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

Oddie is Odious

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 4, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

Brits are famously uncomprehending about America's political system, but that is not what is wrong with an essay by William Oddie [1] at the UK's Catholic Herald, entitled, "Now we have a Catholic Speaker of the House who actually believes what the Church teaches." The odious Mr. Oddie misunderstands the faith, not the politics, in his little piece of propaganda.

To be clear, when Speaker Nancy Pelosi speaks about her faith, I clench my jaw and tremble for what may come out of her mouth. Mr. Oddie is entirely correct to call her out for her repeated mis-stating of the history of the Church's teaching on abortion, he attempts to obfuscate the issue by invoking St. Thomas Aquinas' uncertainty about the time of ensoulment, etc. Oddly, conservatives never fault Pelosi for what is most egregious about her attempts to invoke Aquinas to defend her pro-abortion position: Even if Thomas was uncertain about when the soul entered the unborn child's body, is Pelosi suggesting that there is no place for development of doctrine? What Catholic liberal would hold such a thing? Pelosi is committed to abortion and is seeking theological justifications for her position. The attempt and the result are somewhat lame. I did not shed a tear at the news of her departure.

That said, Catholics have beliefs about more than the status of fetal life, and we will see if Mr. Boehner really does "believe what the Church teaches." Will he schedule a vote on immigration reform so that we can welcome the stranger, as both the Scripture and the recent exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI instruct us to do? Will he shut down funding for anti-poverty programs that help the poor? Will Speaker Boehner allow a vote on the repeal of health care reform, even though the Church has clearly, and repeatedly, stated that health care is a basic human right?

Mr. Oddie should stick to what he knows and leave his assessments of American Catholic politicians to others.

Source URL (retrieved on *07/30/2016 - 04:52*): https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/oddie-odious

Links:

[1] http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2010/11/04/now-we-have-a-catholic-speaker-of-the-house-who-actually-believes-what-the-church-teaches/