



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on July 9, 2013

“Devout Catholic” Nancy Pelosi Getting Free Ride From Cowardly Clergy

For the past 26 years, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif., shown) has been a leading champion of abortion on the national political scene, all the while openly proclaiming to be a “devout Catholic,” a “practicing and respectful Catholic,” and other similar variations on that theme. A former House Minority Whip and Speaker of the House, who represents California’s 12th Congressional district (comprised of the city and county of San Francisco), Pelosi now serves as the Democratic Leader in the Republican-controlled House.



In recent months, [Pope Francis has directed the bishops](#) of Argentina, his home country, to deny Holy Communion to politicians who facilitate abortion. And Raymond Cardinal Burke, the Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, the Vatican’s highest court, has [restated the Church’s position](#) that bishops and priests have a sacred “duty” to withhold Holy Communion from a Catholic who is “persisting obstinately in grave moral evil.” Prefect Cardinal Burke stated:

The local Bishop should teach clearly in the matter and also encourage his priests to make sure that the Church’s discipline is observed, in order to avoid the grave sin of sacrilege on the part of the Catholic politician who approaches to receive Holy Communion when he is persisting obstinately in grave moral evil, and to prevent the scandal which is caused when such individuals receive Holy Communion, because their reception of Holy Communion gives the impression that the Church’s teaching on the intrinsic evil of abortion is not firm.

In June, Rep. Pelosi ratcheted up the abortion rhetoric and heaped more fuel on the growing controversy over the conflict between her position on abortion and that profession of faith, referring to the right to abortion as “sacred ground.” She is clearly in need of reproof and catechetical instruction, apparently suffering from the delusion that abortion has attained the status of a sacrament! Pelosi has two bishops who exercise *de jure* spiritual authority over her, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco and Archbishop Donald Cardinal Wuerl of Washington, D.C., but neither prelate has made any public statement concerning Pelosi’s recent, or past, pro-abortion public forays. Spokesmen for the archbishops were unavailable for comment when *The New American* contacted them on the matter, and, as of this writing, we have not received a response back from them. Likewise, the media office for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) could provide us with no statement concerning Pelosi’s scandalous words and actions.

At a June 13 press conference, Pelosi responded testily to a question by a reporter from *The Weekly Standard* asking her to explain the moral difference between what [abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell](#) did to babies at 23-25 weeks of pregnancy (for which he was convicted of murder and other crimes) and what happens in clinics where doctors carry out abortions 28 weeks into a pregnancy. Pelosi refused to answer the question and snapped at the journalist and said that she would not discuss the issue with



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him because he obviously had an agenda to undermine the “sacred ground” of abortion rights. In the same breath she described herself as “a practicing and respectful Catholic.” (See the [video](#) below.)

Here is the exchange between Pelosi and *The Weekly Standard* (TWS):

TWS: Madam Leader, you mentioned the bill that passed out of the House Judiciary committee. Members who have proposed that bill have done that in the wake of this murder trial in Philadelphia. They argue that there really isn't much of a moral difference between what someone like Dr. Kermit Gosnell did to infants born at 23, 24, 25 weeks into pregnancy, and what can happen [legally] at a clinic down the road in Maryland where a doctor says that he'll perform an elective abortions 28 weeks into pregnancy. So the question I have for you is what is the moral difference between what Dr. Gosnell did to a baby born alive at 23 weeks and aborting her moments before birth?

Pelosi (acidly): You're probably enjoying that question a lot, I can see you savoring it. Let me just tell you this.

TWS: Could you answer the question?

Pelosi: Let me just tell you this. What was done in Philadelphia was reprehensible and everybody condemned it. For them to decide to disrespect a judgment a woman makes about her reproductive health is reprehensible. Next question.

TWS: So what's the moral difference? I just asked a simple question. What's the moral difference then between 26 weeks elective abortion and the killing of that same infant born alive. This is the issue that they're trying to —

Pelosi: This is not the issue. They are saying that there's no abortion. It would make it a federal law that there would be no abortion in our country. You're taking the extreme case. You're taking the extreme case. And what I'm saying to you is what happened in Philadelphia was reprehensible. And I do not think you —

TWS: You didn't answer the question.

Pelosi: I'm not going to have this conversation with you because you obviously have an agenda. You're not interested in having an answer. I've responded to you to the extent that I'm going to respond to you. Because I want to tell you something. As the mother of five children, my oldest child was 6 years old the day I brought my 5th child home from the hospital, as a practicing and respectful Catholic, this is sacred ground to me when we talk about this. I don't think it should have anything to do with politics. And that's where you're taking it and I'm not going there.

Besides evading a legitimate question about one of the most important and timely public policy issues before our nation, Rep. Pelosi told a couple of whoppers. First of all, the legislation to which the reporter and Pelosi referred is H.R. 1797, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which [passed the House](#) several days after the above exchange. Rep. Pelosi's claim that “It would make it a federal law that there would be no abortion in our country,” is blatantly false, and she surely knows that. The legislation would merely ban late-term abortions after the 20th week of pregnancy, and even then allows exceptions. But, of course, none of the pro-abortion MSM reporters or commentators called her on this brazen falsehood; they are too firmly allied with her on this issue to let truth get in the way. Contrast this protective covering for Pelosi with their [vicious “gotcha” treatment](#) of pro-life Republican Senate candidates Todd Akin (Missouri) and Richard Mourdock (Indiana) in the last election, both of



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whom made clumsy — but completely defensible — off-the-cuff remarks concerning rape and abortion, that the press then exploited and misrepresented relentlessly, day after day, guaranteeing their defeat.

Secondly, Pelosi's claim about politics — "I don't think it should have anything to do with politics; and that's where you're taking it and I'm not going there" — is so ludicrous it must surely have caused some muffled guffaws from her own supporters in her media cheering section. Everyone who has followed this issue at all knows that Pelosi has been on the frontline of making "it" have everything to do with politics. She has made abortion one of her top, "sacred" political totems. She is always "going there," receiving awards from Planned Parenthood and NARAL, voting public monies to promote abortion, declaring that *Roe v. Wade* must be defended, etc., etc., etc.

Warped, Expedient, Politicized Theology

Nancy Pelosi's nonsensical claim to eschew politicizing abortion is almost as ridiculous as her lame attempts to co-opt the Bible and the Catholic faith in service of her anti-Christian agenda. One of her most notorious efforts in this regard was her May 6, 2010 speech to a Catholic Community Conference on Capitol Hill (see video [here](#)) in which she claimed to be guided in her actions by the values of Jesus, "the Word." Rep. Pelosi said:

They ask me all the time, "What is your favorite this? What is your favorite that." And one time they asked me, "What is your favorite word?"

And I said, "My favorite word? That is really easy. My favorite word is the Word" — is the Word. And that is everything. It says it all for us. And you know the biblical reference, you know the Gospel reference of the Word.

And that Word is, we have to give voice to what that means in terms of public policy that would be in keeping with the values of the Word. The Word. Isn't it a beautiful word when you think of it? It just covers everything. The Word. Fill it in with anything you want. But, of course, we know it means: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." And that's the great mystery of our faith. He will come again. He will come again. So, we have to make sure we're prepared to answer in this life, or otherwise, as to how we have measured up.

Rep. Pelosi is referring, of course to the Gospel according to St. John, Chapter 1, verse 14, which states: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Pelosi has many times similarly invoked the Bible and claimed that it is her Catholic faith that guides her in making moral decisions concerning legislation and public policy, decisions that clearly mutilate and violate the expressed teachings of the Catholic Church.

Dr. Paul Kengor is a popular author, a professor of political science at Grove City College, and executive director of The Center for Vision & Values. In a [recent column](#), he asked: "Has anyone in the Church hierarchy spoken to Congresswoman Pelosi about her latest or previous comments on abortion? This has been, and remains, a scandal."

"A few years back," Professor Kengor notes, "her priest in San Francisco, Father John Ring, when asked about her radical abortion stance, demurred, saying: 'She's a fine woman. She is a good parishioner.' When asked about Pelosi receiving Holy Communion, Father Ring testily said: 'Leave it in God's hands. I'm not going to argue the matter with you.'"

However, as we reported above, Prefect Cardinal Burke has made it clear that priests and bishops are



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not supposed to “leave it in God’s hands”; God has put it in *their* hands, as one of their obligatory pastoral duties. This is expressed explicitly in Canon 915 of the Catholic Church’s Code of Canon Law, which [states](#):

Those who have been excommunicated or interdicted after the imposition or declaration of the penalty and others obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Holy Communion.

“With regard to Canon 915,” [said Prefect Cardinal Burke](#), “it states that those who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin should not be admitted to receive Holy Communion. There can be no question that the practice of abortion is among the gravest of manifest sins and therefore once a Catholic politician has been admonished that he should not come forward to receive Holy Communion, as long as he continues to support legislation which fosters abortion or other intrinsic evils, then he should be refused Holy Communion.”

[Dr. Ed Peters](#), a noted Catholic canon law expert, has [repeatedly cited Pelosi](#) as one of the most egregious examples of “Catholic” politicians to whom priests and bishops should apply Canon 915. Among the numerous other Catholic public officials to whom Canon 915 should be applied are: Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of State John Kerry, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, California Governor Jerry Brown, and many members of the U.S. House and Senate.

Courageous priest, Catholic lay people take on Pelosi

Even though Pelosi’s pastors and bishops have not marshaled the courage to enforce Canon 915, at least one Catholic priest has publicly taken her to task. Father Frank Pavone, founder and national director of Priests for Life, has called on Pelosi to either truthfully embrace the Catholic faith or renounce it. In a letter to Rep. Pelosi following her press conference debacle, [Fr. Pavone charged](#):

You stated at the press briefing on June 13, “As a practicing and respectful Catholic, this is sacred ground to me when we talk about this. I don’t think it should have anything to do with politics.”

With this statement, you make a mockery of the Catholic faith and of the tens of millions of Americans who consider themselves “practicing and respectful Catholics” and who find the killing of children — whether inside or outside the womb — reprehensible....

Whatever Catholic faith you claim to respect and practice, it is not the faith that the Catholic Church teaches. And I speak for countless Catholics when I say that it’s time for you to stop speaking as if it were. Abortion is not sacred ground; it is sacrilegious ground. To imagine God giving the slightest approval to an act that dismembers a child he created is offensive to both faith and reason....

Mrs. Pelosi, for decades you have gotten away with betraying and misrepresenting the Catholic faith as well as the responsibilities of public office. We have had enough of it. Either exercise your duties as a public servant and a Catholic, or have the honesty to formally renounce them.

What was Pelosi’s response to Fr. Pavone’s charitable rebuke? Her typical scorn for authentic Catholic teaching. She [called](#) Fr. Pavone and Priests for Life arrogant, medieval, hysterical, and disconnected from the Catholic Church.

American Life League (ALL), the largest grassroots Catholic pro-life education organization in the United States, has also not shied away from confronting Pelosi, or from urging the U.S. Catholic bishops to man up to their sacred duty.



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Michael Hichborn, ALL's Director of Media Relations, told *The New American* that "Nancy Pelosi's response to the reporter clearly indicates that she cannot deny the fact that there is no moral difference between killing a preborn baby at 28 weeks gestation and a baby that is born at 23 weeks gestation, and so she retreats to the emotional appeal that access to abortion is 'sacred ground.'"

"Mrs. Pelosi's grasping and clinging to her identity as a 'practicing Catholic' remind me of the way Judas smothered Our Blessed Lord with kisses when he betrayed him for 30 pieces of silver," says Hichborn. "Since Mrs. Pelosi has received Holy Communion completely unabated while working tirelessly to expand and maintain open access to abortion, she can conclude only one of two things; either Jesus isn't truly present in the Eucharist, or Jesus is ok with abortion. Until she is openly denied Holy Communion as is required by Canon 915, she will have no reason to change her mind."

But isn't that kind of action precisely what the political correctness police would call "hateful" and "judgmental"? Quite the opposite, says Hichborn; in fact, it shows true love for her as well as true love for the Faith. Moreover, he notes, "We must fast and pray for her soul because she is in grave danger of eternal separation from God, the source of all life."

If Nancy Pelosi's pastors truly care for her soul, they will rebuke and correct her.

"Given her scandalous and forceful promotion of abortion in all cases, all forms of birth control, the perversion of the souls of children through pornographic sex education, and her full support for homosexual activity," notes Hichborn, "if bishops do not courageously and unwaveringly deny her the reception of Holy Communion, by their silence and inaction they will consign her soul to an eternity of Hell while seriously imperiling their own."

Photo of Rep. Nancy Pelosi: AP Images

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