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The Tendentious Papist & Sr. Carol

Michael Sean Winters | Feb. 1, 2011 Distinctly Catholic

Only some crimes can be excused with appeals to youth. The American Papist's post [1]regarding the on-going discussions between Sr. Carol Keehan, DC, and the U.S. bishops betrays his usual lack of nuance and perspective. But, the Papist continues to characterize Sister Carol's stance on health care as "vocal disobedience" to the bishops and claims she "went behind their back" to lobby for the bill.

Except for Manichaens, there is a difference between disagreement and disobedience. And, where is the evidence for the claim that Sister Carol went behind anyone's back. She published her statements on the web - after sending them to Cardinal George in advance. The Papist, of course, is free to dismiss journalistic standards of finding out what really happened. So, too, is he free to make sweeping claims that distort rather than reveal the truth. But, his failure to abide by minimal standards of accuracy and his penchant for distortion are rooted in something less forgivable, a presumption of bad faith regarding Sr. Carol.

Mark my words: In the months ahead, as it becomes obvious that the bishops have always acknowledged how devoted Sr. Carol is to the Church, how loyal Sr. Carol is to the Church's mission and to the Church's bishops, how Sr. Carol has advanced the healing ministry of Jesus in ways the rest of us can admire but not even begin to emulate, those conservatives will get even nastier and some of that nastiness will turn on the bishops.

The bishops may have been right on the health care bill and they may have been wrong. Ditto for Sr. Carol. (In the event, I agreed with Sister!) But, there was never any great "wound" to the Church's unity except in the fevered imaginations of a few cranky conservatives.

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Links:
[1] http://www.catholicvote.org/discuss/index.php?p=13403