

COMEDY CENTRAL SHOW ATTACKS CHRIST

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest assault by Comedy Central on Catholicism:

They really hate Christians, especially Catholics. Indeed, that is the most defining characteristic of those employed by Comedy Central. It is not certain whether they screen for bigots, or whether only bigots apply.

“Corporate” is a show most Americans have never heard of. They are not missing anything. Last night it sent a Valentine’s gift to Catholics by portraying a lay person dressed like a nun who gives an advertising executive the finger.

She works for a group of mega-churches, the Glorious Salvation Ministries, and is interested in hiring the ad company to do a marketing campaign. An employee of the ad firm shows up wearing an oversized rosary, suggesting that both characters are Catholic.

Of course, in real life, mega-churches, and groups with a name like Glorious Salvation Ministries, are Protestant entities, not Catholic. But if the goal is to take liberties with Christian iconography, it makes sense to rip off Catholicism; the mainline churches offer little to exploit.

None of this is worth getting too excited about, but knowing that Comedy Central hires a large number of anti-Catholic bigots, we knew they would not stop there.

At the end, the nun-like character is shown sucking a cross-shaped popsicle seductively. She smiles, saying, “My favorite flavor—the blood of Christ.”

The writers, directors, producers, and actors are sick people.

Contact Jill Dorteimer, Communications VP:
jill.dorteimer@cc.com

TRUMP'S BID TO AX THE NEA

Catholic League president Bill Donohue discusses how President Trump's new budget affects the National Endowment for the Arts:

President Trump's new budget envisions the end of the National Endowment for the Arts. Its death is long overdue.

Under the Trump plan, the NEA would be phased out in 2019, providing \$29 million to cover the devolution process. The administration "does not consider NEA activities to be core Federal responsibilities." That is an understatement: federal funding of the arts is a patently unfair redistribution scheme—it takes from the poor and gives to the rich.

It is not low income people, or blue collar workers, who spend their time on weekends in galleries and museums—they certainly do not attend the opera—it is the rich who like such ventures. Let them pay for their own leisurely activities.

Just as important, the taxpayers, most of whom are Christian, should not have to pay for "artistic" fare that trashes their religion. To wit: "Jerry Springer: The Opera" is an obscene assault on Christian sensibilities that is currently being performed in New York at the Pershing Square Signature Center. The production company responsible for the play is the New Group; it receives funding from the NEA and is heavily dependent on public monies.

At a recent [press conference](#), where I was joined by Brent

Bozell of the Media Research Council, Deal Hudson of the Christian Review, and Ralph Reed of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, we detailed the bigotry of the “Springer Opera” and called into question further federal funding of the NEA.

Knowing that the Congress failed to eliminate the NEA last year, we implored President Trump to appoint a new chairman, one who would not insult Christians by giving money to grantees such as the New Group. The current chairman, Jane Chu, will be succeeded in June and Trump will soon name his nominee.

Robert Lynch, president and CEO of the Americans for the Arts, defends NEA funding by saying it is “a big win, economically and job-wise.” Chu says we need to consider “the NEA’s vital role in serving our nation’s communities.”

Neither Lynch nor Chu ever want to talk about the moral recklessness of NEA panels that give lavishly to entities such as the New Group; panel members obviously don’t bother to screen for plays that viciously mock Christianity. Those who say that the New Group did not get a grant for the “Springer Opera” are being disingenuous: money, being fungible, can be used to underwrite operating expenses and pay for other kinds of fare.

It is up to the Republicans to back their president. They acted poorly last summer when they actually increased funding for the NEA. That was before the dustup about the New Group and its hosting of the “Springer Opera.” There are no more excuses left to dodge their responsibilities.

CONNECTICUT JUDGE NOT FIT FOR PROMOTION

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Connecticut Supreme Court Judge Andrew McDonald:

If public figures with an animus against the Catholic Church were driven out of public life, Connecticut's Andrew McDonald would not be sitting on the Connecticut Supreme Court today. That he has been nominated by Governor Dan Malloy to be Chief Justice makes this story all the more surreal.

In 2011, McDonald, then a state senator, introduced a bill with Rep. Michael Lawlor that would have allowed state officials to take over the administrative and fiscal decisions of the Catholic Church in Connecticut. It authorized lay Catholics in each parish to run internal affairs, stripping the pastor of his duties.

This power grab—one of the most blatant violations of separation of church and state in American history—was announced on March 5, 2011. Importantly, the public did not learn of it until the next day, a Friday; the hearings were shoved through in stealth-like fashion on March 11, thus denying Catholics an opportunity to adequately marshal a protest.

As I said then, this was “payback” time. “This brutal act of revenge by Lawlor and McDonald, two champions of gay marriage,” I wrote, “is designed to muzzle the voice of the Catholic Church.”

I went further, calling on them to be removed from office. “By singling out the Catholic Church—no other religion has been targeted—Lawlor and McDonald have demonstrated that they are ethically unfit to continue as lawmakers. They have evinced a bias so strong, and so malicious, that it compromises their

ability to serve the public good. They should therefore be expelled by their colleagues.”

How would lawmakers, and the media, treat it if a Connecticut bishop said it was time for Catholic officials in the state to take over the administrative and fiscal responsibilities of the legislature? Would he not be the subject of condemnation? Would there not be calls for him to resign? Would this not be seen as a First Amendment crisis?

When this happened, Bridgeport Archbishop William Lori (now the Archbishop of Baltimore), led the fight against this unprecedented trashing of religious liberty. We were happy to play a secondary role. The governor at the time, Jodi Rell, said that what the two lawmakers were seeking to do was “blatantly unconstitutional, insensitive, and inappropriate.”

It does not speak well for the current governor that he does not see what Rell saw. Worse, Gov. Malloy wants to promote McDonald to be Chief Justice.

If McDonald had singled out Muslims or Jews the way he did Catholics, he would have been run out of town, and the Catholic League would have supported his ouster. That he is poised to lead the Supreme Court on matters of religious liberty, especially as they affect Catholics, is mind-boggling.

Justice demands that someone else be chosen as the new Chief Justice in Connecticut. We will let lawmakers know of our outrage.

CONTROVERSY HITS TWO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on why two Catholic schools are embroiled in controversy:

A student at a Catholic school in Greenwich, Connecticut showed her support for Planned Parenthood by posting one of its stickers on her laptop. She was told to remove it.

A teacher at a Catholic school in Miami was fired following news that she “married” her girlfriend.

In both cases, the media went wild, creating controversy where there wasn’t any. In the case of the former story, even the outgoing president of Planned Parenthood, Cecile Richards, chimed in, offering kudos to the girl.

The Catholic Church’s teachings on abortion maintain that life begins at conception. Therefore, elective abortion is immoral. Planned Parenthood is the leader of the pro-abortion industry in the United States. To support it is to support abortion.

The Catholic Church’s teachings on marriage do not recognize a union between two people of the same sex as a marriage. Teachers who choose to work at a Catholic school typically sign a contract, as the lesbian teacher at the Miami school did, saying they will uphold Church teachings.

What is troubling about these cases—there are many of them across the nation—is the contempt that some in the media, and some activists, have for respecting the First Amendment rights of Catholic institutions to practice their teachings.

If the Greenwich school sanctioned a student for posting a racist sticker on her laptop, there would be no news. If the Miami teacher was fired for living with two spouses, there

would be no news. But because the major media are rabid supporters of abortion and homosexual marriage, both of these “news” items got big play.

PELOSI IS INDEED IRREPLACEABLE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Nancy Pelosi’s latest spiritual epiphany:

Rep. Nancy Pelosi is so committed to the rights of illegal immigrants that she took to the floor of the House two nights ago and spoke for 8 hours on their behalf. Yesterday, her performance drew the applause of Karen Tumulty of the *Washington Post*.

In her blog post, Tumulty noted that when Pelosi was finished, “she was still wearing the gunmetal-blue stilettos,” a feat (pun intended) that most men cannot appreciate. I said *most*.

Tumulty further noted that “the image of a 77-year-old woman holding her ground in four-inch heels was also a reminder of what makes Pelosi so hard to replace for the Democrats: her steel.”

I agree with Tumulty that Pelosi is indeed irreplaceable, but it is not her steel that is the key to her uniqueness: it is her intellect and Catholic bona fides.

In her 40-hour speech, Pelosi waxed eloquent. “Forty is a biblical number—you know, 40 years in the desert; 40 days for the Jews; 40 days in the desert for Christ; 40 days of Lent; 40 hours of Christian Catholic faith in the hours of devotion.

I thought, oh my goodness, what a coincidence.”

This reminded me of another brilliant speech she gave in 2010.

“My favorite word is the Word, is the Word. And that is everything. It says it all for us. And you know the biblical reference. You know the gospel reference of the Word.

“And that Word is that—we have to give voice to what that means in terms of public policy that would be in keeping with the values of the Word. The Word. Isn’t it a beautiful word when you think of it? It just covers everything. The Word. Fill it in with anything you want. But, of course, we know it means that the Word was made flesh...”

You could search the world over and never find anyone quite like Nancy Pelosi. She really is irreplaceable.

FBI AGENT LISA PAGE HATES PRO-LIFERS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a tweet yesterday by Mollie Hemingway of The Federalist and Fox News (forwarded to him by Catholic author Bill Doyno):

If the public were asked about Lisa Page, most would not know who she is. If those who know who she is were asked in a word association game to identify what she is known for, they would likely name “FBI agent” and “adulteress.” They should now add someone who hates pro-lifers.

On p. 13 of the Interim Report by Senator Ron Johnson, “The Clinton Email Scandal And The FBI’S Investigation Of It,” released yesterday, there is an exchange between FBI senior

lawyer Peter Strzok, Page's co-adulterer, and her about pro-life Americans. Referring to the 2016 March for Life, Page admits that she "truly hate[s] these people."

Notice that Page did not merely disagree with the purpose of the March for Life, which is to protect the life of the unborn. No, she made it personal, expressing her hatred of pro-life men and women.

The media are not reporting on this at all. Why? One, as we have long known, most of the big media reporters and commentators are decidedly in the pro-abortion camp, and at least some of them share Page's hatred for pro-life Americans. Two, it would not make their side look good to report it.

If someone in the Trump administration were caught saying that he "truly hates these Planned Parenthood people," it would surely be reported; some would call for that person to resign.

The FBI's reputation has been seriously damaged over the past several months, and this only adds to it. This kind of rank partisanship is what we would expect from a law school chapter of the ACLU. That it is occurring at the FBI, in top-level positions, is a disgrace.

"THE MICK" EXPLOITS THE MASS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on last night's episode of the Fox sitcom, "The Mick":

This episode was full of comments about Catholicism that were too silly and childish to be of any interest to the Catholic League. But the show crossed the line when it moved on to deliberately exploit the Mass for crass purposes.

First we see the main character, Mick, entering the church with a pile of donuts and coffees, handing them out to friends, then scarfing down donuts as Mass begins.

Later, upset at her friend's new found religious zeal, Mick interrupts Mass, barging onto the altar. She calls the priest a "serpent," and accuses him of replacing her friend's drinking problem with another "addiction"—Catholicism.

This can be a teaching moment for scriptwriters: as long as you leave our sacraments alone, and avoid derogatory comments or depictions of Jesus and his Blessed Mother, you'll hear nothing from the Catholic League.

But when you exploit the Mass, the center of our prayer life, for cheap laughs, we'll call you out every time.

Contact Todd Adair, Vice President, Publicity:
Todd.Adair@fox.com

HAPPINESS ELUDES COLLEGE STUDENTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the state of happiness on college campuses:

The most popular course at Yale these days—enrolling 1,200 students (they had to move the class to a huge building)—is called Psychology and the Good Life. It's not just Yale where courses in positive psychology are all the rage: they're packing students in all over the nation, and have been doing so for some time. The goal is to make students happier.

What is happiness? For Aristotle, it meant the ability of each

person to reach his potential. That required hard work and was dependent on virtue. Aquinas cited the necessity of virtue as well, though “perfect happiness,” he insisted, was not possible without God. For today’s students, such conceptions of happiness are foreign at best, and anathema at worst.

Contrary to the prevailing wisdom, happiness is not analogous to pleasure; its analogue is joy. Pleasure may arise from self-indulgence, but true happiness stems from its opposite: self-giving. It is the joy we receive by giving of ourselves to others. People of faith understand this, especially practicing Christians, but to secularists, which include a lot of college students these days, it is unintelligible.

Can happiness be learned? That is what positive psychology is predicated upon. Indeed, it assumes it can be taught.

Happiness can be acquired, but to say it can be learned, and taught in a classroom, is not only a stretch, it is deceiving. No one doubts there are aids, exercises, and tips that can be tapped when we are down, but there are no shortcuts, or cheat sheets, that can be accessed to make us happy.

To put it differently, there is no happiness pill or injection. True happiness, dependent on virtue as it is, has a long apprenticeship; it must be carefully nurtured. It’s more like cooking a great chili or tomato sauce: it’s a slow boil, taking time to mature. It is not microwave ready.

Virtue is an expression of morality, and morality is typically grounded in religion. These are three attributes—virtue, morality, and religion—that are treated by those who teach positive psychology as if they were a communicable disease. Most of these professors are thorough-going secularists, bent on a quest for happiness without God.

A decade ago, Todd Kashdan was one of the early big names in positive psychology. He taught at George Mason University, and was smart enough to know the difference between pleasure and

happiness; he aptly tied the latter to selflessness. But he was just like his colleagues in one important respect: he had an aversion to religion. Indeed, he boasted, "I never use the word morality." Or God.

Daniel Gilbert, who has long taught positive psychology at Harvard, goes beyond Kashdan. He is concerned that his work on happiness seems to have all the trappings of a religion. "I guess I just wish it didn't look so much like religion." That makes him unhappy.

Despite this professorial aversion to religion, the empirical evidence on happiness overwhelmingly shows that the most happy people in America are also the most serious about their religion; the most unhappy are the secularists. This is one of the conclusions I came to writing [*The Catholic Advantage: Why Health, Happiness, and Heaven Await the Faithful.*](#)

Well-being is a term that describes our physical and mental health, our degree of happiness, and overall life satisfaction. Those who have the highest well-being are the most religious; those who score the lowest are the least religious.

I tested this conclusion by comparing practicing Catholics, priests, nuns (especially cloistered sisters), and saints to Hollywood celebrities and intellectuals. The latter, almost all of whom are secularists, suffer from poor physical and mental health, and are decidedly unhappy.

How can this be? Beliefs, bonds, and boundaries—the Three B's—explain it all. Catholics believe in God, are bonded to each other, as well as to God, and respect behavioral boundaries. Celebrities, by and large, have no time for God, are narcissistic, and behaviorally reckless. Intellectuals are too smart to believe in God, are self-absorbed, and find boundaries to be suffocating.

A young college graduate, Rachelle Hampton, writing in Slate

about the popular Yale course on happiness, recently spoke openly about her depression and the depression of other college students. She found herself “meditating” in her classes at Northwestern, electing to find solace in a course on Buddhism (this is a religion without rules, suited to the needs of secularists).

Rachelle is not alone. She shared this statistic: “Almost 50 percent of students surveyed by the American College Health Association in 2016 reported feeling that things were hopeless—and almost 37 percent reported feeling ‘so depressed that it was difficult to function’ during the previous 12 months.”

It is sad that so many bright young people are in a moral fog, falling back upon themselves to set anchor. Catholicism is anything but foggy—it is a clear-eyed prescription for well-being, anchored in the Ten Commandments and the Catechism. But don’t look for the positive psychologists to acknowledge this, even though it is supported by scientific evidence, the very god they worship.

DEMOCRATS HAVE A RELIGION PROBLEM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue explains why the Democrats have a religion problem:

By a large margin, most Americans believe in God, and most are Christians. It would seem logical that both Republicans and Democrats would try hard not to alienate them, yet time and again the Democrats have managed to do so.

The latest example is New Jersey Senator Cory Booker. He blasted the president for mentioning religion in his State of the Union Address. "Here's a guy that used religion tonight to divide," Booker said.

Booker did not say whether it was Trump's pledge to protect people of every creed and religion that bothered him the most. Perhaps it was Trump's reference to "In God We Trust." Maybe it was Trump's remark about the need to have "confidence in our values, faith in our citizens, and trust in our God." No matter, Booker certainly made a name for himself: God-talk is taboo, at least if invoked by President Trump.

Do Democrats take religion seriously? They say they do. How about Burns Strider? He was Hillary Clinton's faith adviser when she ran for president in 2008. When Hillary learned that he was sexually harassing her female staff, she refused to fire him. She even overruled her campaign manager, Patti Solis Doyle, who wanted him canned.

The story about Strider broke on January 26, and over the last few days only the *Washington Post* has shown any interest in discussing his role as a religious advisor. It is a sure bet that had an evangelical leader advising presidential candidate George W. Bush in 2008 been caught harassing female staff members—and allowed to continue—he, and not just Bush, would be raked over the coals when the news broke. Strider, however, is being treated as if he were a deputy campaign manager. Is that because few take religious advisors to the Democratic Party seriously?

There's a related issue here. It says a lot about the Democrats that someone with such a bare bones religious resume could ascend to the post of Hillary's senior religious advisor. Strider spent three years in Hong Kong as a youth minister, and that's about it. He never entered the ministry, and indeed spent more time in policy positions and as a lobbyist than he did in any religious capacity.

Interestingly, Strider's thin religious credentials did not stop him from being named by Religion News Service as one of the 12 most influential religious leaders in the Democratic Party in 2006. The bar was not set very high: Illinois Senator Barack Obama made the cut.

About the time Strider assumed the role as Hillary's senior religious advisor, journalist and Democratic operative Amy Sullivan vouched for his credentials; she hailed him for his religious outreach efforts. Sullivan was a vocal critic of the Democrats for allowing the Republicans to capture the hearts and minds of the faithful, and was delighted to see Strider on board. She herself is worth a closer look.

By 2009, Sullivan emerged as a religious advisor to the Democrats. She showcased her chops by hammering the Catholic Church for opposing a bill, the Freedom of Choice Act, that was designed to force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions. Is this what she meant by religious outreach?

The *Washington Post* article also mentions that Strider worked with Mara Vanderslice in 2004 trying to woo religious voters. After I outed her for her support for an urban terrorist group, ACT-UP (its members invaded St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1989 during Mass, spitting the Eucharist on the floor), presidential candidate John Kerry silenced her. That didn't matter to Democrats, however. Two years later she was named one of the most important religious voices in the Democratic Party.

Just after Kerry muzzled Vanderslice, I outed Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson, the Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach to the Democratic National Committee. She signed an amicus brief on behalf of atheist Michael Newdow attempting to excise the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance. After I broke the news, she quit, blaming me.

Matters continued to go south in 2007 when presidential

candidate John Edwards hired Amanda Marcotte and Melissa McEwan to work on his campaign. After I outed them for their anti-Catholic writings, they quit.

In 2012, the Democrats deleted the word “God” from their Platform; they later reversed their decision.

And let’s not forget about the last election. Hillary’s communications director, Jennifer Palmieri, was outed for her Catholic-bashing remarks, and her campaign chairman, John Podesta, said he wanted to foment a “revolution” in the Catholic Church.

If the Democrats want the public to take them seriously in addressing religious issues, they will have to do better than serve up the likes of Cory Booker. They will also have to show greater scrutiny for “religious leaders” like Burns Strider.

GLARING OMISSION IN OBITS FOR VON HOFFMAN

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the death of Nicholas von Hoffman, an influential left-wing writer:

The obituary columns on Nicholas von Hoffman that appear in today’s editions of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have one glaring omission: neither mentions that von Hoffman, a long-time critic of Senator Joseph McCarthy, later concluded that the Wisconsin Irish Catholic was “closer to the truth [about communist infiltration in the U.S. government] than those who ridiculed him.”

The *Washington Post* is particularly partisan: von Hoffman

wrote those words in the *Post* in 1996. In that same article, he also said, "McCarthy may have exaggerated the scope of the problem but not by much."

In today's obituary columns, both the *Times* and the *Post* cited von Hoffman's book, *Citizen Cohn*, a critical biography of Roy Cohn, McCarthy's chief counsel in the 1950s congressional hearings on communism. Not to mention von Hoffman's reassessment of McCarthy, which followed a trove of documents about the Soviet Union's involvement in U.S. politics, is inexcusable.

McCarthy, as von Hoffman noted, was sloppy in his work and wrong on some important points, but his instincts were good. Most important, history shows that he was more accurate than his fiercest critics ever were, to say nothing of the apologists for communism. Sadly, the latter are still with us.