

If We Need You, Weâ€™™ Call You

Contributed by James Reza
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I get a kick every time something horrific occurs in a public school like the one recently in Ohio or a few years ago in Colorado, when some demented kid or kids go on a shooting rampage killing several kids and sometimes teachers, or when one or several kids get killed in an auto accident, leaving the student body along with the teaching staff stunned and asking, "Why?" Then to ease the trauma, and bad experience of the students, the school administrators instead of bringing in religious clergymen to talk to the students, bring in counselors to try to explain to them why sometimes these tragic things occur.

One has to wonder why all these horrific and tragic situations are constantly occurring in our schools. But then, all one has to do is see how our government, particularly the Obama Administration, along with the ACLU, are constantly assaulting our religious institutions, and most recently my own Catholic Church while stopping schools from mentioning God in their school activities. I'm well aware that Madalyn Murray O'Hair, an atheist, was instrumental in her Supreme Court ruling (Murray v. Curlett) lawsuit, which led to a landmark ruling which ended official Bible-reading in American public schools in 1963. In 1995, Ms. O'Hair was kidnapped and murdered, along with her son Jon Murray and granddaughter Robin Murray O'Hair, by her former American Atheist office manager David Roland Waters. I've heard of "Poetic Justice" but these O'Hair murders take the cake!

Unable to have Bible readings in school hasn't stopped there. Now anti-religious groups backed by our government has tried to stop sports teams from praying during sports events, or even at a graduation. Some schools don't even allow students to give Christmas Cards during the Yuletide Season and the list just goes on and on. Then, when a tragedy occurs like I just mentioned, students, parents, and teachers quickly get together to pray or hold a candlelight vigil in whatever school the tragic event occurred. I often wonder why the government doesn't try to stop a public school from assembling to have a prayer or candle vigil. To me it's like the government is trying to look like the good guys during a crisis and are saying, "Keep out God, however, if we need you, we call you!" These anti-God government groups often remind me of criminals who are on death row. Once caught and sentenced to death, most finally ask for forgiveness and suddenly turn to God when they are going to have their lives snuffed out. One wonders why they didn't look for God and his teachings when they were free men or women. Then it dawns on me that most criminals were probably never exposed to Him even when they were in school. "But that's their parent's job James," some might say. True, but if their parents were not practicing whatever religion, at least in school during a sporting event, or a graduation, or whatever, they could have at least heard some form of prayer if the schools were allowed to do so. "What's the harm in that?" I ask myself. In high school in the 50s, I, a Catholic, along with Baptist, Methodist, Jehovah Witness, and Episcopalian students would all bow our heads to hear scripture being read over the PA. I don't think those Biblical reading did us any harm.

As a kid, I never saw my mom or dad in church, or even praying at home. It wasn't until mom nearly died with TB that she and dad turned to God. Luckily, I was enrolled in a Catholic school and for 8 years the nuns taught us kids our Catholic faith and made us learn and recite our prayers daily. I'm a big time sinner, and am well aware of what God's commandments want me to do. Having said that, I often wonder why sort of individual I would have turned out to be had I not been exposed to God's teachings, probably worse I imagine. I'm not perfect and many times as I'm about to do something that I know offends God I can hear my beloved teacher, Sister Lawrencia, whispering in my ear, "James, you know better than that!"

As I see all this anti-God movement in our country by our government and other radical anti-religious groups I wonder where our country is heading. Some groups have even tried to take the slogan "In God We Trust" out of our currency. Aware that secularists believed that America should be a secular state or a godless state, the framers of the Constitution did not want religion to influence public policy. Simply put, politics and religion don't mix. Government and religion should be kept as far apart as possible. Yet, the United States Constitution addresses the issue of religion in two places: in the First Amendment, and the Article VI prohibition on religious tests as a condition for holding public office. The First Amendment prohibits the federal government from making a law "respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This provision was later expanded to state and local government, through the Incorporation of the Fourteenth Amendment. Which leads me to this question, as so stated

in the First Amendment, why is President Obama trying to force Catholic run institutions (schools, hospitals, universities, etc.) to offer women abortion prescriptions and anti contraceptives which are totally against the Catholic Church? The First Amendment clearly states that President Obama has no business telling my church, or any other church for that matter, how they should or should not worship. Furthermore, he has no authority to impose his pro-abortion mandates on any church, including my Catholic Church.

I leave with this questions, why is it that Congress can pray before every session? And why do Presidents, and other government officials put their hand on a Bible and swear to uphold the laws of the United States? I often wonder why don't they use the Koran? And finally, if elected government officials can pray in their assemblies, why can't school children say a prayer in school?