

NYC MAYORAL CANDIDATES ON RELIGION

✖ Bill Donohue comments on the role that religion is playing in the race for the new mayor of New York City:

New York is a secular town, but mayoral candidates usually say at least something about the public role of religion. Neither Joe Lhota, the Republican candidate, nor Bill de Blasio, the Democratic candidate, has said anything. It's as if religious liberty issues don't exist. In terms of their outreach to religious communities, they are both bending over backward to please Jews and Muslims, but Catholics are all but invisible to them.

Is there a synagogue in Brooklyn that these two men haven't visited? Is there an African-American church that de Blasio hasn't spoken in? Just yesterday, both Lhota and de Blasio said the public schools should close on two Muslim holidays. "The origins of this nation [are] people of many different faiths coming together," said de Blasio. This is historically incorrect: this nation was founded almost exclusively by Protestants. It would be more accurate to say that America has always welcomed people of all religions.

An Internet search of Lhota and Jews turns up many articles, as does a search when he is paired with Muslims; there is very little about him and Catholics. Many more articles can be found on de Blasio: "Candidate Says No More NYPD Spying on Muslims," and "Bill de Blasio and the Jews," are two examples. Aside from my critical Newsmax article on the Democratic candidate, "NY Mayoral Hopeful de Blasio Has Sordid Past" [click [here](#)], there is practically nothing on him and Catholics.

Lhota is puzzling. Unlike de Blasio, who has shown he is no

friend to the Catholic community, Lhota carries no such baggage. That he hasn't seen Catholics as a group to court—when his competitor has disqualified himself from doing so—does not speak well for his campaign. But the problem may be Lhota himself: any man who advertises on TV that he is a big fan of abortion rights and gay marriage—*drawing attention to the fact that he shares these positions with his challenger*—is not going to appeal to practicing Catholics. Such incompetence is hard to beat.