



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 21, 2012

New York Times Runs Anti-Catholic Ad, But Refuses One Critical of Islam

The New York Times, never considered a model of objective journalism, is being accused of having an editorial double-standard after it published a full-page ad aggressively critical of the Catholic Church, but refused a nearly identical one critical of Islam. The anti-Catholic ad (left, top portion), run in mid-March by the atheist group Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), was framed as an “Open Letter to ‘liberal’ and ‘nominal’ Catholics,” declaring that “It’s Time to Consider Quitting the Catholic Church.”



The “letter,” from FFRF heads Annie Laurie Gaylor and Don Barker, is a thinly disguised canvassing drive, offering lapsed and liberal Catholic believers “a more welcoming home” in the darkness of the atheist clavern.

At heart the ad is little more than an attack on U.S. Bishops’ for their firm stand against the federal mandate forcing contraception and sterilization on Christian institutions. “Why are you aiding and abetting a church that has repeatedly engaged in a crusade to ban contraception, abortion, and sterilization, to deny the rights of all women everywhere, Catholic or not, to decide whether and when to become mothers?” the ad challenges readers. It continues: “By remaining a ‘good Catholic’ you are doing ‘bad’ to women’s rights. You are an enabler. And it’s got to stop.”

“You’re better than your church, so why stay?” the ad goads. “Why put up with an institution that discriminates against half of humanity? ... Join those of us who put humanity above dogma.”

The ad made little positive impact on the FFRF’s anemic membership, but did raise the ire of more than a few faithful Catholics. Bill Donahue of the [Catholic League](#) said that he had never seen a “more vicious anti-Catholic advertisement in a prominent American newspaper.” He predicted that “not a single Catholic who reads this ad will be impelled to leave the Church. That is not the issue (Catholicism, unlike many other religions, is actually growing in the U.S., and worldwide). The issue is the increase in hate speech directed at Catholics.”

The anti-Catholic screed also prompted Pamela Geller of the “[Atlas Shrugs](#)” blog to submit her own advertisement to the *Times*, challenging “moderate Muslims” that “[It’s Time to Quit Islam.](#)” The ad, meant to mimic the tone and intent of the FFRF ad, throws out a challenge to moderate Muslims: “Why are you aiding and abetting Islamic leaders who have repeatedly and publicly announced a jihad to subjugate Christians, Jews, Hindus, and all non-Muslims, and to deny the rights of all women everywhere, Muslim or not?” The ad concludes by inviting Muslims to join “those of us who put humanity above the vengeful, hateful, and violent teachings of Islam’s ‘prophet.’”

Not surprisingly, the *Times* passed on the ad, explaining in a letter to Geller that the “fallout from running this ad now could put U.S. troops and/or civilians in the [Afghan] region in danger.” The *Times*



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subsequently released a statement insisting that the paper had not nixed the ad completely, but had merely “made a decision to postpone publishing it in light of recent events in Afghanistan, including the Koran burning and the alleged killings of Afghani civilians by a member of the U.S. military.”

Geller told the [Daily Caller](#) that she doubts the *Times* will ever publish anything critical of Islam, because “when is it ever a good time to blaspheme under the Sharia?” She added that the refusal “shows the hypocrisy of the *New York Times*, the ‘gold standard’ in journalism, and its willingness to kowtow to violent Islamic supremacist intimidation.”

The Catholic League’s Bill Donahue responded to the *Times* apparent double-standard, charging that it was the result of “either bigotry or fear.” He added that the editors of the paper have “painted themselves into that corner” with their response to Geller’s ad.

He said that “no rational person can maintain there is anything but injustice” in the *Times* decision to run one ad and pan the other. “It shows the disparate treatment and the duplicity of the *New York Times*. You can trash some religions, like Roman Catholicism, with impunity, but you cannot trash Islam?”

Graphic: The offensive, anti-Catholic ad (top) and the New York Times headquarters building in New York (bottom).



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