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Richard Rohr criticizes 'Fortnight for Freedom'

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NCR Today

Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr, a popular spiritual writer and retreat leader, has publicly criticized the U.S. bishops' campaign for religious freedom, saying it "strikes a large part of the population as crying wolf when there is no wolf."

The campaign, undertaken by the bishops as a symbol of opposition to a controversial federal mandate requiring coverage of contraceptives in health care plans, is known as the "Fortnight for Freedom" and is to continue through July 4.

Rohr's comments regarding the campaign, posted June 23, came on his personal blog.

"It feels like entitled people wanting more entitlement," writes Rohr of the campaign. "How different from the early Christian martyrs, whom we piously venerate, who became holy and courageous through the limitations imposed on them by empires and emperors. Too bad Sts. Perpetua and Felicity could not sponsor a fortnight for freedom from their prison cells."

Rohr continues: "It really feels like bishops are shooting themselves in the foot by trying to divert attention away from our own problems and sins. Christian spirituality has always first sought spiritual freedom, inner freedom, freedom from self, freedom for love, and never did we expect governments to supply our ?freedom? by any political mandate whatsoever. Our dear bishops are beginning to look like ?the Republican party at prayer? more than men of the Gospel of Jesus."

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