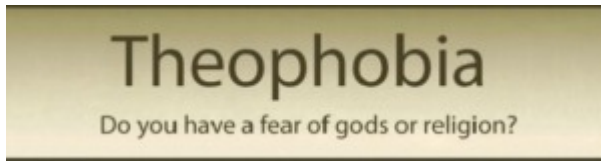


RELIGIOUS LIBERTY FRIGHTENS SECULARISTS



Bill Donohue comments on Religious Freedom Day:

January 16 is Religious Freedom Day, a day that most Americans are proud to support. There are some, however, who are frightened by it.

Frederick Clarkson is frightened. He is the author of "When Exemption is the Rule: The Religious Freedom Strategy of the Christian Right," an analysis of Christian legal organizations and their impact on society. His thesis is that "the evangelical Protestant Christian Right and American Roman Catholic bishops [have] forged a lasting alliance." Specifically, they want to carve out "theocratic zones of control." As such, it poses a threat to religious liberty.

Supporting Clarkson is Patricia Miller. What really interests her, and Clarkson, is sex. They detest religious exemptions that "threaten reproductive and LGBT rights." Both have their work flagged on the website of Religion Dispatches, an anti-Christian site. Not surprisingly, Clarkson formerly worked for Planned Parenthood, and Miller is the author of a pro-abortion book.

This is the way the Left works. First, they promote a libertine agenda, one that does violence to liberty, properly understood, and to civil society. Second, they foster increasing encroachments by the state on religion. Third, when religious-liberty advocates fight back, seeking to insulate practicing Christians and Jews from an overreaching state, they are accused of creating a theocracy. Indeed, Rev. John C. Dorhauer, who wrote a preface to Clarkson's work, says we are

faced with the prospect of turning America into “a theocratic state, or a collection of mini-states.”

Yuval Levin offers a more astute understanding of this subject. Writing in the February edition of *First Things*, he notes that Madison recognized that “religious liberty is the freedom not to be coerced into doing that which your religion prohibits you from doing.” We stand with Madison.

Clarkson and Miller should be worried: Our side is not walking away from this fight for freedom.

OBAMA OPPOSES RELIGIOUS PROFILING?



Bill Donohue comments on President Obama's State of the Union address:

President Obama implored us to “reject any politics that targets people because of race or religion.” Regrettably, his opposition to religious profiling cannot be taken seriously. If anything, his administration has contributed to it.

The Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate is a classic case of religious profiling. Not only does it cherry pick Catholic non-profits by forcing them to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, it redefines what constitutes a Catholic entity: Catholic social service agencies that hire and serve large

numbers of non-Catholics—that is what truly Catholic institutions do—are deemed to be no longer Catholic. This explains why the Little Sisters of the Poor were declared to be non-Catholic by the administration; it also explains why the nuns sued them.

When bishops complained that the HHS mandate was violating the conscience rights of Catholics, the Obama administration retaliated by issuing a gag order: it prohibited military chaplains to read from the pulpit a letter by Archbishop Timothy Broglio protesting this edict.

For many years, the Migration and Refugee Services, an agency run by the bishops, received a federal grant for its work combating human trafficking. But because it opposes abortion as a remedy to “help” women, it was denied by the Obama team, even though its grant application received high scores from independent reviewers.

Catholics have every right to question Obama’s alleged sensitivity to religious institutions. After all, he invited Catholic dissidents to the White House to meet the pope, and has welcomed vile anti-Catholics such as Bill Maher and Dan Savage. By contrast, there is no record of him ever embracing anti-Muslim bigots. That’s because Muslims are treated with greater respect than Catholics.

**CARDINAL WUERL ADDRESSES
VIOLENCE**



Bill Donohue comments on Washington Archbishop Donald Cardinal Wuerl's remarks on violence:

At President Obama's State of the Union address tonight, there will be an empty seat, purposely set aside, in the First Lady's guest box: it represents the victims of gun violence. Those who are seriously interested in this issue might want to ponder the cultural reasons why violence is so prevalent in our society. Cardinal Wuerl offers great insight into this matter.

In a Newsmax TV interview, Cardinal Wuerl addressed the societal effects of abortion, tying it to violence. He said "one reason why we are so casual in our country with violence" is the "disrespect for human life." He specifically called attention to the mindset that abortion engenders: "What we have done is create a mentality that so depreciates the value of life, that all these things follow very easily. You can't say to someone, life only has the value you give it and expect that they're not going to apply that principle in areas where you might differ."

Cardinal Wuerl nailed it. Consider young men. They have always been, for reasons grounded in nature, the most violent segment in society. They take their cues from the dominant culture, and the lesson they learn from our casual attitude toward abortion-on-demand is that life is cheap. It is expendable. Indeed, as Cardinal Wuerl put it, they learn that "It's all right to kill as long as the person is inconvenient to you."

In 1979, when Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize, she said that "the greatest destroyer of peace is abortion."

Why? “Because if a mother can kill her own child—what is left for me to kill you and you kill me—there is nothing in between.” She understood the corrosive cultural effects of abortion—it softens our resolve to condemn violence in all of its manifestations.

Unfortunately, many of those who rightly abhor gun violence concentrate only on guns, and not the cultural forces that abet it.

COVERING UP FOR ACT UP



Bill Donohue comments on a story in today's *New York Times*:

New York Times reporter James Barron has a story today about former Senate majority leader George Mitchell being named the grand marshal of this year's New York St. Patrick's Day Parade. He mentions that a gay group led by Brendan Fay is being allowed to march in this year's parade. He recounts how much has changed since a gay uprising in 1989. “The controversy began in December 1989,” he writes, “when thousands demonstrated outside St. Patrick's Cathedral over statements made by Cardinal John J. O'Connor on abortion, homosexuality and AIDS.”

That is not exactly what happened. Barron left out the most salient aspect of this protest—what happened inside the cathedral. He should read his own newspaper's account.

The *Times* editorial of December 12, 1989 describes how demonstrators “stormed St. Patrick’s Cathedral.” It notes that “They entered the cathedral and repeatedly interrupted the service. They lay down in the aisles, chained themselves to pews and sought to shout down Cardinal O’Connor as he said mass. One protester is reported to have disrupted even the administering of communion with an act of desecration that deeply offended worshippers.”

The act of desecration was spitting the Eucharist on the floor. No wonder Mayor Ed Koch, who was there, said he was shocked by the “fascist tactics” of the protesters.

Everyone knows that if Catholics demonstrated outside a hall where gay activists were holding forth, and some of them went crazy—storming the event—no reporter, then or later, would ever write about it without mentioning what happened inside. Yet gay fascists can disrupt a Mass and desecrate the Eucharist, and years later the *Times* only notes that “thousands demonstrated outside St. Patrick’s Cathedral.”

It would be wrong to say this is poor journalism—it’s rewriting history.

Contact NYT public editor, Maggie Sullivan: public@nytimes.com

**GOLDEN GLOBES ’ REVEALING
MOMENTS**



Bill Donohue comments on the Golden Globes Award ceremony:

The Hollywood crowd has a great sense of humor about some things, but even those who delight in pushing the envelope have boundaries.

TheWrap, which covers Hollywood, quotes Golden Globes host Ricky Gervais saying that “‘The Martian’, was a lot funnier than ‘Pixels,’ but then again, so was ‘Schindler’s List.’” Wrap reporter Jeff Sneider observes that “While everyone seemed to appreciate the shot at Adam Sandler [‘Pixels’ star], the ‘Schindler’s List’ punchline elicited some audible shock in the audience as well as TheWrap’s newsroom.”

Sneider continues, “Clearly, the Holocaust is no laughing matter, but apparently child molestation is. In talking about this year’s awards darling ‘Spotlight,’ a movie about priests sexually abusing children, Gervais scored with a joke about Roman Polanski calling it ‘the best date movie ever.’”

This was the joke: “The Catholic Church are [sic] furious about ‘Spotlight,’ as it exposes the fact that 5% of all their priests have repeatedly molested children and been allowed to continue to work without punishment. Roman Polanski called it the best date movie ever.”

Most reviewers dispute Sneider’s account. They call attention to the noticeable groans in the audience. Indeed, *USA Today* named the quip, “Winner of the Golden Groaner prize.” But even this is inadequate.

In fact, there was no groan after the (inaccurate) remark about priests: The audience groaned only when their hero, child-rapist Roman Polanski, was mentioned.

The groans and laughter at these events are an excellent window into the Hollywood mind, shallow though it is. Tinseltown has its hot buttons, not among them being cheap shots at priests.

CARDINAL DOLAN CHAMPIONS SCHOOL REFORM



Bill Donohue comments on a statement given yesterday by New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan on education reform:

In an ideal world, school vouchers, or a tuition-tax-credit, would be available to parents across the nation. However, given the vested interests of the teachers' unions, we have to settle for what we can get. In New York State, that means the Education Tax Credit (ETC).

While not ideal, the ETC would allow funding of schools other than traditional public schools (charter schools), as well as private ones. No one has been more persistent in promoting this reform than Cardinal Dolan. ETC came close to being passed last year, and has the support of Gov. Andrew Cuomo. The time has come to pass it.

Michael Mulgrew, president of the United Federation of Teachers, opposes the ETC because it would allegedly "drain money from public schools to give huge tax credits to the very

rich.” While the rich would benefit the most, this hardly outweighs the benefits to poor families: their children would be given the chance to escape from schools that no rich person, or union member, would choose for his own children. Moreover, concerns about the rich benefiting are a canard: vouchers and tuition-tax-credits don’t disproportionately help the rich, and they are still resisted.

This business about “draining money from the public schools” doesn’t fly: for every student who leaves the public schools for a private one, there is that much more money available for remaining public school students. Besides, as a study by the Manhattan Institute found, reforms that create competition improve public school performance.

Let’s also not forget what school reformer [Campbell Brown](#) found. In New York, tenure laws ensure that charges of wrongdoing against a teacher must first be evaluated by an independent investigator. Then it goes to an arbitrator (the teachers’ union is involved in the selection process) who is paid an exorbitant fee. In the end, penalties—even for sexual misconduct—are typically minor. This is not the best we can do, and everyone knows it.

CHILD-ABUSING BIGOTS ENDORSE HILLARY



Bill Donohue comments on NARAL's endorsement of Hillary Clinton:

NARAL Pro-Choice America endorsed Hillary Clinton today for the Democratic presidential nomination. It supports letting infants born of a botched abortion die unattended by doctors. Hillary said she was "honored" by the endorsement.

The vast majority of Americans are opposed to the current abortion policy which allows abortions to be performed at any time during pregnancy and for any reason. Only a small percentage of Americans support partial-birth abortion, the procedure that smashes the baby's skull when he or she is 80 percent born. Almost no one supports walking away from infants who survive an abortion, allowing them to die on a physician's table. NARAL does.

Sixteen years ago, NARAL was almost alone in opposing the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, a bill that mandated medical care for children who survived an abortion. It even lied about its position. In 2000, I debated Kelli Conlin on TV about this subject; she was the executive director of the New York chapter of NARAL. She denied that NARAL opposed this bill, but I proved she was a liar; I also sent a copy of NARAL's press release to NBC moderator Gabe Pressman following the show to settle the issue.

NARAL also has a long history of bigotry. Indeed, it was founded on anti-Catholicism, dating back to its inception in the 1960s. How do we know? Because one of its founders, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a practicing abortionist, admitted many times that he made up lies about the Catholic Church hoping to discredit its moral voice. In fact, he said that the goal of NARAL in the 1960s was to associate Catholicism with

“reactionary, pro-fascist positions,” thus making it easier to promote abortion. He later repented, told the truth about NARAL, and became a Catholic.

Hillary is “honored” to be endorsed by anti-Catholic bigots who advocate infanticide. Perhaps she will be asked which position she likes most.

CHARLIE HEBDO AND THE MEDIA ARE COWARDS



To read Bill Donohue’s comments on the anniversary issue of Charlie Hebdo and media reaction to it, click [here](#).

It is also available on [Newsmax](#).

SCALIA—RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY IS BUNK



Bill Donohue defends Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's remarks that were given at Archbishop Rummel High School in Metairie, Louisiana on January 2:

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said that the Constitution was never meant to be neutral about religion. Indeed, he said, "there is no place for that in our constitutional tradition." He admitted that "you can't favor one denomination over another," but that doesn't mean that religion cannot be favored over non-religion.

Scalia's comments have ignited a firestorm. For example, professor Jeff Schweitzer accuses him of "gross ignorance unbecoming of a justice of the Supreme Court." The marine biologist should stick to studying fish.

Scalia's critics say he ignores the meaning of the establishment clause which supposedly bars government aid to religious institutions. In fact, it was written in support of the primary clause, the free exercise clause. University of South Dakota law professor Patrick M. Garry, author of *Wrestling with God: The Courts' Tortuous Treatment of Religion*, notes that "The first and foremost concern of the framers of the First Amendment was not to create a separation of church and state, but to guarantee religious freedom. And the absence of an established church was just one aspect of achieving freedom of religion."

Garry demolishes the idea that the First Amendment is neutral about religion. "The First Amendment framers did not intend to strip religion of its uniqueness, or to make it exactly equal

to every secular institution in society. To the contrary, the establishment clause aims only to keep government from singling out certain religious sects for preferential treatment, not from showing any favoritism to religion in general."

The founders publicly funded the building of churches, paid for the salaries of ministers, and allowed for state churches. That has changed, but Scalia is right to say that there is nothing in the Constitution that requires the government to be neutral about religion.