

Wednesday, June 16, 2010

Ave Maria Town, Jackson Labs, and The Wanderer...Oh My!



Ever since I wrote the article about my concerns over [The Wanderer](#), I have been eagerly reading my weekly paper to see if they will cover the scandal of Jackson Labs locating at Ave Maria Town. And it truly is a scandal to see this anti-life organization with deep roots in eugenics welcomed by Tom Monaghan and Ave Maria University. If you don't think that's what's happening you need to read about Jackson Labs and realize exactly how deeply disturbing Monaghan's complicity in providing the land to build their facility is. Monaghan claims absolution because the National Catholic Bioethics Center provided cover, but that organization is not without controversy.

Randy Engel has a two part article about this mess:

Part I - Eugenics Meets the Pizza King - Ave Maria in the Shadow of Auschwitz

Part II - Ave Maria, Jackson Laboratory and Mass Eugenic Killing

And Randy is not the only one talking about the scandal. The National Catholic Register and the American Papist also addressed the issue in early June.

All of these sources are asking what is going on? And why? What happened to the idea of the city on a hill where Catholics could locate in confidence that their values would be supported. What will happen to the integrity of the town when one of the biggest employers for miles around is an anti-life organization whose entire history is steeped in the culture of death? It looks like a prescription for the perfect storm of disunity. Culture of life move over and make room for the culture of death. It reminds me of the years when St. James Catholic Church in Falls Church, VA peacefully coexisted with the abortion mill next door.

All they did was build a higher fence and sing a little louder and harrass pro-lifers who stood on their property to counsel women and offer alternatives. The devil loves that kind of setup!

One voice has been surprisingly silent while the confrontation over Ave Maria welcoming Jackson Labs builds -- and it's a voice that calls itself "Witness for the Truth." That, of course, is The Wanderer. I've been watching for six weeks to see if an article or a column would mention this abomination. There hasn't been a single solitary word about the Ave Maria scandal on a puff piece by Jeffrey Tucker (two months old) praising a conference on sacred music held at Ave Maria. Is the fix in?

A newspaper can tell you just as much by what it doesn't print as what it does. The pro-life movement has known that for years and the tea party movement discovered it more recently. The mainstream media ignores those who don't represent their liberal mindset.

So does The Wanderer's silence on the buddy-buddy relationship between Ave Maria and Jackson labs reflect a new mindset where Ave Maria and Tom Monaghan are above criticism? I fear the next thing in The Wanderer's pages will be a full-page ad promoting the university. Or perhaps I and other subscribers will get slick packages from Ave Marie touting their orthodoxy.

Until Jackson Labs is run out of Ave Maria Town on the proverbial rail, no orthodox Catholic can believe that Tom Monaghan cares more about the faith than about money. He has given a lot of it away to good causes and that's great. But a drop of poison can ruin a gallon of water. Jackson Labs will poison Ave Maria Town beyond recovery. Why aren't the "witnesses for the truth" at The Wanderer shouting that from the housetops?

Additional commentary by Mary Ann Kreitzer on June 17, 2010 :

I think one can assume The Wanderer was threatened with a lawsuit by Tom Monaghan. I also think it's pretty clear that the original articles were on target since well-known Catholic lawyer Charlie Rice wrote an article saying they were and that Mrs. de Stuart had actually understated her case.

So if the articles were accurate and The Wanderer backed off what's the conclusion? I think there are several possibilities. First, they probably wanted to avoid a nuisance lawsuit. It costs a lot of money even if you win and The Wanderer is in financial difficulty. The second possibility is one I hate to even think of: That Monaghan suggested working together in a beneficial relationship. That's why I'm watching to see what happens.

Let's recap: First The Wanderer publishes a correction of articles that were accurate which required shoving the writer under the bus. 2.) Then they publish a two-month old puff piece on Ave Maria. 3.) Then they ignore a HUGE negative story about the relationship between Ave Maria and Jackson Labs. It is just the kind of story The Wanderer SHOULD run and has in the past.

What's 4? A full page ad for the university or selling Ave Maria the use of The Wanderer's mailing list?

I hope not. By ignoring the Jackson Lab controversy The Wanderer has broadened the debate to include their integrity.

Mary Ann Kreitzer is a prominent pro-life journalist, president of Les Femmes, and editor of its publication The Truth. She is one of the founders of the Catholic Media Coalition, an organization of independent Catholic writers, webmasters, editors, and others engaged in producing media for and about the Catholic Church.

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[U.S. Coalition for Life Three-Part Series on the Town of Ave Maria, Tom Monaghan and the Jackson Lab Scandal](#)