

# FBI ASKED TO SETTLE CATHOLIC PROBE

*This is the article that appeared in the March 2024 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).*

*Catholic League president Bill Donohue wrote to FBI Director Christopher Wray about his apparent refusal to settle the agency's investigation of mainline Catholics.*

February 15, 2024

The Honorable Christopher A. Wray  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

Dear Director Wray:

On January 31, 2024, the Ranking Member of the Senate Budget Committee, Charles Grassley, and Judiciary Committee Ranking Member, Lindsey Graham, and several other senators, wrote to you regarding the FBI's probe of Catholics as outlined in the Richmond memo. You were to answer their questions by February 14, but apparently that has not been done.

This issue has been festering for a year. It was in February 2023 that the public learned of a startling memo produced by the Richmond Field Office: it revealed an investigation of traditional Catholics. On February 9, 2023, I made public the concerns of the Catholic League. "What's next? Will it be a war on Catholics who are orthodox?"

My hunch was proven right. The FBI subsequently said that "mainline Catholic parishes" and "local diocesan leadership"

were selected for investigation.

On April 11, 2023, I wrote to you asking to make public those documents related to this issue. On July 24, July 26, August 10, September 21 and December 6, I wrote to the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Jim Jordan, asking to get to the bottom of this issue.

It is vitally important that you answer the questions posed by the senators in their letter of January 31. They asked many serious questions that are of interest to Catholics nationwide.

For instance, they wanted to know why “the FBI permanently deleted critical records related to the memo.” They asked why the FBI relied on the Southern Poverty Law Center for information in its probe of Catholics; I asked Rep. Jordan to address the same question.

This is not a subject we will ever abandon. Catholics have every right to know what is going on at the FBI and why they have been spied on, without just cause. Not only are First Amendment religious liberty issues at stake, so is the legitimacy of the FBI.

I implore you to cooperate with those government officials who have contacted you about this issue. Hopefully we can settle this matter once and for all.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President

cc: Sen. Charles Grassley  
Sen. Lindsey Graham  
Rep. Jim Jordan