

IS AOC CATHOLIC?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez:

Is Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) Catholic? She was, but there is no evidence she still is. Yet she is conveniently labeled as a Catholic by some of her supporters and she occasionally implies she is still Catholic.

Why does this matter? If she were not a congresswoman, it wouldn't. But when someone who is no longer a member of the faith community he was raised in passes himself off as a loyal member—for self-serving political purposes—that raises serious ethical problems.

Who is and who is not a Catholic is not purely a matter of self-identity. If someone born of Irish ancestry and raised as a Catholic calls himself a Jew, no one thinks he is Jewish. Truth matters, and the truth never turns on self-identity alone.

AOC spoke on February 27 at a congressional hearing on “The Administration’s Religious Liberty Assault on LGBTQ rights,” held by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. She criticized the Trump administration for its policies on homosexuals and transgender persons, saying it was misusing religious liberty to undermine these people.

In her remarks, AOC never once identified herself as a Catholic, though she did play the religion card. She preferred to use such terms as, “From the perspective of a woman of faith” and “I know it is part of my faith.”

Not only did she not identify her faith, she said, “We are equal, in my faith, in the eyes of the world.” Catholics don’t speak that way. They would say something like, “As a Catholic, I believe we are all equal in the eyes of God.”

In a glowing article on AOC posted on Huffington Post, it says that she “identifies as Catholic” and “frequently refers to her religious beliefs on Twitter.” Not true. On Twitter, she never identifies herself as a Catholic: she calls herself a “raised Catholic” (see her tweet from 12-10-18). That is the way ex-Catholics speak, not those who are currently practicing their religion.

In a caustic exchange on Twitter with Kellyanne Conway, AOC spoke about her “Christianity + faith life” (tweet is from 4-28-19). Again, that is not the way Catholics speak. In fact, that is a really weird way for any Christian to talk. There is no need for the “+ faith life” if the person is truly a Christian.

We did a Nexis search of AOC to learn how often she identified herself as a Catholic. We looked for “As a Catholic” or “My Catholic.” The answer: Zero. The only reference to her Catholicity is from an article she wrote for *America* magazine on June 27, 2018, the Jesuit publication.

In her piece, she made a comment about the Catechism and forgiveness, and uses terms such as “For Catholics,” but never once does she say she is a Catholic. Yet that was the purpose of the article. It was titled, “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on her Catholic Faith and the Urgency of Criminal Justice Reform.” Why the reticence given this opportunity to showcase her Catholic credentials? Indeed, she could have told us something about how much her Catholic faith means to her, but she didn’t come close.

In her statement before the House committee, AOC did address one Catholic issue. Not surprisingly, she condemned the Catholic position.

“My faith commands me to treat Mr. Minton as holy because he is sacred, because his life is sacred, because you are not to be denied anything I am entitled to, that we are equal in the

eyes of the law.”

What was all that about? Evan Michael Minton, who also spoke before the committee, wanted to change from being a woman to a man (that is biologically impossible, but that is not the issue). In 2017, “he” sought a hysterectomy at a Catholic facility, Mercy San Juan Medical Center; it is part of the Dignity Health Care chain.

The Catholic hospital does not perform elective hysterectomies (such a procedure is only done to treat a serious medical problem and when there is no alternative treatment available). Mercy immediately referred “him” to another hospital within the Dignity chain that is not Catholic, and the procedure was performed within a few days. Even though there was no discrimination, “he” got the ACLU to sue Mercy.

In other words, AOC flexed her so-called Catholic muscles by taking the side of someone who deliberately sought an operation from a Catholic institution that it was prohibited by its religious tenets from performing. She obviously does not believe in the free exercise of religion as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Worse, she took the side of anti-Catholics.

The Catholic League does not tolerate fictions. Everyone knows that inside a pregnant woman’s body there is another human being, and everyone knows that no one can change his or her chromosomal makeup, even though many learned people believe otherwise. And everyone should know that AOC is a fraud.

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WE MUST HEAR FROM BLOOMBERG'S "KILL IT" VICTIM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Michael Bloomberg's treatment of female employees:

In the South Carolina presidential debate, Senator Elizabeth Warren commented that when she was a special-education teacher she was happy not to have a boss like Michael Bloomberg. She recounted how he allegedly said to one of his pregnant employees, "Kill It!" Bloomberg denied the accusation.

In 1997, Bloomberg was sued by Sekiko Sakai Garrison. He settled with the Japanese woman, but neither the amount nor any other information about the non-disclosure agreement (NDA) has been made public.

Bloomberg must not be allowed to get away with this. Succumbing to public pressure, he said last week that he will release Garrison from the NDA. But neither he nor his company has reached out to her. Bloomberg should contact her immediately.

In the Catholic Church, NDA's are not tolerated (they once were). While there are legitimate reasons for having NDA's, such as protecting the privacy rights of victims, those who are in public office, or are in pursuit of it, must be held to a higher standard. This is doubly true of presidential candidates.

There are other reasons why Bloomberg must come clean. Last year a Bloomberg L.P. spokesman told ABC News that the company rarely settles disputes, preferring to take their case to the courts. What was different about this case? Why didn't Bloomberg take his chances in the courts? Why did he find it necessary to settle?

Garrison's lawyer told ABC News that she may be willing to speak if the NDA were to be voided. Justice demands that this be done. Consider what we know already.

According to Garrison's lawsuit, on April 11, 1995, at approximately 11:20 a.m., Bloomberg posed for a picture with two female workers and a group of students from New York University in the company snack area. He noticed Garrison standing nearby and struck up a conversation with her. "How's married life? You *still* married?" She said everything was going along just great, and that she was pregnant. Bloomberg responded, "Kill it!" Stunned, she asked him to repeat what he said. "Kill it!" He then muttered, "Great! Number 16!" He was expressing his unhappiness with the sixteen women who were out on maternity leave.

Who is telling the truth? Bloomberg or Garrison? We can't be certain but it sure looks like she is. There are several reasons for drawing this conclusion.

Garrison understood Bloomberg's remark as suggesting she abort her baby in order to keep her job. She was visibly upset with him and told several managers in the company what happened.

In August 1995, four months after this incident, Garrison filed a complaint with the New York Division of Human Rights. According to ABC News, she spoke to "ten people within the firm, five of whom were managers."

What did they do for her? According to her lawsuit, filed two years later, nothing. It's actually worse than nothing. "The managers told her to ignore the comment, forget it ever happened and not to act on her complaint. These managers reiterated threats of termination if plaintiff pressed the complaint."

The day after the "Kill It" episode, Garrison went to work but was so distraught and ill that she had to leave. She called in sick the next day. She was subsequently fired.

Some in the media are portraying this as a he said/she said type of dispute: Bloomberg says he never said "Kill It!" and she says he did. But this account is false. There is at least one witness.

David Zielenzinger, a former Bloomberg technology worker, told the *Washington Post* he heard the conversation. "I remember she had been telling some of her girlfriends that she was pregnant. And Mike came out and I remember he said, 'Are you going to kill it?' And that stopped everything. And I couldn't believe it." Zielenzinger said this was vintage Bloomberg. "He talked kind of crudely about women all the time."

Bloomberg learned from some employees that Garrison was upset with him after their exchange. His remarks are telling. [She made handwritten notes of the call, which were obtained by the *Post*.]

Bloomberg called her at home and left a lengthy voice mail. He asked her to give him a call, saying he learned from another employee that "you were upset." He said that "whatever you heard wasn't what I said and whatever I said had nothing to do with pregnancies."

Why, then, did Bloomberg apologize? Here is how he ended the call. "I apologize if there was something you heard but I didn't say it, didn't mean it, didn't say it." A spokesman for the company did not deny this account.

Why would anyone apologize for something he never said? More important, why, if he never said it, would he say he "didn't mean it"? This indicates that he did say it, objecting only to her interpretation of what he meant when he advised her to "Kill It!" What should she have thought? That he was joking about his suggestion that she kill her baby? Did he think she would burst out laughing? What kind of man speaks this way?

Bloomberg had a thing about Garrison. Did he see her as an easy mark? She was the only Japanese woman working in sales in

the New York headquarters at the time. Here are some things he allegedly said about her before his infamous "Kill It!" remark.

In front of male employees who knew her boyfriend, he asked her, "Are you still dating your boyfriend? You giving him good [he used a slang term for oral sex]?" On another occasion, after pointing to a newly-hired older female who was conversing with an overweight male salesperson, he asked Garrison, "If you had to, would you rather do THAT or THAT?"

When Bloomberg spotted Garrison wearing an engagement ring, he said, "What, is the guy dumb and blind? What the hell is he marrying you for?" A week later, he said to her, "Still engaged? What, is he THAT GOOD in bed, or did your father pay him off to get rid of you?"

Bloomberg once broke up a conversation between Garrison and a male employee at a business convention so he could make a crude comment about the male employee's girlfriend (she was also an employee). As she entered the elevator, he said, "That is one great piece of ass. You must be a great f***." On another occasion, when Bloomberg saw Garrison wearing a dress he didn't like, he told her, "Don't like the dress. Your ass looks huge in it." He made this comment to her on several occasions whenever she wore a new outfit.

One day Bloomberg saw Garrison return from lunch with a Tiffany shopping bag. "You ARE a real Jap" he said. He was either referring to her Japanese heritage, or, more likely, commenting on her acting like a "Jewish American Princess." Either way he was denigrating her and making an ethnic slur.

Bloomberg looks even more guilty when we consider that his contempt for pregnant workers is not confined to Garrison.

Less than two years before his alleged "Kill it!" comment, Bloomberg learned that one of his employees, who had just given birth, was having a hard time finding a nanny. He yelled

at her in front of a large group of employees. "It's a f*****g baby! All it does is eat and s***. It doesn't know the difference between you and anyone else!"

Bloomberg then made a racist comment. "All you need is some black who doesn't even have to speak English to rescue it from a burning building!" The woman burst into tears in front of her co-workers.

If the CEO speaks this way in front of his employees about pregnant women, it should come as no surprise that he tolerates—indeed promotes—an environment where sexual comments and behavior are not uncommon. This explains why Garrison's lawyer, Bonnie Josephs, said, "The atmosphere was toxic and harassing."

It wasn't just Garrison whom he spoke to this way. In court filings, women employees of Bloomberg allege he said such things as, "I'd like to do that piece of meat"; "I would DO you in a second"; "I'd like to f*** that in a second"; "That's a great piece of ass."

He did not hide his sexism. In September 1996, in front of employees and news reporters at a conference in Toronto, he allegedly said, "I would like nothing more in my life than to have Sharon Stone sit on my face."

Bloomberg set the tone for his entire company. Garrison's immediate boss routinely displayed wind-up toys in the shapes of a penis and a vagina on his desk. He also placed them on her desk, and when she complained, he did it over and over again. This same man bragged to her about a male employee who performed oral sex on his secretary while she sat on his shoulders in their office.

It is hardly a surprise to learn that when Bloomberg was mayor of New York City, his company continued to foster a morally corrupt workplace.

In 2007, a lawsuit of discrimination against pregnant women and new mothers was filed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. It was conveniently dismissed in 2011, but not before 67 women said they were prepared to join the case. Bloomberg, they said, took aim at women after they became pregnant and after they took maternity leave.

Bloomberg's disdain for pregnant women is of a piece with his politics. His passion for abortion is so strong that as soon as he became mayor of New York City, he issued an executive order that forced medical students training to become an obstetrician or a gynecologist in a city hospital to learn how to abort a baby. "Kill it!" is something this man can't seem to get enough of.

We need to see the NDA. If Bloomberg gets away with this, it will be a huge setback for the rights of all women, especially pregnant women and their babies. He should initiate the contact and she needs to go public with her account.

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SURVEY OF CATHOLICS FOUND WANTING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new survey of Catholics:

The recently released survey of Catholic registered voters conducted by [Real Clear Politics for EWTN](#) has some fascinating data, but it also raises serious questions about its design.

When asked which party the respondent belongs to, 45% said they were Democrats and 34% said they were Republicans. This accounts for the fact that 48% voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016, versus 46% for Trump. This is not in accordance with the 2016 results. According to Pew Research Center, Trump won 52% of the Catholic vote and Clinton won 45%. So to begin with, this survey is skewed toward the Democrats.

Just this week, Rasmussen found that 45% of likely U.S. voters said the country is heading in the right direction. In the poll for EWTN, only 41% of Catholics agreed with this assessment. Democrats tend to be more negative about the future of the country, so this outcome makes sense given how the poll is weighted.

How Catholic are these voters? Are they practicing? Do they even know what the Church teaches about public policy issues?

As it turns out, only 46% either fully accept or mostly accept the Church's teachings, while 44% do not. This reflects the fact that almost a quarter (23%) either go to Mass less than yearly or never. These people are Catholic in name only, making them about as representative of Catholics as carnivorous-eating self-identified vegetarians are of vegetarians.

Almost two-thirds (63%) know virtually nothing about the Church's teaching on the death penalty. Three in ten (31%) said they were unaware that the Church had a specific teaching on this subject, and another 32% said they were unaware of the specifics.

Some Catholic commentators are making hay over the fact that a majority of Catholics think abortion should be legal in all or most cases. This is deceiving.

Fully 80% are opposed to the standard provided by *Roe v. Wade*: it allows abortion to be legal in all cases. A third (33%) say it should be illegal in all cases save for rape, incest, or to

save the life of the mother, and 11% say it should always be illegal. Three in ten (31%) say it should be legal except for late-term abortions.

How do Catholic registered voters feel about President Trump? Many are so ambivalent as to make their responses incoherent. When matched up against Joe Biden, Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, Pete Buttigieg, and Mike Bloomberg, Trump loses to all of them. Yet 54% say they are leaning towards voting for him: 34% said they are sure to vote for him; 12% say there is a good chance they will; and 8% say it is possible they will.

On cultural issues, Catholics are mostly conservative. Half (49%) say that current programming from the entertainment industry is mostly unhealthy; 57% want more faith-based programming; and a plurality (42%) say there is an anti-Christian bias in the media.

This survey, contrary to some news reports, did not break down these sentiments by religiosity (or if it did it did not make the results public), so we have no way of knowing how devout Catholics stacked up against non-practicing Catholics. It would have been helpful to include such data.

If this survey tells us anything, it reveals that it is still early in this electoral year, thus explaining the lack of clarity in the Catholic response. Look for their positions to become more decisive as the year progresses.

KEY RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CASE TO

BE HEARD

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an important case that the Supreme Court has agreed to hear:

We may not know the outcome until the spring of 2021, but it looms as one of the most important cases pitting gay rights against religious liberty that the U.S. Supreme Court has ever agreed to hear.

Two years ago, a federal district court turned down Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in its bid not to be forced to place children for foster care with parents of the same sex. The city of Philadelphia brooked no religious exemption. Last year, it lost again in the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals.

Those on the side of the Catholic Church include the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Jewish Coalition for Religious Liberty. Those on the other side include the Hindu American Foundation, Muslim Advocates, Sikh Coalition, Unitarian Universalist Association, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Union for Reform Judaism.

Catholic social service agencies do not recognize homosexual parents as suitable to be foster parents. They believe that children are entitled to a mother and a father, the only two people who can naturally create a family.

Love is not dispositive: Children need to be loved by those who provide role models for them based on the two sexes. Gender is not the issue. That term refers to socially learned roles that are appropriate for boys and girls, the cues of which are taken from nature.

Religious liberty cannot exist without extending to religious individuals and institutions the kinds of exemptions they have

traditionally been afforded.

SENATE SET TO VOTE ON INFANTICIDE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a Senate vote scheduled for tomorrow:

On February 25, the U.S. Senate will vote on a bill by Sen. Ben Sasse, the “Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.” The Act was passed in 2002 but it did not provide specific sanctions for abortionists who intentionally allowed innocent babies to die if they survived a botched abortion. This bill would hold all healthcare practitioners accountable.

In February 2019, this bill was blocked by Senate Democrats. Presidential candidates Sens. Bernie Sanders, Amy Klobuchar and Elizabeth Warren voted to stop the bill from being considered. Filibuster tactics killed the bill.

This bill is not about abortion—it is about infanticide. Some reporter, perhaps during the February 25th debate, needs to ask these three candidates why they do not want punish those who are complicit in infanticide. Joe Biden, Michael Bloomberg, Pete Buttigieg, and Tom Steyer also need to be asked about this issue.

The governors of New York and Virginia have said they are opposed to any law that would sanction doctors for not attending to a baby who survives abortion. We need to know if they speak for all Democrats. President Trump supports the bill by Sen. Sasse.

All of the Democrats, and the one socialist, who voted to kill this bill last year are big promoters of social justice. It would be instructive to learn how they can explain their stance given their professed commitment to the least among us.

Moreover, Biden has a chance to distance himself from these three senators by drawing a line in the sand. Now that he is once again flexing his Catholic credentials, the timing is perfect.

EPISCOPAL BISHOP SHOULD BUTT OUT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by an Episcopal bishop from Olympia, Washington:

We would not defend a Catholic bishop who publicly criticized a decision by a high-ranking cleric of another religion about matters that pertain only to the members of that religion. We respect house rules. It's too bad that Greg Rickel, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia, Washington, does not.

Recently, two teachers at a Catholic high school in the Seattle area, a man and a woman, resigned, and it is believed they did so because it became known that they each got engaged to a person of the same sex. They voluntarily signed a contract pledging to uphold Catholic teachings, something they obviously violated. [As we said earlier this week](#), this should be a "slam dunk" case, but, of course, a few dissidents protested.

Now an Episcopal bishop, Greg Rickel, has weighed in. After Seattle Archbishop Paul Etienne spoke in defense of what

happened at the Catholic high school, Rickel sounded the alarms. He accused Catholic officials of “making oneself God,” something he said was “the greatest heresy.” He also accused them of “discriminating and ruining the livelihood of two people who simply want to love.” He added it is “no wonder we are in decline.”

Rickel would not only do well to respect house rules and mind his own business, he needs to attend a local Catholic college and learn what Catholicism teaches. He may then learn—he could actually go to a Catholic elementary school—that Catholic clerics do not believe they are God. As for the teachers, yes, Catholic schools are known to fire those who reject Catholic teachings on racism, genocide, sexuality, and many other matters.

Regarding the decline of Christianity, Rickel should heed the words of one of his own, Rev. David Goodhew, director of ministerial practice at Durham University in England. “The church is a movement and the Episcopal church is moving downward....Some optimists hope the decline is slowing. This is not borne out by the data.”

In other words, Bishop Rickel, worry about your own problems. There are many. His church has been in free-fall for decades, precisely because of its quest for “relevancy.”

BEHIND THE DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG BANKRUPTCY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the decision of the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to declare bankruptcy:

In 2018, Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro unethically released a grand jury report on Catholic priests and lay people who were accused of sexually abusing minors decades ago—most were never found guilty and some successfully contested the public release of their name (the Catholic League filed an amicus brief in this victory in the Pennsylvania Supreme Court)—the result of which was to spur a debate over suspending the statute of limitations.

The debate has been just as political as the cherry picking of the Catholic Church in seeking a grand jury probe. Last year a state appeals court allowed a case to go forward against the Altoona-Johnstown diocese despite the fact that it was time barred by the statute of limitations. The case is currently being appealed but in the meantime similar cases are being filed.

Similar cases against which institutions? Pennsylvania Rep. Mark Rozzi, who is leading the charge to suspend the statute of limitations, is quoted in the *Washington Post* as saying it is not just priests who have victimized minors. He mentions “Amish and Mennonite abusers, schoolteachers, pediatricians, Boy Scout leaders, Penn State’s Jerry Sandusky, Bill Cosby.”

Rozzi’s list is incomplete. He left out many other secular and religious institutions, and he never mentioned the fact that most sexual abuse occurs in the home. And what exactly has he done about it? For example, why has he not lobbied to remove the obscene protections afforded the public schools in Pennsylvania? They are shielded by the doctrine of sovereign immunity: a student has to make a claim within 90 days of the alleged abuse, otherwise the clock runs out.

There are discussions now to include the public schools, but why didn’t Rozzi demand they be included years ago? Just as important, where are the claims being made against the public schools now that an appeals court is saying that students who were victimized decades ago can proceed in court?

Shapiro is quoted in the *Washington Post* as saying the Catholic Church “has refused to reform.” That is a bald face lie: no institution has undertaken more reforms, with more positive results, than the Church.

When Shapiro released his grand jury report, we found that in the Diocese of Harrisburg, 71 persons were named: 42 were dead and four were missing. Most of those who were still alive were no longer in ministry. In August, the diocese paid 106 people \$12 million in compensation; five more settlements have since been reached.

There is a reason the Diocese of Harrisburg filed for bankruptcy the day after the Boy Scouts of America did: both have been targeted by lawyers who have a profound hatred of institutions that promote traditional moral values. It is incontestable that no religious organization is known for doing this more than the Catholic Church, and no secular organization can rival the Boy Scouts on this score.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, both the Catholic Church and the Boy Scouts dropped their guard and succumbed to a more secular vision of sexuality; it lasted roughly until the early-1980s. They both paid a big price for it. But other religious entities were just as guilty, to say nothing of the public schools. Why are they not filing for bankruptcy? This has nothing to do with kids not being raped by teachers: it has to do with politics. There is no comparable animus against these organizations.

The hypocrisy is serious but not as serious as the injustice: to single out the Catholic Church and the Boy Scouts is moral profiling. This is no less invidious than racial profiling.

BEWARE LAY CLERICALISM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a controversy that has embroiled a Catholic school in Washington state:

Two teachers at Kennedy Catholic High School, located in the Seattle area, recently resigned, and although neither school authorities, the Archdiocese of Seattle nor the teachers are speaking to the media, it is understood that both teachers, a man and a woman, were engaged to a person of the same sex, thus forcing the issue.

This should be a slam dunk case. Those who teach at Catholic schools sign a contract pledging to uphold Catholic teachings. Indeed, teachers in this archdiocese voluntarily agree that "if the teacher's life-style is incompatible with Catholic moral values or if his/her conduct is at variance with Catholic teaching," they can be fired.

The Catholic Church, like so many other religions, does not condone gay marriage. Ergo, homosexual teachers at a Catholic school who claim to be engaged or married to someone of the same sex are at variance with Catholic teaching.

A small protest outside the Archdiocese of Seattle drew dissident Catholics who supported the insubordinate teachers. Some dissidents said such things as, "I don't believe this is in line with Jesus' mission." Greg Nickels, ex-mayor of Seattle, argued the teachers were fired "because they are gay." State Sen. Joe Nguyen said the archdiocese was "on the wrong side of history."

It is important to note that, assuming the teachers were fired, they most certainly were not let go because they were homosexuals (presumably this was known to at least some at the school before their engagement). It was their planned marital status that was controlling.

The reaction of the protesters smacks of lay clericalism. Lay people have an important role in the life of the Church, but they are not empowered to make decisions that are the proper reserve of the bishop. Canon 806 states that the diocesan bishop has the right to oversee and inspect Catholic schools (including those run by religious orders).

Pope John Paul II explicitly warned against lay clericalism. The laity are entitled to a “consultative voice,” he said, but the final authority rests with the bishop. The bishop “must hear the faithful, clergy and laity, to form an opinion,” but, he added, “the latter may not formulate a definitive judgment on the Church” as “it corresponds to the bishop to discern and pronounce himself, not on a mere question of conscience, but as a teacher of the faith.”

Those who claim that the Church is “on the wrong side of history” are badly educated in the Catholic faith. The Church is committed to the pursuit of truth—that is the only side it seeks to be on—and properly eschews that which is trendy and fashionable. That is suitable for politicians and preteens.

ORLANDO SENTINEL ATTACKS FIRST AMENDMENT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an editorial in today's *Orlando Sentinel*:

The editorial in the February 18 *Orlando Sentinel* is critical of private schools, mostly Christian, which participate in a state-school voucher program; the schools uphold biblical teachings on homosexuality. The newspaper says they should not qualify for the program because they discriminate against

homosexuals the way Bob Jones University once discriminated against blacks. There are several problems with this line of reasoning.

Race and sexual orientation have nothing in common: race is not a behavioral category but sexual orientation is ineluctably ordered to behavior. Christian sexual ethics, which are based on Judaism, proscribe adultery, homosexuality, and other sexual acts. That is their right.

There is no rational argument for denying a person who is black, brown, or white from marrying to attending a Christian school: race is behaviorally neutral. Indeed, it is because Bob Jones University—which also promoted anti-Catholicism—could not sustain a rational argument that it eventually was forced to change course.

There is a rational argument for allowing religious schools to sanction behaviors it finds sinful. To deny them this option is to deny them their identity. Moreover, to protect the institution of marriage—indeed to grant it a privileged position—Christian sexual ethics does not approve of sexual conduct that is outside the union of a man and a woman in the institution of marriage. No such reasoning could plausibly be applied to denying mixed racial marriages.

An investigation of private schools in Florida by the *Orlando Sentinel*, published January 23, found 156 private Christian schools with “anti-gay views.” Almost half are Baptist. Catholic schools were mostly given a pass by the newspaper.

Catholic schools do not reject applicants on the basis of sexual orientation, though they will enforce teacher contracts which bar them from marrying someone of the same sex, and they generally do not admit students whose parents are homosexuals. The reasoning is sound: sending mixed messages to students only confuses them about the validity of Catholic sexual ethics.

As it turns out, there are nine schools cited by the newspaper where a quoted statement is cited as proof of their “anti-gay views.” It is important to note that they have *nothing to do with the status of a student’s sexual orientation*. Rather, they have to do with beliefs and practices.

1. Central Florida Christian Academy admits students who follow biblical teachings and abstain from “sexual immorality.” The newspaper concludes this means “gay children aren’t welcome.” But it is not clear that it does. The school did not say it does not admit gay students. It said it does not admit students who are engaged in sexually immoral behavior. That could mean premarital sex (until recently confined to heterosexuals) as well as homosexual acts.
2. Calvary Christian High School in Clearwater is mentioned because it denies students who practice a “homosexual lifestyle or alternative gender identity” or “promoting such practices.” Lifestyle, switching sexes, and [homosexual] practices are all behavioral categories, and as such are entirely legitimate for a Christian school to consider.
3. Wade Christian School in Melbourne says students can be expelled for a “homosexual act.” The emphasis is on an “act,” not orientation.
4. Master’s Academy describes “homosexual behaviors” as sinful and does not enroll those who engage in them. Again, it is the behavior that matters.
5. Mount Dora Academy lists as an offense “sexual misconduct or professing immorality (including homosexuality) on or off campus.” Conduct is not neutral—it is normative—and is therefore a valid concern for Christian schools.
6. Landmark Christian School in Haines City does not accept or retain “faculty, staff, or students who profess to or practice a homosexual lifestyle.” A lifestyle is empirically a behavioral category.

7. Cooper City Christian Academy in Broward County says students should refrain from “talking favorably or engaging in” such things as “idolatry, Satanism, astrology, profanity...premarital sexual activity, pornography, homosexual behavior, gender-confusion behavior, cross-dressing” and the like. All of these beliefs and practices are proscribed by our Judeo-Christian tradition.
8. Worshipper’s House of Prayer Academy in Miami says it has a “zero tolerance” policy for “homosexual activity.” Activity is conduct.
9. Donahue Academy is the one Catholic school listed. Its “anti-gay” rule bars those who “advocate” or act “upon those [disordered] inclinations romantically or sexually.” This speaks to the religious beliefs of Catholic schools and the acting out of proscribed moral conduct.

In short, the *Orlando Sentinel* counts as “anti-gay views” anything associated with the sexual ethics of the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It has a First Amendment right to free speech to do that. But religious schools also have a First Amendment right to free speech, as well as the free exercise of religion.

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THERE ARE ONLY TWO SEXES

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

There is an op-ed in today’s *Wall Street Journal* that deserves a huge audience, and that is why we have provided a link to

it. Two biology professors make it crystal clear that sex is binary—we are either male or female. There is no third sex. It's time to stop the madness.

ALERT

We did not know that the link we provided for the *Wall Street Journal* article cannot be accessed without having a subscription. We urge you to buy a copy of the paper to read this important piece.