



A divided Congress seeks Papal approval amid ongoing debate on abortion financing

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di Mattia Ferraresi

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📷 Papa Francesco (foto LaPresse)



Washington, DC. Tomorrow, Francis will be welcomed by a Congress that is in constant cultural war, with Democrats longing for a Pope's wink in the right direction, and Republicans wrinkling their noses when topics like climate change, inequality and immigration come up. However, these days the debate is dominated by one issue: Planned Parenthood, i.e. abortion and contraceptives.

Last week, the House passed a measure to temporarily cut off public funding to the health services organization. This one-year measure would allow the investigation of the actions brought to light after a series of videos released by a Pro-Life association went viral. The activists showed footage of Planned Parenthood executives having lunch while they discussed the use of fetal organs and tissues for medical research.

When the Planned Parenthood scandal broke worldwide, the Cardinal of Boston, Sean O'Malley, took a strong stand against the culture of abortion and the "standard practice of obtaining fetal organs", actions that "fail to respect the humanity and dignity of human life". O'Malley was referring to the "throwaway culture" condemned by Francis, and he recommended these issues be "the center of attention in the present public controversy". And so it was.

[Video_box_2**]**Some Republicans in Congress have introduced a bill to defund Planned Parenthood, and have made this vote conditional to the passing of the budget, threatening a government shutdown, which would take effect on October 1st if no agreement is reached. This is the same strategy used in 2013 to defund Obamacare. That attempt failed, and this one risks failing too, since the divided Republicans do not have the 60 votes in the Senate necessary to pass the bill.

In the Church's reconciling embrace so dear to Democrats, there is room for the New York Times editorial, intended to convince Pope Francis to open up to contraceptives, based on the pill's popularity among Catholics. However, there also seems to be room for the left's vote that has recently blocked a Senate bill, which would have banned abortions after 20 weeks.

traduzione a cura di Chiara Salce