

ROBERTS' RELIGION PROBED; CATHOLIC BAITING ERUPTS

It didn't take long before critics of Supreme Court nominee John Roberts made an issue of his religion. All over the airwaves pundits were wondering whether his Catholicism might interfere with his duties as a judge.

For example, the day after President Bush nominated Roberts, an influential left-wing publication, *The American Prospect*, ran a particularly unseemly piece in its online edition charging that Bush's choice of Roberts meant that the president was "Playing the Catholic card."

According to Adele M. Stan, Bush was "betting he's bought himself some insulation—any opposition to Roberts, particularly because of his anti-abortion record, will likely be countered with accusations of anti-Catholicism." She said this is a "timely pitch" to "conservative Catholic voters prior to the midterm elections"; she urged "liberal Catholics" and others to protest Roberts.

Stan went even further on her blog, AddieStan, by saying "Rome must be smiling" at Bush's choice. She asked that readers contact the Democratic Catholics on the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject Roberts.

William Donohue issued a quick reply, saying we ought to apply Stan's logic to President Clinton's selection of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Steven Breyer for the Supreme Court. Donohue offered, "Did he do so because he liked 'Playing the Jewish card'? And did he do so because he wanted his critics to be seen as anti-Semites? For good measure, was Israel 'smiling' when Clinton chose Ginsburg and Breyer?"

The fact that Jew baiting did not accompany the nominations of Ginsburg and Breyer, Donohue said, showed how this nation has

progressed. “Unfortunately,” he added, “within 24 hours of Roberts’ nomination, Catholic baiting raised its ugly head.” He concluded by saying, “We hope this is not the beginning of an ugly few months.”

Just as we thought, things got worse. That’s one reason why Donohue joined with evangelical notables like Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family and Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council in the “Justice Sunday II” event that was staged in Nashville on August 14. The idea that Catholic nominees to the Supreme Court should be subjected to a religious litmus test is outrageous.

This issue lists many of the most objectionable comments about Roberts and Catholicism. It also lists how the Catholic League has responded to these vicious remarks.

SHOWTIME UPDATE

The petition drive against the Showtime production of Penn and Teller’s vicious assault on Mother Teresa was at least partly successful. In an unprecedented move, Viacom/Showtime officials decided never to run this particular episode again.

On July 18, the producer of the offensive show, called Bill Donohue. When Donohue accepted the call, the producer thanked him for doing so and expressed surprise that he would even speak to her. She then apologized profusely.

According to the producer, a Showtime employee, she was asked to draw up a list of questions that were to be asked of Donohue; a member of the technical crew that was to shoot the program would then pose the questions to Donohue in the Catholic League’s office (which occurred in October 2004).

That was it. The rest of program was in the hands of Penn and Teller's editors. When she saw the final product, the producer confessed that she was horrified. Indeed, she told Penn and Teller's executives that she would never work for them again.

Donohue credited her for her sincerity, said none of the questions she posed were disrespectful and said he would make notice of this on the Catholic League's website where her name appeared. But he also said he wanted to hear from others.

On August 17, Donohue heard from Viacom CEO, Sumner Redstone. What he heard led him to blast Redstone for "defending Catholic bashing." Click [here](#) for the incredible details.

THE ATTEMPT TO DERAIL JOHN ROBERTS

William A. Donohue

Attempts by some Democrats to derail John Roberts' nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court by dwelling on his religion will backfire: the nation has had enough with attempts to impose a veiled litmus test on Catholic nominees to the federal bench.

When Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Steven Breyer were nominated by President Clinton for a seat on the high court, no one in the media or the congress asked them to explain how their Jewish heritage might impact on their rulings. But from Barbara Walters on ABC to Lynn Neary on NPR, media pundits have wondered aloud whether Roberts' Catholicism might affect his decisions on the court. And, of course, Senator Dick Durbin—always one to pry about matters religious when Catholics are nominated—has already announced that he will

grill Roberts about his faith when he gets a chance.

Former New York State Governor Mario Cuomo had the audacity to go on "Meet the Press" saying he wants the Senate Judiciary Committee to ask Roberts the following questions: "Are you going to impose a religious test on the Constitution? Are you going to say that because the pope says this or the Church says that, you will do it no matter what?" The implication, of course, is that Roberts may be Rome's robot. Ironically, it is not Roberts who is imposing a religious test, it is people like Cuomo who are aiding and abetting "Catholic-friendly" senators like Kennedy, Durbin and Leahy on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Is there anything wrong with offering a biographical portrait of a Supreme Court nominee that mentions his or her religious affiliation? Of course not. But there is a monumental difference between a descriptive article and one that posits a cause-and-effect relationship between one's religious beliefs and one's likely rulings from the bench. The former is good journalism; the latter is yellow journalism.

It is even worse when senators start questioning a nominee about his religion. When Senator Chuck Schumer questioned circuit-court nominee Bill Pryor about his "fervent personal beliefs on *Roe v. Wade*," he crossed the line. Why? Because everyone knew that Schumer's words were code for "fervent religious beliefs." Indeed, the record shows that in the very next breath Schumer gratuitously observed that he is friends with the bishop in his community. Bully for him! But his real point was lost on no one.

It is morally offensive and constitutionally inappropriate to pursue such a line of inquiry. All a prospective judge should be asked in this regard is whether he holds to any convictions so strongly that he could not faithfully execute his duties to interpret the Constitution in a fair manner. The source of those convictions should be a moot issue.

It is important to acknowledge that while a religiously informed conscience may play a legitimate role for a lawmaker, it has no legitimate role to play for a judge. Those who legislate have every right to seek insight from the teachings of their respective religions: their goal is to service the common good, thus they may feel it is wise to consult the fund of knowledge that their religious ancestors have bequeathed. But a judge is there for one reason and one reason only: to interpret the Constitution as it was meant to be interpreted by those who wrote it. Ergo, whatever religious, or secular, beliefs he personally holds should be irrelevant.

On August 14, I proudly joined with Evangelicals in Justice Sunday II (I participated in the first event in April). We may be of different faiths, but it is not our theological differences that matter: we are united on the same side of the culture war against those who would like to censor the public expression of religion and drive people of faith out of the public square. Radical secularists want us to sit back and relax and leave the driving to them. But I have news for them: we will be disobedient. Moreover, we fully intend to take control of the wheel. (Lucky for them, we believe in something they don't—tolerance. Which is why we won't run them over.)

The culture war is now at a fever pitch in this country: either the value of restraint will prove triumphant or the value of license will prevail. Playing a crucial, and altogether inflated, role in the outcome are the decisions reached by the federal judiciary, especially the Supreme Court. That is why getting the right person on the high court is such a weighty concern.

Finally, when Ruth Bader Ginsburg was asked what her position was on gay rights and capital punishment, she declined to answer. Similarly, Roberts should decline to answer if pressed how he would vote on abortion. Indeed, it is up to all fair-minded senators to interject themselves on his behalf if one of their colleagues seeks to violate this understanding.

THE PAPACY AND THE JEWS: RABBI DALIN SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT

By William Doyno, Jr.

Every day, the secular media bombards us with the idea that the Catholic Church is a backward, repressive institution, unfair to its own members and prejudiced against those outside its communion. Is it any wonder that so many Jews, and other non-Catholics—not to mention “anti-Catholic Catholics” ignorant of their own faith—have a distorted or incomplete understanding of Catholicism? Anti-Catholicism so saturates the media that even the *Jerusalem Post*, trying to correct the record, got its story wrong: there have been no fundamental “changes” in Catholic theology regarding Jews because Catholic teaching against anti-Semitism was not introduced at Vatican II, but merely developed (with the assistance of the Holy Spirit), and applied more conscientiously to the modern world.

That John Paul II increased the warmth and trust between the two communities is undeniable; but that John Paul II began the rapprochement between the Catholic and Jewish communities—as if everything up to his pontificate was something to regret—is a myth, which he himself would rebel against, were he still alive to refute it.

Fortunately there are many Catholics and Jews who have dedicated their lives to trying to set the historical record straight. One man in that mold is Rabbi and historian David Dalin, who first came to the attention of Catholics when he published a much-discussed essay on Pius XII and the Jews in

the influential *Weekly Standard* (February 26, 2001). In it, he staked out his position in defense of Pius XII, and argued that many of the wartime pope's critics—particularly embittered, dissenting Catholics—were not really interested in the tragedy of the Jewish people but merely sought to exploit it for their own anti-papal agenda. "Jews, whatever their feelings about the Catholic Church," he wrote, "have a duty to reject any attempt to usurp the Holocaust and use it for partisan purposes." That remarkable essay was re-published in the important anthology Dalin co-edited, *The Pius War: Responses to the Critics of Pius XII* (See, "Why We Published *The Pius War*," in *Catalyst*, April, 2005, pp. 8-9).

Even before he came to the attention of the wider Catholic community, Dalin was known as an exacting scholar of Judaism, having already authored several important books, and written for such journals as *Commentary*, *Conservative Judaism* and *American Jewish History*. His knowledge of Catholicism and Catholic-Jewish history is no less impressive. And unlike so many who delve into this complicated area, Dalin has impeccable credentials: he received his B.A. degree from the University of California at Berkeley, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He received his M.A. and Ph.D from Brandeis University, and his Rabbinic Ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary in America. Dalin, in other words, is an authority on this subject, not an amateur making stray and superficial comments.

Because of his body of work and reputation, Rabbi Dalin is a much sought-after speaker and lecturer, and now teaches at Ave Maria University in Naples, Florida, where he is a Professor of history and political science.

In his new book, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, Dalin directly refutes the thesis of John Cornwell's notorious book, *Hitler's Pope*. He uses the occasion to explore the whole history of Catholic-Jewish relations, and compares them to Jewish-Muslim relations, which are at the heart of current geopolitical

debates today.

The *Myth of Hitler's Pope* covers three areas of concern for Catholics and Jews. The first, of course, is the life and record of Eugenio Pacelli, who served as Pope Pius XII during the Second World War and beginning of the Cold War. Against the polemicists and mythmakers of our time, Rabbi Dalin demonstrates the humanity, courage and charity of Pius XII, both before and after he became pope.

At every stage of his life, Dalin argues, Pacelli was an outspoken foe of every aspect of Nazism. With careful documentation, much of it new, from recently released archives, Dalin proves that Pacelli, did, in fact "speak out" against anti-Semitism, racism, warmongering and the atrocities of the Holocaust. His record as papal nuncio in Germany (1917-1929), as well as when he was Cardinal Secretary of State to Pius XI (1930-1939), is quite impressive. This is true notwithstanding the much-maligned 1933 Concordat between the Holy See and Germany, which Pacelli negotiated (on behalf of Pius XI) to protect the Church's freedom against the onslaught of the Nazis. (By doing so, he preserved at least some mobility for the Church to protect persecuted Catholics and Jews.) As pope himself, from 1939-1958, Pius XII was the architect of the Catholic Church's world-wide rescue efforts during the Holocaust, going to great lengths to protect Europe's persecuted Jewish community.

One of the most important parts of Rabbi Dalin's book is where he demolishes the claim that Pius XII was uninvolved in these rescue efforts, as if all Catholic rescue was spontaneous and independent of the pope. In fact, as Dalin proves, Pius XII gave direct orders and explicit instructions to his subordinates to rescue Jews; the result was that countless numbers of them were saved from Hitler's death camps. This was recognized at the time, after the War, and after Pius XII's death, by almost all major Jewish leaders and organizations. Dalin rightly criticizes those who attempt to diminish or

explain away these powerful testimonials on behalf of Pius. Contemporary scholars like Sir Martin Gilbert, whom Dalin cites as a renowned authority, estimate that the wartime Church, under Pius XII's leadership, saved "hundreds of thousands of Jewish lives."

The second subject concerns a little known figure—Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem; according to Dalin's research, he played a significant role in Hitler's Third Reich. Al-Husseini was one of the fathers of today's radical Muslim extremists and, therefore, a notorious anti-Semite who sanctioned Hitler's policies against the Jews. And Husseini did this, openly and publicly, at the very time that Pius XII was rescuing Jews in Rome and elsewhere. The story Dalin tells about this pro-Nazi cleric—who became a hero to Yasser Arafat, and whose theories are at the root of modern-day terrorism—is truly astonishing: he juxtaposes the actions of the two men, and chastises anti-Pius ideologues for ignoring al-Husseini's appalling record, while defaming a good and noble pope.

Writes Dalin:

"One of the most damaging side effects of the myth of Hitler's pope is that it perpetuates the myth that the Catholic Church, rather than radical Islam, has been and remains the preeminent source of anti-Semitism in the modern world...Today, sixty years after the Holocaust, the wartime career and historical significance of Hitler's mufti...should be better remembered and understood. The 'most dangerous' cleric in modern history, to use John Cornwell's phrase, was not Pope Pius XII but Hajj Amin al-Husseini, whose anti-Jewish Islamic fundamentalism was as dangerous in World War II as it is today. While in Berlin, al-Husseini met privately with Hitler on numerous occasions, and called publicly—and repeatedly—for the destruction of European Jewry. The grand mufti was the Nazi collaborator *par excellence*. 'Hitler's Mufti' is truth. 'Hitler's pope' is myth."

The final and perhaps most important theme of Dalin's book is the strength of Catholic-Jewish relations—not just today, but throughout the ages. For a number of years, numerous commentators—many of them Catholics, alas—have depicted the history of Catholic-Jewish relations as one long trail of tears. But while it is true that there have been difficult chapters in this relationship, it is also true that a philo-Semitic or pro-Jewish tradition has always existed in the Church—and it didn't begin at Vatican II. Employing all his skills as an historian, and without whitewashing any particular act of injustice, Dalin recounts how, with few exceptions, pope after pope, from ancient times to the present, raised a helping hand for the Jewish community:

“The historical fact is that popes have often spoken out in defense of the Jews, have protected them during times of persecution and pogroms, and have protected their right to worship freely in their synagogues. Popes have traditionally defended Jews from wild anti-Semitic allegations. Popes regularly condemned anti-Semites who sought to incite violence against Jews. Popes employed Jewish physicians in the Vatican and counted Jews among their personal confidants and friends. You won't find these facts in the liberal attack books, but they are true.”

Noting that many of Pius XII's detractors also assailed Mel Gibson's masterful “Passion of the Christ,” Dalin concludes his book with the observation that secularist ideologues who attack Pius XII—or John Paul II or Benedict XVI—are really engaged in the larger cultural war, against the Judeo-Christian values they represent. Rabbi Dalin calls upon both Jews and Catholics committed to their respective faiths to wake up, recognize what is going on, and fight back. As a first step, he proposes that Pope Pius XII be formally recognized as a “Righteous Gentile” by the state of Israel, as it has recognized other heroes who rescued Jews during the Holocaust.

That proposal may shock those committed to the myth of "Hitler's Pope," because of ignorance or prejudice, but if they read this book, they may well change their mind and agree with Dalin's informed and heartfelt judgment. May Israel one day so recognize Pius XII; may the Vatican beatify and canonize him; and may Rabbi Dalin, a courageous and prophetic figure for our cynical age, live long enough to see both occur.

William Doyno Jr. is a Catholic author and commentator. A contributing editor to Inside the Vatican, he has been published in such journals as National Review, Modern Age, and Crisis, and is now researching and writing a book on the Vatican's role during the Second World War.

RIPPING ROBERTS ON RELIGION

Many critics of John Roberts have posited that it is legitimate for senators to question him on the relationship between his religion and his position on various constitutional issues. Others have said that his wife's religious beliefs or associations should also be weighed. Neither of these areas of inquiry were ever pursued by senators when Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Steven Breyer were nominated; both Ginsburg and Breyer are Jewish.

The following remarks shed light on the different standard that is being applied to John Roberts:

Christopher D. Morris, Vermont writer and critic: "Asking the bishops to testify would be healthy." Writing about those bishops who threatened to withhold the Eucharist from John

Kerry, Morris wrote, "If the bishops repeated or confirmed their threats, the Senate Judiciary Committee should draft legislation calling for the automatic recusal of Catholic judges from cases citing *Roe v. Wade* as a precedent." [*Boston Globe*, August 9]

Mario Cuomo: Regarding questions that Cuomo would like to see the senators ask Roberts, he said: "Are you going to impose a religious test on the Constitution? Are you going to say that because the pope says this or the Church says that, you will do it no matter what?" ["Meet the Press," August 7]

Larry King: "Anyone have a problem on him being a devout Catholic?" [CNN, "Larry King Live," August 4]

John MacArthur, publisher of *Harper's Magazine*: "The Roberts couple seem to be very well-educated; I wonder whether in their high-minded socializing with Clarence and Virginia Thomas (at the College of the Holy Cross) and Robert and Mary Ellen Bork (at the lay Catholic John Carroll Society), they find time for informal book chat..." [*Providence Journal*, August 2]

Dahlia Lithwick, legal analyst for *Slate*: "And I wouldn't underestimate the influence of his religion, that Scalia and Thomas, one of the very reasons they may not have drifted leftward has a lot to do with very, very strong religious views that pull them to the right. And I think that probably John Roberts will fall into that camp in that sense." [NPR, August 2]

E.J. Dionne: "If Roberts's religious views are important to him, why should they be off-limits to honest discussion?" Dionne also said that "it would be helpful if Roberts gave an account of how (and whether) his religious convictions would affect his decisions as a justice." [*Washington Post*, August 2]

James Ridgeway: "Possible conflicts involving wife's work" he

notes, includes the fact that “She is currently legal counsel to the anti-abortion group Feminists for Life of America.” Curiously, Ridgeway says that Roberts and his wife belong to the Church of the Little Flower in Bethesda, Maryland, “whose members include L. Paul Bremer III.” [*Village Voice*, August 2]

Frances Kissling: “If this pope will intervene in the ways he has already in Europe, it certainly raises questions for us in the immediate sense of whether he thinks he can tell Roberts how to vote when he gets on the Supreme Court.” [NPR, August 1]

Christopher Hitchens: “Why should this question [about Roberts’ faith and the way he might rule] be asked only of Catholics? Well, that’s easy. The Roman Catholic Church claims the right to legislate on morals for all its members and to excommunicate them if they don’t conform. The church is also a foreign state, which has diplomatic relations with Washington.” Hitchens went on to say that “If Roberts is confirmed there will be quite a bloc of Catholics on the court. Scalia, Kennedy, and Thomas are strong in the faith. Is it kosher to mention these things?” [*Slate*, August 1]

Bill Press: “It is absolutely essential to explore Roberts’ religious beliefs as part of the confirmation process.” He added, “Fair to question Roberts about his faith? Of course it is. And those who suggest otherwise should not be taken seriously.” [*Tribune Media Services*, July 29]

Victor Kamber: “But isn’t the faith question, don’t we need to know where he puts his faith against the law?” [CNN, “Inside Politics,” July 28]

Senator Dick Durbin: According to law professor Jonathan Turley, “Roberts was asked by Sen. Richard Durbin what he would do if the law required a ruling that his church considers immoral.” [*Los Angeles Times*, July 25]. Durbin then disputed that he made this remark and Turley responded by

saying Durbin made the comment in the NBC makeup room on July 24; Turley also said that he cleared Durbin's quip with the senator's press secretary, Joe Shoemaker. [*Washington Times*, July 26]

Senator Dick Durbin: CNN correspondent Ed Henry, "Now, Senator Durbin, who is Catholic himself, told me today that he believes he needs to look at everything, including the nominee's faith, as he takes a measure of the man, in this case, Judge Roberts." [CNN, "Inside Politics," July 26]

Tony Harris, CNN Anchor: "Roberts is a Roman Catholic and a political conservative. This week on our 'Faces of Faith' segment we're going to examine how his faith might influence his profession." [CNN, "Sunday Morning," July 24].

CNN: The network flashed two responses to its e-mail question, "What would you ask Supreme Court nominee John Roberts?" They were as follows: a) "If being a devout Catholic would have an influence on any *Roe versus Wade* decisions, this is very important," and b) "I hope I would ask Roberts if he believes in the separation of church and state." [CNN, July 23]

Nina Totenberg: "Don't forget his wife was an officer, a high officer of a pro-life organization. He's got adopted children. I mean, he's a conservative Catholic." [NPR, July 23]

Senator Tom Coburn: "I had a couple of questions that he ducked."

As reported, the news story said, "Coburn said he and the nominee discussed issues ranging from Roberts' faith and his relationship with his wife... He said Roberts declined to answer a question about how his Catholic faith influences his life and work." [Associated Press, July 23]

Brian Mitchell: "The left has other reasons to fear Roberts. Roberts is a Catholic. His wife Jane is a former executive vice president of Feminists for Life." [*Investor's Business*

Daily, July 21]

Jonathan Mann, CNN Anchor: "He is a Catholic. His wife...is involved with a group called Feminists for Life, it's an anti-abortion group." [CNN, "Insight," July 20]

Barbara Walters: "John Roberts is a, a Roman Catholic. How important to him is his religion? Do you think that it might affect him as a Supreme Court justice?" [ABC, "Good Morning America," July 20]

People for the American Way: "It looks as if a full-scale 'Religious McCarthyism' campaign has been launched. The Right's win-at-all-costs advocacy disguised as 'defense' now routinely includes slanderous attempts to intimidate Senate Democrats and their political allies by trying to paint opposition to the nominee—or even questions about his views on the right to privacy—as being rooted in anti-Catholic or anti-Christian bigotry." [July]

Adele M. Stan: In a section of her article entitled, "Playing the Catholic card," Stan wrote, "In choosing a Roman Catholic, Bush is betting he's bought himself some insulation—any opposition to Roberts, particularly because of his anti-abortion record, will likely be countered with accusations of anti-Catholicism. A timely pitch, one must say, to conservative Catholic voters prior to the midterm elections." [*The American Prospect*, July 20]

Adele M. Stan: In her blog, Stan wrote, "Rome must be smiling." Calling it "a brilliant move" by Bush to select a Catholic, she advised that "senators who challenge Roberts [on abortion] are likely to be tarred with the anti-Catholic smear. That's why it's imperative that Catholic senators take the lead in the hard questioning." [AddieStan, July 20]

Lynn Neary: "And he is a Roman Catholic, and that might affect the way he views an issue like abortion, for instance." To which American University law professor Stephen Wermeil said,

“It could make a difference. It could also make a difference in church-state separation issues.” [NPR, July 20]

Suzanne Malveaux: “We’ve learned a lot more about him in the last 12 hours. We know he’s Roman Catholic. We know his wife is a part of a group, a pro-life organization here. What does that say about the candidate? How important is that going to be in this confirmation?” To which Donna Brazile responded, “I think it’s going to be one of the many issues that gets scrutinized when members of the Senate Judiciary Committee sit and talk to him about his views.” [CNN, “Inside Politics,” July 20]

Nancy Skinner: “And we don’t know exactly what he’s going to do [about Roe v. Wade], because he was an advocate in the Bush administration when he said that. But his wife is associated with an anti-abortion group.” [CNN, “Showbiz Tonight,” July 20]

Nina Totenberg: “Pro-choice advocates noted, too, that Roberts’ lawyer wife is a former top officer of an anti-abortion group called Feminists for Life.” [NPR, “Morning Edition,” July 20]

Rachel Maddow: “I think the abortion stuff is going to be a big deal. I think the fact that he said we want to get rid of Roe v. Wade, the fact that his wife is the executive vice president of Feminists for Life. I mean, that stuff is going to matter.” When challenged by Tucker Carlson why it was necessary to bring his wife into the debate, Maddow said, “The fact is, that tells you something about his politics on choice, and that is going to matter.” [CNN, “The Situation with Tucker Carlson,” July 19]

BILL FRIST: "DR. DUPLICITY"

In late July, Senator Bill Frist formally broke with the pro-life community's opposition to embryonic stem cell research. Bill Donohue wasn't pleased and let the media know his thoughts:

"Here is what Senator John Kerry said when running for president: 'I believe life does begin at conception.' Here is what Senator Bill Frist is now saying: 'I believe human life begins at conception.' They now agree on one more thing: They will do absolutely nothing to protect the beginning of innocent human life.

"Frist is worse than Kerry. Kerry, a lawyer, said his position on the beginning of human life was based on 'my Catholic belief.' Frist, a physician, says that while his Christian faith informs his position, there's more to it: 'But, to me, it isn't just a matter of faith. It's a fact of science.'

"And it's a fact of politics that Frist is such a hypocrite. His change of heart has nothing to do with any scientific breakthrough: there is no new evidence suggesting that the human embryo does not constitute human life, nor is there any evidence that embryonic stem cell research can be performed without killing embryos. What's changed is that Dr. Duplicity wants to be president.

"Frist still calls himself 'strong[ly] pro-life,' and says he gives 'huge moral significance to the human embryo.' Furthermore, he says the human embryo 'is nascent human life,' explaining that we should 'treat that embryo with dignity, with respect.' Which raises the question: If it's okay to snuff out the beginning of human life, how much dignity and respect may logically be accorded the dead?

Several leading newspapers, including the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*, picked up on Donohue's characterization

of Frist as “Dr. Duplicity.”

“THE DA VINCI CODE” FILM STIRS CONTROVERSY

Not a single frame has been shot in the film version of “The Da Vinci Code” and already it is the source of controversy. England’s famous Westminster Abbey has refused to allow Columbia pictures the right to use its cathedral, saying it would be “inappropriate” to allow filming.

The movie, which is based on the best-selling book, is not scheduled to be released until May 2006. No matter, major media outlets are already tapping Bill Donohue to jump into the fray; he did so with interviews on the “Today” show and on “Paula Zahn Now.”

In his August 10 appearance on NBC’s “Today” show, Donohue mentioned that he wrote to the movie’s director, Ron Howard, back in March requesting that a disclaimer be put in the beginning of the movie saying it is a work of fiction. Though the book was marketed as a novel, author Dan Brown maintained in interviews that it is based on historical truth. This is why Donohue said, “You want to play it both ways and tell us this is an admixture of fact and fiction. You’re going to incur the wrath of the Catholic League.”

When he was interviewed by Paula Zahn on CNN, Donohue outlined his concerns: “I don’t like the genre of docudrama. It’s either a documentary or it’s a drama. I didn’t like it with Oliver Stone, I didn’t like it with Alex Haley. And I don’t like it when they’re playing fast and loose with my church, making up lies about the Catholic Church.”

Donohue's biggest objection is the book's questioning of the divinity of Jesus. As he said to Zahn, "We have 25 accounts in the Gospels, and 40 [additional ones] in the New Testament talking about the divinity of Jesus Christ. What he's [Brown] trying to say is that this whole thing is a ruse. Now, Hollywood wouldn't make a movie, 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,' which is notoriously anti-Semitic...."

Donohue made hay with the remark of John Calley, the film's co-producer, who recently admitted that the movie is "anti-Catholic." Donohue said, "I love it when he did that, because it's no longer Bill Donohue saying this movie is anti-Catholic." That sure does seem to settle the issue. Stay tuned.

DONOHUE ON "COACHING"

A new book by Pat Williams, *Coaching*, contains advice to coaches on how to handle young people. Bill Donohue was asked to contribute, and here is what he said: "Youngsters who show early signs of leadership are often very expressive individuals. You hope that they express this leadership ability in good conduct—but some exuberant young leaders express their leadership ability through misbehavior. Adults make a big mistake when they dismiss young people as potential leaders merely because they exhibit problem behavior."

When asked if he was reflecting on his own life, Donohue said, "You got it."

CATHOLIC LEAGUE MEMBERS: FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

ANOTHER "ST. MEL"

We now know two Catholic League members who go by the name of Mel. More important, both are men of courage and faith. You already know about Mel Gibson, now meet Mel Le Pan, II.

When Mel Le Pan learned that an Augusta, Georgia establishment called Sidetrack Bar and Grill posted an anti-Catholic sign outside the restaurant, he sent a news release to the media registering his objections; he also made mention of his membership in the Catholic League.

Mel proved victorious: a local TV station covered the story and bingo—the sign was removed. Congratulations to another "St. Mel."



TED KENNEDY ON ABORTION: 34 YEARS AGO



In his statement to the press, Bill Donohue remarked as follows: "The same Ted Kennedy who once championed the rights of the unborn now champions the right of a doctor to jam scissors into the skull of an infant who is 80-percent born. Sadly for him, history will look back on this era and recognize that he didn't care enough about human beings to take responsibility for children from the very moment of conception."