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The righteousness of US bishops

by Dennis Coday

NCR Today

Lisa Miller, religion editor for *Newsweek*, has a quite good analysis of "a new generation" (her characterization) of Catholic bishops and how they play politics. She offers little new for frequent readers of *NCR*, but her take is valuable for its succinctness.

Read the full piece: A new generation gets righteous

One thing Miller reveals is just how tight the U.S. bishops' staff was with:

Rep. Bart Stupak, the Catholic Democrat from Michigan who, at the 11th hour, attached an amendment to the House health-care bill restricting the use of government funds to any health-care plan that includes abortion. The bishops, he says, were "very, very, very engaged" in the framing of the amendment. Through last summer and fall, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops "was working with my staff." But as the House headed toward a vote, "I asked them to come by, to make sure we were on the same page. After that first meeting, I said, 'I'm not moving forward until you know what I'm doing.' We had to coordinate forces. They'd ask us about members. I'd say, 'I've talked to this one but not to that one.'" The bishops, in other words, were counting votes.

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