

CATHOLICISM EMERGES AS ISSUE IN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

For the first time in over four decades, Catholicism has emerged as a factor in a presidential campaign. In 1960, Massachusetts Senator John Fitzgerald Kennedy had to overcome Protestant critics who objected to having any Catholic in the White House. Now another Roman Catholic JFK from Massachusetts is the source of controversy, namely John Forbes Kerry. Only this time the critics are coming from his own camp—practicing Roman Catholics.

Kerry, the presumptive Democratic nominee for president in 2004, differs from Kennedy in a couple of ways. Though there is an Irish county by the name Kerry, there is nothing Irish about John Kerry. He is an Austrian whose paternal grandfather was a Czech Jew named Kohn. Before coming to the U.S., Kohn not only converted to Catholicism, he changed his name to Kerry. More important, the issues facing Kerry today are not the ones that Kennedy faced in 1960.

In 1960, abortion was illegal; the birth control pill had just been made commercially available; stem cell research wasn't an issue; euthanasia was taboo; the idea of school choice—in the form of tax relief for parents who sent their children to parochial schools—was opposed by Protestants; and gay unions were unimaginable. Now abortion is legal; birth control is widely used; embryonic stem cell research is an issue; support for euthanasia, in the form of doctor-assisted suicide, is a subject that lawmakers must address; evangelical Protestants are now pro-school choice; and homosexuals want to get married.

For Kerry, these new issues are a problem. His voting record on abortion is the most radical of any senator in the nation—he votes with NARAL, the most extreme pro-abortion

organization in the U.S.—100 percent of the time. He supports all methods of birth control; he votes in favor of embryonic stem cell research; he supports doctor-assisted suicide in some cases; he opposes school vouchers; and he not only advocates civil unions for gays, he is one of only 14 senators who voted against the Defense of Marriage Act.

In his new book, Kerry calls himself a “practicing and believing Catholic.” Yet in every instance mentioned above he is at odds with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Currently, the bishops are not in agreement about what should be done. So stay tuned. This is one issue that is not going to go away.

PLEDGE CASE HITS THE COURT

On March 24, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the Pledge of Allegiance case. The Catholic League, together with the Thomas More Law Center, filed an *amicus curiae* brief in support of the Elk Grove Unified School District that seeks to uphold the recitation of the Pledge in the schools. Challenging the school district is Michael Newdow; he objects to the words “under God” in the Pledge.

“It cannot seriously be maintained,” we said in a news release, “that the words ‘under God’ in the Pledge of Allegiance constitute the establishment of a religion.” We made the point that there is a dramatic difference between the collective acknowledgment of our religious heritage and the formal establishment of a religion. We added that Newdow is “a devout atheist” who cannot understand the difference.

Just as it makes sense not to force students to say the Pledge, it makes sense not to prevent those who choose to

recite it from doing so. As our brief states, “This Court should take the opportunity to affirm once and for all that a voluntary nonsectarian invocation of God in public, especially in the public schools, does not violate the Establishment Clause, and is in fact Constitutionally consistent with our nation’s history and religious heritage.”

Ultimately, what is at stake is the right of Americans to celebrate their religious heritage on public property without fear of state reprisal. A decision will soon be rendered.

WHAT’S WRONG WITH WHITE PEOPLE?

William A. Donohue

The Catholic Church rightfully emphasizes that all human beings share an inherent dignity. It matters not a whit what a person’s race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or age is—all are equal before God. Because we do not choose any of these attributes, they are of no moral consequence. It’s only when we engage in making value choices that morality kicks in. For instance, having a homosexual orientation is not sinful; acting on it is.

Until recently, such an observation would be regarded as pedestrian. Always allowing for the occasional eccentric, everyone knew that homosexuality was wrong. But all this has changed.

First gays wanted tolerance. To tolerate is to put up with, and that’s what homosexuals wanted from heterosexuals—to publicly acknowledge their presence without rancor or discord. Having won that battle (deservedly so), they proceeded to

reject tolerance altogether. What they did was to raise the bar: they wanted social affirmation. Nothing less than social approval of who they are—including their lifestyle—would satisfy. Now they want us to say it's okay for a guy to marry a guy.

Americans are a tolerant people. That's good, just so long as tolerance doesn't slide into amorality. For example, it is one thing to put up with immoral behavior, quite another to say we no longer object. Not only is there nothing wrong with registering moral outrage at morally outrageous behavior, there is something immoral about remaining silent. And no segment of society fails this test more than white people; in particular, well-educated white people.

In a recent survey of the American people by Quinnipiac University, it found that opposition to gay marriage was running 63-31 percent. Among whites, 31 percent were pro-gay marriage, but among blacks the figure was 22 percent. Even in a place like New York City—long considered a bastion of liberalism—the sentiment was running 47-40 percent against homosexual marriage; blacks were the most opposed, with 63 percent favoring a ban.

The Pew Hispanic Center found that 72 percent of Latinos believe homosexual sex between adults is “unacceptable”; 59 percent of whites feel the same way. In New York State, in a poll of Democratic voters taken by Edison Media Research, it was determined that 27 percent of Hispanics thought gays should be able to marry; 47 percent of whites approved. In Florida, a survey by Schroth & Associates found that 20 percent of Hispanics were pro-gay marriage, compared to 29 percent of whites.

On March 22, several hundred clergymen rallied at a church in the Atlanta area to sign a declaration of opposition to gay marriage. All of them were black. One week later, on March 29, hundreds of clergymen from across New York gathered at City

Hall to protest gay marriage. Almost all were African American or Hispanic (conspicuously absent were Catholic priests). The same phenomenon exists worldwide. Virtually every nation in the world where the right of two men to marry is being seriously advanced is white: it is in Canada, the U.S. and Europe where the gay rights movement is flourishing. It is not flourishing in Asia, the Middle East, Africa or Latin America. Just in nations that are predominantly white.

This pattern is evident in the United Nations as well: non-white nations are busy resisting the tide of the gay rights movement that is being foisted upon them by rich white countries. And within North America and Europe, we find that it is the best educated white men and women (more women than men) who want to see Tom and Dick get married. Though they may balk at the prospect of Tom, Dick and Harry marrying, not one among them is able to articulate a principled reason why it's okay for two guys to marry, but not three.

So what's wrong with white people? To be sure, many have swallowed the moonshine—served up in copious portions by our cultural elites—that to deny homosexuals the right to marry is to discriminate against them. Lost in this logic is the fact that homosexuals can marry. And many do; some even father or give birth to children. What they can't do is marry someone of the same sex. Neither can brothers marry their sisters; or fathers marry their daughters; or sons marry their mothers; or sisters marry their sisters; or brothers marry their brothers. But all are free to marry someone outside their family who is of the opposite sex.

It is not a good sign when a society passes laws that contravene nature's cues. For example, nature tells us that, on average, men are stronger than women, and that young men are stronger than older men. That is why we draft young men and not old ladies. In the same way, nature, and nature's God, allow for the unity of male-female relations and the prospect of a family. A society that does not ratify that fact of life

is simply asking for trouble.

NEW ANTI-PIUS XII BOOK BY AN OLD CRITIC

by Ronald J. Rychlak

During World War II and for years after it ended, Pope Pius XII was heralded as a staunch opponent of the Nazis and a champion of their victims. Then in 1963, as the result of a piece of fiction written by German playwright Rolf Hochhuth, a controversy arose about whether the Pope had been sufficiently outspoken about Nazi atrocities. One of the earliest papal critics of this era was Robert Katz. In his 1967 *Death in Rome* and in his 1969 *Black Sabbath*, Katz severely criticized Pope Pius XII for failing to take a firmer stand in opposition to the Nazis.

After the controversy re-erupted in the past few years, with the publication of several new books, authors like John Cornwell and Susan Zuccotti were justifiably criticized for relying on Katz's work, which pre-dated the extensive release of Vatican documents on this subject.

Now, in *The Battle for Rome: The Germans, the Allies, the Partisans, and the Pope* (Simon and Schuster: New York 2003) Katz re-asserts his old charges. Not only does he cite his out-dated books for authority, but coming full circle, he relies upon Zuccotti and Cornwell who had relied upon him! In fact, at one point (p. 54), Katz refers to a charge made by "one historian." Flipping to the endnotes, one finds an abbreviation. Only by further flipping to Katz's key does the reader learn that Katz's "historian" is journalist (not

historian) John Cornwell and his discredited book, *Hitler's Pope*.

One of the reasons why serious scholars have avoided Katz's earlier books is because of a lawsuit that was filed by Pope Pius XII's niece, Elena Rossignani. The Italian Supreme Court ruled that: "Robert Katz wished to defame Pius XII, attributing to him actions, decisions and sentiments which no objective fact and no witness authorized him to do." Katz was fined 400,000 Lire and given a 13-month suspended prison sentence.

In his new book, Katz discounts that lawsuit, noting that because of an amnesty, the litigation was ruled moot. That may be a legal defense, but it does not negate the two separate findings on the merits against Katz, and those findings should be sufficient to warn readers about the legitimacy of (and motivation behind) Katz's work.

Katz focuses on the period when German troops occupied Rome. The first important Vatican-related event took place in October 1943, when the Nazis rounded up about 1,200 Roman Jews for deportation. Katz concludes that the Allies had advance notice of the planned roundup and that Pope Pius had at least an unsubstantiated warning of it.

Katz reports that a copy of a German telegram revealing the Nazi order for the roundup of Jews was passed on to President Franklin Roosevelt. Only by consulting the notes at the back of the book, however, does one learn that the telegram reached Roosevelt nearly three months after the roundup. Katz's case against Pope Pius XII, who had offered gold to pay a ransom to the Germans to prevent deportations, is even weaker. (Katz even faults Pius for making this offer, because it may have dissuaded some Jews from going into hiding!)

Katz claims that the German Ambassador to the Holy See, Ernst von Weizsaecker urged the Pope to make "an official protest"

on the day that the Jewish people were arrested. In support of this claim, Katz cites a telegram sent by the Consul at the German embassy to the Quirinal [seat of the Italian government] to the Foreign Office in Berlin. This telegram, however, was sent nine days before the roundup and said nothing about any plan urged on the Vatican.

In a conversation that Weizsaecker had with the Vatican Secretary of State on the day of the arrests, the ambassador expressly urged the Pope *not* to openly protest, since a protest would only make things worse. In fact, thanks in part to Vatican intervention, about 200 prisoners were freed. Moreover, there were no further mass arrests of Roman Jews (thousands of whom—with papal support—went into hiding in Church properties). Obviously, Pius acted with the best interest of the victims in mind.

The second event on which Katz focuses took place on March 23, 1944 after Italian partisans set off a bomb which killed 33 members of the German police. Hitler ordered the immediate execution of ten prisoners for every soldier killed. Within hours, 335 prisoners (most of whom were not Jewish; one was a priest) were led to the catacombs on the outskirts of Rome and shot. The massacre took place in complete secrecy.

Katz argues that the Pope knew of the retaliation in advance but that he did nothing to help. He cites as “proof” a memorandum that was received at the Vatican on March 24, about five hours before the prisoners were killed. That memo, which was published by the Vatican in 1980, said that “it is however foreseen that for every German killed 10 Italians will be executed.”

First of all, this memo probably did not make it all the way to the Pope prior to the executions. More importantly, Pope Pius XII certainly was well aware of the likelihood of brutal Nazi retaliation before he got this memo, which provided no specific details or new information. In fact, historian Owen

Chadwick cited the document as proof that Pius XII obviously did not know details of the reprisal.

When the memorandum made its way to him, Pius sent a priest to obtain more information and release of the prisoners. The Gestapo chief of police, however, would not receive the Pope's messenger. The executions were already underway. That officer (Herbert Kappler) testified during his post-war trial that "Pope Pius XII was not aware of the Nazis' plans before the massacre."

Katz's efforts to defame Pius XII are evident from the very beginning of this book. The text starts with a report from the Roman police chief on the activity of the clergy and Catholic Organizations. It says, "The clergy continues to maintain an attitude of cooperation with the Government." Since the book is about the era of Nazi occupation, one might think that the Church was in cahoots with the Germans. The date of the report, however, is *prior* to the Nazi occupation.

Katz suggests that Pius should have approved of rebel efforts to murder Nazis. At the same time, he suggests that the Pope should have participated in a funeral for murdered Nazis. He also criticizes Pius for his efforts to bring about peace. Additionally, Katz seems to think that the Pope should have behaved differently when the victims were Italian Catholics as opposed to Jews. Can you imagine the justifiable criticism if the Pope had done that?

Katz would have the reader believe that Sir Francis D'Arcy Osborne, British Minister to the Holy See from 1936 to 1947, was a critic of Pius. In fact, following the war Osborne wrote that "Pius XII was the most warmly humane, kindly, generous, sympathetic (and, incidentally, saintly) character that it has been my privilege to meet in the course of a long life."

Similarly, Katz wants us to believe that the U.S.

representative in the Vatican, Harold Tittman, was a papal critic. Tittman's son, however, is working on his father's memoirs, and he reports that the U.S. representative held a

very favorable opinion of Pius XII's policies. Most preposterous of all is the attempt to suggest that Domenico Cardinal Tardini held Pius in low regard. One only need consult Tardini's loving tribute, *Memories of Pius XII*, to see the falseness of that charge.

Katz contends that Pius was prejudiced not only against Jews but also against blacks. He cites a British memorandum indicating that after the liberation of Rome, the Pope requested that "colored troops" not be used to garrison the Vatican. This canard stems from a report the Pope received about French Moroccan troops. They were particularly brutal, raping and looting wherever they went. The Pope did not want these specific soldiers stationed in Rome (or anywhere else). He expressed his concerns about these men to British Ambassador Osborne, who broadened the statement in his cable back to London, saying that the Pope did not want "colored troops" stationed at the Vatican.

The Pope's concern about these specific French Moroccan troops is made clear in a declassified confidential memorandum from the OSS, an article that appeared in the Vatican newspaper, and a message sent from the Vatican to its representative in France. None of these documents make reference to race, just the Pope's concern over these specific French Moroccan troops. (Although Katz did not know how they played into this story, even he noted the outrageous brutality of these soldiers.)

Katz assails Pope Pius IX as an anti-Semite; incorrectly asserts that Pius XII favored the Germans over the Soviets in World War II; calls Pius XII pompous; mocks the Chief Rabbi of Rome (who praised Pius XII); accepts self-serving testimony from Nazi officers over Jewish and Catholic witnesses; repeats stories that have been shown to be false; gives inaccurate interpretations to papal statements; cites rumors that suggest the Pope was prepared to flee Rome; and takes every cheap shot that he can.

Of those who support Pius XII, Katz writes: “The Pope’s defenders can do no better than cite decades-old research of deflated credibility...” That, of course, is preposterous. All kinds of new evidence has come to light in the past year with the opening of new archives. Every bit of it supports the view that Pius XII and the Vatican leadership were opposed to the Nazis and did what they could to help all victims, Jewish or otherwise.

One final error made by Katz: He reports at the end of the book that Ronald J. Rychlak is a “non-Catholic lawyer and professor at the University of Mississippi School of Law, now Pius’s staunchest supporter.” I am and always have been Catholic.

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“THE PASSION” CONTINUES TO EXCITE

Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” continues to be the source of controversy. Attempts by three Jewish brothers in France to ban the film did not succeed in court, but this did not stop the Benlolo brothers—Patrick, Gerard and Jean-Marc—from appealing the decision. The movie was censored in Israel; it was the only nation in the world to ban the film (Shapira Films, which has the Israeli distribution rights, refused to release “The Passion”).

For about a year now, critics of the film have been saying it

would spur violence against Jews. Events have proven them wrong: two months after the release of the movie, not one act of violence was reported. It needs to be said that the movie's critics were particularly certain that Jews would not escape violence overseas. Indeed, Poland, France, Russia and the Arab nations were cited over and over again as places bound to witness pogroms. But not one act of thuggery has occurred anywhere in the world.

It must also be said that those who made these extravagant claims, including many prominent Jews, have not apologized. They should. Recall that William Donohue wrote to Abraham Foxman of the ADL requesting an apology for his anti-Christian remark. Here is what Foxman said: "[Gibson is] hawking it on a commercial crusade to the churches of this country." For Foxman, it is not secularists who are the problem for Jews. Nor is it lax Christians. On the contrary, it is those practicing Christians who are a menace.

This is all rather strange given that it was atheistic Nazism and atheistic Communism that murdered Jews by the millions in the last century. And today it is Muslim extremists who want to murder Jews. Yet it is church-going Christians whom the ADL fears the most. This is not only historically erroneous, it smacks of a bias so deep as to be impervious to reason.

In an online survey of those who have seen "The Passion," Regent University professor William Brown found that 92 percent said the movie made them think about their relationship with God; and 90 percent said the movie gave them "a better understanding of God's love toward mankind." Not exactly the kind of sentiment we would expect from people likely to punish Jews.

Then there is the survey by the Institute for Jewish and Community Research (IJCR). In a poll of 1,003 adults about the film, 83 percent said it did not make them blame contemporary Jews for Christ's death; only 2 percent said the film made

them more likely to hold today's Jews responsible; and 9 percent said the film made them less likely to do so.

All of which shocked the president of the IJCR, Gary Tobin: "I did not expect so many people would say that, even if they believed Jews were responsible for the death of Christ 2,000 years ago, they don't hold Jews today responsible." Tobin also said the movie "is clearly filled with anti-Semitic views and images." It was for this reason, he said, he "didn't expect people to have a more favorable impression of Jews."

But if the movie was, in fact, so "clearly filled with anti-Semitic views and images," then why was this fact apparently lost on those Christians who saw the movie? Of course, it is entirely possible that Tobin's perception of what constitutes anti-Semitism is so skewed as to create problems for him that are not shared by others.

In any event, not only has the movie not generated hate crimes against Jews, it has actually motivated murderers, robbers and Nazis to confess to their crimes.

Detectives in Texas say the death of a 19-year-old woman originally ruled a suicide has turned into a murder case after a repentant man who watched the movie confessed to killing her because she was carrying his child. In Florida, a man who robbed a bank of \$25,000 in 2001 walked into the Palm Beach County sheriff's office and confessed to his crime. The robber told a detective that it was his emotional response to the film that spurred him to surrender. And a Norwegian neo-Nazi confessed to two bombings a decade ago after a pang of repentance triggered by watching the movie. His lawyer said, "The trigger that made him go to police and confess was that movie."

So not only has "The Passion of the Christ" not spawned violence against Jews, it has served as a catalyst for contemporary Nazis to confess to their crimes. Had there been

any violence, it is a sure bet the media would have broadcasted it all over the world. But news stories on criminals who turned themselves in after seeing the film were few and far between.

The Catholic League is proud to have led the fight in defense of Mel Gibson. That Mel appreciates what we did cannot be understated: the conversations he has had with Bill Donohue give evidence of his gratitude.

“SOUTH PARK” WEIGHS IN ON “THE PASSION”

The Comedy Central network aired an episode of the cartoon “South Park” dealing with “The Passion of the Christ” on March 31, titled “The Passion of the Jew.” Both Jews and Christians were objects of the show’s crude satire, though the former may find the material more objectionable than the latter.

One character, Eric Cartman, a child often portrayed as an anti-Semite, says “The Passion” shows that “Jews are the devil.” He tells his Jewish friend, Kyle Broflovski, “Go see it and tell me I’m wrong.” Kyle sees the film, and is so upset that he vomits in the theater. He wonders, “How could the Jews do that to Jesus?” Later that night, Cartman prays to a poster of “Braveheart,” while Kyle awakes screaming from a nightmare in which he is among the Jewish priests calling for Jesus’ death.

Cartman, dressed as Hitler, holds a meeting of the “Mel Gibson Fan Club”; obviously well intentioned Christians show up, and assume that his cryptic Nazi references in fact have some benign religious significance.

Two other children, Stan Marsh and Kenny McCormick, call "The Passion" a "snuff film." Their friend Cartman explains, "He [Mel Gibson] was trying to express, through cinema, the horror and filthiness of the common Jew." The two demand a refund from a crazed and masochistic Mel Gibson, who refuses. Claiming, "I brought the fire and brimstone back to Christianity with 'The Passion,'" Gibson begins to sing and dance, then chases after the boys in a Mad Max truck.

Meanwhile, Kyle speaks about the guilt he feels as a Jew for the death of Jesus with a Catholic priest, who dismisses Passion plays as a relic from the Middle Ages used "to incite people against the Jews." Inspired by the priest's emphasis of atonement in Christianity, Kyle announces to his outraged synagogue that the Jewish community must apologize for Jesus' death. Upon hearing that Kyle has seen "The Passion," one member shouts, "This proves the anti-Semitic effect that movie is having!" A man with an exaggerated nose and accent ironically says, "Yeah, it makes Jews into stereotypes." A grosser caricature adds, "Stereotyping Jews is *terrible*!" They then hear a passing crowd chanting a German slogan (the idea was Cartman's; the Christians agreed to it because they thought it was in Aramaic).

The Jewish congregation marches to the theater to demand that the film be pulled. Kyle cries, "Don't become an angry mob! The last time we did that we killed Jesus!" The climax occurs when Mel Gibson crashes his truck into the theater and emerges from the flames, acting insane. The Christians are disillusioned, and Stan moralizes, "Focusing on how [Jesus] got killed is what people did in the Dark Ages and it ends up with really bad results."

Kyle concludes, "Oh, dude, I feel so much better about being Jewish now that I see that Mel Gibson is just a big wacko [obscenity]."

Christian fans of the movie are depicted as easily manipulated

(for example, a woman exiting the theater praises the film: "It really guilt-trips you into believing.") The only one who left the theater an anti-Semite is the one who entered as one (Cartman). The Jews, on the other hand, are shown overreacting dramatically and attempting censorship. And Kyle's final line is biting satire not only at the expense of Mel Gibson's critics, but even of the "South Park" writers themselves, who can only pooh-pooh Mel's movie by attacking the man himself.

DNC'S NEW WEBSITE DEVOID OF ANTI-CATHOLIC LINK

On April 8, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) unveiled its new website. Gone from the site is the links page which directed users to various allied organizations. Among them was an anti-Catholic group, Catholics for a Free Choice.

For the past two years, the Catholic League has been pressing the DNC to drop its link to Catholics for a Free Choice. During this time, we inundated the DNC with protest letters and placed ads in many newspapers across the nation, including the *New York Times*, demanding an end to this invidious association. There was also a confrontation between William Donohue and one of the DNC's lawyers over this matter. Now the DNC has decided to sidestep the issue by simply dumping all links from its current website.

Here's what we told the media:

"The DNC deserves no credit for this action. It brazenly offended Catholics for years by embracing a Catholic-bashing organization. But now that its leader, Senator John Kerry, is in trouble with Catholics for a whole host of reasons,

prudence dictates that the DNC distance itself from anti-Catholic bigotry.”

We also noted an AP story that mentioned how the DNC’s revised webpage “provides links to help Democrats meet other Democrats, through Meetup.com...” In re-sponse to the question, “What do people do at a Meetup?”, the following answer was given: “Chat, chew the fat, shoot the breeze, sling the bull, babble, cackle, chatter, gab, yak, yammer. No big whoop.”

We concluded that they can yak all they want—all we ask is that they keep their Catholic-bashing babble to a minimum.

PULPIT POLITICS

On Palm Sunday, Senator John Kerry attended services at Charles Street African Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston’s Roxbury district. Inexplicably, he took communion at the Protestant church. Just as disconcerting was what Rev. Gregory G. Groover said from the pulpit. He introduced Kerry as “the next president of the United States.”

We pointed out to the media that it is illegal for a member of the clergy to endorse a candidate for public office from the pulpit. This, however, mattered not a whit to Rev. Groover or to candidate Kerry. Nor did it seem to matter to most members of the media. But if President Bush were to be endorsed by a Roman Catholic priest—the way Kerry was endorsed by this minister—all those who sat silent about what happened on Palm Sunday would no doubt have exploded in anger. Indeed, the IRS would be on the case in a New York minute.

The IRS has a *Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations* that spells out, in great detail, what is

permissible and what is not. It says that religious leaders are free to speak about any political matter “*as individuals*” (its emphasis). But the IRS also says that “religious leaders cannot make partisan comments in official organization publications or *at official church functions*” (our emphasis). Being introduced from the pulpit as “the next president of the United States” is therefore a clear violation of the law.

There is a bill before the Congress by Rep. Walter Jones that would allow the clergy to speak openly about political matters in a house of worship, without impunity. Congressman Jones argues that it was Lyndon Baines Johnson who pushed through a law in the 1950s that curtailed the freedom of speech by members of the clergy; LBJ was then serving in the Congress. Jones wants the law repealed so the clergy can be free to say what they want.

The Catholic League appreciates the concerns of Rep. Jones, but it is wary about opening the door to pulpit politics. What cannot stand, however, is the current duplicity: the media say nothing about Protestant ministers, especially those in black churches, who endorse candidates in front of their congregations, but protest to high heaven homilies by Catholic priests who merely discuss public policy issues from the pulpit.

There has got to be a level playing field, especially in this area.

MAKE CHURCHES “CAMPAIGN-FREE

ZONES”

Now that the presidential season is in full swing, we thought it wise for both the Republicans and the Democrats to consider our proposal: make churches “campaign-free zones.” Here is the text of our remarks:

“For many years now, Republican and Democratic candidates for public office have exploited houses of worship for political capital. Time and again they have brought their campaigns into churches, synagogues and other houses of worship, turning religious services into political rallies. To be sure, they could not have succeeded in doing so without the blessings of the clergy, but this is no excuse: the onus is on the candidates to respect the spirit of the law that governs separation of church and state.

“In the current issue of *Time* magazine, there is a story about John Kerry’s Catholicism. It quotes Kerry saying on [March 27], ‘We have a separation of church and state in this country.’ Also [on March 27] Kerry said, ‘There is nothing conservative or mainstream about crossing the line between church and state.’ Yet the very next day Kerry took a stab at President Bush when he spoke at New Northside Baptist Church in St. Louis, quoting Scripture: ‘It is not enough, my brother, to say you have faith, when there are no deeds.’ Evidently this is now part of Kerry’s stump speech when he campaigns in churches. For example, on March 7, in a Mississippi church, Kerry again quoted James 2:14, ‘What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?’

“Kerry needs to be careful. His voting record is diametrically opposed to the teachings of the Catholic Church on virtually every public policy issue. From abortion and stem cell research, to gay marriage and school vouchers, Kerry disagrees with the Church. Catholics might rightly want to know why his

deeds (voting record) are at odds with his faith (the Church's teachings).

"Bush and Kerry, along with all other candidates for public office, should pledge to keep churches 'campaign-free zones.' The crass use of houses of worship for political capital is not only unethical, it is contemptuous of the religious sensibilities of Americans. It is time for a moratorium."

KERRY DEFIANTLY REJECTS CHURCH TEACHINGS

As reported in the April 6 edition of the *New York Times*, Senator John Kerry got defiant when told the day before 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."

The Massachusetts senator 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."

We immediately shot the following news release off to the media:

"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.”