

Keep the Community Organizing Off Church Property

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By REY FLORES

For the past few weeks I have been asking readers to share information with me about any troubling political activities that may be taking place in their respective parishes and dioceses.

I have received a few e-mails from people who are very concerned as to why some of these political activities persist undisturbed. Many of these e-mails have a recurring theme and almost always ask the same question:

“Why aren’t our bishops doing anything about it?”

That is a great question.

People should be going to their parish for spiritual edification and guidance. The house of our Lord is a place to get right with Him through all of the vital sacraments with which we have been so blessed in the Catholic Church.

I don’t go to church to get my fill of the latest political activism, and neither should you. If you want politics, strife, and worldly opinions about the latest political activities, go down to your congressman or senator’s office. Either that or just stay home and watch the propaganda on TV.

As Catholics we are called to fight injustices, but not to use the local parish to register voters and hand out some biased voters’ guides that lean toward anti-Catholic agendas. And keep politicians of all stripes off Church property, period, unless they are there to receive the sacraments like the rest of us.

Through papal, conciliar, and episcopal documents, we are taught about the **Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching**. They are as follows: **1) Life and Dignity of the Human Person, 2) Call to Family, Community, and Participation, 3) Rights and Responsibilities, 4) Option for the Poor and Vulnerable, 5) The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers, 6) Solidarity, 7) Caring for God’s Creation.**

The very first of these teachings addresses human life and human dignity, life being the first and foremost. How can we have any human dignity if life itself is not allowed

to flourish? How can any of us as Catholics ever have the nerve to talk about any human rights of any kind if we are not defending the right to life first and foremost?

This is what is wrong when our parishes are used as Petri dishes for the social engineering experiments of the secularist social justice do-gooders. This is what is wrong when some of our clergy allow their own flocks to be used by these Godless humanist community organizers.

For the past couple of months, members of St. Joseph Covenant Keepers (SJCK) in the Diocese of Baton Rouge in Louisiana have been trying to get some answers from their diocesan leaders about some of the usual social justice hijinks that seem to plague the Church nationwide.

The following three paragraphs are excerpts from a letter that went out to lay Catholics on behalf of SJCK in March and is also posted on the Brown Pelican Society of Louisiana web site (www.brownpelicanla.com). Not surprisingly, the concerns are once again about parishes getting too cozy with secular and political organizers:

“With grant money from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) came to Baton Rouge and started the Baton Rouge Sponsoring Committee, which was subsequently renamed ‘Together Baton Rouge’ (IAF-TBR). IAF turns churches into political action units (as opposed to individuals). IAF interests have drawn Catholic churches across the line between stating principles and providing material political aid. We seek to inform you of that.

“There are several serious instances of crossing that line. An IAF member has convinced Catholic priests to circulate political lobbying letters within the population of diocesan priests. Two Catholic pastors have agreed to hold political fundraising events on church property during which funds were solicited and collected for one side of a political issue, while the other side was excluded.

“By an honest error, we believe, these two pastors have made incorrect moral arguments to support their actions. They have reduced morality to circumstances, when the Catechism says that actions and intentions decide morality, and circumstances do not. Unfortunately, they have involved themselves as pastors in IAF political activity, such as fighting against St. George incorporation, which they should have done as private citizens while keeping their churches out of it.”

Anytime anything like this happens, the diocese needs to investigate.

SJCK also adds: “The attempt to turn churches into political action units has been going on for over 50 years. Gains have been slow, but steady. It began in Chicago, and has gone national, though small towns and rural areas remain unaffected. If this trend is allowed to continue, it will fundamentally change the nature of the Catholic Church in America. Christ will become social agent rather than Savior. A politically expedient, one-sided, and opportunistic ‘social justification’ will inevitably replace authentic social justice. Social justification will be used to define faith and morals, instead of faith and morals defining authentic social justice. All in all, misguided populist pressure from within will force the Church out of her mission to preach and heal, to educate and legislate and sanctify, and make her one more political player in the political arena.”

Why aren't more lay people upset about these things? Because when some priests and some bishops above them in the chain of command have been complicit in continuing to allow organizations like Alinsky's IAF to infiltrate our churches for decades now, why would the parishioners question these activities?

When parishioners are being co-opted by the community organizations, it leads me to believe that someone or something other than the parish pastors and/or the diocesan bishops are tending the flock, or are shearing them clean of their spiritual wool.

There is no reason for any bishop or any other Church leaders to further ignore any of these scenarios any place in the country.

These partisan political activities, political fund-raisers, and questionable relationships with dishonest community organizations are in plain sight.

Pseudo-Solutions

I think Claude Culross from the St. Joseph Covenant Keepers sums it up best:

“Our biggest concern in Baton Rouge is that the wall of faith has been breached. **Church bodies have been persuaded that they better help the poor by approaching social problems through The State.** An illusion of perfection has become the enemy of the good, as **churches have been lured into thinking they can eliminate the problem of poverty by political action, instead of providing direct assistance to the poor.**

“This has led to outrageous pseudo-solutions to otherwise genuine needs, such as the transportation of those without cars. Rather than direct assistance, a probably unconstitutional tax district was gerrymandered, and many more millions of dollars

were poured into an irredeemably dysfunctional city bus system, all for maybe a hundred needy riders? A thousand? No one seems to have counted the true number!

“Ill-conceived political sprees typically take a lot of tax revenue, so when a petition drive started in order to form a municipality of an unincorporated but high revenue area, so that they could have their own school district, **subsidiarity went out the window as politically active priests started making invalid claims about morality to keep the cash cow in the barn.**

“I’m sure I’ll better understand the situation just as soon as I find **Christ’s parable of The Good Samaritan Community Organizer.** Now, let’s see, which Gospel was that in. . . .”

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