

LAZIO AND HILLARY CROSS CHURCH-STATE LINES

Last Saturday, Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate Rick Lazio campaigned in a synagogue in East Hampton. On Sunday, he took his campaign to the same synagogue in West Hampton that his Democratic challenger, Hillary Rodham Clinton, campaigned in the week before. And last Sunday, Mrs. Clinton made a campaign stop at the Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Harlem.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, expressed the sentiments of many Catholics this way:

“Rick Lazio and Hillary Clinton got a free pass from the press last weekend when they took their campaigns to some houses of worship. They got their free passes precisely because he campaigned in synagogues and she campaigned in a Protestant church. Had they whipped up the faithful by making highly partisan appeals in a Catholic church, the media would have gone ballistic.

“Imagine the following headline: ‘Archbishop Edward M. Egan Invites New York Senatorial Candidates to Speak at 10:15 Mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral on Sunday.’ Now is there anyone in the press corps who wouldn’t be screaming about the constitutional principle of separation of church and state? In fact, the double standard is worse than this: let Archbishop Egan—or any other priest—address a public policy issue from the pulpit and the next day the pundits go crazy.

“It’s not hard to figure out what is going on: the name for it is bigotry. To be exact, the media do not want to offend African Americans (it is in their Protestant churches that these abuses typically occur), nor do they want to offend Jews. But Catholics? They’re fair game. Now if anyone has a

plausible alternative explanation, I'd love to know what it is."