

# BLOOMBERG'S "LIAISON" BACKS 9/11 GAG RULE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue looks at who is supporting New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's 9/11 gag rule:

It is nearly impossible to find anyone who supports Mayor Bloomberg's gag rule censoring the clergy and First Responders from speaking at the 9/11 ceremonies this Sunday. One exception is a woman who lost her husband in the attacks, and who is identified as a liaison between the mayor and the victims' families. Her name is Christy Ferer. But she is not exactly a go-between: she works for Bloomberg. Moreover, she used to date him.

"There are so many faiths that would have to be present," Ferer recently said. "How do you not insult somebody?" Better to insult everyone equally, she concludes. But not exactly: no group of New Yorkers is more insulted than Catholics. Not only is Archbishop Timothy Dolan banned (along with other clergy), no First Responders are allowed to speak (yet the vast majority of those who died on 9/11 were Catholic).

Ferer's ties with her ex-boyfriend have paid dividends. Besides being a Special Assistant to Bloomberg today, she previously served on the Advisory Council Board for the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and is past Commissioner of the Port Authority. She also served on the transition committee for Mayor-elect Bloomberg. Her husband who was killed on 9/11, Neil Levin, was also a longtime friend of Bloomberg, and a former director of the Port Authority.

Many members of victims' families have previously complained that Ferer does not reach out to them, and there is no evidence that she consulted with them regarding the propriety

of censoring the clergy and First Responders from the 9/11 events. She says she reads their e-mails, but this is a poor substitute for dialogue. In other words, we need to know the names of those whom Bloomberg and Ferer consulted with before the decision to ban the clergy and First Responders was made.

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