

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

May 1, 2013 at 8:55am

"Newark Archbishop John Myer's priorities are appalling"

by John McCarthy

NCR Today

New Jersey Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttle is one of the best voices at the statehouse in Trenton. She has an amazing record of standing up for the middle class and the "least of these" among us--no wonder she is a life long Catholic. She wrote a powerful piece that all lay-Catholics should read. It is a piece that touches on a scandal that has made so many feel as though their Church has abandoned them. More importantly, she talks about the difficult responsibility of balancing faith and life as a public official. The op-ed was originally published in the Star Ledger and can be found here: Assemblywoman: Newark Archbishop John Myer's priorities are appalling

Excerpts from the opinion piece below:

"Newark Archbishop John J. Myers must go. I agree wholeheartedly with The Star-Ledger editorial calling for his immediate resignation. If he does not resign, the Roman Catholic Church should swiftly investigate his support and protection of the Rev. Michael Fugee, a priest who admitted to sexual contact with a minor??"

?As a lifelong Catholic and a public official, I was outraged to learn of the archbishop?s efforts to promote Fugee and to continually expose children to him knowing his past behavior. Myers may have confused turning the other cheek with turning a blind eye, but lay Catholics have not.?

?As horrified as I am by Myers? latest disregard for his parishioners, I am sad to say that I am not surprised.?

?Reading about Myers on Sunday, I was reminded of why I was not at church, as I was on so many

Sundays in years past.?

?Several years ago, the pastor of my church received a call from Myers after a single letter requested that I be removed from serving as a lector. Because I am an advocate for marriage equality, it was not appropriate for me to speak publicly in church.?

?To Myers and some others, it did not matter that the bill was titled Marriage Equality and Religious Exemption Act, as it would allow for marriage equality in New Jersey and would not force the church to perform same-sex marriages or even recognize them. I may have been driven away from my church, but my faith has never wavered.?

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