

## Professor George on the Ground Zero Mosque

Michael Sean Winters | Aug. 19, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

Unbeknownst to me, Professor Robert George has been dealing with a dreadful personal family tragedy, so I shall ignore his comments about myself and my writings at the blog *Mirror of Justice*.

Souls that are hurting tend to say hurtful things. Of course, I do not retract a word I have written in his regard.

Among those words I wrote were these: ?I need scarcely add that George will be more believable when voicing his concern for the religious freedom of Catholics if he stands up for the religious freedom of Muslims! And, if he does so stand up, I shall be the first to applaud him.? Professor George has now made clear that he does support, forcefully and unambiguously, the right of Muslims to build a mosque at Ground Zero, writing, ?Across the country in recent months, from California, to Louisiana, to New York, anti-Muslim sentiment has become a prominent feature of opposition to new mosques. At risk in this is religious freedom itself. But not just religious freedom. Also threatened is the respectful civility that enables constructive public discourse in religiously pluralistic democratic societies. First, an attitude of ?freedom for me but not for thee? rings the death knell for liberty itself. Freedom of religion is a right of all human beings, including Muslims. People who oppose the building of mosques in their communities out of anti-Islamic animus are guilty of intolerance and a lack of respect for religious freedom. Such hostility assaults the human dignity of both the hater and the hated.? I hope he is able to persuade those signatories of the Manhattan Declaration who have declined to support religious liberty in this instance to make similarly bold statements.

Professor George has made a name for himself as a defender of religious liberty. That is why his silence heretofore was so noteworthy and so disturbing. I am truly delighted to see that he has raised his voice on this very decisive issue. Welcome to the ranks of the Dreyfusards, Professor George.

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