

UNIV. OF MINN. CHANCELLOR ON MYERS: HE'S IN THE CLEAR

On July 25, the University of Minnesota (UMN) at Morris issued a statement by its chancellor, Jacqueline Johnson, which began with the following paragraph: "I believe that behaviors that discriminate against or harass individuals or groups on the basis of their religious beliefs are reprehensible. The University of Minnesota Board of Regents Policy: [sic]*Code of Conduct* prohibits such behavior in the workplace—of course this includes the classroom—and I expect those who work and study here to comply with that policy." She then proceeded to say that Professor Paul Z. Myers, who intentionally (and with malice) desecrated the Eucharist, was expressing his own views and not those of UMN.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue issued a news release the same day, saying, "This is classic: Johnson admits Myers has violated the UMN's Code of Conduct and then proceeds to tell us why he is being allowed to do so with impunity—it's a matter of academic freedom."

Johnson faxed a letter to Donohue today saying she needed to address his "misunderstanding" of her statement. She makes it plain that because Myers posted his comments on his personal blog, he did not violate UMN's Code of Conduct.

Donohue sent Johnson the following letter today:

"I am sorry for my generosity: I took it that the reason you began your statement of July 25 with a citation of UMN's Code of Conduct as it applies to religious intolerance was your way of acknowledging Myers' delinquency. I now stand corrected: Your comment was simply a ploy—a cute way of acknowledging that something was wrong, but certainly not anything that would demand your attention. And just so you don't

misunderstand me: You could have issued a statement saying that while UMN has no authority over what Myers says in his blog, it is morally indefensible for anyone to intentionally desecrate the Eucharist. But, no, you couldn't even say that. Instead, you hide behind legalisms. We will let the Catholic community know of your decision."

Contact Chancellor Johnson at jrjohnso@morris.umn.edu

EUCHARIST MOCKED IN R.I. PLAY

"You're Eating God" is a one-woman play by Rachel Caris that opened July 23 at the Brown University/Trinity Playwrights Repertory Theatre in Providence, Rhode Island. The play, which ends August 2, is about a family living in a backyard bomb shelter in the 1960s. "The title of the piece comes from one of its lines," says Bryan Rourke of the *Providence Journal*, "which one character delivers after seeing another character ravenously eat a pile of Eucharistic hosts." He says that the play "satirically questions the conventions of Catholicism."

The play's webpage flags the following: "Warning! 'Eating' is an outrageous farce. It contains graphic language, sexual situations, and religious satire. Not for the faint of heart. Inappropriate for children and young teens." On the same page is a picture of Caris drinking a soda in a diner booth with a statue of the Virgin Mary.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

"Catholic schoolboy traditions are fair game for a play that pokes gentle fun at Catholicism. But that is not what this play is about: There is nothing gentle about mocking the

Eucharist. This should be known even to those who are not Catholic.

“What is most objectionable about this anti-Catholic production is that it is funded by the Ivy League Brown University. And it again demonstrates that the elites will not target Muslim or Jewish beliefs, but they apparently feel free to bash Catholicism with impunity.”

UNIV. OF MINN. REFUSES TO PENALIZE MYERS

he Chancellor of the University of Minnesota, Morris (UMN) released a statement today regarding the intentional desecration of the Eucharist by Professor Paul Z. Myers. “I believe that behaviors that discriminate against or harass individuals or groups on the basis of their religious beliefs are reprehensible,” said Jacqueline Johnson. Importantly, she added that the school’s Code of Conduct prohibits such behavior. However, she also stressed that academic freedom allows faculty members “to speak or write as a public citizen without institutional discipline or restraint...” Nowhere did she say Myers would be disciplined.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

“This is classic: Johnson admits that Myers has violated the UMN’s Code of Conduct and then proceeds to tell us why he is being allowed to do so with impunity—it’s a matter of academic freedom.

“Academic freedom is not the issue: academic malpractice is. For example, Section 10.21 (b) of UMN’s Tenure Code explicitly

says that a tenured faculty member can be terminated or suspended for 'unprofessional conduct which severely impairs a faculty member's fitness in a professional capacity.'

"In 2001, this part of the Tenure Code was invoked against a professor at UMN because he had images of child porn on his computer. It should now be invoked against Myers, and that is why we will appeal to UMN's Board of Regents to do just that. It strains credulity to maintain that Christian students can expect fair treatment by a faculty member who has publicly shown nothing but contempt for their religion.

"It is a sure bet that UMN would not tolerate a white professor who worked a comedy club on weekends trashing blacks. Indeed, it would say that such behavior disqualifies his ability to be objective. In many respects Myers is worse, and that is why sanctions are warranted."

Contact Myers at myersp@morris.umn.edu

Contact President Robert Bruininks at bruin001@umn.edu

DISSIDENT GROUPS ATTACK VATICAN; FOUNDATIONS UNDERWRITE AD

An ad criticizing the Catholic Church for its teaching on contraception was placed today in Italy's largest newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*. The "Open Letter to the Pope" is the work of Catholics for Choice and was signed by many dissident Catholic organizations.

Here's what Catholic League president Bill Donohue had to say

about it:

“There are several anomalies here. First, the alleged subject matter of the ad, namely contraception, is a ruse. Second, the mission of some of the groups who signed it has absolutely nothing to do with contraception. Third, the group which promoted it has no members.

“To be specific, contraception is not what motivates these groups—their real interest is in getting the Catholic Church to change its teachings on every aspect of human sexuality. For instance, Catholics for Choice was not founded as an anti-contraception organization, rather it was established as a pro-abortion group. It is also decidedly anti-Catholic and has twice been cited as a fraud by the Catholic Bishops.

“Among the groups which signed the ad are Dignity, New Ways Ministry (NWM), Pax Christi (Maine), Voice of the Faithful (New Jersey), and Women’s Ordination Conference (WOC). Dignity and NWM are gay groups which reject the Church’s teachings on homosexuality. Pax Christi is an organization which claims to be interested in peace, Voice was founded to address the sexual abuse scandal, and WOC advocates women’s ordination. For obvious reasons, contraception is not exactly a pressing issue in the gay community, and issues like peace, sexual abuse, and women’s ordination are clearly removed from matters like birth control. What all these groups have in common, however, is a general loathing of the Church’s teachings on sexuality.

“Were it not for the Ford Foundation and other anti-Catholic members of the foundation establishment, there would have been no ad. In other words, deceit marks every aspect of this campaign. But at least it pulls the mask off of these phony dissident groups.”

MYERS DESECRATES THE EUCCHARIST

University of Minnesota professor Paul Z. Myers made good on his pledge to desecrate the Eucharist today. According to his statement on the subject, "I pierced it [the Host] with a rusty nail (I hope Jesus's tetanus shots are up to date). And then I simply threw it in the trash."

Saying he did not want to "single out just the cracker," Myers also tore pages from the Koran along with a few pages from Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* and nailed them to the Host. He then said, "They are just paper. **Nothing must be held sacred.** (His emphasis.) Question everything. God is not great, Jesus is not your lord, you are not disciples of any charismatic prophet."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

"A formal complaint against Myers has already been made. What he did—in both word and deed—constitutes a bias incident, as defined by the University of Minnesota. The policy says that 'Expressions of disrespectful bias, hate, harassment or hostility against an individual, group or their property because of the individual or group's actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion...can be forms of discrimination. Expressions vary, and can be in the form of language, words, signs, symbols, threats, or actions that could potentially cause alarm, anger, fear, or resentment in others...even when presented as a joke.'

"The University must now take action and apply the appropriate sanction. We are contacting the president, Board of Regents and the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office at the

school, as well as Minnesota's governor and both houses of the state legislature; the Catholic community in Minnesota is also being contacted. Moreover, we are also contacting Muslim groups nationwide.

"It is important for Catholics to know that the University of Minnesota will not tolerate the deliberate destruction of the Eucharist by one of its faculty. Just as African Americans would not tolerate the burning of a cross, and Jews would not tolerate the display of swastikas, Catholics will not tolerate the desecration of the Eucharist."

Contact Myers at myersp@morris.umn.edu

Contact President Robert Bruininks at bruin001@umn.edu

MYERS TO DESECRATE EUCHARIST AND KORAN

On July 15, Catholic League president Bill Donohue called attention to the way Professor Paul Z. Myers of the University of Minnesota treats Catholicism and Islam: the biologist's pledge to desecrate the Eucharist contrasts starkly with the deference he has shown to Islam.

Now Myers says that "Thanks to all those who have demanded that I treat that silly book [the Koran] with disrespect, I'll have to treat both equally."

Donohue responded today:

"The latest threat by Myers only makes matters worse. Instead of treating Catholicism with the respect he has previously shown for Islam, he now pledges to disrespect Islam the way he

pledges to disrespect Catholicism (once again!). This is his idea of equal treatment.

“Much has been written about the moral vacuity that marks the Darwinian vision of society that Myers embraces. He now has a grand opportunity to rebut those critics. Or sustain the perception. So which will it be, Professor Myers? I will let Ibrahim Hooper at the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) know of your latest bluster. And I sincerely implore you to drop both threats now.”

Contact Myers at myersp@morris.umn.edu

Contact CAIR's communications director at ihooper@cair.com

PHONY ASSAULT ON DEAL HUDSON

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded today to a story last night by CNN's Anderson Cooper on attempts by some Catholics to get the McCain campaign to oust Catholic author and activist Deal Hudson from the Catholics for McCain National Steering Committee:

“Anderson Cooper said last night that those opposed to Hudson were citing two reasons why he should be dumped from the McCain campaign as an advisor: Hudson ‘harassed an 18-year-old female college student 10 years earlier,’ and his ‘brokering a deal between a meeting of conservative Catholics and San Antonio mega-preacher John Hagee.’

“There is nothing Catholic about these charges. Catholics put a premium on forgiveness and reconciliation—they do not conduct vindictive campaigns of personal destruction under the guise of promoting the Catholic cause. Hudson has made several

public statements of apology regarding his improper sexual encounter with a coed in 1994. What are we to do as Catholics—say it isn't enough? Ted Kennedy belongs to Barack Obama's Catholic National Advisory Council. Should he be criticized? Certainly: I did just that when I cited his 100 percent NARAL record. What I didn't do was cite his past sexual indiscretions, one of which left a young woman dead.

“Everyone knows that I was the first to criticize Pastor John Hagee for his offensive past comments about the Catholic Church. When Hudson sought to open Hagee's eyes about some misconceptions he had about the Catholic Church's historical role in dealing with Jews, it helped to change the Texas minister. Indeed, Hagee issued a public apology. Hagee and I then met, courtesy of Hudson, and have since reconciled. Is that not the Catholic thing to do? If not, then is the Vatican not acting in a Catholic way? I received a letter from a prominent Vatican Cardinal thanking me for reconciling with Hagee. I also received the plaudits of many in the Jewish community for doing so.

“Hudson and Hagee have paid their dues. It's time everyone—especially Catholics—acknowledged it. Kudos to the McCain campaign for seeing through this phony effort and standing by Hudson.”

OBAMA TO CATHOLICS: NO VOUCHERS

When he was a state senator in Illinois in June 2002, Barack Obama was explicitly asked by Chicago media personality Jeff Berkowitz whether he supports school vouchers. “I would

support anything that is going to be better for the children of Illinois,” he said. He emphatically added that “I am not closed minded on the issue.”

In February 2008, Obama spoke to reporters from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* about the issue. Still keeping an open mind, he said, “If there was any argument for vouchers, it was ‘Let’s see if the experiment works.’ And if it does, whatever my preconception, you do what’s best for kids.”

However, last Saturday Obama told the American Federation of Teachers that he was opposed to vouchers. When his campaign was asked about his new position, it released a statement saying, “Senator Obama has always been a critic of vouchers.”

Commenting today is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“Guess Obama couldn’t resist pandering to the teachers union. It’s so easy to tell the media that keeping an open mind on school vouchers is the best way to go. But when cash counts—and the American Federation of Teachers has plenty of it—who cares about principle? Fact is, no amount of empirical evidence was ever going to change his mind.

“Obama now joins a long list of African American elites who wouldn’t dare send their kids to an urban public school, but who works hard at every turn to deny poor black parents the same options he and his wife are so lucky to have. We hope that Catholics, as well as African Americans, get the message.”

MYERS STILL WANTS TO ABUSE EUCHARIST; SHOWS DEFERENCE TO ISLAM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented on the latest developments to surface regarding the pledge made by Paul Z. Myers, a professor at the University of Minnesota, to desecrate the Eucharist:

"Myers was quoted yesterday saying, 'I have to do something. I'm not going to just let this disappear.' [Last Friday it was reported that he had acquired a Host.] He continued, 'Something will be done. It won't be gross. It won't be totally tasteless, but yeah, I'll do something that shows this cracker has no power.'

"The biology professor made it clear that he would never disrespect Islam the way he does Catholicism. When asked about those who abuse the Koran, for example, he said such an act was analogous to desecrating a graveyard. 'That's completely different,' he said. 'I don't favor [that idea].' But when it comes to the Body of Christ, he opines, 'The cracker is completely different.'

"This isn't the first time Myers has shown deference to Islam. For instance, two years ago he was critical of the Danish cartoons that simply depicted an image of Muhammad. 'They [the cartoons] lack artistic or social or even comedic merit, and are presented as an insult to inflame a poor minority.' So now the Planet-of-the-Apes biologist has divined himself an expert on the artistic value of cartoons. So thoughtful of him. He even went so far as to say that Muslims '*have cause* to be furious.' (His *italic*.) Worthy of burning down churches, pledging to behead Christians and shooting a nun in the back, Professor Myers?

“We hope Myers does the right thing and just moves on without further disgracing himself and his university. The letter I received from University of Minnesota President Robert H. Bruininks makes it clear that school officials want nothing to do with his hate-filled remarks. It would also be nice if Myers’ fans would cease and desist with their hate-filled screeds.”

Contact Professor Paul Z. Myers at myersp@morris.umn.edu

HYSTERIA MARKS MYERS AND HIS ILK

Yesterday, Catholic League president Bill Donohue issued a news release calling attention to the plea that Paul Zachary Myers made on his blog: he solicited the Communion Host for the express purpose of desecrating it. Donohue now responds to the reaction he has received from the University of Minnesota Morris professor, as well as others:

“Myers went on Houston radio station KPFT last night saying that Bill Donohue has ‘declared a fatwa’ against him. He should know better—I don’t need others to do the fighting for me. I’m quite good at it myself. But he’d better be careful what he says, because if I get any death threats, it won’t be hard to connect the dots.

“Myers, who claims expertise in studying zebrafish, has quite a following among the King Kong Theory of Creation gang. Indeed, we’ve been inundated with hate mail from all over the world, and it all stems from those whose alleged god is reason.

“As a result of the hysteria that Myers’ ilk have promoted, at least one public official is taking it seriously. Thomas E. Foley is chairman of Virginia’s First Congressional District Republican Committee, a delegate to the Republican National Convention and one of two Republican at large nominees for Virginia’s Electoral College. His concern is for the safety of Catholics attending this year’s Republican National Convention in Minneapolis, Myers’ backyard. Accordingly, Foley has asked the top GOP brass to provide additional security while in the Twin Cities so that Catholics can worship without fear of violence. Given the vitriol we have experienced for simply exercising our First Amendment right to freedom of speech, we support Foley’s request.

“We already know that Myers lost one round: the university has removed the link to his blog from his faculty page. He should be prepared to lose a few more rounds. By the way, Myers says he is delighted to have finally garnered my attention. Too bad I can’t say the same—I never heard of the guy until yesterday.”

Contact Professor Paul Z. Myers at myersp@morris.umn.edu