

Catholics Keeping Catholics in the Dark

By Brad O'Leary

Six months ago at a family gathering I was shocked when I learned I had children and grandchildren planning to vote for Barack Obama. Their reasoning was he was handsome, articulate, and “for change.” Yet none of them could tell me what he stood for on any of the issues. I thought the best way to educate them would be to draft a letter, detailing Obama’s stances on the important issues of the day. That letter soon became a book.

When conducting my research, as a Roman Catholic, I was particularly troubled when I discovered the extreme positions Obama has taken on the issue of abortion, positions I detail extensively in one chapter of my book.

Obama has stated that the very first thing he’d do as President would be to sign the Freedom of Choice Act – a federal law that would nullify all the existing state restrictions on abortion. This bill would codify abortion as a legal right at any stage of pregnancy, eliminate laws like parental notification, and require that abortions even receive taxpayer funding.

As a State Senator in Illinois, Obama almost single-handedly led a fight to deny emergency medical assistance to viable babies, born alive after botched abortions. These babies were being discarded after birth, literally left to die slow, painful deaths. Obama fought to keep this practice in place. Even the pro-abortion lobby group NARAL wouldn’t join Obama in his fight – perhaps thinking the practice was too barbaric even for them.

Now, as a veteran political consultant, I know politics is a nasty business and I am well acquainted with phenomenon of certain media outlets refusing to run paid advertising on the grounds that they don’t agree with the ad’s message.

However, I never expected to have an ad with a pro-life message censored by nearly every Catholic diocesan editor newspaper in the country.

The ad I submitted to these papers simply provides public polling information that shows a majority of Catholics are opposed to abortion. The ad also provides Barack Obama’s well-documented stance on various issues pertaining to abortion. It does not specifically endorse any candidate, nor does it urge readers to vote for, or against, any candidate.

Despite all of this, only two dioceses out of 194 agreed to run this paid advertisement in their papers.

Though the ad was deemed to be in accordance with Catholic teaching by a Catholic review board that screens such ads prior to submitting them to individual Catholic publications, nearly every diocese rejected the ad for being “too political.”

While my ad is “too political,” many of these same dioceses had no problem publishing a piece disseminated by the Catholic News Service that praises Obama’s pro-abortion running mate, Senator Joe Biden, as an ally of the Church and its policy interests.

The Catholic News Service, however, did not publish the results of a poll taken by Zogby International that shows that 56 percent of Americans and 54 percent of Catholics think the actions of these editors is censorship. Surprisingly, 63 percent of people who say they “never attend church” also consider it censorship.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops calls abortion an “intrinsic evil” and states: “A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who takes a position in favor of an intrinsic evil, such as abortion.”

Why would nearly every Catholic diocesan editor nationwide reject a non-partisan ad that simply promotes a book and seeks to educate Catholics on an issue of great importance to them? This year, millions of young Catholics will be exercising their right to vote for the first time. Don’t they deserve to be equipped with the knowledge they need to make an informed decision?

Archbishop Raymond Burke, the prefect of the Vatican’s Apostolic Signature, recently stated: “It is simply ridiculous and wrong to try to silence a pastor, accusing him of interfering in politics so that he cannot do good to the soul of a member of his flock.”

What would the 55 Bishops, who have made public statements condemning Obama and Biden’s position on abortion, say about their editors silencing a member of the flock who seeks to do the same?

Brad O’Leary is the author of “The Audacity of Deceit: Barack Obama’s War on American Values.” To learn more about the book, and Obama’s political positions, go to www.BarackObamaTest.com.