

LOS ANGELES TIMES AND NEW YORK TIMES CHEER RELIGIOUS SPEECH

n the March 3rd editions of the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*, there were editorials praising Los Angeles Archbishop Roger Cardinal Mahony for opposing restrictive immigration bills. If a bill with punitive measures gets passed, Cardinal Mahony wants priests and the laity to defy the law. Our take on the two Times' was shared with the press:

"The *Los Angeles Times* not only commends Cardinal Mahony for his latest statement on public policy, it congratulates him for 'reinforcing the right of religious leaders to speak out on the moral ramifications of political issues.' This is a dramatic breakthrough given that this same newspaper once ran an editorial condemning Cardinal Mahony for his 'unwelcome clerical intrusion into the political process.' Confused? We're not. Today's loving editorial concerns the issue of illegal immigration; the damning one concerned abortion. Got it?

"Similarly, the *New York Times* is delighted with 'Cardinal Mahony's defiance' because it 'adds a moral dimension' to the issue. Bursting with glee, the editorial credits the cardinal with 'a startling call to civil disobedience' that is 'as courageous as it is timely.' But during the last presidential campaign, this same newspaper ran an editorial blasting Catholic bishops for 'breaching the church-state line that is so necessary to protect religious freedom.' The difference? The issue was abortion.

"None of this has anything to do with a change of heart—it's about a change of issues. Still, it's nice to know what it takes for Catholics to win the approval of these newspapers:

call on the faithful to break laws that liberals don't like and you'll be an instant hero. Not only that, you'll be spared their tired lecture about the necessity of keeping church and state separate. Gotta love these guys, don't you?"