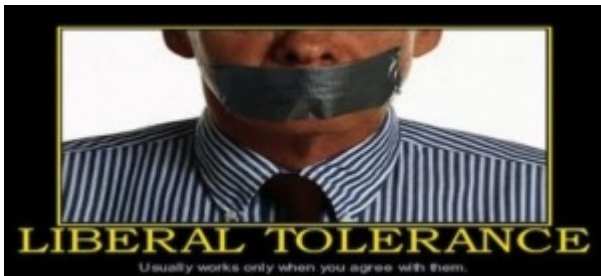# RELIGION POLL PROVES REVEALING

Bill Donohue comments on some of the findings from the latest Pew Research Center survey on religion and politics:

The poll results released yesterday show that fewer Americans today say that President Obama is a Christian than was true four years ago when he was a presidential candidate; 55 percent said he was a Christian in October 2008, but only 49 percent say he is today. On the other hand, the more people get to know Mitt Romney, the more they identify him as a Mormon; since November 2011 to today, the percentage who say Romney is a Mormon has jumped from 48 to 60.

Among those who know that Romney is a Mormon, those who are most uncomfortable with his religion are those who have none; it's not the unaffiliated who are the most uncomfortable—their numbers are not very different from the rest of the population—it's the atheist/agnostic category that shows the most unease. Indeed, less than half of non-believers say they are comfortable with Romney's religion.

The American people do not like to have agendas imposed on them. For example, 45 percent say that "Christians have gone too far to try to impose religious values on the country." But that number pales in significance to the 65 percent who say that "liberals have gone too far trying to keep religion out of schools, government."

These findings raise some interesting questions. What is it about President Obama that the more people get to know him, the less likely they are to believe he's a Christian? What is

it about agnostics and atheists that makes them uncomfortable with Mormonism, or, for that matter, any religion? Why do two-thirds of Americans believe liberals want to censor religious speech?

The president has a perception problem that only he can change. As for non-believers and liberals, they need to work on nurturing the virtue of tolerance.