

# CATHOLIC HIGH COURT JUSTICES PROBED AGAIN

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When Jews and Protestants are being considered for a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court, they are rarely, if ever, asked by legislators to explain how their religious convictions might affect their legal thinking. The same is not true of Catholic nominees: their faith often becomes center stage at the hearings.

Sometimes it gets really ugly, as when Senator Dianne Feinstein tried to smear prospective Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett. “When you read your speeches,” she said, “the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you. And that’s of concern when you come to big issues that large numbers of people have fought for years in this country.”

This was not Feinstein’s first rodeo. In 2005, she questioned John Roberts about his suitability to sit on the Supreme Court. She specifically asked him if he shared President John F. Kennedy’s 1960 convictions about not mixing church and state. Other prospective federal judges who are Catholic have been subjected to the same line of questioning.

It must also be asked, why is it that nominees who are known secularists are not probed to learn if they harbor an animus against public displays of religious expression? Why is it always Catholics who are asked to explain themselves?

Now our Catholic Supreme Court Justices are under the microscope again, only this time liberal commentators are afraid they may not be Catholic enough!

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has

filed an amicus in a case before the high court asking the Justices to reject the Trump administration's attempt to end birthright citizenship for some babies born in the U.S. Without addressing the merits of this case, what interests the Catholic League is the media reaction to the Catholics on the high court.

Maureen Groppe is a senior reporter for *USA Today*. A recent column she wrote says it all. "Will the Majority-Catholic Supreme Court Listen to the Church on Immigration?" She is particularly impressed that the USCCB is making a moral case against Trump's position, as well as a legal case; the bishops branded it "immoral."

The USCCB uses stronger language with regard to abortion. It labels it "intrinsically evil." Yet when Catholic Justices overturned *Roe v. Wade*, sending the issue of abortion back to the states, pro-abortion groups blasted them and law journals ran articles about conflating religious convictions and legal reasoning. The American Bar Association held a webinar on this subject.

"Will the Majority-Catholic Supreme Court Listen to the Church on Same-Sex Marriage?" Imagine a news story on this subject that invites the reader to question the autonomy of Catholic Justices. Would *USA Today* run it?

We all have biases, but when it comes to being clueless about harboring them, no one beats liberals. They live in a world where their political thinking is constantly reinforced, leaving them hopelessly blind to their own prejudices.