

# CHURCH AND STATE IN RALEIGH

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has ordered the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina, to rehire a woman whom the diocese fired as its director of music ministry; EEOC has also mandated that all diocesan employees be trained in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The diocese is refusing to cooperate saying that EEOC has no authority to make the ruling. The woman who was fired, Joyce Austin, has filed several lawsuits against the diocese since 1992, even though she continues to work there part-time.

The Catholic League's response, outlined in a news release, was as follows:

"How many times have the advocates of separation of church and state told us that churches should not encroach upon the affairs of government? But where are these same people when it is the state that encroaches upon the affairs of churches?

"It is mind-boggling that an executive agency of the federal government should try to tell a Catholic diocese who it should hire as its music director. That is why the Catholic League will now contact the offices of North Carolina Senators Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth, as well as Raleigh Congressman David Price. It is not the Diocese of Raleigh that needs to be disciplined, it is the zealots at the EEOC who have thrown the First Amendment to the wind."

Imagine for one moment what would happen if a diocese mandated the employment practices of a government agency? The ACLU, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and People for the American Way would go bonkers. That is why their silence on this issue is telling.