

# PHONY ATTACK ON RYAN'S CATHOLICITY



Bill Donohue comments on an op-ed article in today's *New York Times* by Fordham theologian Michael Peppard:

Pro-abortion Catholics have long sought to equal the playing field with pro-life Catholics by arguing that there really isn't much of a difference between their side and the other. It never works. And it doesn't work for Michael Peppard as well.

Vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan is pro-life, and Vice President Joe Biden is pro-abortion. Biden has never found an abortion he couldn't justify, and Ryan would ban all abortions save for rape, incest and the life of the mother. In the mind of Peppard, there is no difference between the two: both depart from Catholic doctrine.

Not so fast. Pope John Paul II said it was acceptable for Catholics to vote for a pro-abortion candidate in a race against another pro-abortion candidate, providing that the former is less extreme and efforts are made to persuade him to adopt a pro-life position. In other words, Catholics who exercise the virtue of prudence have no problem voting for a man whose position on abortion would save the lives of over 1 million babies a year. This is especially true when compared to a man who would not save one baby out of the 1.2 million killed every year.

In Professor Peppard's vision, a driver who goes 56 in a 55 miles an hour speed zone is equally guilty of speeding as the

one who goes 106. Technically, that may be true, but in reality, only a fool would equate their culpability.

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## BIDEN'S WEARY CATHOLICISM



Bill Donohue comments on Vice President Joe Biden's remarks on Catholicism that were given at the end of yesterday's debate:

Vice President Joe Biden has been instructed by bishops not to present himself for Communion; he has been the subject of many reprimands; and he has been banned from speaking at Catholic institutions. Most of these sanctions are a function of his pro-abortion views.

Last night, Biden added to his problems by saying he agrees that life begins at conception, but he doesn't want to do anything to ensure the rights of the unborn child. The Catholic Church is opposed to animal cruelty as well, yet it is a sure bet that Biden has no problem with laws that punish dog fighting. Maybe if he began to think of little Joe in his mother's womb the way he thinks of Fido, more kids would live.

Just as obnoxious was Biden's claim that the Obama administration is not interfering with the religious liberties of Catholic non-profits. Is he unaware of the dozens of lawsuits filed by the bishops, the laity, and Catholic institutions seeking to insulate themselves from the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate? Of course not.

The vice president really outdid himself when he *twice* said it is "a fact" that there is nothing for Catholics to worry

about. Here's a real fact: Biden initially registered his misgivings about the policy, and even went so far as to warn that the HHS mandate would not sit well with Catholics. So what changed your mind, Joe?

Listening to Biden discuss his Catholicism is getting weary.

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## CATHOLIC VP v. CATHOLIC VP



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the two Catholic vice presidential candidates:

In many respects, the Catholic community today is divided into pro-life and social justice camps. That is unfortunate, and while this division can be overstated, it remains true that most Catholic activists sit in either one camp or the other; cross-over Catholics are a rare breed.

Paul Ryan represents the pro-life wing, and Joe Biden represents the social justice wing. Indeed, both exemplify the differences, and not just on the issue of abortion. For example, Ryan's idea of freedom of choice commits him to supporting school vouchers; Biden's notion of choice commits him to abortion rights. Ryan is opposed to reinventing the institution of marriage; Biden wants to expand marriage to include two people of the same sex.

The Catholic Church opposes abortion and gay marriage. On both of these issues, Biden disagrees with the Church. Biden's defenders, e.g., Catholics who identify with social justice concerns, argue that Ryan's budgetary prescriptions make him the dissident Catholic; his ideas are said to hurt the poor. This assumes, however, that there is a clear Catholic teaching

on what constitutes the best *means* to conquer poverty. There isn't. For instance, fidelity to the Church's preferential option for the poor can be realized by making a serious case to raise taxes, or to lower them. In effect, both Biden and Ryan can plausibly maintain that he is a champion of the poor. But only one, Ryan, can be identified as the champion of the unborn.

Not all policy issues are equal. Abortion is regarded by the Catholic Church as "intrinsically evil." Moreover, the bishops' conference has explicitly endorsed a constitutional amendment defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman. This puts Biden at a decisive disadvantage in making the case that he better represents Catholic teachings.

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## OBAMA LIKES MEN MARRYING



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on President Obama's support for homosexual marriage:

In 1996, when Barack Obama was up for a state senate post in Illinois, he said he supported gay marriage. Eight years later, when he set his sights on the U.S. Senate, he discovered his Christian roots and said he was against it. In 2008, he said he was opposed to homosexuals marrying, but he also opposed a ballot initiative in California, Proposition 8, that affirmed marriage as being exclusively between a man and a woman. In other words, his Christian roots were losing their grip. Since then he's been "evolving." Now the evolution is

over and he has fully broken with his Christian moorings.

The president of the United States likes the idea of Tom and Dick marrying. He did not say whether he supports Tom, Dick and Harry marrying, or whether he is “evolving” in that direction. Perhaps he has to consult with his mentor on this issue, Mr. Joseph Biden of Delaware.

Yesterday, North Carolina voters affirmed marriage as being between a man and a woman. In the 32 times voters have been asked to decide this issue, they have voted 32 times to support traditional marriage. Gay rights advocates have never won.

President Obama will be hurt by this decision in the swing states. More than that, he has now made this cultural matter a major issue in the presidential campaign.

The time has finally come to pass a constitutional amendment affirming marriage as an institution reserved to the only two people who can naturally produce a family, namely a man and a woman.

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## **JOE BIDEN RIDICULED FOR WEARING ASHES**

Fox News analyst Bob Beckel today criticized Vice President Joe Biden for wearing ashes on TV; today is Ash Wednesday and Biden is Catholic.

In the middle of a discussion on President Obama’s stimulus plan, Beckel gratuitously said, “Sorry about laughing, but I looked at Joe Biden’s forehead, and I know it is Ash

Wednesday, but I'm not sure I would wear that ash on the air. Anyway...."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue wasn't amused:

Bob Beckel's admonishing remark, "I'm not sure I would wear that ash on the air," makes us wonder whether it is the public display of ashes he finds risible, or the religion that sports them.

In any event, there is no record of Beckel ever lecturing a Jew about wearing a yarmulke on TV or a Muslim wearing a turban. Must be something about Catholicism that bothers this guy. We'd love to know what it is. At the very least, a clarification about what he meant is in order.

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## BOB SHRUM THROWS MUD AT BISHOPS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an article posted today on TheWeek.com by Democratic consultant Bob Shrum:

Shrum begins his [article](#) with a broadside against Democrat Bart Stupak, the congressman whose amendment in the House version of the health care bill bans abortion coverage. Shrum makes the patently false claim that Stupak's amendment "prevents Americans from purchasing abortion coverage with their own money." As Stupak wrote last month in the *New York Times*, "The amendment does not prevent private plans from offering abortion services and it does not prohibit women from purchasing abortion coverage with their own money." Now if Shrum has evidence that Stupak is lying, he ought to present

it.

Shrum gets nasty when he takes issue with Stupak's religiously informed conscience. He contrasts Stupak unfavorably with Ted Kennedy and Mario Cuomo, both of whom earned their hero status by thumbing their noses at Catholic teachings on abortion. Then he lays into the bishops for interfering in politics by criticizing two other Catholic dissidents, John Kerry and Joe Biden. He is at his demagogic best when he plays the anti-Catholic card by suggesting the bishops are hostile to democracy; watch out, he warns, they might even push to outlaw divorce!

Shrum really gets down and dirty when he slanders all Catholic bishops. "Having abetted thousands of priests in molesting children, they're now set on abusing health reform," he writes. Now if the standard of discourse allows for this kind of commentary, it finishes the prospects for civil conversation. Imagine an opponent of gay marriage citing gay leaders who abet the frequent use of bathhouses, the lethal sex acts that take place there, and the diseases they generate. Any group can be smeared.

Shrum needs to apologize for this scurrilous piece. He can't fight the bishops on the merits of the issue, so he resorts to mud throwing as a way to silence them. We look to responsible Democrats who disagree with the bishops on this issue to denounce Shrum for his despicable behavior.

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## **"JOE THE THEOLOGIAN" OPINES**

# ON ABORTION

In the October 19 edition of the *News Journal*, Joe Biden offered his thoughts on faith and values. The Delaware daily also printed a 2007 interview with the Democratic VP candidate on the subject of abortion; it was not previously published.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue criticizes Biden's views today:

"In his latest interview with the *News Journal*, Biden says, 'I accept my Church's teaching on when life begins. But we live in a society where a large number of people don't agree with that position.' This is true and much the same could be said about racism: The Catholic Church calls racism 'intrinsically evil' and supports laws that criminalize it. Biden agrees with this Church teaching and has no problem imposing his view on 'a large number of people [who] don't agree with that position.' But when it comes to abortion, which the Church also labels 'intrinsically evil,' Biden demurs. To explain this glaring inconsistency, consider what Biden said in his earlier interview with the newspaper.

"Biden declared that 'my church has wrestled with this [abortion] for 2,000 years.' Wrong—the wrestling match he envisions is pure fantasy. The *Catholic Catechism* clearly states that 'Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and is unchangeable.'

"Biden also said that 'throughout the church's history, we've argued whether or not it [abortion] is wrong in every circumstance and the degree of wrong.' Wrong—as the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops recently said, 'modern science has not changed the Church's constant teaching against abortion, but has underscored how important and reasonable it



is....'

"Biden dug himself in deeper when he opined that 'One of my avocations is theology,' boasting that 'I'm a John XXIII guy, I'm not a Pope John Paul guy.' Well, someone should tell 'Joe the Theologian' that John XXIII was every bit as anti-abortion as that 'other guy,' JP II."

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## **FOX'S "FAMILY GUY" SLANDERS GAY PRIESTS**

In the October 19 episode of Fox's "Family Guy," characters Brian (the family dog) and Stewie (the family child) travel in a time machine to rescue Mort Goldman (a Jewish family-friend) from the Nazi invasion of Poland. After Brian and Stewie disguise Mort as a priest to get him out of the country, a Nazi officer asks Mort, "Are you sure you're a real priest?" Stewie replies, "Yeah, yeah, I can vouch for him, he's real. He's molested me many, many times."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

"To its credit, the Fox News Channel has criticized its broadcast sister station, Fox, for what happened on last Sunday's episode. But the criticism only dealt with the implication that Nazis would have supported the McCain-Palin ticket. However, there is also the matter of slandering all gay priests. While it is true that most of the molesters in the Catholic clergy have been gay, most gay priests are not molesters.

"A disturbing pattern has emerged on 'Family Guy.' On at least three occasions, it has mocked the Eucharist, and now it is

targeting gay priests. The brains behind these assaults is Seth MacFarlane. He is not only the show's creator, he is a big Barack Obama supporter. This may explain his animus against McCain-Palin, but it is not clear why an Obama fan would find it necessary to beat up on gay priests. After all, Obama's running mate, Joe Biden, just yesterday said he is against Proposition 8, the California resolution that would limit marriage to a man and a woman. Thus did he lay down stakes with the radical gay community.

"Whatever the motive, the juvenile scripts that MacFarlane is associated with could benefit from some fresh material. Make that material that doesn't bash Catholicism, as well."

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## **BIDEN DEFIES POPE AND BISHOPS: NOW HE IS PRO-GAY MARRIAGE**

On today's episode of "Ellen," Joe Biden told Ellen DeGeneres "that if I lived in California, I would vote against Proposition 8." This initiative reads, "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." Yet in his debate with Sarah Palin on October 2, Biden said that "Barack Obama nor I support redefining from a civil side what constitutes marriage."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue weighed in on this today:

“Proposition 8 is a civil initiative that would secure marriage as an institution that is exclusively between a man and a woman, and Joe Biden told Ellen DeGeneres that he is opposed to that measure. In other words, Biden did not tell the truth in his debate with Sarah Palin. He cannot logically be opposed to both gay marriage and Proposition 8, but that is exactly what he is trying to get away with. More important, Biden is openly defying both the pope and the bishops.

“Last year, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict XVI pointedly said the following about people like Joe Biden: ‘Worship pleasing to God can never be a purely private matter...*it is especially incumbent upon those who, by virtue of their social or political position*, must make decisions regarding fundamental values such as respect for human life, its defence from conception to natural death, *the family built upon marriage between a man and a woman....These values are not negotiable.*’ (My emphasis.)

“Last year, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* wherein it said that the family based on marriage between a man and a woman ‘should be defended and strengthened, not redefined or undermined by permitting same-sex unions or other distortions of marriage.’

“Biden is in a major jam. He needs to hold a press conference explaining his irreconcilable moral positions, and why he has chosen to defy the pope and the bishops.”

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## BIDEN IS SELF-DESTRUCTING

Sen. Joseph Biden said yesterday that if the Republicans were serious about helping disabled children they would support

stem-cell research.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded this way:

"Biden's remark, which was aimed at Sarah Palin, is not only inaccurate, it exposes his Catholic Achilles' heel once again. No one in public life has ever taken a position against all stem-cell research; adult stem-cell research is not ethically problematic. What millions of Americans object to is embryonic stem-cell research, and that is because it is impossible to do this kind of research without destroying the embryo. Now it may come as news to Biden that the embryo represents nascent human life, though it is not clear whether this would matter to a man who agrees with NARAL 75 percent of the time.

"The Catholic Church, to which Biden belongs, is opposed to embryonic stem-cell research; McCain and Obama, along with Biden, are not. In this regard, Palin is more Catholic than Biden. Not only does he look bad in comparison to Palin, it is coming at a time when Biden is being hit with a barrage of criticism from bishops angry with his 'Meet the Press' appearance where he declared abortion to be a personal matter.

"Bishop Morlino of Madison, Wisconsin saw Biden on TV and quickly put aside the homily he prepared for Mass: he instead branded Biden's distortion of this issue as breaching church and state lines. Archbishop Chaput of Denver said it would not be wise for Biden to present himself for Communion. Biden, who hails from Scranton, was indirectly cited by Scranton Bishop Martino: he said that 'No Catholic politician who supports the culture of death should approach Holy Communion.' Biden's outgoing bishop, Wilmington Bishop Saltarelli, said that if Biden becomes vice president, he will bar him from speaking in Catholic schools. Philadelphia Archbishop Rigali and Bridgeport Bishop Lori both blasted Biden for contradicting Church teaching on abortion.

"In short, Biden is self-destructing right before our eyes."