

# SNL'S DAVIDSON LIBELS PRIESTS; CAIR OVERREACTS TO PIRRO

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a remark made on NBC's "Saturday Night Live," and addresses the flair up over comments made by Fox News host Jeanine Pirro:

"But if you support the Catholic Church, isn't that like the same thing as being an R. Kelly fan?"

That's what Pete Davidson said on "Saturday Night Live." In doing so, he libeled all priests. He did not compare the alleged predator to an alleged predatory priest—he compared Kelly to the entire Catholic clergy. His bigoted remark deserves to be condemned by everyone.

Should Davidson be fired? That's a drastic action, one suitable for (a) those who make comments that are so serious and injurious that anything less would be unacceptable and (b) recidivists. Because we are not aware of any anti-Catholic comments that Davidson has previously made, we are not calling for his dismissal. But executives at NBC need to talk to him without delay. If he strikes again, our response will be different.

Regrettably, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Catholic League analogue in the Muslim community, is asking Fox News to fire Jeanine Pirro for comments she made about Rep. Ilhan Omar on the same night that Davidson made his remark. CAIR did not cite a single previous instance where it objected to Pirro.

From our perspective, if there is a comment that is so egregious as to be completely indefensible—a 10 on a scale of 1 to 10—then calling for a TV host or entertainer to be fired

may be warranted. But when it does not reach that level, *and there is no history of similar statements*, then calls for dismissal are unwarranted.

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## **CHILD OF GAY PARENTS DENIED SCHOOL ADMISSION**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the decision of a Catholic school to deny admission to the child of gay parents:

The child of gay parents was denied admission to St. Ann Catholic School in Prairie Village, Kansas. Some Catholics are so upset that they started a petition to protest the decision. The pastor, Father Craig Maxim, reiterated Catholic doctrine, and he was subsequently supported by Kansas City Archbishop Joseph Naumann.

There really should be no issue here, but increasingly Catholic schools are faced with similar challenges.

Parents are not required to enroll their children in a Catholic school, but once they elect to do so, they are obliged to follow its strictures. If they find some of the rules disagreeable, they are free to enroll their child in some other school. They are not free to reject those rules and then claim victim status. Nor are they free to enlist others in their effort to override school and Church authorities. Mutiny is not acceptable.

This is not simply a matter of maintaining fidelity to Catholic teachings; it is a matter of respecting diversity. Catholic schools offer a diverse educational alternative to public schools and other private institutions. Everyone should respect their right to autonomy, regardless of whether they agree with Catholic teachings.

The petition is straightforward. "Respectfully, we believe that the decision to deny a child of God access to such a wonderful community and education, based on the notion that his or her parent's [sic] union is not in accordance with the Church teaching in Sacramental marriage, lacks the compassion and mercy of Christ's message."

The petition reeks of a simplistic sentimentalism and is incredibly myopic. The issue is not about one child—it is about all students.

Catholic students who are taught that marriage is between a man and a woman—not two men or two women or multiple partners—cannot be expected to respect the Church's teaching on marriage if some of their classmates have two fathers. If the teachers and administrators sanction gay marriage, why should students feel obliged to abide by Church teachings on any subject?

The central issue is not hard to understand, though it is increasingly resisted in today's society. Gay couples are denied by nature, and nature's God, the ability to procreate. That's the way it works. Gays may adopt children, but in doing so they are ineluctably paying homage to nature, and nature's God—their adoptive children were made possible because of a union between a man and a woman. That's the way it works.

Catholic teachings on sexuality, marriage and the family respect what nature, and nature's God, have decreed. Anyone is free to disagree. They can even pretend that everything that exists is nothing but a social construction. But they are not

entitled to force those of us who know better to yield to their fantasies.

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## HOUSE VOTE ON BIGOTRY IS A SHAM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a House vote on bigotry:

After bickering back and forth all week about whether to condemn anti-Semitism, the Democrats in the House, led by Rep. Nancy Pelosi, have descended to tribalism, the hallmark of identity politics. Just about every “persecuted minority” was thrown a bone, though somehow the South Sea Islanders were overlooked.

Much of the resolution focuses on the reason why this issue has emerged: the anti-Semitic remarks made by Rep. Ilhan Omar (though she is not mentioned by name). But the lobbying to include equal time condemning anti-Muslim bigotry paid off, thus undercutting the purpose of the resolution.

Though Pelosi is politically savvy, she is not known for her intellect. She proved this again with her remarkable statement defending Omar.

“I don’t think the congresswoman perhaps doesn’t appreciate how it was heard by other people although I don’t believe it was intended as anti-Semitic although that’s how it was interpreted.” What a wordsmith!

In fact, Omar meant exactly what she said. This is why she stepped on the gas after being criticized for her previous

recent remarks. Indeed, the occasion for the resolution was her quip about Jews pledging their allegiance to Israel over America.

The larger point is this: If bigoted hate speech now depends on how it is interpreted, or heard by others, then it is non-existent. Just ask the bigot's followers. If their hero puts a swastika on a synagogue, they can say they interpret that as a love letter. Since truth is a fiction—another gift from the Left—then bigotry is purely in the eye of the beholder.

Catholics will love to know what the resolution says about anti-Catholicism. There is one section about charges of dual loyalty, which include when the “loyalty of President John F. Kennedy was questioned because of his Catholic faith.” That's it. It's also inaccurate. The anti-Catholicism that JFK experienced did not occur when he was president: it occurred when he was running for president, in an attempt to stop him.

There is nothing in the resolution about what we detailed [yesterday](#), namely the anti-Catholic comments made by Democrats. When they question Catholic candidates for the federal bench, their bigotry shines brightly. We cited five sitting Senators—Schumer, Durbin, Feinstein, Hirono, and Harris (the latter is running for president).

This vote is a sham.

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# WALL STREET JOURNAL ERRS WITH CROPPED PHOTO

The March 5 edition of the *Wall Street Journal* contained a serious error. The newspaper was contacted by University of Mississippi law professor Ronald Rychlak about a photo of Pope Pius XII that suggests the Holy Father was sympathetic to the Nazis.

We are not pleased that the newspaper has not contacted Rychlak saying it will run his letter, but we are pleased to note that in an online posting they have accepted his criticism and changed the photo to reflect a more accurate depiction.

Rychlak is one of the world's leading authorities on the role of the Catholic Church's opposition to Hitler. He has authored several books on this subject, including *Hitler, the War, and the Pope*. He serves on the board of advisors of the Catholic League.

Here are his remarks, setting the record straight.

"The caption of the picture accompanying Francis X. Rocca's article on the opening of Pope Pius XII's archives ('*Vatican to Open Secret Archives on Wartime Pope Pius XII*'). The caption says 'Pope Pius in Berlin in 1939. The pope has been criticized for not speaking out against the Holocaust.' That is incorrect.

"This photograph, a favorite of those who seek to portray Pius XII in an unfavorable light, was actually taken in 1927. It shows Nuncio Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII who was at that time a Vatican representative to Germany, leaving a reception for President Hindenburg. It is a Weimar soldier, not a Nazi soldier, in the foreground. Pacelli left Germany in 1929, before Hitler came to power, and he never returned.

“The dating of this photograph to 1939 was (to my knowledge) first done by John Cornwell in the British edition of his book when he put that photo on the cover. After objection from the Vatican, the publisher changed the date to 1929 (still incorrect, but at least prior to the Nazi era). Cornwell used the same photograph with the correct date on the U.S. edition of his book, but the photo was cropped to eliminate the soldier nearest the camera (making it hard to recognize that he was a Weimar soldier, not a Nazi), darkened (making it appear more sinister), and blurred (so that a chauffeur in the background takes on the appearance of an SS officer). Unfortunately, such manipulation of evidence has been far too common in this debate.”

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## **POLITICS                      MARS                      HOUSE RESOLUTION   ON   BIGOTRY**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a House resolution condemning bigotry:

A vote condemning anti-Semitism was scheduled to take place March 6 in the House of Representatives. The proximate cause? Comments made by Rep. Ilhan Omar.

Omar has several times made anti-Semitic remarks (she is also no stranger to anti-Catholicism). Her latest salvo, which is vintage anti-Semitism, suggested that American Jews pledge their allegiance to Israel. This is what occasioned the need to rebuke her, as well as her supporters in the House. But now the House leadership is buckling under pressure.

A new resolution is scheduled for a vote March 7. It will be more expansive, condemning anti-Muslim bias as well. It may

even be stretched to include all expressions of bigotry.

This is pure politics. Widening the scope of the resolution has the effect of diluting the seriousness of what drove this issue in the first place, namely anti-Semitism.

If the House is going to play the game of inclusivity, which is a dodge, then it might consider condemning anti-Catholic remarks made by all politicians. But, of course, that would mean condemning some current leaders, all Democrats.

Not to be misunderstood, the Catholic League is not lobbying to enter this “Me Too” contest. We would prefer the resolution as initially proposed, the one that centers on anti-Semitism.

For the record, however, the public deserves to know something about the nature of anti-Catholic comments made by senior members of the Democratic Party. Many are of recent vintage, which underscores the seriousness of this issue.

Click [here](#) to read a sample.

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## VACUOUS REPORT ON ABUSE ISSUED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a report issued by the Leadership Roundtable:

It would be hard to find a more vacuous document on the subject of clergy sexual abuse than the one released by the Leadership Roundtable; it was based on a summit held prior to the Vatican meeting on this subject last month.

This organization, which has previously done some very fine



work, dropped the ball this time. Before addressing the report's most glowing failure, a word about its recommendations is in order.

There are six pages of recommendations on pp. 12-17, and another six pages on pp. 22-27.

The first cluster, pp. 12-17, addresses Accountability, Co-Responsibility, and Transparency for USCCB Leadership; it is followed by Accountability, Co-Responsibility, and Transparency for Bishops; the last part is Accountability, Co-Responsibility, and Transparency for Lay Leaders.

With certain exceptions, the wording is very much the same for the USCCB Leadership, the Bishops, and Lay Leaders. If this wasn't repetitive enough, the second cluster, pp. 22-27, is similar to the first.

More serious is the refusal to address the reasons why priestly sexual abuse occurs.

It was encouraging to read on p. 4 a section that addresses the "Twin Crises of Abuse and Leadership Failures." Just as encouraging was a section on p. 5 that discusses the "Root Causes" of these problems.

Regrettably, *absolutely nothing in the report even attempts to examine the root causes of sexual abuse*; only leadership failures are noted.

Yet p. 4 it admits that "there are twin crises that need twin solutions." True. The scandal involves two parties: the enabling bishop and the molesting priest. Why didn't anyone associated with this report bother to question why only the former is discussed?

Three cardinals, Blase Cupich of Chicago, Joseph Tobin of Newark, and Sean O'Malley of Boston, participated in the summit. Surely someone, if not them, should have seen the

gaping hole in this report.

The report follows the establishment-talking point, adopted by Rome, that puts the entire blame on the bishops, thus avoiding a discussion of the priest who acted out. This explains why clericalism is mentioned twelve times; there is no mention of gays or homosexuality.

To be sure, clericalism may account for why some bishops did not act responsibly; the "I am the bishop and I know best" type of episcopal leadership smacks of elitism. But it does not explain why other bishops did what they did, much less does it account for the act of abuse.

For example, it surely does not explain why bishops who listened to the advice of therapists, and were guided by a sense of forgiveness, did not remove an accused priest from ministry. Why was this aspect to the problem never noted?

Whatever role clericalism may have played with some bishops, it is of no explanatory value accounting for why a priest molested a postpubescent male. And since this describes 80 percent of the cases, why was there no discussion of the role played by homosexual priests?

It is even worse than this. On p. 6 the report cites as an example of clericalism "a pastor who makes an important decision for the parish without proper consultation." Point conceded. But what does this have to do with raping an adolescent?

Similarly, on p. 8, under "Root Causes of Twin Crises," it lists four factors. Three of them constitute the mantra: lack of accountability, co-responsibility, and transparency. The fourth is clericalism!

Recall that on p. 4 it said that "there are twin crises that need twin solutions." Correct. So what happened? Why did they not even discuss the dynamics that allow a priest to abuse a

young man? Whatever happened to probing the “root cause”?

Even more absurd, after calling attention to the problem of clericalism—blaming it for everything—it says on p. 8 (and again on p. 30) that they need to “Define clericalism, its root causes, and the various forms it takes.”

Undergraduates are expected to define the terms used in a term paper before they employ them. Is it too much to ask that those who prepare a report for Church leaders do the same? Moreover, why are they convinced that a concept they have yet to define is responsible for the problem they seek to resolve?

Just as was true in the Vatican summit, there is a reluctance to come to grips with the overwhelming role played by homosexual priests in the sexual abuse scandal.

What do those associated with this report think Pope Francis meant when he took up the issue of a “gay lobby” in the Church?

What do they think Father Donald Cozzens meant when he said the priesthood risks becoming a “gay profession”?

What do they think Father Richard McBrien meant when he spoke about the “gay culture” in the Church?

What do they think Father Andrew Greeley meant when he wrote about the “Lavender Mafia” in the Church?

None of these men are known as die-hard conservatives. If they were honest enough to discuss the obvious, why aren’t those at the Leadership Roundtable?

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# MORE RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY FROM REP. OMAR

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on what Rep. Ilhan Omar told her fans two days ago:

Rep. Ilhan Omar, who [lied](#) about the Covington Catholic High School students, and then, after unfairly maligning them took down her accusatory tweet, is no stranger to religious bigotry. Just ask Jews.

Now she has struck again. On February 27, she told a gathering of her fans at Busboys and Poets, a Washington, D.C. cafe, what they came to hear.

“I want to talk about the political influence in this country that says it is okay to push for allegiance to a foreign country.” Everyone knew she was targeting Jews.

American Jews do not pledge allegiance to Israel: their allegiance is to the United States. With good reason, they support Israel. So, too, do millions of Christians. But it is a hallmark of anti-Semites to accuse Jews of putting Israel first.

There was a time, not long ago, when Catholics were accused of putting the best interests of the Vatican over the best interests of the United States. That was an expression of religious bigotry. It is no less bigoted for a public figure to accuse Jews of dual loyalty.

The Democratic Party has a few brazen young congresswomen on its hands. They had better defuse this time bomb before the mutineers take control.

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# MAJOR SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY UNVEILED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new school choice program:

Yesterday, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos unveiled an innovative school choice initiative sponsored by Sen. Ted Cruz and Rep. Bradley Byrne. The Education Freedom Scholarships program would funnel \$5 billion into locally controlled scholarship programs. It is designed to offer parents school choice, and to provide competition among schools.

The public school establishment, which reflexively puts the best interests of the teacher unions above the best interests of students, is opposed to this program. JoAnn Bartoletti, who heads the National Association of Secondary School Principals, said the initiative would “further starve public schools.” The public schools are currently starved?

Bartoletti misrepresented the program. Sen. Cruz spoke the truth when he said, “This legislation doesn’t take one penny from any public school in America.” That is because it is entirely voluntary.

Taxpayers can elect to make a contribution to the program; they would then receive a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit. Participation is voluntary for students, schools, and states, and would not require a new bureaucratic entity to run it. Moreover, public schools can also participate in it. The competition with Catholic and other private schools would benefit all students.

Families know what is in the best interests of their children

better than anyone, and that is why this program is so promising. When parents are empowered, educational achievement follows.

The Education Freedom Scholarships initiative is another promise kept by President Trump. Catholics should welcome it.