

The ABC of our Islamophobia

Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, April 09, 2015

Historic church destroyed in Melbourne.

Emergency crews were called to a historic church in Melb that was destroyed by a fire on Monday morning.

CRITICISE Islam and you're an "Islamophobe". You risk court, as two Christian pastors in Melbourne found in 2004.

But criticise Christianity — celebrate even the burning of a church — and you're a "progressive". The ABC is your friend.

Islamophobia bad; Christophobia good.

Take last week. In the days before Easter, Christianity's holiest time, no fewer than four Melbourne churches were torched. The loveliest, Brighton's Catholic Church of St James, was burned down, its magnificent stained glass, bells and organ destroyed.

This was not just an attack on a building, but on a community pledged to goodness.

As the St James website reminds parishioners, each have "special talents or gifts ... given to us for the enrichment of the lives of others and so that we can serve God better". So "visit the sick and elderly, feed the hungry, teach those who want to learn, console the lonely and sorrowful ..."

Such teachings have already inspired

Christians to create the Red Cross, St John Ambulance, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul Society, World Vision and many fine private hospitals, hospices and schools.

Yet when St James was destroyed, actor Rachel Griffiths was given sympathetic time on Melbourne ABC radio to say how good she felt. "I was quite elated, like many of my generation, when I heard the news," she said.

See, this church had more than three decades ago employed a paedophile priest, so "it's always been a difficult building for us to drive past".

This church must be burned for the sins of one priest? Should we also burn your Hollywood for the crimes of Roman Polanski, Ms Griffiths?

As Anglican priest Mark Durie, an adjunct research fellow of the Centre for the Study of Islam and Other Faiths at the Melbourne School of Theology, says: "There is a kind of popular mood of hatred of Christianity."

The media class is responsible for much of it, often savaging Christianity in a way it wouldn't dream of doing to Islam. For instance, Fairfax newspapers and the ABC in 2011 damned an obscure US pastor for threatening to burn copies of the Koran.

Yet Australian filmmaker Corey Sinclair marked Easter Monday with a column in the NT News attacking his Christian relatives and boasting of "a small Bible they handed out at one sing-a-long that my friends ended up using for joint paper".

Or take the reaction three years ago to Innocence of Muslims, a laughably bad YouTube clip crudely satirising Islam. Prime minister Julia Gillard called it "truly disgusting" and The Age publish a polemic attacking such "Islamophobia".

Yet SBS marked Easter Sunday — the day of Christ’s supposed resurrection — by screening Monty Python’s *Life of Brian*, a film mocking Christ as “just a naughty boy”.

No respect? No problem.

Likewise, the media routinely portray people opposing the building of new mosques as bigots and extremists, but don’t likewise smear the West Australian Government for now refusing to build a dedicated Christian chapel at the new Perth Children’s Hospital, even though it plans a separate Muslim prayer area.

Extreme sensitivity to rudeness to Muslims may well seem a virtue, but then there’s a puzzling deafness to crimes against Christians.

Last year a university lecturer saw a Muslim woman on a Sydney train take off her scarf, and jumped to the conclusion she must have been scared and needing company. The subsequent hashtag #illridewithyou became a worldwide Twitter sensation, pushed by the ABC and other Leftist media outlets.

But those same media outlets barely reported a word of the Easter address of Pope Francis, who warned of the “brothers and sisters who are persecuted, exiled, killed, beheaded, for the only reason of being a Christian” – “martyrs today” in places such as Syria, Iraq, Nigeria and Kenya who “are more numerous than in the first centuries”.

No, the media looks the other way when Christians, not Muslims, are the victims, and when Muslims, not Christians, are the perpetrators. Even when the slaughter of Christians is too horrible to ignore, note a telling evasion.

Last week, the day before Easter, gunmen from the Islamist al-Shabab slaughtered more than 140 Christian students in Kenya. Yet on three successive days, the ABC television news reports did not mention the faith of the killers — the critical clue to why they killed only Christians. Lateline’s first report also refused to identify the killers’ faith and motive.

Is the ABC now so cowed by fear of seeming “Islamophobic” that it cannot even identify a Muslim terrorist by the cheery light of its burning church?