

THE WAR ON CATHOLIC HOSPITALS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on attempts to force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions:

For the past six months, the ACLU has been trying to persuade the Obama administration to force Catholic hospitals to perform emergency abortions. It has written to the Department of Health and Human Services, led by pro-abortion zealot Kathleen Sebelius (the good friend of the late partial-birth abortionist George Tiller), asking them to look into this matter; the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are currently considering action against Catholic hospitals. Now the ACLU, to the joy of the *New York Times*, is pressing this issue again, citing the case of a Phoenix Catholic hospital, St. Joseph's, which recently performed an abortion. The nun who approved the abortion has been excommunicated, and the hospital has been stripped of its Catholic affiliation.

The hero is Phoenix Bishop Thomas Olmsted: he stood on firm civil-rights grounds when he ordered sanctions against those who believe that the unborn have no rights which the born need respect. But, of course, the *New York Times* says the hero is the former Catholic hospital: in today's editorial, it says the hospital made a "commendable decision" by choosing to abort the baby. Disingenuously, the editorial says, "No one has suggested that Catholic hospitals should be required to perform nonemergency abortions." Really? Is there anything in the ACLU's record which suggests it would rally to the defense of Catholic hospitals if the Church amendment (which bars federal agencies from forcing religious hospitals to perform abortions) were repealed?

Where the Obama administration will go with this issue is unclear. But we know that anti-Catholics have been welcome in this administration, and at least one (failed) nominee, Dawn Johnsen, sought to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status. We stand with brave bishops like Thomas Olmsted, encouraging more Catholics to defend their First Amendment right to religious liberty, while standing fast on the rights of all children.

