

# TOP RELIGION STORY OF 2012



Bill Donohue comments as follows:

The top religion story of 2012 was *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* survey of American charitable giving, “How America Gives”; it was released in August. Its central finding was that the more religious a city or state is, the more charitable it is; conversely, the more secular an area is, the more miserly the people are.

The most generous states are Utah and Idaho, both of which have a high number of Mormon residents; the Bible Belt states account for all the other states in the top ten. With regard to cities, Salt Lake City and Memphis are one-two. The least generous states, ranked 45-50, are Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire. The two stingiest cities are Boston and Providence.

The findings are consistent with other studies. It suggests that the rise of the “nones”—those who have no religious affiliation—are a social liability for the nation. It also shows that those who live in the most liberal areas of the nation are precisely the ones who do the least to combat poverty. They talk a good game—liberals are always screaming about the horrors of poverty—but in the end they find it difficult to open their wallets.

There is little doubt that the “nones” and liberals (there is a lot of overlap) are living off the social capital of the most religious persons in the nation. Perhaps there is some way this can be reflected in the tax code.