

SOUTH CAROLINA POLITICIAN RIPS CATHOLICISM

In late November, Beaufort County Councilwoman Laura Von Harten blasted the Catholic Church for its strictures regarding the priesthood and its teachings on abortion. She took the occasion to vent at a scheduled hearing regarding a zoning request by a local Catholic church, St. Gregory the Great in Bluffton, South Carolina, that would allow it to expand. Several area residents quickly denounced her for her comments; when the vote was taken, she recused herself.

Von Harten ripped the Catholic Church for not allowing women priests and for its anti-abortion position (what she called “uterus rights”), saying they were “an affront to my dignity and all womankind.”

When we caught wind of Von Harten’s rant, we quickly issued a statement saying: “Without the slightest provocation, Laura Von Harten decided to bash Catholicism. This suggests an animus so deep as to call into question her fitness for public service. She should do more than recuse herself on matters Catholic—she should resign from her post as councilwoman.” We ended our news release stating, “There is no legitimate role for bigots in public life.”

The good news is that Von Harten apologized and sent a statement to the Catholic League. We trust she will not offend Catholic sensibilities again. We are even more confident she will not mess with the Catholic League again.