

Evangelical Leaders: Trump Didn't Stand Us Up

After the *Daily Beast* and several other news outlets claimed Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump “blew off” a planned meeting with Priests for Life and the 115 Forum on Wednesday, several evangelicals who were in attendance came to the embattled GOP front-runner’s defense.

Among those coming to Trump’s defense was the head of Priests for Life, Fr. Frank Pavone. He said his organization “reaches out to candidates regularly,” and many of those conversations are off the record, but he felt the characterization of Trump’s not taking part in the meeting was false.

“Let me make clear that Mr. Trump did not break any commitments to speak to me or any gathering I organize,” he said. “On the contrary, I have had very friendly and fruitful interactions with him and members of his team and look forward to continuing that dynamic.”

Dr. Day Gardner, who just endorsed Trump this week, was also at the meeting. She added her own thoughts on the media reports, which characterized as “scandalous lies”:

“Donald Trump was not on the agenda and had no commitment to participate in any way in that meeting. This is an inside hatchet job of epic proportions from person(s) who will go to any lengths to blackball Donald Trump.”

But perhaps the most outspoken defender of Trump is evangelist and pro-life activist Dr. Alveda King, who also attended the meeting. She issued the following statement regarding the news reports:

“This is not true. I was at the meeting, and Mr. Trump did not reject any invitation. There was no meeting with Mr.

Trump scheduled in the first place.

"I personally have met Mr. Trump and have spoken with his staff and supporters on a regular basis, and find them very open to pro-life discussions. I remain saddened by the 'winner take all by any means necessary' affront that is being promulgated in this election season.

"As a Christian evangelist, I no longer endorse political candidates. I am called to pray for everyone, including all leaders.

"'The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.'—1 Timothy 2:1-3 MSG

"While I sometimes privately offer support and advice to various candidates, in this election I urge Americans to pray and repent; and vote responsibly; and to not indulge in emotional mudslinging and lies."