

EUCHARIST DESECRATED; NO PENALTY FOR PROFESSOR

In July, Paul Zachary Myers, a biology professor at the Morris campus of the University of Minnesota (UMN), made good on his pledge to desecrate the Eucharist. The atheist professor suffered no penalty despite a strong protest led by the Catholic League.

Myers was responding to an event that had recently taken place at the University of Central Florida (UCF) when a student walked out of Mass with the Host, holding it hostage for several days. Myers was angry at the Catholic League for criticizing the student; the religion-hating professor voiced his objections on his own personal Internet site, i.e., his blog. There was a link from the faculty page on the university's website to his blog.

Here is an excerpt of his July 8 post, "It's a Frackin' Cracker!":

"Can anyone out there score me some consecrated communion wafers?" Myers continued by saying, "If any of you would be willing to do what it takes to get me some, or even one, and mail it to me, I'll show you sacrilege, gladly, and with much fanfare. I won't be tempted to hold it hostage (no, not even if I have a choice between returning the Eucharist and watching Bill Donohue kick the pope in the b****, which would apparently be a more humane act than desecrating a g**d***ed cracker), but will instead treat it with profound disrespect and heinous cracker abuse, all photographed and presented here on the web."

Anyone who tapped into UMN's website was able to access Myers' hate speech from the university's website, despite the fact that the school has restrictions on matters like these. The

president of UMN, Robert Bruininks, quickly wrote to Donohue informing him that UMN had severed the link between the university's website and Myers' blog. But that was the extent of his response.

There were several other things that UMN, and Minnesota's elected officials, could have done, but didn't. For our part, we contacted UMN's Board of Regents, the liaison group that works with this group, UMN's alumni, Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty and both houses of the Minnesota legislature. See *"Chronology of a Desecration"* for more information.

"It is hard to think of anything more vile than to intentionally desecrate the Body of Christ," we said to the press. On July 24, Myers made good on his pledge to desecrate the Eucharist, driving a rusty nail through a consecrated Host; he posted a picture of it on his blog. The atheist professor, who was raised Lutheran, suffered no penalty for his behavior.

BUSH CHIDES CHINA

Before leaving for Beijing, President George W. Bush gave a speech in Bangkok, Thailand that cited the lack of religious liberties, as well as other human rights, that exist in China. And while in China, Bush commented on the deprivation of religious liberties there on several occasions.

Bush made it clear that "America stands in firm opposition to China's detention of political dissidents, human rights advocates and religious activists." Moreover, Bush said, "I have spoken clearly, candidly and consistently with China's leaders about our deep concerns over religious freedom and human rights."

The plight of the Catholic Church is particularly distressing. There is an officially sanctioned “Catholic Church” in China, but there is also an underground Church, one that authentically represents the teachings of Catholicism. The members of the underground Church are in constant danger of being persecuted.

We were quick to applaud what President Bush did, but we also cited Pope Benedict XVI’s remark: He pleaded with Chinese leaders “to open [China] to the Gospel.”

By contrast, Sen. McCain and Sen. Obama looked weak. For example, McCain was on record imploring the president not to be “confrontational” with Chinese officials about the issue of human rights. When Bill Donohue appeared on “Fox and Friends” to discuss this, he asked, “Should he be obsequious?” Donohue also criticized Obama for saying nothing about the massive abuse of religious liberties in China.

MILITANT ATHEISM UNLEASHED

William A. Donohue

When I spoke to a reporter from Providence about a play that mocked the Eucharist, I unloaded. Fortunately, he listened to me explain the source of my anger. “Because this is the fourth incident this summer of someone playing fast and loose with the Eucharist,” I told him. He understood.

The first incident occurred when *Washington Post* religion editor Sally Quinn decided she would show how much she cared about the late Tim Russert by doing something she hated to do—receive Communion; Quinn is not Catholic. The second incident was worse: a brazen student from the University of

Central Florida walked out of Mass with the Eucharist to protest some innocuous school policy. The third was obscene: University of Minnesota Professor Paul Z. Myers desecrated a consecrated Host to protest my criticism of the Florida student. So when the reporter called to ask why I was unhappy with some woman who decided to mock the Eucharist in a play, he touched a raw nerve.

For fifteen years I have been president of the Catholic League, and never have I seen such a series of assaults on the Eucharist. What's going on? And what accounts for the total failure of the University of Minnesota to hold Myers accountable?

What's going on is that militant atheism is all the rage. Books by Richard Dawkins (a personal friend of Myers who lies about me the same way Myers does), Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett and Christopher Hitchens have all sold well, and what they are selling is hate. Hatred of religion in general, and Christianity in particular. The bulls-eye, of course, is Roman Catholicism. I'll give them this much: At least the religion bashers are smart enough to know who's on top.

What these authors do is embolden their base. To be specific, they energize atheists to be more in-your-face about their convictions, the result of which is an agenda to attack Catholicism. And what better way to do so than by trashing the Eucharist? This may not explain what Quinn did, or for that matter what the Florida student and the playwright did, but it sure explains Paul Z. Myers' boldness.

The sick climate that these zealots have created could not have succeeded without a little help from their friends. In the case of Myers, that means the administrators at the University. They had several options available to them, and they passed on every one of them. Predictably, they hid behind academic freedom, claiming they were impotent to do anything about Myers' off-campus behavior.

This is utter nonsense, and I will prove it right now: Does anyone believe that the University of Minnesota would do absolutely nothing about a white professor who packed them in at a local comedy club on weekends doing his racist rendition of "Little Black Sambo"? Would the very same administrators plead helplessness about a professor who spoke to community groups off-campus about the mythology of the Holocaust?

Lest anyone not be convinced, need I remind you that Larry Summers was driven out of his job as president of Harvard University for remarks that radical feminists found objectionable. It cannot go unsaid that Summers' comments were made off-campus. Moreover, when Summers spoke, it was made explicitly clear that he was not speaking as president, but as an academic. But that didn't matter to the ever-tolerant ones on the faculty—he offended them because he disagreed with them, and that was enough to get him kicked out.

Academic freedom was instituted to protect contrarian professors from being hounded out of the academy for challenging the conventional wisdom on a particular academic subject. It was not instituted to protect hate speech. Myers is free to say whatever he wants about his specialty, which is zebrafish, but he has no moral right to assault the sensibilities of any religious group. So what should the administrators have done?

At the very least, the president should have convened an assembly, with members of the press invited, to unequivocally condemn what Myers did. Even if what Myers did was outside the purview of the president's authority, there was nothing stopping him from holding such a forum. And there was certainly nothing stopping the chancellor of the Morris campus from doing the same. She was actually worse—she tried to play both sides of the street.

As I said to Ray Arroyo, this may not be over yet. Over the summer, Myers' personnel file ballooned: everything that

happened regarding this issue is in it. Which means that he'd better be careful about bringing his religious bigotry to bear in the classroom. If just one Catholic student complains that he is being treated unfairly because of his religion, Myers will have to answer.

Because of the hate-filled milieu that Myers and his ilk have created, all kinds of copy-cats have come forth. Some have put videos of themselves up on the Internet. They all go after me big time, and that is as it should be. They know who the enemy is, and for that I am eternally grateful.

CHRONOLOGY OF A DESECRATION

The following is a chronological account of how the issue of the desecration of the Eucharist unfolded. For related issues, see Bill Donohue's piece, "Militant Atheism Unleashed."

- **July 10:** Professor Paul Z. Myers, a professor of biology at the Morris campus of the University of Minnesota (UMN), pledges to desecrate the Eucharist; he asks the public to give him some consecrated Hosts. His decision is in retaliation to Bill Donohue's criticism of a student at the University of Central Florida who walked out of a June 29 Mass on campus with the Eucharist; the student was protesting student fees going to religious events. Donohue accuses Myers of violating UMN's policy governing the school's electronic pages (there was a link on the university's website to Myers' personal blog) and violating UMN's Code of Conduct regarding uncivil behavior. UMN's President, Board of Regents and Minnesota's public officials are contacted.

Myers goes on a Houston radio show (KPFT) charging that Donohue "declared a fatwa" against him. Donohue responded by

saying of Myers, "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."

- **July 11:** Donohue receives a letter from UMN President Robert Bruininks thanking him for bringing this issue to his attention. "Let me assure you that the views expressed by biology professor Paul Myers on his personal blog do not reflect those of the University of Minnesota, Morris or the University of Minnesota system," he said. "Per the University's Web policy, the link to Myers' personal blog from the University's Web site has been deactivated."

Donohue issues a news release, "Hysteria Marks Myers and His Ilk," drawing attention to all the hate mail the Catholic League was receiving from around the world. "Myers, who claims expertise in studying zebrafish," Donohue says, "has quite a following among the King Kong Theory of Creation gang." In another development, Thomas E. Foley, a Virginia activist and delegate to the Republican National Convention, makes a public statement about the need for additional security at the upcoming convention in Minnesota's Twin Cities; he cited the hatred drummed up by Myers against Catholics.

- **July 14:** Myers says, "I have to do something. I'm not going to just let this disappear." He says that he acquired a Host on July 11: "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."

- **July 15:** Donohue accuses Myers of previously showing deference to Islam and asks him to treat Catholicism the same way.

- **July 17:** Myers grants an interview to Catholic Radio International. He says that his planned desecration is "an issue of civil liberties." He reasons that because he is not

Catholic or a believer of any kind, he is free to do what he wants to the Eucharist. In fact, he goes so far as to say that there is "an orchestrated campaign by Bill Donohue to demand that secular people...have the same reverence for this object." Myers then attacked Donohue: "I would make a deal here to return these wafers to the nearest Catholic church if the Church could come out and disavow the tactics of Bill Donohue and the people who have threatened my job and who have threatened my life." *[Note: No one from the Catholic League ever threatened his job, never mind his life.]*

- **July 21:** Myers responds to Donohue by saying, "Thanks to all those who have demanded that I treat that silly book [the Koran] with disrespect, I'll have to treat both equally."

- **July 22:** Donohue says "The latest threat by Myers only makes matters worse...This is his idea of equal treatment."

- **July 24:** Myers desecrates the Eucharist, posting a picture of it on his personal blog. He explained: "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." He also tore pages from the Koran, and, in a failed attempt to show impartiality, he included 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."

The Catholic League contacts UMN's 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. Also contacted are Minnesota's Catholic community and Muslim groups nationwide. "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."

• **July 25:** UMN Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson issues a statement condemning religious intolerance. She cites UMN's Code of Conduct that "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." But she hastened to add that UMN "affirms the freedom of a faculty member to speak or write as a public citizen without institutional discipline or restraint..." She ended by saying that Myers' views were his own and that "The University deactivated the link between this blog and the University of Minnesota, Morris website..." The Catholic League appealed to UMN's Board of Regents citing a previous incident wherein a faculty member was brought up on charges of violating the Tenure Code for possessing images of child porn on his computer.

• **July 31:** Chancellor Johnson faxes a letter to Donohue saying she needed to clarify his "misunderstanding" of her July 25 statement. She said it was not her intention to say that Myers had violated UMN's Code of Conduct. Indeed, she claimed that since Myers posted his comments on his personal blog, he did not violate the Code.

"I am sorry for my generosity," Donohue answered. "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."

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FLORIDA STUDENT ABUSES

EUCCHARIST

On June 29, Webster Cook, a student senator at the University of Central Florida (UCF), walked out of a campus Mass with the Eucharist; he returned it a week later. Cook stated that he took the Eucharist back to his seat to show a friend, and only left after a parishioner confronted him about not consuming it.

In another statement after the incident, Cook seemed to muddle

his intentions by voicing his discontent that UCF uses student fees to fund religious services at the university. He said, "The problem is actually that this is a publicly-funded institution. Through student government here, we fund them through an activity and service, so they're receiving student money."

During the week Cook held the Host hostage, local Catholic officials pleaded with him to return it and not to desecrate it. He returned it to the church a week later, only minutes before the Mass began.

Shortly after the incident we commented that regardless of the alleged nature of his grievance, Cook's action was beyond hate speech. We called on the UCF administration to act swiftly and decisively in seeing that justice be done. We said that all options should be left on the table, including expulsion.

We encouraged our members to contact UCF's President John C. Hitt and voice their opinions on this matter. After our members inundated his mailbox, Hitt issued a statement:

"UCF takes this situation seriously and we are glad to know the student has returned the Eucharist and written a letter of apology. We encourage students to express their views respectfully, and we expect them to comply with university codes of conduct."

"Any disciplinary action will be handled through the university's student judicial system, per our published procedure."

On July 17, Webster Cook was impeached by the student government in a 33-2 vote; the impeachment had no effect on his status as a student. Before the vote, UCF's senate speaker said, "The situation involving Senator Cook and the Catholic Campus Ministry is an isolated event and one that has interfered with our true purpose."

In August, a panel of students and administrators, convened to

determine whether or not Cook violated the code of student discipline, unanimously voted to dismiss all charges against him despite the range of options available to punish this act. At the very least, a disciplinary warning was warranted to send a message that the concerns of Catholics are taken seriously at UCF.

PZ MYERS HATEMAIL

We were deluged with nasty phone calls and e-mails after we called attention to Paul Z. Myers' pledge to desecrate the Holy Eucharist. The following is just a small sample of the hate-filled messages we received. All comments appear as we received them:

- "You bunch of death worshipping, closed minded, gay hating, poverty causing, child abusing bigots."
- "You silly fools. F*** the pope and the body of christ."
- " "It is hard to think of anything more vile than to intentionally desecrate the Body of Christ." Well, priests f***ing altar boys seems a lot more vile to me."
- "I guess wanking over your Eucharist wafer is a no no then?! Get a life – you're a waste of space- go do something useful. "Ooh someone called the pope a bad name...". Wake up-the POPE is the greatest enemy you people have."
- "Uh oh, better increase security! A biology professor in Minnesota said he would do bad things to a cracker."
- "What's so sacred about a flavorless wafer? Apparently it's supposed to turn into a piece of "the body of Christ" when a priest blesses it...The whole "body of Christ" bull**** is

symbolic?"

- "I stuck the cracker in my mouth but I didn't try to walk out of the church with it, I went to their public bathroom, took it out of my mouth, and ejaculated all over the cracker, and flushed it down the toilet."

- "Do you really need to start acting like the American Taliban and exhibiting the same thinness of skin we saw in the Danish Carton/Muslim fiasco? Can we expect future generations of Catholics in the US to be incited to riot and even commit assault because someone disrespected the sacraments? Is this Iran? Is the Catholic League ready to start issuing fatwas?"

- "Please recall to your mind the long history of such intolerance and the egregious acts committed against individuals and groups who spoke against it or were simply on the sidelines and caught up in the insanity of those who cannot or will not tolerate any form of criticism of their beliefs, rituals, or actions. Such criticism could lead to torture and death."

- "In the past, the Catholic Church has also been accused (with a great deal of historical evidence) of doing violence against those that disagree with them...Please note that this is not a hate letter or one that could even remotely be classified as one."

- "Mr. Bill Donohue stated "It is hard to think of anything more vile than to intentionally desecrate the Body of Christ." Really? Perhaps he is forgetful of the sexual abuse of thousands of children worldwide by ordained Catholic priests, and the consequent exercise in covering-up this abuse?"

- "You people are loony for "christs" sake whining about a cracker!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

- "You people disgust me with your puerile magical beliefs. It's obvious that all religions were made up by people."

· “With all due respect, sir, it is not against any law that I know of to laugh at another person’s silly beliefs nor to “abuse” a cracker—whatever that means. If your magic cookie is REALLY the body and blood of Jesus Christ, then submit one to DNA testing for the absence before “Hocuc Pocus” and the presence afterward of Jesus” DNA. He was both god and MAN, wasn’t he?

· “STOP THE BS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! IT’S A FKG PIECE OF FOOD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! YOU WANT TO DO RELIGION, ;MOVE TO THE FKD, CROOKED, LYING VATICAN!!!!!!!!!!!!”

· “You are utter morons. I previously had little or no desire to insult Catholics in particular but following “Crackergate” I will do so if I get the chance. You and your imaginary friend are beneath contempt.”

· “Is the Catholic Church trying to cash in on the “respect-our-religion-of-peace-or-we-will-kill-you” scheme that radical Islam is using? If so, can we expect the acts of terrorism required to back it up? Are we going to see internet videos of nuns beheading people?”

· “Crackers are not people and people who believe that they are, or who believe that the crackers in question are the actual body of God, are themselves a bit crackers. In the past it has always been polite to accept and afford a modicum of respect for these silly beliefs, all in the spirit of live and let live. However in this post 9-11 world, it has become obvious that these harmless delusions are not so harmless. It’s time that we called a cracker a cracker and face reality...After watching Bill Donohue’s choleric diatribes, I’ve come to the conclusion that the Catholic League is no better than Al-Qaeda and the world will know now peace until self-righteous ideologs like Bill Donohue are recognized as the lunatics they are...You should worry less about people insulting crackers and more about pedophile Priests.”

· “A cracker is stolen and you go ballistic. Perhaps you would be better served directing your disgusting venom at your child-f***ing priests.”

· “Crackers are crackers both before and after the Catholic wizard casts his magic spell on them. It doesn't matter what anyone does to them because they are crackers. They don't feel anything. They don't scream when you touch them. They are little no very good tasting-crackers.”

· “You are delusional. Do you really think that some invisible man in the sky exists, and that by consuming some little cracker that you're eating his flesh? That is not only pathetic, it's disgusting.”

· “You're the same thing, if not worse than. Those nutty Islamist bastards you always talk about. F U, F— Jesus and his slut mother.”

· “It's hard to think of anything more vile than to intentionally desecrate the Body of Christ” How about having priests like that to f*** little boys up the a**??? That was pretty f***ing easy to think of and it certainly is more vile than intentionally desecrating a f***ing cracker.”

· “Perhaps the long history of psychological abuse practiced by the church in how they have used fear to keep their adherents in place. And let's not forget all of the condemnation of homosexuals and others that the Catholic Church has issued (often from the mouth of the Pope).”

· “This kind of retaliation makes both religion and the Catholic League very foolish and no less fanatical than the Muslim fundamentalists who bombed Danish embassies after Salman Rushdie's cartoon containing the prophet Muhammed. These such actions only breed the kind of atheists who would rudely steal your holy cracker.”

· “I have, in the past, had no real animus toward the Catholic

church in spite of their history of oppressing non-believers, child rape, support of politicians, qualifications and beliefs on a multitude of other important matters, and medieval rejection of science and all that it has done for us...I am now of the belief that any restraints put on catholicism are to be supported. Indeed, catholicism is reminding those of us who are rational that it deserves a place amongst those religions, like fundamental christianity and islam that needs to be resisted and constrained for the good of society."

- "You're as insane as the muslims who want to kill Danish cartoonists over some cartoons in which the prophet Mohammed appears...You're delusional. It's a cracker. It's bad enough that you are engaged in an act of ritual cannibalism, but to give someone this level of grief over it; get serious."

- "You want to know why there is so much so called bias against you? Because you have to be loopy or a crook to believe what you believe. I don't mean any disrespect. It's just a fact...Then there is the killings and all sorts of suffering you cause."

- "Are you people insane? You are calling the non-eating of a CRACKER a HATE CRIME? You people ARE crazy. A hate crime is what happened to Matthew Shephard/ NOT WHAT HAPPENED TO A F***ING CRACKER you think is "JESUS."...Your church is crazy. You are crazy...YOU ARE THE HATE THAT RUINS THE WORLD."

- "I would suggest you read and try to understand the writings of Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. These scholars follow simple logic and not the entirely unfounded (head in sand) beliefs in religious myth and fanaticism...I am certain (or at least hopeful) that the day will come when Catholic (and all other religious) fanaticism will disappear, using simple logic rather than blind belief and "fairy tales" created and repeated by the various religions."

- "You are a bunch of bigoted, intolerant throwbacks to the

Inquisition.”

- “How can I sign up to desecrate a piece of food. If it makes your heads explode I will pay double for the privilege.”
 - “I’m going to call out Donohue and his merry band of haters for what they are – heretics and blasphemers...It’s time to be bold and say that Bill Donohue and the “Catholic” League are, in fact, acting against Christ, and need to repent of their hatefulness.”
 - “Apparently conspiracy to wound a biscuit is a cardinal sin if you’re an insane Catholic.”
 - “Personally, I’ve always thought Gingerbread Jesus would get the point across much more efficiently. But then you get into sticky area if you bite off Jesus’ head.”
 - “Several crackers met an untimely death in my bowl of vegetable soup today.”
 - “The irony of all this is that the agenda is basically to turn America into a theocracy where the rights of atheists are threatened.”
 - “Catholics are f***ing nuts. Religious f***ing idiots.”
 - “You guys started the inquisition and murdered Giordano Bruno for believing there might be planets around other stars and you have the audacity to worry about anti catholic bias.”
 - “Are you completely nuts? It’s a cracker! Your god doesn’t even exist. Get over it and grow up.”
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OBAMA 'S PUBLIC POLICY BLUNDERS

Over the past few months, Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. Barack Obama has displayed his inability to win over Catholic voters. This was evident when he formed his Catholic National Advisory Council and appointed pro-abortion Catholics to its Leadership Committee. Recently, Sen. Obama has disappointed Catholics again. This time regarding his public policies on school vouchers, faith-based initiatives and selective infanticide.

When Obama was a state senator in Illinois in June 2002, he was explicitly asked by Chicago media personality Jeff Berkowitz whether or not he supports school vouchers. Obama answered, "I would support anything that is going to be better off for the children of Illinois." Obama added emphatically that he was not "close minded" on the issue of school vouchers and school choice.

Fast-forward to February 2008 when Obama spoke to reporters from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* about the very same 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 the kids."

However, on July 12, Obama changed his tune and 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."

Clearly the senator was pandering to the teachers' union. It was so easy only a few months before for Obama to tell the media that he has an open mind on vouchers, but when the money

called, Obama showed his true colors.

It is a shame that the Illinois senator will not place himself in the shoes of struggling American parents whose children are enrolled in depleted public schools; Obama and his wife are fortunate enough to send their two daughters to a private charter school in Illinois. With this change of heart, Obama placed himself on the list of American elites who would never dare to send their own children to a public school but work hard to deny the less fortunate the same options they are lucky to have.

On July 1, Obama again disappointed the religious community when he spoke about his faith-based initiative: because Obama wants to gut faith from these programs he should have scrapped the plan altogether.

The Illinois senator stated that faith-based groups that receive federal grants can't use that money "to proselytize to the people [they] help and [they] can't discriminate against them—or against the people [they] hire—on the basis of their religion." Obama went on to say, "Federal dollars that go directly to churches, temples and mosques can only be used on secular programs."

So, to get this straight, Obama believes that faith-based groups cannot act according to their faith, when using federal grant money. If this were to pass, an Orthodox Jewish day care center that receives federal money must not disseminate its values and is not allowed to exclusively hire Orthodox Jews. Also, Catholic foster care programs would not be able to place Catholic children with Catholic parents.

We blasted Obama for his attitude toward faith-based programs. Indeed, Obama said, "I'm not saying that faith-based groups are an alternative to government or secular nonprofits, and I'm not saying that they're somehow better at lifting people up." In our news release, we issued a rebuttal:

"The whole purpose behind funding faith-based programs is that they are, in fact, superior to secular programs. And the reason they are has everything to do with the inculcation of religious values disseminated by people of faith. No matter, Obama wants to gut the religious values and bar religious agencies from hiring people who share their religion. Hence, his initiative is a fraud."

In an early July interview with *Relevant* magazine, Obama admitted that when he was in the Illinois state senate he voted against a bill that would require health care for a baby who survived an abortion. "The reason was that there was already a law in place in Illinois that said that you always have to supply life-saving treatment to any infant under any circumstances, and this bill actually was designed to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, so I didn't think it was going to pass constitutional muster," Sen. Obama told the magazine.

When we heard that he was dodging the issue of his support for selective infanticide, we called him on his bluff.

We issued a news release stating that Obama's position that the bill he voted against would overturn *Roe* was not a gray area. The bill explicitly stated that it would not overturn the infamous case.

When Obama fielded the question on whether or not he supported selective infanticide—which we charge he did—the presidential candidate replied that it was not a "fair characterization." In our news release we asked if that was the best he could do. Given the seriousness of the accusation, if it were totally bogus, any other candidate for the presidency would immediately hold a press conference and demand an apology and a retraction. That Obama did not do so spoke volumes.

With his consistent blundering on the issues most sensitive to Roman Catholics, Obama risks losing their support. If Obama wishes to attract more Catholics to his campaign, he should

move in line with the issues near to their hearts.

BOB CASEY MISLABELED AS PRO-LIFE

Pennsylvania Senator Bob Casey, Jr., a Catholic, spoke at the Democratic National Convention on August 26. The senator's father, former Pennsylvania Governor Bob Casey, was barred from speaking at the 1992 Democratic National Convention because of his pro-life views.

Leading up to the Convention, Casey was touted as a pro-life Democrat and was presented as an example of the big-tent ideals of the Democrats.

According to CNSNews.com, Kristen Day, president of Democrats for Life, claimed that the Party had moved on from the days of the 1992 Convention. She said, "I think the Democratic Party is changing and moving away from abortion as a decision-making tool—when we're saying who can speak and who can't—and I think it is very encouraging to see this more inclusive party."

Leading up to this year's Convention, we spoke to the media on the fraud that was presented to the American people, that Bob Casey, Jr. is pro-life.

The truth is that Casey, Jr. has a NARAL voting record of 65 percent but considers himself pro-life. We stated that if a Democrat voted with the National Rifle Association two out of every three times, no one in his right mind would call that person an advocate of gun control. So why is Casey, Jr. considered pro-life? The Pennsylvania senator can mouth the virtues of pro-life all he wants, but at the end of the day

what really matters is his voting record.

Casey's father, contrary to the spin, was not denied to speak at the 1992 Convention because he didn't endorse Bill Clinton for president. As Bob Casey said at the time, California Treasurer Kathleen Brown (sister of Jerry Brown) was allowed to speak even though she endorsed her brother over Clinton. The difference was that Kathleen Brown was pro-abortion.

The Democrats—with the help of their friends in the media—used the Pennsylvania pro-abortion senator to sell the message that they have gotten beyond their anti-Catholic reputation. That reputation, which was played out at the 1992 Democratic National Convention by delegates who wore buttons depicting Casey, Sr. as the pope, still sticks. If they were serious about reaching out to Catholics and jettisoning their anti-Catholic baggage once and for all, they could have allowed a prominent Catholic to speak in Denver who is truly pro-life.

That should have been an easy choice to make given the small pool of eligible candidates.

IS ANTI-CATHOLICISM DEAD?

If you're puzzled by the stupidity of this question, so are we. Yet this was the subject of a panel discussion at the Museum of the City of New York on July 22; all the participants were Catholic.

The good news is that all the panelists agreed anti-Catholicism still exists. The bad news is that the question was entertained as a rebuttable presumption in the first place. In any event, what really settled this issue was not the presentation of the panelists: it was the bald-face

bigotry of those who responded to a New York Times story on the event. The following is a selection taken verbatim from the Times' blog posting.

- "I don't think its so much that people are anti-Catholic (the partitioners) but many people rightfully object to the church and their missions. Those missions include: 1.) subverting the U.S. through encouraging, aiding and abetting illegal immigration in contravention to our laws 2.) sewing insurrection in countries in Central America which is detrimental to American interests and in contravention to the historical role of the Catholic church in encouraging unrestrained population growth and actually subjecting the indigenous people to slavery (in Guatemala for instance) 3.) subjecting their own parishoners to sexual abuse 4.) encouraging a bigoted viewpoint towards people who are of alternative sexual orientations 5.) being anti-woman 6.) and encouraging unrestrained population growth leading to the perpetuation of poverty and hopelessness. How dare the Pope come over to our country and preach about America's supposed failure to help the helpless in his comments about the U.S. immigration policy."

- "I'm inclined to agree that a bad catholic is better than a good one. A good catholic believes the irrational supernatural nonsense that he's been taught to believe, usually through rigorous childhood indoctrination. The good catholic is the skeptical catholic who questions what has been driven into his head, and sees the absurdity of it all."

- "Why is it okay to be anti-communist, but not okay to be anti anything else?"

- "Again, the vestiges of anti-Catholic sentiment at this point are largely grounded in reality. Catholicism is ridiculous and rigidly incompatible with modern social values. Shunning contraception in the face or rampant over-population and HIV in the developing world, stoking the most regressive

strains of anti-gay and anti-woman sentiment, protecting pedophile priests the world over for centuries... this is the modern legacy of the Catholic church."

- "I would say that anti-Catholicism is alive and well. Gays who are excluded from the RCC are anti-Catholic, and so are married women who are not prepared to have their 5th child and yet are told by the RCC that they cannot use birth control. Countries whose citizens are dying in droves from AIDS and yet are told by the RCC that they cannot distribute condoms are anti-Catholic. Divorced people who fled abusive marriages who are now excluded from communion in the RCC are anti-Catholic. I mean, how can any thinking, feeling person NOT be anti-Catholic? It was Jesus himself, if he were here today, would be anti-Roman Catholic."

- "I'd rather deal with 'bad' catholics any day, those who respect my beliefs, rather than 'good' ones who look down upon me for not sharing in all their beliefs, ignoring my right to use the brain that God has given me. To those who say that the RC church doesn't teach that anymore, read Dominus Iesus. It's a rather current (2000) reaffirmation of their superiority and self-assuredness."

- "I'm not against Catholics...as long as they don't go to Mass. In fact, I'm going to marry one, though he knows that our kids will never set foot inside a Catholic Church. All this recent hullabaloo over the Pope just confirms to me that there's something weird and creepy about a religion that elevates a man to god-like status when one of the central commandments ("Thou shalt have no other god before Me") says explicitly not to do that."

- "Anti-Catholicism, like all anti-religious beliefs, will be around as long as religions are anti-life, anti-reason, fear-generating, anti-humanity and anti-science AND act on their delusional beliefs in the most detrimental of ways to human life."

· “As long as women around the world are denied reproductive freedom, and adolescents are denied access to contraception knowledge and education – I hope anti-Catholicism will grow in strength. We have only the Catholic church to blame for these blights on our world. We cannot discuss population control in order to preserve our limited global resources – for fear of offending Catholic superstition and despotic devotion to church laws that harm us all.”

· “I think it’s time to be anti-religion.”

· “If anti-Catholicism is dead, what will the ever-apoplectic William Donohue do!?!?!?!? If we’re lucky, he’ll finally explode into a million pieces, when alone in a windowless room.”

EUCCHARIST MOCKED IN IVY LEAGUE PLAY

For the fourth time during the summer, the Eucharist was trashed; this time it involved a play presented at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

“You’re Eating God” is a one-woman play by Rachel Caris that ran from July 23 to August 2 at Brown. The play, a production of the Brown University/Trinity Playwrights Repertory Theatre, is about a family living in a backyard bomb shelter in the 1960s. “The title of the piece comes from one of its lines,” said Bryan Rourke of the *Providence Journal*, “which one character delivers after seeing another character ravenously eat a pile of Eucharistic hosts.” He said 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.

It would have been one thing if this play resembled Catholic schoolboy traditions and poked gentle fun at Catholicism. But that is not what this play was about: There is nothing gentle about mocking the Eucharist. This should be known by those who are Catholic or not.

The Brown University/Trinity Playwrights Repertory Theatre was founded for emerging playwrights to hone their skills and development. The program's website states:

"Brilliant young writers who are already developing a national reputation are invited to Brown for six weeks each summer. Working with a carefully assembled company of gifted professional actors and directors, playwrights become deeply engaged in the production process—attending rehearsals daily, shaping and refining their texts as each new play is born. The result is some of the most imaginative and adventurous theatre to be seen anywhere in America."

There is nothing imaginative and adventurous about mocking the Eucharist. This mockery once again demonstrates that the elites of society will not target Muslim or Jewish beliefs, but they apparently feel free to bash Catholicism with impunity.