

GOOD FRIDAY HOLIDAY UPHELD (AGAIN)

In January, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected a challenge to a Maryland law that mandates Good Friday as a holiday in the public schools. Today it followed suit by allowing Indiana to give state employees the day off; the justices did not comment on why they refused to hear an appeal that argued the holiday was a violation of the First Amendment.

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed the court decision today:

“The high court’s decision not to hear a challenge to the right of Indiana to declare Good Friday a holiday is welcome, but it would have been preferable to accept the case and then deal directly with the faulty reasoning of the appeals court that reached the right conclusion. The appeals court maintained that ‘Indiana does not celebrate the religious aspects of Good Friday,’ holding that the holiday ‘has absolutely no religious significance.’ Instead, the appeals court noted, Good Friday just happens to fall in the middle of ‘the long vacationless spring—a day when employees should take off to rejuvenate themselves.’

“This is intellectually dishonest. The purpose of treating Good Friday as a holiday is to allow for the reverential commemoration of the crucifixion of Christ. Almost 9 in 10 Americans are Christian, thus it could be said that not to allow the states this prerogative would be to show an hostility to religion that is unacceptable. What the states are doing is accommodating religion—they are not sponsoring anything.

“The justices on the appeals court acted cowardly. Indeed, they demonstrated that they need a few days off so that they

can rejuvenate themselves. A trip to the Holy Land might do them wonders."