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Santorum Urges Boycott on Gifts to Catholic Schools that 'Abandon the Church's Teaching'

Joe Feuerherd | Mar. 17, 2011 NCR Today

Rick Santorum took some heat, **here at the NCR Today [1]**blog and elsewhere, for his contention that Thomas Jefferson is ?rolling over in his grave? at modern interpretations of church-state separation. But the former Pennsylvania senator?s comments on Catholic schools are equally irksome.

?The heresy that goes on in Catholic schools in America is amazing,? he told Boston Catholics at an event earlier this week. ?He urged the crowd not to donate money to Catholic schools that abandon the church?s teachings,? **reported the Boston Globe[2]**.

Said Santorum of those who contribute to Catholic schools, ?You?re feeding the beast.? One wonders what criteria Santorum, whose children are home-schooled, uses to determine which schools ?abandon the church?s teachings.?

To those of us who view the nation?s Catholic school system as one of the jewels of the faith, who were educated there and have now seen our children benefit from the church?s schools, Santorum?s words grate beyond the usual sound bites of a long shot candidate. No, this is close to home.

Even politicians (mostly Democrats) who oppose government aid to Catholic schools do not generally question the motives of those who run these underfunded underappreciated institutions. Opposition to government aid based on church-state issues is one thing; bad-mouthing the best thing the church has done in neighborhoods across the country is quite another.

Catholic school teachers frequently work for half that earned by their public school counterparts, even as their students, in many cases, exceed their counterparts in academic performance. These teachers do not promote ?heresy? or design curriculums that ?abandon church teaching.? It?s slanderous to say otherwise.

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