

TLAIB TRIES TO WALK BACK HER ATTACK

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest developments regarding the controversy that has embroiled Rep. Rashida Tlaib (we are thankful to CNSNews.com for its reporting on this ongoing issue):

Rep. Rashida Tlaib is now trying to walk back an obscene assault she made on the sensibilities of religious Americans. Here is how this controversy unfolded.

On March 16, I wrote to the ten members of the House Ethics Committee asking them to issue [a letter of reprimand](#) to Tlaib for her unprovoked attack on members of virtually every faith community; we also listed her email address asking our followers to contact her.

On March 15, Tlaib retweeted a post by activist David Hogg from the previous day saying, "Don't let this administration address COVID-19 like our national gun violence epidemic. F**k a National day of prayer, we need immediate comprehensive action."

Now Tlaib, knowing that we have asked her colleagues to sanction her, and having been stung with an avalanche of criticism, is trying to diminish what she said. After she was hit by the Catholic League response earlier in the day on March 16, she tweeted the following that evening:

"Let me be clear as someone who has been praying through this all & as someone who attended the National Prayer Breakfast. My retweet was not to be an attack on prayer. It was to bring attention to the need for meaningful action to combat this public health crisis."

Let me be clear, Rep. Tlaib: You are fooling no one. You not

only have a record of offending people, your anti-Semitic comments have mobilized friends of mine like Rabbi Aryeh Spero to hold a sit-in at Rep. Nancy Pelosi's congressional office to protest your bigotry (and that of your fellow "Squad" member, Rep. Ilhan Omar). Your record of hate speech is incontestable.

You say your retweet "was not an attack on prayer." How lame. What you manifestly chose to do is attack the one day when Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Mormons, Muslims, and others come together in a national day of prayer. Your point was to insult us. Mission accomplished.

President Trump, whom you previously assaulted with your filthy comments, is working with Republicans and Democrats "to combat this public health crisis." And guess what? They are able to do so without resorting to the kind of vile remarks you made about religious Americans. You deserve to be reprimanded. Indeed, you need to be called out by members of both chambers.

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DETROIT BISHOPS SLAMMED FOR THEIR FIDELITY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on recent attacks on the bishops of Detroit:

When we learned that Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Gerard Battersby, following the lead of Archbishop Allen Vigneron, was instructing priests not to allow a Mass for members of Dignity Detroit, we did not feel compelled to say anything.

After all, DignityUSA rejects the Church's teachings on sexuality and has been openly defiant of America's bishops for decades. But now that the Detroit bishops are coming under fire for practicing fidelity, a lay Catholic response is necessitated.

The first dissident group to defend the Detroit chapter of Dignity, and to attack the Detroit bishops, was New Ways Ministry. It has now been followed by the *National Catholic Reporter*.

Dignity, New Ways Ministry, and the *National Catholic Reporter* have all been condemned by Church officials for their rejection of the Church's teachings on sexuality, and all three have received funding from establishment foundations seeking to undermine the Church. Their claim to a Catholic status is risible.

Dignity has no standing in the Catholic Church. At one time, its New York chaplain was Father Paul Shanley, the most notorious serial homosexual rapist in American history. It is comprised of embittered ex-Catholics, many of whom were priests, who falsely claim to be representative of Catholic homosexuals. It is a recipient of money from the Arcus Foundation, a left-wing philanthropy.

In fact, the only organizations that minister to homosexuals that can claim to be legitimately Catholic are Courage and Encourage; the former helps homosexuals who are Catholic to live chaste lives; the latter is an apostolate of Courage that provides family support for these Catholics. Both groups are supported by the Detroit bishops.

New Ways Ministry, another homosexual group at war with the Catholic Church, has been condemned as a fraud by Vatican and American Catholic leaders for decades. In 1999, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith permanently prohibited this renegade group from any pastoral work with

homosexuals. It also receives funding from the Arcus Foundation.

It issued a statement on March 13 saying “[Archbishop Allen] Vigneron’s record on LGBTQ issues is quite negative,” and that Bishop Battersby’s statement means “the archdiocese appears to be moving backward.” Translated, this means that New Ways Ministry is unhappy with the bishops for doing their job.

The *National Catholic Reporter* was founded in Kansas City, Missouri in 1964. Catholic in name only, Bishop Charles Helmsing of Kansas City-St. Joseph wasted no time telling the editors to remove the word *Catholic* from its title. It rejects the Church’s teachings on marriage, the family, and sexuality, and receives money from the Hilton Foundation to portray a positive picture of dissident nuns.

On March 17, this media outlet featured an article by homosexual activist Jamie Manson that called the decision to ban Masses for Dignity “a particularly callous act,” even while admitting that Dignity has been “thrown out of the church.” Her hubris is astonishing.

Detroit is fortunate to have Archbishop Vigneron and Bishop Battersby. There was nothing strident or caustic about their response to Dignity.

They knew that if the Catholic Church is going to hold Masses for organizations that unequivocally and publicly reject the Church’s teachings on sexuality, it would give scandal to the faithful, making them wonder what to believe. They acted with fortitude and honesty.

SALUTE TO ST. PATRICK

Bill Donohue

[Note: We run this article each year on March 17]

The heroics of St. Patrick are not appreciated as much as they should be. He is the first person in history to publicly condemn slavery, and one of the first leaders to champion the cause of equal rights.

There is much to celebrate on March 17. Fortunately, his writings, though slim, are eye-opening accounts of his life: *Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus* and *Confession* reveal much about the man. Along with other sources, they paint a picture of his saintliness.

Patrick was born in Britain in the 4th century to wealthy parents. It is likely that he was baptized, though growing up he did not share his family's faith. He was an atheist.

When he was 15, he committed what he said was a grave sin, never saying exactly what it was; it appears it was a sexual encounter with a young girl. No matter, it would haunt him throughout his life.

At age 15 or 16 (the accounts vary), Patrick was kidnapped and enslaved by Irish barbarians. They had come to plunder his family's estate, and took him away in chains to Ireland. While a slave, he converted to Christianity, praying incessantly at all hours of the day. After six years, he escaped, and made his way back home.

His family thought he was dead, and with good reason: no one taken by Irish raiders had managed to escape and return. St. Patrick biographer Philip Freeman describes how his family received him, stating "it was as if a ghost had returned from the dead."

After he returned home, he had a vision while sleeping. He felt called to return to Ireland. This seemed bizarre: this is where he was brutalized as a slave. But he knew what Jesus had commanded us to do, "Love thy enemy." He was convinced that God was calling him to become a missionary to Ireland. So he acted on it, despite the reservations of family and friends.

Patrick became a priest, practiced celibacy, and was eventually named a bishop. Contrary to what many believe, he did not introduce Christianity to Ireland, nor was he Ireland's first bishop. But he did more to bring the Gospel to Ireland than anyone, converting legions of pagans, especially in the northern parts of the island.

His missionary work in Ireland has been duly noted, but his strong defense of human rights has not been given its due.

No public person before him had denounced slavery, widespread though it was. Jesus was agnostic on the subject, Aristotle thought it was a natural way of life, and neither master nor slave saw anything fundamentally wrong with it. Patrick did.

Though he did not invoke natural law specifically, he was instinctively drawn to it. He taught that all men were created equal in the eyes of God, and that the inherent dignity of everyone must be respected.

Patrick did more than preach—he lashed out at the British dictator, Coroticus, harshly rebuking him for his mistreatment of the Irish. In fact, Patrick found his Irish converts to be more civilized than Coroticus and his band of thugs.

Patrick was way ahead of his time in the pursuit of human rights. Not only were men of every social status entitled to equal rights, so were women. In his *Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus*, he scolds "the tyrant Coroticus—a man who has no respect for God or his priests." More important, he made a startling plea: "They must also free Christian women and captives." His reasoning showed the power of his faith when he

said, "Remember, Christ died and was crucified for these people."

He did not mince words. "So, Coroticus, you and your wicked servants, where do you think you will end up? You have treated baptized Christian women like prizes to be handed out, all for the sake of the here and now—this brief, fleeting world."

What makes this all the more dramatic is the way the pagan world thought about women: the idea that women were equal to men was totally foreign to them. But the women understood what Patrick was saying, and gravitated to him in large numbers. The Christian tenet that all humans possess equal dignity had taken root.

Did the Irish save civilization, as Thomas Cahill maintains? Freeman thinks not—"it had never been lost." But everyone agrees that had it not been for St. Patrick, and the monasteries that followed, much of what we know about the ancient world would not exist.

Indeed, it is difficult to fathom how classical Greek and Roman literature would have survived had it not been for the Irish monks who attracted students from many parts of Europe. They are responsible for preserving the great works of antiquity. And all of them are indebted to St. Patrick.

It is believed that he died on March 17, sometime during the second half of the fifth century. That is his feast day, the source of many celebrations in his honor. His impact extends beyond the Irish and the Catholic Church—human rights are a global issue—making him a very special person in world history.

REQUEST TO REPRIMAND REP. TLAIB

Catholic League president Bill Donohue is asking the House Ethics Committee to reprimand Rep. Rashida Tlaib for her obscene assault on people of faith.

We are contacting the ten members of this committee. To read Donohue's letter to the chairman (the others will receive the same letter), click [here](#).

Contact: Rashida.tlaib@mail.house.gov

POLL TAPS CHRISTIANITY'S DECLINE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue discusses a new poll on Christianity:

The Pew Research Center survey on white evangelicals, President Trump, and Christianity's public role was released March 12. The data on Christianity's influence in American society is particularly interesting.

Half of all Americans say Christianity's influence is declining. This perspective was true for all religious groups; those who were the least likely to ascribe to this point of view were Jews, the unaffiliated and non-believers.

The reasons why this is happening vary. The number one reason given was the "growth in the number of people in the U.S. who are not religious" (60%). This was followed by "misconduct by

Christian leaders” (58%) and “more permissive attitudes about sexual behavior and sexuality in popular culture” (53%). “Negative portrayals of Christianity in pop culture” was next (41%).

White evangelicals and Catholics have much in common: the majority cited all four of the above reasons for the decline of Christianity’s influence, the lone exception being white evangelicals who cited “misconduct by Christian leaders” (48%).

Not surprisingly, Catholics, having been burnt by the clergy sexual abuse scandal, were the most likely (66%) to say “misconduct by Christian leaders” was a major cause of Christianity’s decline. The other three most cited reasons are the most illuminating.

What does the growth of people who are not religious have in common with permissive attitudes about sexuality and negative portrayals of Christianity in pop culture? The sense that a more Christian nation would be a more moral one.

This sentiment is not without reason. The rejection of Christian sexual ethics, with its emphasis on sexual reticence, is made manifest in sexual promiscuity and attacks on Christianity. This suggests that secular elites in the media, the entertainment industry, and education have crafted a culture that works to the detriment of most Americans. Yet they continue to see themselves as the enlightened ones. Most Americans know better.

The country is split on whether Christianity’s decline is permanent (27%) or temporary (24%). Comparing the faithful to those who are not religious, the former are more optimistic than the latter about this being a temporary condition. It would be interesting to know how many of the latter *hope* the condition is not temporary. Regrettably, there are lots of reasons to believe that today’s atheists and agnostics are

more intolerant of religion, especially Christianity, than non-believers of previous generations.

The decline of Christianity and the rise of secularism does not bode well for the future of American society. Self-giving and selflessness, which are hallmarks of Christianity, stand in stark contrast to the self-indulgence and selfishness that mark the culture of secularism.

SATAN ENTERS ABORTION POLITICS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the politics of abortion gone off the deep end:

Most Americans reject the limitless features of *Roe v. Wade*: they oppose abortion for any reason and at any time during pregnancy. And while they favor keeping abortion legal for some reasons, and in the early stages of pregnancy, there is nothing about abortion that makes them happy.

However, there are some persons who like abortion, even to the point of celebrating it. Moreover, they not only act irrationally when confronted with pro-life Americans, they evince a demonic strain.

March 10 was “National Abortion Providers Appreciation Day,” a time when abortion-happy activists celebrate abortionists for doing what they do best—killing kids. The day pays tribute to David Gunn, the abortionist who met the same fate as his victims on March 10, 1993; he is one of the very few abortionists who has been murdered in American history.

The city council of St. Paul, Minnesota voted 7-0 to join the celebration, as did Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey. Archbishop Bernard Hebda, who represents the twin cities, said he was confounded by these decisions, saying, "There is no way around it—abortion kills children."

NARAL, the pro-abortion giant, was so jubilant about their special day that they called abortionists "real live superheroes." *Ms. Magazine*, co-founded by Gloria Steinem (she aborted her child at age 22), called "National Abortion Providers Appreciation Day" an occasion that recognizes "acts of kindness." The ACLU issued a statement thanking abortionists for their "life-saving work."

Last week, the Spokane, Washington city council passed an ordinance that empowers the police to cite pro-life activists who pray, or sing, too loudly outside the local Planned Parenthood abortion clinic. Women on the way to abort their children, and the personnel who perform it, have been complaining about too much noise. They want a quiet environment so they can concentrate on their objective.

Washington, one of the most militantly secular and anti-Catholic states in the nation, was also the site of an ugly confrontation this past weekend in the city of Bellingham. Pro-life students prayed outside a Planned Parenthood abortion mill, and for this "crime" they were subjected to obscenities and harassment.

A man masturbated in his car in front of the students, a woman flashed them, and a man threw a glass vial at them. No one topped a woman who yelled at them, "We don't need your prayers. Hail Satan!"

Satan has long left his mark on abortion politics, but these recent events suggest he is upping his game.

ANOTHER ANTI-CATHOLIC VIRUS JOKE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on another anti-Catholic joke:

We know Seth Meyers will never trash Muslims, but he can safely insult Catholics knowing we will not resort to violence. He won't trash Jews because he doesn't have the guts to do so, and he sure won't attack "people of color." The most protected of all classes these days are the LGBTQXYZ people: he would actually quit his job before mocking them.

Yesterday, we mentioned that Trevor Noah, David Spade, and the *Onion* libeled priests with "jokes" about the coronavirus. To show how creative the Hollywood writers are, Seth Meyers chimed in last night with one of his own. "Despite Italy's national lockdown, Pope Francis today urged priests to visit coronavirus patients, and if there's one thing priests respond to, it's urges."

No reasonable person seeks to justify someone who, in the heat of a confrontation, lashes out against his adversary with a bigoted remark. But at least the context helps explain the outburst.

What do we say about someone who makes a gratuitous, totally unprovoked, sweeping statement about an entire class of people, maliciously assaulting them?

This is the state of anti-Catholicism in America today. Those who claim to be the most tolerant people in the country—the Hollywood elite—have more in common with white supremacists than they know.

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WHAT? THE VIRUS SPARKS BIGOTRY?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on more unprovoked attacks on Catholicism:

The coronavirus has nothing to do with homosexuals, so it would never occur to Hollywood script writers to make them the butt of jokes linking promiscuity to the disease. They are too protective of homosexuals to do that. Catholics are different.

Trevor Noah, one of the most vile bigots on television, told his audience last night that “it’s going to be hard to take Communion seriously when the priest has to throw wafers into people’s mouths from across the room, the body of Christ—from downtown.”

Also on Comedy Central last night, David Spade took aim at the Eucharist—bigots always go for the jugular—by joking about priests who put their fingers in the mouths of Catholics at Communion. A panelist asked if a “little boy gave it to him.”

The *Onion* has a reputation for being a crude publication but yesterday it outdid itself. It portrayed Pope Francis telling priests to do their part to “stem the spread of this deadly virus by temporarily ceasing all fondling of children in their congregation.”

These three examples from March 9th prove how visceral the strain of anti-Catholicism is in the entertainment world.

There are some really sick people working there.

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U.N. REPORT ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IS ABSURD

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a U.N. report on religious freedom:

A recently released United Nations report on religious freedom that was presented to the Human Rights Council deserves a sharp rebuke. While appearing reasonable at different junctures, the report is nothing but a frontal assault on religious autonomy and religious freedom. No wonder it was criticized by senior Vatican officials.

The report by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief, Ahmed Shaheed, is more than tendentious: it is a polished ideological attack on our most foundational human right. Indeed, the report reads like a manifesto for LGBT rights. It is not the business of the United Nations to impose its secular, and indeed troubling, vision of sexuality on religions around the world.

One of its most glaring problems is the decision to link cases of violence committed in the name of religion—which are properly condemned—with instances of non-violent beliefs and practices that are seen as problematic by militant secularists. The conflation of violent acts with non-violent “discriminatory” ones is not persuasive. Indeed, by bundling

inexcusable behaviors with wholly defensible religious precepts, the report shows its unmistakable bias.

For example, it is one thing to condemn the Islamic practice of stoning adulterers, quite another to lump this barbaric act with the imposition of “modest” dress codes. Similarly, when religious bodies hold to traditional moral beliefs on sexuality, they are entitled to have their convictions respected, not chastised.

It also makes no logical sense to conflate laws which criminalize persons on the basis of their sexual orientation, which is indefensible, with laws that restrict abortion, which are eminently defensible. Worse, it is outrageous for the Human Rights Committee to cite conscience laws, as observed in the United States, as problematic. Such laws are integral to religious liberty.

Another objectionable tactic is to treat nations that criminalize homosexuality with the same brush as nations that object to homosexuality being promoted in their sex education textbooks. The latter is noble. Is the United Nations so thoroughly in the grip of the LGBT community that it can't see the difference between the two?

The report embraces “gender ideology,” namely, the bizarre notion that one's sex is not rooted in nature. It goes further by criticizing nations such as Poland, with its vibrant Catholic community, for rejecting this madness. In doing so, the international forum discredits itself. It should not bend to ideological whims, especially when they are based on politics, not science.

At least the report does not seek to hide its mentors. It mentions its reliance on feminists and those who work with “LGBT+” persons (it does not say who the + people are). It also cites, positively, the work of a United States organization, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

They gave away the store on that one.

The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice is not only a rabid pro-abortion group, it is virulently anti-Catholic. It endorsed the Freedom of Choice Act, which the Catholic League successfully fought. This was the most radical piece of abortion-rights legislation ever proposed (the Obama administration was behind it). It would have jeopardized the right of Catholic hospitals and doctors to refuse to perform abortions.

The most serious flaw in this seriously flawed document is its attack on religious autonomy. It makes an obligatory statement saying that "religious organizations are entitled to autonomy in the administration of their affairs," only to effectively undercut this pledge by taking issue with religious norms it finds objectionable. In fact, it cites objections to religious strictures made by feminists, as if religious bodies ought to defer to them.

Its most aggressive assault on religious liberty is the contention that religious dissidents should be on a par with religious leaders. This is what the report means by saying "religious communities themselves are not monolithic." It even goes so far as to say that the rights of dissenters must be afforded "an enabling environment." Maybe a big sign on church property that says "Welcome Mutineers" might work.

The sages who wrote this report should practice what they preach. They can begin by inviting me, as one of their dissenters, to join their forums, permitting me to checkmate their grandiose proposals. After all, we're all equal. Aren't we?

Contact Shaheed's U.N. office: freedomofreligion@ohchr.org

HUNTING FOR OLD DIRT ON THE CHURCH

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on two media outlets that are out to get the Catholic Church:

The media can't find new dirt on the Catholic Church, so they resort to finding old dirt. Any ethical media source would just move on, but there are some that bear an animus so strong that they can't. The latest example is a report jointly issued by ProPublica, a liberal non-profit investigative internet outlet funded by establishment sources, and the *Houston Chronicle*.

The report is a bomb. It breaks no new ground. It focuses on the way the Catholic Church deals with a few priests who were credibly accused of sexual abuse and who are either no longer in ministry or have moved to another country. All the priests named in this anecdotally driven article of more than 5,000 words are alleged to have offended decades ago.

This exact same game was played last fall when the Associated Press, the *Denver Post*, *USA Today*, and WCP0 (the ABC affiliate in Cincinnati) did stories on credibly *accused, not convicted*, priests who are either inactive or have been removed.

Nowhere in the ProPublica/*Houston Chronicle* article does it say the Catholic Church did anything illegal or, for that matter, out of the ordinary. When employees who work for the media—or anyplace else—have been let go for alleged instances of sexual misconduct, no one expects the employer to keep tabs on them. If they take another job someplace else, that is never considered a black mark on the organization that dumped them. Except, of course, if that institution is the Catholic

Church.

Apparently, we must remind these journalists of an elementary axiom of the criminal law: *the accused is assumed innocent until proven guilty, and is entitled to due process*. Yes, that even includes the Catholic clergy.

ProPublica boasts of developing an interactive database to search for accused priests. Where is its interactive database for accused public school employees? Only a fool would think this is an oversight. They don't have one because they don't care about the victims of sexual abuse, unless, of course, the victimizer is a Catholic priest.

What these media outlets are doing is piling on, cherry picking the Catholic Church so they can throw mud at it. They are the really filthy parties to this contrived controversy about old cases of abuse.

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