

# SQUAD MEMBERS LOVE ABORTION

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on reactions to U.S. Supreme Court Justices who heard oral arguments on a pivotal abortion-rights case:

Everyone knows that Sen. Charles Schumer went off the rails by threatening two sitting Supreme Court Justices because he believes they will vote against an upcoming abortion-rights case. But little attention has been given to the hysterical reaction of two members of “The Squad”: Rep. Ayanna Pressley and Rep. Rashida Tlaib.

Pressley said that “reproductive justice is racial justice.”

This is the kind of statement we would expect from the Klan. We would not expect this from a black woman. Blacks, who are 13% of the population, account for 36% of all abortions. Pressley needs to explain why this is an expression of racial justice, and she needs to tell this to a black audience.

Tlaib aimed her remarks at pro-life Americans by repeating one of her standard lines. “Y’all, y’all, you know what? You’re so freakin obsessed with what I decide to do with my body, maybe you shouldn’t even want to have sex with me.”

Believe me, lady, no one does. I know of no defender of life who wants to sleep with you. And if you don’t know the difference between a woman who wants to remove a wart from her toe and a pregnant woman who wants to remove a human being from her body, you need to enroll in Bio 101.

The other “Squad” members are just as far gone. Here is what they said about abortion last year.

Rep. Ilhan Omar objected to pro-life legislation in the states, saying the bills were “only the latest in a long history of efforts to criminalize women for simply existing.”

That would mean that pro-life Americans want their mothers imprisoned. Even those in the asylum don't speak such gibberish.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez objected to a pro-life bill in Alabama that the governor pledged to sign. She labeled the bill as an example of "patriarchy." The governor is a woman. In the fall, she said that "nonbinary people" need access to abortion. Problem solved: they don't exist.

This is the mentality of the those who love abortion. There isn't much upstairs to play with, making it impossible to engage them in rational discourse.

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## **CATHOLIC HATERS CAN'T LET IT GO**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Catholic haters who can't let it go:

There are ongoing scandals in virtually every institution in the world, secular as well as religious, so when a prominent American newspaper runs an editorial about an organization where one of its past leaders once funneled money to a controversial affiliate overseas, it makes one wonder why it chose to focus on that institution and not an organization that is currently involved in a scandal in this country. We don't lack for any.

When a late-night comedian chooses to hurl insults at a demographic group for no apparent reason other than to be malicious, it makes one wonder what's going on.

The first example was provided by the *Washington Post* in its March 4th editorial criticizing money legally sent by Theodore McCarrick, when he was a cardinal, to a religious community in Latin America founded by a rogue; the money was spent on the indigent. The second example is provided by Seth Meyers in his March 4th monologue deriding Catholics for drinking consecrated wine from the same chalice as others.

It was so nice to read the editorial's professed concern for the Church's "reputation and mission," which, it said, has been "besmirched" by its leaders. It's time the newspaper factored in its own contribution to besmirching the Catholic Church.

As for Meyers, we could provide him with plenty of examples of the beliefs and practices of other religions that would make for lots of laughs, but we know he would throw it in the trash where it belongs. That he doesn't trash the anti-Catholic material he is given tells us everything we need to know about him.

Both the *Washington Post* and Seth Meyers are Church haters (we've dealt with both of them many times before). It's in their claw—they can't give it up.

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## KANSAS CITY STAR'S RELIGIOUS

# BIAS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an editorial of March 2nd in the *Kansas City Star*:

The *Kansas City Star* is well known for its religious animus, especially against Catholic institutions (see our website for multiple examples). Its hostility was on display again on March 2nd.

In a badly conceived editorial, it railed against allowing private and religious schools to be exempt from Missouri's minimum wage increase. It is the exemption for religious schools [read: Catholic ones] that exercises the editors the most. How do we know? Because it repeatedly singles out religious organizations for criticism.

Why is the editorial badly conceived? Because it is palpably hypocritical. It admits that public employers, including the public schools, are exempt from the minimum wage law, yet it is only mildly critical of this exception. In other words, if exemptions from this law are a problem, why has the *Star* consistently refused to take the public schools to task?

Moreover, why hasn't the *Kansas City Star* listed all the organizations that are exempt from the minimum wage? Missouri employers are required to pay \$9.45 an hour unless the worker or occupation is exempt under state or federal law.

Here is a list of exemptions under Missouri law:

- Tipped employees
- Retail or service businesses whose gross annual income is less than \$500,000
- Most agricultural and farm workers

Here is a list of exemptions under federal law:

- Farm workers

- Seasonal workers (fishermen, amusement park workers, et al.)
- babysitters
- tipped employees
- minors and young workers
- full time and vocational students
- employees with disabilities
- public school teachers and administrators
- outside sales employees
- employees in certain computer-related operations
- companions to the elderly or infirm

On several occasions, the editorial raises the question why religious schools are afforded exemptions from some laws. But it is not religious schools that are routinely cut slack by state legislators—it's the public schools.

For example, the statute of limitations for crimes involving the sexual abuse of minors in Catholic schools does not apply to the public schools: victims of sexual abuse in the public schools have 90 days to file a claim or it is too late. But victims in Catholic schools have a much longer time frame within which to do so, and this is especially true when statutes of limitation are being revised to allow old cases to be prosecuted.

The public schools are able to get away with this because of the antiquated doctrine of sovereign immunity: it allows the public sector a privileged position by discriminating against private and religious institutions. But don't look for the *Kansas City Star* to protest this blatant injustice. It never will.

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# PA SUPREME COURT TO DECIDE KEY ABUSE CASE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an important court decision affecting the rights of priests:

On March 2, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that it will review a Superior Court decision that allowed Renee A. Rice the right to pursue claims against the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown even though the statute of limitations had long expired. The Catholic League filed an amicus brief in the case in support of the diocese; the Pittsburgh firm of Jones Day represented us.

The Superior Court held that a grand jury report issued by the state Attorney General in 2016 could trigger the running of statutes of limitation, though it is common practice for the clock to start at the time of an injury.

Rice said she was molested 40 years ago by Fr. Charles Bodziak at St. Leo's Church in Altoona, a charge the priest denies. She further maintains that two bishops tried to cover up his behavior, even though the diocese sent her a letter 10 years before her lawsuit encouraging her to come forward about her alleged abuse. She did nothing until the grand jury report supposedly awakened her.

Attorneys for the Catholic League contend that the Superior Court ruling "effectively enacts window legislation [it allows a look-back provision] from the bench, contrary to decades of precedent."

When our brief was filed in September 2019, I commented on its significance. "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, not exactly a small issue.”

If jurors are allowed to widen the time limits for civil claims in clergy sexual abuse cases, it would create havoc. For instance, 15 “copycat” lawsuits were filed after the Superior Court ruling, beckoning other alleged victims to file suit. No wonder plaintiffs called the decision a “game-changer” that will “open the courthouse doors” to decades-old claims.

It is good news that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court has agreed to hear the appeal by the diocese. It also granted leave for the Catholic League to file an amicus brief on behalf of the diocese, which we will do.

Were the Superior Court ruling to hold, the effects would be felt not only by the Catholic Church but by all religious organizations. Indeed, secular institutions such as schools, hospitals, colleges, and all other employers would be at risk for being sued decades after the alleged offense.

We look forward to a complete reversal of the lower court’s decision. That would ensure that the rule of law will be applied equally to priests, dioceses, and religious organizations.

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## EUROPEANS

## UNDERVALUE

# RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new survey of democratic rights in countries throughout the world:

The Pew Research Center recently released a survey of democratic rights in 34 countries. Countries represented in the survey were drawn from Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, Canada, and the United States.

Respondents were asked how important certain democratic values were to them, and how satisfied they were with the state of affairs on several variables. The following nine categories were chosen: Fair Judiciary; Gender Equality; Free Religion; Regular Elections; Free Speech; Free Media; Free Internet; Free Civil Society; and Free Opposition Parties.

The data reported the “% who say it is very important to have \_\_\_\_ in their country.”

The median score (the score where half the numbers are higher and half are lower) on Free Religion, as compared to the median score on the other eight categories, was relatively high for all parts of the world except for Europe. In other words, outside Europe, Free Religion garnered a relatively high percentage.

The median score for Europe was 57%. That was the lowest median score across the board. In other words, the other eight categories were seen as more important to Europeans.

“In over half the countries surveyed,” the report said, “those who say religion is very important in their lives are more likely to believe religious freedom is very important.” This makes sense, but it also means that those who are not themselves religious are not likely to support this foundational human right.



The survey confirms the de-Christianization of Europe. Regrettably, secular societies are, by and large, more inclined to value individual autonomy and devalue freedom of religion. Those who are religious are not only in a minority, they live in countries where their religious rights are comparatively tenuous.

Six nations stand out for their very high support for gender equality and their very low support for freedom of religion: Canada, Sweden, France, Netherlands, Spain, and Australia.

For those who value freedom of religion, matters were better in the United States. Of the nine categories, the top three were Fair Judiciary (93%), Gender Equality (91%) and Free Religion (86%).

The role that freedom of religion plays in the life of a free country is no longer understood by many in the West. It should be the focus of history textbooks and is deserving of a national conversation on how to preserve our freedoms. Instead, we are more interested in promoting the freedom of middle school kids to “transition” from one sex to the other.