

Wednesday
May 1, 2013
6:45 PM



Seminary
of the
Immaculate
Conception

St. Patrick, Huntington Chapter
Msgr. John Bennett, Pastor

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”**

Who said that, and what does it mean to you? What does it mean to you as a person of faith and a citizen of the United States? The reality – all religious people live in two societies, viz., the sacred and the secular. We tend to leave “sacred” matters to church leaders and “secular” matters to elected or appointed public officials. But often the secular matters contain moral and/or religious implications. Is it right then that we, the laity, remain silent and leave the clergy to defend our freedom of religion and conscience? No! Pope Benedict, Cardinal Dolan, Bishop Murphy and the USCCB have emphasized that the laity has a special charism, or gift, from the Holy Spirit to work in the public square and bring our values into the political debate.

In America, there has too long been a trend away from the sacred towards the secular, and lately away from First Amendment freedom of religion to a mere freedom to worship. The robust freedom of religion that our founders knew would allow each American to follow his conscience, free from intolerance and from government dictates, is now denied to millions of Americans.

Case in point: the Department of Human Health and Services (HHS), as part of the regulations promulgated under the Affordable Care Act, **requires** Catholic hospitals and other Church-affiliated employers to provide insurance coverage for contraception, sterilization and certain abortion inducing drugs in a knowing denial of established church doctrine and in direct denial of freedom of conscience. The mandate has generated predictable outrage. Timothy Cardinal Dolan has stated: “It is not about women’s health...We’re talking about an unwarranted, unprecedented, radical intrusion into a Church’s ability to teach, serve and sanctify on its own.”

To learn more about this imposition on the conscience rights of all Americans and the implications of denial of our freedom of religion, come to a public forum sponsored by the St. Patrick, Huntington chapter of the national Catholics for Freedom of Religion (CFFR) organization. The forum will be held at the **Seminary of the Immaculate Conception**, 440 West Neck Road, Huntington, on **Wednesday, May 1, 2013**. Principal speaker is **Rabbi Aryeh Spero**, author of [Push Back: Reclaiming Our American Judeo-Christian Spirit](#). Rabbi Spero is a dynamic communicator who has addressed the National Press Club, testified in front of the House Judiciary Committee and appeared on countless radio and TV programs. His message is powerful and inspiring, and will touch those of all religious backgrounds.

SCHEDULE

6:45 p.m.	<i>Book Signing</i>
7:15 p.m.	<i>Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance, Opening Prayer</i>
7:30 p.m.	<i>Rabbi Aryeh Spero</i>
8:15 p.m.	<i>Questions & Answers</i>
8:45 p.m.	<i>Book Signing Continued/Reception</i>

For additional information and reservations:

Beverly Malone • 631-423-0483x102 • bmalone@icseminary.edu

**The quoted language was set forth by our Founding Fathers in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution – it is included in the “Bill of Rights.”*

A free will offering to help defray the evening’s expenses will be appreciated.

St. Patrick Chapter Steering Committee

Msgr. John Bennett, Candy Bertuccio, Marybeth Cassidy, Gail Clancy, Beverly Malone, Pat Moynihan
Jack Mulderrig, Michael F. Mullen, Peter Murphy, Richard Peer, Jim Romaine, Barbara Samuells