

Don't confuse honors with a political dinner

Concerning the flap about inviting and honoring President Barack Obama at Notre Dame, I was disappointed with Father Reese's comparison to Cardinal Egan. Father Reese neglected to mention that the Al Smith Dinner was not an occasion to bestow an honor, and that Notre Dame is bestowing an honorary doctorate degree on the president. The comparison is not well-crafted. The Al Smith Dinner invited both Republican and Democratic candidates to state their case; but Notre Dame is singling out President Obama for an honor, not merely to talk. Good for the position by the local bishop, who appreciates when not to reward support for an intrinsic moral evil.

Which distinction also undercuts the attempt to make the appearance of President Bush comparable? While the death penalty is generally opposed by the church, see the Catechism section 2266 and 2267, it does not rise to the level of the intrinsic moral evil that abortion and embryonic stem-cell research maintain, while shamefully enjoying support from so many self-proclaimed Catholic legislators.