

**A Public Statement by Dr. Joseph J. Fahey  
on the refusal by the Board of Trustees of Manhattan College  
to recognize the right of adjunct professors to join a union  
September 20, 2015**

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"Shame on the Trustees of Manhattan College for beating up on the adjunct professors by invoking the civil law to block the natural moral law of a worker's right to join a union. The Trustees claim they are defending religious liberty while doing everything in their power to stifle a tiny union that is composed of the poorest and weakest people on our campus. The Trustees are in direct violation of Catholic teaching on unions that actually encourages workers to form or join labor unions.

One moral good cannot be used to trump another moral good. Religious freedom and the freedom of workers to join unions complement rather than conflict with each other. Manhattan College is already free to pursue its stated mission of "social justice" as found in its "Lasallian Catholic mission." In Catholic teaching social justice very much includes the right of workers to form or join labor unions. The Trustees in fighting the right to collective bargaining are violating the mission of Manhattan College.

The Trustees owe the students of Manhattan College an explanation of where the funds are coming from to pay the hefty legal fees that are expended in fighting an adjunct union. Fighting this union has nothing to do with the educational mission of Manhattan College. If student tuition is used to fight this union the students have a right to know that. If external funds are being used to fight the adjunct union, what is their origin?

Make no mistake, this is not a fight against unwarranted governmental intrusion as the Trustees claim. Their fight is against underpaid adjunct faculty who simply wish to bargain collectively for some respect through just wages and benefits. If the Trustees win this fight in Federal Court they will celebrate a victory of legal sophistry over social justice for their adjunct professors. Justice demands that Manhattan's Trustees abandon this wasteful and scandalous fight. They should agree to count the ballots and bargain in good faith if the workers chose a union in a vote they took *four years ago*. Justice delayed is truly justice denied.

Let Manhattan join St. Mary's of California (a Lasallian college), Georgetown, Le Moyne, St. Francis (Brooklyn), and St. Michael's (VT) who have chosen to bargain in good faith with adjunct unions after NLRB certified elections. Why is Manhattan uncommon?"

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