

OMISSIONS IN PRESIDENT'S WHITE HOUSE WELCOME TO POPE



Bill Donohue comments on President Obama's welcome to Pope Francis at the White House:

As he welcomed Pope Francis to the White House this morning, President Barack Obama spoke eloquently about the Catholic Church's contributions to America and the world. He praised Pope Francis' "profound moral example" and leadership on issues ranging from world peace, to justice for the poor and marginalized, to "our obligation to protect our planet." He cited the pope's message about mercy, and thanked him for the "great gift of hope."

Yet as the president spoke about religious liberty and the dignity of the human person, there were two glaring, if predictable, omissions.

"You remind us that people are only truly free when they can practice their faith freely," the president told the pope. Then, reciting a litany of horrific persecutions of Christians and others around the world, he said, "we stand with you in defense of religious freedom."

Here in the United States, however—while we are certainly not threatened with the lethal violence that terrorizes Christians in other parts of the world—the Obama administration has itself been on the attack against religious liberty. The Little Sisters of the Poor and other religious entities are being told they must provide insurance coverage for

contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs. Catholic agencies are being forced out of foster care and adoption services because they will not place children with same-sex, or unmarried, co-habiting heterosexual couples. And family-owned businesses are being forced to participate in same-sex wedding ceremonies that violate their religious beliefs.

The president also praised the pope's commitment "to ensure that every human being is able to live in dignity—because we are all made in the image of God."

Stirring words—that ring rather hollow when we reflect that Obama is the most pro-abortion president in American history. Today, he stands with those in Congress defending taxpayer funding for Planned Parenthood, America's leading abortion provider, which has now been caught out selling the body parts of aborted babies—"made in the image of God"—for profit.

President Obama said the pope's "moral authority comes not just through words, but also through deeds." So must the president's.

DONOHUE SET TO MEET POPE



On September 23, Bill Donohue, and vice president Bernadette Brady-Egan, will meet with Pope Francis following a prayer service at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in

Washington, D.C.

The invitation to meet the pope was extended by Donald Cardinal Wuerl. He also invited them to the canonization Mass

at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. Timothy Cardinal Dolan invited Bill to the prayer service at St. Patrick's Cathedral, but he has elected to stay in D.C. to do TV interviews.

Donohue will be available to do TV interviews from Washington, and Rick Hinshaw, the director of communications, will handle media requests in New York. Donohue will return at noon on Friday.

PROTESTANT OPTION IS EXTANT



Bill Donohue comments on critics who keep pushing for reforms within the Catholic Church that have been rejected:

If I belonged to a socialist club in college, and later found myself drawn to libertarianism, I would jump ship. So why do Catholics who have long since rejected many of the Church's teachings stay, when they could easily join one of the mainline Protestant denominations? Abortion, contraception, women priests, married priests, gay marriage—the mainliners welcome it all—so why the reluctance to bolt?

It's often said by liberal Catholics that conservative Catholics are all about "bells and smells," ritualistic exercises devoid of doctrinal substance. As it turns out, it is they—disaffected liberal Catholics and those with one foot out the door—who are the real devotees of "smells and bells."

After all, it can't be the teachings that keep them from leaving, so what's left? The choir?

Remember that stupid TV show from the 1990s that I had a hand in killing, "Nothing Sacred"? The pro-abortion priest who starred in the show had quite a following among Catholic malcontents, including, sadly, a number of bishops. "Nothing" was noted for its "bells and smells" approach to Catholicism, a characteristic that spoke volumes about its few fans.

The latest to carp about the Church's teachings, while still professing to be a Catholic, is Garry Wills. In an op-ed in the *Boston Globe*, he comforts himself with the thought that there are two Churches: "Other Church," which is the hierarchy, and "Our Church," which is everyone else. It is the former to whom Jesus gave his authority, but who cares about theology when living a delusion? Moreover, if Wills were to read the Catholic League-Polling Company [survey](#) of Catholics, it would burst his bubble about the faithful being in rebellion against the Magisterium.

No doubt Wills never missed an episode of "Nothing." It must be tough getting old never finding a religious home. Someone ought to tell him that the Protestant option is still extant.

GEORGE WILL: BIGOT WITH A BRAIN



Bill Donohue comments on an article in yesterday's *Washington Post* by columnist George Will; it is syndicated in other papers today:

"He [the pope] stands against modernity, rationality, science and, ultimately...open societies." This is the kind of anti-Catholic trope that uneducated bigots have been trotting out for about a century. Now it is being advanced by George Will, an atheist whose latest cause is assisted suicide. He is an educated man, but his grasp of Catholicism is on a par with that of Bill Maher's.

In my latest [book](#), *The Catholic Advantage: How Health, Happiness, and Heaven Await the Faithful*, I took Will to task for showcasing his ignorance of my religion when, in the 1980s, he misinterpreted what Cardinal John O'Connor meant when he said Catholicism is a "theology of suffering." New York City Mayor Ed Koch got it, but it was over Will's head.

Not surprisingly, Will doesn't like Pope Francis. The Holy Father, he opines, is known for emitting "clouds of sanctimony." He speaks with authority: pomposity, which is a close cousin to sanctimony, is his signature style. More important is his twisting of the pope's position on materialism to mean that he is anti-electricity.

Will is a wordsmith, so he ought to know the difference between consumerism and "compulsive consumerism." The latter is indeed a sin (a concept that is admittedly hard for atheists to understand). Why? Because it suggests extravagance, the kind of materialistic indulgence that no Christian can condone.

If it weren't for Catholicism, there would be no Age of

Science, so it is mind-boggling that Will would suggest otherwise. More recently, as Pope Benedict XVI has said, when faith and reason are severed, serious problems emerge. Will gets the latter but not the former. Neither did the 20th century's totalitarians.

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CHURCH-STATE FANATICS MUST LEARN FROM CUBA



Bill Donohue comments on the pope's visit to Cuba:

In 1959, Cuba was declared an atheist state, but has since become more accommodating to the Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI paved the way for Pope Francis' engagement with the Communist regime, and it looks as though the progress will continue.

Two new Catholic churches are being built in Cuba: one in Havana and one in the province Pinar del Rio. It's time the separation of church and state fanatics study the Cuban evolution and lighten up.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State was founded as an expressly anti-Catholic organization, Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State. The only thing that has really changed since

the post-war period when it was launched is that it has become more polished in its bigotry. Freedom From Religion Foundation is another wild-eyed anti-Catholic group, and in many ways is even more extreme than Americans United.

If they can build Catholic churches in Cuba, the time has come to ask these Catholic-bashing entities to take their cues from the Communists: Catholics are not asking for funds to build their churches (though President Thomas Jefferson did provide monies for this initiative), but they are asking for such things as school vouchers. If the Castro brothers are not scared to death of public money servicing the Church, then these militant secularists ought to take a deep breath and move on. Ideally, they would go into retirement.

CHARLIE HEBDO MOCKS DROWNED LITTLE BOY

CHARLIE HEBDO

Bill Donohue comments on *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons mocking the drowning of a little Syrian refugee boy:

Who but *Charlie Hebdo* would find the tragic drowning death of a little boy funny? The French magazine, notorious for its vile offenses against the sacred beliefs of Muslims, Christians and Jews, has now published two disgusting cartoons mocking the death of little Aylan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian boy whose body washed up on the shores of Turkey during the Syrian refugee exodus.

One cartoon shows a little boy's body washed up on shore, next to a fast food billboard advertising two kid meals for the price of one, with the caption, "So close to making it." The other cartoon shows a Jesus figure walking on water, with a child's body upside down in the water next to him. The Jesus figure is saying, "Christians walk on water"; the drowning child says, "Muslim children sink." And the caption reads, "Proof that Europe is Christian."

No amount of moralizing by the magazine's editors can change what this is: a cheap exploitation of a little boy's tragic death to grab attention, and then to somehow point fingers at Christians as responsible for his death. Which begs the question, who were little Aylan and his family fleeing from that caused his death? It wasn't Christians, it was radical Islamist jihadists terrorizing their own people—as well as Christians—throughout the Middle East.

Some will of course try to spin this as a free speech issue. It is not. Nor was it last January when we, even as we joined the worldwide public outcry against the senseless slaughter of *Charlie Hebdo* staff by Islamist terrorists, also deplored the magazine's vile, obscene portrayals of religious figures.

We've never called for censorship, and we do not do so now. But we do join in the widespread moral condemnation of these disgusting cartoons. And we agree with those like Peter Herbert, chairman of the Society of Black Lawyers in England, who called *Charlie Hebdo* "a purely racist, xenophobic and ideologically bankrupt publication."

OBAMA WELCOMES RELIGIOUS REBELS



Bill Donohue comments on some appalling invitations to the pope's White House visit:

It is so fitting that the least friendly administration to religion in history would invite a collection of pro-abortion nuns, Catholic gay activists, assorted dissidents and religious rebels to attend Pope Francis' visit to the White House September 23.

These include gay Catholic blogger Aaron Ledesma; Catholic gay activist and Church critic Nicholas Coppola; and Sister Jeannine Gramick, co-founder of the Catholic dissident group New Ways Ministry, who in 1999 was barred by the Vatican from working in ministry to homosexuals. Coppola and Gramick were both invited by GLAAD, which says the White House invited it and LGBT leaders to attend.

Vivien Taylor, who identifies as transgender, not only scored an invite, but was told to bring some friends. He is—including members of Dignity, a Catholic dissident group, and other “transgender and intersex people.”

Also attending is Gene Robinson, the first openly gay Episcopal bishop, who left his wife of 14 years for his male partner, then last year “divorced” that partner.

Also on hand will be Sister Simone Campbell. She is the leader of the “Nuns on the Bus” who actively campaigned for Obamacare with its blatant pro-abortion provisions. We doubt an invitation is on the way to the Little Sisters of the Poor,

the nuns being targeted by the administration for remaining true to their Catholic faith and refusing to comply with the pro-abortion mandate. We don't expect to see them there.

Catholic-baiting is nothing new in Washington. Back in 1994, the Clinton administration's own Ambassador to the Vatican, Ray Flynn, wrote that he was "embarrassed" by the "ugly anti-Catholic bias that is shown by prominent members of Congress and the administration."

President Obama, however, has taken it to a new level. From inviting an aggressively anti-religious atheist organization to the White House; to trying to force Catholics, like the Little Sisters, to violate Catholic moral teaching; and now, to this attempt to exploit a papal visit to promote an agenda that is offensive to faithful Catholics, he has shown a religious intolerance that is mind-boggling.

USUAL SUSPECTS TRYING TO BLOCK PUBLIC'S ACCESS TO POPE



Bill Donohue comments on groups trying to limit public access to Pope Francis:

Poll after poll shows that Pope Francis is universally popular these days, with millions of Americans—of all religions or no religion—clamoring for an opportunity to welcome him when he arrives on our shores next week. Two groups—the Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) and Americans United for Separation

of Church and State—are predictably unhappy about that, and doing all they can to limit the public’s access to the pope.

Americans United is unhappy that the city of Cape May, New Jersey is planning to broadcast the pope’s September 27 Mass from nearby Philadelphia at the Cape May Convention Hall. The city, which has waived charges at the Convention Center for other non-profit events, organized this one in conjunction with the Cape May Ministerium, a group of clergy representing different denominations. “It’s a great opportunity for the city of Cape May to showcase itself,” and to “make that available to people who can’t attend in person,” said Cape May’s attorney. No matter, says Americans United; they’ll sue if the event takes place.

FFRF got similarly exercised about New York City’s giveaway of tickets to see Pope Francis in Central Park September 25. This, the group said, made New York City appear “to be endorsing Pope Francis’ sectarian religious message.”

FFRF is also in high dudgeon over Pope Francis’ scheduled meeting with inmates at the Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility in Philadelphia September 27. As prisons are “public-supported,” the group complained, the pope should not have been invited to meet with inmates; nor should inmates have been permitted to hand carve a chair to present to the pontiff, even though they volunteered to do so.

Freedom *From* Religion is an apt name for this group. Obviously they care nothing for the Freedom *of* Religion of those who are incarcerated.

LITTLE KNOWN POPE FRANCIS QUOTES



Bill Donohue comments on the Pope Francis that the media don't want the public to know:

It's great that the media have finally found a pope that they like, but if they were sincere they would report on statements made by Pope Francis that don't quite fit the narrative they have spun about him.

The teachings of the Church generally lean toward the liberal side on social and economic matters, and generally lean conservative on cultural and moral issues. In this regard, Pope Francis is no different from his predecessors. But one would never know this by reading mainstream media accounts of him.

Pope Francis has made many comments on issues the media have either ignored or underreported. To read some of them click [here](#).

SO ABORTION MAKES WOMEN HAPPY?



Bill Donohue comments on an op-ed in today's *New York Times*:

"We can all recognize that abortion in many ways represents a sad, even tragic choice in many, many women." Those are the words of Hillary Clinton. Which is why she must be as dumbfounded as I am to read the op-ed by Jill Filipovic boasting how abortion brings about "positive feelings of relief or happiness." You can just hear it said, "Break out the booze—my baby is dead."

Filipovic is an unemployed writer who provides not a single shred of evidence to support her delirious conclusion. When I submit op-ed ads to the *New York Times*, I am routinely asked to provide proof for my contentions. I'm fine with that—I always have the data. Then why was this piece printed when the author simply *asserts* that "research shows" women are happy following an abortion?

In 2011, the *British Journal of Psychiatry* published "the largest quantitative estimate of mental health risks associated with abortion available in the world literature." It measured anxiety, depression, alcohol use, marijuana use, and suicidal behavior. It found that "the overall experience of abortion led to a staggering 81% increased risk of mental health problems across all the variables." Studies done in the U.S., Finland, Denmark, and Canada have come to similar conclusions.

In addition to these five mental health problems, post-abortion syndromes include such emotions as guilt, feelings of numbness, avoidance of children or pregnant women, inability

to bond with present or future children, eating disorders, fear of infertility, and nightmares. There is no post-abortion syndrome called elation. And they all remember the anniversary of the aborted child's due date, or the date of the abortion.

Project Rachel was founded as a Catholic ministry to reach out to women who have had an abortion. Filipovic ought to talk to these women. She would learn that "breaking out the booze" only occurs when post-abortive women opt to self-medicate.

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