



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on September 15, 2016

Has Hillary VP Pick Tim Kaine Been Excommunicated from the Catholic Church?

Given how Senator Tim Kaine (shown) just announced that the Catholic Church may soon follow his lead and change its “position” on marriage, it sounds more like he aspires to be pope than a vice president. But while that church status is unavailable to him, he may already have another: the excommunicated.



At issue is something called “automatic excommunication,” or *excommunication latae sententiae*, Latin for “sentence [already] passed.” It occurs when a Catholic commits certain offenses, such as procuring an abortion or, in the case of a priest, breaking the seal of confession. Relevant to Kaine’s situation, however, is [section 1364](#) of the Code of Canon Law, which states that “an apostate from the faith, a heretic, or a schismatic incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication.” The vice presidential nominee is not an apostate and probably not a schismatic, but then there’s the matter of heresy, which the Catechism of the Catholic Church [defines](#) as “the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same.”

Kaine’s most obvious problem here is his support of abortion, with *Politico* [writing](#) in July that he has pleased pro-abortion “groups with a perfect voting record” — meaning, perfectly bad for unborn babies. Yet Kaine’s rejection of Church doctrine goes far further. And he certainly didn’t help his cause last Saturday in Washington when, shockingly, he did more than just [tell](#) the Human Rights Campaign during its national dinner that he changed his position some years ago and now supports faux marriage.

He also said he thinks the Church is “going to change” its position to match his.

Apparently, it’s just going to take a while for the Catholic Church to reach his level of enlightenment.

Yet according to Catholic doctrine, this will never happen. That marriage is the union of a man and woman in Holy Matrimony is definitive Catholic teaching, not subject to change. Most outside pious Catholic circles don’t understand this reality, which is why the *Daily Mail* could [describe](#) Kaine as a “devout Roman Catholic.” But he, again, is far more likely an excommunicated one, as his consistent



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rejection of Catholic doctrine proves. Just consider how a more definitive source than a newspaper — Bishop Thomas Tobin of the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island — characterized the candidate's Catholic status in a July [Facebook post](#):

VP Pick, Tim Kaine, a Catholic?

Democratic VP choice, Tim Kaine, has been widely identified as a Roman Catholic. It is also reported that he publicly supports “freedom of choice” for abortion, same-sex marriage, gay adoptions, and the ordination of women as priests. All of these positions are clearly contrary to well-established Catholic teachings; all of them have been opposed by Pope Francis as well.

Senator Kaine has said, “My faith is central to everything I do.” But apparently, and unfortunately, his faith isn't central to his public, political life.

Bishop Tobin isn't the only Catholic officer to fire a shot across Kaine's bow. Also in July, Father Thomas Petri, the vice president and academic dean of the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C., [tweeted](#) the senator, “Senator [@timkaine](#): Do us both a favor. Don't show up in my communion line. I take Canon 915 seriously. It'd be embarrassing for you & for me.” Note that Canon 915 [deals with](#) how those “who have been excommunicated ... and others obstinately persevering in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to holy communion.”

And such Catholic Church discipline is far from unprecedented. In 2011, Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz (now retired) of Lincoln, Nebraska, stated that, as *LifeSite News* [put it](#), “Catholic politicians who support Planned Parenthood or other measures facilitating abortion ... should be denied Communion” and identified such a person as “a notorious public sinner.” In 1996, the bishop “announced that any Catholics in his diocese who persisted as members of Planned Parenthood would be excommunicated automatically,” wrote *LifeSite*. The prelate also said in 2011 that while the matter of excommunication of legislators who merely support Planned Parenthood hadn't arisen in his diocese, such a move “could be” warranted. Note that Kaine falls into this category.

And Kaine is categorically illogical in his latest heretical pronouncements on faux marriage. In making his case Saturday that the Catholic Church would follow his lead, he said, “My church also teaches me about a creator who, in the first chapter of Genesis, surveyed the entire world, including mankind, and said, “It is very good,”” reported the *Mail*. If we're to discuss Christian theology, however, note that God did say that — before the Fall of man, before sin entered the world. In the Garden of Eden, to use a cliché, it was Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve.

Kaine's theology also ignores the Bible's telling us that God destroyed the world with water for its wickedness and wiped out Sodom and Gomorrah, at least partially because of sexual sin; in fact, this is where the term “sodomy” originated.

The *Mail* also informs that Kaine “recalled Pope Francis' remark that ‘who am I to judge?’ in reference to gay people.” But politician and paper both have it wrong. In the secular “Anglosphere” “Who am I to judge” has become a code phrase meaning “Homosexual behavior is okay.” But Francis is neither secular nor Anglo, with Spanish being his first language. Moreover, he wasn't talking about “gay people” but a specific group: priests who have homosexual feelings but nonetheless live celibate lives.

And in this he was merely expressing traditional Catholic teaching. To wit: People's feelings often emerge within them through no fault of their own and may be unwanted. Thus, merely having disordered feelings isn't a sin.



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It's acting on them that's a sin.

Further justifying homosexual behavior, Kaine stated Saturday night, "I want to add: Who am I to challenge God for the beautiful diversity of the human family?" Ironically, of course, Kaine here is challenging God on what constitutes sin. Yielding the same result as biological determinism, his position states, logically rendered, "Since God is good and created everything, everything that exists must be good." Yet just as Kaine earlier ignored the Fall — original sin entering the world — in evaluating what occurred before it, now he's ignoring its impact on what occurred afterwards.

Whether viewing our fold as naturally flawed or supernaturally fallen, spina bifida, cleft palate, Down syndrome, and innumerable other inborn abnormalities evidence the imperfection of this world. Following Kaine's implied "logic," however, we not only shouldn't correct such problems (when possible), but shouldn't even view them as problems; in fact, we should celebrate an [infant's repairable heart defect](#) even though it will lead to his premature death. It's all part of God's ordained diversity, right?

And whether the feelings associated with a given behavior are innate or acquired, the reality is no different. If Kaine is right in his implied proposition that everything that exists must be good, including behaviors, then how can we not rubber stamp pedophilia, bestiality, and serial killing? Diversity, you know.

None of this is to say that Kaine has or hasn't incurred automatic excommunication; that's not a judgment I or any other layman can make definitively. And Kaine's faith may seem completely inconsequential to many voters, who may not be Catholic or (for that matter) religious. Yet this speaks to the senator's sincerity. To claim practicing-Catholic status while rejecting basic Catholic teaching requires a staggering level of self-deception — or deception of others.

And anyone who would claim to be a loyal Catholic while rejecting Catholicism could claim to be a loyal American while rejecting Americanism.

Photo of Senator Tim Kaine: AP Images



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