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Weigel's Blinders

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 14, 2012 Distinctly Catholic

The other day, speaking with a friend, I was trying to explain that I thought the real problem I have with George Weigel's writings is not that he is a conservative politically and I am not. No, my problem is that I do not think he has the heart of the matter in hand, if the matter in hand is the Catholic Church's teachings. Now, as if Mr. Weigel had read my mind, he furnishes me with a perfect example of what I mean. In his weekly column [1] this week he writes:

The immediate threat, of course, is the HHS (Health and Human Services) mandate requiring Catholic institutions and Catholic employers to include coverage of contraceptives, sterilizations, and abortifacient drugs in the health insurance offered to their employees. The legal challenges mounted against this obvious violation of the first freedom, religious freedom, may well be vindicated. But with Obamacare now seemingly set in concrete, the Church will face a host of such implementing ?mandates? and it will be imperative to contest those that are morally unacceptable, time and time again. Authentically Catholic health care in America is now in mortal danger, and it is going to take a concerted effort to save it for future generations.

Now, I have been as vocal in my opposition to the HHS mandate as Mr. Weigel. Of course, I would quibble with that bit about "obvious violation of the first freedom" because I think the law suits that have been filed against the mandate are far from a slam dunk on First Amendment grounds but are a slam dunk on RFRA grounds. But, the line that jumps out, and offers evidence of Weigel's inability to grasp the heart of the matter is the last sentence: "Authentically Catholic health care in America is now in mortal danger..." This suggests that we currently have "authentically Catholic health care in America" today, but authentically Catholic health care must be universal, and there are 30-40 million Americans who lack access to health care but who will get it now that the Affordable Care Act will be fully implemented. Mr. Weigel and his party tried desperately in the last election to keep those Americans from getting health care. That is not Catholic sir, authentic or otherwise. Dear bishops - please stop publishing this man.

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[1] http://www.archden.org/index.cfm/ID/9360