

HOLOCAUST EVENTS POLITICIZED; REBUTTAL PROVIDED

From April 12-19, the University of Minnesota Duluth hosted a series of events commemorating the Holocaust. There were so many early signals that at least some of these events would be patently unfair to the Catholic Church that both the Diocese of Duluth and the Catholic League raised many public concerns. Bill Donohue wrote a lengthy rebuttal to the events [[click here](#)].

What got our attention initially was the graphic on the front of a postcard that was sent to the Duluth community advertising the series. It was a representation of an invidious portrayal of a Catholic prelate and a Nazi standing on top of a Jewish person. The drawing, which depicts the 1933 Concordat signed between Pope Pius XI and Hitler, has been used by enemies of the Church to paint the pope as an accomplice of the Nazis. As Donohue pointed out, this is pure rubbish. Another disturbing sign was a scheduled production of the 1963 anti-Catholic play, "The Deputy."

The Diocese of Duluth said, "We object to what appears to be a thoroughly biased, and, worse, false presentation of the efforts of Pope Pius XII and other Catholic leaders during the Nazi Holocaust." It also dismissed the academic freedom argument as presented by the University as "hollow."

Fr. Richard Kunst, a Duluth priest, was particularly poignant in his remarks: "Not only am I a Catholic priest and student of papal history, I am of Jewish heritage. My mother is Jewish. In 'The Deputy,' Pius is a victim of hate speech."

Donohue's five-page rebuttal was sent to the President of the University of Minnesota; the Chancellor at the University of Minnesota Duluth; the panelists involved in the events; select

professors on campus; the student newspaper; student groups; the media; and leaders in the Catholic and Jewish communities. We also distributed copies of the Catholic League reader, *Pius XII and the Holocaust* to students.

Professor Deborah Petersen-Perlman, who played a major role in planning these events, said, "We are intending to raise awareness." It could also be said that stunt men do the same. This is the kind of lame response we expected, and it is one we've experienced with academics many times before.

By blanketing the Duluth community with our response, we put everyone on notice that we were on to the University's propaganda exercise. If those associated with this veiled attack on the Catholic Church had any intellectual fortitude, they would have reached out to area Catholics. No matter, they expected a cakewalk and instead had to scurry.

BISHOPS STAND TALL

On April 12, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops announced the start of a religious freedom campaign.

It is the most comprehensive and cogent defense of religious liberty ever drafted by the bishops in the United States. Erudite and wide-ranging, it is clarion call to the Catholic community, and beyond, to get serious about religious rights, both at home and abroad.

While the Obama administration's decision to try to force Catholic non-profits to pay for services it deems immoral was the final straw, the statement drew attention to many other current threats to religious liberty. The bishops addressed not only specific issues, but their source.

It also registered disapproval of attempts to dumb-down religious liberty. Freedom of worship, they rightly said, was not the same as religious liberty; nor will we settle for it. Freedom of worship implies an insular exercise, such as praying in a church; religious liberty has a broader focus, one that speaks to the public expression of religion. We are not about to let those in government box us in, confining our religious rights to merely private matters.

Threats to religious liberty extend beyond government. For example, when Christian clubs on campus are told they cannot restrict leadership positions to Christians, that is a direct assault on religious liberty.

The bishops are serious about this campaign, and they have the unreserved support of the Catholic League.

MISERABLE CATHOLICS

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK
William Donohue

It is not uncommon for people to join an organization when they are young, and grow to like it immensely. But people change, and oftentimes organizations do not, or at least they don't change dramatically. So we understand it when people change and no longer feel at home with the organization they once admired. It happens. We expect, quite rationally, that such persons will exit and find a new home. What is not understandable is why some people elect to stay, knowing they will be miserable.

They stay for lots of reasons. Some stay because they have a hard time dealing with change. Others stay because they are

masochists: they get a perverse sense of happiness convincing themselves that they are modern-day martyrs, ready to take a bullet for the cause. Still others are just mean-spirited: they won't be happy until they shove their agenda down the throats of those who don't agree with them. But all of them stay because they believe they are right and the rest of their colleagues are wrong. So they work from the inside to turn the organization inside-out.

This describes, unfortunately, the way many who identify themselves as Catholic feel about their religion; sadly, this includes some nuns and priests. This was driven home to me recently after a radical atheist organization took out a vicious full-page ad in the *New York Times* ripping Catholicism, and professed Catholics agreed with it. The ad, "Quit the Catholic Church," was paid for by the Freedom From Religion Foundation; it ran on March 9.

The ad blamed the Catholic Church for promoting "acute misery, poverty, needless suffering, unwanted pregnancies, overpopulation, social evils and deaths." It accused the bishops of "launching a ruthless political inquisition" against women, and said "preying priests" and corruption extend "all the way to the top." It had a special message for Catholic women: "Apparently, you're like the battered women who, after being beaten down every Sunday, feels she has no place to go."

Many of the comments about the ad that were posted on the websites of liberal Catholic media outlets agreed with the ad. *America*, *Commonweal* and the *National Catholic Reporter* ran several statements of support. Some wondered why anyone would object. For example, Gerelyn at *Commonweal* questioned, "Is there something in the ad that is untrue?" Similarly, Dale Sith at the *National Catholic Reporter* said, "By the way, there was nothing in the Freedom From Religion's *Times* ad that wasn't true."

Some who could not bring themselves to condemn the ad teach at Catholic colleges. Tom Beaudoin teaches theology to graduate students at Fordham. He was blown away by the ad and recorded his sage observations in the blog section of *America*. "Whatever one thinks of this ad, it seems to mark a particular moment in the unfolding history of the Catholic Church in the United States." Notice he didn't choose a side (actually, he did). More important, he didn't say that by accepting such a defamatory ad this marks a new low for the *New York Times*.

Beaudoin believes we deserve it. Why else would he write, "What is happening with religion in general and Catholicism in particular that would make such a moment possible?" I have a clue for him—radical secularism. But, of course, that is not what he means. What he means to say is, "What has Catholicism done to elicit such a response?" Blaming the victim was never put more crudely. He concludes by saying the ad is "a conversation starter." Nice to know he wants to converse with the professed enemies of Catholicism. I want to defeat them.

Not to be outdone we have the *Commonweal* contribution of Father Robert P. Imbelli. He also teaches theology at a Jesuit institution, this one being Boston College. He was delighted that the *Times* ran the cartoon that accompanied the ad. The cartoon, which featured what appears to be Cardinal Dolan, shows the New York archbishop screaming at a woman "Over Something This Small" (it shows a picture of the pill with the inscription, "Birth Control"). Father Imbelli opined, "Happily the punchy cartoon was spared the censor's ax." He had nothing to say about the propriety of the hate speech directed at his religion.

These are not isolate examples, for if they were they would hardly be worth mentioning; *Commonweal* and the *Reporter* regularly feature self-hating Catholics. I once told Alan Dershowitz that we Catholics would give Jews a run for the money when it comes to which group has more of the self-hating types. He laughed but refused to take me up on it.

Over the years, *America* and *Commonweal* have published some brilliant articles that challenge the accepted wisdom in Catholic circles. That is why it is distressing to note some of the commentary they are featuring these days. To be specific, it is a sad day when Catholic media outlets offer a home to those who are so unhappy with Catholicism that they mistake blatant bigotry for mere disagreement. It is bad enough that some find enjoyment wallowing in misery; it is worse when others are exposed to their maladies.

STATEMENT TO THE DULUTH COMMUNITY: UNIV. OF MINNESOTA DULUTH HOLOCAUST EVENT

Bill Donohue

It has come to my attention that the University of Minnesota Duluth is hosting a series of events on the Holocaust; they are scheduled to run between April 12 and April 19. Because many of the events address the religious response to the Holocaust, it is of great interest to the Catholic League. For example, we have a wealth of information on our website about the Catholic response to Hitler. Moreover, we have raised funds for books and articles on the subject, and we even have a reader on Pope Pius XII that covers the Jewish reaction to his noble efforts.

It is our hope that these events will foster an intellectual dialogue that is both educational and productive of good interreligious relations. But I am less than confident that this will happen. Unfortunately, some of what I have learned

is very disturbing. There appears to be an effort to cast the Catholic Church in the role of an enabler, if not worse, of Nazi efforts. This is not only historically inaccurate, it is scurrilous.

The first sign that the Catholic Church will be treated in a villainous role is the postcard that was mailed to the public flagging the events: on the front there is an invidious drawing featuring a Nazi soldier and a Catholic prelate standing on a Jewish man. The drawing is nothing new: it was created to demonstrate the Catholic Church's alleged support for Hitler that the 1933 Concordat supposedly represented.

The second disturbing sign is the April 15 performance of "The Deputy," a play based on the work of Rolf Hochhuth. It is described in the promotional material as a play "which indicts Pope Pius XII for his failure to take action or speak out against the Holocaust."

The third disturbing sign is the April 19 event, "Religious Institutions Responses to the Holocaust." One of the panelists will address what is called "the role of the Confessing Church and the Holocaust."

My response to these issues is taken from my own book, *Why Catholicism Matters*, which will be published on May 29 by Image, an imprint of Random House; one part of my new book deals with the role of the Catholic Church and the Holocaust, citing the primary research on this subject that has been done by other scholars.

First Complaint

Pope Pius XI signed the concordat to protect German Catholics from prosecution. Rabbi David Dalin, who has written a ground-breaking book, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, demonstrates that this agreement was a protective measure; it was not an endorsement of Nazism. Essentially, the agreement allowed the Church to continue to exist in Germany as long as it did not

interfere with Hitler's regime. Not only was it violated by Hitler almost immediately, according to Zsolt Aradi, a Jewish writer who covered Pius XI, "the little freedom that the Concordat left for the clergy and hierarchy was widely used to save as many persecuted Jews as could be saved." In any event, the pope didn't have a whole lot of options to choose from at the time. It is important to note that the pope never gave even tacit support to Hitler's agenda.

This same pope issued an encyclical in 1937, *Mit Brennender Sorge*, that condemned the Nazi's violation of the concordat, and took aim at the Nazis' racial ideology (it was written by the man who would become his successor, Eugenio Pacelli—Pope Pius XII). An internal German memorandum dated March 23, 1937, called the encyclical "almost a call to do battle against the Reich government." Indeed, the encyclical was roundly attacked in the German newspapers, which wrote that it was the product of the "Jew God and His deputy in Rome." In fact, some media outlets said the encyclical "calls on Catholics to rebel against the authority of the Reich," a conclusion that was entirely warranted.

In short, to mail postcards smearing the Catholic Church, as if the concordat was a vote of support for Hitler, is inexcusable. It is also inexcusable to learn that the *Duluth News Tribune* featured the agit-prop drawing as an advertisement for the event.

Second Complaint

"The Deputy" previewed in Berlin and London in 1963 before coming to New York City in 1964. Prior to that time, the overwhelming consensus in the Jewish community was that Pope Pius XII was a hero. To wit: the pope is credited by former Israeli diplomat Pinchas Lapide of saving approximately 860,000 Jewish lives, far more than any other leader in the world, secular or religious. Indeed, it was proposed in the 1940s that 800,000 trees be planted as a testimony of the

pope's contribution; they were planted in Negev, in southeast Jerusalem. And when Pope Pius XII died in 1958, Leonard Bernstein of the New York Philharmonic stopped his orchestra for a moment of silence. Among the Jewish organizations that praised the pope were the following: the Anti-Defamation League, the Synagogue Council of America, the Rabbinical Council of America, the New York Board of Rabbis, the America Jewish Committee, the World Jewish Congress, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the National Council of Jewish Women.

So what new evidence turned up between 1958 and 1963 to indict the pope as an enabler of Hitler? None. Hochhuth, well known in radical circles at the time, made this charge in his play absent any historical evidence. Recent scholarship, particularly the work of Professor Ronald Rychlak, shows that while Hochhuth operated alone, he was an "unknowing dupe" of the KGB. How do we know? Because of the 2007 testimony of Ion Mihai Pacepa. He maintains that Nikita Khrushchev approved a plan to discredit Pope Pius XII. Pacepa was in a position to know; he was a former Romanian intelligence chief and the highest-ranking official ever to defect from the Soviet Bloc.

No serious historian today views "The Deputy" as being anything other than propaganda. In fact, not a single historian has ever remarked on the factual accuracy of this play. But we do know that it nonetheless sparked a rash of anti-Pius books, most of which were written by ex-priests and ex-seminarians whose antipathy of the Church—on matters wholly unrelated to the Holocaust—is palpable. I would be remiss if I did not note that the Catholic League offered to pay for Professor Rychlak to go to Germany a few years ago to interview Hochhuth. Hochhuth declined.

Third Complaint

It is difficult to understand how the "Confessing Church" position can be maintained. What exactly is it that the Church

is allegedly confessing? *(The term "Confessing Church" in German history refers to a Protestant breakaway movement that opposed the Nazis.) We know this much: throughout the Holocaust, the *New York Times* ran a grand total of nine editorials critical of Hitler. Two of them were written to praise Pope Pius XII! To be specific, on Christmas Day 1941, the *Times* said, "The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas." On Christmas Day 1942, the *Times* said of the pope, "This Christmas more than ever he is a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent." So much for the canard that the pope was "silent."

It must be said, too, that many of those who elected to remain silent did so with the best of motives. For example, when plans were made for an anti-Hitler parade in New York City on May 10, 1933, the American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith put out a joint statement condemning "public agitation in the form of mass demonstrations." They feared such actions would only "inflame" matters. In 1935, after the Nuremberg race laws were enacted, American Jews, led by Rabbi Stephen Wise of the American Jewish Congress, worked against legislation that would have made it easier for Jews to emigrate to the United States. Following Kristallnacht, the "Night of the Broken Glass" (Hitler's storm troopers went on a rampage killing Jews), several Jewish organizations came together saying "there should be no parades, no demonstrations, or protests by Jews." Again, they feared an even more vengeful Nazi response.

The author who made the accusation that Pius XII was "Hitler's pope," John Cornwell, has since retracted his charge. Do the panelists at these events know about this? Will it be mentioned? Will it also be mentioned that Hitler planned to kidnap the pope? Will the students learn that more Jews were saved in Italy—where the pope was actually in a position to affect outcomes—than in other any European nation? (Throughout Europe 65 percent of Jews were exterminated, but in Italy 85

percent of Jews were saved.) Will they learn that far more Jews were saved in Catholic countries than in Protestant ones?

“Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler’s campaign for suppressing the truth.” Those were the words of Albert Einstein. Golda Meir offered similar praise. At the end of the war, the World Jewish Congress was so appreciative of the pope’s efforts to save Jews that it gave 20 million lire to the Vatican. And after the war, the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Israele Anton Zolli, formally expressed the gratitude of Roman Jews “for all the moral and material aid the Vatican gave them during the Nazi occupation.” In 1945, Zolli was received into the Catholic Church and asked Pius XII to be his godfather; he chose the pope’s first name, Eugenio, to be his baptismal name.

It is for these reasons, and many more like them, that I am disturbed to read how patently unfair the campus events on the Holocaust appear to be. In the interest of intellectual honesty, and goodwill between Catholics and Jews, I implore those in the Duluth community to weigh what I have said and give it a fair hearing. No matter what side anyone comes down on, the truth should never become hostage to political propaganda.

PSYCHOLOGISTS ADDRESS SEXUAL ABUSE

William O’Donohue, Ph.D., Olga Cirlugea, B.A., Lorraine Benuto, Ph.D.

We are clinical psychologists (the second author is a graduate student in a doctoral training program) at the University of

Nevada, Reno who have been treating sexual abuse victims (the first author for over 30 years). We have treated adults who were abused by priests when they were children; we have also been involved in cases where adults alleged that they were abused by priests, but where the priests deny any wrongdoing. Collectively, we have treated over 2,000 children who have been sexually abused, and also have worked on cases where children have falsely accused others of sexual abuse. As authors, we have published books and peer reviewed journal articles on this subject.

The facts are sometimes difficult to discern: these can be partially shrouded in the mists of history; people offer differing accounts; there are certainly motivations to lie or distort; there are also motivations to falsely accuse—individuals can gain significant sums of money in settlements; individuals may also can have a political agenda against the church; or individuals may even deny that they have abused when they actually have been, to avoid their feelings of shame or embarrassment—or even to protect their abuser. The reporting of abuse and deciding what actually has occurred is no simple matter.

When it comes to priests, we know from an analysis of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice study that a little less than half of the priests were found to be subject to unsubstantiated allegations. An unsubstantiated allegation was defined as “an allegation that was proven to be untruthful and fabricated” as a result of a criminal investigation. This rate of false accusations is much higher than found in the general population. Additionally, 23% of the priests who were accused of abuse were identified as suffering from behavioral or psychological problems ranging from alcohol and substance abuse to depression and a past history of coercive sex, although most never received treatment for these problems.

More than half of the priests had only one allegation brought against them. Also, it is important to note that a few priests

accounted for a disproportionate number of victims: 3.5% of priests accounted for 26% of victims. Even though an investigation was conducted almost every time a report was filed, only 217 or 5.4% of priests were charged with a crime by a district attorney. Of the 217 priests that had criminal charges brought against them, a substantial majority (64%) were convicted; but still a significant number were not found guilty. Most received probation (88%) and/or a prison sentence (73%), while 44% went to jail and 18% were fined.

The problem of the sexual abuse of minors is a national problem, involving the clergy of all religions, as well as public school teachers, coaches, et al. For example, 10% of Protestant clergy were involved in sexual misconduct, 2-3% of which committed sexual abuse. In 2007 Jehovah's Witnesses settled 9 lawsuits with victims alleging that the church's policies protected child sexual abusers. The Church Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints reported 3-4 yearly lawsuits over the course of the last 10 years, which translates to allegations in .4-.5% Mormon wards. The Jewish community has founded two sexual abuse survivors' organizations, Survivors for Justice and Awareness Center, the latter of which provides "the names of 107 rabbis accused of sexual misconduct and 279 other trusted officials (for example, parents and counselors), as well as 85 unnamed abusers."

Did abuse occur simply because somebody said it happened? The clear and simple answer to this question, is "No." Although we do not know the exact percentage of false reports, it is our clinical experience and the consensus in the field that the majority of children reporting that they have been abused are telling the truth. It is clear that many children have been abused by adults, and this is morally reprehensible, a serious crime and effective measures need to be put into place to prevent this in the future. However, the matter is complex. Our field, for example, does not have clear statistics regarding the percentage of adults who allege that they have

been abused as children and who are in fact telling the truth. It needs to be said that adults have unique pathways to false reporting (for example, they can be motivated by money or may be suffering from delusions).

What causes false reporting? Lies. Children and adolescents do not always tell the truth. In fact while we don't know exactly how often they lie about being sexually abused, research shows that those numbers are above zero. Furthermore, because children at times recant (meaning that they first state that they were abused and then later state they were not), we know that children sometimes claim that they have previously lied or at least were mistaken. A variety of factors can influence the likelihood of children making false allegations. For example, children may have been coached by a parent involved in a bitter custody battle to make false statements against the other parent, or may have had a personal vendetta against the alleged perpetrator. It's important to note that children can also lie by claiming that the abuse did not occur when in reality it did. This is more likely to happen if the child was threatened or coerced by the perpetrator.

Beyond lying, false memories can also be formed. In fact, well over 100 scientific research studies have shown that both children and adults can and do form false memories. This research was spurred by the infamous McMartin Day Care case in the 1980s Manhattan Beach, California in which over 360 children alleged that they were abused, often in bizarre ways (for example, placed in planes and forced to watch babies being fed to sharks). In what was then the longest and most expensive criminal trial in California history, all parties were found not guilty. Dr. Michael Maloney examined the interviewing of the children and found that the interviewer used improper methods to question the children and that these were extremely suggestive, biased, and which lead to false memories on the part of the children. This spurred a number of academic research studies which attempted to understand what

causes and how easy it is to form a false memory.

For example, in one study, young children were told that a visitor, Sam Stone, was clumsy and always broke things that were not his. When "Sam" came to visit the children he did not touch or break anything. The next day the children saw a soiled stuffed bear and a torn book. Even though no child had seen Sam do anything, when asked a quarter of the children (25%) hinted that he might have had a part in the problem. Even though the children had not seen Sam do anything, their prior experience of being told that he was clumsy mixed in with their actual experience of observing him and they concluded that he might have had a part in the torn book and soiled bear.

In addition, over the next ten weeks the children were asked misleading questions/statements by the first interviewer such as, "I wonder if Sam Stone got the teddy bear dirty on purpose or by accident?" On the tenth week, a second (seemingly independent) interviewer asked what had happened to the toys. The majority of children (72%) accused Sam of having ruined the toys, and nearly half of the children (45%) reported that they remembered seeing Sam do it. Thus the children's new experiences (being interviewed and having it suggested to them that Sam Stone dirtied the teddy bear) are mixed into the memory of the past event (when Sam Stone came to visit).

Adults may also form false memories. In fact, research has demonstrated time and time again that eyewitnesses often confuse misleading post-event information with what they have witnessed, thus developing false memories. Elizabeth Loftus of the University of California, Irvine has consistently found that about 25% of adults are so suggestible that fairly simple suggestions result in significant false memories of events that in fact did not occur when they were children (e.g., that they were lost in a mall).

False memories are not identical to repressed memories. A repressed memory is a memory of some major event that while initially stored in memory is allegedly completely erased , often for decades; it then suddenly emerges often after some triggering event. Historically there has been much debate regarding the existence of repressed memories. However, there is a large amount of scientific evidence that clearly shows that repressed memories simply do not exist. Furthermore research studies involving traumatic events that have been verified indicate that people do not forget their trauma. Indeed, traumatic events are actually quite memorable.

Despite the scientific evidence, the legal system has used repressed memories to convict people, including priests, on charges of child sexual abuse. For example, the Massachusetts Supreme Court affirmed the conviction of Paul Shanley (a defrocked priest convicted of sexually abusing a child who claimed that for many years he repressed his memory of being molested) despite an amicus brief signed by almost 100 distinguished psychologists and psychiatrists essentially categorizing the repressed memory phenomenon as junk science.

It should be clear that children who have been abused by priests represent a terrible betrayal of trust, a serious injury to these children, and a criminal as well as a moral failing. However, an examination of the best studies suggest that the rate of priestly sexual abuse is about the same rate found in the general population. Furthermore, it is not clear that Catholic priests abuse children at a higher rate than other clergy. Certainly, beliefs that "most priests abuse" or that priests are more risk to children than other individuals, are not justified. Second, the pattern of abuse is rather unique: individuals who are victimized by priests are more likely to be adolescents and males. Third, there is evidence that priests have a higher rate of false and unfounded allegations than adults in the general population: less than half of the allegations were found to be substantiated and

even with those that were criminally prosecuted a large number—nearly a third—were found not guilty. All of this raises important questions about the phenomenon of false allegations.

We conclude by warning against a rush to judgment. Concern for past victims and intelligent prevention efforts to reduce the rate of abuse to zero, certainly must be a priority. But it should also be a priority to make sure that prejudices against priests do not come into play to demonize innocent individuals.

A longer version of this article, complete with citations and a bibliography, is available on our website under “Papers, Essays and Research.”

BISHOPS LAUNCH RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CAMPAIGN

The statement by the bishops launching a religious freedom campaign was well received in the Catholic community. Those who work against our religious rights tried to downplay it. But they did not succeed—it was too impressive to ignore.

Internationally, the declaration calls attention to the “assassinations, bombings of churches, torching of orphanages,” and other acts of violence against Christians. At home, it spells out the threats to religious liberty at all levels of government.

At the federal level, the Obama administration’s redefinition of what constitutes a religion is alarming, and its determination to force Catholic non-profits to fund abortion-

inducing drugs is equally ominous.

State immigration laws such as those in Alabama that make it illegal for priests to minister to illegal aliens are obscene. Just as draconian are attempts to limit the authority of bishops by having the legislature determine the locus of decision-making; this was tried in Connecticut.

Cities like Boston and San Francisco have punished Catholic foster care and adoptive services because Catholic agencies don't approve of gay marriage. New York City is no better when it seeks to deprive poor inner-city minorities of using empty public schools on Sundays for services.

Perhaps most profoundly, the bishops reaffirmed Catholic teaching on unjust laws. "An unjust law cannot be obeyed," they said. This was a clear signal to those at all levels of government that Catholics are prepared to exercise civil disobedience, if necessary. Don't push us.

The bishops have chosen a two-week period from June 21 to July 4 as a time to rally Catholics to participate in this religious liberty campaign. We urge all our members to support their bishop in this important endeavor.

OBAMA'S CATHOLIC PROBLEM

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life recently published a survey that indicated that President Barack Obama has a Catholic problem.

According to the survey, only 35 percent of the American people said the Democratic Party is "friendly to religion," while 54 percent said the Republicans are. When asked

specifically about the Obama administration, 39 percent saw it as “friendly,” and 23 percent saw it as “unfriendly.” But in 2009, only 17 percent said the administration was “unfriendly to religion.”

The big problem for Obama was with Catholics, especially white Catholics. The percent of Catholics who said the administration is “unfriendly to religion” has jumped in the past three years from 15 percent to 25 percent. Among white Catholics, the percent who say the administration is “unfriendly” has gone from 17 percent to 31 percent.

It is not hard to fathom why the administration is having a hard time with Catholics. After all, it is trying to force its secular agenda down their throat by making those who work in Catholic non-profit groups pay for abortion-inducing drugs in their insurance premiums.

Moreover, the administration recently denied funding to a Catholic social service agency that helps women and children simply because it is pro-life. Obama has appointed people such as Kathleen Sebelius to his cabinet, even though she has been at war with the Catholic Church for decades. He tried to get a big post for a woman who once worked on an ACLU lawsuit trying to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status. He hosted a forum for some of the biggest Catholic bashers in the nation when he welcomed the Secular Coalition for America in 2010. He has opposed school choice—vouchers for indigent parents to send their children to a parochial school—while funding the “choice” of aborting their babies. The list is endless.

We all know that Protestants vote Republican and Jews vote Democrat. It’s Catholics who are up for grabs.

99.98% OF PRIESTS ARE INNOCENT

Recently the findings of the 2011 Annual Report on priestly sexual abuse were released by the bishops' conference and the headlines should have read, "Abuse Problem Near Zero Among Priests." That was not the case.

According to the 2011 *Official Catholic Directory*, there are 40,271 priests in the U.S. The report says there were 23 credible accusations of the sexual abuse of a minor made against priests for incidences last year. Of that number, 9 were deemed credible by law enforcement. Which means that 99.98% of priests nationwide had no such accusation made against them last year. *Nowhere was this reported.*

Here are more data from the report that didn't appear elsewhere: almost all the offenses involve homosexuality. Indeed, 16% of the credible allegations made against priests who work in dioceses or eparchies, and 6% of religious order priests, involved pedophilia. In the former category, 82% of the alleged victims were male; in the latter, the figure is 94%. In other words, we are not talking about kids as victims, and we are not talking about females: we are talking about postpubescent males who were allegedly violated by adult males. That's called homosexuality.

When did these alleged offenses take place? Overall, 68% took place between 1960 and 1984; 1975-1979 being the most common period (among religious order priests, 33% took place before 1960, and another 40% took place between 1960-1980). In 75% of all the cases, the accused priest is either dead or has been dismissed.

Since more than 10% of the *credible* allegations were found to be false or unsubstantiated, it makes one wonder how many of

the total number of accusations are bogus. The bishops should commission a study of those priests whose reputations have been ruined by cash-hungry liars and their lawyers; the looters should also be studied. We would be happy to make a generous donation.

OBAMA ENLISTS ACLU TO WAR ON CATHOLICS

The more the bishops study the issue, the more resolved they are in opposing ObamaCare. At the heart of the bishops' objections is the contrived and unjust way the Obama administration defines a religious organization; it grants an exemption only to what it deems is a religious entity. In point of fact, it is the ACLU that is really dictating to Catholics what passes as a religious institution.

In 2000, the California Contraceptive Equity Law was passed. In it there is a provision defining what qualifies as a religious employer, and it was written by the ACLU. Besides noting that the institution must be a non-profit, the exact qualifying language is as follows:

- "The inculcation of religious values is the purpose of the entity"
- "The entity primarily employs persons who share the religious tenets of the entity"
- "The entity serves primarily persons who share the religious tenets of the entity"

The Health and Human Services edict forcing Catholic

institutions to provide for abortion-inducing drugs in their insurance coverage also allows an exemption for groups it deems religious. Besides noting the non-profit status, the exact qualifying language is as follows:

- “Has the inculcation of religious values as its purpose”
- “Primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets”
- “Primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets”

Having written a Ph.D. dissertation and two books on the ACLU, Bill Donohue said, “The ACLU has long been an enemy of religious liberty. Indeed, when it was founded in 1920 by Roger Baldwin (whom I interviewed in 1978), it listed all the provisions of the First Amendment among its first ten goals. Not among them was religious liberty. And these are the same folks that Obama turns to in his war on Catholics.”

KATHLEEN KENNEDY TOWNSEND’S CONFUSION

Recently Kathleen Kennedy Townsend posted an article on the website of *The Atlantic* about how she spent her St. Patrick’s Day. Hers was far different than Bill Donohue’s.

“I spent my St. Patrick’s Day marching in the parade up New York’s Fifth Avenue, and then drank beer with my friends,” Donohue said. “Kathleen Kennedy Townsend spent hers at a conference attended by homosexuals, lesbians, and men/women with new genitals. I had a good time.”

Kathleen is confused. She said the Catholic Church’s teachings “encourage bigotry and harm.” She didn’t cite a single

example, so she obviously meant some other religion. She also said that the conference was put on by a Catholic organization called New Ways Ministry. Again, she is confused—there is no Catholic group by that name (on St. Patrick's Day last year the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops reaffirmed that New Ways Ministry is not a Catholic organization). To top things off, she says that two female priests gave her a special blessing at the conference. More confusion: our religion does not have female priests. All three errors were made in the first six sentences of her article; there was no need to go any further.

It is hard to know what the source of Kathleen's confusion is. This wouldn't be so bad if she didn't have that Kennedy name.