

NUDITY AND BIGOTRY MARK FOLSOM ST. FAIR

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the Folsom Street Fair events this weekend:

Every year, San Francisco celebrates the Folsom Street Fair, traditionally held the last weekend in September. It is a mass gathering of naked homosexual men, some of whom submit to beating each other in the street with chains and other metal devices. This is regarded as a demonstration in tolerance.

In 2012, many citizens of San Francisco got so fed up with naked men sitting next to children in public places that they banned nudity in public. The board of supervisors vote was close, 5-4. But it was not a total ban: an exception was made for homosexuals—they are allowed to go naked at the Folsom Street Fair and other events. Many prefer to indulge their passions by participating in bondage exercises.

The Folsom Street Fair also features a heady dose of Catholic bashing. Usually, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence show up, but they are not listed on the event calendar this year. No matter, the bigotry they represent will be given high profile on September 29 at the CumUnion Parties.

One thing that the tolerance police will not tolerate is taking pictures of the participants, unless prior consent is given. That's right, before gawkers can take a picture of naked men mutilating themselves, they are expected to seek permission.

No one has yet explained why it is always homosexuals who insist that they must have the right to expose themselves with impunity in public places. There must be some unmet psychological need. Why they hate Catholics is easy to understand: We think it is important for street fair

participants to keep their pants on.

POPE NOTES PROGRESS ON COMBATING ABUSE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by Pope Francis on board the papal plane:

Going against the grain, and making the same point made by the Catholic League, Pope Francis cited the progress that the Catholic Church has witnessed in combating sexual abuse, referencing the Pennsylvania grand jury report as evidence.

While noting that “one single priest who abuses a child” is positively “monstrous,” the Holy Father said, “The Church takes an example from Pennsylvania, given the numbers that you see when the Church first became aware of this, and gave it our all in recent times.”

He was referring to the fact that almost all the cases alleged to have happened occurred decades ago, reaching back to World War II. “Then in recent times,” the pope said, “it diminished because the Church noticed that it had to fight in another way.”

“In olden times these things were covered up—but were covered up also in families, when an uncle abused his niece, or a father raped his child; it was covered up because it was a very great shame. That is how people thought in the last century.” He insisted that “An historic fact is interpreted with the hermeneutic of the time in which it took place, not by the hermeneutic of today.”

This last point made by Pope Francis is critically important and is not well appreciated. Indeed, just the opposite is happening: The Church's most extreme critics—they are found on both the right and the left today—are looking through the narrow lens of 2018, judging, with characteristic arrogance, the content of the culture as it existed a half century ago.

The pope is right to say that when sexual abuse occurred in the last century, the shame of it impelled families to keep quiet, not exposing the abused or the abuser to public ventilation. In some instances even today, this is common practice. In Orthodox Jewish neighborhoods, accusers are expected to bring their claims before a rabbinical court, not the civil authorities.

Similarly, when bishops dealt with molesting priests in the last century, they relied on the advice of those in the behavioral sciences, following the advice of therapists who claimed to have “fixed” a molesting priest. That was the hermeneutic of the age.

We know now that the psychologists and psychiatrists badly oversold their expertise and failed to successfully treat these men. But when the abuse crisis was at its peak—the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s—“rehabilitate” and “renew” defined the zeitgeist of the time, especially in academic circles. Interestingly, the therapists are still given a pass by almost every critic of the Church, yet they played a key role in decisions that allowed the abusers to return to ministry.

The pope is to be commended for speaking the truth. Regrettably, he is not joined by as many as he should, in and out of the Catholic Church.

OPEN LETTER TO PENNSYLVANIA SENATORS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue has sent a letter to Pennsylvania Senators asking them to amend a bill on the sexual abuse of minors that discriminates against private institutions such as the Catholic Church.

To read it, click [here](#).

PA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DEFENSIVE REACTION

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro's reaction to the league's lawsuit:

On September 21, attorneys for the Catholic League filed an Application for Leave [amicus curiae brief](#) in the Western District of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania regarding the political machinations of the state's attorney general, Josh Shapiro. His decision to target the Catholic Church in a grand jury investigation of the sexual abuse of minors—giving a pass to all other private and public institutions—warranted the filing. Shapiro's defensive reaction to the brief is problematic on several levels.

An article in the September 23 edition of *The Morning Call*, an Allentown newspaper, says that Shapiro's spokesman, Joe Grace, is contending that the attorney general's office investigates "child sexual abuse and all sexual abuse wherever they find it

in Pennsylvania, without fear or favor.”

In fact, Shapiro’s office has not conducted a grand jury investigation of the clergy of any religion, save for Catholicism. Nor has he launched a probe of the public schools. No one can maintain that sexual abuse does not exist in any of these entities.

According to the reporter, Christine Schiavo, the attorney general’s office argues that it has filed charges against “a police chief, a deputy coroner and seven Lackawanna County prison guards, and has secured the convictions of Penn State officials” related to the investigation of Jerry Sandusky, the former assistant football coach who was convicted in 2012 for sexually assaulting 10 boys.

In any of these cases, did Shapiro tell the defendants they should give up their rights to defend themselves? Did he say that their right to present a defense was evidence of their guilt or an attempt to cover-up their guilt? Or does he just tell this to priests? Why were there no press conferences attendant to any of these cases? Why does he save his grandstanding for the Catholic community?

Regarding the prison guards, why didn’t Shapiro launch a grand jury investigation into every prison in the state? How could he possibly know if other prison guards were assaulting prisoners without a probe? He didn’t have to go after six Catholic dioceses because of an offender at one Catholic high school, but he did. Why? Why the double standard?

The Penn State University matter is laughable. The grand jury investigation of Penn State began in 2009 under Attorney General Tom Corbett. It concluded on November 4, 2011 when the report was released. Shapiro had nothing to do with any of it—he took office on January 17, 2017.

If this is the best Shapiro can do, it is a pitiful showing. This is hardly the end of this issue. Bet on it.

PA GRAND JURY REPORT SPARKS AMICUS BRIEF

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an *amicus curiae* brief filed today with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court:

In light of the extreme and questionable actions of the Attorney General of Pennsylvania in conjunction with the recently released Grand Jury Report, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights today [filed](#) an Application for Leave to File an *Amicus Curiae* Brief with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

The Catholic League believes that anyone who hurts a child must be investigated and, when appropriate, prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Such investigations and prosecutions must however be conducted in accordance with the protections required by the United States Constitution and, in this instance, the Pennsylvania Constitution.

There is perhaps no greater threat to liberty than a politically motivated prosecutor. When those motivations extend beyond individuals who have engaged in criminal wrongdoing—targeting an entire religion—the threat is cataclysmic to all faiths.

This is not the first time that Attorney General Josh Shapiro has used the power of his office to single out the Catholic Church in order to impugn its moral integrity. We urge the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to take the steps necessary to ensure a grand jury process grounded in the Constitutional protections of due process, reputation and religious freedom.

ATHEIST GROUP LOOKING FOOLISH

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an atheist group's latest failures:

Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) is the most unhinged atheist organization in the nation. They are looking increasingly foolish, taking on cases that undermine their credibility.

Taylor County, Texas has drawn the ire of FFRF. Why? Among other things, employees in municipal buildings have been known to have crosses on their desks. Another worker had the nerve to have a painting with a Bible verse on his desk. "God Bless America" signs were also found, including one on the door of the Veterans' Service Office.

FFRF sees all Christian symbols as analogous to swastikas. That's just how far gone they are. Ironically, their zeal in scrubbing the public sector free of every vestige of Christianity is reminiscent of Nazism. Freedom of religion, and freedom of speech, are twin liberties found objectionable by fascists in every nation.

Lawyers for Taylor County had to remind FFRF that the Supreme Court has said many times that historical phrases such as "God Bless America" do not violate the Constitution. Neither do religious symbols owned and worn by citizens as part of their apparel: Americans do not lose their rights by stepping inside a government facility.

Similarly, just last week, the Cullman County School Board in Alabama voted unanimously to add "In God We Trust" to school displays. It is, of course, our national motto, but to FFRF that doesn't count—it is still an obscenity. They said they

were “considering the best legal options for this rash of legislation.”

We would encourage the leadership of FFRF to sue. That way they can drain their coffers in another losing effort.

Losing is one thing. Losing while looking foolish is quite another.

Contact: info@ffrf.org

WHY SHOULD PRIEST ACCUSERS BE BELIEVED?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the rights of priests:

When the Pennsylvania grand jury report on accused priests was released, there was a rush to judgment on the part of the media, pundits, and activists, all concluding that the accused were guilty. This included many Catholics, both liberals and conservatives. I tried to raise questions about the veracity of the report and was immediately criticized for doing so.

Now some of these very same people are saying that the woman who has accused Rep. Keith Ellison of violence and sending threatening text messages to her, Karen Monahan, should not be believed.

In fact, last month, after Monahan’s allegations were made, Ellison received the overwhelming support of his colleagues in the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party: In his bid to become state attorney general, he won 82 percent of the delegates. Monahan’s accusations obviously didn’t matter.

Worse, some of Ellison's supporters started attacking her.

Monahan tweeted the following: "I've been smeared, threatened, isolated from my own party. I provided medical records from 2017, stating on two different Dr. Visits. I told them about the abuse and who did it. My therapist released records stating I have been dealing and healing from the abuse."

Why should the priest accusers be believed, but not Ellison's accuser? Not one of the accused priests had the chance to rebut any of the charges, yet all of them were condemned in the eyes of the public.

In another example of duplicity, why should anyone trust Debra Katz, the lawyer for Brett Kavanaugh's accuser, Christine Blasey Ford?

When Paula Jones accused Bill Clinton of sexual harassment, Katz, a left-wing lawyer, dismissed Jones' claims saying the alleged incident "lasted 10 to 12 minutes." It is certainly true that it didn't take long for Clinton to drop his pants, expose himself, and tell Jones to "kiss it" [his penis].

Now if the clock is the measure of injustice, that would mean that the most common abuse committed by molesting priests—"inappropriate touching"—should be dismissed as trivial (it only takes a few seconds to grab someone's behind). But, of course, there is a different standard for judging priests.

In another demonstration of her hypocrisy, Katz made little of the sexual misconduct accusations levied against Senator Al Franken. "Context is relevant," she said. She pointed out that the offenses took place before he was a senator.

Kavanaugh's alleged offense took place 36 years ago when he was in high school, but that matters gravely to Katz. If her client decides to testify, she should be asked how long it took for Kavanaugh to pin her down. If it took 10-12 minutes,

then she loses. End of story.

Priests should have the same rights as everyone else, but that is not the case. This calls into serious question the motivating factors behind this unequal playing field. Duplicity abounds.

Father Serra is being sacrificed on the altar of political correctness. To Catholics, however, he was a saintly man, one whose place alongside other great saints remains secure.

STANFORD RENAMES FATHER SERRA SITES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Stanford University's decision to rename sites that honor Father Serra:

Stanford University has decided to rename many places on campus that give tribute to Father Junipero Serra, the 18th century Spanish missionary who was canonized in 2015. A total of 21 missions were established by the missionaries, nine of which were under the tenure of Serra; he personally founded six missions.

The decision, which was approved by Stanford's board of trustees, means that Serra Mall will be renamed "Jane Stanford Way" in honor of Jane Stanford, co-founder of the university. Two campus buildings bearing Serra's name will be renamed, but some other campus sites will keep the Franciscan's name; the names of other Spanish missionaries will also remain.

The university committee that made these recommendations acknowledged the "multiple dimensions of his [Serra's]

legacy—as a California pioneer, as a celebrated religious figure, but also as founder of a system that did harm to Native Americans.” It said that “the historical record confirms that the mission system inflicted great harm and violence on Native Americans.”

The most serious weakness in the committee’s report is its failure to recognize Serra’s heroics in combating the inhumane treatment afforded the Indians by the Spanish authorities. Similarly, its failure to identify specific instances of injustice committed by Father Serra is telling. The committee’s report seems to blame Serra for the misdeeds of others, which is patently unfair.

For the most part, Serra got along fine with the Indians. They understood, for example, that it was the Catholic Church that led the protests against inhumane treatment of the Indians; the Spanish crown ultimately agreed with this position.

Both colonial authorities and the missionaries vied for control over the Indians, but their practices could not have been more different. With the exception of serious crimes, Serra insisted that all punishments be meted out by the priests, the result being that the Indians were spared the worst excesses at the hands of the civil authorities.

The Franciscans also sought to protect Indian women from the Spaniards. They segregated the population on the basis of sex and age, hoping to protect the women from unwanted advances. When sexual abuse occurred, it was quickly condemned by Serra and his fellow priests.

The violence that the Stanford committee cites was certainly not done by Serra, or at his behest. The only person he ever flogged was himself: it was an expression of redemptive suffering. Not to recognize these facts is delinquent.

As for the missionaries uprooting the Indian culture, the evidence shows that no attempt was made to wipe out the native

language of the Indians. Indeed, the missionaries learned their language and even employed Indians as teachers. Some cultural modification was inevitable, given that the missionaries taught the Indians how to be masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and painters. The Indians were also taught how to buy and sell animals, and were allowed to keep their bounty. Women were taught spinning, knitting, and sewing.

It is disturbing that so many historical figures are being reexamined under the cultural microscope of the 21st century. Those engaged in this cultural transformation—it is more like an eradication—are creating standards that will no doubt be used by successive generations to indict many of them. This is not a mature way to judge history.

Father Serra is being sacrificed on the altar of political correctness. To Catholics, however, he was a saintly man, one whose place alongside other great saints remains secure.

BIG MEDIA SILENT ON BISHOP RHOADES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on media coverage of Bishop Kevin Rhoades' exoneration:

Every time there is a story about a priest accused of wrongdoing, it makes its way into the newspaper. If the accused is a bishop, it merits coverage by all the big media: print, digital, radio, and television. But when a bishop gets cleared of wrongdoing, they go mute.

On September 13, Dauphin County District Attorney Francis Chardo said that following a full investigation, it was

determined that “there is no basis to conclude that Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades ever engaged in a criminal or otherwise improper relationship with a person whom we will refer to as J.T.” Harrisburg, Pennsylvania is the seat of Dauphin County.

Bishop Rhoades, who heads the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and who was previously stationed in Harrisburg, was charged with molesting a teenager decades ago in Puerto Rico. But the stories told by J.T. (an ex-con) never added up. More important, his own mother said that Bishop Rhoades’ account was accurate.

Bishop Rhoades has had his reputation smeared, and the media are letting the false accusation stand. The Associated Press was alone among the big media to run a story on his exoneration. The story was covered by newspapers in Indiana and Pennsylvania, but it received no mention in the evening news on any broadcast or cable channel. The *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and all the other prominent newspapers, said nothing about it.

Sadly, we have become accustomed to this kind of biased journalism. When a bishop is accused, the story is given high profile, but when a bishop is exculpated, the story is buried. Small wonder why the public holds the media in low regard. Catholics have more reason than every other segment of society to hold them in contempt.

BEE’S SHOW FEELS THE PINCH

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on last night’s edition of Samantha Bee’s TV show:

Looks like our campaign against Samantha Bee’s TBS show, “Full

Frontal," is paying dividends. In the August 15 edition of her show (reruns were aired over the past few weeks), Bee ran 23 advertisements; on September 12, there were 19.

We have been able to pick off seven of her most prominent sponsors: Verizon, Procter and Gamble, Wendy's, Ashley HomeStore, The Wonderful Company (maker of pistachios), Popeyes, and Burger King.

What we are most pleased with is a change in Bee's script. We started to target her sponsors because of two things: her relentless anti-Catholic assaults, and her use of the c-word to describe the president's daughter.

Bee has subsequently stopped attacking the Catholic Church and has not employed vulgarities to assail public persons or institutions. We are delighted that she is feeling the pinch.

Do we trust Bee? Not at all. Any person with her record of bigotry and obscenities is not to be trusted. But her producers know that it was her antics that triggered a public revulsion against her, and that the Catholic League has played a major role in that effort.

We will continue to monitor Bee's show, and will resume our campaign if and when she starts acting out again. It is a sorry state of affairs in this country that it takes a stern reaction from groups like the Catholic League to get the likes of Samantha Bee to zip it.