

THE BISHOPS' "EVIL" TAKE ON TRANSGENDERISM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an attack on a recent bishops' document on transgenderism:

When we had a staff meeting Monday morning, I told our policy employees that we have something to be proud of today: the bishops have released a document on transgenderism that is so well crafted—the best I've seen from any quarter—that it makes us proud to be Catholic.

Today I told them about a priest who has attacked the bishops in public for this splendid statement, accusing them of formally cooperating "with evil."

The document, "Doctrinal Note on the Moral Limits of Technological Manipulation of the Human Body," is pastorally kind, theologically authoritative, and scientifically astute. Its purpose is to provide guidance to Catholic health care institutions on how to deal with persons who want to undergo sex-reassignment interventions.

Such interventions, the bishops say, "do not respect the fundamental order of the human person as an intrinsic unity of body and soul, with a body that is sexually differentiated." That is why the bishops say, "Catholic health care services must not perform interventions, whether surgical or chemical, that aim to transform the sexual characteristics of a human body into those of the opposite sex or take part in the development of such procedures."

This sent Daniel P. Horan into orbit. A Franciscan priest, he is the director of the Center for Spirituality and a professor at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. Writing in the *National Catholic Reporter*, a dissident Catholic publication that is ideologically responsible for the clergy sexual abuse

scandal, Horan brands the bishops' document "nothing short of a disaster."

Horan strains to offer a rebuttal, but it all comes down to what he says at the end. We must admit as Christians, he says, "that transgender people exist; that nonbinary people exist; that intersex people exist (his italics)."

The truth is they only exist in some people's head. In reality, one is either a male or a female. There is no third sex.

"The authors of this document should have consulted with and learned from actual experts in the areas of human sexuality and gender from within the scientific and academic communities." Horan is wrong again.

As reported by the Catholic News Agency, "The bishops said they developed the statement in consultation with medical ethicists, physicians, psychologists, and moral theologians."

Horan is neither a natural scientist nor a social scientist; he teaches in the humanities. Yet he places himself on a mantle of authority in an area where he has little expertise. That's because he is driven more by ideology than a commitment to the truth.

In January 2019, I wrote to him when he was teaching at Catholic Theological Union about an article he wrote saying it is "preposterous" to claim that the "gay clergy are the problem" regarding priestly sexual abuse. I refuted that position (and subsequently wrote a book about it, *The Truth about Clergy Sexual Abuse: Clarifying the Facts and the Causes*). He did not reply. No matter, it is obvious where he is coming from.

Horan was not satisfied to take on the bishops. He had to go for the jugular. He branded the document "a form of formal cooperation with evil."

What makes this so sad is that just this week, one of the most famous atheists in the world, Richard Dawkins, said, "As a biologist, there are two sexes and that's all there is to it...Sex really is binary." He added, "I mean it's incontrovertible."

Maybe the good priest should enroll in a course by Dawkins.

Contact Horan: dhoran@saintmarys.edu