

GAY MARRIAGE LEGALIZED; RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IMPERILED

In a 5-4 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that gay marriage is a constitutional right that must be observed by all 50 states. Instead of allowing the states the right to make decisions about marriage, these judges elected to impose their will on the nation.

The five justices cited the 14th Amendment as their rationale. But that amendment was passed in 1868, three years after the Civil War ended: it made it illegal to have one law for whites, and another for blacks. It said absolutely nothing about marriage. The justices reasoned that equal protection under the law, mentioned in the 14th Amendment, was sufficient grounds to legalize the right of two men to marry.

Bill Donohue not only questioned the constitutional basis for this decision, he maintained that the reasoning of Justice Anthony Kennedy, who wrote the majority opinion, was sociologically illiterate. "The idea that marriage is a matter of individual autonomy—and not a social institution—is the most profound flaw in their ruling," he said. "In their mind, society is composed of monads."

Far and away the worst part about this decision is its implications for religious liberty. Indeed, they are ominous. The majority declared that religious Americans "may continue to advocate with utmost, sincere conviction that, by divine precepts, same-sex marriage should not be condoned." But, of course, our First Amendment right to freedom of speech is inalienable, so the justices really weren't giving us anything we didn't already possess.

"The First Amendment," the five justices said, "ensures that religious organizations and persons are given proper

protection as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives....” Donohue questioned, “That’s the best they can do?” Justice Clarence Thomas, in his dissent, rightly criticized this genuflection to religious rights. “Religious liberty,” he said, “is about freedom of action in matters of religion generally”—it is not confined to advocacy.

Two days after this ruling was reached, Mark Oppenheimer, a columnist for the *New York Times*, called upon the IRS to revoke the tax-exempt status of churches. Look for such demands to mount. It is not likely that lawmakers will introduce legislation to deny the tax-exempt status of religious institutions, but it is likely that the IRS, an unelected federal agency, will someday take up the cause.

“In order to stop the IRS from revoking the tax-exempt status of religious institutions that refuse to marry two men or two women,” Donohue said, “Congress needs to pass the First Amendment Defense Act. Nothing less is acceptable.”

POPE SPARKS CONTROVERSY

Pope Francis’ encyclical, *Laudato Si*, ignited quite a reaction among fans and foes alike. The irony of seeing traditional enemies of the Catholic Church now hail the pope, even to the point of insisting that Catholic politicians take their marching orders from Rome, was amusing.

The pope painted a bleak picture saying that the earth “is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth.” At one point he asked that we reject “doomsday predictions,” yet later he said, “Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain.”

Bill Donohue defended the right of the pope to address this issue, noting that other popes had also addressed environmental issues, though none were anywhere near as specific. When conservative radio talk-show host Michael Savage called the pope the “Anti-Christ,” Donohue called him out for his “disparaging” remarks. Donohue also took aim at those on the left.

The *New York Times*, Donohue said, “normally loves church-state separation,” but not this time: it implored governments around the world to adhere to the pope’s call. “Sadly,” the *Times* said, “the encyclical, compelling as it is, is unlikely to have a similarly positive effect on American politics.” Donohue couldn’t hold back. “This is a keeper,” he said. “Never before have I read an editorial by the *Times* saying how sad it is that agents of the state are not taking their cues from the pope.”

Look for this issue to spark more controversy in the fall.

MOTHER ANGELICA’S GREATEST GIFT

William A. Donohue

Mother Angelica built the most powerful Catholic media empire in American history, one so towering that it really has no rival anywhere in the world. The Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) is, without doubt, her greatest gift. It is a tragedy that she is not in better health—she is 92—to see the extent of her contribution.

There are any number of Catholic media enterprises: television

channels, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, wire services, and Internet sites. Some are local, others are regional, and a few are national. They vary greatly in style, quality, and philosophical leanings, but none can compare with EWTN. It is in a class of its own.

EWTN is surely known to Catholic League members, but some may not know about its reach, or the excellence of its programming. Ably led by Michael Warsaw, the CEO and chairman, and an impressive governing board, EWTN is the premier Catholic media outlet in the nation.

The “TN” in EWTN is misleading: it is much more than a television network, though that was its first media foray; it remains its most influential outlet. My favorite show is hosted by Raymond Arroyo: “The World Over” is the flagship program on the network. Full disclosure: Raymond is a member of the Catholic League’s board of directors, as well as being my personal friend.

“The World Over” is a live show on Thursday night; it airs at 8:00 p.m. ET. Fortunately, those who miss it can catch it over the weekend when its encore editions air. Raymond begins each show with a roundup of world events: he misses nothing and his delivery is, well, Arroyoesque. He has just the right sense of humor, balance, and wit. It is not easy to educate and entertain simultaneously, but he pulls it off every week with precision.

Unlike some other TV hosts, Raymond never “wings it.” He is well prepared for each guest, refusing to rely on his native abilities, considerable though they are. His range is enormous: he covers the humanities and theology with the same degree of dexterity that he handles political and cultural issues. And woe to guests who try to pull the wool over his eyes—he can be devastating.

Doug Keck is the president and chief operating officer of

EWTN. He also hosts a weekly show, "Bookmark," that features Catholic authors. Doug is a skilled interviewer—he is one of the best I've ever encountered—and he always facilitates a professional exchange with his guests. Father Mitch Pacwa, who is one of the most interesting priests I have ever met—he is a pistol—has a one-hour weekly show that is fascinating. Of course, EWTN wouldn't be EWTN without a sampling of Mother Angelica's previously recorded gems.

Al Kresta and Teresa Tomeo are just two of the featured radio talk-show hosts who grace EWTN's dial. Both are as competent as they are feisty. The *National Catholic Register* is EWTN's weekly newspaper, and it does a fine job. With veteran journalists such as Joan Desmond and Edward Pentin, the *Register* has become a well-respected Catholic organ. Pentin, in particular—he is the Rome correspondent—is willing to challenge the conventional wisdom, providing a great service to readers. Also, EWTN's acquisition of Catholic News Agency has only made it stronger.

The Catholic community needs to be better educated, especially these days, and that is where EWTN comes in. We live in an increasingly hostile environment: attacks on the Church emanate daily from all levels of government, the media, the entertainment industry, and education. Unless we are armed with accurate information, lay people can't affect the culture the way they should.

This is the beauty of EWTN: it has an arsenal of information at its fingertips. And unlike some other Catholic media outlets, its fidelity to the Magisterium is never in question, making it an extremely reliable source. How sad it is that there are more than a few Catholic journalists who openly reject the teachings of the Catholic Church. That kind of disloyalty is not tolerated at EWTN.

EWTN can give us the ammo, but it is up to us to produce. It cannot be said too strongly that it is not enough to be

knowledgeable—we have to be willing to engage. I was told decades ago by the great political philosopher Sidney Hook that being right was one thing, but if we do not have the courage of our convictions to follow through, all is lost. He was right. Too many people on our side think life is a popularity contest. It is not. It is about doing the right thing. What is even worse is when people who are in a position to change things play it safe and do nothing.

So, yes, EWTN can give us the tools we need to do battle, but no host or journalist can give us the moxie we need to finish the job. That is up to us. Mother Angelica, after all, did not succeed because of her prescience and media prowess alone—she had the guts to stand up to those who revile us. God bless her.

WHY FR. SERRA DESERVES TO BE CANONIZED

Bill Donohue

This article is adapted from Bill Donohue's longer piece, "The Noble Legacy of Father Serra." To read the full text, click [here](#).

Who Was Father Serra?

Junípero Serra was born on the Island of Majorca, off the coast of Spain in 1713, and died in Monterey, California in 1784. Partly of Jewish ancestry, this young and sickly boy applied to enter the Order of St. Francis of Assisi; he became a Franciscan in 1731.

He is known as the greatest missionary in U.S. history, traveling 24,000 miles, baptizing and confirming thousands of persons, mostly Indians (in 1777 the Vatican authorized Serra to administer the sacrament of confirmation, usually the reserve of a bishop). He had but one goal: to facilitate eternal salvation for the Indians of North America.

Were the Indians Perceived as Being Inferior?

Culturally, the Indians appeared inferior, but they were not seen as racially inferior. Take, for example, the Chumash Indians of Southern California, the first California Indians to be contacted by Spanish explorers. When the Franciscans first met them, they were struck by how different they looked and behaved. The women were partially naked and the men were totally naked. Serra, in fact, felt as though he was in Eden.

Moreover, the Indians had no written language, and practiced no agriculture. They lived by hunting, fishing, and gathering. They ate things that the missionaries and the soldiers found bizarre, including roots, seeds, birds, horses, cats, dogs, owls, rats, snakes, and bats. These primitive habits, along with other practices, convinced them that changes had to be made.

How Did Father Serra Get Along with the Indians?

For the most part, they got along well. This had something to do with the fact that the Catholic Church led the protests against inhumane treatment of the Indians; the Spanish crown ultimately agreed with this position. It cannot be said too strongly that the primary mission of the Franciscans was not to conquer the Indians, but to make them good Christians. The missions were supposed to be temporary, not some permanent take over.

The Indians drew a distinction between the way the Spanish soldiers treated them and the way the Franciscans did. So when some Indians would act badly, the soldiers blamed them and

sought harsh punishments. The priests, on the other hand, saw murderous acts as the work of the Devil. Also, the soldiers were always anxious to take land from the Indians, but they were met with resistance from the priests.

Both the colonial authorities and the missionaries vied for control over the Indians, but their practices could not have been more different. With the exception of serious criminal acts, Serra insisted that all punishments were to be meted out by the priests. While he did not always succeed in challenging the civil authorities, he often did, the result being that the Indians were spared the worst excesses.

The Franciscans also sought to protect Indian women from the Spaniards. The missionaries carved out a very organized lifestyle for the Indians, keeping a close eye on attempts by Spanish men to abuse Indian women. The Friars segregated the population on the basis of sex and age, hoping to protect the females from unwanted advances. When sexual abuse occurred, it was quickly condemned by Serra and his fellow priests.

Was it Violence that Decimated the Indians?

No. What killed most of the Indians were diseases contracted from the Spaniards. According to author James A. Sandos, "Indians died in the missions in numbers that appalled Franciscans." He describes how this happened. "When Spaniards in various stages of exploration and expansion entered into territory unacquainted with disease," he writes, "they unwittingly unleashed disease microbes into what demographers call 'virgin soil.' The resulting wildfire-like contagion, called 'virgin soil epidemics,' decimated unprotected American Indians populations." Professor Gregory Orfalea is no doubt correct to maintain that it is doubtful if Serra ever understood the ramifications of this biological catastrophe.

Isn't It True that the Clergy Flogged the Indians?

By 21st century standards, flogging is considered an unjust means of punishment, but it was not seen that way in the 18th century. Fornication, gambling, and the like were considered taboo, justifying flogging.

Serra, who never flogged anyone (save himself as an expression of redemptive suffering), admitted there were some excesses, but he also stressed something that is hard for 21st century Americans to understand: unlike flogging done by the authorities, when priests indulged the practice, it was done out of love, not hatred. "We, every one of us," Serra said, "came here for the single purpose of doing them [the Indians] good and for their eternal salvation; and I feel sure that everyone knows that we love them."

There is also something hypocritical about using 21st century moral standards to evaluate 18th century practices. Abortion-on-demand is a reality today and that is barbaric.

Some Contend that the Indians Were Treated the Way Hitler Treated Jews?

This is perhaps the most pernicious lie promoted by those who have an animus against the Church. Hitler committed genocide against Jews; there was no genocide committed by Serra and the Franciscans against the California Indians. Hitler put Jews in ovens; the missionaries put the Indians to work, paying them for their labor. Hitler wanted to wipe out the Jews, so that Western civilization could be saved; the priests wanted to service the Indians, so that they could be saved.

Sandos pointedly refutes this vile comparison: "Hitler and the Nazis intended to destroy the Jews of Europe and created secret places to achieve that end, ultimately destroying millions of people in a systematic program of labor exploitation and death camps. Spanish authorities and Franciscan missionaries, however, sought to bring Indians into a new Spanish society they intended to build on the California

frontier and were distressed to see the very objects of their religious and political desire die in droves. From the standpoint of intention alone, there can be no valid comparison between Franciscans and Nazis.”

Moreover, as Sandos writes, even from the standpoint of results, the comparison fails. “Hitler intended to implement a ‘final solution’ to the so-called Jewish problem and was close to accomplishing his goals when the Allies stopped him. In contrast, neither Spanish soldiers nor missionaries knew anything about the germ theory of disease, which was not widely accepted until late in the nineteenth century.”

Those who make these malicious charges know very well that Jews never acted kindly toward the Nazis. They also know, or should know, that acts of love by the Indians toward the missionaries are legion. No one loves those who are subjecting them to genocide.

Were the Indians Treated as Slaves?

No. The historical record offers no support for this outrageous claim. Slaves in the U.S. had no rights and were not considered human. The missionaries granted the Indians rights and respected their human dignity.

It is also unfair to compare the lifestyle of the Indians to slave conditions in the U.S. “The purpose of a mission was to organize a religious community in isolation that could nourish itself physically and spiritually. Surplus production was to feed other missions and local towns and presidios. Profit was never a consideration, unlike plantations, where profit was the purpose and reason for their creation.”

Did the Missionaries Eradicate Indian Culture?

No. While missionary outreach clearly altered many elements of Indian culture, as Orfalea notes, “the fact is, the California Indian did not disappear. From the low point at the turn of

the [20th] century (25,000 remained), the Indian population has grown to well over 600,000 today, twice what it was at pre-contact." Indeed, today there are over one hundred federally recognized California tribes with tribal lands, with many others seeking recognition.

Not only did the missionaries not wipe out the native language of the Indians, they learned it and employed Indians as teachers. Some cultural modification was inevitable, given that the missionaries taught the Indians how to be masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and painters. The Indians were also taught how to sell and buy animals, and were allowed to keep their bounty. Women were taught spinning, knitting, and sewing.

"Although many historians once thought that Indian culture had been eradicated in the missions," Sandos says, "anthropologists and other observers have provided evidence to the contrary."

Should Serra Be Made a Saint?

The evidence which has been culled for over 200 years, from multiple sources, is impressive, and it argues strongly for including Father Serra in the pantheon of saints.

A total of 21 missions were established by the missionaries, nine of them under the tenure of Serra; he personally founded six missions. He baptized more than 6,000 Indians, and confirmed over 5,000; some 100,000 were baptized overall during the mission period. Impressive as these numbers are, it was his personal characteristics that made him so special.

"To the Indian," Orfalea writes, "he [Serra] was loving, enthusiastic, and spiritually and physically devoted." His devotion was motivated by his embrace of Christianity and his strong sense of justice. To put it another way, his love for the Indians was no mere platitude. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" was routinely put into practice; he knew no other

way. But it was his humility, coupled with his merciful behavior, that distinguished him from all the other missionaries.

Serra was so merciful that he said, “in case the Indians, whether pagans or Christians, would kill me, they should be pardoned.” This was not made in jest. He insisted that his request be honored as quickly as possible, and even declared, “I want to see a formal decree” on this matter.

Father Serra deserves to be made a saint. He gave his life in service to the Lord, battled injustice, and inspired everyone who worked with him to be a better Christian. That Saint Serra will now inspire people all over the world is a certainty, and a great testimony to his noble legacy.

U.N. REFUSES TO PUNISH SEX OFFENDERS

At the end of May, Bill Donohue wrote a letter to U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on the refusal of the United Nations to punish sexual abuse committed by its peacekeeping missions. He wants the U.N. to either implement its “zero tolerance” policy, adopted in 2004, or to stop all proceedings against the Holy See on this issue.

Below is the text of Donohue’s letter.

May 21, 2015

His Excellency Ban Ki-moon

Secretary General of the United Nations

405 E. 42 St.

New York, New York 10017

Dear Your Excellency:

As president of the largest Catholic civil rights organization in the United States, I am appealing to you to do one of two things: a) either ensure that the United Nations' policy on "zero tolerance" against convicted sex abusers serving in peacekeeping missions is enforced immediately, or b) cease and desist from probing into alleged sexual abuse violations committed by those in the employ of the Holy See.

This duplicity can no longer be tolerated. When U.N. panels sit in judgment of the Holy See on these matters—while the U.N. itself does nothing to combat sexual abuse committed by those under its watch—it rubs all fair-minded people the wrong way; it is also the height of hypocrisy. Indeed, it is analogous to a corrupt judge overseeing a trial on corruption. Consider recent revelations about the U.N.'s failure to seriously address this issue.

In 2002, the American bishops adopted, and began enforcing, a "zero tolerance" policy on sexual abuse committed by Church employees; the Holy See has since implemented a similar policy. Two years later, the U.N. adopted a "zero tolerance" policy, but unlike the Catholic Church, it was never enforced. Worse, the conventional response has been to grant immunity to those accused of sexual offenses. I can only imagine how the U.N. would react if the Catholic Church decided to grant immunity to accused sex offenders.

In 2012, eight years after the U.N. adopted its "zero tolerance" policy, you promoted an "enhanced plan of action" to combat this problem, yet a special report by a U.N.-commissioned independent panel recently determined that a "culture of silence" prevails and that "impunity" rules.

It is more than laughable—it is obscene—that U.N. peacekeeping members who have been convicted of sexual abuse are not even fined! To be exact, this September the U.N. General Assembly

will debate whether convicted sex offenders should lose their vacation pay!

This problem is not going away. Reports of women and children being sexually molested by U.N. peacekeeping forces continue to pour in from all over the world. For example, we know that well over 500 victims of sexual assault were recently treated in one year in the Central African Republic alone. How many others have suffered elsewhere?

To do the probing of these cases, the U.N. has authorized 168 civilian positions. But only 1.2 percent of the posts have been filled. Similarly, new ways for alleged victims to state their grievances have been announced, but there has been no follow through. Another program, a multilingual learning initiative for peacekeeping personnel, has been mandated to deal with sexual abuse, but not only has it not been implemented—the pilot program does not begin until May 2016.

When asked why the U.N. has failed to deliver on this issue, its spokesmen say it is difficult to ensure enforcement. No doubt it is. But would this be accepted as a legitimate response if offered by the Holy See? We all know the answer.

I speak from experience. I have read what officials from the U.N. Committee against Torture, and the Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, have said about the Holy See. I have also replied to their reports. In particular, the May 2014 report by the Committee on Torture was a highly politicized and totally biased statement against the Holy See.

Let me repeat my appeal. Either move with dispatch to implement the “zero tolerance” policy that was adopted in 2004, or demand that U.N. officials of the aforementioned U.N. committees stop with their inquiries into alleged wrongdoing by the Holy See. I hope you choose the former.

Sincerely,

NBC NOW DEMANDS SECRECY

NBC has its chief news anchor Brian Williams go rogue, and instead of commissioning an independent investigation, it decided to do an in-house probe. Just as bad, it is keeping the report secret. Now consider its reporting on the Catholic Church.

- On 5-18-11, it reported that an independent investigation of the Church's priest abuse scandal was flawed because the data provided to John Jay College came from the Church
- On 11-9-11, it said the Church was an institution of "secrecy"
- On 2-25-13, it commented on a "secret dossier" given to the pope
- On 2-26-13, it reported that "The pope decided that an internal report on that scandal [Vatileaks] would remain a secret...."
- On 3-7-13, it said "secrecy has become a top priority for Vatican officials"
- On 3-8-13, it quoted a journalist who said it was "dangerous" to expose Vatican "secrets" because some guy told him that its cameras were "so powerful they can even read the lips of people"
- On 10-1-13, it said the Vatican bank issued a report on its annual accounts "to boost transparency" and "rebuild its reputation"
- On 2-5-14, it said the U.N. issued a report on the Church's "code of silence" in handling abuse cases. But

it did not say that the 15-page report contained not a single footnote or endnote, nor did it say that the U.N. insisted that the Church change its teaching on abortion and other issues

Just recently, Fox News reported that U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon appointed a panel to investigate sexual offenses against children committed by U.N. peace-keeping forces. NBC did not report on it. On May 21, Bill Donohue issued an open letter to Secretary Ban calling him to finally implement the “zero tolerance” policy that the U.N. adopted in 2004—after the U.S. bishops adopted one—or stop badgering the Holy See.

NBC cannot have it both ways: It cannot demand transparency from the Vatican while keeping secret its internal probes.

CATHOLIC POLITICIANS AND THE CHURCH

The media are awash with stories on the tension between Catholic GOP presidential candidates and their fidelity to Pope Francis’ encyclical on the environment. It is a story worth exploring. But an even juicier story is the decades-long rejection of papal authority by Catholic Democrats in Washington on issues such as abortion.

In recent years, Vice President Joe Biden, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, former Congressman Patrick Kennedy, and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, have all gotten into public clashes with their bishop; in some cases as many as 26 bishops have publicly rebuked them. Some of these Democrats were summoned to meet with their bishop—more than once—while others were told to

refrain from receiving Communion. Their public support for abortion rights was, in every instance, the issue that provoked the reaction. Yet their dissent, and subsequent reprimands, were never cast by the media as cause for concern.

Catholics are expected to give their assent to papal teachings, but it is not true that all pronouncements are morally equal. In 2004, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) was explicit about this: “Not all moral issues have the same moral weight as abortion and euthanasia. For example, if a Catholic were to be at odds with the Holy Father on the application of capital punishment or the decision to wage war, he would not for that reason be considered unworthy to present himself to receive Holy Communion.”

It goes without saying that climate change is not on the same moral plane with the intentional killing of innocent human beings. It was striking nonetheless to see long-time dissident Catholic journalists—those who rail against Church teachings on sexuality—lining up single file to express their absolute allegiance to what the pope said on climate change.

RUBIO: CATECHISM MAY BE BRANDED “HATE SPEECH”

A couple of weeks ago, Sen. Marco Rubio told Rev. Pat Robertson that anyone who supports traditional marriage is being labeled “a homophobe and a hater.” He said “the next step is to argue that the teachings of mainstream Christianity, the *Catechism* of the Catholic Church, is hate speech....”

Rubio did not exaggerate. As if to prove him right, he was

immediately branded as “anti-gay” by People for the American Way. Mediaite also sounded the alarm.

Gay organizations and publications that routinely brand traditional marriage advocates as bigots include the Human Rights Campaign, GayStarNews, the Advocate, lgbtqnation, Towleroad, and GLAAD. Non-gay groups that do the same include Media Matters, Salon, Huffington Post, and Think Progress. The Southern Poverty Law Center is the most irresponsible: an entity that believes in marriage as a union between a man and a woman runs the risk of being called an “anti-gay hate group.”

The lunacy never ends. Last year, a traditional marriage conference at Stanford University was condemned as “anti-gay.” Moreover, just staging the event was enough to provoke warnings that it might occasion a “significant increase in suicide” among homosexuals. Two years ago, the CEO of Starbucks said that if anyone didn’t like his company’s pro-gay marriage policy, “you can sell your shares in Starbucks and buy shares in another company.” He said this while saying Starbucks wants to “embrace diversity of all kinds.” Save for diversity of thought.

Rubio is right to warn that we are getting to the point where the *Catholic Catechism* will be condemned by the high priests of tolerance for its alleged hate speech on sexuality. Our side needs to respond with vigor. The Gaystapo is on the move.

DISCRIMINATION

AGAINST

CHRISTIANS IS REAL

A few weeks ago the Public Religion Research Institute released a religion news survey.

Are Christians discriminated against in a nation that is over 70 percent Christian? The public seems to think so. Here is the question posed to respondents: "In America today, discrimination against Christians has become as big a problem as discrimination against other groups."

By a margin of 49 percent to 47 percent, the public agrees with this question. White evangelical Protestants were the most likely to agree: 70 percent say that discrimination against Christians has emerged as big a problem as discrimination against others. The majority of non-white Protestants agree, with 55 percent answering affirmatively. Catholics also see anti-Christian bigotry as a big problem, splitting 50 percent to 47 percent. White mainline Protestants are not convinced: their numbers are 46 percent to 50 percent. The unaffiliated clearly stand out from the faithful: only 34 percent agree with this question.

Why would most Americans say that discrimination against Christians is a serious problem? It surely has much to do with the sense that Christians are fair game for unfair treatment, as witnessed in legislation such as the attack on Christian non-profits under the Obama administration. In particular, the Health and Human Service mandate forcing Christian non-profits to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization, and contraception has set off the alarms. Punishing Christians who object to same-sex marriage is also a genuine concern.

FEMINISTS WAGE “WAR ON WOMEN”

Recently, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a Texas law that protects women’s health.

The federal appeals panel ruled that it was a “legitimate purpose” of the Texas law “to provide the highest quality of care to women seeking abortions and to protect the health and welfare of women seeking abortions.” This ruling is consistent with the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion: “The State has a legitimate interest in seeing to it that abortion, like any other medical procedure, is performed under circumstances that insure maximum safety for the patient.”

Who could possibly object to high standards of medical care for women? Women’s advocates, that’s who. *The New York Times* objected. Ironically, a story on its website on this issue provided a link to a factual description of abortion, and it listed seven risks, among them “excessive bleeding” and “reaction to the medicines or anesthesia, such as problems breathing.” Would not common decency argue that these problems be minimized, and that quality treatment be afforded? Why would the *Times* be willing to settle for less?

The Center for Reproductive Rights called the high standards “harmful.” NARAL Pro-Choice Texas also preferred lower standards. Wonkette declared abortion to be “one of the safest procedures in America,” which, even if this were true (it most certainly is not safe for the child), raises the question: Why oppose safer conditions? Planned Parenthood of Texas said the law was “medically unnecessary,” and both Salon and RH Reality Check called it “draconian.”

Liberals are fond of saying that education is empowering, yet when it comes to educating women planning an abortion, they say they should not be required to see what it is they are aborting. They demand that women be given the best medical

care, yet when it comes to abortion, they are prepared to put them at risk. They love to spend money on healthcare, yet when it comes to maximum safety for women considering an abortion, they complain about costs. Whose side are they really on? Women deserve better than “back-alley” treatment.