

# TRADITIONALISM SCARES LIBERAL CATHOLICS

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Liberal Catholics joined with the Catholic haters in slamming Kansas City Chiefs' Harrison Butker after he touted traditional Catholic moral theology in his commencement address at Benedictine College on May 11. The bigots are easy to understand: they believe in nothing but themselves and hate everything about Catholicism. Liberal Catholics don't hate their religion but they are embarrassed by traditionalists.

There is nothing that makes liberal Catholics more nervous than being lumped together with traditionalists. I've seen this first-hand for decades. Fr. Andrew Greeley was perhaps the most famous liberal Catholic who got the jitters whenever a Catholic critic said that Catholics were close-minded (meaning they ascribe to orthodoxy). He made it clear that he never wanted to be associated with them.

Catholic bashers can produce the most vulgar artwork, sing the most obscene lyrics, tell the most insulting jokes—all aimed at Catholic teachings or the clergy—and they will rarely upset liberal Catholics. Why not? They want their secular allies to praise them for having an open mind.

No one ever called Fr. Greeley parochial. His sex novels won him the applause of the secular elites, which is why he never stopped writing them; he made sure he would never be thrown in the same bin with conservative Catholics.

The latest example of this phenomenon occurred when a writer for *America* took the side of Butker's critics.

Butker's speech was too much for Zac Davis, an associate editor at *America*, a Jesuit publication. He began his piece by

quoting the Associated Press, which called it "A step back in time." He also quoted the NFL for saying the speech violated its "commitment to inclusion," a commitment which obviously does not *include* the right of Butker to espouse Catholic teachings at a Catholic school. Davis added, "In secular outlets, Mr. Butker's discussion of gender roles caught the most attention."

Notice the obsession with secular elites. This is exactly the way liberal Catholics think. Nothing is more important than winning their affirmation. Always insecure, their fawning of secular elites is astounding.

A few years back, Chris Cuomo interviewed me a couple of times on CNN. At one point he said that some Catholics don't want to be associated with me. I responded by saying I don't like being associated with your brother, Andrew (who is Catholic); he was then governor of New York but was subsequently forced out of his job after a series of unseemly allegations. In other words, because I am a conservative Catholic, liberal Catholics want to distance themselves from me lest they get tagged as "close-minded."

There is a related problem for liberal Catholics. Most are not championing abortion rights, but most do not want to be labeled pro-life either. That's because the last thing they want to do is lose the admiration of secular elites, virtually all of whom are pro-abortion. They would rather sit on the sidelines before ever condemning abortion.

If only liberal Catholics felt the same way about abortion as they do racism, the pro-life cause would deepen. But they don't. They see abortion as unfortunate but racism as obscene. Both are obscene.

It is striking to see people like Whoopi Goldberg and Bill Maher speak in defense of Harrison Butker while the Catholics at *America* criticize him. Looks like not all members of the

secular elite are hopeless. Wish we could say the same about all Catholics.