

SOTOMAYOR'S CATHOLICISM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on the nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court:

When John Roberts was nominated to be on the high court, Senator Dick Durbin told CNN that he considered it fair game to probe Roberts about his Catholicism. Durbin released a glowing statement yesterday on Sotomayor that never mentioned her religion. When Roberts was questioned by Senator Arlen Specter and Senator Dianne Feinstein, they both asked him whether he agreed with President John F. Kennedy about separation of church and state. Neither even mentioned Sotomayor's religion in their respective statements yesterday.

When Roberts was nominated, Dahlia Lithwick, legal analyst for *Slate*, said, "I wouldn't underestimate the influence of his religion"; when Samuel Alito was nominated, Lithwick said that "People are very, very much talking about the fact that Alito would be the fifth Catholic on the Supreme Court if confirmed." Yesterday, Lithwick posted a lengthy piece on Sotomayor that never mentioned her religion. When Roberts was nominated, NPR's Nina Totenberg said that his wife was "a high officer of a pro-life organization. He's got adopted children. I mean, he's a conservative Catholic." Yesterday, she simply mentioned that Sotomayor attended Catholic schools without ever raising it as an issue. When Roberts was nominated, journalist Adele Stan noted his religion and said, "Rome must be smiling." Yesterday, in her positive assessment of Sotomayor, she never mentioned her religion.

What's going on? Are liberal Catholics Catholic? Obviously not, at least according to liberals. After all, if Sotomayor were known as a practicing Catholic, those who fretted over Roberts and Alito would have called 911 by now. White House press secretary Robert Gibbs, however, put their worst fears to rest yesterday when he said of the Puerto Rican jurist, "I

believe she was raised Catholic.” If this is true, then the telling verb “raised” would explain why liberals like Sotomayor—she’s one of those Catholics they can trust. Let’s hope they’re wrong.