

CATHOLIC RIGHTS AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIV.



THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON DC

Bill Donohue is sending the following letter today to senior officials at George Washington University, as well as to others on campus:

I am writing to you about a serious civil liberties issue at George Washington University. It involves the right of a Catholic priest, Father Greg Shaffer, to practice his faith as Chaplain of the Newman Center. You should know that I have been contacted by students on campus who are disturbed about this issue.

Two students, Damian Legacy and Blake Bergen, are upset with Father Shaffer because of his embrace of Catholic teachings on homosexuality and abortion. The students, who admit to being in a sexual relationship, apparently want the priest to give his blessings to their affair.

Nothing that has been reported by the media suggests that Father Shaffer has said anything inflammatory about these subjects, and the students themselves do not offer any evidence of abusive speech or behavior. Make no mistake about it, their complaint transcends Father Shaffer: it is an attack on the freedom of expression of Catholics on campus to discuss their religious beliefs and practices with impunity. In short, this is a civil liberties issue involving both freedom of religion and freedom of speech.

Ideally, this issue should be the subject of a campus-wide discussion on the meaning of the First Amendment, as well as the true meaning of diversity. Those who seek to stifle these rights are not only demonstrating intolerance, they are

*working against the purported objective of higher education,
namely the unfettered pursuit of truth.*

*It is my hope that you will address this problem justly and
without delay. Thank you for your consideration.*

**Contact the Chief of Staff, Office of the President:
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