

# CHURCH-STATE SEPARATION NOW BEMOANED



Bill Donohue comments on the way Church critics are reacting to Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment:

It is striking how many traditional proponents of separation of church and state are now screaming at Republican Catholics to get in line and start taking their marching orders from Rome. All of a sudden church and state separation is an anathema: they want the pope to shove his teachings down their throat. Correction: they only want the pope's position on climate change to be imposed—not his condemnation of abortion.

The *New York Times*, which normally loves church-state separation, is today expressing its hope that governments the world over will adopt the pope's "unexpectedly authoritative and confident" encyclical. "Sadly," it notes, "the encyclical, compelling as it is, is unlikely to have a similarly positive effect on American politics."

This is a keeper. Never before have I read an editorial by the *Times* saying how sad it is that agents of the state are not taking their cues from the pope. Indeed, this newspaper typically congratulates Catholic pro-abortion Democrats for their "independent" thinking. But independent thinking is the last thing the *Times* wants to encourage now.

The *Times* is not alone in its duplicity. Catholic leftists, such as John Gehring at Faith in Public Life, are saying that Catholic Republicans are now in a jam. "It's much harder for

them to brush off one of the greatest moral leaders of the world," he said. Gehring is wrong. As a matter of fact, it's really not that hard: all they need to do is call Nancy Pelosi.