

“PHILOMENA” LIES AND ANTICS

Bill Donohue comments on the latest round of noise surrounding the film, “Philomena”:

On Saturday, the *Independent.ie* (Irish Independent) ran a story by Liz O'Donnell on “Philomena” saying that Philomena Lee’s “child was stolen by the nuns.” This is incorrect: the 18-year-old Lee, pregnant out-of-wedlock, was taken to the nuns by her widowed father, hoping they would care for the baby. They did. At age 22, Lee voluntarily signed a contract awarding the nuns her son. The nuns then got her a job. That is the undisputed truth.

Today, *Newsday*, the Long Island daily, has a story by Anthony M. DeStefano saying “Philomena Lee had an audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican, where he reportedly is planning to screen the film.” This is incorrect: she was denied her request for a private meeting with the pope, and wound up shaking his hand behind a wall as part of the general audience. Moreover, Father Frederico Lombardi of the Holy See Press Office explicitly said, “The Holy Father does not see films and will not be seeing this one.”

At the British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards on Sunday, “Philomena” won the Adapted Screenplay prize. Dame Judi Dench, who plays Philomena Lee, did not win Best Actress, but had they had an award for Biggest Fool, she would have won going away: at the awards ceremony, she flashed her butt in front of Oprah Winfrey; tattooed on it was the name Weinstein, in reference to the film’s distributor, Harvey Weinstein. Dench is 79.

Look for Dench to mimic Miley Cyrus at the Oscars. Pass the vomit bag.

VALENTINE'S DAY CRACKUP



Bill Donohue comments on St. Valentine's Day crackups:

The two greatest threats to liberty today, and to Catholicism, stem from militant secularism at home and militant Islam abroad. Both strains of extremism are on display today.

Planned Parenthood's president Cecile Richards is celebrating St. Valentine's Day by tweeting a video where she says women need "safe + legal abortion."

Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia took to the streets condemning St. Valentine's Day for its celebration of promiscuity and abortion.

By contrast, Pope Francis celebrated St. Valentine's Day by welcoming 10,000 engaged couples in St. Peter's Square.

It is so nice to be a Catholic in this sea of madness.

PHILOMENA DENIED PAPAL MEETING



Bill Donohue comments on more spin from the "Philomena" team:

Earlier this year, Harvey Weinstein, distributor of "Philomena," went to Switzerland seeking to manipulate the pope: he lobbied Vatican officials there in an attempt to secure a private screening for Pope Francis. He failed. "The Holy Father does not see films and will not be seeing this one," said Father Federico Lombardi of the Holy See Press Office. But two priests from the Vatican agreed to see it.

AP reported that the pope's "personal secretary" saw the movie, along with another Vatican official. The *Vatican Insider* identified Msgr. Guillermo Karcher as "one of Pope Francis' secretaries." The *Irish Examiner* labeled him "the Pope's private secretary." Steve Coogan, who adapted the book for the screen, said the same twice yesterday on MSNBC and CNN. They are all wrong.

The name of Pope Francis' personal secretary is Msgr. Alfred Xuereb. Msgr. Karcher is one of nine papal masters of ceremonies; he is not even the main master. He is also assigned to the office of liturgical celebrations, and to protocol in the office of the Secretariat of State; he is not the head of protocol, nor is he listed as a top official.

On CNN yesterday, Coogan said, "the Vatican...extended an invitation to Philomena to visit the Vatican." In fact,

Philomena Lee was denied a private meeting with the pope. But Francis did shake her hand last week, as he did with many others who were part of the general audience; it is open to the public. Philomena and Coogan were separated from the pope by a wall. I almost forgot to mention that the pope said “Thanks” to her.

Father Lombardi has been bombarded with attempts to have the pope see this twisted propaganda film. He’s had it with them. “It is also important to avoid using the pope as part of a marketing strategy.” Get the message Weinstein? Stop trying to manipulate the pope, and the public about your latest contribution to anti-Catholicism. The media should do likewise.

MORE LIES ABOUT “PHILOMENA”



Bill Donohue comments on the latest lies about “Philomena”:

The lies told about the Weinstein-distributed film, “Philomena,” never stop. Steve Coogan, who did the screenplay adaptation, and is one of the producers, appeared on MSNBC today to discuss the movie.

Richard Liu, the host, said at one point, “And you’re talking about a group of girls and women, out-of-wedlock, having children in these institutions [homes run by nuns for troubled young women], and their children were taken away from them.”

This is a lie: the nuns did not walk the streets of Ireland seeking to rob kids from their mothers. In the case of Philomena, her father took her to the nuns to care for the baby she could not provide for.

Coogan replied to Liu that the home was “the only place that you could go to.” He is correct about this: no one was kidnapped—the women came to the nuns *voluntarily*. Moreover, the alternative was the street. Lucky for Philomena, her father placed her with the nuns—the same nuns who found her a job after her baby was born.

Coogan said these women were “effectively incarcerated against their will.” This is a lie: no one was “incarcerated”; Philomena did not live in a jail cell. The word “effectively” is interesting: either they were imprisoned or they were not. Coogan also says “their children were forcibly adopted.” This is another lie: Philomena signed a contract when she was 22. No one “forced” her to give up her baby.

Liu asks, “And then [the nuns] prevented [the women] from finding their children.” Coogan says that in Philomena’s case, “she was obstructed at every turn by both the government and the Church.” Two more lies: the Church didn’t stop anyone, and Philomena never set foot in the U.S. until last year; this was long after her son died of AIDS. Contrary to what the film contends, she never looked for her son in the U.S.

All of this is annotated in my report [click [here](#)].

CATHOLIC UNIV. OF AMERICA’S

CRITICS



Catholic University of America has come under attack again for receiving a donation from the Koch Foundation. In December, Bill Donohue exposed Faith in Public Life, which led the first attack, as a group that is funded by a George Soros

foundation, the Open Society Institute. Another left-wing entity, Catholic Scholars for Worker Justice, is spearheading the latest attack.

According to a Religion News Service story by David Gibson, Faith in Public Life says that while it receives \$200,000 a year from the Open Society Institute, its officials "work with Catholic leaders in support of Catholic teaching," and the Koch brothers do not.

Bill Donohue contests this claim today:

Fully 13 percent of Faith in Public Life's budget comes from an atheist who supports abortion, euthanasia, drug legalization, and many other causes that are opposed by the Catholic Church. By contrast, the Catholic League is a grass roots organization that is listed in the *Official Catholic Directory*; we wouldn't accept funds from a pro-abortion, pro-euthanasia, drug legalization foundation. That's dirty money.

If it is true that Faith in Public Life "works with Catholic leaders in support of Catholic teaching," then why did the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issue a three-page "Advisory Memo to Journalists" on June 27, 2012, warning them of the totally misleading comments made by Faith's Catholic Program Director, John Gehring? Gehring's memo advised the media about the "inflammatory and

irresponsible” rhetoric of “several bishops,” and he tutored the secular media on how to handle the USCCB. In short, he worked *against* the bishops.

I am so happy that I helped to subvert Faith in Public Life. To wit: Gehring’s June 7 memo that the USCCB blasted was made public by me on June 18; it was leaked to me by a loyal Catholic in the media.

FYI: Catholic University of America does not have pro-abortion clubs on campus; Georgetown has two. Just thought you’d like to know.

UNIVISION’S SURVEY OF CATHOLICS

✖ Bill Donohue comments on a worldwide survey of Catholics by Bendixen & Amadi International for Univision:

The survey of 12 nations yields some interesting results, but first a note on its methodology. Asking people to identify themselves as Catholic is not a sufficient condition for drawing conclusions: we need to know whether they regularly attend to the sacraments, or not. The survey made no effort to distinguish between practicing and non-practicing Catholics.

Asking Catholics whether priests should be allowed to marry, or whether women should be allowed to become priests, does not tell us very much. Every survey says “yes” to both, but what counts is the intensity of the conviction: few Catholics have their bags packed ready to jump ship. If that were the case then the mainline Protestant denominations would be booming; instead, they are dying. In other words, there is a

difference between a preference and a demand. There is no demand for either.

The survey is revealing in ways that the media are choosing not to discuss. On the two most contentious moral issues of our day—abortion and gay marriage—there is little sympathy for the secular perspective.

Only 10.3 percent of Catholics worldwide think abortion should be allowed in all cases. Yet in the U.S., for instance, it is legal in all cases. Those who like to lecture the Church about “getting in step with the times” are deadly silent on this matter. On gay marriage, only 31 percent support it; the U.S. and Spain are the only nations where a majority do. When asked whether the Church should perform marriages between two persons of the same sex, 76 percent say “no.” Had Catholics been asked whether the government should compel the Church to recognize gay marriage, even more would have said “no.”

The media are not reporting these findings; all that is needed is a calculator. And honesty. It is still painfully obvious that Catholics in the developed world need to catch up with those in the developing world, especially those in Africa and Asia, in their support for Church teachings.

HOLLYWOOD’S MORAL COMPASS



Bill Donohue comments on the upcoming Oscar balloting:

The song, "Alone Yet Not Alone," was nominated for an Oscar, but then the decision was rescinded; the tune is from a Christian film of the same title. "Philomena," a propaganda film strewn with lies about the Catholic Church [[click here](#)], has won four nominations. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences does the balloting, and most of the voters are white men: in 2012, 94% were white and 77% were male. It would be nice to know if there is even one practicing Catholic among them.

If Hollywood is not Catholic-friendly, it certainly has no phobia when it comes to the sexual abuse of children. We know this because five years ago the Tinseltown celebs came to the defense of Roman Polanski, a confessed child rapist, when he won a Zurich Film Festival award. Harvey Weinstein, the distributor of "Philomena," referred to the "so-called crime" that Polanski committed. But there is nothing "so-called" about plying a 13-year-old girl with a Quaalude and champagne, and then raping her in a tub.

"Free Polanski" was the name of the petition launched in 2009 to defend the man who drugged, penetrated, and sodomized the girl. It politely referred to this as "a case of morals." That was the best it could do. It was signed by Stephen Frears, the director of "Philomena," Martin Scorsese, Jonathan Demme, John Landis, Mike Nichols, Steven Soderberg, and many others. The man who led the petition was Woody Allen.

Allen is nominated for best original screenplay in "Blue Jasmine," and Cate Blanchett is up for best actress. But the white boys who will vote on Friday must decide whether they want to honor a man whose adopted daughter, Dylan Farrow, says he sexually abused her when she was a seven-year-old. Prosecutors found there was "probable cause," but decided to spare Dylan the trauma of a trial. So Allen walked. Had he been a priest, he would have been in prison years ago.

Hollywood's moral compass is set: it has infinitely more

tolerance for celeb child rapists than it does for Christianity, especially Catholicism.

MALICIOUS U.N. REPORT ON VATICAN



Bill Donohue has published an article on the U.N. panel report that examines how the Vatican has handled the issue of priestly sexual abuse. He concludes that it is “malicious

as well as inaccurate.”

To read Donohue’s piece, click [here](#).

DE BLASIO BOYCOTTS ST. PAT’S PARADE



Bill Donohue comments on the decision by New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio not to march in this year’s St. Patrick’s Day parade:

Not since David Dinkins decided not to march in 1993 has a

mayor refused to do so. Personally, I am delighted: I lead the Catholic League contingent every year, and I do not want to march with a public official who does not want to be associated with Irish Catholics.

De Blasio says he will not march because the parade does not allow pro-gay signs. Neither does it allow pro-life ones. The great myth has always been that the parade is anti-gay: in previous years, I have gone on the radio inviting gays to march with the Catholic League, provided they do not draw attention to themselves or to some extrinsic cause. The parade is not about homosexuals, or abortion, or anything other than honoring St. Patrick.

The mayor says he won't accede to the request by gay activists to ban city workers from marching. So kind of him—otherwise he would be looking at an insurrection.