

Hudson v. Sullivan on Burke v. O'Malley

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 6, 2009 NCR Today

[Deal Hudson is all in a lather](#) [1] because of a well-reported [article by Amy Sullivan](#) [2] in the current edition of Time magazine. Sullivan accurately reports on the virtually unprecedented criticism Archbishop Burke leveled at Cardinal O'Malley for presiding at the funeral of Sen. Ted. Kennedy. I say unprecedented because what Burke was criticizing very clearly was not a theological point, nor a canonical interpretation, but a pastoral judgment, indeed, a judgment that was O'Malley's to make and no one else's.

Hudson also likes to point to the importance of his conservative friend by saying Burke's job is "the Catholic equivalent of Chief Justice of the United States." Surely someone as learned about the Catholic Church as Mr. Hudson knows that the Apostolic Signatura is not in any way, shape or form a co-equal branch of the Vatican government, that his appointment is not for life as is that of a U.S. Chief Justice, and that the phrase "promoveatur ut amoveatur" "promote him in order to remove him" is usually rendered in Latin for a reason.

Sullivan's article is spot-on. I am sure that the bishops with whom Hudson is chummy are fans of Burke and may agree with him that there is nothing untoward about suggesting that Cardinal O'Malley was doing the work of the "Father of Lies" in deciding that he would join the thousands of Boston's poor who came to bid farewell to Sen. Kennedy. But, there are also many bishops who were scandalized by Burke's remarks. Sullivan is to be applauded for getting this story out.

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