

NYC COUNCIL UNIT BANNED FROM ST. PAT'S PARADE



Bill Donohue comments on the decision by New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito to ban an official City Council presence in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade:

There is a growing contempt for tolerance and diversity in the homosexual community, and among their supporters, especially in New York. The latest example is the ruling by the New York City Council Speaker banning an official City Council presence, banner, and Sergeant-at-Arms in this year's march. When a government agent prohibits the celebration of St. Patrick's Day, a tradition that has been honored for hundreds of years, it is an obscene exercise in censorship.

The St. Patrick's Day Parade does not permit pro-life activists to march under their own banner, but that hardly makes this Catholic event anti-life; it simply means this is not a day that centers on abortion. Ditto for gays: it is not about them. They are the only ones who are feigning exclusion (gays can march, just so long as they blend in like everyone else).

The protesters obviously loathe diversity: diversity means pluralism, a wholesale rejection of mandated, one-size-fits-all policies. What these activists want is the right to impose their agenda on Irish Catholics, neutering a day set aside to honor St. Patrick.

This issue is settled territory: the U.S. Supreme Court, citing diversity, ruled that a private parade cannot have its strictures dictated to by the law. The only ones who object

are those who believe in bullying.

If some contrarians sought to use the club of the law, and public pressure, to force their way into the Gay Pride Parade—insisting on banners that read, “Straight Is Great”—they would be run out of town. So should our intolerant Mayor, Bill de Blasio, and his equally intolerant sidekick, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. There can be no compromise when it comes to our First Amendment right to freedom of religion, speech, and assembly.