

# CATHOLIC POLITICIANS AND ABORTION

New Jersey Governor James McGreevey announced yesterday that he would no longer receive Holy Communion at Mass.

McGreevey's decision follows comments made by Archbishop John Myers of Newark that Catholic elected officials who support abortion rights should not present themselves for Communion. In addition, Bishop John Smith of Trenton has explicitly criticized McGreevey for his record on abortion, and Bishop Joseph Galante of Camden has said he would not give the governor Communion because McGreevey did not receive an annulment of his first marriage before remarrying.

Here's how Catholic League president William Donohue sees it:

"The Catholic League takes no position on the question of whether a bishop ought to deny Holy Communion to a Catholic public official who supports abortion rights; it is none of our business. But we do support the right of any bishop to do so if he wishes. And we take great umbrage at those Catholic politicians who continually misrepresent Church teachings on this and related issues.

"McGreevey did the right thing by saying he would no longer receive Communion. But he was wrong to say, 'I believe it's a false choice in America between one's faith and constitutional obligation.' It is the dichotomy he presents that is false. Indeed, it's pure propaganda.

"There is nothing inconsistent about a person of faith, in an elected position, voting on a public issue in a way that conforms to the teachings of his religion. In fact, Catholics like John Kerry, Protestants like Hillary Clinton and Jews like Joseph Lieberman do so all the time: all of them vote to prohibit murder, theft and rape. Just because Christians and

Jews believe something is sinful doesn't necessarily mean they shouldn't also declare it to be illegal. After all, no one is proposing that we make all Americans abstain from eating meat during Lent on Fridays, or prohibit the eating of pork. The issue is whether the law should protect the unborn. That's not a religious issue, it's a matter of Biology 101."