

# CATHOLIC JUDGE NOMINEE ON THE DEFENSIVE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the fate of a judicial nominee whose Catholicity has become an issue:

Gordon Giampietro, a former federal prosecutor, has been nominated by President Trump for a seat on the federal district court in Milwaukee. He has come under fire for holding to Catholic teachings on marriage, the family, and sexuality.

None of the comments he has made fall outside the domain of settled Catholic theology, but enough red flags have been raised by irresponsible media outlets to warrant the concern of Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin; she could block the nomination.

Coming to Giampietro's defense are the Catholic bishops of Wisconsin, led by Milwaukee Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKi. Add the Catholic League to this list. To read my letter to Senator Baldwin, click [here](#).

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# LESBIANS ROILED BY CATHOLIC RULES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on lesbian manipulation of Catholic institutions:

Last week it was reported that a Catholic foster care agency in Texas denied a lesbian couple the right to adopt a child. This week it is being reported that a Catholic school in

Michigan told a lesbian softball coach that she could not keep her job if she decided to “marry” another woman.

The couple sued and the coach resigned. All three are angry with the Catholic Church. None respect religious liberty and all believe they have a right to Catholic resources while violating Catholic teachings with impunity.

The Texas couple has neither federal nor state law on its side. Catholic non-profits such as Catholic Charities can receive public funds distributed to the bishops’ conference and go about their business—in this case running a foster care program—without crossing state and church lines, provided they do not engage in “intrinsically religious” activities, e.g. religious worship. Last year, Texas passed a religious liberty law that safeguards the right of agencies like Catholic Charities to turn away LGBT couples or prospective parents.

It is important to note that Catholic Charities Fort Worth expressly said, contrary to what was reported, that it does not refuse children in its foster care program who identify as LGBT. But it does matter who the foster parents are.

The lesbian Michigan coach—known to [Huffington Post](#) writers as a “queer”—said her sexual orientation does not affect her ability to coach her team. Maybe not, but that is beside the point: All teachers and coaches are expected to be role models, and Catholic teachers and coaches are expected to model themselves on Catholic teachings.

It needs to be said that the lesbian coach was not told that she was in violation of Catholic teachings because she was a lesbian. Indeed, she held her job for five years without a problem. But when she went public with her intent to “marry” another woman, everything changed.

“When someone is living outside of Church teaching or participating in behavior not in line with Church teaching *and makes it known publicly*,” the school said, “they cannot

fulfill their primary mission to lead by example.” (My italics.) In other words, it was the public manifestation of the intended behavior that proved to be determinative.

Why is it that homosexuals are almost never seen trying to crash the schools and social service agencies run by Orthodox Jews and Muslims? After all, both have similar strictures to Catholic entities on these matters.

We all know why—gay activists have decided to target the Catholic Church. If they had any respect for the diversity that Catholic institutions offer, they wouldn’t be so busy trying to shove their secular values down the throats of Catholics.

Regrettably, those most likely to scream about tolerance are often the least tolerant among us.

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## **“SPRINGER OPERA” REVIEWS ARE TELLING**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on reviews of “Jerry Springer: The Opera,” which officially opened on February 22nd in New York City (previews began January 23rd):

Here is a sample of what theater critics said about “Jerry Springer: The Opera” when it was performed in England in the early 2000s:

- “Surely no more blasphemous, vulgar or salacious piece of musical theatre than Jerry Springer—The Opera has graced the London stage in modern times.” (*Evening Standard*, 4-30-03)

- “Probably the filthiest thing I have ever seen on stage.” (*Sunday Mercury*, 6-20-04)
- “The blasphemy was far, far worse than even the most detailed news reports had led me to believe.” (BBC senior radio producer, UPI, 1-12-05)

Here is what Jerry Springer said about the play:

- “I wouldn’t have written it. I don’t believe in making fun of other religions or in saying things that could be insensitive to other people’s religions.” (CNN, 3-30-05)

Here is what I recently said to President Trump about the play:

- “The most obscene anti-Christian play ever performed.” (Letter to the president, 1-24-18)

The following media outlets reviewed the play on February 23rd:

- *Hollywood Reporter, MSN.com, Newsday, New York Daily News, New York Observer, New York Post, New York Times*

None cited the Christian bashing that is featured in the play, and some never even made reference to Jesus or any Christian figure or event that was trashed.

This is a cultural bellwether. It signals a total collapse of outrage over anti-Christian fare.

It would be a mistake to think that these critics are incapable of being offended. No, they have plenty of anger in them over the slightest offense against transgender persons. But Christians—they’re fair game. Indeed, it is open season on Christians, led by the arts, education, the entertainment industry, and the media. And, sadly, by a growing number of executives in the corporate world.

We take the long view at the Catholic League, and are not

dissuaded by the reaction of elites. That so many have become morally corrupt is evident, but they don't own America. Remember what happened in November 2016?

We are confident that we will get what we want out of this "Springer Opera" mess. We trust that President Trump will soon nominate a morally responsible person to be the new head of the National Endowment for the Arts, someone who will make the cheerleaders of the "Springer Opera" wince.

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## **IRISH CENTRAL SMEARS BILLY GRAHAM**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an Irish Central article on Rev. Billy Graham:

As I have pointed out before, Niall O'Dowd of Irish Central is a proud Irishman and an irresponsible critic of the Catholic Church, one who takes delight in Church scandals, real and contrived. So to read a piece by him complaining about the alleged anti-Catholicism of Rev. Billy Graham is enough to make me reach for the vomit bag.

"Billy Graham Tried to Stop JFK Becoming President Because He Was Catholic." That is the title of O'Dowd's article. The evidence he marshals does not support such an incendiary charge.

It is one thing to say that many Protestant leaders were uncomfortable with the thought of a Catholic president. That much is true. But to say that they conspired to stop John F. Kennedy from becoming president is quite another.

There is an axiom that true scholars follow (that would certainly not include O'Dowd): the more serious the charge, especially when made against prominent public figures, the more serious the evidence must be. Otherwise, one looks like the fool Christopher Hitchens was when he tried to besmirch Mother Teresa.

O'Dowd's case rests on a meeting of about 25 Protestant American leaders, held in Montreux, Switzerland in August 1960, that was convened by Graham. He quotes from a note by the wife of Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, Ruth, about what happened. "They were unanimous in feeling that the Protestants in America must be aroused in some way, or the solid block of Catholic voting, plus money, will take this election."

What O'Dowd leaves out is what happened next. A few weeks later, on September 7, Peale, a popular author, convened a meeting of Protestant leaders—it was a one-day conference in Washington—to discuss the "philosophical" implications of having a Catholic president.

O'Dowd says that Graham was the "prime mover" of the event. Really? Then why wasn't he there? This doesn't matter to O'Dowd, who takes the occasion to indict Graham as an anti-Catholic. That's the whole of his "evidence."

In contrast to O'Dowd's dishonest account, consider what liberal Catholic *New York Times* reporter Peter Steinfels said about this Peale-Graham story in 1992.

"Long before their Montreux meeting," writes Steinfels, "both Mr. Graham and Dr. Peale had been giving low-level support to their friend Mr. Nixon. But this is not a story of political manipulation of religious issues, in the fashion of today's political handlers. *Nor is it a case of lurid anti-Catholicism.*" (My italics.)

Steinfels continues his fair-minded assessment. "Mr. Graham and Dr. Peale are simply respectable religious leaders whose

vision of the United States inextricably merged Protestant Christianity, moral revival and anti-Communist leadership in the cold war. *They had—and have—anti-Catholic counterparts among liberals* who simply assume that secularism, free thought and scientific progress are an indissoluble whole.” (My emphasis.)

Today, of course, it is liberals, not Protestants, who are the most notorious anti-Catholics.

After Kennedy was elected, Graham said that Kennedy’s victory “had proved there was not as much religious prejudice as many had feared, and probably had reduced forever the importance of the religious issue in American elections.” Not the kind of thing we would expect from a Catholic basher.

O’Dowd hates Graham not because the gifted orator was anti-Catholic—he was not—but because he was a conservative Christian who rallied the masses.

In 1999, Graham contacted me about an article that accused him of being anti-Catholic. He was incensed. He had a right to be. After researching the story, I concluded it was a malicious smear. Just like what O’Dowd is doing now.

Contact O’Dowd: [niall@irishcentral.com](mailto:niall@irishcentral.com)

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## CHRISTIANS BEWARE OF UNILEVER

Catholic League president Bill Donohue advises Christians to be wary of Unilever’s arm twisting of Facebook and Google:

On February 12, Unilever, the worldwide consumer goods giant—it sells Lipton, Dove, Hellmans, and over 400 other products—announced that it was pressuring Facebook and Google

to act socially responsible.

“Unilever will not invest in platforms or environments that do not protect our children or which create division in society, and promote anger or hate.” Facebook and Google immediately said they would cooperate.

On the day this story broke, CNN reported that Unilever would stop advertising on platforms that promoted racism and sexism.

However, there is more to this than meets the eye. Unilever is not the gold standard of citizenship—its interest in protecting children does not extend to the unborn. Moreover, it has a history of racist and sexist practices. Furthermore, its idea of what constitutes “division in society” is dangerous: it includes the exercise of religious liberty.

Even worse, pressuring Facebook and Google to be more restrictive is the last thing they need to do: both social media platforms have an ugly record censoring religious speech. To read a representative sample of their rulings, click [here](#).

The man who is driving Unilever’s agenda is Paul Polman. Born in the Netherlands, he has been at the helm of Unilever, a British-Dutch company, since 2009. An article in *Forbes* last year referred to him as “a CEO gone rogue.” Reporter Tom Borelli said that “Polman’s problem is his eagerness to put superficial feel good policies ahead of sound business decisions and he is not shy about touting his twisted priorities.”

What are those priorities? Suffice it to say that Polman has emerged as one of the most influential corporate voices of left-wing politics. When asked why he spends as much time on political matters as he does running the company, he does not mince words. “To me, it is the same.” This helps to explain why some are already calling him the next George Soros, the left-wing billionaire who funds virtually every radical cause.



Like so many other major figures on the left, Polman is riddled with contradictions.

Unilever's Code of Business Principles says it will "recruit, employ and promote employees on the sole basis of the qualifications and abilities needed for the work to be performed." Not true. Polman has gone out of his way to pressure American and European companies to follow his lead by recruiting refugees. He even begged the European Union to hire workers simply because they are asylum seekers.

Unilever says it does not promote political parties, but this does not mean it is politically disengaged. Quite the opposite. Its pro-abortion activities are so rabid that it has been subjected to a boycott by Life Decisions International; its contributions to Planned Parenthood are significant.

Staunchly pro-gay, Unilever is the darling of the Human Rights Campaign, the prominent homosexual rights group. This alone should raise eyebrows, but what should concern Christians most is how Unilever's passion for gay rights has positioned it against religious liberty. It sees some religious objections to the gay rights agenda as an expression of bigotry.

In Georgia, when reasonable religious liberty concerns were voiced by Christians—they refused to accede to every gay objective—Unilever sided with gay activists against them. This is why its plea to Facebook and Google to end "division in society" has such a pernicious ring to it. Are Christians who practice their faith by defending marriage, properly understood, being "divisive"?

Ben & Jerry's is perhaps the most aggressive Unilever product pushing the gay agenda. It has sold an array of "gay" ice cream, ranging from "Chubby Hubby" to "Hubby Hubby." (By the way, in 2010, it had to admit that its ice cream is not "all natural.") In Australia, Ben & Jerry's supported gay marriage by contributing to the "Vote4love" campaign. It hit a brick

wall, however, when Muslims in Indonesia objected to its “Golden Gaytime” ice cream.

Unilever’s gay agenda hit another snag in South Africa when it ran an advertisement suggesting that a child who came out gay was in effect putting a bullet into the heart of his father. It apologized for the ad.

To its credit, Unilever’s “Code of Business Principles and Code Policies” sets the bar high for all business practices. To its discredit, its record of compliance with these objectives is poor. For example, it admonishes employees to “Take care that participation in industry or trade associations events and related contacts are not used for anti-competitive purposes.”

Yet as reported by the *Wall Street Journal*, Unilever has come under fire for colluding with another company “to drive up the spreads market in South Africa.” Specifically, it has been accused of driving up prices for edible oils and margarines. It is looking at fines of up to 10 percent of annual turnover.

Unilever markets itself as environment-friendly, and can be rather strident in its condemnation of those who don’t share its position. Yet in 2016 it settled with 600 workers in India over mercury exposure. The settlement was in response to a 2006 lawsuit; it was launched after workers were exposed to the dangerous substance in a thermometer plant.

No corporation wants to be labeled racist, and few have denounced racism as vigorously as Unilever. Yet it has been involved in one controversy after another involving cosmetic products that promise “lighter-looking” skin. For example, women were told that if their skin is too dark, they can improve it by purchasing Pond’s “Pinkish White” or the “Fair & Lovely” product. Unilever has had to pull some products, offering an apology to women of color. Also, Dove has had to apologize to black women for some of its marketing gimmicks.

Unilever is so aggressive that it will go to no end trying to come up with a new way to hawk its products. For example, after Lipton was exposed for testing its tea by conducting experiments on animals that critics said amounted to torture, it had to end this practice.

Human rights is one of Unilever's much vaunted principles, and no one has been more outspoken about it than Polman. Yet it has often been on the defensive given all the charges of sexual harassment made against it. This is especially true of its African companies. The Kenyan Kericho tea plantation has been the subject of much controversy. Allegations of sexual abuse have been made by its female workers; they have been sustained by the Center for Research on Multinational Corporations, a Dutch non-profit investigatory agency. Sexual coercion and forced pregnancy tests were among the allegations.

The Kenyan Human Rights Commission also made a probe of Unilever's practices. It said that sexual harassment was "rampant" and reflected a corrupt corporate culture. Unilever denied the accusations. No matter, it is not just in Kenya where such charges have surfaced. Women who work in the Jordan plant have made similar accusations.

This is not the profile we would expect of a corporation that brags about its dedication to social responsibility. That many of these heinous acts have taken place under Polman's watch does not speak well for him.

Facebook and Google already lean left and have not won the favor of practicing Christians. For these two social media giants to be pushed further left by Unilever is something that needs to be monitored and responded to accordingly.

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# REV. BILLY GRAHAM, R.I.P.

Bill Donohue comments on the death of Rev. Billy Graham:

Growing up Catholic in New York in the 1950s, the Catholic we most identified with was Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, the first televangelist. The Protestant we most clearly revered was Rev. Billy Graham. In both cases, they had no rival.

For Catholics, Graham was more than just the titular head of the Protestant community, he was a man who inspired us. He was a man of prayer, and his deep spirituality was contagious. Moreover, his ecumenical efforts were legion.

When Graham was at his peak, our culture was Christian-friendly, allowing him to follow a decidedly pastoral approach. Those ministers who came after him were forced to take a more aggressive public stance, owing to the advent of the culture war.

I have one fond remembrance of him. In the late 1990s, he contacted me about some cruel story that had circulated about him—it made him out to be an anti-Catholic bigot. The story was completely bogus. I appreciated how seriously he took this issue, and how quickly he responded.

Rev. Billy Graham will be missed. I am happy that he is with our Lord.

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## CHRIST    DEFILED    BY    COMEDY

# CENTRAL EXEC

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Comedy Central's latest outburst of bigotry:

Last week we noted how the Comedy Central show, "Corporate," assaulted Christ. That was bad enough, but after we flagged what happened on the February 14 episode, Jake Weisman, co-creator and writer of the show, responded by making incendiary remarks about the Catholic Church on Twitter.

Weisman was so incensed by our decision to report him to Viacom president Robert Bakish (Viacom owns Comedy Central), that he went on an obscene Twitter rampage against me. Personally, I really don't care what he says about me, but I do care about his filthy tirade against Jesus Christ.

The worst of Weisman's tweets was a remark he made about Christ, saying that our Lord "sucked his own d\*\*\*."

We live in a time when Hollywood is engulfed in one sexual scandal after another, and while this has provoked a responsible pushback, stars like Weisman continue to defile Christ with impunity.

If someone spoke about his mother the way he does about Jesus, he would go ballistic. But maybe I overestimate him—he is so crude that he may not care.

Bakish needs to have someone call this guy in and hold him accountable. To do nothing is to say that when it comes to vile hate speech directed at Christianity, Hollywood is incapable of being shamed.

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# OPEN LETTER TO GOV. ANDREW CUOMO

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo is proposing a change to New York State law that adversely affects the Catholic community. To read Bill Donohue's letter to him, click [here](#).

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## COMEDY CENTRAL EXEC THREATENS CHURCH

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on what a Comedy Central executive said yesterday (Viacom owns Comedy Central):

Viacom has a serious problem on its hands: Jake Weisman, the co-creator and writer of the Comedy Central show, "Corporate" (he also stars in the show), has threatened to "bring the whole system down." He was referring to the Roman Catholic Church.

Weisman made his threat yesterday on Twitter. His incendiary comment was in response to a news release I wrote about the February 14th episode of "Corporate." In it, the Eucharist was obscenely mocked. A woman dressed like a nun was shown seductively sucking a cross-shaped popsicle. She remarked, "My favorite flavor—the blood of Christ." It doesn't get much dirtier than this.

It must also be said that the filthy responses that supported Weisman's tweet cannot be reprinted here—some were aimed directly at me.

In one sense, I am happy Weisman made this threat. While Hollywood was not always a bastion of anti-Catholicism, in the past half-century it has certainly evolved into one. Let's be honest: If Jews were portrayed the way Hollywood portrays Catholics, it would be labeled the premier anti-Semitic industry in America.

We noticed that Viacom has a New York office located at 345 Hudson Street (also the site of Comedy Central's headquarters). Curiously, this is the same address of the Weinstein Company. As everyone knows, Harvey and Bob are veterans in the war on Catholicism. Imagine if we placed a wire in this building to see what is said about Catholics on a daily basis!

I am writing to Robert Bakish, president of Viacom, about Weisman's public admission of anti-Catholic bigotry. If anti-Catholicism were treated as seriously as sexual harassment is these days, Hollywood would become a ghost town. In the meantime, Bakish has a hotheaded bigot on his hands. This calls for a serious response.

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## FELDBLUM'S NOMINATION MUST BE PULLED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Chai Feldblum remaining at the Equal Employment Opportunity

Commission (EEOC):

Someone in the Trump administration blew it big time when Chai Feldblum was selected to remain at the EEOC. Her name was forwarded to the Senate in December for renomination; her term expires July 1.

The Catholic League stands with Senator Mike Lee who on February 14th called on President Trump to withdraw her name. No doubt the president would, if only he knew how extremist she is.

When Chai Feldblum taught at Georgetown University Law School, she distinguished herself by saying that in a conflict between religious liberty and sexual rights (read: gay rights), the former should yield to the latter. This despite the fact that religious liberty is a First Amendment right and sexual rights are nowhere mentioned in the Constitution.

Feldblum is so radical that she didn't say *most* of the time religious liberty should take a backseat to sexual liberty, she said *all* of the time. "I'm having a hard time coming up with *any* case in which religious liberty should win," she said. (My italic.)

Feldblum is so far gone that she contends that homosexual men and lesbians—whom the lesbian professor calls queers—should be able to adopt a child and be given exactly the same kinds of governmental benefits afforded conventional marital unions, *even if they don't live under the same roof.*

In 2006, Feldblum signed a statement, "Beyond Same-Sex Marriage," that included the following gem. "Queer couples who decide to jointly create and raise a child with another queer person or couples, in two households," should be given all the benefits that accrue to married men and women.

This is not normal. It is a bastardization of marriage, the ultimate losers of whom are children. If this needs to



explained, it is too late. When common sense has been abandoned, no amount of discourse can work. The clueless should stay in places like Georgetown Law, or the local asylum, and not wander out, at least not without a GPS ankle bracelet.

Trump needs to withdraw Feldblum's name immediately. Kudos to Senator Lee for revisiting her renomination.