

# MIAMI CHURCH RUNS AFOUL OF IRS RULES

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on what happened yesterday in one Miami church:

"Yesterday, Bishop Victor T. Curry of Miami's New Birth Baptist Church welcomed Rev. Al Sharpton, who ran against Senator John Kerry for the Democratic nomination, and Terry McAuliffe, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Jamie Malernee of the *Sun-Sentinel* reported that Curry 'made no apologies for turning his Sunday service into a political rally.' Rev. Sharpton, speaking from the pulpit, added to the politicized atmosphere by shouting, 'We're not people who are going to be beat twice.' But no one was more partisan than McAuliffe: 'Bush has misled us for four years and will not mislead us for the next four years. Get out to vote and we'll send Bush back to Texas.' Consequently, the Catholic League will now ask the IRS to revoke the tax-exempt status of this church.

"In another interesting turn of events, former President Bill Clinton spoke yesterday at New York's Riverside Church. 'Politics and political involvement dictated by faith is not the exclusive province of the right wing,' he said. This is a remarkable statement coming from a leader of the Democratic party. To be specific, John Kerry has said, 'I can't take my Catholic belief, my article of faith, and legislate it on a Protestant or a Jew or an atheist....' Thus does Kerry want to inoculate his religious views from his political positions. This is in sharp contrast to Bill Clinton's plea that one's politics should be *dictated* by one's faith.

"By contrast, Rev. George Rutler celebrated a Mass yesterday in New York that was well attended by Catholics in town for the convention. In a lengthy sermon, which focused on

humility and the poor, Rutler made a passing reference to the controversy over Catholic pro-abortion politicians, saying that 'No one has a right to take Communion.' Yet this was enough for an AP reporter to say that 'church-state separation watchdogs' have said that 'Masses such as the one held Sunday amount to a tacit political endorsement.'

"Neither Clinton nor Rutler violated the IRS rules governing church and state. But McAuliffe crossed the line, hence the need to contact the IRS."

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## **CHRISTIAN-BASHING ON CAMPUS**

The faculty at Black Hawk College in Illinois have rallied around sociology professor Bruce LeBlanc after an advisory committee said he violated the school's harassment policy. Though LeBlanc was not penalized in any way, the fact that the committee recommended he apologize to the offended student led him to challenge this decision through the school's collective bargaining agreement.

The professor, a former Catholic priest and admitted homosexual, is known for his practice of graphically describing homosexual acts in the classroom, and for his habit of mocking Christian beliefs. The last straw came last spring when a student, who claims he was harassed by LeBlanc because he is a conservative and a Christian, reported that LeBlanc wrote "F— God" on the blackboard. The faculty have defended LeBlanc on free speech grounds.

Catholic League president William Donohue jumped on this one:

"There is a huge difference between academic freedom and academic license, the latter being a form of academic

malpractice. Furthermore, academic freedom is not an end in itself, it is a means towards the discovery of truth. But in the mind of Professor LeBlanc, truth does not exist. Neither, obviously, does civility.

“Leave it to the faculty to protect themselves at all costs. For example, Professor Joan Eastlund, president of the faculty union, says that LeBlanc’s blackboard creation was done to teach about ‘the power of symbols in human culture.’ One wonders what she would be saying now if LeBlanc had substituted the ‘N’ word (pluralized) for God.

“After 9-11, Black Hawk College was awash with ‘Hate Free Zone’ bumper stickers, pins and magnets. But it did no good, for hatred of Christians is in vogue in LeBlanc’s ‘Hate Free’ classroom. Similarly, the college’s website touts the following *Core Values*: Appreciation of Diversity; Caring and Compassion; Fairness; Honesty; Integrity; Respect; and Responsibility. They need an asterisk at the end to say, ‘Christians not included.’”

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## TREAT CATHOLICS AS MUSLIMS

A Defense Department report on the anti-Muslim remarks of Lt. Gen. William Boykin has been criticized by the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* for its leniency. Boykin has said that the U.S. is “a Christian nation” at war with “Satan.” He has also said that “my God [is] a real God,” as opposed to the “idol” that Muslims worship. After the Defense Department investigated the matter, it concluded that Boykin had violated Pentagon rules, but it did not recommend any penalty; one official called Boykin’s offense “relatively minor.”

In an editorial today in the *New York Times*, the newspaper calls for Boykin to be removed from his current job. Yesterday, the *Los Angeles Times* went further, demanding that he be forced into retirement.

Here's how Catholic League president William Donohue sees it:

"General Boykin's comments were as bigoted as they were stupid. Did he really think that a man in his position could get away with offending an entire class of people? What should be done about him was perhaps best expressed by Ibrahim Hooper, the communications director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations: he should be reassigned to a post where he cannot continue to harm America's image in the Muslim world. But this isn't the end of the issue—the selective indignation of the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* is also an issue.

"In 1993, Dr. Joycelyn Elders was nominated by President Bill Clinton to be the Surgeon General of the U.S. Dr. Elders came under fire at that time from the Catholic League for her anti-Catholic remarks (e.g., 'Look who's fighting the pro-choice movement: a celibate, male-dominated church'; those who oppose abortion are 'non-Christians with slave master mentalities'; the Catholic Church has either been 'silent' or done 'nothing' about social injustice). And what did the two *Times* newspapers say about Elders? They both gave her a ringing endorsement (the *Washington Post*, by the way, sided with the Catholic League).

"Catholics look forward to a day when the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* treat us the way they do Muslims."

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# CHRISTIAN LEADERS WHO LOBBY BUSH EXPOSED

A letter has been sent to President George W. Bush by ten Protestant teachers of ethics asking him to “respect the integrity of all houses of worship.” Commenting on the letter is Catholic League president William Donohue:

“The ten signatories advertise themselves as ‘a group of prominent Evangelicals and moderate to conservative religious leaders.’ In their letter to President Bush, they say, ‘Whenever the church has engaged in partisan politics, it has compromised its moral authority.’ Thus do they sell themselves as centrists who eschew politics.

“The group is guilty of false advertising: most of them are actively involved in partisan politics—the politics of the Left. For example, three of them, James M. Dunn, George Hunter and Rollin O. Russell, serve on the national committee of the Clergy Leadership Network, the left-wing group recently headed by Brenda Peterson that was set up to defeat Bush; a fourth, Jimmy R. Allen, previously served on the committee. Peterson recently quit her job as the DNC’s Director of Religious Outreach after the Catholic League exposed her as a fraud: her name was on an amicus brief seeking to get ‘under God’ excised from the Pledge.

“Another signatory is Richard V. Pierard. In 1995, he signed the ‘Maston Colloquium Statement,’ an inflammatory attack on Christian conservatives that accused them of being ‘rabble rousers’; he is most known for his vociferous opposition to school vouchers. Tony Campolo, another ‘moderate,’ counseled President Clinton after his encounter with Monica Lewinsky,

and more recently has written a book that claims that 'evangelical Christianity has been hijacked' by conservatives. And then there is Ronald B. Flowers, who, like Brenda Peterson, went into court to get 'under God' expunged from the Pledge.

"The reason for the letter is clear: practicing Christians are not responding to John Kerry, the candidate the signatories prefer, and so their best bet is to intimidate people of faith from becoming politically active. It is a testimony to their failure at religious outreach."

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## **KERRY CATHOLICS SAY BUSH IS THE "ANTI-CHRIST"**

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the remarks made about President George W. Bush that are featured on the website of Catholics for Kerry 04:

"The home page of Catholics for Kerry 04 prominently lists comments by Wayne Madsen, who says, 'George W. Bush's blood lust, his repeated commitment to Christian beliefs and his constant references to 'evil doers,' in the eyes of many devout Catholic leaders, bear all the hallmarks of the one warned about in the Book of Revelations—the anti-Christ.' He also charges that Bush 'couples his political fanaticism with a neo-Christian blood cult.'

"This is the language of a demagogue, and it has no legitimate role to play in presidential politics. It is important to note that it is not the position of the Catholic League that the Kerry camp should be held responsible for this group of

wacko Catholics. But at the same time, it shows how hypocritical the operatives in the Kerry camp really are.

“For example, it is reported by the Associated Press today that Kerry spokesman Chad Clanton is demanding that President Bush ‘condemn’ a book about John Kerry’s alleged fraudulent behavior in Vietnam, *Unfit for Command*. Why? Simply because one of authors made anti-Catholic remarks in a chat room last year (for which he has apologized).

“Now according to the logic of the Kerry campaign, it would seem only proper that John Kerry should condemn Catholics for Kerry 04: surely the nexus is tighter in this case than in the chat room quip. Indeed, this Catholic-Kerry website provides a direct link to ‘Contribute to Kerry Online,’ the official donation section of the Kerry-Edwards website.

“The subject of religion has been giving Kerry and the Dems fits lately. We hope their recent discovery of anti-Catholicism, however strained, suggests a new beginning. They can start by hiring a new religious outreach person who doesn’t cavort with anti-Catholics.”

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## **“OPIE AND ANTHONY” SET TO RETURN**

Radio shock jocks Greg “Opie” Hughes and Anthony Cumia, who were fired after the Catholic League blasted them for offering a descriptive account of a staged live sex act in St. Patrick’s Cathedral two years ago, will return to the air October 4 on XM Satellite Radio, the nation’s largest satellite radio station.

The stunt, which was aired on New York's WNEW (an Infinity Broadcasting station), was performed by a man and a woman from Virginia in front of men, women and children on August 15, 2002, the Feast of the Assumption, a holy day of obligation for Roman Catholics; the man, Brian Florence, died of a heart attack on September 25, 2003.

The day after the incident, Catholic League president William Donohue filed a formal complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) asking that Infinity Broadcasting be fined and that the license of WNEW be revoked. After FCC chairman Michael Powell asked for an investigation, the show was dumped. Donohue then told the FCC he was satisfied with the firing of the shock jocks and that he personally recommended that "the FCC go no further in the investigation."

Donohue remarked on the new show today:

"We wish Opie and Anthony well and trust they have learned their lesson. In a press release today, they said, 'We learned a lot during our two years away from our fans, and we can't wait to get back on the radio and reconnect with them.'

"We hope they do more than that: never has our office been subjected to more vulgar and obscene rants than when we got Opie and Anthony kicked off the air. It would be wise, therefore, for these guys to go about their business having fun, but without stooping into the gutter just to please the lowest common denominator. There are a lot of depraved young men out there and they don't need any further encouragement. And one more thing: lay off us Catholics."

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# DNC'S RELIGION ADVISOR QUILTS

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the resignation of Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson as the Senior Religion Advisor to the Democratic National Committee (DNC):

"Rev. Peterson told Religion News Service that 'it was no longer possible for me to do my job effectively.' The *Washington Post* added today that her decision was made 'after the New York-based Catholic League issued three blistering news releases attacking her positions.'

"The only question now is whether John Kerry and the DNC have finally got the message. When we exposed Mara Vanderslice as a Left-wing activist who cavorts with anti-Catholics, the Kerry camp silenced her as its Religious Outreach Director. When we exposed Rev. Peterson as a Left-wing activist who went into the U.S. Supreme Court on the side of atheist Michael Newdow to censor the words 'under God' in the Pledge, she was forced to quit her role with the DNC. The first hire may have been a mistake, but it is not credible to maintain that the DNC erred in hiring Rev. Peterson: they knew what they were getting and they knew what happened to Vanderslice, and yet they persisted anyway.

"Why are Kerry and the DNC imploding on religion? Because too many of the elites running the show are devout secularists who put a premium on freedom *from* religion. Their idea of religious liberty is banning nativity scenes on public property. Their idea of diversity is censoring 'under God' from the Pledge. Their idea of tolerance is forbidding a moment of silence in the schools. Their idea of a good Catholic is Frances Kissling of Catholics for a Free Choice. Their idea of compassion is hiking taxes. Their idea of helping the poor is giving them directions to a soup kitchen. And their idea of choice is abortion, not school vouchers.

“Kerry and the DNC now have two strikes against them in their religious outreach efforts. Whether they strike out is up to them. We’re certainly not dropping out of the game, and we’re certainly monitoring Bush and the RNC on this subject just as closely.”

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## **DNC ’ S           RELIGION           ADVISOR UNMASKED**

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the Democratic National Committee’s (DNC) new Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach, Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson:

“We know that Rev. Peterson wants ‘under God’ thrown out of the Pledge, and that she believes ‘Love Thy Neighbor’ means paying taxes. Now we will show the positions of the Clergy Leadership Network (CLN), the organization she recently left as its executive director.

“In the CLN’s ‘Debate’ section of its website, it says a lot about separation of church and state, but virtually nothing about religious liberty (e.g., it is against faith-based initiatives). Regarding tax policies, it would be an understatement to say it likes taxes: ‘Taxes provide a way to look out for our neighbors....Slashing taxes denies that!’ It then says that slashing taxes is ‘inevitably an appeal to our greed, not to our generosity or compassion.’ In other words, the greedy want to keep the money they’ve earned; those who want to take it from us are the altruists. No wonder Rev. Peterson says, ‘The federal budget is a moral document.’

“Under the ‘Current Issues’ section, there are three issues listed: stem cell research, global security and the federal

marriage amendment. It has something to say about the first two issues, but, inexplicably, the third issue cannot be accessed. This is deceitful. Consider that the CLN's CEO, Albert Pennybacker, is on record favoring gay marriage. And another senior official, William Sloane Coffin, has said that most of the other CLN officials 'view marriage as a human right, not a reward for being heterosexual.' The 'Focus Statement' of the CLN website even says that 'gay, lesbian, bisexual [and] transsexual people are being attacked through legislation and even constitutional amendments.' It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out what Rev. Peterson believes.

"The website even provides a link to an anti-Catholic site, Chuck Currie (see his piece, 'When Catholic Girls Go Wild'). To top it off, there is a link to MoveOn.org, a smear site that has nothing to do with religion. Remember, Rev. Peterson presided over it all, and for this she was rewarded by the DNC as its number-one liaison to religious groups."

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## **DNC'S RELIGION ADVISOR SAYS: "LOVE THY NEIGHBOR" MEANS PAYING TAXES**

Yesterday, the Catholic League issued a news release exposing the Democratic National Committee's (DNC) newly appointed Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach, Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson, as one of thirty-two clergy members to file an *amicus* brief seeking to excise the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance. Today, Catholic League president William Donohue reveals more about her:

“Last November, a small group of mostly Protestant clergy members on the Left started a group called the Clergy Leadership Network (CLN) to counter the efforts of the so-called Religious Right. Its first executive director, Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson, explained that ‘Our sole mission is to get a national leadership change.’

“The CLN seems more at home with politics than religion. For example, when Rev. Peterson was asked whether Christians and Muslims worship the same God, she breezily answered, ‘I would rather you not quote my theology.’ She is similarly uneasy talking about abortion. That is why she said her clergy group takes no position on abortion, saying only that it would interfere with the CLN’s ‘reason for existence.’ Which means getting rid of Bush.

“When Rev. Peterson was tapped to become the DNC’s Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach, the Democratic activists knew exactly what they were getting: all she had to do was walk across the street from her CLN office to join the DNC. And what they got is a person who believes that ‘paying taxes is a way of loving your neighbor.’ Maybe she’ll persuade Teresa Heinz Kerry to tell us how much she pays in taxes so we can get a handle on just how much the billionaire loves her neighbor.

“So this is the kind of person the DNC wants practicing Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims to embrace. If Peterson were a plant by the Bush camp, we’d understand it. What we don’t understand is political suicide.”

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# DNC'S NEW RELIGION ADVISOR WANTS "UNDER GOD" OUT OF THE PLEDGE

On July 23, Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chairman Terry McAuliffe announced the appointment of Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson as the Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach; she is an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Commenting on her selection is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"Terry McAuliffe says that the appointment of Rev. Peterson as the new Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach 'reflects the DNC's commitment to reaching all people of faith'; he also notes that she 'will act as liaison to religious organizations.' Upon learning of this appointment, we decided to find out who this woman is. And what we found will make people of every faith wonder whether McAuliffe and the DNC have totally lost their senses.

"Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson was one of thirty-two clergy members to file an [amicus curiae brief](#) in behalf of Michael Newdow's attempt to excise the words 'under God' from the Pledge of Allegiance. The brief shows infinitely more concern for the sensibilities of atheists like Newdow than it does for the 90 percent of Americans who believe in God. And this is the person the Democrats want to dispatch to meet with the heads of religious organizations? Are they out of their minds? Would they hire a gay basher to reach out to homosexuals?

"The Democrats are now 0 for 2 in appointing senior religious liaison directors. The Kerry campaign first appointed Mara Vanderslice as the Director of Religious Outreach, but when we exposed her as a radical leftist who associates with anti-

Catholics, the Kerry staff silenced her. Now they've stepped in it again by selecting Rev. Peterson.

"The selections of Vanderslice and Peterson suggest that either no one bothers to vet candidates for religious outreach, or the elites making the choices are anti-religious. If the former is true, then this shows that the Democrats place no priority on appealing to people of faith. If the latter is true, then Kerry needs to bring in a big broom and clean house."