

CONFUSION REIGNS OVER SAME-SEX BLESSINGS

Last December, Pope Francis gave priests permission to bless homosexual couples. It immediately triggered a blowback of massive proportions. But some loved it. Among the happiest are Catholic dissidents, members of the clergy, religious, and laity who have long rejected the Church's teachings on women and sexuality.

We issued a report detailing the comments that these people made in support of this change. Catholics for Choice—the anti-Catholic pro-abortion letterhead funded by wealthy individuals and foundations—acknowledged that “some priests have been secretly blessing same-sex unions for years.” They noted, with delight, that they can now do so publicly.

They were right. Fr. James Martin, a LGBT advocate, said he was delighted to bless a gay couple in a living room, saying, “It was really nice to be able to do that publicly.” Thus did he tacitly admit that he had been doing so all along.

The confusion that stories like this have generated is considerable.

There has been widespread opposition by the African Catholic clergy to this decision. Bishops and priests in the United States, France, Eastern Europe, and many other parts of the world have also expressed their misgivings.

Earlier in the year, it was reported that an American Catholic priest blessed a same-sex couple in a church, something the pope's declaration did not permit. The question that Catholics need answered is whether the Vatican is willing and able to deal with situations like that in Kentucky which appear to run afoul of its intentions.

Fr. Richard Watson offered the blessing to a lesbian couple at Saint Paul Catholic Church in Lexington, Kentucky on New Year's Eve; the couple claim to have been civilly "married" for 22 years. Had the blessing taken place in the home of the couple, it would not have drawn much attention. But it took place in a church, and the priest was wearing a rainbow stole. The Vatican document on this issue clearly states that it is not acceptable to allow "any type of liturgical rite or blessing similar to a liturgical rite," citing the "confusion" it would incur.

The situation in Lexington should come as no surprise. After the Vatican declaration on same-sex blessings was issued, Fr. Watson pledged to open his doors to everyone, "no matter their circumstances." Yet the Vatican statement is replete with qualifications, citing many circumstances where the blessing would not be appropriate.

The director of the gay, lesbian and transgender ministry of the Diocese of Lexington, "JR" Zerkowski, also heralded the new directive. In 2021, Bill Donohue wrote to his boss, Bishop John Stowe, asking whether he agreed with Zerkowski about his publicly stated support for the Equality Act, legislation that has been slammed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for its anti-Catholic provisions. He did not reply.

In a statement released October 25, 2023, Donohue mentioned that Pope Francis thanked Zerkowski for his work. He pointedly questioned whether the pope knew of his association with extremist groups who reject Church teachings. Donohue addressed another issue as well. "Does he [the pope] know that under the tutelage of Zerkowski that his ministry draped an image of Our Blessed Mother in a gay pride flag, posting it online, calling Jesus' mother the 'Mother of Pride'?"

In other words, it was to be expected that, given its history, the Diocese of Lexington would put its own spin on the recent same-sex marriage directive. It was also to be expected that

the confusion that this statement would engender would begin as soon as it was released.

In March 2021, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith posed this question: "Does the Church have the power to give the blessing to unions of persons of the same sex?" It replied, "Negative." It said that it "declares illicit any form of blessing that tends to acknowledge their unions as such." To make its point crystal clear, it said that God "does not and cannot bless sin."

On December 2023, the *New York Times*, citing the latest document, ran a headline, "Gay Catholics Hear History: 'God Bless You.'"

The author of the document, and the head of the Dicastery (previously the Congregation) for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernández, said on December 18 that this was his only statement on this issue—"no further responses should be expected."

On January 4, 2024, Fernández issued another response, seeking to clarify his comments of December 18. Now Catholics learned that the original statement was not "heretical."

Catholics from Kentucky to Kenya are supposed to believe in the same Church teachings, but given the confusion over same-sex blessings, this is in jeopardy. What makes this issue so important is that the Catholic Church is losing members in the United States while it is booming in Africa. Indeed, more than half of all the people who joined the Catholic Church worldwide in 2021 came from Africa.

If Africa is the future of the Church, the disillusionment that African Catholics are currently experiencing should be one of the most pressing issues facing the entire Catholic Church today.

BIDEN FINDS AN EXECUTION HE LIKES

When Joe Biden was running for president in 2020, he pledged that no one—no matter how heinous the crime—should ever be executed. Instead, the guilty should “serve life sentences without probation or parole.”

Merrick Garland was Attorney General for just a few months before he declared a moratorium on the death penalty. He and the president announced that they would seek to abolish capital punishment once and for all.

On January 12, 2024, Biden and Garland changed their mind. They finally found an execution they like. It is not hard to figure out why they pivoted. It has everything to do with race.

In the last three years that Biden has been president, there have been nearly 2,000 mass shootings. But never once did Garland authorize the death penalty. So the question is, why did Biden and Garland make an exception for Payton Gendron?

The reason they want Gendron dead is because they see in him something that transcends his persona—he is seen as fodder for virtue signaling. Quite simply, they are discriminating against him because he is a white man who killed blacks, and they want to show blacks that they won't stand for it.

Black people kill black people with stunning frequency, yet such stories are given short shrift by the media, and politicians fail to say a word about it. But when a white person, such as Gendron, kills black people, he's a suitable candidate for execution. If black lives really mattered as

much as white lives, then the race of the killer wouldn't matter. But it does.

Gendron is a self-confessed white racist who killed 10 black persons at a Buffalo supermarket in 2022 when he was 18. New York State does not allow the death penalty but the Department of Justice can override this in hate crime cases. They did so in this case.

Biden wants Gendron executed because he wants the public to know that he won't tolerate white supremacy. That's what he told a black congregation in South Carolina on January 8. He called white supremacy a "poison" that is infecting America. Just last spring he told a black audience at Howard University that "the most dangerous terrorist threat" to America is white supremacy.

One likely reason why Biden is pursuing the death penalty in this case is because he wants to shore up his base with black voters. It is slipping badly, especially among young blacks. His approval rating with blacks under the age of 50 is 32 percent.

When Garland addressed the death penalty for Gendron, he said, "The Justice Department fully recognizes the threat that white supremacist violence poses to the safety of the American people and American democracy." This is a ruse.

Crime data show that in almost 90 percent of the cases where a black person has been murdered, the killer was black. Whites are responsible for 8 percent of blacks who are murdered; the figure is double (16 percent) for whites killed by blacks. In other words, the greatest domestic threat to black people today stems from black people, not white supremacists.

Further proof that Biden and Garland have a racial motive in treating Gendron differently can be seen in their treatment of the El Paso mass killer. In 2019, Patrick Wood

Crusius killed 23 people in a Wal-Mart racist rampage. It has been described as the deadliest attack on Hispanics in American history.

Crusius received 90 consecutive life sentences. Why didn't Garland pursue the death penalty? Don't 23 dead Latinos count as much as 10 dead African Americans?

If Gendron had been the leader of some white supremacist group, but was otherwise regarded as fairly normal, he would fit the profile of someone who might be a candidate for unusually harsh treatment. But such is not the case.

Like so many mass shooters, Gendron was a classic loner. He was not in charge of any group, white supremacist or otherwise; nor did he belong to a white racist organization. His father was an alcoholic and a long-time drug addict; his chronic substance abuse resulted in the demise of two marriages.

Gendron was such a freak that he wore a hazmat suit to class. After he threatened a shooting at his high school, he was sent for a mental health evaluation.

He was fascinated by violence, even to the point of bragging how he killed a feral cat. First he stabbed it, then he smashed its head on concrete. He finished it by cutting off the cat's head with a hatchet.

This is a sick man. Normal people do not act this way.

Make no mistake, his horrific crimes demand that he be put away for life.

But given what we know about his disturbed upbringing and his mental state, why are such factors being discounted? If he were just another screwed up young man, with no racist background, everyone knows that Biden and Garland would not be seeking the death penalty.

Looking at the world through a racist lens—which is what Biden and Garland are doing—inevitably results in disparate treatment. It's obvious that they are exploiting the Gendron case for political purposes.

CLIMATE CZAR PODESTA IS CZAR OF DUPLICITY

President Biden's pick of John Podesta to replace John Kerry as his top climate envoy is revealing on several fronts. All three Catholics worship at the altar of climate control more than they do the altar of the Magisterium, or the teaching body of the Catholic Church. In the case of Podesta, not only is his fidelity misplaced, he has actively sought to subvert the Catholic Church.

To be specific, we learned in 2016 that Wikileaks documents from 2012 showed how Podesta created Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, a bogus lay Catholic entity. He did so with the express purpose of mobilizing Catholics to challenge the Catholic hierarchy, forcing changes that advance the left-wing agenda.

Catholics in Alliance was funded by George Soros. We fought this shell group from the get-go, exposing them as a fraud. When Wikileaks documents confirmed our allegations, Podesta claimed he could not be anti-Catholic because he is a Catholic.

Here is what Bill Donohue said on October 17, 2016, in reply. "Bigotry is determined by what is said and done and does not turn on biographical data. For example, putting a swastika on a synagogue is no less anti-Semitic if done by a Jew.

Similarly, making anti-Catholic statements, or engaging in anti-Catholic conduct, is no less anti-Catholic if done by a Catholic.”

If a non-Catholic president chose Podesta for a senior post in his administration, we would brand it as anti-Catholic. When a president who identifies as a Catholic does it, it is aiding and abetting sabotage within the Catholic Church.

Podesta is not only duplicitous about his Catholic status, he is just as duplicitous about his commitment to the environment.

Last November, Podesta went with John Kerry, the climate chief at the time, to the U.N.’s COP28 summit. They had a good time hammering fossil fuels. More important, they got there by taking a private jet. Sen. Joni Ernst took note. “Once again, the Biden administration exposes the hypocrisy of their own radical green fantasy.”

Podesta loves jetting around in private planes. In fact, he averages 11,000 miles per year in private jet travel. He also owns nine luxury cars. In other words, his lifestyle is responsible for emitting so many pollutants into the air that he has to be in the top 1 percent of the nation’s polluters. And when he gets to his destination, he bashes polluters.

John Podesta is a quintessential phony. That is why he was chosen to be the Climate Czar by our “devout Catholic” president. The Czar of Duplicity is a perfect fit.

NFL JOINS HANDS WITH LGBT BIGOTS

The National Football League (NFL) paired with an anti-Catholic LGBT organization, GLAAD, during Super Bowl week, celebrating what it calls "A Night of Pride with GLAAD." Sponsored by Smirnoff, the fun and games began on February 7 and were carried on CBS Sports, GLAAD, and NFL social channels.

GLAAD has a history of anti-Catholic antics, ranging from celebrating anti-Catholic plays to bashing popes. More recently, it heralded the decision by the Los Angeles Dodgers to honor an anti-Catholic group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, at its June 16 game in 2023; the Dodgers reversed its earlier ruling to disinvite the Sisters.

On June 17, NBC Los Angeles noted the role of the Catholic League in getting the Dodgers to initially disinvite the bigots. "The Dodgers pulled the Sisters from their Pride Night the day after Bill Donohue...had emailed Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred to urge the team to yank the group." Manfred was bombarded with emails from our subscribers.

But then the Dodgers caved in to gay pressure groups. Sarah Kate Ellis, president and CEO of GLAAD, said the ruling to reinstate the Sisters restored "fairness." Fairness to whom? Not to Catholics.

As we recounted at the time, the Sisters have a long history of Catholic bashing extending back to 1979.

Why is the NFL cheering homosexuals and the sexually confused (males who think they are females and vice versa)? Why is the NFL now aiming at the kids? To be precise, why is it hosting its second annual Pride Flag Football Clinic for young boys? Does it really expect that these kids are the future of the

NFL? Or are they pandering?

More seriously, why has the NFL teamed with GLAAD, an organization that is not shy about bashing Catholics? If it is wrong to host an anti-gay group during Super Bowl week, why is it acceptable to host an anti-Catholic group?

For that matter, if the NFL is reaching out to young LGBT boys, why doesn't it reach out to young Christian boys? Why doesn't it have a clinic for young Jewish and Muslim boys?

The NFL, under its woke commissioner, Roger Goodell, is not content to promote professional football. Its foray into left-wing politics is no secret, but less well known is its embrace of anti-Catholic bigotry. But now the word is out. Our fans will surely weigh in against him.