



Focus on Religious Freedom

Some Good News for Religious Freedom

A California judge has ruled in favor of a Christian cake designer in the latest court decision regarding the conflict between religious freedom and same-sex marriage.⁽¹⁾ This is the latest in a series of court decisions over several years regarding wedding vendors - such as cake designers, florists, photographers and artists - who refuse to use their creative talents for same-sex ceremonies because of their biblically based belief that marriage is only between a man and a woman.

The evidence showed that the baker, Cathy Miller, both employs and serves LGBT people but that she has a long-standing policy for refusing to bake cakes that violate her Christian beliefs.⁽²⁾

"The State asks this court to compel Miller to use her talents to design and create a cake she has not yet conceived with the knowledge that her work will be displayed in a celebration of a marital union her religion forbids," wrote the Superior Court Judge. "For this court to force such compliance would do violence to the essentials of Free Speech guaranteed under the First Amendment."⁽³⁾

Some Bad News for Religious Freedom

A Colorado Christian baker, Jack Phillips, who won a partial victory of 7-2 at the US Supreme Court in 2018 when he declined to create a wedding cake for a same-sex couple, is now on trial for refusing to design a transgender birthday cake for a woman who requested a specialized cake in honor of her gender transition. Phillips' attorney from Alliance Defending Freedom explained that forcing him to create a message contrary to his religious beliefs violates his right to free speech. Phillips also objects to making cakes with other messages he opposes, including Halloween items.⁽⁴⁾

"It's one thing to be sued repeatedly; it's another to watch your family suffer harassment and face death threats, be forced to lay off longtime employees, and lose a substantial part of your business," reads a statement from Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF).⁽⁵⁾ "No American should be bullied or banished from the marketplace simply for living and working consistently with their faith," ADF stated. "Opponents of religious freedom want to strip away our freedom to live and work consistently with our deeply held beliefs.... Praise God that Jack refused to give up his freedom without a fight. He knows it's not just his own religious freedom on the line - it's yours too."⁽⁶⁾

(christianitytoday.com,10/25/22(1)(2); nregister.com,10/26/22(3); deseret.com,10/24/22; nytimes.com,10/15/22; christianco.com,10/11/22(4)(5); 1cbn.com,10/7/22(6)

Rosary for America - Elections 2022 - Please Pray with Us

Let us pray together to implore God's blessing on our Nation as we choose our leaders. Led by Catholics for Freedom of Religion on Sunday, Nov. 6, rosaries will be prayed on the hour from noon through 5 pm.

To add your presence to this important petition of prayer, call 681-999-0162; Access Code 801851#

"Civic engagement is part of the task of discipleship. It is part of the vocation of all God's faithful who are called by Jesus to be 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world.'"

- Bishop Andrew Cozzens