

The Goofy Left at USCCB Meeting

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 13, 2013 Distinctly Catholic
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My friends who range themselves amidst the Catholic Left need to learn a bit about the culture of a bishops' conference meeting. I have noticed this before, but this year it was particularly evident.

One day, coming back from lunch, I was nabbed outside the hotel by a young man who saw my media credentials. He wanted to tell me about the petition his group had organized, arguing that Archbishop Kurtz should not be elected President of the conference. I asked him whom he preferred. He had no answer, but assured me that 22,000 people had signed the petition. I wonder if it dawned on him that each diocese tends to have rather more than 22,000 people.

Later in the day, a group of protesters were being escorted out of the hotel lobby. They had signs about various leftie causes. The strange thing was that they kept re-entering the hotel and kept getting tossed out again. I am not sure what they thought they were accomplishing except making life hellish for the hotel staff.

Then, at one of the receptions, there was a young man associated with a leftie group who had managed to get media credentials. He cornered a bishop, thrust a microphone into his face, and began peppering him with leading questions. This struck close to the bone. This young man had media credentials. The routine is that if you want to interview a bishop, you fill out a request, hand it to the USCCB communications staff, and they contact the bishop to arrange the interview. You do not accost these guys in the halls, bathrooms or at the receptions. The people hosting the receptions are kind enough to invite some of us in the media to attend their receptions, which allow us to engage in easy conversation with the bishops, and to enjoy the open bar! If this obnoxious faux media person causes the rest of us in the media pack to be denied access to these receptions, there will be hell to pay.

The conservatives are present at the meeting too. The American Life League's Michael Hichborn is always lurking around, waiting to corner a bishop, although I must say I have not seen him accost a bishop with a microphone in hand.

People - if you want to influence your bishops, get to know them. Most of them a very nice men. Chat with them. Ask them about their diocese. See if you have any mutual friends. Then, ask them about the issues that concern you. Offer to help - petitions don't help. Most of all, don't waste your time or theirs with silly protests. And the next time I see someone with media credentials corner a bishop at a reception, I am going to beat him over the head with one of the delicious baby lamb chops they were serving.

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