

FOX'S "FAMILY GUY" GOES OVER THE LINE

Bill Donohue comments on "Family Guy's" ridicule of the Eucharist:

"Family Guy" is a typically juvenile prime time cartoon show that airs on Fox. It's Christmas episode last night was true to form, and most of its adolescent humor would not have drawn a response from us. But the show crossed the line with its mockery of the Eucharist.

As the show's Griffin family debates whether to go to church or go sledding on Sunday morning, Dad says, "after all, sledding was the second passion of the Christ." With that, Jesus is shown sledding down a mountain, saying, "Eat this, for this is my dust."

The "passion" comment is silly, and the humorous image of Jesus sledding doesn't offend us. But the Eucharist is sacred: the body and blood of Christ, the source and summit of our Catholic faith. It is not fair game for ridicule.

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MICROSOFT'S LGBT CHRISTMAS AD

Bill Donohue comments on Microsoft's Christmas ad:

Ask any schoolboy what the meaning of Christmas is, and he will say it celebrates the birth of Jesus. Ask the ideologues at Microsoft, and they will say it means whatever their

politics dictate. This year it represents an opportunity to exploit Christmas by pushing the LGBT agenda.

Microsoft has released a TV ad, "Art of Harmony," that is laden with Christmas overtones, yet absent of Christian content. "This holiday season we brought together a group of people who are making a difference in the world," the ad says. It does not say what holiday is being observed, though we have a hunch it isn't Kwanzaa; the ad ends by showing a Christmas tree in the background.

As it turns out, this is no ordinary "group of people." Included is Jazz Jennings, described by Microsoft as "the youngest person to publicly identify herself as transgender, now a national role-model and activist for transgender youth." No doubt she is—her agents have seen to that. [Little Jazz is not mentioned by name but she is seen speaking before the Human Rights Campaign, a pro-gay and anti-religion organization.]

Zea Bowling also made the cut. Zea is described as "a 7-year old first grader who stood firm in the face of hate during a celebration of the Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage." Such courage for a kid fresh off her tricycle. And such brains: she may not know how to tell time, but she sure knows who the haters are—those who believe marriage is between a man and a woman.

In a scene where a rainbow flag is waved, we receive our marching orders: "People should let people be whoever they want to be." Are Jazz and Zea's parents listening?

No one, of course, is shown celebrating Christmas. Nor are there any kids shown standing up to corporate bullies who rip off the Christmas season to make cheap political points.

Anyone who thinks this isn't a political statement needs to read what the ad agency that created it has to say. "This year has been challenging for many and much of what we hear in the

news can be negative. Microsoft wanted to lift people up and remind them that ordinary people can make a difference. The message focuses on the spirit of the holidays, people coming together and celebrating what is good and right with the world—what unites us, instead of what divides us.”

I guess this is open to interpretation, so I’ll offer mine.

Much of what I heard in the news was indeed negative. Hillary’s criminal behavior, her lying, her scheming, and her dancing to Jay Z’s “f**king n***ers” lyrics did not make me happy. But the ordinary people, those adorable “deplorables,” did put a smile on my face, proving that even they can make a difference.

Yes, we do need to “celebrate what is good and right with the world,” which is precisely why so many will be dancing in the streets come January 20. It’s on a Friday, so it’s a sure bet the champagne will be flowing. Keep the Advil handy.

If the bi-coastal elites at Microsoft really believe in diversity, then let them have their LGBT celebrations in June during gay pride month, and leave December to Christians.

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SANTA’S BACK AT HILLSBORO

Bill Donohue comments on a reply from Hillsboro School District:

On December 5, in a news release titled, “Diversity = Intolerance,” I mentioned that Oregon’s Hillsboro School District issued a policy requesting that employees “refrain” from decorating their office doors with Santa. That’s because

some feel “uncomfortable” seeing Christmas symbols.

We bombarded the local media in the Portland area where Hillsboro is located with our statement, and subsequently heard from the school district’s communications director, Beth Graser; she emailed me a letter explaining what happened and how this matter has been resolved.

There is good news: Santa is back. More good news: there are no reports of vomiting or levitation among the “uncomfortable” crowd.

“I apologize for the turmoil this has caused,” Graser wrote. Apology accepted. But her explanation of what happened suggests that some in the district still don’t get it.

Graser says the office door policy was meant to apply only to the district staff. However, a portion of the policy was sent to principals, and one of them shared it with others. It eventually wound up in the hands of an employee who is not anti-Santa, and that someone contacted the media. Once we learned of it, we jumped on it.

In her letter to me, Graser strains to say that all of this hullabaloo could have been avoided had the unhappy employee simply discussed the policy with school officials, instead of going to the media. But that dodges the real problem. There would have been no media issue in the first place had school district officials not sought to censor Christmas.

No matter, we are happy to say that the right decision has been made. Here is what Graser wrote: “We respect and value all religions, cultures, customs and traditions, including Santa and Christmas. We have not banned Santa. Many of our schools have Santa and/or Christmas-related decorations displayed and many are having visits from Santa over the next two weeks.”

A happy ending to a needless controversy.

TRUMP WILL BE RELIGION-FRIENDLY

Bill Donohue comments on Donald Trump's friendly attitude toward religion:

None of the three biggest vote getters in the primaries—Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, and Bernie Sanders—are known for their deeply rooted religious convictions. Trump is Presbyterian and Clinton is a Methodist, and like many mainline Protestants, they are religion-lite; Sanders is an admitted secularist. What makes Trump different from Clinton and Sanders is his religion-friendly posture, something the faithful from every religious community can welcome.

There are certain advantages to being religion-lite and religion-friendly at the same time. Having no strong personal stake in the conflict between religious liberty and the rights embroiled in abortion, marriage, education, housing, and healthcare, there is good reason to believe that Trump can be counted on to be religion-friendly.

Moreover, he won 52 percent of the Catholic vote (he did much better among practicing Catholics) and 81 percent of the evangelical vote. He is not likely to let his constituents down.

Trump is a businessman, not a culture warrior. As such, he was never seriously engaged in any of the fights that animate those of a more orthodox religious stripe. Take abortion. On October 24, 1999, Trump was asked by Tim Russert on "Meet the Press" if his support for abortion rights would extend to a defense of partial-birth abortion. "I'm very pro-choice," Trump said, adding that he would oppose a ban on partial-birth

abortion.

Within no time, Trump reversed himself. "After the show," he said, "I consulted with two doctors I respect and, upon learning more about this procedure, I have concluded that I would indeed support a ban." His remark was published three months later in his book, *The America We Deserve*. This was the beginning of his evolution on this subject.

Trump has consistently said that he will appoint pro-life judges to the federal bench, and there is no reason to disbelieve him. Indeed, the month before the election he pledged to Catholics that he will work with us, "helping the ongoing growth of the pro-life cause."

On the collision between gay rights and religious liberty, Trump is less specific. He is welcoming to the gay community, assuring them, properly so, that he will not tolerate bullying, but he is also choosing cabinet members that are religion-friendly.

For example, Sen. Jeff Sessions (attorney general), Betsy DeVos (education), Rep. Tom Price (health and human services), and Ben Carson (housing and urban development), are all known for refusing to subordinate religious liberty to the gay rights agenda.

There is one more important consideration. To the extent that Trump makes appointing pro-life judges a priority, he is likely to select men and women who will honor our right to religious liberty; competing rights will not be eviscerated, but they will not eclipse our First Amendment right.

Trump is particularly good on school choice. His choice of Betsy DeVos as education secretary proves his commitment to academic excellence and religious liberty. It would be hard to find someone with a more stellar record of supporting school choice than her. That she is dedicated to including religious schools in her effort is indisputable. Indeed, she played a

prominent role in helping Mike Pence succeed with a voucher plan in Indiana that was decidedly religion-friendly.

Ben Carson is a decent man with deep religious roots. As the new Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, he will be positioned to advance the cause of religious liberty. He can be expected to ensure that faith-based programs that are tied to the department's block grants are not burdened with contrived church-and-state regulations. This will put a stop to the kinds of machinations sponsored by the Obama team.

In fact, the Obama administration's war on religious liberty, especially its attack on Catholic institutions, is coming to an end. The draconian Health and Human Services mandate will be dismantled by Secretary Price. Trump said as much when he noted that Hillary Clinton was aligned against the Little Sisters of the Poor. "That is a hostility to religious liberty you will never see in a Trump administration," he said.

The religious rights of men and women in the armed services will also spike under Trump. We know this not simply by citing what he says, but by reading what his adversaries are saying about him. Mikey Weinstein, who heads the Military Religion Freedom Foundation, is the most vociferous enemy of religious liberty in the military, and he is up in arms over Trump. That is a very good sign.

President Ronald Reagan was not known to be a particularly religious man, yet he was one of the most religion-friendly presidents we've had in recent memory. He was the first to establish formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See, and he was a champion of the pro-life cause.

All indications are that Trump will be more like Reagan, which is a good omen. When he is attacked for standing up for religious liberty—and he will be—it will be up to us to defend him. We plan to do so with vigor.

ATHEISTS AND SATANISTS—ONE AND THE SAME

Bill Donohue comments on the activities of atheists and Satanists:

American Atheists and Satanists say they are opposed to all religions, but they lie: it is Christianity that they really hate. The proof is evident every year at Christmas.

American Atheists is rolling out its annual billboard displays, this year targeting cities such as Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Lynchburg, Virginia. Both cities are home to prominent evangelical organizations: Focus on the Family and Liberty University, respectively. One of the billboards reads, "Atheist Christmas: The More, the Merrier"; the other says, "Make Christmas Great Again—Skip Church!"

Notice the billboards only mock Christmas, saying nothing about any other religious holiday, such as Hanukkah.

The Satanic Temple of Detroit is perhaps the most active branch of the Satanists, and once again this year it is erecting "Snaketivity" on the Capitol lawn in Lansing. It is being placed in a spot near the traditional nativity scene. The display features a cross, a red snake, and a sign that reads, "The Greatest Gift is Knowledge."

Notice the display only misappropriates a Christian religious symbol, leaving other religious symbols—the menorah and crescent and star—unscathed.

What is the difference between American Atheists and the Satanists? Not much: both hate Christianity and both lie for a

living.

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DIVERSITY = INTOLERANCE

Bill Donohue comments on the true meaning of diversity:

Old-fashioned bigots are honest: they don't mince words or try to disguise their bigotry. Today's bigots are dishonest: they talk endlessly about the virtues of "diversity and inclusion," yet are just as intolerant as the bigots of old. Indeed, the record shows that diversity is code for intolerance.

Oregon's Hillsboro School District has censored Santa (not just Jesus) from the schools. But instead of telling the truth—it wants to limit the free speech rights of Christians at Christmastime—it says it is practicing diversity. So it has instructed employees that they must be careful when decorating their doors: nothing religious will be tolerated. Moreover, even non-religious figures, such as Santa, are forbidden.

Why is Santa so controversial? They don't come right out and say it, so I will: Santa reminds people of Christmas, and Christmas reminds people of Christ. There's the rub.

School authorities say that when employees decorated their doors in years past, it made some people feel "uncomfortable." But Hanukkah begins on Christmas Eve this year, and surely there is some super-sensitive soul who feels "uncomfortable" about Hanukkah symbols, yet there is no word about censoring

them (at least for now).

After telling employees to “refrain” from using Santa to decorate their doors—in the name of being “respectful and sensitive to diverse perspectives and beliefs”—school officials then lied to the community, saying, “We [are] NOT banning Santa.” But that is exactly what they did. This is why old-fashioned bigots are so endearing: they don’t lie.

The Utah Cultural Celebration Center, located in West Valley City, is home tonight to a “Trees of Diversity” exhibit. It does not say what Diversity Trees look like, or why they are being substituted for Christmas trees. However, given that Diversity = Intolerance these days—especially at this time of the year—it hardly matters what they say. We get the point.

Proof that diversity is code for intolerance can also be gleaned by considering which holiday is being bashed on TV. If December is Diversity month, then why are not all religious and secular holidays treated with the same degree of disdain that Christmas is?

Last night, “Family Guy” on Fox featured a discussion about Jesus’ penis. Why is it that Muhammad’s penis is never a topic of conversation on this show? The birth of Jesus was mocked on NBC’s “Saturday Night Live,” but there was no ridicule of Hanukkah. Again, where’s the diversity in singling out Christianity?

The only good news is that fewer and fewer Americans are being fooled by these dishonest diversity games. What’s really going on is censorship, pure and simple.

NATIVITY SCENES BELONG IN NYC SCHOOLS

Bill Donohue comments on why nativity scenes should be displayed in New York City public schools:

New York City permits the display of Jewish religious symbols, e.g., the menorah, on public property and in public schools. It permits the display of Christian religious symbols, e.g., nativity scenes, on public property but not in public schools. This disparate treatment violates every tenet of fairness, diversity, and inclusion.

Accordingly, the Catholic League is proud to support the effort by New York State Senator Tony Avella to secure equal treatment in the schools. I have [written](#) to Mayor Bill de Blasio and Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña requesting they honor this appeal.

The previous mayor, Michael Bloomberg, refused to even consider this request. Hopefully, Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña will conclude that all religious symbols must be treated fairly.

CENSORING AND NEUTERING CHRISTMAS

Bill Donohue comments on the anti-Christmas efforts of the Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF):

Secularists are not necessarily anti-Christmas, but the radicals in their ranks are. At the top of the list is FFRF.

Its tactics are twofold: If religious Christmas symbols and events cannot be banned, secular symbols and events must compete with them. Consider the following.

For many years, the northern Michigan town of Menominee has displayed a nativity scene on public property. It was taken down this year after a complaint by FFRF. Chicago's Daley Square has long been host to a life-size nativity scene, and in recent years that spot has been shared with a display by FFRF: it is celebrating seasonal climate changes (the change from autumn to winter means a lot to these people); it is also saluting freedom from religion. Both the religious and the secular displays are now up.

FFRF reflexively chooses censorship over competition. It feels at home with censorial tactics because that is what it is good at (it is now threatening the city of St. Bernard, Ohio with a lawsuit over its crèche). But when that fails, faux competition is its default position. For example, the local Chicago chapter of FFRF explains its dummy secular display by saying "the holidays should be all-inclusive." But they are not.

With the exception of national holidays, such as the 4th of July and Thanksgiving, most holidays are properly exclusionary in nature.

Martin Luther King Day celebrates the contributions of this American civil rights leader. No one else is celebrated on his holiday; to do so would be to neuter his heroics. Similarly, Veteran's Day excludes all non-veterans from its celebrations. If everyone were included, it would negate the honors that veterans deserve.

To those who still don't get it (they are largely post-graduates), try this thought experiment. What makes our birthdays special? Still need help? One of the wonderful things about our birthdays is that they exclude most of the

world from celebrating with us. We get the gifts—everyone else gets nothing.

Three cheers for exclusion!

Try educating FFRF: info@ffrf.org