



Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

Office of the Bishop
610 Lingle Ave., Lafayette, IN 47901-1740
PO Box 260, Lafayette, IN 47902-0260
(765) 742-0275 FAX: (765) 742-7513
bishopdoherty@dol-in.org

"IN OUR OWN VOICE"

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I write to ask your help with a communications issue. Today, Catholic bishops and institutions have our own voices (papers, websites, etc.), but too many folks accept second or third hand news about our Church family. Facts get sacrificed to opinions.

America magazine (July 2-9, 2012) notes that "a recent survey by the Public Religion Research Institute reports that 57 percent of Catholics overall do not believe that the right to religious liberty is being threatened in the United States today." I have to tell you that there is plenty of hard evidence to the contrary. Our religious liberty has been materially restricted by regulations, already on the books. The courts have yet to respond to complaints (lawsuits) about these limits.

Do not confuse 'freedom to worship' with 'religious liberty.' The former reflects what goes on inside the walls of a church. The latter includes how loyal church people live their faith and consciences as they administer church sponsored schools, hospitals, food pantries, Catholic Charities, Catholic universities and church sponsored long-term care facilities.

How can you help? You can help by reading "our side" in the current debates. I certainly expect people to think for themselves. But I expect also that the same people employ factual information from inside our own house, given in our own voice.

Our diocesan newspaper *The Catholic Moment* is our voice. I am thankful that paid subscriptions guarantee us this clear channel. It is where I, and other authoritative leaders, can speak without interruption or filtering. Also view the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Statements of the USCCB reflect official positions informed by experts on points of history and law. You can access our local paper and my column, or the USCCB, at:

Our diocesan website: www.dol-in.org

Our diocesan newspaper website: <http://www.thecatholicmoment.org/>

US Bishops on religious liberty: <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/>

With a prayer for your well being,

Most Reverend Timothy Doherty
Bishop of Lafayette-in-Indiana