

WHITMER MOCKS EUCHARIST; APOLOGY FAILS

On October 10, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer insulted Catholics nationwide when she intentionally ridiculed the Eucharist in a video. She then compounded the problem by lying about it. We led the charge against her, resulting in a media blitz, forcing her to say something.

The short video was posted by podcaster Liz Plank on her Instagram account. Whitmer, who is wearing a Harris-Walz hat, is standing above Plank, who is kneeling in front of her. Plank opens her mouth and Whitmer places a Dorito chip on her tongue, mocking the Eucharist. Whitmer is shown staring into the camera with a blank look on her face.

There is no way to understand this stunt other than as an expression of vintage anti-Catholic bigotry. Whitmer's team, and her allies in the media, tried to distort what she did. They said she was merely mimicking a popular trend on social media where people are shown feeding each other. Some apologists even said this is being done to support the CHIPS Act, a bill that supports the semiconductor industry.

This is a lie, and it is easy to disprove.

There are indeed many clips of people feeding each other on social media, but there is no reference to the CHIPS Act, nor are they eating chips. The typical video on TikTok shows one person sitting at a table, often in a restaurant, being fed—usually with a fork or spoon—by a friend.

None of them are kneeling. None of them are receiving food on the tongue.

What Whitmer did was to deride Holy Communion. There is no wiggle room for her to deny the obvious.

We pulled out all the stops on this one. In addition to our big list of email subscribers and media outlets, we contacted every Catholic parish in Michigan and every state lawmaker. We also blanketed the media. News stories exploded on radio and TV, and it was covered by newspapers and internet sites across the nation. Our role was prominently noted on national TV.

Whitmer dug herself in deeper when she offered a dishonest apology, and then had her team lie about it. Whitmer said she would “never do something to denigrate someone’s faith,” which, of course, she did. Indeed it was the reason she was forced to say something.

Her press secretary lied when she said, “Liz is not kneeling in the video.” Liz Plank also lied when she said, “No one was on their knees. I’m sitting on a couch that’s visible in the shot.” She was sitting on the couch for the interview, but she was kneeling when they mocked the Eucharist. See p. 2.

WALZ’S ABORTION LIES

In the vice presidential debate, Senator J.D. Vance accused Minnesota Governor Tim Walz of signing a bill that allows for infanticide. He said, “as I read the Minnesota law that you signed into law, it says that a doctor who presides over an abortion, where the baby survives, the doctor is under no obligation to provide lifesaving care to a baby who survives a botched late-term abortion.”

Walz accused Vance of distorting the law, saying, “That is not the way the law is written.”

Walz lied. That is exactly the way the law is written.

In 1976, Minnesota passed a law that required medical personnel to “preserve the life and the health of the child” who was born as a result of an abortion.

In 2023, Walz signed a law that amended this law to read that in such cases all that is needed is to “care for the infant who is born alive.” Stricken was the requirement to “preserve the life and the health of the child.”

Vance was right to say that in these cases “the doctor is under no obligation to provide lifesaving care.”

Now why did Walz remove the requirement that medical personnel “preserve the life and the health of the child,” replacing it with the much lower standard of merely providing “care for an infant who is born alive”? Keeping him warm is not sufficient.

Vance said that what Walz did was “fundamentally barbaric.” We agree.

NEW YORK TIMES’ LYING “FACT-CHECKERS”

William A. Donohue

“Fact-checking” has blossomed into a journalistic industry. Too bad it’s so corrupt. By corrupt I mean dishonest. The latest example comes by way of the October 3rd edition of the *New York Times*.

On the first page of the “National” section there was a full-page spread listing 21 instances where Sen. JD Vance and Gov. Tim Walz said things during their debate that the paper deemed worthy of fact-checking. Vance was subjected to 17 of them.

Let's stop right there. Why was Vance subjected to 80 percent of the "fact checks"? Are we to believe that Walz has a near monopoly on speaking the truth?

Of the 17 quotes by Vance that were analyzed, only one was deemed to be true. Four of his remarks were deemed false. The other twelve were scored as either "exaggerated," "misleading" or "needs context." By contrast, of the four quotes by Walz that were scrutinized, one was deemed to be true, one was said to be false and the other two were scored "misleading" or "exaggerated."

The *Times* opened with the following quote by Vance: "The statute you signed into law, it says a doctor who presides over an abortion where the baby survives—the doctor is under no obligation to provide lifesaving care to the baby who survives a botched late-term abortion."

Kate Zernike scored this as a false statement, saying, "Mr. Vance is distorting the so-called born alive law that had been in effect in Minnesota since the 1970s. That law required doctors to report when a 'live child' was 'born as the result of an abortion,' and to provide 'all reasonable measures consistent with good medical practice' to care for that infant."

Zernike completely misrepresented what the law said.

She only acknowledged the first part of the second sentence of the 1976 law. This is inexcusable.

Here is what the entire sentence says: "All reasonable measures consistent with good medical practice, including the compilation of appropriate medical records, *shall be taken to preserve the life and health of the child* (my italics)."

The law signed by Walz in 2023 deleted the italicized words, replacing them with "to care for the infant who is born alive." Now why would he want to do that?

It should be obvious that to “care for an infant” is not the same as to “preserve the life” of an infant. Keeping the baby warm is a poor substitute for keeping him alive.

In her analysis of Vance’s comments, Zernike further said, “Doctors have argued to get rid of these laws because there are already laws requiring them to provide appropriate medical care to any human.” Similarly, in her reply to Catholic League email subscribers who contacted her, she said that the law Walz repealed “was duplicative of other laws that prevent infanticide.”

This is astounding. When it comes to other demographic groups in our society—gays, blacks, et al.—we can’t have too many laws protecting their human rights. But when it comes to infants, one is enough. Sorry, this is a lame excuse.

Zernike wrote in her Times piece that in the “extremely rare cases of infants who have been ‘born alive,’” they were “close to death,” and doctors said it took “decision-making away from families....”

That’s rich. First, why did she put quotation marks around “born alive”? Is not the issue what to do about babies born alive as a result of a botched abortion? There is nothing so-called about that.

Second, since when do doctors allow parents to make decisions for them when faced with the prospect of saving the life of their baby? Are they not obligated to save lives, and not to defer to others whether to intervene? Where does this stop? And why choose to start with innocent babies?

Since when have we expected doctors to be mere “care givers,” professionals who “care for an infant who is born alive,” but who do nothing to save the child’s life?

In her reply to our supporters, Zernike defends this position, saying, “*this does not allow a doctor to kill a viable child*

(her italics).” This is a red herring. Neither Vance nor I said so. Vance spoke about the doctor being under no obligation to attend to the child, and I defended that interpretation.

She said in her *Times* response to Vance that in the five years that Walz has been governor of Minnesota, “there have been eight recorded infants ‘born alive.’” Three were classified as “previabile”; two had “fetal abnormalities and died shortly after birth”; and three were provided “comfort care” and died shortly after birth.

The key question is whether any of these babies could have survived had they been given proper medical attention.

Let’s say the babies may have died anyway. What about the seven cases that occurred between 2015 and 2019 where reports simply said that “comfort care measures were provided as planned”? And what about a 2017 case where records show “no specific steps taken to preserve life were reported” of a baby born alive?

Passively allowing babies to die is barbaric, just as Vance said. Lying about it is just as bad.

PEOPLE OF FAITH MAKE THE BEST CITIZENS

Bill Donohue

Citizenship is central to a free society. Without men and women acting responsibly, and giving of themselves to others, freedom is jeopardized for everyone. The attributes that make

for good citizenship include such virtues as self-discipline, self-responsibility, community service and patriotism.

These virtues do not come naturally to us—they must be carefully nourished. Those who do the nurturing include parents, teachers, the clergy and community leaders. Some do a better job than others, and that varies on several measures, one of which is religion.

Do people of faith make for better citizens than their secular counterparts? From the data we have collected, it appears to be so.

We examined the data collected by the Pew Research Center on the percentage of adults who identify as highly religious. Using the data, we compared the twelve most religious states to the twelve least religious, or most secular, states on several variables.

The twelve most religious states are: Alabama (77 percent of adults identify as highly religious), Mississippi (77 percent), Tennessee (73 percent), Louisiana (71 percent), Arkansas (70 percent), South Carolina (70 percent), West Virginia (69 percent), Georgia (66 percent), Oklahoma (66 percent), North Carolina (64 percent), Texas (64 percent), and Utah (64 percent).

The twelve least religious states are: New Hampshire (33 percent of adults identify as highly religious), Massachusetts (33 percent), Vermont (34 percent), Maine (34 percent), Connecticut (43 percent), Wisconsin (45 percent), Washington (45 percent), Alaska (45 percent), New York (46 percent), Hawaii (47 percent), Colorado (47 percent), and Oregon (48 percent).

Here's how they match up on eleven different issues,

Religious Liberty Laws

Ten of the most religious states have a religious-liberty law.

One of the least religious states has a religious-liberty law.

Abortion

Abortion Rate:

The average percentage of pregnancies aborted per 100,000 in the most religious states was 4.19 percent. This comparatively low figure was driven by restrictive abortion laws in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Texas. All of these states had zero abortions last year. Georgia saw a small decline while Utah, South Carolina and North Carolina posted an increase.

The average percentage of pregnancies aborted per 100,000 in the most secular least religious states was 14.44 percent.

Restrictive Abortion Laws:

All twelve of the most religious states have restrictive abortion laws.

One of the least religious states has a restrictive abortion law.

Total Number of Abortions:

Lots of changes have taken place since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned and the issue of abortion was returned to the states. For example, the states have implemented different policies, resulting in dramatic differences.

Last year, 92,810 abortions were performed in the most religious states.

The figure for the least religious states was 236,110.

Number of Abortion Facilities:

There are a total of 33 abortion facilities in the most religious states (eight have none).

There are a total of 264 abortion facilities in the least religious states.

Transgenderism

Laws against Minors Receiving Gender Affirming Care:

All twelve of the most religious states have laws against minors receiving gender affirming care.

One of the least religious states has a law against minors receiving gender affirming care.

Laws Protecting Women's Sports:

Eleven of the most religious states have regulations protecting women's sports.

Two of the least religious states have regulations protecting women's sports.

Laws Protecting Women's Bathrooms and Locker Rooms:

Eight of the most religious states have some form of protection.

None of the least religious states have any protections for women's facilities.

Parental Rights

Eight of the most religious states have laws protecting parental rights.

None of the least religious states have laws protecting parental rights.

Education

School Choice:

Eleven of the most religious states have some sort of school choice program.

Three of the least religious states have some sort of school choice program.

Sexually Explicit Material:

Nine of the most religious states have regulations barring sexually explicit materials in schools.

None of the least religious states have regulations barring sexually explicit materials in schools.

Internet Porn

Eleven of the most religious states require age verification to view porn over the Internet.

None of the least religious states require age verification to view porn over the Internet.

Prostitution:

All of the most religious states ban prostitution.

All of the least secular states ban prostitution, but Maine and New York in recent years have watered down some of the provisions against prostitution. In Maine, it is decriminalized to sell sex, but it is still illegal to buy sex. In New York, the law banning loitering for the purpose of prostitution has been repealed. Additionally, California also repealed its law banning loitering for the purpose of prostitution, but it is not one of the most secular states.

Self-Destruction

Drug Overdose Rate:

There is little difference between the most religious and the least religious states on this variable.

Suicide Mortality Rate:

There is little difference between the most religious and the least religious states on this variable.

Medical Assisted Suicide:

All twelve of the most religious states ban medical assisted suicide.

The least religious states are split six to six on this issue.

Drug Legalization:

In the most religious states, four have made no effort to legalize drugs; five have legalized medical marijuana; and three have decriminalized marijuana.

In the least religious states, only one has made no effort to legalize drugs; two have decriminalized marijuana; and nine have fully legalized marijuana.

Self-Giving

Community Service:

In the most religious states, citizens contributed a combined total of 963,500,000 service hours.

In the least religious states, citizens contributed a combined total of 793,000,000 service hours.

Military Service:

Per capita, the rate of enlistments, ages 18-24, were much greater in the religious states than in the least religious states.

The findings are profound. People of faith not only value religion personally, they live in states where religious liberty is protected. They value life, beginning in the womb. They accept our God-given nature, and do not approve of schemes to transition to the opposite sex (which is a fiction anyway).

Pornography is rejected, whether it is available online or in elementary and secondary school books. Parents have rights that schools need to respect. They should also have the right to send their child to the school of their choice, without paying twice—once for public education and once for the private option.

People of faith are not selfish. Indeed, they are more likely to be self-giving. This matters greatly to those whom they serve; their voluntary efforts are an example of putting their faith into action. Everyone benefits when young men and women serve in the armed forces, and in this regard religious Americans are a role model for everyone.

It makes sense that secularists are not gung-ho on religious liberty—if religion doesn't matter much in their own lives, why should they care? Their acceptance of abortion and transgenderism smacks of radical individualism. It also explains why they don't demand a crackdown on sexually explicit material in the schools or online porn. And, of course, it makes sense that those who are pre-occupied with themselves have little interest in giving back to their community or serving in the armed forces.

To be sure, there are many religious persons who are self-absorbed, and there are many secularists who are not. But *overall*, the data indicate that people of faith make for better citizens, and that is an important cultural marker.

KAMALA'S SLAVEMASTER PEDIGREE

The Left is good at lying, especially when it comes to the poor and their upbringing.

The first question asked of Kamala Harris by David Muir in the debate between her and Donald Trump was, "When it comes to the economy, do you believe Americans are better off than they were four years ago?" She responded, "So, I was raised as a middle-class kid." Not only was that a dodge—her answer had nothing to do with the question—it was a lie.

In a lengthy piece on Breitbart about her biography, it was said that "a close look at her childhood shows that Harris and her younger sister grew up with many opportunities that many 'middle class' children do not have, such as living abroad, private school education, and growing up in some of the wealthiest locales in the world."

Today, Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, have an estimated net worth of \$8 million and they live in a house in Brentwood, California worth over \$5 million (double what they paid in 2012). The 3,500-square-foot estate has four bedrooms, five bathrooms, and a private pool. Her neighbors include Gisele Bündchen, Dr. Dre, LeBron James and Gwyneth Paltrow.

None of this would matter much if it weren't for Harris portraying herself as an average American, and as someone whose background allows her to be the champion of the dispossessed. In actual fact, she has a slavemaster pedigree.

Her father, Stanford professor Donald Harris, is a descendant of Hamilton Brown, a slaveowner in Jamaica. He owned over 120 slaves in the early nineteenth century. He not only was a big sugar plantation slavemaster, he was an outspoken foe of the

abolitionists. Moreover, he hated William Wilberforce, the most prominent public opponent of slavery.

Harris does not like to talk about her father's slavemaster roots, and neither does she like to talk about her mother's slavemaster roots. Indeed, her mother's side of the family is a classic case of privilege and an exemplar of oppression.

"In Indian society, we go by birth. We are Brahmins, that is the top caste." That is how her mother, Shyamala, described her roots.

A caste system is a type of social stratification that differs from a class system in that it does not permit mobility, either upward or downward. It's a closed system.

At the top are the Brahmins, mostly priests and academics. The second of four castes are known as the Kshatriyas; they are the warriors, administrators and rulers. Vaishyas are the third layer, consisting of artisans, merchants, tradesmen and farmers. Then come the commoners, the Shudras, mostly peasants and servants. Last are the Dalits; they are the ones who scrub the toilets, etc.

The Brahmins received some of their bounty from selling slaves. In the case of Harris' mother, Shyamala Gopalan, her roots are that of the Tamil Brahmins, also known as Tambrans.

Tambrans are from the southern tip of India, Tamil Nadu. They were the most advantaged group residing in the Tamil-speaking region of the country. As hereditary Hindu priests, they took over many of the elite positions in the colonial government, something which today is a source of embarrassment. This explains why Harris never mentions the words Tamil and Brahmin in her 2019 book about her life, *The Truths We Hold*. She doesn't want the world to know about her elitist roots.

Slavery was not outlawed in India until 1843, yet it still exists today in parts of the country. Ironically, it still

exists in the spinning mills of Tamil Nadu, Harris' mother's hometown area. According to a young scholar in India, "the history of Brahmins is underwritten by centuries of enslaving many millions of others." This is the privileged basis of Harris' mother's ancestors.

The caste system extends back 1,500 years. The Brahmins not only held all the major positions of power in India, but unlike everyone else, they lived in rent free villages. They maintained their grip on power by practicing endogamy, marrying only their own kind; the marriages were arranged.

At the bottom of the caste system are the Dalits, also known as the Untouchables. As one contemporary Indian writer puts it, "India's history is smeared with brutalities against lower-caste people by those higher up on the caste ladder." The Untouchables are the most oppressed in the Hindu caste system, a function of their being considered impure.

Harris says we need reparations in the U.S. because of slavery and discrimination. But she never addresses the oppressive conditions of the Dalits and Shudras, nor does she call for the abolition of slavery in India where it still exists.

Perversely, Harris demands that to facilitate discussions on reparations for African Americans we need to do a study of slavery and the effects of discrimination. Fine. Let us also do a study of her slavemaster pedigree. Then she can begin writing checks to those who survived the oppression visited upon their forefathers by her ancestors.

Harris likes to mouth the wonders of inclusion, yet she is the beneficiary of centuries of exclusion. Time for her to fess up.

WHY KAMALA STIFFED AL SMITH DINNER

When Kamala Harris decided to stiff New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan and skip the Al Smith Dinner on Oct. 17, she became the first presidential candidate to do so since Walter Mondale in 1984. As Cardinal Dolan pointed out, he lost every state but one. (New York Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor did not extend an invitation to either candidate in 1996 and that is because he could not bring himself to invite Bill Clinton; he had just vetoed a ban on partial-birth abortion.)

The Al Smith Dinner, named after the first Catholic to run for president in 1928, is well attended by elites from government, the media, business and the entertainment industry. It is an opportunity to showcase one's policies and persona. This may explain why Harris took a pass.

Neither Harris nor Trump is Catholic, but that doesn't matter as much as their policies. They differ tremendously on abortion, school choice and religious liberty, and many other issues of importance to Catholics.

Harris is a rabid proponent of abortion-on-demand, and even agrees that babies born alive as a result of a botched abortion need not be attended to by medical personnel.

When it comes to religious liberty, Harris is a co-sponsor of the Equality Act and the sponsor of the Do No Harm Act. Both would exempt the bill's provisions from the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the most consequential religious-liberty legislation ever adopted.

It would have been uncomfortable for Harris, and, quite frankly, for many others, had she attended. She has a lot in common with dissident Catholics (to the extent they can

realistically be called Catholic), but not with practicing Catholics.

There is another reason why it would have been awkward for Harris to attend the dinner. The event is known for allowing the candidates to “roast” each other. This is right up Trump’s alley—he is lightning fast and loves to roast his foes on a regular basis. But for Harris, this kind of setting would have been a disaster.

Harris was raised in a confused religious household. Her father was a Christian and her mother was Hindu. She attended a Baptist church but she says very little about her religious upbringing. Nor does she say much about her faith today.

The Religion News Service, a secular-leaning media outlet, says two things about her religious status. She likes to talk about the Good Samaritan and she likes to invoke liberation theology.

What does the Good Samaritan New Testament verse mean to Harris? It means helping our neighbor. Fine. But her comments are so pedestrian as to be childlike in their innocence. “Neighbor is not about having the same ZIP code. What we learn from that parable is that neighbor is someone you are walking by on the street.” That is certainly a novel interpretation.

Religion News Service tried to help her by offering a sanitized understanding of liberation theology, saying it is a “strain of Christian thought that emphasizes social concern for the poor and political liberation of oppressed peoples.” Not really. It is a Marxist-driven ideology with a Christian veneer, just the kind of “theology” that secularists are okay with.

To be sure, Harris is not that different from the man she serves. While the media call Joe Biden a “devout Catholic,” a survey by Pew Research Center found that only 13 percent of Americans think he is “very religious.”

Her running mate, Tim Walz, is no better. His parents were nominally Catholic and he bolted the Catholic Church long ago to join the most liberal mainline Lutheran denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He wanted nothing to do with the more orthodox Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. During the debate with JD Vance, he admitted, “I don’t talk about my faith a lot,” which is certifiably true. He then quoted a passage from the Bible.

The religion problem is deeper than the candidates. The Democratic Party has been thoroughly secularized for some time.

In 2012, the Democrats deleted the word “God” from their Platform (they had to restore it after a pushback). Four years later, the 2016 Democratic Party Platform had 14 sentences on specific rights for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People, and two vague sentences on “respecting faith” at home.

The only time the 2024 Platform mentions God is in a throwaway reference speaking about the need for all of us to “live up to their God-given potential.” That’s it. Though it does make mention of Jews and Muslims, it makes no mention of Christians or Catholics. It’s as though we don’t exist.

People of faith don’t even merit their own section on religious liberty.

Instead, there is a small section on “Combating Hate & Protecting Freedom of Religion.” It condemns anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, but says not a word about all the violence directed at Christian churches and crisis pregnancy centers. Nor does it comment on attempts to stifle Christian speech or punishing Christian foster parents.

Harris had a chance to reach out to Catholics at the Al Smith Dinner. She chose not to.

SECULARISTS PUZZLED BY TRUMP SUPPORT

Every survey shows that most Americans do not consider Donald Trump to be a particularly devout Christian. Indeed, only 14 percent of U.S. adults say the word “Christian” describes the former president. Even among evangelical Protestants who think favorably of Trump, only one in five strongly associates the term “Christian” with him.

This obviously does not bother his supporters, but it sure bothers others. The others are those who are unhappy with the faithful for standing by Trump, a man they say is characterologically flawed. They are basically saying that religious Americans who are in Trump’s corner are hypocrites.

R. Marie Griffith is a religion and politics professor at Washington University in St. Louis. Speaking of the faithful who support Trump, she says, “They really don’t care about, is he religious or not.” According to Newsweek, this signifies a “disconnect” between personal faith and political support, one that “prioritizes political goals over traditional religious values.”

Not really. What it suggests is that Christians who like Trump are mature voters: They are not choosing the most pious candidate—they are choosing the person who is the most likely to promote their values. Whether the candidate is religion-friendly matters gravely, not his personal relationship with God.

In June, we published a report, “Biden and Trump on Religious Liberty,” that compared the Trump-Pence administration’s record on this subject to that of Biden-Harris (we recently

updated it). In his four years as president, Trump addressed religious liberty issues 117 times. From the beginning of his presidency in January 2021 to October 1, 2024, Biden-Harris addressed these matters 33 times.

While quantitative data are important, qualitative analysis are also critical. On this score, Trump wins easily: he expanded religious liberty while Biden-Harris often contracted it.

Our report looked at the following issues: Faith-based initiatives; Conscience rights; Abortion; HHS Mandate; Foster Care; Gays; Transgenderism; and International Issues.

“No one seriously believes that Trump is a man of deep faith,” Bill Donohue said. “But his policies on religious liberty are a model of excellence. Biden, on the other hand, tries hard to convince the public that he is a ‘devout Catholic’ yet his religious-liberty rulings are unimpressive, and in some cases are subversive of this First Amendment right.”

Harris’ views on religious liberty are inextricably linked to the administration she serves. This explains why Sen. Mike Lee recently said that “Kamala Harris doesn’t believe that religious institutions should be able to live according to their faith. Rather, they must bend the knee to the popular social justice movement of the day.”

Lee does not exaggerate. Harris is a co-sponsor of the Equality Act and she introduced the Do No Harm Act. Both would gut religious liberty protections by sidelining the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act. And unlike Trump, who gave us Supreme Court Justices who respect the First Amendment guarantee of religious liberty, Harris would go the other way.

There is no disconnect between people of faith who are unimpressed with Trump’s personal Christian credentials and his phenomenal record of promoting religious liberty for all Americans. After all, they know what the choices are.

Harris, who is a religious hybrid (she was raised Baptist and Hindu), is not exactly known as Ms. Devout. But she is known as someone who entertains a militant secularist mindset. It is the latter that counts. Persona matters but policies matter more. That's the mature way of sizing up candidates for public office.

CATHOLICS FOR KAMALA LEAVES US NUMB

There is a group called Catholics for Kamala but it is short on her accomplishments. We would expect a detailed analysis of her public policy positions that are important to the Catholic community. But there is none.

On the home page of [catholics4kamala](#) there is a picture of her with the inscription, "Elect Kamala Harris for President." Below it reads, "The positions of the Biden/Harris Administration and the Democratic Party are easily the most consistent with Catholic Social Teaching." For some reason, not a single position is listed.

The next page reads, "We Need a President Who is Compassionate." Not competent, but "compassionate." It says below, "Catholics need to vote for a Presidential candidate that exhibits the character our country needs now."

Back to the home page. Clicking on "Learn More" takes the reader to a page that reads, "The Catholic Case for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz."

In the course of a couple of paragraphs, the first specific issue mentioned that is supposed to be of special interest to

Catholics is “global warming.” The last issue mentioned is the “scourge of White Christian Nationalism,” which, as we have pointed out many times, is a bogeyman invented by Christian bashers.

The most specific catholics4kamala gets about issues is in the “Harris v. Trump” page. This is what passes as specific about Harris: “Youthful and joyful”; “Looks forward to the future”; “Advocates for the well-being of all”; “Focused on the Common Good”; “Inclusive and affirming”; and “Hopeful.” That about sums it up.

BEWARE POLLSTERS

There is a fancy name for what is called “the scientific study of elections.” It is called psephology, or what is more commonly known as survey research. To what extent we can seriously say it qualifies as a science is open to debate. Not open to debate is how influential surveys are. They matter, and that is because they shape public opinion.

It was during World War II that survey research surged. Columbia University conducted research on how best to sell war bonds, and it was determined that Kate Smith, the iconic American singer (best known for “God Bless America”), would be the most persuasive person to hire. It worked.

Survey research is the domain of sociology. Today there are many outstanding survey houses: the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, and the University of California at Berkeley are as well known today as Columbia. Then there are survey companies outside the academy, such as Gallup, Pew Research Center, McLaughlin & Associates, Rasmussen, and all the ones sponsored by the media, mostly newspapers and TV

outlets.

The quality of the work varies intensely. During an election season, they carry significant weight, perhaps too much.

The size of the sample, the filtering characteristics employed (registered v. non-registered voters), the wording of the questions, the inclusion of cell phone users, the diversity of the respondents, etc. There is also the factor that some citizens don't trust pollsters and refuse to offer an honest answer. As important as anything, some surveys are methodologically more trustworthy than others, but even in the best of hands, problems are legion.

In 2016, when Hillary Clinton faced Donald Trump, virtually every pollster in the nation got the outcome wrong; the overall average put Clinton ahead by 4.3 percent. A few weeks before the election, the *New York Times* said Clinton had a 91 percent chance of winning; Trump had a 9 percent chance.

It is not true that all electoral constituents are equally consequential. Protestants and Jews, for example, are reliably Republican and Democrat, respectively. Catholics matter the most because they are the most in flux.

Up until the late 1960s and early 1970s, Catholics laid anchor with the Democrats. But when George McGovern was the Democratic nominee in 1972, his radical politics stunned Catholics. Internal changes in the Party—the ascent of feminists—pushed Catholics from leadership positions in the Party.

Abortion was another factor. Of the three major religions, Catholics were the only ones to be pro-life; Protestants, including evangelicals, and Jews celebrated *Roe v. Wade* (evangelicals switched sides by the end of the 1970s).

The two political parties also flipped during the 1970s. Before that time, Republicans, led by a WASP Rockefeller

elite, were seen as the voice of abortion rights; Democrats, reflecting the views of Catholics, were mostly anti-abortion. By the time Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980, the Republicans were the party of pro-lifers and the Democrats were the pro-abortion party. Nothing has changed since.

In 2016, Trump won the Catholic vote, 52-45. In 2020, he narrowly won 50-49 over Joe Biden. In early October, a Pew Research Center poll had Trump beating Harris among Catholics 52-47.

When Catholics are asked by pollsters whom they will vote for, what matters is whether they are practicing or not. Catholics who attend church with some regularity are more likely to vote for Trump, but those who seldom attend are more likely to go for Harris. Hispanics vote Democrat, though more are now moving towards the Republicans.

Now more than ever before, Republicans have become the party of religious Americans; secularists dominate the Democratic Party. They also don't like Catholics. In 2023, a survey by the Pew Research Center found that more Democrats had an unfavorable view of Catholics (25 percent) than had a favorable view of them (22 percent). Interestingly, Democrats look more favorably on Muslims and atheists.

Demographically, single women—never married, separated, divorced or widowed—are the biggest supporters of the Democrats. It accounts, in large part, why Democrats do better with women overall.

The working class used to be solidly Democrat, but no more. They feel abandoned and alienated and much prefer the Republicans, especially Trump Republicans.

Blacks have always been a one-party people. Following the lead of Lincoln, they voted overwhelmingly Republican, but when FDR made overtures to them, they became overwhelmingly Democrat. They became even more solidly Democrat in the 1960s: it was

the federal government that gave blacks rights long denied in the states, and Democrats are much more likely to prefer federal approaches to social and economic problems than are Republicans, who favor a states-rights approach.

Besides Catholics, the segment of the population that matters most are the Independents; there are more of them than there are Republicans and Democrats. (It was revealed this fall that for the first time in decades there are now more registered Republicans than Democrats.)

In short, Catholics and Independents are likely to decide the election. In the meantime, keep your eye on the pollsters. Some are better than others.

THE REAL THREAT TO DEMOCRACY

There are constant cries from the Left warning that democracy is under assault. They are right about that, but they are wrong about the enemy: it's not Christians we should fear—it's people like them who are imperiling democracy. Here are a few examples of how they operate.

Christians are busy in the courts these days pursuing religious liberty claims. For defending their rights, they are being castigated by CNN. "Religious interest groups are queuing up a series of high-profile appeals at the Supreme Court this fall that could further tear down the wall separating church and state, seeking to take advantage of a friendly 6-3 conservative majority that has rapidly pushed the law in their favor in recent years."

In other words, because religious liberty is under assault by militant secularists, allies of religious liberty have had to

go to the courts seeking justice from these bullies. For this, they are accused of subverting the First Amendment. This is what white racists said in the 1960s when blacks were seeking justice in the courts—they blamed the plaintiffs. Fair-minded people know who the real threat to democracy is in both instances.

Similarly, because Republicans are filing a record number of lawsuits in the states ensuring election fairness, they are being blamed for undermining democracy, not those engaged in voter fraud. Reuters reports that the reason for the court challenges is “to sow doubts about election integrity,” and the *New York Times* says that “experts” believe that many of the suits “are based on unfounded, or outright false, claims.”

These stories are appearing at the same time that the Biden-Harris administration is suing Alabama for removing more than 3,000 noncitizens from the voter rolls. Why would they want to do that?

Why is it that this administration’s Department of Justice refuses to make public a plan it adopted in March 2021, two months after the election, to increase voter turnout? Who were they looking to register? Milkmen or migrants? Given that they sought the advice of left-wing advocacy groups (they are currently working with the Southern Poverty Law Center in the Alabama case), we know it wasn’t the milkman.

Hillary Clinton recently said that those who engage in speech that sounds like Russian propaganda should be “criminally charged” for exercising their freedom of speech. But apparently she is not a threat to democracy anymore than John Kerry is. He is now complaining that the First Amendment right to free speech “stands as a major block to the ability to be able to hammer [disinformation] out of existence.”

Meanwhile, religious left-wing activists recently held a conference at Georgetown University decrying attempts to

destroy democracy. It is not Muslim extremists who bother them, or Iran interfering in our elections, it's "the tenets of Christian Nationalism" that we need to guard against.

The meeting was led by Jim Wallis, the self-described "radical" who was removed from his post as editor-in-chief of Sojourners, the far-left Protestant publication which he founded and headed, for making a lousy editorial judgment. A year after he was dumped from the magazine, Georgetown rewarded him with a new post—one that he founded—as the head of the Center on Faith and Justice.

Psychologists call this phenomenon "projection," that is, the tendency to project onto others one's own foibles. It might also be called "gaslighting," the manipulation of others designed to cause them to doubt their own thoughts and perception of reality. The Left is very good at that.

This is more than hypocrisy—this is propaganda at its worst.