

# BILL DONOHUE TO BILL O'REILLY: STOP SPINNING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue replied today to Bill O'Reilly's remarks about the Catholic League last night on TV:

"Last night on his TV show, Bill O'Reilly said, 'The Catholic League hates me.' We do not. We simply object when he crosses the line from criticizing the Catholic Church to dissing it.

"In none of the three news releases that I have written on Bill O'Reilly have I ever even hinted at hating him. But the reverse is not true: in his book, *Who's Looking Out for You?*, O'Reilly branded the Catholic League a 'witch-hunter.' So why is he now spinning the truth?

"In that same book, O'Reilly alleges that we said he 'despises' the pope. What I said was that O'Reilly, having called Pope John Paul II 'an autocrat,' and having admitted that 'I have never liked this pope,' has shown 'contempt' for him. That was it. In his mind, that makes us—I guess he means me—a 'witch hunter.'

"O'Reilly has done a great job criticizing those who are already bashing Pope Benedict XVI. Now if he would just stop bloviating, all would be well."

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## NEW POPE WILL INFURIATE

# **“PROGRESSIVES”**

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on why the new pope will infuriate “progressive” Catholics:

“In November, 1997, before a packed house of ‘progressive’ Catholics at the annual Call to Action convention, Sister Maureen Fiedler exclaimed that ‘a lot of people in this Church are waiting for a person in this Church to pass away.’ Translated, this means they couldn’t wait for John Paul II to drop dead. Indeed, I have personally heard many disaffected Catholics, including quite a few nuns, say the same thing. Now that the conclave is about to begin, they think their moment has arrived. Watch for them to crash once the new pope is named.

“Whoever the new pope is, he will not turn the Church over to the Call to Action fringe. That’s because they represent a dying breed. Consider what happened in 1996-97.

“In April, 1996, Sister Maureen Fiedler of Maryland’s Quixote Center launched a petition drive aimed at getting one-million Catholics to sign a statement calling for radical changes in the Church’s teachings on women and sexuality. The campaign was dubbed We Are Church, and was well-greased by fat cats who hate the Catholic Church: the Ford Foundation, which funnels millions to Catholics for a Free Choice, used its ‘Catholic’ group to give big bucks to Fiedler. ‘We were blessed with substantial grants,’ Fiedler admitted. ‘We had organizing kits,’ she said, ‘we had grass-roots [efforts]; we did full-page ads [in newspapers]; we had massive mailings; we did public collections in front of cathedrals, like St. Patrick’s in New York.’ They even bribed kids by giving them a dollar for every signature they got. When the year was up, the campaign was such a bomb that it was extended for six months. In the end, it netted only 37,000 signatures. It was at the Call to Action 1997 convention in Detroit that Fiedler

reported the sorry results. She blew up at lay Catholics, saying that progressives overestimated their 'theological maturity'; she concluded by sounding her death wish for the pope.

"It is for reasons like this that the new pope is not about to turn Left, for to do so would be tantamount to going South."

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## **BILL MAHER TRASHES POPE**

On April 8, and again on April 12, the HBO show, "Real Time with Bill Maher," featured a verbal assault on Pope John Paul II. Led by Maher, the pope was also attacked by Arianna Huffington. Here is a sample of what happened:

Maher: "People waited in line for 24 hours to see the pope's body and when they got to see the pope they smelled worse than he did."

Maher: "For those who could not make the funeral, the Vatican has asked that in lieu of flowers, just stop touching your d-."

Maher: "American Catholics say we love the pope, he should be a saint but he is kind of full of s- on everything we believe."

Maher also said that the whole story of Jesus, the Virgin Mary and the resurrection was "grafted from paganism." He ended by mocking the death of the pope and the upcoming conclave.

Huffington egged Maher on, saying "this guy" [the pope] should be blamed for the sexual abuse scandal, as well as AIDS in Africa.

Catholic League president William Donohue remarked as follows;

“HBO bears the ultimate responsibility for this exercise in incivility. They must know that Maher is a man infused with hatred towards the Catholic Church, and that Huffington has long demonstrated that she has no ethical standards whatsoever. So what did they expect? Because Maher and Huffington have a total IQ in double digits, it is not worth our while to try to correct their ignorance. But that doesn’t mean we won’t try to persuade HBO to stop with the bigotry. Timing, as well as content, matters, and on these two counts, HBO failed miserably.”

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## **SCHIZOPHRENIA MARKS CHURCH CRITICS**

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on what is ailing some critics of the Catholic Church:

“It is nothing short of remarkable that some of the nation’s leading critics of the Catholic Church can hold diametrically opposing positions on the same subject without ever seeming to notice. In this regard, demands that the Church needs to involve itself more in the public affairs of society manage to coexist with equally fervent calls for it to recede from public life. What matters is the issue, not principle. Consider today’s column in the *Los Angeles Times* by Robert Scheer.

“Scheer takes President Bush to task for not taking his cues on the Iraqi War from Pope John Paul II. He asks why ‘journalists and politicians ignore[d] the pontiff’s opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq?’ He also says of the

pope, 'It hardly honors the man to ignore his impassioned statements on what he considered to be a great moral crisis.' Now had the subject been abortion or gay marriage, is there anyone who doubts that Scheer would never have written this sentence? What makes this really schizophrenic, however, is the fact that Scheer began his journalism career in the 1960s blasting Cardinal Francis Spellman, Archbishop of New York, for his so-called meddling in the Vietnam war.

"Scheer is not alone. During the presidential election campaign last year, the pundits hammered the Catholic Church to death because some bishops publicly addressed abortion, euthanasia, marriage and the family. They were repeatedly warned, by the champions of free speech, not to exercise their First Amendment right to freedom of speech when such subjects were on the table. But if a bishop were to speak against capital punishment, or in favor of an increase in the minimum wage, these same persons wanted the bishops to grab a bullhorn and lecture the faithful.

"As the conclave draws near, watch for more of this incredible public display of cognitive dissonance. It is one of the hallmarks of the Left."

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## **POPE'S BURIAL ENDS THE LULL-STORM COMING**

Catholic League president William Donohue remarked as follows:

"The storm is about to hit. For the most part, anti-Catholic bigots and the disaffected dissidents within the Church have been quiet. What they have been waiting for is about to happen: the week between the end of the mourning and the

beginning of the conclave is upon us. And that means the Left is ready to explode.

“Consider what we’ve heard already. Amidst the mostly favorable coverage by the media of Pope John Paul II, he has been branded as follows: an authoritarian who seeks to silence dissent; the enemy of homosexuals; a misogynist; a polarizing figure; a man who is out of touch with the modern world; a contributor to death due to AIDS in Africa; responsible for the sexual abuse scandal; and so on.

“And we’ve heard a CBS newsperson blast the pope for ruling the Church with ‘an iron fist’ (this was said between the final four basketball games on Saturday); the *JewishForward* said whatever good he did may be undermined by his ‘battles around the world for sexual repressiveness and against reproductive freedom’; the Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church in Minneapolis posted a sign on its property saying, ‘ALL WELCOME, CHRIST IS ALIVE, THE POPE IS DEAD’; the president of the J. Paul Getty Trust commented on ‘the spectacle of grotesquerie and human ruin that has lately filled the balcony above St. Peter’s Square’; Christopher Hitchens said he was ‘part of the coverup and obstruction of justice’ attendant to the homosexual scandal; Sister Helen Prejean, who is soft on abortion, took him to task for not changing his mind soon enough on capital punishment (and in doing so managed to misrepresent his pronouncements on the subject—the pope never said it was an intrinsic evil like abortion); and a website called ‘HillaryNow,’ operated by Robert Kunst, said that when the pope went to Israel, he ordered an ambulance to follow him so that in the event he needed a transfusion, he would not have to access ‘Jewish blood.’

“But this is nothing. Many have been waiting for this moment for more than a quarter century. When they lose again, watch out.”

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# POPE JOHN PAUL II:ROLE MODEL FOR THE WORLD

Catholic League president William Donohue released the following statement today on the death of Pope John Paul II:

“Karol Wojtyla was an intellectual, actor, philosopher, athlete and human-rights advocate, but above all, he was a priest. That is what defined him more than anything else—he was a priest in service to the Lord.

“Having traveled to over 100 nations, and having reached out to the members of all the world’s religions, he managed to touch people in a way very few have. It is only fitting that someday he will be known as John Paul the Great, making him only the third pontiff in history to be bestowed this honorific title.

“Pope John Paul II will be remembered for many things, but at this time it is important to recall his signature statement, ‘Be Not Afraid.’ It was in his first homily as pope in 1978 that John Paul broached this phrase, and it is one that he restated thousands of times over during his papacy. That these were not empty words can be disputed by no one: consider what happened after he told millions of his fellow countrymen in Poland one year later, ‘Do not be afraid to tell the truth.’

“John Paul II’s unyielding commitment to speaking the truth will surely prove to be one of his most enduring legacies. In a world where moral relativism runs rampant, and the lies of postmodernist thought are trumpeted, nothing could be more countercultural that the pope’s speeches and writings on the existence of an objective moral order. His courage, along

with his intellectual acumen, was astounding.

“It is only just that we remember Pope John Paul II for what he was, and will always be—a role model for the world.”

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## NEW YORK PRESS JOKES ABOUT POPE'S DEATH

On the cover of the March 2-8 edition of the *New York Press*, a free New York weekly, there is a picture of Pope John Paul II. The story is titled, “THERE'S NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT THIS MAN DYING—OR IS THERE?” The story contains 52 of the most crude and vulgar jokes about the pope's death. Here are a few examples:

- Beetles eating Pope's dead brains.
- Gurgling sound during embalming process; real fluids in dead Pope's body sucked out into jars.
- Doctors examining the body discover that the Pope was not only a woman, but also Hitler.
- Can't move. Can't reach penis.
- Throw a marble at the dead Pope's head. Bonk!

Catholic League president William Donohue released the following statement about this story today:

“There are many in our society who have long been threatened by the teachings of the Catholic Church, especially those which address sexual ethics. Take the *New York Press*, for example. Its celebration of libertinism leaves it squarely at



odds with the sexual reticence favored by Catholicism. It also leaves it squarely at odds with nature, which explains why attending funerals is not an uncommon experience for those who work there. But like a dopey dog who doesn't recognize his master, they plod along never learning from the wisdom the Catholic Church has to offer. And, of course, they hate the pope. Which makes sense: he is the one man whose commitment to the truth has literally driven them over the edge."

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## POPE'S RESILIENCY ANGERS NEWSWEEK

In the March 7 edition of *Newsweek*, there is an article in the "Periscope" section by Christopher Dickey on the health of Pope John Paul II titled, "He Has Willpower—But No 'Living Will.'" In it, Dickey (who did the piece with Robert Blair Kaiser) writes, "Even as the aged pope's body shuts down in the late stages of Parkinson's disease, his will to live—and to impose his will on the Roman Catholic faithful—remains as stubborn as ever." He later writes that if the pope were to slip into a coma, "Could anyone—would anyone—pull the plug?"

Catholic League president William Donohue offered the following remarks today on this article:

"When presidents like Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt continue in office despite poor health, they are regarded as courageous, even heroic. But not Pope John Paul II—he has a duty to die. That's because the pope, unlike the presidents, stubbornly imposes his will on the people. What is really astonishing—and maybe Dickey could address this—is the extent to which this dictatorial pope is loved the world

over.

“Dickey lets us down when he asks whether someone could pull the plug on the pope. We thought he was smarter than that. It should be obvious—even to someone like Dickey—that any man who can impose his will on 1.1 billion people surely can impose his will on his own doctors. The very idea that this despotic pope has left anything to chance is beyond comprehension. That Dickey can’t connect his own dots does not speak well for his intellect, which is why it’s time for *Newsweek* to pull the plug on his column.”

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## STEM CELL ISSUE REACHES A HOT POINT

The day before former President Ronald Reagan died, 58 senators sent a letter to President George W. Bush urging him to permit embryonic stem cell research. The senators are now insisting that with the death of President Reagan, the issue has taken on greater urgency. They cite the support that Nancy Reagan has shown for this type of research.

Catholic League president William Donohue cautions against any change in the current rules even as the issue reaches a hot point:

“Senator Orrin Hatch, an advocate of embryonic stem cell research, has said of Nancy Reagan’s support for this procedure, ‘I believe that it’s going to be pretty tough for anybody not to have empathy for her feelings on this issue.’ That’s true enough, but it doesn’t settle the issue: what ultimately matters is whether embryonic stem cell research is the intentional destruction of human life. Since every person

ever born began as an embryo, and since embryonic stem cell research is predicated on the acknowledgement that embryos are human (otherwise the research would be meaningless), it is incumbent that our society not sanction it.

“The same day the 58 senators sent their letter to President Bush, Pope John Paul II admonished Americans to reject such things as abortion, same sex unions, pornography and prostitution as ‘self-centered demands’; he could easily have chosen to add embryonic stem cell research to this list. The pope, who suffers from Parkinson’s Disease, might arguably have benefited from embryonic stem cell research had it been previously allowed. But the Holy Father recognizes, as all of us should, that it is immoral for one person to have his life extended at the expense of someone else’s right to life.

“One of the senators who signed the letter to President Bush is John Kerry, a man who calls himself a ‘practicing and believing Catholic.’ Given the fact that he supports partial-birth abortion and embryonic stem cell research, it would be instructive to know when Senator Kerry believes human life begins.”

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## **KERRY      DEFIANTLY      REJECTS CHURCH   TEACHINGS**

As reported in today’s *New York Times*, Senator John Kerry got defiant yesterday when told that some are unhappy with the way his voting record departs from Church teachings. Kerry wanted to know who they are, challenging reporters to “name them.” He pointedly asked, “Are they the same legislators who vote for the death penalty, which is in contravention of Catholic

teaching?" Kerry also said, "My oath privately between me and God was defined in the Catholic church by Pius XXIII and Pope Paul VI in the Vatican II, which allows for freedom of conscience for Catholics with respect to these choices, and that is exactly where I am."

Catholic League president William Donohue had this to say:

"When Senator John Kerry is asked why he disagrees with the Catholic Church on such important life issues as abortion (including partial-birth abortion, parental consent, federal funding and the rights of unborn victims of violence), doctor-assisted suicide and stem cell research, he responds by saying it is a matter of conscience. But when it comes to those Catholic legislators who disagree with the Catholic Church on capital punishment, the issue of freedom of conscience quickly becomes moot. In fact, Kerry dogmatically condemns such lawmakers.

"Last September, the U.S. bishops released a statement, 'Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility.' In it, they said that abortion 'is never morally acceptable.' On November 21, 2002, Pope John Paul II approved a doctrinal note on 'The Participation of Catholics in Political Life' that was written by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. It said that '*lawmaking bodies have a grave and clear obligation to oppose any law that attacks human life*' (emphasis in the original). Regarding conscience, it stressed that 'it must be noted that a well-formed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or individual law which contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals.'

"Kerry needs to educate himself about the teachings of the Church. He also needs a history lesson: there never was a Pope Pius XXIII."