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The Problem with the Pro-Life Movement

Michael Sean Winters | Sep. 2, 2009 NCR Today

Judie Brown, the executive director of the American Life League, was more than a little upset at the fact that Sen. Edward Kennedy was given a public funeral and, still more, that the President of the United States was permitted to eulogize him. But, she has directed her anger now at Cardinal Sean O?Malley for presiding at the funeral.

?Yet a greater source of sadness is that the Cardinal Sean O'Malley, of the Archdiocese of Boston, looked on as though insulting Christ Himself were an everyday occurrence,? she wrote in her blog [1]. (No direct link, so you will have to scroll down once you click on the link.) She also is pretty sure why the Cardinal chose to participate in the sacred rites. ?It is a perfect example of what many describe as bowing to human respect rather than abiding by the laws of God and serving Him first without counting the cost.? (Additionally, she quotes approvingly from a letter she received suggesting that the only way to ?cleanse? the Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help where the funeral was held would be to destroy it.)

The idea that priests and prelates are clamoring for the ?prestige? of the media spotlight and the political influence that comes from being seen with the President was Cardinal Sean?s motivation is not a new charge. A similar assignation of the moral motivation of Father Jenkins was made during the kerfuffle over Notre Dame?s bestowal of an honorary degree on the President last May. In both instances, the charge is as base as it is unsupported by even a shred of evidence.

Cardinal O?Malley, you will recall, thought nothing of selling his home to pay off the debts of the archdiocese of Boston when he arrived in that city as archbishop in 2003. He continues to wear his friar?s habit rather than something more elaborate, except on formal occasions. If you go to the chancery for lunch, you are served a modest repast of tuna fish salad. He is not a man known for putting much stick in the rewards of the world.

The pro-life movement has a problem, a big problem. Some of its leaders are hateful, literally filled with hate. Raymond Arroyo, the irrespressible EWTN host, also delivered a not-so thinly veiled [2]attack on the proceedings and the presiders at the funeral and the internment. Others have cast similar aspersions upon the motives of Cardinal O?Malley. Let?s talk about a scandal. Let?s talk about an outrage. Let?s talk about finding some new leadership of the pro-life movement, people whose love of Christ and his flock and the pastors he has sent to govern us will attract those who do not share our views on the sanctity of human life. Not only will we be more successful, we will more closely follow in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd who was not afraid to leave the ninety-nine sheep in search of the one who was lost.

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[1] http://www.all.org/newsroom_judieblog.php
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