

# 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."

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