

POPE ACCUSES ALLEGED VICTIMS OF SLANDER

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by Pope Francis in Chile:

"The day someone brings me proof against Bishop Barros, then I will talk," Pope Francis told the media. "But there is not one single piece of evidence. It is all slander. Is that clear?"

The pope was referring to charges that Chilean Bishop Juan Barros Madrid covered up for a molesting priest, Father Fernando Karadima; the priest was found guilty by the Vatican in 2011 and sentenced to a lifetime of penance and prayer.

In 2015, when Pope Francis named Juan Barros as the Bishop of Osorno, he noted that a Vatican inquiry found no evidence against him. The Holy Father blamed "leftists" for smearing the bishop.

"The Osorno community is suffering because it's dumb," the pope said. He explained that it "has let its head be filled with what politicians say, judging a bishop without any proof."

The pope's most outspoken critic is Juan Carlos Cruz, an alleged victim of Father Karadima. He claims that Barros watched as the priest abused him.

Responding to the pope's recent remarks in Chile, Cruz accused the pontiff of being a phony. He said the pope's "plea for forgiveness is empty." Not surprisingly, the media are not reporting on who Cruz is, so we will.

Cruz is a homosexual who says the alleged abuse by Father Karadima began when he was 15 and *continued until he was 23!* He wants us to believe that he was powerless to fend off the priest's advances for nearly a decade, extending into his twenties.

There is no way for the Catholic League to know exactly what happened, but if a Vatican inquiry failed to uncover anything against Barros, that cannot be breezily dismissed. Moreover, when the character of his chief accuser is suspect, if not flagrantly flawed, then it is understandable why the pope reacted the way he did.

Too many priests—and now even notable lay persons who are not Catholic—have been branded as molesters without sufficient evidence or due process. The climate is poisoned. To be sure, the guilty must pay, but the accused have rights that must be protected.

For the pope to accuse “leftists” of slander is not something the Catholic League finds hard to believe. We’ve seen it for years.

SOCIAL JUSTICE CATHOLICS AND THE MARCH FOR LIFE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the March for Life and the social justice agenda:

There is no annual demonstration that draws more Catholics than the March for Life. The turnout is so impressive—the

media typically underplay its success—that it has become the envy of social justice Catholics, those whose primary commitment is to fighting poverty and various forms of injustice. In recent years, some in their ranks have sought to use the March for Life as a platform for their agenda.

Not to be misunderstood, there are millions of Catholics who support both the pro-life cause and the social justice cause. In doing so, they give life to the “seamless garment” approach broached by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin in 1981. He called on Catholics to see the plight of the unborn and the plight of the needy through the same lens. Philosophically, it is hard to argue with such a conception. Practically speaking, however, it is untenable.

No organization can survive if it has too many goals, and this is especially true when the tie that binds them is tenuous to begin with. Organizational success depends on many things, one of the most important of which is the ability to keep focused. In other words, when a tent gets too big, it tends to collapse under its own weight.

Then there is the ideological divide. For example, most social justice activists, including Catholics, are not only disengaged from the pro-life movement, they tend to be pro-abortion.

I first learned this many years ago when I met Catholics who worked for Catholic Charities: more than a few were champions of abortion. I have also met scores of other Catholic social justice activists—they include many nuns—who are either soft on abortion or resolutely in the pro-abortion camp.

It is important to note this reality because there are some social justice activists who would like to hijack the pro-life cause by pushing their own ideological ambitions. The poor, the environment, racial discrimination, world peace—these are all worthy concerns—but they are best addressed by

organizations dedicated to such matters. They should not be an appendage to a movement whose primary interest is to protect the life of the unborn.

No one has been more vocal in his determination to convince the pro-life community that it must embrace the social justice agenda than John Gehring. He is a left-wing activist who works for Faith in Public Life, an outfit funded by the atheist and pro-abortion billionaire, George Soros.

On the eve of the March for Life, we can always count on Gehring to make his pitch. He likes to cite Pax Christi USA as a good example of a social justice organization that participates in the March for Life. That alone should raise eyebrows among pro-lifers.

Pax Christi USA promotes disarmament, as well as economic and racial justice. It has several subunits, including an "Anti-Racism Team"; there is no "Anti-Abortion Team." Similarly, it issues statements on such topics as "Protection From ICE Raids," though there is no equivalent document on "Protection From Abortionists."

Pax Christi USA does have a statement on abortion: It is a short and flatulent commentary supporting dialogue between opposing sides. It is also dishonest.

In 2010, Pax Christi USA joined a protest of one of the most pro-life organizations in the nation, the Susan B. Anthony List. Dave Robinson, executive director of Pax Christi USA, called the pro-life entity "a partisan front group, which uses issues like abortion to confuse voters and to score cheap political points." Thus, he committed his organization to the pro-abortion side.

In 2001, Pax Christi USA had to cancel its national assembly after Christian Brothers University notified the organization that its keynote speaker was a proponent of abortion rights.

In 2000, Pax Christi USA signed a statement of support for Sister Jeannine Gramick and Father Robert Nugent, two pro-homosexual activists who had recently been sanctioned by the Vatican for their extremism. Not surprisingly, Pax Christi never attempted to explain the relationship between disarmament and homosexuality. The nexus, of course, is that both are part of the left-wing agenda.

In 1996, Pax Christi members in Washington D.C. took up the cause of women's ordination; it too, had nothing to do with missiles, but it had much to do with left-wing politics.

In 2005, Catholic and evangelical leaders held a huge conference, "Justice Sunday," that promoted religious liberty; I was one of the speakers. Who opposed it? Pax Christi USA.

It must also be said that it is a mistake to call Pax Christi USA a "peace" organization. To establish peace, it is sometimes necessary to pick up arms. There is no cause, or nation, that it believes is worthy of defense. Its mission is surrender, not peace.

The March for Life is the envy of those in the social justice camp precisely because they are unable to rally anywhere near as many people to their side. They belong on the sidelines, as spectators, far away from the gladiators who truly care about the unborn.

CATHOLIC LEAGUE DONATES TO PRO-LIFE FILM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new film about the abortion movement:

Alveda King, niece of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., is an executive producer of a new movie, "Roe v. Wade," that chronicles the origins of the abortion movement in the United States.

From the racist views of Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger, to the founding efforts of pro-abortion activist Dr. Bernard Nathanson, the movie also focuses on the role that Norma McCorvey (the "Jane Roe" plaintiff in *Roe v. Wade*) played in the infamous Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

Both Nathanson and McCorvey later pivoted and became pro-life activists; they also converted to Catholicism. The film ends by addressing technological advances showing the beginning of human life in the womb.

Incredibly, Facebook is banning fundraising ads for the movie. King is trying to raise \$2 million to pay for the cost of making the documentary, and has already secured 1,000 screens. To that end, the Catholic League is making a \$10,000 donation today, making us an associate producer of the film.

We urge everyone to contribute to this movie. You can do so by going to the website, www.indiegogo.com.

Let's send Facebook and all the other censorial activists in the pro-abortion industry a lesson—we will not be silenced in our campaign to promote the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death.

NEW YORK TIMES TELLS IRISH HORROR TALES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on two stories in the *New York Times* that malign the Catholic Church in Ireland:

Newspapers are supposed to report news, but when they don't—when they recycle old news—it calls into question the motive. That's what the *New York Times* did recently.

On January 14 and January 16, it ran two “news” stories besmirching the Catholic Church in Ireland: neither broke any new ground and both misreported the facts.

The January 16 story by Ed O'Loughlin reports on discussions in Ireland on what to do about the Magdalene Laundry on Gloucester Street, the last of its genre; these were homes and workplaces for homeless and dispossessed women. “Poor nutrition and hygiene, cold and damp lodging and little or no medical supervision were the norm.”

That is not true. Proof? All one has to do is read the McAleese Report, issued in 2013. It is the most comprehensive collection of data ever obtained on the Magdalene Laundries, complete with statistical analysis. It totally demolishes the myths about the horrid conditions that the nuns subjected the women to, including stories of torture.

Did O'Loughlin even bother to read this government report? He certainly could not have written such dribble if he read the comments made by Dr. Michael Coughlan, Dr. John Ryan, Dr. Donal Kelly, Dr. Harry Comber, and Dr. Malachy Coleman. They unanimously dispute the horror tales.

What unites the O'Loughlin article with the January 14 story by Dan Barry is their misreporting of what really happened in

the Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, near Galway.

"A few years ago," Barry writes, "an amateur historian shook Ireland to its core with a ghastly allegation: Hundreds of bodies of young children *appeared to have been buried* in an abandoned septic tank by Catholic nuns who for decades had managed a home for unwed mothers and their offspring in the County Galway town of Tuam." (My italics.)

The "amateur historian" is Catherine Corless. Barry says that "she wrote an article in the local journal in 2012 that *strongly suggested* that the remains of hundreds of children, all born to unwed mothers and all baptized in the Catholic faith, had not been buried in consecrated ground, but in parts of a disused septic system dating to when the home was a 19th-century workhouse." (My emphasis.) He further notes that the "suspicions were confirmed in March by forensic investigators," commissioned by the government.

Similarly, O'Loughlin refers to Corless as a "dogged local historian" who made headline news when "she published *evidence*" that nearly 800 children had died in the Tuam home, and that the remains of "some" were found in the septic tank. (My emphasis again.)

As I have noted several times before (see the Catholic League website), the "mass grave" story, as it is called, is a hoax, a cruel myth promoted by those whose agenda it is to smear the Catholic Church.

Barry notes the bodies "appeared to have been buried" in a septic tank. Appeared? Either they were or they weren't. Alternatively, he says that in her 2012 article, Corless "strongly suggested" this was true. A suggestion, strong or weak, is not a substitute for an empirical finding. O'Loughlin ups the ante even further claiming that Corless found "evidence" to support her claims.

Have Barry and O'Loughlin read the 2012 article by Corless?

Apparently not. I have. In her piece titled "The Home," which was published in the Journal of the Old Tuam Society, Corless made no mention of any "mass grave." If anything, she offered evidence that contradicts what she later claimed.

Here is what Corless said: "A few local boys [in 1975] came upon a sort of crypt in the ground, and on peering in they saw several small skulls." She mentioned there was a "little graveyard." That is not the makings of a mass grave.

The primary source for her "mass grave" thesis is Barry Sweeney. When he was 10, he and a friend stumbled on a hole with skeletons in it. In 2014, he was asked by the *Irish Times* to comment on Corless' claim that there are "800 skeletons down that hole." He said, "Nothing like that." How many? "About 20," he said. He later told the *New York Times* there were "maybe 15 to 20 small skeletons." It would behoove Barry and O'Loughlin to read the *New York Times* more carefully.

Corless herself admitted in 2014 that she learned from local residents that the Tuam graveyard outside the Home was dotted with "tiny markers there." There were "bits of stones left to indicate graves." Those "tiny markers" suggest this was a cillin graveyard, or a graveyard for children. A "mass grave" is not dotted with "tiny markers" or "bits of stones." Yet Corless has been able to get away with these contradictory explanations.

In a 2014 news story by Douglas Dalby of the *New York Times*, he says of Corless' account that she "*surmised* that the children's bodies were interred in a septic tank behind the home." (My italic.) His verb is accurate. To surmise is to guess—it is proof of nothing.

It also doesn't help the cause of Barry and O'Loughlin—and it is a cause that they have embarked upon—for Barry to write that Corless' "suspicions were confirmed in March by forensic investigators." Wrong. March is when Katherine Zappone,

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, released her Interim Report on this subject. Nowhere in the report does she use the term “mass grave,” or imply anything like it.

Finally, there is the matter of Catherine Corless. She is neither an “amateur historian” nor a “local historian.” She is not a historian—local, regional, or national. She doesn’t even have an undergraduate degree. She is a typist.

What the *New York Times* has published is pure propaganda, designed to feed the worst impression about the Catholic Church in Ireland. There is no other plausible interpretation.

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PUTIN EQUATES COMMUNISM TO CHRISTIANITY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on recent remarks made by Russian president Vladimir Putin:

Russian president Vladimir Putin is making some waves with his recent statement equating communism to Christianity. He said that “communist ideology is very similar to Christianity,” crediting Soviet communism for preaching “freedom, brotherhood, equality.” Though he admitted that religious persecution took place under Soviet rule, he nonetheless lauded it for its ideological commitment to these ideals.

Pope Francis himself said in 2016 that it has been noted many times that “it is the communists who think like Christians.” By that he meant the communists profess a commitment to the poor.

So is Putin saying the same thing as the pope? Not at all.

The pope was saying that although the communists have adopted the rhetoric of Christianity (with regards to the needy), they have done so dishonestly: He said the “communists have stolen our flag,” meaning they have ripped off our legacy to serve their own interests. In fact, he pointedly said in 2013 that “The Marxist ideology is wrong.”

Putin believes that the state should serve the poor. That is not the Christian way: people must serve the poor, albeit there is a role for the state. “The family constitutes the best ‘social capital,’” Pope Francis said a few years ago in his trip to Ecuador. “It cannot be replaced by other institutions.” In doing so, he was enunciating the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, meaning that those closest to the problem are best suited to fix it. That is an anathema in Soviet discourse, something shared by Putin.

If Putin were right, then the most communist nation in the world would also be the greatest champion of the poor. But he is wrong—North Korea is the most communist nation on the globe and it is also the most oppressive. Not only does it starve its people, in the latest Open Doors report on Christian persecution around the world, North Korea is listed as the number-one offender. In fact, it has led this list for 16 consecutive years.

This is not an accident. “The primary driver of persecution in North Korea is the state,” says the Open Doors report. And who do they persecute the most? Christians. “Christians are seen as hostile elements in society that have to be eradicated.”

Putin is not only wrong about equating communism to Christianity, he needs to tend to his own house. While religious liberty has improved in Russia, overall levels of freedom are a disgrace. Freedom House, which monitors freedom throughout the world, rated Russia “Not Free” in its latest

report. On a score of 1 to 7, where 1 = Most Free and 7 = Least Free, Russia's composite score was 6.5, earning a 7 for political rights and a 6 for civil liberties.

If Putin wants to help the poor, he can begin by shelving his authoritarian state and allowing individual rights to thrive. Then he would be modeling his nation on Christian principles.

NYC MONUMENTS STAY, SAVE ONE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a report that made recommendations on what to do about certain New York City monuments:

The New York City commission empowered to assess the propriety of having controversial monuments, statues, and markers on public lands has issued its report: all of the tributes, save one, will remain where they are. The lone exception is a Central Park statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims, a nineteenth century gynecologist who experimented on slave women; his statue will be moved to the Brooklyn cemetery where he is buried.

After I testified before the panel on November 27, I told my colleagues at the Catholic League that my guess is that the statue of Columbus in Columbus Circle—the most high profile and contentious of all monuments, statues, and markers—will remain, as will most of the others. If there is an exception, I said, it would be to remove the statue of Dr. Sims.

I would have preferred not to empanel a commission at all—it was pure political grandstanding—but given the hostile climate created by left-wing extremists, the report's final recommendations are quite acceptable.

The statue of Columbus will remain because of the efforts of the Italian-American community (Gov. Andrew Cuomo deserves credit here) and Catholic activists: they stood fast against the cultural cleansers. I was happy to lend the support of the Catholic League to the pro-Columbus side.

The most ideological of the speakers were young radicals associated with Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter; they were joined by some aging professors still living in the 1960s. Their hatred for America was palpable, as was their contempt for the democratic process. Indeed, the first speakers at the Manhattan hearing (where I spoke) pledged to take down the Columbus statue by force if the panel didn't elect to move it.

How ironic it is to note that the most vocal critics of Columbus—those who accused him of gross injustice—turned out to be modern-day totalitarians. These zealots made the 15th-century Italian explorer look positively angelic by comparison.

One final thought. The most notable member of the commission was Harry Belafonte. He was also the laziest—he did practically nothing. For that we can count our blessings: he is not a patriot.

It's time Harry fully retired and moved to some place where he belongs. Maybe he can bring his calypso to North Korea and dance with Kim.

CBS SHOW GIVES MUSLIMS A PASS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addresses last night's episode of "Young Sheldon" on CBS:

The January 11 episode of the CBS show, “Young Sheldon,” mildly lambasted Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Protestantism (Baptists), Zoroastrianism, the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints, and Taoism. It made an exception for two religions: it made a frontal assault on Catholicism, trashing the Eucharist, and it said not a word about Islam.

We all know why. Catholicism is hated because it is the crown jewel of religions. Muslims are given a pass because CBS executives are cowards—they fear reprisal.

It’s really not hard to figure out. In both cases, CBS exudes bigotry.

Contact the show’s press agent Tracey Raab:
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NEW YORK TIMES CHANGES POLICY ON OBSCENITIES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on why the *New York Times* changed its policy on obscenities:

In the first paragraph of today’s lead front-page story in the *New York Times*, it says that President Trump referred to “people from Haiti and some nations in Africa” as “s***hole countries.” *Note: the asterisks are mine—the Times spelled the word in full.*

The president says he did not use this term but that is irrelevant to my point: the newspaper changed its policy on publishing obscene words so its “readers would fully understand what the story was about.”

That, of course, is not true. No reader of what I just wrote is unable to “fully understand” what Trump allegedly said. My use of asterisks conveys the message without being convulsive. Worse, the *Times* refused to allow me to use asterisks to describe the obscenities that Dan Savage has used about Catholicism.

In a memo I received on February 11, 2016, an employee at the *Times* told me that an op-ed page ad I had submitted on the Disney/ABC show, “The Real O’Neals,” could not be published because it violated the paper’s obscenity policy.

The staffer wrote that “I have discussed this advertisement with the highest executives at The Times, and we are all in agreement that it cannot be published with these quotes. You can disagree with Mr. Savage’s hiring and say that his remarks show him as an obscene bigot, but we would rather not reprint his remarks, even with asterisks.”

I can only conclude that, given the reason cited today for publishing Trump’s alleged obscenity, the *New York Times* did not want its readers to “fully understand” what Savage said about Catholicism. Anyone who can’t figure out why is hopelessly partisan.

Contact the New York Times: nytnews@nytimes.com

ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS RIP THE POPE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the reaction to a Vatican initiative inviting the poor to attend a circus:

A Vatican office invited 2,100 poor persons, including the homeless, children from needy families, prisoners, and refugees, to a circus on the outskirts of Rome. Today's event did not go off without controversy.

"People who perform in the circus create beauty," said Pope Francis, "they are creators of beauty. And this is good for the soul. We need beauty."

The pope quickly came under fire by animal rights activists, many of whom accused him of sanctioning animal cruelty. Carla Rocchi, who heads Italy's Animal Protection League, said that circus animals suffer from the "unnatural condition of detention and exploitation, if not mistreatment." Gaia Angelini, another animal rights leader, criticized the pope for sanctioning "the exploitation of the weakest, in this case, animals."

The manager of the circus emphasized that his employees operate under strict guidelines that ensure "excellent care" of the animals. He did not address the absurd remarks of the animal rights enthusiasts.

According to the logic of Rocchi, all house pets are suffering from the "unnatural condition of detention," and should therefore be freed from captivity. So when someone acquires a rescue cat—an animal who was savaged in the wild by other animals—and provides the feline with loving care, he is subjecting the cat to the "unnatural condition of detention."

Angelini is not only wrong to say that the circus "exploits" animals, she makes a more serious error: unborn children, not elephants, are the weakest among us.

Pope Francis is well known for his outreach efforts to the poor and the dispossessed. Under his direction, the poor have been given showers and shaves, as well as lavish meals. In addition, thousands have gone on private tours of the Sistine Chapel.

Kudos to His Holiness for now bringing joy to social outcasts by allowing them to bask in the beauty of the circus.

HOLLYWOOD'S PHONY #MeToo CRUSADE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Hollywood's #MeToo movement:

All the Hollywood gals, and many of the guys, are desperate to show how protective they are of women being exploited by men, but few of them mean it. If they did, they wouldn't continue to make shows and movies that debase women. Hollywood literally created the culture which spawned the objectification of women, and now it is reaping what it has sown. Worse, its support for the #MeToo crusade shows how utterly disconnected from reality it is.

The latest example of this phoniness comes by way of CBS. The CBS Corporation owns Showtime, and one of its programs, "Shameless," proves my point beyond a shadow of a doubt. (Many thanks to Brent Bozell's Newsbusters for providing a script summary.)

The New Year's Eve episode of "Shameless" nicely teed up the next installment, which aired January 7. Both were vulgar, misogynistic, and anti-Christian, but it was the latter episode that was clearly over the top. As is often the case with this kind of sick programming, it was gay themed from beginning to end.

On December 31, Ian, played by Cameron Monaghan, is depicted as the gay son of a crook played by William H. Macy. He is

confronted by a pastor who believes in conversion therapy for both homosexuals and persons who reject their nature-ordained sex. The pastor, of course, is a zealot who goads a sexually confused female, asking her if she wants “to be cured of the homosexuality disease and go back to being a normal girl again.” Ian, the gay activist, is so upset that he pledges to “beat the f*** out of this guy.”

On January 7, Ian kicks it into high gear, summoning an angry gay mob to confront Christians in the Chicago area. Ian tells religious leaders that “Jesus is nonbinary,” a concept that might have gotten one institutionalized in the past but is now an accepted dogma in liberal circles.

The following exchange shows how morally corrupt the script is, underlining the charge being made here: Hollywood, and in this case the CBS Corporation, is responsible for the climate that debases women.

Crowd: Butt bumping is Jesus’ love!

Ian: Dry humping is Jesus’ love!

Crowd: Dry humping is Jesus’ love! Dry humping is Jesus’ love! Dry humping is Jesus’ love.

Woman: Carpet munching is Jesus’ love! Carpet munching is Jesus’ love! Carpet munching...

Woman and Ian: ...Is Jesus’ love!

Crowd: Carpet munching is Jesus’ love!

Priest: That’s enough. That’s enough!

This back and forth dialogue continues aimlessly—it includes an exchange insisting that “Nipple licking is Jesus’ love”—until Ian decides to counsel a lesbian. He implores her to ignore what the clergy have said about Jesus’ teachings, contending that “the truth is that you f***ing girls [are

doing] exactly what Jesus wants you to do....”

The CBS Corporation’s Board of Directors lists fifteen members, three of whom are women; there are 10 Executives, none of whom is female. That sounds about what we would expect from a media giant that touts its support for women’s rights—its leadership is 88 percent male.

I am writing to the three women, Shari Redstone, Linda M. Griego, and Martha Minow, asking if they support the #MeToo movement. If so, it would be instructive to know how they feel about shows that celebrate “carpet munching,” and whether they see such fare as being contradictory to this cause. All the men will receive a copy of my correspondence as well, along with this news release.

I will not ask if they are offended by anti-Christian shows; I already know the answer.

One final thought. At the Golden Globes Awards, William H. Macy spoke out strongly in favor of #MeToo. That he is undermining this cause by participating in “carpet munching” shows is not something he is likely to comprehend. Thus, no attempt will be made to contact him.