

# TIME for the 'Bad Vatican' to go

---

May 19, 2009

By **Matt C. Abbott**

A while back, an acquaintance of mine repeated something she had heard: There is the "Good Vatican" and the "Bad Vatican." I must admit, at the time, I was a bit perplexed by that statement. But certain recent events have led me to see, and agree with, what she was asserting, namely, that not everyone in the Vatican is...how shall we say...on the same page.

Even *TIME* magazine can recognize this. A May 16 article, by Amy Sullivan, states (excerpted [click here](#) to read the entire piece):

'...Cardinal James Francis Stafford, one of the highest-ranking Americans at the Vatican, has declared Obama an unfit honoree because his statements on abortion reflect 'an agenda and vision that are aggressive, disruptive and apocalyptic.'

'...*L'Osservatore Romano*, the official newspaper published under the authority of the Vatican's Secretariat of State, ran an article in late April essentially urging the bishops to chill out.

'Under the headline 'The 100 Days that Did Not Shake the World,' the paper gave Obama a tentative thumbs-up for his policy changes concerning the economy and international relations. 'On ethical questions, too — which from the time of the electoral campaign have been the subject of strong worries by the Catholic bishops — Obama does not seem to have confirmed the radical innovations that he had discussed,' said the article, which noted that Obama's stem-cell guidelines were 'less permissive' than expected.

'So is this a schism? Have Cardinal George and the other conservative U.S. bishops gone rogue? Or is the Pope letting them play bad cop while he makes nice with the popular new American President?'

Father Tom Euteneuer, president of Human Life International and a priest I've quoted often in this column, had the following response to the *TIME* article:

'We have no reason to expect fair coverage of Church affairs from the dogmatically secularist and leftist *TIME* magazine, but it is very sad for them to be able to accurately quote *L'Osservatore Romano* in support of their position. The author of the article suggests a rift between the Vatican and those who are trying to be faithful to the Church's teaching. Unfortunately, such a rift is plausible, not because there is anything wrong with Church teaching but because it is not being properly stated and implemented, even by Vatican officials. This is embarrassing and demoralizing to those of us who try to stand against the most aggressively anti-life administration in history — and its sycophantic enablers in the so-called objective media.

'We now know that such appeasement on the part of some in the Vatican historically only encouraged communist regimes in their anti-Catholicism, and it is beyond naive to think that cozying up to this administration will have any positive effect. The *TIME* article is merely the first to exploit *L'Osservatore Romano*'s benign view of the intentions of Obama and his administration. This scandal needs to be addressed, and soon.'

My anonymous friend offered some interesting, even chilling, observations. First, he noted that the *TIME* article conveniently overlooked [Archbishop Raymond Burke's powerful speech](#) at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast on May 8.

My friend also stated:

'The article simply represents what have become the standard liberal talking points: Catholic opposition to Obama is instigated entirely by Republicans and Catholics who oppose Obama are stupid tools of Republican partisan politics. These talking points are themselves nothing but Democratic partisan talking points straight out of Axelrod's war room. That Cardinal George is an unwitting tool of Republican partisan politics is absurd to anyone who knows anything.

'But I'm afraid these talking points will be largely successful in fooling most people in the country, including a lot of Catholics. There is a wedge being driven among Catholics, for sure. Yet it's a wedge driven by the Left and it's succeeding because the rift was already there. I'm afraid the sifting time has come. The schism is in the process of being hardened and it's because the Left knows the battleground has been

sufficiently softened up. The number of Catholics faithful to the Church is small enough and weak enough that they can successfully be isolated, demonized and persecuted.

'The good news is that Cardinal George is among that faithful group, as are Dolan, Burke, Carlson, and some others. But they will be leading a faithful yet shrunken remnant facing persecution in the coming decades. We are at the early stages of the triumph of a demagogue along the lines of Hitler in 1933.'

<http://www.renewamerica.us/columns/abbott/090519>