

ST. LOUIS ABORTION BILL IS A DISASTER

Bill Donohue comments on a bill being considered by St. Louis lawmakers:

Board Bill 203 is under review by the St. Louis Board of Aldermen. It would amend Ordinance 67119, an anti-discrimination bill, by adding “pregnancy and reproductive health decisions as protected classes.”

St. Louis Archbishop Robert J. Carlson is properly opposed to this bill, saying it seeks to make St. Louis “a sanctuary city for abortion.” To make matters worse, there is no religious exemption. As such, it would mean that Catholic non-profits, such as schools and social service agencies, could be fined for maintaining their opposition to abortion in matters of employment and insurance coverage.

So as not to be misunderstood, the Catholic League would oppose this bill even if a religious exemption were granted: government should not be in the business of granting additional protections to those engaged in abortion services. But it is striking nonetheless that the proponents of this bill are dismissive of religious exemptions.

On the one hand, Bill 203 seeks to include “pregnancy and reproductive health” issues as deserving the same protective status as that of other classes defined in Ordinance 67119; on the other hand, it seeks to exclude the plain language of that bill as it applies to religious exemptions.

For example, when it comes to housing, 67119 exempts “a religious organization, association, or society, or any nonprofit institution or organization operated, supervised or controlled by or in conjunction with a religious organization.” This language is missing from 203. Its only

religious exemption extends to hiring by schools and colleges.

The proponents of this bill want to have it both ways: they cite Ordinance 67119 as grounds to include their proposed protected classes, but their interest in being inclusive stops short of providing the religious exemptions provided by that law.

Catholics will never compromise on life and death issues: the first human right is the right to be born.

We commend Archbishop Carlson for his courageous leadership on Board Bill 203. He deserves the wide support of Catholics, as well as all those opposed to expanding abortion rights in St. Louis.

To read Donohue's letter to St. Louis Aldermen, click [here](#).

MEET HBO'S "THE YOUNG POPE"

Bill Donohue comments on the new HBO series, "The Young Pope," which debuts January 15:

Most normal men and women will be watching the Packers-Cowboys game on Sunday. Owing to the fact that Monday is a federal holiday, the party goers will have had their fill of beer by the time the game ends around 8:00 p.m. This guarantees that none will tune into HBO's "The Young Pope" at 9:00 p.m.

This is HBO's first mistake: real men and women watch football and drink beer—they don't get their jollies watching an ideologically driven flick about some tortured pope who has "power-mad dreams." But perhaps I am too harsh: the target audience never threw a football, much less watched a game on TV.

The man behind this fictional series is Paolo Sorrentino. Pope Pius XIII's real name, viewers learn, is not Leonard Belardo—it's *Lenny* Belardo. His hip name corresponds with his habit of chain smoking and drinking diet soda. But the Brooklynite (he is America's first pope) also has a few flaws.

According to *TV Guide Magazine*, Pope Pius is "cruel, deceptive and a bit of an ass." *Variety* says he can be "cruel, vindictive, surprisingly compassionate, and justifiably paranoid." Breitbart says the pope comes across as "a lustful (possibly bisexual) narcissist." The *Hollywood Reporter* calls him "arrogant, whimsical and hilariously destructive," a pontiff who "comes across as borderline anti-Christ." Oh, yes, "he personally doesn't believe in God."

Indiewire.com praises Sorrentino for his devilish abilities. "Anyone angry with Lenny is asked to shift their [sic] ire toward the church." Mission accomplished: it's not the tormented pope who is the problem, it's his lousy church.

What does Sorrentino have against the Church? An atheist, he bemoans it's structure. "The Vatican is a state with a vertical power structure." Perhaps this genius can tell us which nation-state has a horizontal power structure.

The pope's advisor, Cardinal Michael Spencer, is played by James Cromwell. The character he plays has "completely forgott[en] the purpose for which Christ founded the church." This explains why he plays his role so effortlessly.

Cromwell notes that "there are sequences about pedophilia in America," and "the whole homosexual issue." This suggests bad editing: there is no need to treat these matters as separate issues—in real life, homosexual priests raped the boys, not pedophiles (sex with prepubescent males account for less than 5 percent of the abuse cases.)

In an interview with the *Hollywood Reporter*, Cromwell tells us how horrible the Catholic Church in America is for opposing

abortion. He boasts that abortion is not a divisive issue in Europe. He's right. There is also little debate there anymore about putting to death the depressed, the handicapped, the sick, and the elderly, increasingly without their consent.

So, guys and girls, keep the brews flowing on Sunday, unless, of course, you want to watch a chain-smoking, bit of an ass, borderline anti-Christ, possibly bisexual, cruel, vindictive, paranoid pope who doesn't believe in God. This should go over big with the Meryl Streep gang.

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STEVEN MCDONALD, R.I.P.

Bill Donohue comments on the death of Steven McDonald:

New York City Police Officer Steven McDonald passed away yesterday.

Two years ago, in my book, *The Catholic Advantage: Why Health, Happiness and Heaven Await the Faithful*, I wrote about his heroics. "One of the most courageous persons I have ever met is Steven McDonald; he is a Catholic activist and a member of the Catholic League." His legacy is rich with inspiration.

After questioning some teenagers in Central Park in July 1986, he was shot, leaving him paralyzed from the neck down. His wife, Patti Ann, was three months pregnant at the time, and when she gave birth to their son, Conor, Steven took it as a sign that he "should live, and live differently." So he prayed, asking God for guidance. "That prayer was answered with a desire to forgive the young man who shot me."

Why did Officer McDonald feel the need to forgive the man who left him disabled, confined to a wheelchair, using a tracheal tube to breathe? “I wanted to free myself of all the negative, destructive emotions that his act of violence had unleashed in me: anger, bitterness, hatred, and other feelings. I needed to free myself of those emotions so that I could love my wife and our child and those around us.”

Steven was also a robust defender of the faith. In 2010, he spoke at a Catholic League rally across from the Empire State Building, protesting the decision by the owner of the iconic structure not to honor Mother Teresa; a request I made to have the tower shine blue and white on her centenary was refused (though Mao Zedong, the mass murderer, was honored). Steven also spoke at events with me fighting anti-Semitism.

Steven McDonald was special: He was a paragon of forgiveness, teaching all of us—Catholic and non-Catholic alike—of the need to forgive those who have trespassed against us. May he rest in peace.

TRUMP’S EDUCATION PICK UNDER FIRE

Bill Donohue comments on Donald Trump’s Education pick:

The Senate is expected to hold hearings next week on Betsy DeVos, President-elect Donald Trump’s pick for Secretary of Education. As soon as he announced his choice on November 23, anti-school choice activists attacked her.

The ACLU immediately went on the offensive warning that “private and parochial schools” would benefit. Such a

condition it said, “perverts the bedrock American value of separation of church and state.”

There is a reason the ACLU never mentioned the “bedrock American value” of religious liberty. When it was founded in 1920, it listed every right incorporated in the First Amendment as one of its top ten priorities, save for freedom of religion. Ever since, it has worked tirelessly against this right, the exception being the religious rights of prisoners, Muslim extremists, and the like.

Also attacking DeVos on the day she was nominated was the Interfaith Alliance. It is so opposed to religious liberty that it has tried to stop the installation of war memorials honoring veterans if they mention God. Its opposition to the Marriage and Religious Freedom Act, which defends marriage between a man and a woman, showed its ideological colors. It has also tried to censor me: in 2010, it joined with other left-wing groups lobbying TV producers never to invite me again.

The third organization to rip DeVos was Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Founded as a virulently anti-Catholic group in the 1940s, it is led by Barry Lynn today. He accused DeVos of mounting a “*crusade* to create school vouchers across the country.” Notice his italic. Betsy the Crusader is coming to Washington!

Katherine Stewart, writing in the *New York Times*, agrees with Lynn, citing a comment DeVos made in 2001 saying educational reform is a way to “advance God’s kingdom.” Terrifying. That should all but seal her fate. Had a nominee invoked Satan’s kingdom, it would be seen as free speech, if not applauded.

The public school establishment is, of course, leading the charge. Michael Mulgrew of the United Federation of Teachers warns that school choice would undermine public education in New York City, which is “moving in the right direction.” In

point of fact, Mayor Bill de Blasio's decision to award failing schools in New York with *more funding* turned out to be a monumental failure. After spending 839 million dollars, almost all these schools failed to meet expected standards.

Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president of the National Education Association, is predictably upset. "Betsy DeVos is not qualified," she said, "and even more than unqualified, Betsy DeVos is an actual danger to students—especially our most vulnerable students." Of course, it is precisely "the most vulnerable students" who stand to benefit the most by giving their parents the same opportunity that Barack and Michelle Obama have had in sending Sasha and Malia to private schools.

Best of all is the argument made by some faculty members at the University of Cincinnati. "DeVos is unqualified." Why? "DeVos has no relevant credentials in education, no formal training or experience in teaching, and no advanced knowledge of educational research." That's her strength: she hasn't been corrupted by the credentialized class. She knows what works, which is more than can be said about many of those with initials after their name.

These activists and educrats are scared to death of allowing parents the right to choose which school to send their children to, knowing full well that they might opt to select a charter school, non-denominational private school, Christian school, Catholic school, or a yeshiva.

Betsy DeVos deserves a fair hearing. That means turning a blind eye to the demagogues and the foes of religious liberty out to sunder her.

To read Bill Donohue's article on school choice that appears in the January/February edition of Catalyst, the Catholic League journal, click [here](#).

SHOWTIME GETS NASTY

Bill Donohue comments on “The Nasty Show Volume II”:

“Comedian Brad Williams hosts some of the most deranged minds in comedy.” That is the way Showtime plugs “The Nasty Show Volume II.” Deranged is actually too kind a word to describe the show that aired on January 6.

Mike Ward, one of the deranged comedians, made a crack about a deaf kid wishing to sing for the pope. He says that because the kid is deaf, “maybe he hadn’t heard what the Catholics do with little kids.”

It is not clear whether Ward meant “little” as in midget—that is what Williams is—or he was referring to a child.

Corey Holcomb showed his brilliance by commenting on the birth of Jesus. “Mary came home from the club that night...told Joseph that bulls*** story. ‘The spirit got me pregnant. Bitch! The spirit don’t f*** with you, bitch! Shut the f*** up, goddammit!”

Holcomb is a black man who sounds like an illiterate.

Ralphie May is another genius. He makes a comment about a woman who has an upset stomach, noting that she is “trying to get [her] p***y right with Jesus.”

It is debatable whether May is more anti-Christian than he is misogynistic.

Hollywood actors went into a rage last night at the Golden Globe Awards over vulgar comments attributed to Donald Trump. But they don’t mean it. Vulgarities are their specialty, as witnessed by this Brad Williams spectacular.

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WE LOST TWO PRO-LIFE CHAMPIONS

Bill Donohue comments on the passing of two great men on January 7:

The pro-life community lost two giants on Saturday: Father Michael Scanlan and Nat Hentoff. I knew them both. They were two of the most courageous men I ever met.

Father Scanlan not only saved the College of Steubenville, he turned the renamed Franciscan University of Steubenville into a citadel of Catholic higher education. The renaming in 1985 was not a nominal change: Father Scanlan put the school on the map, making it a home for serious Catholic scholars. Moreover, his commitment to the pro-life cause was unequivocal.

I taught at a Pittsburgh school, La Roche College, during Father Scanlan's early years, and had the chance to meet him; the colleges are about an hour away. He was gregarious and kind, and completely dedicated to academic excellence in the Catholic tradition. Indeed, he quickly became an inspiration to Catholics across the nation. He also served on the board of advisors of the Society of Catholic Social Scientists since its inception.

Nat Hentoff is mostly known for his work as the nation's leading jazz critic, but he was also active in many causes, ranging from the black civil rights movement to the pro-life movement.

I encountered his writings as a young boy reading *Down Beat* magazine. I would later tell him how profound that experience was: it was through reading about jazz musicians that I was moved by the injustices that black musicians had to endure. That inspired me to pursue sociology, the discipline I received my Ph.D. in at New York University.

Hentoff was the victim of vicious attacks by the circles he traveled in, namely liberal-left quarters. He lost friends, as well as jobs, for his defense of the unborn. For him, it was not a matter of religion (he was an atheist Jew); rather, it was a matter of Biology 101—life begins at conception. His colleagues on the board of directors of the ACLU took it out on him in the late 1970s by refusing to reelect him.

Father Scanlan loved the work of the Catholic League, and Nat Hentoff never stopped singing our praises (for many years, he called me several times a month).

Father Mike and Nat were two brilliant men who never ran from a fight. While their lives were very different, their persistence in trumpeting the pro-life cause is what united them. May they rest in peace.

TRANSGENDER POLITICS UNMASKED

Bill Donohue comments on a woman who sued a Catholic hospital for refusing to change her sex:

The mainstream media are floating a fake news story. They are saying that a “man filed suit against a Catholic hospital in New Jersey on Thursday for refusing to allow a surgeon to perform a hysterectomy on him at the facility.” But a man cannot have a hysterectomy—only those with a womb can. They

are called women.

I was slightly dishonest. The sentence I quoted, from an AP story, began by saying “A transgender man...” The really dishonest people are those in the media, and elsewhere, who want to brainwash us into thinking that a woman who seeks to remove her uterus is a man because she says she is. If she identified as a giraffe, would that make her so?

The real story here, of course, is the manipulative and dishonest politics of a sex-engineering activist seeking to shove her sexual agenda down the throat of Catholics. This New Jersey woman, Jionni Conforti, had lots of places she could have gone to in her quest to have a surgeon make the “transition,” but she intentionally chose a Catholic hospital, knowing it would resist.

Catholic institutions believe in nature and nature’s God, and therefore reject the fiction that sex is not determined at birth. As such, they refuse to perform operations that would deny this verity.

While this case has its bizarre elements, the root issue is quite simple: the First Amendment presumptively insulates religious institutions from the reach of government. Catholic hospitals that are denied the right to follow Catholic teachings are no longer Catholic. Ms. Conforti knows that, and that is why she is suing.

She needs help, but her problems are upstairs, not downstairs.

TREVOR NOAH IS A BIGOT

Bill Donohue comments on Comedy Central's Trevor Noah:

On last night's "Daily Show with Trevor Noah," the host commented on the new McDonald's that opened near the Vatican. He said that "it makes a lot of sense when you think about it—both the Catholic Church and McDonald's have served billions: they both make people feel guilty about themselves, *and both are historically bad for children*, so it makes sense."

Noah hails from South Africa and wants white people to be upset about the injustice that Africans have experienced. Why? What's wrong about being a bigot? He makes a good living working for the anti-Catholic maniacs at Comedy Central.

Noah's credibility is shot. He should never lecture us again on the horrors of bigotry. He is a master of it.

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MORE DIRT UNCOVERED IN MSGR. LYNN CASE

Bill Donohue comments on an article by Ralph Cipriano on the latest developments in the case of Msgr. William Lynn:

Ralph Cipriano deserves a Pulitzer Prize for his comprehensive and authoritative accounts on the proceedings against Msgr. William Lynn.

His latest article reveals new dirt on the corruption that has long marked the Philadelphia D.A.'s office in its witch hunt against the Philadelphia archdiocese.

There is a reason why some of us are increasingly skeptical about the veracity of many priestly abuse cases; the bogus claims against Msgr. Lynn being Exhibit A.

Please go to bigtrial.net to read Cipriano's many excellent articles on this case. To read his latest, click [here](#).

MORE CATHOLICS IN NEW CONGRESS

Bill Donohue comments on the findings of a new Pew Research Survey, "Faith on the Hill," that details the composition of the new Congress:

When JFK was president, 19% of the Congress was Catholic; today it is 31%. During that period, Protestants declined from 75% to 56%. The most underrepresented segment of the population today are the "nones," meaning those who are religiously unaffiliated: they constitute 23% of the public, but only .2% of the Congress. Looks like either the "nones" decline to run for office, or the public is not receptive to them.

Regarding Catholics, they currently make up a third of those in the House, and a quarter of those in the Senate. Nationwide, they are 21% of the population. The new Congress has four more Catholics (168) than the previous one.

Should Catholics applaud their increasing clout on Capitol

Hill, or does it matter? It depends on what we expect from them. Pro-life Trump beat pro-abortion Clinton among Catholics by a margin of 52% to 45%, so he would certainly benefit by having more practicing Catholics in Congress.

Unlike judges, who are expected to put aside their religious convictions when interpreting the law, lawmakers have every right to follow their religious convictions in making policy decisions. Catholic voters, as well as others, might reasonably expect that on the core public policy issues, Catholic members of Congress will vote to sustain the Catholic position.

Abortion is not just another public policy issue: it is the foundational human rights issue. No life, no rights. It is also not just another Catholic issue: it is regarded as "intrinsically evil." It matters, then, when assessing the spike in Catholics in the Congress, whether they are faithful to Church teachings on abortion.

The results are not encouraging (data on incumbents were taken from the National Right to Life ratings; data on newly elected members were taken from National Right to Life, Planned Parenthood and NARAL).

Of the 168 Catholics in Congress, 80 are pro-life and 88 are pro-abortion. Party affiliation is largely determinative: 78 of the pro-life members are Republican; 2 are Democrats. Cumulatively, this means that by a margin of 52% to 48%, Catholics in Congress are pro-abortion.

There are 7 new pro-life Catholics in Congress, and all are Republican. There are 13 new pro-abortion Catholics in Congress, and all are Democrats. This means that the new freshman class of Catholics has *decreased* the Catholic influence in Congress on the pro-life cause.

Of course, some may object that being in favor of abortion rights is not the same as being pro-abortion. Tell that to the

leaders of this cause: they are increasingly boasting about women who have had abortions, and have even launched a new initiative, “#ShoutYourAbortion.” Indeed, just a few weeks ago, actress Lena Dunham tweeted, “Now I can say that I still haven’t had an abortion, but I wish I had.” Lucky for her that her mother didn’t agree.

It is hard to take seriously those who are concerned about the quality of life after birth, but not *de novo*. This is doubly true of those who wear their Catholic label on their sleeve, the prototype being Rep. Nancy Pelosi (she has still not thanked me for sending her copy of *Catholicism for Dummies*).

We don’t need more Catholics in Congress—we need more pro-life Catholics in Congress.