NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (https://www.ncronline.org)

Extra Ecclesia: Maureen Dowd

Michael Sean Winters | Mar. 29, 2010 NCR Today

Regular readers will know that I am a ?big Church? kinda guy. There is room for Lefties like me. There is room for rightwing blowhards like Raymond Arroyo. There is room for everybody in the wide embrace of Holy Mother Church.

Except Maureen Dowd. Her column yesterday [1], about the Catholic Church and its response to the clergy sex abuse scandal, reached a new low for her, which is really saying something. Her suggestion for dealing with the crisis: Elect a nun as Pope. Of course, her witty prose makes clear that she is not really serious. She is using the idea merely to aid her in her primary purpose which is, as ever, to mock. Mocking is what Dowd does for a living. But, in this case, using the actual sufferings of real life victims of clerical abuse to poke fun seems not just stupid but heartless.

You can pick almost any paragraph of Dowd?s screed and find ridiculousness. ?The pope is in too deep. He has proved himself anything but infallible.? Does Dowd have any idea what papal infallibility entails or to what kinds of situations infallibility can be invoked? Hint: Not to managerial decisions. She refers to Pope Benedict as a ?sin-crazed ?Rottweiler?? although she was just exhausting herself in saying the Church had failed to notice the sin of clergy sex abuse. She says Benedict ?was so consumed with sexual mores ? issuing constant instructions on chastity, contraception, abortion ? that he didn?t make time for curbing sexual abuse by priests who were supposed to pray with, not prey on, their young charges? when even a vague acquaintance with Ratzinger?s tenure at the CDF would show no ?constant instructions? on sexual mores if by constant she means more than a document every few years. Her concluding line expresses the hope that the cardinals elect a nun as Pope and proclaim ?Habemus Mama? ? of course, the noun, here, should be in the accusative tense, as in ?Papam? which is what we Catholics ?Habemus? when a new Pope is elected.

Alas, an ignorance of Latin grammar is the least of Dowd?s problems. Her sanctimonious drivel should not adorn the Lynchburg Daily News let alone the New York Times. She is a disgrace to the journalistic profession. I do not wish her ill but I wish her away, far, far away.

Source URL (retrieved on *04/24/2017 - 08:12*): https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/extra-ecclesia-maureen-dowd

Links:
[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/28/opinion/28dowd.html