

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

December 18, 2012 at 8:53am

Garnett on Unions

by Michael Sean Winters

Distinctly Catholic

Notre Dame Law professor Rick Garnett is a friend, a friend with whom I frequently disagree, but a friend nonetheless. He has put up a post at "Mirror of Justice" that takes issue with the support for unions voiced by, among other, Morning's Minion at Vox Nova, Lew Daly, and yours truly. I should say at once that I am delighted to be lumped together with such thoughtful commentators.

I will stipulate that Garnett is correct that some unions pursue policies and practices with which no morally serious person can agree. But, Garnett is changing the subject. The fact that a union here or there may engage in bad practices does not vitiate the right to unionize anymore than the fact that some bishops covered up the crime of sex abuse vitiates the apostolic succession or Nixon's crimes vitiates the importance and value of democracy. And, the issue in right-to-work legislation is whether or not unions can organize, make no mistake about that. Such laws as passed in Michigan last week are aimed at destroying, not reforming, unions. Conservatives can spout all sorts of concerns and give voice to all sorts of talking points about how these laws will make unions better, but that is only evidence that they have been drinking the Kool-Aid. It's Christmas, Professor Garnett. Switch to egg nog.

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