

CISCO DISCRIMINATES AGAINST CATHOLICS

Cisco Systems, the multinational technology behemoth, has a reputation for fostering tolerance, diversity, and inclusion. It is undeserved. When it comes to Catholics, it makes an exception. As will be revealed, it also has a problem with others.

In April, Belen Jesuit Preparatory School in Miami was turned down by Cisco for participation in the company's matching gift program. The reason? It's Catholic. Of course, Cisco never came right out and admitted to its bigotry. It's too clever for that.

After the Catholic school submitted its application, it was asked whether it was in compliance with Cisco's non-discrimination policy. Like all Catholic schools, Belen Jesuit doesn't discriminate against anyone—not in hiring or in its student body population. But that wasn't sufficient to satisfy Cisco.

"Please confirm that your non-profit organization does not require exposure, adherence, or conversion to any religious doctrine for students and employees, and that you serve all faiths and the community at large. For example, do you require attendance at religious services?"

This was the question, based on Cisco's policy on "religious proselytizing." It has no policy on "secular proselytizing."

Cisco is a private company so it can pretty much do what it wants. This means, however, that because it is not subject to the First Amendment, it cannot trot out the so-called establishment clause to justify its policy.

To put it differently, there is no separation of church and

state issue here—Cisco's policy is purely a reflection of its own values. Those values are secular in nature. That they evince a clear animus against religion is not debatable.

Cisco is playing a game. It says Catholic schools can qualify for admission to its matching gift program provided they don't expose students to Catholicism, or expect them to adhere to Catholic teachings. In other words, if Catholic schools cease to be Catholic, they can qualify.

Cisco should simply admit to its bigotry and not try to play a Catch-22 game with Catholics. This ploy is reminiscent of white racist polling officials down South who once tested for citizenship by having one set of questions for prospective white voters and another set for blacks.

Whites were asked questions such as, "Who was the first president of the United States?" Blacks were asked the wording of Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution. As some astute blacks answered at the time, "That's easy. It says no blacks are going to vote here."

Belen Jesuit made the point that students and parents freely decide to enroll in the school, knowing full well its strictures. Theology classes are required, and while religions other than Catholicism are presented, most of the classes are not about Buddhism. Students are expected to attend Mass, but no one is required to go to communion. That didn't cut it with Cisco: application denied.

What makes Cisco tick? Its values are not merely secular—they are radically secular.

- In 2017, when a bill was being considered in Texas that would ban males who think they are females from showering with elementary and secondary school girls, Cisco opposed it.
- In 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court decided, 7-2, to affirm the right of a Christian baker not to personalize a gay wedding cake. Cisco filed an amicus brief on the losing side trying to

strip him of his religious liberty.

- Recently, when a bill was introduced in Congress that would add sexual orientation and gender identity to the 1964 Civil Rights Act (it has failed repeatedly), Cisco supported it. The bill would grant preferential treatment in hiring to homosexuals and to men who think they are women, and vice versa.
- The Southern Poverty Law Center, a far-left entity that brands Christian family organizations as hate groups, is lavishly funded by Cisco.

How clean is Cisco? Not very.

Cisco has had a string of serious complaints made against it for age discrimination. There are also racial issues. Last year it was sued for racial discrimination by a black woman. In 2018, federal investigators found that it discriminated against American workers; it prefers to hire foreign nationals over U.S. citizens. Regarding the latter, the Department of Labor found that Cisco “secured visas for foreign workers instead of hiring U.S. citizens for certain jobs and paid the visa holders at a lower rate than their American counterparts.”

In short, Cisco funds left-wing causes, especially those that work against religious liberty, and has had its fair share of unjust labor practices.

More important, it has no tolerance for the diversity that Catholic schools offer, preferring to exclude them from its commitment to inclusion. No wonder it is located in the Silicon Valley, home to Marxist millionaires who say one thing and do another. It fits like a glove.

Not long ago, it was bigoted WASPs who fought the Church. Then it was militant secularists, followed by Muslim fanatics. Now we have the Fortune 500 to contend with.

ASSESSING THE ABUSE REPORT ON ILLINOIS PRIESTS

There are many news stories about the 395 priests in Illinois who have been named in a report on clergy sexual abuse, but most of them are incomplete. For starters, not all of those named are priests, not all of them are from Illinois, and most of the listings are unsubstantiated accusations.

Bill Donohue has read the report. He also read what five of the six dioceses have said about it (one diocese, Belleville, has said nothing). Let's start with the man behind the report, Jeffrey Anderson.

Who is Jeff Anderson?

As a young man, Anderson was a hippie and a college dropout; he finally graduated from the University of Minnesota. He made it to law school, though he wasn't known for his scholarship. However, in his last year at William Mitchell College of Law, he found his stride: He successfully defended a homeless black man who urinated in a church.

Anderson then went on to bigger things. His clients included gay activists who fought bathhouse raids and murderers. A recovering alcoholic, he says his daughter was molested by a therapist.

Anderson has had quite a religious odyssey. He was raised a Lutheran, but that didn't work out too well. So he became a Catholic. Then he became an atheist—he called himself a “dedicated atheist.” Then he flipped again and became “deeply religious.” The last we read about him he was content to call himself an agnostic.

See the pattern. His first gig was to sue people of faith. He claims his daughter was sexually abused. And his own religious beliefs are a mess. In short, he was destined to sue the Catholic Church.

Anderson loves to sue the Church so much that he once boasted that his goal in life is to “sue the s*** out of the Catholic Church.” He has made good on his word. Filthy rich, in one case alone he netted half a billion dollars in a settlement.

His mission in life is not to defend all victims of sexual abuse, just Catholic ones. That’s why he recently took out ads in New York City newspapers advertising his willingness to defend only victims of Catholic clergy abuse. The 5’4” activist-lawyer also likes to grease professional victims’ groups: they give him leads on clients and he gives them big checks. That’s quite a tag team. The media, of course, never focus on this collusion.

The Anderson Report

The sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, as experienced in the United States, is long over. This explains why the allegations in the Anderson Report, as it is known, are about old cases. In fact, the report lists accusations going back more than a half-century ago. Of the nearly 395 persons mentioned, 394 are either dead or out of ministry. That leaves one guy.

The report includes deacons, seminarians, brothers, and nuns—not just priests. Some of the priests are from religious orders, and are therefore not under the jurisdiction of a bishop. In other cases, the order priests are not from Illinois, and their alleged offense may not even have taken place there.

How many are truly guilty? No one knows. Even Anderson admits that “in most cases the allegations have not been proved or substantiated in a court of law. Consequently, unless

otherwise indicated, all of the allegations should be considered just allegations and should not be considered proven or substantiated in a court of law.”

We did a search of how many news outlets nationwide quoted what Anderson said and found that the overwhelming majority failed to cite his admission. So the public has been duped again.

When it comes to the scandal, duping the public is a common game. How many organizations in the United States, secular or religious, have been subjected to an investigation about sexual misconduct extending back to World War II?

Why is there no appetite for probing ministers, rabbis, public school teachers, psychologists, psychiatrists, guidance counselors, athletic coaches, and the like? Why are the media so lacking in curiosity about this phenomenon? To find out, read the mission statement of the Catholic League on our website.

Anderson’s report critically notes that the Illinois Attorney General’s Office “determined that the Illinois dioceses had received allegations related to sexual abuse for approximately 690 clergy, but had only publicly identified 185 clergy as being ‘credibly’ accused of sexual abuse.”

So what? There is a profound difference between a mere allegation, an allegation deemed credible, a substantiated allegation, and a conviction in a court of law. Is Anderson suggesting that priests are not entitled to due process? What other institution is expected to post the names of those whose accusations have not been deemed credible, never mind substantiated or found guilty? None.

Response by the Dioceses

Fortunately, this time around the bishops and their spokesmen are fighting back. Mary Jane Doerr, the director of the

Chicago Archdiocese's Office for the Protection of Children and Youth, expressed her exasperation with the report. "What's frustrating to me is the lists represent the past. And it was not a good past, but we don't do that anymore. That's not what's going on today."

Anderson says that the purpose of his report "is to disclose the scope of the peril that the Catholic Bishops have chosen not to disclose and keep secret." John O'Malley, the Archdiocese of Chicago's special counsel, isn't buying it. "These names were not secret. There was not an effort to conceal them. They were all reported to the authorities."

O'Malley also takes issue with Anderson for portraying as perpetrators those who have been investigated and cleared. In one particular case, the special counsel said, "Police didn't decide he was a perpetrator. The archdiocese did not. Jeff Anderson did. People are entitled to their reputations until proven otherwise."

Andrew Hansen, a spokesman for the Springfield diocese, aptly called Anderson's report "an impressive professional marketing brochure, but it does not represent, as Mr. Anderson suggests, a thorough and diligent review of the publicly available facts, and it is highly misleading and irresponsible."

The official statements released by those dioceses which have spoken publicly were not shy in their defense.

The Archdiocese of Chicago, following what O'Malley said, charged that Anderson "conflates people who have been accused, but may be innocent, with those who have substantiated allegations against them, referring to all as perpetrators."

The Diocese of Joliet said, "All of the allegations reflected on Mr. Anderson's list which were made to the Diocese of Joliet have already been reported to law enforcement authorities." Furthermore, the diocese argued that "All credibly accused priests have been removed from ministry."

The Diocese of Peoria maintained that 26 of the 29 priests named in the report have been reported to the authorities, and most of them are dead. The diocese contested the listing of the other three: one never had an accusation made against him; one accusation was never substantiated; and one was immediately placed on administrative leave and reported to the authorities, contrary to what Anderson said.

The Diocese of Rockford said Anderson's list "includes names already disclosed by the Rockford Diocese along with other names previously disclosed publicly but which are not on the Diocese's list of those substantially accused because the accusations either have not been substantiated or are completely without merit."

The Diocese of Springfield said it had already posted the names of 19 priests on its website who were credibly accused, "none of whom are in active ministry, and 13 of whom are deceased."

Donohue's Analysis

In some important ways, Anderson's report is consistent with the studies conducted by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice on priestly sexual abuse. For instance, most of the alleged offenses took place in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Significantly, most of the victims were postpubescent males, victimized by homosexual priests. But, of course, the newspapers are not reporting on this, so the gay cover-up continues.

Regarding the listings, it is hard to come to definitive conclusions when the data are not uniform, but there are some entries that deserve to be discussed.

The report loses credibility when it lists people like Brother John W. McMuldren, C.S.C. He was from Alaska, spent one year in Illinois, and in the lone case where charges were made against him (in Alaska), he was found innocent.

A nun, Sr. Norma Giannini, was charged with sexually abusing two teenage boys: one said he was abused more than 100 times and the other said he was molested between 60 and 80 times. Such cases strain credulity.

It would be unfair to cast suspicion on all of the entries. Indeed, there are some that cry out for an explanation.

Why was Fr. Kenneth M. Brigham of the Archdiocese of Chicago able to partake in a "sex-ring with other priests"? Others must have known about this, so why didn't they act?

Ditto for Fr. Victor Stewart. He was another priest from the Chicago archdiocese who participated in a sex club.

Fr. Roger P. Schoenhofen, O.M.I., was a priest in the Diocese of Belleville who participated in a "ring of homosexual priests," sexually abusing young men at St. Henry's Seminary. Others must have known about this, so why didn't they act?

These are the most disturbing stories in the report. Bad as they are, we must keep in mind that all but one of the 395 persons mentioned in the report are either dead or are no longer in ministry. This is not an anomaly: this is true across the United States.

Yet Anderson has the gall to say in his report that "The danger of sexual abuse in Illinois is clearly a problem today, not just the past." He is a liar. He knows the evidence is just the opposite.

Anyone who thinks Anderson is in this game purely for the money is missing the point. He couldn't possibly spend all the money he has. No, he is in it for the same reason that so many others are in it: The name of the game is to "Get the Catholic Church." It is not greed that motivates the Church haters, it is ideology.