

# SCHOOL SHOOTINGS RAISE CHURCH-STATE QUESTIONS

The recent school shootings in Littleton, Colorado and Conyers, Georgia raise significant questions regarding the proper relationship between church and state.

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed this issue today:

“President Clinton and the First Lady went to Littleton yesterday to console the surviving families of the Columbine High School massacre. Hillary Clinton told the crowd how ‘we’ have prayed for survivors and their families. This meeting took place in Light of the World Catholic Church. Prior to going to the church, President Clinton told reporters that ‘We thank God that the injuries to the students do not seem to be life-threatening.’

“By choosing a church as their venue, and by acknowledging their reliance on prayer, the Clintons made a statement that transcends the symbolic. They didn’t choose a public hall or a Wellness Center for their meeting. Nor did they choose a site sponsored by Wicca or some New Age religious group. But more important is this: why, if religion is what most people repair to in times of crisis, do so many of our elites treat it as if it were a communicable disease?

“In the Georgia shooting, it has been reported that at least one teacher ‘herded her students into a closet and recited Bible verses to them.’ Will she now be fired for violating laws requiring separation of church and state? That’s what happened in New York City last June when Mildred Rosario lead her sixth-graders in prayer following the death of one of their classmates. The civil libertarian police couldn’t wait to hang her.

“What these shootings tell us is that we as a nation are clearly schizophrenic about religion. Ninety-four percent of the American people believe in God, the President and the First Lady do their counseling in a Catholic Church, almost everyone prays when they learn of lives cut short, social scientists confirm the relationship between religion and citizenship, and yet we are taught to be skittish about religion. Makes no sense to us.”