

# ROBERTS ASKED ABOUT HIS RELIGION

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on questions that were asked yesterday about John Roberts' religion:

"Senator Arlen Specter and Senator Dianne Feinstein both asked John Roberts yesterday whether he agreed with the comment made by President John F. Kennedy in 1960 regarding matters of church and state. Neither one of them even hinted at the fact that Kennedy was forced to make his infamous Houston speech just to ward off the anti-Catholic bigots who were trying to destroy him. Indeed, by taking us down this dirty road again, Specter and Feinstein have brought us right back to where JFK started.

"In response, Roberts agreed that his religion would not dictate his decisions as a judge, but professed not to understand what Feinstein meant by 'absolute separation of church and state'; he then briefly cited the two cases on the Ten Commandments that the Supreme Court decided, with different outcomes, in the high court's last session.

"Roberts handled himself well, but the shame of it is that he had to answer these questions at all. What did Specter and Feinstein expect him to say—that he takes his marching orders from the Vatican? Too bad one of the senators on the Judiciary Committee didn't interrupt Specter by asking him why he didn't press Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer to discuss the relationship between their Jewish heritage and their jurisprudential philosophy. And too bad Feinstein wasn't asked whether she believes that having 'In God We Trust' on our coins violates her absolutist understanding of the First Amendment.

“For the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee to probe Roberts on his religion is a disgrace. And for Feinstein to do so, coming on the heels of her anti-Catholic remark the day before blaming the Catholic Church for the death of Jews in Budapest during the Holocaust, shows a boldness that is beyond belief.”