

# CATHOLIC POLITICIANS AND THE CHURCH



Bill Donohue comments on Catholic politicians and their religion:

The media are awash with stories on the tension between Catholic GOP presidential candidates and their fidelity to Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment. It is a story worth exploring. But an even juicier story is the decades-long rejection of papal authority by Catholic Democrats in Washington on issues such as abortion.

In recent years, Vice President Joe Biden, House Minority Speaker Nancy Pelosi, former Congressman Patrick Kennedy, and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, have all gotten into public clashes with their bishop; in some cases as many as 26 bishops have publicly rebuked them. Some of these Democrats were summoned to meet with their bishop—more than once—while others were told to refrain from receiving Communion. Their public support for abortion rights was, in every instance, the issue that provoked the reaction. Yet their dissent, and subsequent reprimands, were never cast by the media as cause for concern.

Catholics are expected to give their assent to papal teachings, but it is not true that all pronouncements are morally equal. In 2004, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope

Benedict XVI) was explicit about this: “Not all moral issues have the same moral weight as abortion and euthanasia. For example, if a Catholic were to be at odds with the Holy Father on the application of capital punishment or the decision to wage war, he would not for that reason be considered unworthy to present himself to receive Holy Communion.”

It goes without saying that climate change is not on the same moral plane with the intentional killing of innocent human beings. It is striking nonetheless to see long-time dissident Catholic journalists—those who rail against Church teachings on sexuality—lining up single file to express their absolute allegiance to what the pope is expected to say tomorrow.

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## **NEW YORK STATE WEIGHS PHONY ABUSE BILL**



Bill Donohue comments on a proposed abuse bill in New York State:

Every year New York Assemblywoman Margaret Markey introduces her bill lifting the statute of limitations on childhood sexual abuse, and every year she loses. The word is out: she’s a phony. Her bills almost always give public school employees a pass (the doctrine of sovereign immunity means that public school victims have only 90 days to press charges). Her

latest attempt—it is her seventh—is also a loser. Unlike previous years, this bill is being introduced at the end of the legislative year. Why? It's rooted in vindictiveness.

Markey's bill is her latest gift to the Catholic community: She is unhappy that an education tax credit bill, which is supported by most Catholics, Orthodox Jews, and minorities, might pass. It provides a tax credit that makes it easier for families, especially poor ones, to send their children to private or parochial schools. The enemies of the indigent, which include the teachers' unions, want to deny the poor the same options that the affluent have. Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie is leading the campaign to deny school choice to poor Latinos and African Americans.

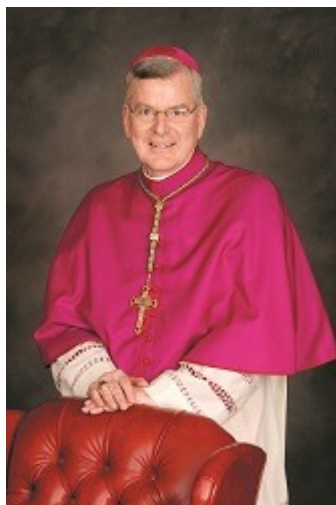
Catholic bashers have branded the Catholic community's opposition to Markey's bill as insensitive. It's a lie. In 2009, after Markey took a beating in the press (led by the Catholic League) for not including public schools in her bill, she broke precedent and actually came clean. But her bill, which applied to both the public and private sectors, was knocked down because the public school establishment went insane. Yet no one called it insensitive.

If Markey's bill were law today, a student in a Catholic school who was groped by a teacher in 1955 could sue, but a child who was raped in a public school as recently as last February could not. This is the kind of "justice" that Markey stands for.

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# ANOTHER COVER-UP OF GAY ABUSERS



Bill Donohue comments on the resignation of St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt:

Both the *New York Times* and AP reported today that Archbishop Nienstedt protected a pedophile priest, Curtis Wehmeyer. But Wehmeyer is not a pedophile: as with almost all molesting priests—more than 80 percent of them—he is a homosexual.

In 2010, Wehmeyer molested two postpubescent boys, 12 and 14, though it wasn't until 2012 that the mother of the abused boys told a priest about it. She was told to call the cops. She did. Wehmeyer was immediately relieved of his duties, and the Ramsey County Attorney commended Archbishop Nienstedt for doing "the right thing."

It was Nienstedt who got the priest removed. Under his predecessor, Archbishop Harry Flynn, Wehmeyer made sexually suggestive remarks to two men, 19 and 20; he was sent for counseling. Two year later, while Flynn was still in charge, he was found cruising in an area known for gay sex. In 2009, with Nienstedt at the helm, he got a DUI. If Nienstedt made one mistake, it was not dumping Wehmeyer sooner.

Ever since Nienstedt criticized the gay movie, "Brokeback Mountain," he has been a marked man. The *Star Tribune*, the *St. Cloud Times*, Minnesota Public Radio, the *New York Times*, as

well as an array of wayward priests, Catholic journalists, former Catholics, and unethical lawyers, have been out to get him. Just today, Fr. Mike Tegeder said it was a good sign that Nienstedt resigned; Tegeder supports gay marriage.

Nienstedt's sin is that he is an orthodox Catholic. How do I know? When Nienstedt took over the Diocese of New Ulm in 2001, he made public the names of eight priests who were credibly accused of molesting minors, only one of whom was there when Nienstedt took over. He did what his predecessor, Bishop Raymond Lucker, would not do. Lucker was loved by Nienstedt's critics. Similarly, when Nienstedt took over from Flynn, he had to deal with two molesting gay priests.

Nienstedt was twice accused of inappropriate touching, and twice the charges proved false. He is a good man who was unfairly treated.

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## NIGHTTIME SHOWS LOVE CATHOLIC BASHING



Bill Donohue comments on Catholic-bashing remarks made on nighttime TV over the past week:

On June 6, Showtime ran a rerun of an earlier "HAPPYish" show that featured Ellen Barkin saying that Jesus and Lazarus were lovers. To which Bradley Whitford replied, "I thought it was Judas who f\*\*\*ed Jesus."

On June 7, John Oliver spoke about the confessional on his HBO

show. He said to the priest, "What do you mean is there anything else? I don't know—I masturbated into a kiwi fruit."

On June 7, "HAPPYish" featured Steve Coogan of "Philomena" fame praising Jesus for being a marketing genius by launching a "We'll save you" campaign. Coogan offered as an example of what Jesus said, "We'll even save your d\*\*\*\*."

On June 9, a reair of "Tosh.0" on Comedy Central had one of its characters opine, "You know I'm not fond of stained glass. When I was an altar boy a priest licked my ass."

On June 9, there was an exchange on the Comedy Central show "@Midnight" about cigarette smoking and shooting up with drugs. If you shoot up at church, said a contestant, "you'll get a thumb up your ass from yours truly." This was followed by similar remarks, ending with Sean Donnelly saying it happened to him because he's "Irish Catholic."

On June 10, Dr. Drew's HLN show had a panel discussion about student conduct in a Christian school. After Drew made a sarcastic remark about such schools, a panelist answered in kind, "Because a Catholic school raises kids right." To which Drew said, "Well, the Duggars taught us that, of course." [Note: the Duggars are not Catholic.]

Most of these people are jerks, so it is a waste of time to register a complaint with them. But Dr. Drew should know better.

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# FEMINISTS WAGE “WAR ON WOMEN”



Bill Donohue comments on the reaction to Tuesday's Fifth Circuit decision upholding a Texas law that protects women's health:

The federal appeals panel ruled that it was a “legitimate purpose” of the Texas law “to provide the highest quality of care to women seeking abortions and to protect the health and welfare of women seeking abortions.” This ruling is consistent with the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion: “The State has a legitimate interest in seeing to it that abortion, like any other medical procedure, is performed under circumstances that insure maximum safety for the patient.”

Who could possibly object to high standards of medical care for women? Women's advocates, that's who. The *New York Times* objects. Ironically, a story on its website on this issue provides a link to a factual description of abortion, and it lists seven risks, among them “excessive bleeding” and “reaction to the medicines or anesthesia, such as problems breathing.” Would not common decency argue that these problems be minimized, and that quality treatment be afforded? Why is the *Times* willing to settle for less?

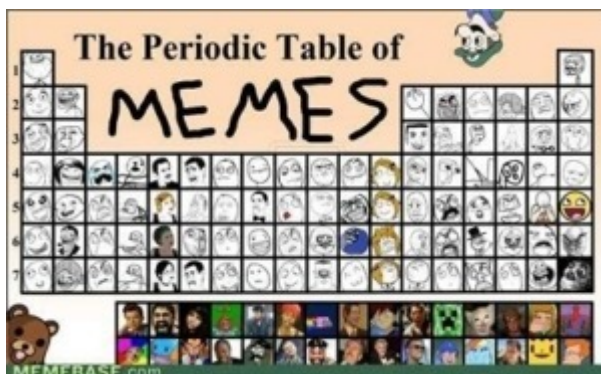
The Center for Reproductive Rights calls the high standards “harmful.” NARAL Pro-Choice Texas also prefers lower standards. Wonkette declares abortion to be “one of the safest procedures in America,” which, even if this were true (it most certainly is not safe for the child), raises the question: Why oppose safer conditions? Planned Parenthood of Texas says the law is “medically unnecessary,” and both Salon and RH Reality Check call it “draconian.”



Liberals are fond of saying that education is empowering, yet when it comes to educating women planning an abortion, they say they should not be required to see what it is they are aborting. They demand that women be given the best medical care, yet when it comes to abortion, they are prepared to put them at risk. They love to spend money on healthcare, yet when it comes to maximum safety for women considering an abortion, they complain about costs. Whose side are they really on? Women deserve better than “back-alley” treatment.

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## MEDIA DISTORT BUSH’S UNWED MOM REMARK



Bill Donohue comments on how the media are distorting a comment made by Jeb Bush about unwed mothers:

The following media outlets have inaccurately reported a comment made by Jeb Bush in his 1995 book, *Profiles in Character*: Huffington Post; Gawker; USA Today; BuzzFeed; Black Business Now; U.S. News and World Report; Opposing Views; Ring of Fire; Perez Hilton; Addicting Info; Wonkette; Daily Kos; Occupy Democrats; Daily Beast; Salon; CNN News. The meme was broached by Huffington Post in its headline yesterday, “Jeb Bush: Unwed Mothers Should Be Publicly Shamed.” All of these media outlets mindlessly distorted what Bush said.

Here is what Bush actually said in his book: “One of the



reasons more young women are giving birth out of wedlock *and more young men are walking away from their paternal obligations* is that there is no longer a stigma attached to this behavior, no reason to feel shame. Many of these young women *and young men* look around and see their friends engaged in the same irresponsible conduct.” (Italics added.)

Ironically, this quote appears in the Huffington Post article by Laura Bassett. That it undermines the title of her article is obvious—at least it is obvious to those who do not share her ideological bias. The other media sources either had similar headlines or made it appear that dads were never mentioned by Bush.

I added the italics to demonstrate how utterly inaccurate it is to say that Bush only addressed moms. Why is this important? Because of the faux “War on Women” campaign that is being waged, oftentimes by those who attack the Catholic Church.

By the way, Bush’s sociological insight is accurate: the loss of stigma attached to unwed mothers and fathers has indeed contributed to a spike in children born out of wedlock.

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## **POPE ATTACKS GENDER IDEOLOGY AGAIN**



Bill Donohue comments on remarks made yesterday by Pope Francis to the bishops of Puerto Rico:

Is Bruce Jenner on the pope's mind? It seems that way. Why else would he attack gender ideology in a speech that had nothing to do with the thesis of his address? As I pointed out [last week](#), Pope Francis has not been shy about condemning gender ideology. Here is what he said yesterday:

- "Allow me to draw your attention to the value and beauty of marriage. The complementarity of man and woman, the vertex of the divine creation, is being questioned by gender ideology, in the name of a freer and more just society. The difference between a man and a woman is not meant to stand in opposition, or to subordinate, but is for the sake of communion and generation, always 'in the image and likeness of God.'"

The pope could have made these remarks about the complementarity of man and woman—this is a staple of Catholic thought on sexuality—without addressing gender ideology. By criticizing the postmodernist idea that nature is a fiction, and all that exists is a social construction, he deliberately took aim at the philosophical underpinnings of sexual reassignment surgery. That he also questioned the conventional wisdom in the academy that gender ideology is a liberating force is significant: he understands that freedom does not lie in contradiction to nature and nature's God.

The mainstream media will ignore the pope's address, even though the subject of sexuality and gender ideology, unlike climate change, lay squarely within the domain of faith and morals.

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# WILL HILLARY EXPLOIT FDR ON SATURDAY?



Bill Donohue comments on Hillary Clinton's presidential launch on June 13 from Roosevelt Island:

Hillary's official campaign begins in the Four Freedoms park on Roosevelt Island. Look for her to invoke FDR's "Four Freedoms" speech in her address, referencing his support for "freedom to worship." The term fits with her agenda: "freedom to worship" implies a private exercise of religion; freedom of religion implies a public and robust one.

On January 13, 2009, Hillary appeared before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; she had been nominated to be Secretary of State. That was the first time she used the term "freedom to worship" in public. On December 13, 2009, when speaking at Georgetown, Secretary Clinton used terms such as "free to worship" and "worship freely." In a State Department briefing on January 21, 2010, she mentioned FDR's "freedom to worship" remark, repeating the term three more times. Her choice of words did not go unnoticed: The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom cited her words in its 2010 annual report, cautioning that it sent a signal to human rights defenders around the world.

Hillary's campaign will say she is only being faithful to FDR's own choice of words, and that "freedom to worship"

carries no political or cultural significance. Not true. When FDR used those words in 1941, he was invoking them in a different context. Here is what he said: “The second freedom is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.” It would have been a clumsy construction to speak of the “freedom of every person to freedom of religion.” Moreover, earlier in that same speech, FDR spoke about the necessity of “freedom of expression [and] freedom of religion.”

The First Amendment does not protect “freedom to worship”: it explicitly protects freedom of religion. U.N. founding documents do the same. If Hillary really believes in a full-throated public exercise of religious liberty, she ought to adopt the language of religion’s friends, not its enemies. No matter, FDR’s innocent use of the term gives her no cover.

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## MAHER TELLS CHRISTIANS TO CHILL OUT



Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by Bill Maher on his Friday night show on HBO:

Maher says Christians have no basis to complain about being defamed or discriminated against because they constitute a majority of the nation. “Seventy percent of the country is Christian, not to mention every president we’ve ever had,” he said. He also said that “conservatives who constantly whine

that Christianity is under attack from liberals have to explain why there are over 300,000 churches in the U.S. but only 400 Whole Foods.”

According to Maher’s logic, Africans in South Africa who lived under apartheid had no basis to complain because they constituted more than 90 percent of the nation. What matters is not the demographics of the population but whether the nation’s elites are working to undermine the norms and values of the majority. If the political and cultural elites bear an animus against the majority, that is not without consequence.

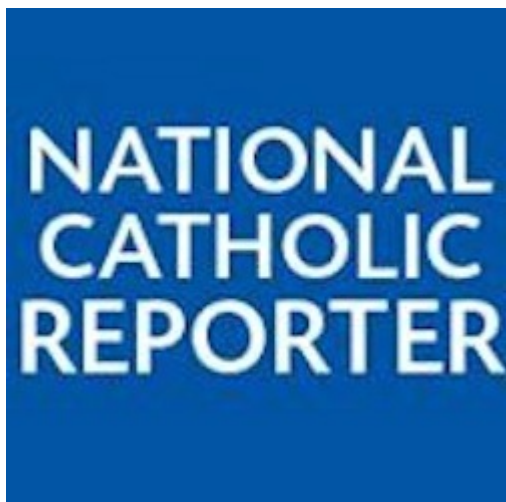
Anyone who thinks that Christian bashing is not alive and well—at the federal, state, and local levels—is delusional. That it thrives in cultural institutions such as the arts, education, the entertainment industry, and the media is indisputable.

Maher can verify the accuracy of my position by accessing the Catholic League’s annual reports on anti-Catholicism, our news releases, and our monthly journal, *Catalyst*; all are available online. Indeed, he will find there are dozens of entries that bear his name.

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## **GUESS WHO’S NOW ATTACKING THE DUGGARS?**



Bill Donohue comments on the latest attack on the Duggar family:

Sarah Palin, and her daughter Bristol, have rightly slammed the mainstream media for bashing the Duggars as hypocrites while continuing to laud Lena Dunham, the celebrity who sexually molested her own sister. But it's not just the secular media that are guilty of rank duplicity—it's hit the Catholic media.

On the front page of the *National Catholic Reporter*, a newspaper and website which opposes every Catholic Church teaching on sexuality [click [here](#)], there is an article by David Clohessy, the director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP). He condemns the Duggars because “no one told the police” about Josh Duggar’s sexual molestation of his sisters.

In the 1990s, David Clohessy knew about the crimes committed by a sexual molester but never called the cops. The abuser was his brother Kevin, then a priest.

It gets worse. In his article today, David Clohessy slams Bishop Robert Finn, who previously led the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, for not reporting a disturbed priest who downloaded crotch-shot pictures of fully-clothed girls (there was one non-pornographic photo of a naked girl) to his computer. Yet the founder of SNAP, Barbara Blaine, who works closely with Clohessy, wrote to the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners in 2009 pleading with the panel to go easy

on Dr. Steve Taylor: he is a former SNAP shrink who was sent to prison for downloading child pornography to his computer.

Child sexual abuse of any kind is abhorrent and must be unequivocally condemned. There are phonies on the right and phonies on the left, and all of them deserve to be rebuked. That some are also shameless is beyond question. Don't these people have mirrors in their house?