the diocese contacts the authorities—even though it had no legal mandate to do so
- Bishop Finn orders an independent investigation of this matter even though there is no complainant
- Porn pictures are later found and Bishop Finn is then found guilty of one misdemeanor for not reporting suspected child abuse

The *Star* doesn’t want the facts to come out: In 2011, it

turned down \$25,000 for a full-page ad I had written exposing all the players involved in their well-coordinated war on Bishop Finn, including the role played by the *Star*.

One more thing. The *Star's* impotence is a function of its misplaced authority: it has no legitimate perch upon which to tell Catholics who their bishop should be.

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NUN PERFORMS ABORTION ON TV SHOW



Bill Donohue comments on the August 15 episode of “The Knick,” a Cinemax TV show (the parent company is Time Warner):

Sister Harriet, a nurse who runs an orphanage, visits an Irish Catholic woman, Nora, who wants an abortion. The woman doesn't want her husband to find out.

- Sister Harriet: “Your husband will know nothing of it. I promise.”
- Nora: “Will God forgive me? I don't want to go to hell for killing a baby.”
- Sister Harriet: “He knows that you suffered. I believe the Lord's compassion will be yours.” [The audience is led to believe that the nun performs the abortion.]

It is no secret that Hollywood is a big pro-abortion town, but to depict a nun who performs an abortion is a new low.

The only saving grace in this episode is the real-life recognition of the woman who is about to have the abortion: she admits that her baby is going to be killed.

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VATICAN OKAYS FORCE IN MIDDLE EAST



Bill Donohue comments on the Vatican's response to the Islamic State terrorists:

The Catholic Church's just-war doctrine allows for a military response to grave conflicts, provided that several criteria are operative. The Vatican has made it clear that the mass murder being committed by Islamic State terrorists meets that standard.

No one has been more pointed than Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, the Holy See's Permanent Observer to the United Nations. He said this week that "there might be occasions in the life and in the relations between states when dialogue, negotiations, fail and large numbers of people find themselves at risk: at risk of genocide, at risk of having their fundamental, their basic rights violated."

"In this case," Tomasi said, "when every other means has been

attempted, article 42 of the Charter of the United Nations becomes possible justification for not only imposing sanctions of economic nature on the state or the group or the region that violates the basic human rights of people, but also to use force. All the force that is necessary to stop this evil and this tragedy.”

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue also released a statement calling on “religious leaders, especially Muslims,” to condemn the genocide. It cited “The execrable practice of beheading, crucifixion, and hanging of corpses in public places”; “The choice imposed on Christians and Yezidis between conversion to Islam, payment of tribute or exodus”; “The imposition of the barbaric practice of infibulation” [female genital mutilation]; “The forced occupation or desecration of churches and monasteries”; and “The destruction of places of worship and Christian and Muslim burial places.” It also made it plain that “No cause can justify such barbarity and certainly not a religion.”

Kudos to the Vatican. It is speaking with greater clarity and urgency than our golf-vacationing president.

NIENSTEDT’S FOES GETTING DESPERATE



Bill Donohue comments on Minnesota Public Radio’s (MPR) latest attempt to discredit St.

Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt:

Those waging war on Archbishop Nienstedt are losing ground, and they know it. In a contrived attempt to keep the flame

alive, MPR is now charging that “New Documents Show Falsehoods in Nienstedt Testimony.” But as with previous efforts, this one comes up lame.

The story involves Rev. Kenneth LaVan. Here is the relevant timeline.

- Some thirty years ago, two teenage girls made accusations against LaVan. About the same time, he was also charged with “boundary violations” with adult females.
- In 1998 he retired.
- In 2008 Archbishop Nienstedt is installed.
- In 2013, after accusations that not enough was being done about accused priests, an outside firm is hired to investigate this issue. In December, Nienstedt is apprised of LaVan’s history and he formally and permanently removes him from ministry.

MPR is saying that Nienstedt should have known about this priest when he allegedly approved a limited assignment for him earlier last year. But inconveniently for MPR, the documents it references never mention child sexual abuse. What Nienstedt approved was a monitoring plan based on the priest’s inappropriate conduct with adult women. Moreover, when MPR finds it necessary to cite the fact that Nienstedt “spent time socially with LaVan,” and that he even wrote a letter to him thanking him for a gift, it shows how utterly desperate it is.

In other words, MPR has no smoking gun. But it does have a bad case of blowing gas.

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THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE MIDDLE EAST VICTOR



Bill Donohue comments on conditions in the Middle East:

After months of carnage committed by Muslim extremists, there is finally some blowback. The decision by President Obama to provide military and humanitarian aid comes late, but it is never too late to save innocent lives. Children are being beheaded, entire villages are being ransacked, Christian shrines are being destroyed—all of this and more by those who claim to have God on their side.

Pope Francis pointedly condemned these actions, saying, "One cannot generate hatred in God's name. One cannot make war in God's name." We expect anti-religious regimes to plunder the innocent without a trace of remorse—that is the legacy of Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot—but when genocide is committed in the name of God, it is too much to bear. This explains why Archbishop Giorgio Lingua, the Vatican nuncio to Iraq, endorsed the U.S. response. "This is something that had to be done, otherwise [the Islamic State militants] could not be stopped."

There are other good signs, as well. The U.S. response is allowing the Kurds, our only friends in the region, save for the Israelis, to fight back and recapture towns lost to the fanatics. The head of the Arab League has condemned the

jihadists for their “crimes against humanity.” Egypt has declared war on the Muslim Brotherhood. And Israel is finding that these Muslim barbarians are such a threat to the entire region that even its old foes are laying low, refusing to condemn the right of Jews to defend themselves against Hamas.

The world has not seen a threat like this to destabilize the democracies in many years. Anything less than an all-out effort to stop these extremists is bound to fail. We have the resources to win—there cannot be two winners in war—the question is whether we have the resolve.

HIP “BLACK JESUS” TV SHOW AIRS



Bill Donohue comments on the premiere episode of “Black Jesus,” which aired last night on the Cartoon Network:

We have long taken the position that portraying Jesus as black is fine with the Catholic League, and indeed we find it silly that anyone would object. The Jesus character in this show is a mixed bag: He is irreverent, and can be downright crude, but he also has many redeeming qualities.

The Jesus character parks illegally, curses, smokes pot, drinks, and hits on women. At one point he is depicted as the get-away driver for a drug deal gone wrong; he is eventually robbed and gets busted. But he is also forgiving, kind,

respectful, and condemns violence. No one questions his divinity, and even an atheist detective who interviews him after his arrest appears to sense that there is more to this man than what first appears.

If the goal is to lure young people to take a closer look at Jesus, the Son of God, that is noble (the show airs at 11:00 p.m.). But if so, it is not a good sociological sign: Must we debase Jesus to make him real? It will be interesting to see how the show develops, and how the audience reacts to the Jesus message, however twisted his delivery.

CATHOLIC-BASHING PLAY BOMBS



Bill Donohue comments on “Doubtless,” a play by Albert Innaurato; it is being performed in New York City:

“Doubtless” started August 4 and it closes August 30. It is easy to ignore—the theatre has 98 seats—but given that Innaurato has solid credentials, we decided to address his latest attack on the Catholic Church.

The play’s name is a rip-off of the John Patrick Shanley play, “Doubt.” That play, which ran between 2004 and 2006, was adapted for the screen, starring Meryl Streep. It featured a controversial priest and a reverent nun (played by Streep). Because there was nothing anti-Catholic about it, we never addressed it. But “Doubtless,” which pointedly attacks “Doubt,” goes out of its way to offend.

The audience is introduced to sexually-romping priests, an

Opus Dei orgy, foul-mouthed nuns, sisters who get it on, and a vampire played by Jesus. Though the play has been panned by critics, the open-minded folks at the *New York Times* did so because of its artistic weaknesses, not its bigotry. "Her [a nun's] vulgar language is fine, really. It's the ranting she'd do better to stop," writes Laura Collins-Hughes. Thanks for the tip, really.

Like so many playwrights who attack Catholicism, Innaurato is acting out his own deep-seated problems: he is an ex-Catholic homosexual. When he was at Yale many moons ago, he befriended Christopher Durang, another ex-Catholic homosexual anti-Catholic. Together, they starred in performances "Dressed as priests they played women in summer stock." How lovely.

I have only one comment to make: Just imagine what the people look like who go to see this stuff.