

# The Deacon's Bench

Where a Roman Catholic deacon ponders the world

Thursday, November 13, 2008

## Woman says she was ordered to leave mass because of Obama signs on car

The election seems to have frayed everybody's nerves -- and **this incident**, first reported in a California paper, bears that out:

A Fairfield woman whose car was adorned with celebratory signs for President-elect Barack Obama is furious that a priest singled her out during Sunday morning Mass and ordered her to leave.



Elizabeth Caster admits her Toyota Sequoia was parked in a loading zone outside of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Fairfield, but said it was common practice by parishioners during services and that two other vehicles parked on either side of her vehicle were not addressed.

Caster said the Rev. Sebastian Meyer humiliated her in front of the congregation, saying from the pulpit, "We cannot have a car with Obama signs written on it on these premises. And I don't care who Obama is."

He continued, "I want this car off the premises in 10 minutes or it will be towed. Whoever's vehicle this is, I want it removed. I don't want to see that car anywhere around here," she said.

The Rev. Meyer did not return calls. An attempt to speak to him face to face ended abruptly Wednesday morning when he announced, "No, we're not writing that," and attempted to snatch a reporter's notebook away.

Caster said the priest followed her and her 10-year-old son out of the church and refused to let her park anywhere in the parking lot.

She had to come back after the service to pick up her parents, who were visiting from Kenya.

Caster, who was contacted by many concerned church members the next day, said she believes it was the Obama slogans that riled the priest.

Among those who witnessed the incident was Joanne Smith, who said she has seen vehicles parked in the yellow zone with signage for the McCain/Palin campaign and is curious as to why Caster's vehicle was singled out.

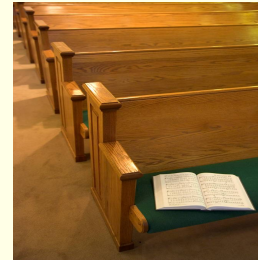
Smith, who regularly attends a different church but brought her father to the Mount Carmel church for Mass on Sunday, said she has witnessed outbursts by the Rev. Meyer before, but never like this.

"He got up there and he was pounding on the pulpit. He was pounding and he was angry," Smith said. "This was the worst I've ever seen."

There's more at [the link](#).

*Photo: Elizabeth and Joe Caster stand with their 10-year-old son Ben in the parking lot of Our Lady of Mount*

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"One filled with joy preaches without preaching." -- Blessed Mother Teresa

### Notable And Quotable

"If you write for God, you will reach many men and bring them joy. If you write for men, you may make some money and you may give someone a little joy and you may make a noise in the world, for a little while. If you write only for yourself, you can read what you yourself have written and after ten minutes you will be so disgusted, you will wish that you were dead." -- Thomas Merton, "New Seeds of Contemplation"

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