

# IRS PROBE REVEALED; SOURCE EXPOSED

When news stories surfaced on the way the IRS was selectively targeting conservative and religious groups, Bill Donohue decided the time had come to reveal his story.

Just weeks after Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, Donohue was notified by the IRS that the Catholic League was under investigation for violating the IRS Code on political activities as it relates to 501(c)(3) organizations. What the IRS did not know was that Donohue had proof who contacted them to launch the investigation: Catholics United, a George Soros-funded Catholic organization.

The IRS was contacted on June 5, 2008 to launch a probe of the Catholic League, and the letter sent to Donohue was dated November 24, 2008. The June 5 letter was sent to the IRS by lawyers from Catholics United; one of the persons who it was mailed to was Lois G. Lerner, the woman cited in the current IRS scandal.

The “evidence” was nothing more than news releases and articles that Donohue had written during the presidential campaign on various issues. The lawyers also asked the IRS to question the source of new funding we had received, implying that we received illegal contributions.

The timing was not coincidental. On October 20, Donohue issued a news release, “George Soros Funds Catholic Left,” and on October 23, he wrote another one, “Catholic Left Scandal Mounts”; both mentioned Catholics United. The same day, October 23, he was asked to go on CNN, and when Catholics United found out, they contacted the station trying to spike the interview.

The person who did this was the head of Catholics United,

Chris Korzen. He said Donohue was not “an authentic Catholic commentator and representative of the Catholic Church,” and that they should either drop him altogether or put him on with Alexia Kelley of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good (Catholics United is listed on the 990 of Catholics in Alliance as a related organization; Soros greases this group, and by extension, Catholics United).

The bid to keep Donohue off TV failed. But here’s the key: Korzen was dumb enough to share with CNN the complaint issued by his group to the IRS. The document, which was leaked by someone at CNN, matches nicely with the IRS complaint of November 24.

In the end, the IRS concluded that although the Catholic League had “intervened in a political campaign,” it was “unintentional”; thus, our tax-exempt status remained intact.

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## **BOWIE’S MESS**

Old-time rock star David Bowie made a splash with his new video that accompanies his song, “The Next Day.”

The video is strewn with characteristic excess: one priest bashes a homeless man, while others are busy hitting on women; self-flagellation is depicted; a dancing gal with bleeding hands makes a stigmata statement; and a customer is served eyeballs on a plate.

The lyrics refer to the “priest stiff in hate” and “women dressed as men for the pleasure of that priest.” The song concludes with, “They can work with Satan while they dress with the saints.” In short, the video reflects the artist—it is a mess.

Bill Donohue commented on Bowie's latest effort: "The switch-hitting, bisexual, senior citizen from London has resurfaced, this time playing a Jesus-like character who hangs out in a nightclub dump frequented by priests, cardinals and half-naked women."

Bowie is confused about religion. He once made a public confession: "I was young, fancy free, and Tibetan Buddhism appealed to me at that time. I thought, 'There's salvation.' It didn't really work. Then I went through Nietzsche, Satanism, Christianity...pottery, and ended up singing. It's been a long road."

Donohue noted that as confused as Bowie is, "it's a sure bet he can't stop thinking about the Cadillac of all religions, namely Roman Catholicism. There is hope for him yet." Donohue's remarks were picked up by media outlets ranging from *Rolling Stone* to the *Wall Street Journal*.

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## SLEIGHT OF HAND

**William A. Donohue**

The collectivization of guilt, and the individualization of merit, is a common media trick, especially when covering Catholics. For example, if there is a wayward cop, and he is Catholic, look for the reporter to cite his religious status. "Patrick McGillicudy, a former altar boy, was arraigned today on charges of police brutality." What you will never see is, "Patrick McGillicudy, a former altar boy, risked his life today to save a woman from her assailant."

Choosing when to play the identity card tells us a great deal about the kind of bias being nurtured. So does the refusal to

do so. Recently, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor was interviewed on "The View" about her life. As readers of this journal know, the ABC show is not exactly Catholic friendly. But the ladies treated the judge well, making plain her many accomplishments. By anyone's lights, Sotomayor is clearly a Catholic success story. Too bad the audience didn't learn that.

Viewers were told that the Puerto Rican judge grew up in the Bronx, and that she survived the projects (the low-income tenements). She made her way to Yale and eventually to Princeton Law School. What was not mentioned was her apprenticeship—Catholic schools. The blame goes to the panel, and to Sotomayor herself: she attended a Catholic elementary school and a noted Catholic high school, Cardinal Spellman. But this never came up.

To mention her Catholic school training would have interfered with the desired narrative: the gals on "The View" called her "super smart," and she responded by saying, "I'm stubborn." You get the point: her success was purely the result of her own individual talents and characteristics, not the Catholic schools that developed her attributes. This was as deliberate as it was deceitful.

Another sleight of hand was evident when a woman from NETWORK contacted us; it is an organization of radical nuns. In a news release I wrote about President Obama and Vice President Biden, I mentioned how the vice president met with about 20 religious leaders, and that the only Catholic cited in the press was Sr. Marjorie Clark. The following paragraph that I wrote did not sit well with the organization:

"Sr. Clark is one of seven 'nuns on the bus' who campaigned for President Obama last fall: only two nuns made the entire trip. She belongs to NETWORK, a dissident group of elderly nuns who are known for never siding with the pro-life community. Indeed, this group is so radical that its founder,

Sr. Marjorie Tuite, was threatened with expulsion from her order after she signed a pro-abortion petition in the 1980s."

That was on May 7. Two days later, I received an email from Stephanie Niedringhaus at the organization. "Your most recent criticism of Sister Marge Clark included numerous inaccuracies. Because you have mentioned our organization and staff before, I would invite you to do some basic fact-checking before spreading erroneous information about us in the future. I hope we can agree that truth is always the best way to go."

My response, offered by one of my staff members at my request, said, "In reply to your email, Mr. Donohue does not respond to generalities; you need to be specific." Her response: "My message was quite specific. I'm asking him to check his facts in the future. Thanks for your courteous response."

Self-delusion is often a reflection of a large ego. But in this case, it was simply a sleight of hand. Then there is Tom Moran. He is the editorial page editor of the *Star-Ledger* who first demanded that Newark Archbishop John Myers resign. I retaliated by demanding that he and the rest of the board resign. After getting blasted with angry emails from our side, he asked if I would agree to be interviewed by him for the newspaper. I agreed.

We talked for about a half hour on May 6th, and at times it got quite contentious, though it ended cordially. I looked for the story but it never ran. Over a week later, he explained why. "By the way, I never printed a transcript of our conversation. It turned out to be a very tough one to boil down to a short piece, and I gave up."

The travesty of justice in Philadelphia, given much coverage in the following pages, involves many guilty parties. The grand jury reports contain more than 20 factual errors, misrepresentations we are trying to rectify. That they have

been allowed to stand, effectively smearing the reputations of innocent priests, is unconscionable.

When the media want a story to catch, they are very good at getting the word out. The obverse is also true. The media blackout on the bishops' conference's annual report on clergy abuse is a case in point. Because this problem is all but non-existent anymore, the media decided there was nothing to report.

While there is much to criticize about the media, I would be lying if I said most of my encounters with reporters and commentators have been bad. Most have been fair.

In any event, the good news is that the mainstream media no longer have a monopoly on disseminating the news. We're happy to play our role in making sure that monopoly never returns.

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## FOUR CATHOLIC MEN FRAMED

*The following statement, written by Bill Donohue, was submitted to the Philadelphia Inquirer to run as a two-page ad. It was scheduled to run on May 20. But after giving us all the information, and after we pledged to pay them \$58,000, we were turned down May 15 by those at the top, without explanation.*

*They couldn't stop us, however, from getting the truth disseminated. On May 20, we sent this statement to over 900 members of the media in Philadelphia and Harrisburg; we also blanketed the parishes in Philly. What has happened to these innocent men is astonishing. What is also despicable is the gutlessness of the Philadelphia Inquirer. Even though the paper is hurting, they would rather furlough their workers*

*before accepting our money: they don't want the truth to come out. One of the reasons this scandal exists is because of the spinelessness of the Philadelphia Inquirer. Had they done their job and exposed the corruption, there may very well have been a different outcome.*

*One of the most outrageous miscarriages of justice ever witnessed has been taking place right before us in Philadelphia. Three Catholic priests, and one Catholic layman, have been railroaded by an ambitious D.A. That the media have failed to report fully and accurately on this story is also a disgrace. But it is not too late to set the record straight. It may even provoke a second look at what really happened.*

On March 22, 2012, Edward Avery, a former priest who had a record of sexual abuse, pleaded guilty to abusing "Billy Doe" and was sent to prison. On January 17, 2013, he appeared in court as a witness and was asked, "Did you do it?" He said he never touched "Doe." So why did he plead guilty? Because he and his lawyers were convinced that if he was found guilty, he was facing more than 20 years in prison; he was offered a plea bargain on the eve of his trial, and he took it. Thus, his sentence was reduced to a maximum of five years, and at age 69, that matters.

*This was the first time Avery was asked by the District Attorney's prosecutors whether he committed the crime. Why wasn't he asked prior to this time? No one has offered an explanation.*

Avery had reason not to mess with Judge M. Teresa Sarmina. After all, she showed her bias when she made a patently false statement against the Catholic Church, and then after I called her out, she walked it back; defense attorneys followed through, asking her to recuse herself. She said she misspoke.

Sarmina didn't misspeak when Msgr. William Lynn was on trial

for conspiracy: to show a pattern of misconduct, she allowed into evidence 21 cases of sexual abuse dating back to 1948, three years before Lynn was born. She misspoke again on June 14, 2012 when she instructed the jury that Lynn did not have to act with criminal intent in order to be found guilty of conspiring to endanger the welfare of a child; the next day she reversed herself, confusing the jury. The jury found Lynn innocent of conspiracy but guilty of endangering the welfare of a child.

Lynn's alleged guilt is tied to Avery's alleged crime. If Avery is innocent, so is Lynn. Moreover, so are Fr. Charles Engelhardt and Bernard Shero, both convicted of raping "Billy Doe"; they are in jail and will be sentenced June 12. The priest faces 37 years in prison, and Shero is looking at 57.

How did we get to this stage? In the grand jury report of September 26, 2001, the grand jury was charged "to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations." The D.A. at the time was Lynne Abraham. After the second grand jury was convened, I decided to challenge her on how she initially reacted. On March 31, 2011, I sent her a letter in the overnight mail asking her to identify which "religious organizations and denominations" she pursued, other than the Roman Catholic Church. Not surprisingly, she did not reply: in other words, she cherry-picked the Catholic Church.

No matter, in 2005, Abraham came up empty. She knew she couldn't prosecute old cases, and that is why not a single priest was prosecuted. The big losers were the taxpayers—they got ripped off by having to fund this wild goose chase.

In 2011, the new D.A., Seth Williams, tried to outdo Abraham. He set his sights on the hierarchy, hoping to nail a bishop. He failed. The best he could do was to get Msgr. Lynn, a top aide to Philadelphia Archbishop Anthony Bevilacqua. Williams was assisted by the grand jury: it never once asked anyone



from the Philadelphia Archdiocese Review Board, which polices these matters, to testify. Ana Maria Catanzaro, who chaired the panel, said she was “shocked at the sweeping statements that were made.” Indeed, there are more than 20 factual errors in the grand jury report, misrepresentations that have yet to be corrected.

*No one has explained why Williams could exploit the very same law found wanting by Abraham. How could it be that in 2005 when Abraham looked at the state statute for endangering the welfare of children, she concluded that Bevilacqua and Lynn could not be charged under that law, but Williams found the same statute perfectly applicable in 2011?*

The key witnesses for Williams in the four cases— Avery, Lynn, Engelhardt and Shero—were the alleged victims, “Billy Doe” and Mark Bukowski.

Bukowski went AWOL shortly after joining the Marines and got a less than honorable discharge. Arrested three times, he is known for deceiving law enforcement. His own mother has accused him of stealing from her husband. He testified before the grand jury that Fr. James Brennan attacked him when he was fully clothed at the age of 14. *But then someone rewrote the grand jury testimony to say he was raped 11 times!*

It is not easy to see how this might have happened since he testified that neither of them was naked when the alleged rape took place. He also told the grand jury that Brennan exposed himself to him, but at the trial he said he wasn’t sure this happened. Furthermore, Bukowski recanted this accusation during an archdiocese inquiry.

The jury was deadlocked on two charges against Brennan. Bukowski has been in prison for drugs, theft, identify theft, filing a false report, running a stop sign, and driving without a license. There will be a retrial.

The real star witness is “Billy Doe.” D.A. Williams had been

looking for a case that fell within the statute of limitations so he could prosecute Lynn for child endangerment, and now he struck gold. The hunger to get Lynn led prosecutors to accuse him of "supplying" Avery "with an endless amount of victims." This monstrous charge—that Lynn operated a conveyor belt of boys readied to be molested—has never been substantiated. It is an outrageous lie.

*"Billy Doe" says it was the D.A.'s office that secured a civil attorney for him to sue the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. If so, it raises serious questions about an attorney referenced by the D.A.'s office who stands to make millions if his client prevails. I have asked the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to launch an investigation.*

Avery took a lie detector test and passed. Engelhardt also took a polygraph and passed. Engelhardt and Shero have no prior arrests. Now compare them to "Billy Doe."

"Billy Doe" has a long record of drug abuse, ranging from marijuana to LSD and heroin. He has been kicked out of two high schools, and has been arrested time and again for drugs and theft. Indeed, his revolving door lifestyle has subjected him to drug rehabilitation 23 times. He never stops: even after he became the number-one witness, he was arrested twice for drugs, including intent to distribute 56 bags of heroin.

Whether it was due to drugs, or is just a reflection of who he is, is unclear, but we know one thing for sure: this guy has a real problem keeping his stories straight.

"Billy Doe" says he was raped by Fr. Engelhardt. If this were true, his story would at least be consistent. It is not. He told an archdiocese social worker that the priest forced him to engage in oral sex, and then anally raped him for five straight hours. He told the D.A.'s office he had two encounters with the priest, both involving masturbation. He told the grand jury he had one session, and it involved oral

sex. So which is it?

*According to his own brother, the rape couldn't have happened since it allegedly took place in the sacristy at a time when several other males were going in and out. Indeed, the doors were open.*

When "Billy Doe" was asked about these stories during the trial, he said he was high on heroin when he spoke to the social worker and therefore couldn't remember what he said to her. However, he managed to remember everything else that happened that day.

"Billy Doe" told the grand jury that when he was a fifth grader, Fr. Avery pulled him aside while he was putting away some choir bells; Avery supposedly told him he was going to do to him what Fr. Engelhardt allegedly did. But the bell story is not believable. At the trial of Engelhardt and Shero, three teachers, including the music director, testified that only eighth grade boys were allowed to help the maintenance crew. That's because the bell cases weighed more than 30 pounds; "Billy" weighed only 63.

More important, "Billy Doe" told the social worker that he was assaulted, and then anally raped—twice—by Fr. Avery; he said he "bled for a week." But when he spoke to the police, he reported no violence: there was no punching and no anal sex. He told Detective Andrew Snyder he was abused four times, but *was never raped*.

"Billy Doe" said he was also raped by Shero. Predictably, he shifted his story three times. He gave the social worker two different locations where it allegedly took place, and then he came up with an even different location when he spoke to the cops. The details of what supposedly happened also kept evolving.

After he was allegedly raped by Engelhardt and Avery, "Billy Doe" said he avoided them by switching Masses. But that

contradicts what his own mother said: she kept a calendar of his activities, and her son's story doesn't jive. The priests at the parish also refute "Billy Doe's" account.

The alleged rapes supposedly traumatized "Billy Doe" to such a degree that he said he began smoking pot at age 11, and experienced massive personality changes after being raped twice when he was 10, and once when he was 11. But his mother, a registered nurse, disputes this: She testified to a grand jury that there weren't any personality changes until he was booted from a Catholic high school at age 14.

By the way, he was kicked out for drugs and carrying brass knuckles.

"Billy Doe" also claimed that he missed a lot of school after he was raped during the fourth quarter of the 1999-2000 school year. But his report card shows he was never absent.

Lynn, Avery, Engelhardt and Shero are sitting in jail because of charges made by "Billy Doe"; the latter two will soon be sentenced. Besides the accuser's testimony, which is riddled with inconsistencies, there were no corroborating witnesses or physical evidence to back his story. Furthermore, his account was contradicted by at least eight witnesses interviewed by detectives: priests, nuns, teachers, the music director, his former drug counselor, and his older brother. His mother's understanding of events, as evidenced by the calendar she kept, also differs from his testimony, as do church records.

Is it any wonder that the D.A.'s office was stunned when the jury found Father Engelhardt and Mr. Shero guilty? Why did Williams deem "Billy Doe" a credible witness when he was never vetted? Everyone knew he was saddled by so much baggage that he wouldn't qualify for a ten cent loan. So why was he accepted to finger these men?

Four Catholic men have been framed. The media have definitely dropped the ball on this story. But it is not too late to ask

some tough questions. This colossal injustice cannot stand.

*[Note: The most authoritative account of what happened can be found at Ralph Cipriano's blog, [bigtrial.net](http://bigtrial.net). To believe the charges levied against these men requires, as Cipriano puts it, "the suspension of rational thought."]*

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## DATA PROVE NO SEX ABUSE CRISIS

A survey done by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), an institute at Georgetown University, shows how utterly absurd it is to maintain that the Catholic Church continues to have a problem with the issue of priestly sexual abuse. Of the nearly 40,000 priests in the United States, there were 34 allegations made by minors last year (32 priests, two deacons): six were deemed credible by law enforcement; 12 were either unfounded or unable to be proven; one was a "boundary violation"; and 15 are still being probed. Moreover, in every case brought to the attention of the bishops or heads of religious orders, the civil authorities were notified.

Not counting those of unknown status, in 88 percent of the total number of cases (independent of when they allegedly occurred), the accused priest is either deceased, has been dismissed from ministry, or has been laicized.

Most of the allegations reported to church officials today have nothing to do with current cases: two-thirds date back to the 1960s, 1970s and the first half of the 1980s. As usual, the problem is not pedophilia: 19 percent of the allegations involving those who work in dioceses or eparchies, and 7

percent of religious order priests and deacons, involve pedophilia. In other words, the problem remains what it has always been—an issue involving homosexual priests (85 percent of the victims were male).

Anyone who knows of any religious, or secular, organization that has less of a problem with the sexual abuse of minors these days should contact the Catholic League. We'd love to match numbers.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented: "One more thing: since nearly 100 percent of our priests did not have a credible allegation made against them last year, this should be picked up by the media. But it won't be. Look for the story to get buried."

The report on sexual abuse, part of an annual audit, is available on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Apparently, almost no one has read it. *Not a single secular newspaper in the United States reported on it.*

It turned out that the story wasn't simply buried—it just wasn't covered at all. Aside from a few blog posts, and a piece by States News Service, that was it. Why did the newspapers ignore it altogether? Because the news was good news, that's why. Had it been bad news—a spike in abuse cases—it would have been frontpage news. But because CARA found "the fewest allegations and victims reported since the data collection for the annual reports began in 2004," the story was deep-sixed.

There is bias by omission, as well as by commission. This is clearly a case of the former. Does it matter? Of course. By not telling the truth, the media help to feed the sick appetites of people like Bill Maher: on his May 10 HBO show, he took another shot at the Catholic Church, saying it welcomes "predators." The titans at Time Warner (the parent

company of HBO) obviously allow Maher to vent his bigotry, aided and abetted by newspapers which refuse to tell the truth. It's a very sick nexus.

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## CORRUPT NJ PAPERS AND POLS

A priest gropes a teenager 12 years ago while wrestling and is told not to be around minors unless supervised. He breaks the agreement. Here's how New Jersey newspapers and politicians responded.

Calling for the resignation of the priest's boss, Newark Archbishop John J. Myers, are the following: the Newark *Star-Ledger*, the *Asbury Park Press*, Sen. Joseph Vitale, Sen. Barbara Buono, Sen. Stephen Sweeney, and Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttel. This wasn't good enough for *The Record*: it called upon lawmakers to tax church property.

An Orthodox rabbi forces an 11-year-old boy to have sex, and over the course of two years he molests him in the woods, in a storage room, in his car, and in the basement of a synagogue. The boy's father, a rabbi, brings this to the attention of a prominent rabbi in the Lakewood Orthodox community, seeking justice in a rabbinical court. Nothing is done. No cops are called. This goes on for two years. The boy is taken to a therapist, but she also refuses to notify the authorities. The boy's father finally reports this to law enforcement, and for this he is punished by his community, loses his job, and is forced to move his family out of state. The raping rabbi finally pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting the boy.

With the exception of the *Asbury Park Press*, which condemned what happened, none of those who called for Archbishop Myers to resign have said a word about the raping rabbi. None has

called for a lawsuit against the Jewish leaders who protected the raping rabbi. None has even identified who the “prominent rabbi” is in Lakewood who allowed this to happen. And none has called for lawmakers to tax the property of synagogues. They are too concentrated on the groping priest.

The disparate treatment can only be called corruption. These editorial writers and politicians are an absolute disgrace.

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## **DOUBLE STANDARD**

No organization in the nation today has less of a problem with the sexual abuse of minors than the Catholic Church. But one would never know that by listening to late-night talk show hosts, and the likes of Bill Maher. They would have the audience believe nothing has changed.

One reason they continue with sweeping generalizations— they’d never condemn any other group based on the misconduct of a few—is because the mainstream media are quick to report on old cases of alleged abuse, but refuse to report on the current situation. Another reason is the failure to adequately report on this problem in the non-Catholic population.

Just recently, a rabbi from Lakewood, New Jersey pleaded guilty to abusing a minor. He forced an 11-year-old boy to have sex, molesting him in the woods, in his car, and in the basement of a synagogue. The boy’s father, also a rabbi, brought this to the attention of his Orthodox community, seeking justice in a rabbinical court. Nothing was done. The police were not notified.

This went on for two years. The boy was taken to a therapist, but she also refused to notify the authorities. The boy’s



father finally reported this to law enforcement, and for this he was punished by his community: he lost his job and was forced to move his family out of state. Sad to say, but failure to notify the police, and neighborhood reprisal against the complainant, is common in the Orthodox Jewish community. Ask anyone in Brooklyn.

The media barely touched this story. Most astonishingly, there were no calls for punishing the leaders who failed to report the crime. Does anyone really believe that if the rabbi had been a priest, and none of his superiors had reported this to the authorities, that there wouldn't have been calls for removing the guilty parties from their posts?

This is not as hypothetical as it may seem. When it was reported that a priest from the Newark archdiocese violated his agreement not to be around minors in an unsupervised capacity (he groped a teenage boy 12 years ago), several newspapers, led by the Star-Ledger, and state lawmakers, called for his boss, Archbishop John J. Myers, to resign.

Why is it that the religious superiors of a raping rabbi, who failed to call the cops, are not the source of condemnation by editorial writers and politicians, but Myers is in their sights for not policing a groping priest? Moreover, imagine the reaction if a Catholic community sought reprisal against a complainant. Maher would have fun with that one.

The sexual abuse of minors is hardly confined to the clergy. The public schools have had their share of this problem, and the practice of moving an offending teacher to another school district—it's called "passing the trash" in education circles—still exists. Yet these stories never command the same attention as reports of priestly misconduct do.

Catholics are fed up with the double standard, and with the failure to acknowledge that great progress has been made in the Church. Most priests, and bishops, are good guys. They

deserve to be treated better, and they certainly deserve to be treated fairly.

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## **“TESTAMENT OF MARY” CLOSES**

In April, Colm Toibin's book, *The Testament of Mary*, became the subject of a Broadway play; it opened at the Walter Kerr Theatre. There is no question that Toibin is a gifted writer, but it wasn't easy to see who was going to be drawn to this play, even if it ran for only 12 weeks. His novella was not written to endear himself to Christians—he posits that Mary does not believe her son was the Son of God—though in fairness there is nothing vicious about his work.

Toibin fancies that Mary is not the pious, obedient woman we have come to know. Instead, she very much had a mind of her own, declaring that her son died in vain. Speaking of the crucifixion, she says, “I fled before it was over but if you want witnesses then I am one and I can tell you now, when you say that he redeemed the world, I will say that it was not worth it. It was not worth it.”

Toibin, who is a homosexual ex-Catholic, is not exactly a champion of the Catholic Church. Indeed, he is a vociferous critic of the Church's teachings on sexuality. He is entitled to his views, though it must be said that his attempt to persuade Christians of the fallacies of their religion falls flat.

The play, based on the book by Colm Toibin, opened on April 22 and was scheduled to run through June 16. But instead of lasting 12 weeks, it lasted only two. On the day it opened, Bill Donohue said, “it is not easy to see who is going to be drawn to this play.”

The play bombed. That's why it closed. Quite frankly, there aren't enough people who want to spend their evenings watching a dark performance about a fanciful Virgin Mary who rejects the divinity of her son. Unfortunately we don't have the results of a psychological battery of tests performed on those who like this kind of stuff.

The *Irish Times'* Fintan O'Toole was furious that the play bombed. He blamed capitalism. "The most basic truth about Broadway is that it's about money. It is the raw, ruthless marketplace to which some people would like to reduce all artistic endeavour. It is a primal form of capitalism: enormous risks in pursuit of enormous rewards."

In O'Toole's world, plays he likes should have a long run on Broadway, even if no one wants to pay to see them (no doubt he would like to get some stimulus money to subsidize his leisure). But one of the great things about capitalism is that it accurately gauges public sentiment, rewarding what people want, and discarding what they don't. A market economy, fortunately, doesn't necessarily reward what the elites want. Which is why they hate it.

Looks like there aren't enough O'Tooles out there to enjoy Toibin's angry discourse on Catholicism.

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## THE THREAT OF ISLAM

The Pew Research Center's report "The World's Muslims: Religion, Politics and Society" is an impressive work, based on surveys conducted between 2008 and 2012 in 39 countries. Over 38,000 interviews were conducted in over 80 languages. It examines the social and political views of Muslims worldwide, asking the respondents whether they believe that

sharia (traditional Islamic law) should apply only to Muslims, if they support religious freedom, and whether they support violence against civilians.

A majority of those surveyed in Africa, the Middle East and Asia wanted to see sharia made the law of the land. (In Afghanistan and Pakistan, these numbers were respectively 99% and 84%). While American Muslims were less likely to support violence against civilians in the name of Islam, 40% in both Afghanistan and in the Palestinian territories did support this.

Andrew McCarthy, author of *The Grand Jihad*, finds the report's results "depressing" but not surprising, "despite Pew's best efforts to make things seem better than they are." He notes, for example, that some two-thirds of Muslims in the Middle East support death for apostates, and a third support suicide bombings. In a recent article, McCarthy writes: "To keep telling people, as the media does, that sharia is nothing to be concerned about because it is just an airy, aspirational, personal moral compass is dangerously irresponsible."

The report doesn't cover countries where Christians are forced to leave in growing numbers. In Syria, for example, entire towns and regions that were Christian for centuries before Islam have been evacuated.

In 2003, Iraq's Christian population was one million; now it's less than 400,000. In Egypt, some 100,000 Christian Copts have fled their homeland since the "Arab Spring." In Mali, some 200,000 Christians have fled after an Islamic takeover in 2012. In the Ivory Coast, Christians have literally been crucified. The problem is Islamism, a word which has come to replace the term "Islamic fundamentalism." Author Raymond Ibrahim writes: "Millions of Christians are being displaced from one end of the Islamic world to the other. We are reliving the true history of how the Islamic world, much of which prior to the Islamic conquests was almost entirely

Christian, came into being.”

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## “700 CLUB” ERRS ON CHURCH AND HITLER

In a segment titled “God and Hitler,” Gordon Robertson (son of Rev. Pat Robertson), hosted a discussion on the Catholic Church’s response to Hitler. Several errors of fact were made.

1) It is wrong to paint Hitler as a Catholic. Though he was baptized, he excommunicated himself, *latae sententiae*, when he sought, in his words, to “crush [the Catholic Church] like a toad.” He made good on his pledge by persecuting 8,000 priests, over 500 of whom were killed in concentration camps. He also sought to assassinate the pope.

2) The 1933 Nazi-Vatican Concordat was not a show of solidarity. As Rabbi David Dalin has shown, it was a protective measure designed to protect German Catholics from persecution. In fact, at least 34 letters of protest were sent from the Vatican to the Nazis between 1933 and 1937, culminating in a 1937 encyclical that condemned Nazi violations of the Concordat and Nazi racial ideology. It was smuggled out of Italy and distributed on Palm Sunday to Catholics in Germany. Nothing like this happened in Protestant churches in Germany.

3) It is not true that Hitler met resistance from Protestants alone. Former Israeli Diplomat Pinchas Lapidé estimated that the Catholic Church, under the auspices of Pope Pius XII, saved as many as 860,000 Jewish lives. During the war, the *New York Times* twice said the Church was “a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent”; Albert Einstein also

singled out the Church during the war. After the war, Golda Meir praised the work of the Church, as did the ADL, the World Jewish Congress, and scores of other Jewish organizations.

4) It is factually wrong to say the Vatican archives have "never been seen." Many scholars have had access. As for Pope Pius XII being "Hitler's Pope," it should be noted that John Cornwell, the ex-seminarian who originated this term, retracted it years ago. So why does "The 700 Club" continue to cite it?