

## Arroyo & Sirico Back At It

Michael Sean Winters | Dec. 13, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

There is a perverse pleasure in watching one's ideological opponents ties themselves in knots, and both EWTN's Raymond Arroyo and Father Robert Sirico of the Acton Institute were engaged in what amounted to philosophic :Twister" this past weekend on the EWTN show "The World Over."

In discussing the Dream Act, Sirico allowed that "I like the spirit of the DREAM Act..." But, the problem he saw was that the Act allowed those with criminal records to gain citizenship, which is not the case. Arroyo, after referring to our undocumented borthers and sisters as "aliens" and "illegals," mentioned that the bishops were supporting the DREAM Act and the two of them fell all over themselves in arguing that on a matter such as this, the bishops were not to be listened to necessarily because no issue of faith or morals was on the table. Alas for them, doing justice is not a matter of morals.

But, I fail to see how their concerns about the bishops' authority differed one iota from the concerns some of us raised about the bishops' statements on health care reform. The issue between Sirico, Arroyo et al. and me was not the morality of abortion but how best to restrict abortion funding in the health care legislation. The bishops preferred one method, I preferred another, but the issue was not whether abortion was moral or not. Arroyo and Sirico would no doubt reply that abortion is a moral issue, and so it is. But, that was not the issue in deciding whether or not the restrictions in the health care law were adequate to make sure there was no federal funding of abortion.

The two banterers then considered who was the most influential Catholic of the year and Sirico said that he thought Sr. Carol Keehan was the most influential Catholic because of her role in passing health care reform. He chided her for that role, of course. But, Sirico was right about one thing. Sr. Carol Keehan was the most influential Catholic in 2010 and millions of Americans who will have insurance in the future will be grateful for that influence.

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