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TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2005

**Questions For John Roberts**

by Michael in New York on [7/26/2005 01:49:00 PM](#)

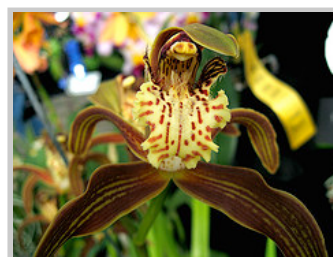
It seems [Sen. Durbin beat me to the punch about questioning John Roberts over Catholicism](#) and his ability to faithfully uphold the Constitution. We don't know what Roberts' position really is -- would he recuse himself right away from any case (Roe v Wade, contraception, gay rights, stem cell testing, etc?) where the Church has taken a firm position? Or would he only recuse himself if he had decided the proper way to vote conflicted with Church teachings? In either case, such a stance would make Roberts unacceptable. In the first case, Roberts would be unavailable for countless important Court decisions -- how'd you like to lose a vote on Roe v Wade, Radical Right? In the second case, Roberts would be refusing to uphold the Constitution and vote accordingly because it would conflict with Church teachings.

Here's how I was going to start tackling this:

Judge Roberts, can you describe to us in detail any time in your career when you've written or signed onto a brief or argued one side of a case or made a judgment that conflicts with the teachings of the Catholic Church on a major issue? In other words, tell us about any time you have worked as a lawyer or advocate or judge or public official on ANY issue that the Church has strongly condemned or opposed. Obviously, this would include issues such as reproductive rights, availability of contraception, equal rights for all Americans to include gays and lesbians, stem cell research and so on.

Judge Roberts, the Catholic Church used to bend over backwards to make clear that Catholic public officials like John F. Kennedy Jr. served their people and their country first and did not answer to Rome. That has changed dramatically in the past five years. Now the Church is making it clear that it believes Catholic politicians and public servants and even citizens MUST answer to Rome. If you do not vote the way the Church tells you to vote -- for example in Presidential elections -- a growing number of bishops around the country with the approval of the Pope may deny you Holy Communion. The Church has said if you do not vote the way the Church tells you to vote that you are committing a mortal sin. Catholics who commit mortal sins and don't repent of them and promise to avoid them in the future are condemned to hell. The very real possibility looms in the future that Catholic public officials who don't vote the way the Church tells them to vote may be threatened with excommunication. There is no question that upholding the Constitution and doing your duty as a public servant would mean going against Church teachings -- for example, every Catholic politician who voted to support the invasion of Iraq went against the beliefs of Pope John Paul II who condemned that invasion as unjust. Judge Roberts, have you ever in your life taken a stance on a public issue or a law for which the Church would now threaten to withhold Holy Communion from you? Are you willing to uphold the Constitution, even if it means being denied Holy Communion, committing a mortal sin and possibly being excommunicated from the Church? (And when the same spiritual punishment will be meted out to...

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