

# **CARDINAL PELL AND BRETT KAVANAUGH; TWO DEFAMED CATHOLICS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the defamation of two prominent Catholics:

In some quarters, George Cardinal Pell and Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh are both seen as sexual predators, deserving of imprisonment and impeachment, respectively. The Catholic League stands behind both the Australian cleric and the American judge: they have been maliciously defamed and are deserving of total exoneration.

Cardinal Pell has appealed his conviction of sexually abusing two choirboys to the Australian High Court. In a 2-1 decision rendered in August, the Court of Appeal in Victoria found Pell guilty as charged of abusing the boys after Sunday Mass while he was Archbishop of Melbourne in 1996 and 1997.

The dissenting judge, Justice Mark Weinberg, blasted the majority opinion in a lengthy statement. He noted that the entire case against Pell came from one person, and that his accusation was contradicted by more than 20 witnesses.

Last February, the Associated Press (AP) commented on the issue raised by Justice Weinberg. "More than 20 witnesses, including clerics, choristers and altar servers, testified during the trial. None recalled ever seeing the complainant and the other victim break from a procession of choristers, altar servers and clerics to go to the back room."

If not one person saw the boys break away from the procession, wouldn't this alone be reason to exonerate Pell? The AP story had more to say.

"The complainant testified that he and his friend had run from the procession and back into the cathedral through a side door to, as [Mark] Gibson, the prosecutor, said, 'have some fun.' Monsignor Charles Portelli...testified that he was always with Pell after Mass to help him disrobe in the sacristy." He maintains the charges are totally false.

It needs to be emphasized that the complainant's friend is dead, having overdosed on drugs. But before he died, he admitted to his mother, on two occasions, that he was never abused by Pell. If he was not abused, then neither was the complainant: they were allegedly abused at the same time and place.

Attempts to destroy Brett Kavanaugh failed last year when no one could corroborate the story of Christine Blasey Ford. She accused Kavanaugh of sexually assaulting her when she was in high school. Others who made similar charges also had their cases fall apart after failing to produce any evidence of wrongdoing.

Recently, the *New York Times* resurrected the charges when it allowed an opinion piece by two journalists to be published in its Sunday edition: they claimed that Kavanaugh sexually abused Harmon Joyce while at Yale. However, the paper has since apologized for running the story without notifying the reader that the alleged victim says she has no recollection of ever having been assaulted by Kavanaugh. In other words, what the paper left out was evidence that no crime was ever committed.

Mollie Hemingway and Carrie Severino are the authors of *Justice on Trial: The Kavanaugh Confirmation and the Future of the Supreme Court*. Here is some of what they learned about Ford, the alleged victim.

"Classmates were surprised by the media's portrayal of her as an ingénue, which was very different from how they remembered

her in junior high and high school. Female classmates and friends at area schools recalled a heavy drinker who was much more aggressive with boys than they were." Another one of her friends in college recalled that Ford was a drug user.

Ford said that her friend, Leland Keyser, was with her at the party where Kavanaugh allegedly molested her; Ford said she ran out of the house after the incident happened. Hemingway and Severino spoke to Ford's friends about this, and what they learned is worth repeating.

"It was inconceivable to them that she would have left Leland Keyser behind and that Keyser would not have found her abandonment to be highly noteworthy. She has always filled a protective role for Ford, so it seemed quite unlikely that she would not have become worried and made sure her friend was well. The story of a fifteen-year-old tenth-grader leaving behind the only other female at a party and then finding her way home, miles away, in pre-cell-phone 1982, with no car, no metro, and no cabs readily available is difficult to believe."

By the way, Keyser said of the *New York Times* article by the two journalists, "I don't have any confidence in the story." She previously told the press that she doesn't believe Ford's accusations against Kavanaugh, maintaining she has no recollection of ever being at any such party.

Why are Pell and Kavanaugh being hounded? There are so many vicious hard-left opponents of conservatism these days, many of whom work as activists and reporters, that it is considered perfectly acceptable, when dealing with men of their stature, to dismiss their presumption of innocence and their due process rights. That both Pell and Kavanaugh represent the traditional moral values associated with Catholicism makes them even bigger targets.

The haters are not willing to disagree—their goal is to destroy. Pell and Kavanaugh are hated because of what they

stand for. Their enemies will use every tool they have, including malicious lies, to bring them down. We are at a very sick stage in our country's history when such intellectual barbarism is now commonplace.

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## **MICHIGAN AG NESSEL SLAPPED DOWN BY JUDGE**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a federal court ruling in Michigan:

A federal district court judge in Michigan has upheld the religious freedom of a Catholic foster care and adoption agency, while calling out the “religious targeting” engaged in by Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel.

At issue is whether faith-based foster care and adoption agencies may refer same-sex and unmarried heterosexual couples to other agencies, rather than be forced to place children with such couples themselves, in violation of their religious beliefs.

As district court judge Robert Jonker explained in his 32-page ruling, the Michigan legislature in 2015 enacted a law upholding the right of faith-based agencies to adhere to the teachings of their Church. But Nessel opposed the law, promised in her campaign not to enforce it, and last spring entered into a settlement with the ACLU whereby the state would terminate its contracts with faith-based agencies that refuse to violate the tenets of their religion.

St. Vincent Catholic Charities of Lansing, Michigan, which includes foster care and adoption among its many services,

challenged Nessel's policy in court; yesterday judge Jonker ruled in favor of St. Vincent, blocking the state from terminating its contract with the Catholic agency.

"The record demonstrates," the judge concluded, "that the State's new position targets St. Vincent's religious beliefs.

Jonker was unstinting in his rebuke of Nessel for her anti-Catholic bigotry.

He noted that she referred to Michigan's 2015 religious freedom law as "indefensible," labeling its supporters "hate mongers" and charging that it's only purpose was "discriminatory animus."

Jonker wrote that Nessel's 2018 campaign and her statements as attorney general "create a strong inference that the State's real target is the religious beliefs and confessions of St. Vincent, and not discriminatory conduct." Moreover, she sought to terminate the state's contract "simply because St. Vincent adheres to its sincerely held religious belief that marriage is an institution created by God to join a single man to a single woman." Furthermore, this "strongly suggests that the State's real goal is not to promote non-discriminatory child placements, but to stamp out St. Vincent's religious belief" and replace it "with a State-orthodoxy test that prevents Catholic believers from participating."

"All of this," he concluded, "supports a strong inference that St. Vincent was targeted based on its religious belief, and that it was Defendant Nessel who targeted it."

The judge said Nessel's policy—which would "flout the letter and stated intention of the Michigan legislature"— "actually undermines the state's stated goals of preventing discriminatory conduct and maximizing available placements for children."

"Shuttering St. Vincent would create significant disruption

for the children in its care, who already face an unpredictable home life and benefit from stability,” Jonker wrote. “It would also hurt the foster and adoptive parents who rely on St. Vincent for support and would have to find new resources.”

We are most pleased with the judge’s ruling because the [Catholic League](#) has been exposing Nessel as an anti-Catholic bigot since she declared her candidacy for this office. She has finally received her comeuppance.

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## **DUKE-UNC MIDDLE EAST COURSE UNDER FIRE**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on why the Trump administration is on the offensive over a college course:

Duke University and the University of North Carolina receive federal funding for a joint Middle East studies course. The Trump administration has threatened to withdraw the grant because the universities have violated the rules of the agreement. While some of the issues involved are of no interest to the Catholic League—insufficient attention granted to foreign language courses—there are other issues that matter a great deal to us.

In a letter by the Department of Education to an administrator at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, concerns were raised regarding the way the Duke-UNC Consortium for Middle East Studies treats religions that are pervasive in the area.

The letter says this initiative “appears to lack balance as it offers very few, if any, programs focused on the historic discrimination faced by minorities in the Middle East, including Christians, Jews, Baha’is, Yazidis, Kurds, Druze, and others. Also, in your activities for teachers, there is considerable emphasis placed on understanding the positive aspects of Islam, while there is an absolute absence of any similar focus on the positive aspects of Christianity, Judaism, or any other religion or belief system in the Middle East.”

Unfortunately, this kind of religious profiling—singling out Islam for adulation while negating the positive contributions of Christianity and Judaism—is commonplace in education at every level these days. The difference in this case is that this expression of political correctness is being funded by the public. Moreover, as the letter from the Department of Education details, this kind of gross imbalance violates specific federal strictures on this subject.

It is also an exercise in intellectual dishonesty: Judaism and Christianity, not Islam, are responsible for the achievements of Western civilization. Anyone not bright enough to acknowledge this verity needs to find a job outside of the hallowed halls of academia.

This initiative is also being used to foster multiculturalism and servicing “LGBTIQ youth in the schools, culture and the media.” Leaving aside what the “I” is in this ever-expanding Queer alphabet, what in the world does this agenda have to do with Middle East studies? But if they want to go this route, why don’t they tell students what happens to these people in Muslim-run nations?

Duke and UNC have a good academic reputation. Such shenanigans as this, however, undermine their standing.

They can scream about academic freedom all they want, but when

they violate the specific terms of the agreement, turning a worthwhile program into another political crusade, they have forfeited their right to tap into public coffers. The Trump administration would be wise to pull the plug on this venture.

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## AMICUS BRIEF FILED IN PA CHURCH CASE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a court case in Pennsylvania:

On September 24, the Catholic League filed an *amicus curiae* brief with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in support of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown's appeal of the badly flawed decision in *Rice v. Altoona-Johnstown*, et al. (No. 325 WAL 2019). We are being represented by the Pittsburgh law firm, Jones Day.

The case involves Renee Rice's contention that she was molested 40 years ago by Fr. Charles Bodziak at St. Leo's Church in Altoona. The priest denies the accusation. Her lawsuit charges that two bishops tried to cover up Bodziak's behavior, even though the diocese sent her a letter 10 years before her lawsuit encouraging her to share details of her abuse. Amazingly, Rice held her claims until after a state grand jury report was issued by Pennsylvania's Attorney General. This is what supposedly awakened her.

Just as amazing is an intermediate state appellate court ruling that changed a basic principle of law: it altered the timeline of the statute of limitations for a civil claim seeking damages for an alleged offense. The Superior Court's use of a grand jury report to trigger the running of statutes

of limitation is unprecedented: it seeks to change the practice of allowing the clock to start at the time of an injury.

As our brief states, this Superior Court ruling “effectively enacts window legislation [the look-back provision] from the bench, contrary to decades of precedent.” We have reached a new level of creative jurisprudence when a court can invoke a jury decision as the new clock determining when the limitations period starts to run. At issue here is the separation of powers between the legislature and the judiciary.

The plaintiff’s bar has been quick to recognize the financial goldmine of *Rice*. They have called it a “game-changer” that will “open the courthouse doors” to decades-old claims. The floodgates have opened, with 15 copycat lawsuits being filed; more will surely follow.

There is little doubt that this case was heavily influenced by the media sensationalism attendant to the Pennsylvania grand jury report on the Catholic Church. If the Superior Court decision is not overturned it will not only have a ruinous impact on the Church, it will affect all religious organizations. Indeed, it will also impact commerce, putting schools, hospitals, colleges, the Boy Scouts, and all employers at risk for being sued decades later.

We hope the Pennsylvania Supreme Court will accept review of *Rice* and overturn a very bad law and even worse policy.

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# SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN SEMINARIES IS RARE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new study on American seminarians:

In a joint effort by researchers at the University of Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University, a study of U.S. seminarians found that six percent have experienced some form of sexual harassment. It was also determined that 84 percent said that their administration and faculty took reports of sexual misconduct very seriously. Seventy-five percent said such behavior was "not at all a problem," and nearly nine in ten said there is none or little talk of sexual promiscuity at their seminary.

This is a significant change from the 1970s when sexual misconduct at U.S. seminaries was a serious problem. The sexual revolution flourished during that decade, impacting the Church as well as the larger society. That was a time when Fr. Andrew Greeley spoke about the "Lavender Mafia" of homosexual subcultures in the seminaries.

The media are not likely to run with this story as it doesn't fit into their narrative of sexual misbehavior in the Church. They certainly will not do what I will do now—compare the situation in the seminaries to other venues.

In 2013, Hollaback! commissioned a College Harassment Survey and found that 67 percent of students experienced harassment on campus. In 2006, the American Association of University Women reported that nearly two-thirds of college students experienced sexual harassment at some point during college. In 2018, an online survey by Stop Street Harassment found that 81 percent of women and 43 percent of men said they experienced

some form of sexual harassment during their lifetime.

Definitions of sexual harassment vary widely, and incidents range from a sexual joke to rape, thus making comparisons difficult. No matter, compared to life outside the seminaries, the condition in most seminaries today is far better than on college campuses or in the workplace. And they are a vast improvement over what existed in many seminaries not long ago.

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## **COLUMBIA WELCOMES ANTI-SEMITES**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Columbia University welcoming an anti-Semite:

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad will speak at Columbia University on September 25. He is not shy about using anti-Semitic slurs to attack Jews (calling them “hook-nosed”). Worse, he argues that “Jews rule the world by proxy.”

Columbia has a track record of welcoming Jew haters. In 2007, I went on the “Today” show to criticize Columbia for inviting Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president, to speak on campus. It was the same Columbia president, Lee Bollinger, who hosted this anti-Semitic bigot.

Bollinger tells us that he deplores the anti-Semitism of the Malaysian Prime Minister. No doubt he does. To be sure, deploring someone’s views is hardly a reason not to invite a controversial person to speak on campus—colleges should be places where freedom of speech is widely entertained. I hasten to say that as with all rights, making them absolute corrupts their value. Where Bollinger really goes wrong is in his failure to recognize the special status of a university.

Bollinger says that “it is in these times that we are most strongly resolved to insist that our campus remain an open forum and to protect the freedoms essential to our university community.”

Bollinger is right to call a university a community. But he fails to recognize what that means. It means that its members are bound together, sharing norms and values that define who they are. As such, they are not simply a constellation of individuals.

An institution of higher learning is a community of scholars, men and women who are expected to be committed to the pursuit of truth. That is the central purpose of a college or university. Accordingly, those who belong to the Flat Earth Society are not invited to speak on any campus, and no one complains. We know the earth is not flat. We also know, or should know, that Jews do not rule the world by proxy.

In other words, open forums are places such as Central Park. There are plenty of places that do not have any pretense of pursuing the truth, nor are they in any way a community: the Beacon Theater and Madison Square Garden are other examples. But a university has a different charge. Those who espouse malicious lies about Jews are not engaged in the pursuit of truth—they are engaged in hate speech.

Let Prime Minister Mohamad exercise his free speech rights in one of New York’s open forums, venues where clowns and magicians populate. To invite him to speak at Columbia is to do violence to the principal reason why colleges and universities were founded in the first place.

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# TRUMP SCORES AT U.N. ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on President Trump's remarks on religious liberty delivered at the U.N. today:

President Trump continued his legacy of defending religious liberty with a stellar address at the United Nations today. He offered many examples of religious persecution around the globe, stating that 80 percent of the world's population lives in nations where religious liberty is either restricted or banned altogether.

In one of the most startling statistics mentioned by President Trump, he said that "11 Christians are killed every day for following the teachings of Christ." That alone is worthy of the kind of international dialogue that the U.N. was founded to address. But we need more than dialogue: the perpetrators need to be brought to justice.

The most ground-breaking aspect of President Trump's statement came at the end. "The United States is forming a coalition of U.S. businesses for the protection of religious freedom. This is the first time this has been done. This initiative will encourage the private sector to protect people of all faiths in the workplace."

This is a huge improvement over the Obama years when religious liberty was privatized to mean freedom to worship. People of faith want an expansive and robust interpretation of religious liberty—we are not satisfied to attend religious services.

The next battleground for religious liberty is the workplace. No one should be forced to engage in any religious practice, but neither should they be told to check their beliefs at the office door. Reasonable accommodations can and should be made.

This is what the president is getting at, and we welcome it.

Trump also noted the hypocrisy of those who preach the wonders of diversity, which frequently is code to neuter religious liberty. "Too often people in positions of power preach diversity while silencing, shunning, or censoring the faithful. True tolerance means respecting the right of all people to express their deeply held religious beliefs."

The last sentence is key. Trump was referring to the habits of Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee to impugn the integrity of Catholic nominees to the federal bench.

In 2003, Sen. Charles Schumer questioned Alabama's attorney general, William Pryor, regarding his suitability to serve on a federal appeals court. "His beliefs are so well known," Schumer said, "so deeply held, that it's very hard to believe...that they're not going to deeply influence the way he comes about saying, 'I will follow the law.'"

In 2017, Sen. Dianne Feinstein played the same anti-Catholic card when she grilled Amy Coney Barrett, a nominee for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. "You have a long history believing that your religious beliefs should prevail. When you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you."

The president is right. Those who preach diversity have a way of censoring religious speech and sanctioning those who hold to their "deeply held religious beliefs." Evidently, there is no problem seating a nominee for the federal bench if he holds to deeply held secular beliefs. It's just religious beliefs that cause the alarms to go off.

Congratulations to President Trump. He not only made a persuasive case for international religious liberty, he offered specifics on how he is going to contribute to our religious rights at home.

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# MEDIA ATTACK DEVOS' VISIT TO CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Education Secretary Betsy DeVos' visit to a Catholic school:

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos was in Pennsylvania yesterday, attending a roundtable on education freedom. But for LGBT activists and their media allies, it was an opportunity to attack the religious freedom of Catholic schools.

The roundtable, hosted by Pennsylvania House Speaker Mike Turzai, the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference and the Diocese of Harrisburg, was held at Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School—a school that, according to CNN, “subscribes to an anti-trans student policy.” Other media piled on. “Betsy DeVos To Promote School That Bans Transgender Students And Staff,” wailed the Huffington Post. CBS and NBC both deplored the Secretary's visit to a “school with [an] anti-transgender policy.” Of course Raw Story chimed in, and even the Fox News local affiliate ran with the CNN story.

But their entire premise is false. Harrisburg Catholic is not an outlier school initiating an “anti-trans” policy. It is a Catholic school that adheres to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church. The policy in question is not a “school policy,” it is the policy of the Diocese of Harrisburg; and it is consistent with the universal teaching of the worldwide Catholic Church.

That policy, and Church teaching, holds that “efforts to chemically and/or surgically alter the given biology” of a male or female “is understood in Catholic moral terms as self-

mutilation and therefore immoral. To attempt to make accommodations for such persons would be to cooperate in the immoral action and impose an unacceptable burden on others in the school community.”

The policy points out that when parents enroll a child in the school, they agree not to “publically act in opposition to Catholic teaching”—which, of course, they would be doing by having their child undergo a sex change procedure. Thus, the child “would be ineligible to attend or remain in attendance in a Catholic school.”

This all seems reasonable, to reasonable people. A religious school ought to be free to adhere to the teachings of its Church.

If DeVos’ critics had any respect for diversity, they would embrace the autonomy of Catholic schools, and the integrity of their faithfulness to Catholic teaching. But instead, LGBT activists and their media mouthpieces demand that *all* schools, even faith-based schools, be in service to the radical LGBT agenda—the teachings of their faith be damned.

Massachusetts Congresswoman Katherine Clark lectured DeVos that “The Department of Education is responsible for ALL students.” Except, apparently, those whose parents choose to send them to Catholic schools whose moral teachings Clark objects to. Secretary DeVos is to be commended precisely for her inclusion of ALL students, and ALL schools, in her efforts to promote educational excellence.

The topic of yesterday’s roundtable—which you wouldn’t have known from the CNN story—involved Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf’s veto of a school choice bill that would have increased tax credits for private school and prekindergarten scholarships for low and middle income families. It had nothing to do with the media’s contrived “trans” controversy. But the venue and participants presented two of their favorite targets: the

Catholic Church and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos.

That proved too much for them to resist.

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## **BUTTIGIEG NEEDS TO MAN UP**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Pete Buttigieg's decision to weigh in on the abortion controversy in his backyard:

Abortionist Ulrich Klopfer has legally killed thousands of babies in South Bend, Indiana, home to its mayor and presidential hopeful Pete Buttigieg. After refusing to speak to the latest news—2,246 fetal remains were found in Klopfer's home—Buttigieg has finally spoken about this story. But his remarks show that he still refuses to man up.

Buttigieg has previously said that abortion is “obviously a tough issue for a lot of people to think through morally.” That certainly includes him. To be sure, he is every bit as radical as Kamala Harris on this issue (her extremism is the gold standard in the Democratic Party), but what makes him different is that he wants us to think that he struggles with the morality of abortion. It would be more accurate to say that he struggles with speaking honestly about the subject.

Here is what Buttigieg said about his hometown abortionist. “Like everyone else, I find the news out of Illinois extremely disturbing, and I think it's important that it be fully investigated. I also hope it doesn't get caught up in politics at a time when women need access to healthcare. There's no question that what happened is disturbing. It's unacceptable. And it needs to be looked at more fully.”

Spoken like a true Rhodes scholar.

His first dodge was to distance his South Bend abortionist from his hometown—the “products of conception” (as the pro-abortion fans like to call them)—were found in Klopfer’s Illinois home, not in his South Bend clinic. Nice try, Pete, but no one is taking the bait. He’s your guy.

His second dodge was to characterize what happened as “disturbing.” No, getting a parking ticket is disturbing—finding thousands of human body parts in a home is horrifying.

His third dodge was his refusal to say what it is that disturbs him. After all, if he is okay with abortion, why is it disturbing to learn about over 2,000 fetal parts in the home of his hometown abortionist? Is this an ecological issue for Buttigieg—is he disturbed that the fetal parts weren’t incinerated? Or would that pose pollution problems for him? Glad bags may be the answer.

Notice how skillful Buttigieg is in the way he dances around the issue. “It’s important that *that* be fully investigated.” What is the *that*, Mr. Mayor? “I also hope *it* doesn’t get caught up in politics...” What is the *it* that you are referring to? “There’s no question what *happened* here is disturbing.” What exactly was it that happened? “*It’s* unacceptable. And *it* needs to be looked into fully.” Again, what is the *it* that disturbs you? (All the italics are mine.)

Even when speaking about something as Hitlerian as this, Buttigieg could not resist telling us how upset he is that this issue may become politicized. Imagine that. Politicizing a “doctor’s” home turned into a sloppy morgue for kids!

It was so reassuring to learn that he believes that whatever it is that *happened*, he is squarely in the corner of promoting women’s “access to healthcare.” And by healthcare, it’s a sure bet he is not talking about mammograms.

Whatever appeal this guy once had, it has vanished. A more deceitful candidate would be hard to find.

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# **PRO-ABORTS      SPIN      ABORTION DECLINE**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the decline in abortion rates:

The abortion rate hit a 46-year low in 2017. This is the central finding reported by the Guttmacher Institute, a pro-abortion research organization that was formerly aligned with Planned Parenthood. It also found that there was a 7% decline in abortions since 2014. Pregnancy rates also declined.

To most Americans, regardless of their position on this subject, it is good news to learn that the abortion rate is now at its lowest rate since abortion was legalized. The reaction from the pro-abortion industry, however, is less than positive.

The Guttmacher study found that the abortion rate declined dramatically in those states that enacted more restrictive abortion laws. The authors of the study try to downplay the significance of these laws, saying that they “do not appear to have been the primary driver of declining abortion rates.” But if that is the case, why are they worried about such laws? In the same report they admit that “abortion bans would undoubtedly prevent many individuals from obtaining abortion care in clinical settings.”

Dr. Herminia Palacio, Guttmacher’s CEO and president, takes umbrage at the suggestion that restrictive abortion laws are

responsible for the decline in abortions. “Lowering the abortion rate is not the goal here. The abortion rate is just a number.”

Of course, lowering the abortion rate is not the issue for the pro-abortion industry—it thrives when abortion rates increase—but to those of us who are concerned about the sanctity of innocent human life, the abortion rate is critically important.

To Dr. Palacio, the abortion rate is just like a bingo game of numbers. But the numbers matter because they give evidence of the number of babies killed *in utero*. Her linguistic sanitization of what the numbers mean reflects her macabre way of thinking about this subject.

Rachel Jones, one of the authors of the Guttmacher study, speculates that the decline in the abortion rate is a function of ObamaCare and the easy availability of birth control. “The anti-abortion activists will try to take credit for this decline,” she says, “but the facts don’t support their argument.” She is wrong.

The Guttmacher study is heavy on citing structural causes that impact on abortion rates, but is wholly neglectful of considering cultural causes.

A survey released in January by The Polling Company, a prominent research organization, found that “7 in 10 Millennials support limits on abortion through specific policies like parental notification, limiting abortions later in pregnancy like at 5 months of pregnancy, and opposition to government funding of abortion.” Similarly, it found that “Only 7 percent shared the position of the Democratic Party Platform—abortion without any exceptions and funded by tax dollars.”

Students for Life Institute of America commissioned the poll, and its president, Kristan Hawkins, offered an explanation

that the Guttmacher Institute cannot bear to hear. "Millennials have lived with the harsh realities of abortion all their lives and understand more than their parents' generation that we must address the human rights issue of our day and make changes in defense of mothers and their preborn infants."

Yes, it is sad but true that many Millennials know of friends who have shared stories about the horrors of abortion. Worse, some have learned that their own would-be-siblings had their lives taken from them. It is these kinds of experiences that drive young people away from the pro-abortion fanatics. And when coupled with the pictures of babies in the womb, they provide solid reasons why abortion rates have declined.

Anyone who is on the defensive about the news that abortion rates have declined to the lowest level since *Roe v. Wade* needs to reexamine what it is that makes them tick.