

IS AOC CATHOLIC?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez:

Is Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) Catholic? She was, but there is no evidence she still is. Yet she is conveniently labeled as a Catholic by some of her supporters and she occasionally implies she is still Catholic.

Why does this matter? If she were not a congresswoman, it wouldn't. But when someone who is no longer a member of the faith community he was raised in passes himself off as a loyal member—for self-serving political purposes—that raises serious ethical problems.

Who is and who is not a Catholic is not purely a matter of self-identity. If someone born of Irish ancestry and raised as a Catholic calls himself a Jew, no one thinks he is Jewish. Truth matters, and the truth never turns on self-identity alone.

AOC spoke on February 27 at a congressional hearing on “The Administration’s Religious Liberty Assault on LGBTQ rights,” held by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. She criticized the Trump administration for its policies on homosexuals and transgender persons, saying it was misusing religious liberty to undermine these people.

In her remarks, AOC never once identified herself as a Catholic, though she did play the religion card. She preferred to use such terms as, “From the perspective of a woman of faith” and “I know it is part of my faith.”

Not only did she not identify her faith, she said, “We are equal, in my faith, in the eyes of the world.” Catholics don’t speak that way. They would say something like, “As a Catholic, I believe we are all equal in the eyes of God.”

In a glowing article on AOC posted on Huffington Post, it says that she “identifies as Catholic” and “frequently refers to her religious beliefs on Twitter.” Not true. On Twitter, she never identifies herself as a Catholic: she calls herself a “raised Catholic” (see her tweet from 12-10-18). That is the way ex-Catholics speak, not those who are currently practicing their religion.

In a caustic exchange on Twitter with Kellyanne Conway, AOC spoke about her “Christianity + faith life” (tweet is from 4-28-19). Again, that is not the way Catholics speak. In fact, that is a really weird way for any Christian to talk. There is no need for the “+ faith life” if the person is truly a Christian.

We did a Nexis search of AOC to learn how often she identified herself as a Catholic. We looked for “As a Catholic” or “My Catholic.” The answer: Zero. The only reference to her Catholicity is from an article she wrote for *America* magazine on June 27, 2018, the Jesuit publication.

In her piece, she made a comment about the Catechism and forgiveness, and uses terms such as “For Catholics,” but never once does she say she is a Catholic. Yet that was the purpose of the article. It was titled, “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on her Catholic Faith and the Urgency of Criminal Justice Reform.” Why the reticence given this opportunity to showcase her Catholic credentials? Indeed, she could have told us something about how much her Catholic faith means to her, but she didn’t come close.

In her statement before the House committee, AOC did address one Catholic issue. Not surprisingly, she condemned the Catholic position.

“My faith commands me to treat Mr. Minton as holy because he is sacred, because his life is sacred, because you are not to be denied anything I am entitled to, that we are equal in the

eyes of the law.”

What was all that about? Evan Michael Minton, who also spoke before the committee, wanted to change from being a woman to a man (that is biologically impossible, but that is not the issue). In 2017, “he” sought a hysterectomy at a Catholic facility, Mercy San Juan Medical Center; it is part of the Dignity Health Care chain.

The Catholic hospital does not perform elective hysterectomies (such a procedure is only done to treat a serious medical problem and when there is no alternative treatment available). Mercy immediately referred “him” to another hospital within the Dignity chain that is not Catholic, and the procedure was performed within a few days. Even though there was no discrimination, “he” got the ACLU to sue Mercy.

In other words, AOC flexed her so-called Catholic muscles by taking the side of someone who deliberately sought an operation from a Catholic institution that it was prohibited by its religious tenets from performing. She obviously does not believe in the free exercise of religion as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Worse, she took the side of anti-Catholics.

The Catholic League does not tolerate fictions. Everyone knows that inside a pregnant woman’s body there is another human being, and everyone knows that no one can change his or her chromosomal makeup, even though many learned people believe otherwise. And everyone should know that AOC is a fraud.

Contact Ariel Eckblad, AOC’s chief of staff:
ariel.eckblad@mail.house.gov