

Losing Your Religion

On January 8, 1962, President John F. Kennedy wrote a letter expressing condolences on the death of James Cardinal Gibbons. Kennedy, who rarely discussed his Catholicism, did so while describing the Cardinal: "He nobly expresses the essential traditions of my church in the United States ... the deep sympathy for the plight of the working man and of minorities, the steady concern for the betterment of society and mankind..."

Thus, it was somewhat startling to see JFK's daughter, Caroline, invoke her father's name and describe herself as a "Catholic woman" when espousing a passionate defense of abortion rights at the Democratic Convention. President Kennedy never publicly commented on abortion and, indeed, his brother Teddy was ardently pro-life when he began his political career. Of course, that changed over time as Senator Kennedy evolved into a liberal lion and enthusiastically entered the pro-choice den.

Caroline Kennedy has to know that the Catholic Church condemns abortion. It is a mortal sin in the eyes of the institution. There is no debate on that. So for Ms. Kennedy to describe herself as a Catholic woman in the context of promoting "reproductive rights" is a direct insult to her religion. Why would she do that? Other Catholic politicians like Mario Cuomo say they don't personally believe in abortion but respect the legal process that allows it. Not Caroline Kennedy – she openly told the world that she is an abortion crusader and the stated belief of her church be damned.

A Gallup poll says 24% of practicing Catholics believe abortion is morally acceptable. At first glance, that's hard to fathom but not when you analyze the landscape. After Caroline Kennedy's speech, not one American Catholic leader publicly criticized her. There was complete silence from the Archbishops. Given a huge opportunity to explain why all life

should be considered sacred, and why Ms. Kennedy is misguided – to say the least – the clerics passed. Call it the silence of the lambs.

It was obvious at the Democratic Convention that President Obama and the Democratic Party are extremely bullish on “reproductive rights” and are using the issue to promote a fabricated “war on women” by the Republican Party. In response, the GOP has little to offer. It fears being branded “anti-woman.”

But theologians don't have to run for office or curry favor with any group. They supposedly have a moral obligation to define their beliefs and stand up for what they consider God's will.

Abortion eliminates life. That's what the procedure does. Human DNA is present upon conception. If the Catholic Church believes that abortion is against what God intended, then it should be just as adamant about stating its case as Caroline Kennedy is about stating hers.

It is not.