

What to the US Catholic Bishops is the Fourth of July? A Rhetorical Analysis of Archbishop Lori's Opening Homily and the "Fortnight for Freedom" Campaign

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"Fortnight for Freedom" was the first organized campaign directly appealing to Catholic laity that the US Catholic bishops developed since making religious freedom a lynchpin issue in 2012 election year. This essay is a micro-stylistic analysis of two principal rhetorical strategies employed by Archbishop of Baltimore William Lori in his opening homily. The homily's central goal was to provide a rationale for the Catholic Church's "Fortnight for Freedom" initiative by arguing for the conflation of religious freedom with personal political freedom, which I demonstrate ultimately failed. First, the archaic diction of "fortnight" reinforced unpopular perceptions of the Church's Magisterium as antiquated and out of touch with the moral priorities of contemporary American Catholics. Secondly, false analogies in the form of enthymematic allusions erroneously compared opponents of the Health and Human Services' contraception mandate to Catholic martyrs and President Obama to King Henry VIII.

Keywords: Fortnight for Freedom, US Catholic Bishops, Rhetoric, Archaisms, Analogy

The Supreme Court ruling that upheld the Affordable Care Act (a.k.a. Obamacare) including the controversial U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) "individual mandate" (which requires "religious organizations"¹ to offer health insurance plans that cover contraception, sterilization and pre-abortive services), prompted the US Conference of Catholic Bishops to deploy a statement first drafted in April, 2012 by an Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty. The central focus of the document, *A Statement on Religious Liberty*, addressed fears of defending "our most cherished of American freedoms," religious freedoms, against the Obama administration's "reductive secularism."² Near the close of the statement, the words of Cardinal Roger Mahony, the former

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¹ According to the HHS mandate, the federal government defines a religious organization/employer as one that (1) Has the inculcation of religious values as its purpose; (2) primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets; (3) primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets; and (4) is a non-profit organization under section 6033(a)(1) and section 6033(a)(3)(A)(i) or (iii) of the Internal Revenue Code." Provision of the Code refer to "churches, their integrated auxiliaries, and conventions or associations of churches, as well as to the exclusively religious activities of any religious order." US Department of Health and Human Services, last modified December 9, 2013, <http://www.hrsa/womensguidelines.gov/> (accessed August 15, 2012), 1.

² The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty document, *Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty*. March, 2012, 2.

Archbishop of Los Angeles, framed the gravity of threat and spurred action. “I cannot imagine a more direct and frontal attack on freedom of conscience than this ruling today. This decision must be fought against with all the energies the Catholic community can muster.”³ These energies would be exerted through a “Fortnight for Freedom” campaign. For two weeks starting June 21 on the vigil of the Feasts of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More (both martyrs for their faith) and culminating on the Fourth of July, Catholics were urged to pray, fast, study, catechesis of religious liberty, and publicly protest.⁴ “Fortnight for Freedom” was the first organized campaign directly appealing to the laity that the US Bishops developed since making religious freedom a lynchpin issue in 2012 election year. Additional activities were to include special Masses, a series of pointed homilies, commentaries, and radio and video spots on the theme of religious freedom and the dignity of human conscience.⁵

This essay is a micro-stylistic analysis of two principle rhetorical strategies employed by Archbishop of Baltimore, William Lori in his opening homily. The homily’s central goal was to provide a rationale for the Catholic Church’s “Fortnight for Freedom” initiative by arguing for the conflation of religious freedom with personal political freedom, which I will demonstrate ultimately failed. My analysis hones in on two ineffective rhetorical strategies. First, the archaic diction of “fortnight” reinforced unpopular perceptions of the Church’s Magisterium as antiquated and out of touch with the moral priorities of contemporary American Catholics. Secondly, false analogies in the form of enthymematic allusions erroneously compared opponents of the HHS contraception mandate to Catholic martyrs and President Obama to King Henry VIII.

In medieval fancy Erasmus’s *Adagia* tells of the goblin Titivillus (my own archaic allusion) who “gathered up in a sack the unconsidered trifles of careless speech let fall by monks.”⁶ My purpose in elucidating the specific unconsidered upshots of the US Catholic Bishops’ “Fortnight for Freedom” discourse is to lighten the load of Titivillus by removing such “careless speech” from his bag. Consequently, the analysis should remind religious leaders and rhetorical critics alike of the deleterious corollaries that missteps at the micro-level will have at the macro-level.⁷ When small semantic, syntactic, and stylistic details are overlooked, speech failing to look over the linguistic precipice falls.

“Fortnight for Freedom” Campaign

On June 21, 2012, the Most Reverend William E. Lori—Archbishop of Baltimore officially launched the US Conference of Catholic Bishops’ “Fortnight for Freedom” cam-

³ Cardinal Roger Mahony, “Federal Government Mandate for Contraceptive/Sterilization Coverage,” *Cardinal Roger Mahony Blogs L.A.* (blog), January, 20, 2012, quoted in The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, *Our First, Most Cherished Liberty*, 10.

⁴ The call and specific instructions for “Fortnight for Freedom” are outlined in the conclusion of The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty document, *Our First, Most Cherished Liberty*, 11. Detailed information on the initiative is also located on the USCCB’s website: www.fortnight4freedom.org.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Erasmus, *Adagia*, trans. Robert Bland (London: T. Egerton, 1814), iv viii. 3.

⁷ For more on this theme see Michael C. Leff and Christopher J. Oldenburg, “The Rhetoric of John Kerry,” In *Encyclopedia of Political Communication*, ed. Lynda Lee Kaid and Christina Holtz-Bacha, 377-378 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2008).

campaign at the Basilica of The National Shrine of the Assumption. The decision to commence the campaign at the National Basilica in Maryland was no coincidence. Lori and his ilk were piously aware of significance of the venue. The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption is America's first cathedral and a symbolic site of religious freedom. It was founded in 1634 precisely one century after the martyrdom of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher. Lori is certain to emphasize this historical significance. "Their [More and Fisher's] courageous witness of faith continues to stir the minds and hearts of people yearning for authentic freedom and specifically, for religious freedom...just as it inspired those who came to Maryland a century later in 1634."⁸

The overall Catholic attendance and participation in the "Fortnight for Freedom" launch, described by US Bishops as "a great national campaign" to defend religious freedom, was abysmal. While the *Baltimore Sun* reported the Basilica of the Assumption was filled with Catholic supporters, this was not the case elsewhere.⁹ At New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral, only about two hundred and fifty Catholics attended the "kick off" Mass.¹⁰ The US Bishops encouraged all one-hundred ninety-four dioceses to participate, and smaller scale events did take place. However, in a nation of fifty-seven million Catholics, it is safe to say that the campaign did not have the evangelical and propitious start it had hoped. The overall purpose of Lori's sermon was to employ Thomas More and John Fisher as analogical paragons of religious freedom. However, before evaluating Lori's central analogies, I would like to explore the problematic nature of the bishops' selection of the term "fortnight."

Archaisms: The Stylistic Sins of "Fortnight"

In a letter dated October 15, 1888, Mark Twain famously penned "the difference between the right word and almost the right word is the difference between lightening and lightning bug."¹¹ Twain's strikingly illuminating caveat is buttressed by more than two thousand years of rhetorical theory. Briefly considering classical, medieval, and renaissance rhetorical theory on archaisms reveals just how far Lori and the US Catholic Bishops have strayed from path of stylistic sanctity.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines archaism as "a thing that is very old or old-fashioned, especially an archaic word or style of language or art."¹² Through most of the rhetorical tradition, theorists have cautioned against the use of archaisms. The author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* emphasizes the use of clear, plain and intelligible word choice. Such a style "is achieved by two means, the use of current and proper terms."¹³

⁸ William E. Lori, "Fortnight for Freedom Opening Homily," June 21, 2012, <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/fortnight-for-freedom/fortnight-for-freedom-opening-homily-archbishop-william-lori.cfm> (accessed August 8, 2012), 1.

⁹ Kevin Rector, "Catholics Challenge U.S. Health Policy; Amid Some Protest, Lori Begins Two-Week Initiative Against Obama Mandate," *Baltimore Sun*, June 22, 2012, 3A.

¹⁰ Michele Somerville, "Was the Fortnight for Freedom a Dud in New York City?" *The Huffington Post*, June 30, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michele-somerville/fortnight-for-freedom-new-york-city-dud_b_1621448.html.

¹¹ Mark Twain, *The Wit and Wisdom of Mark Twain*, ed. Alex Ayers (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 252.

¹² *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "archaism." Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

¹³ *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 271.

Current terms are defined as diction “habitually used in everyday speech. Proper terms avoid figurative language and are “the designations specially characteristic of the subject of our discourse.”¹⁴ Literal terms, descriptions which, as Cicero put it, “were born with the things themselves.”¹⁵ The orator who employs the plain style effectively, Cicero tells us “will be modest, spare the use of archaisms and eschew embellishments of language and thought.”¹⁶ Cicero’s disciple, Quintilian, implored a return to the good style of Cicero by disavowing those terms “excessively antique.”¹⁷ The Roman writer, Longinus, in his treatise *On the Sublime* alerts pupils of the frigidity in attempting to use unusual language.¹⁸ Medieval rhetorical theorist, Geoffrey of Vinsauf coaches aspiring poets to “fasten [a] padlock on obscure vocabulary, be not exclusive but rather social in your eloquence.”¹⁹ Echoing the ancients, Vinsauf emphasizes “Speak as the many; think as the few.”²⁰ Count Lodovico from Castiglione’s *The Book of the Courtier* asserts “I would always shun the use of these antique words; the man who does otherwise is making a big mistake as someone who, in order to imitate the ancients, would choose to make a meal of acorns even though there was plenty of flour.”²¹ Digesting the analogy of word choice to gastronomic preferences, Castiglione’s advice calls for a balanced rhetorical diet. Desiderius Erasmus’s *On Copia of Words and Ideas* also expresses inventive prudence with unusual words. “Words can be considered unusual when they do not occur frequently in those authors which provide the bulk of scholars readings. Today we have to take care not to speak in an artificial manner, to keep a good distance between ourselves and the aspirations of those who think to speak strangely is to speak well.”²²

This is precisely the effect I argue the archaism “fortnight” employed by the US Catholic Bishops had on their listeners. Such a term exacerbated the hierarchical distance between the Catholic Church’s Magisterium and the laity. Moreover, it reinforced the perception that Catholic social teaching is outdated and Church leaders are out-of-touch. The term “fortnight,” a calendric term that predates the twelfth century and means “fourteen nights” or two weeks, is exceedingly archaic. Not only does fortnight transgress the precepts of perspicacity instructed by our ancestral pedagogues, a further problem of credibility and proprietary proximity arises for Lori and the US Bishops when one considers where “fortnight” circulates today. Although it appears archaic to the American ear, “fortnight” is still a familiar term used in England.

Archaism and alliteration, notwithstanding, one wonders why rhetors seeking to conflate religious freedom with patriotism and American independence would center the length of their campaign wholly on a frequently used British idiom. Clearly, uttering Brit-

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 149.

¹⁶ Cicero, *Brutus. Orator*, trans. G.L. Hendrickson and H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 325.

¹⁷ George, Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 495.

¹⁸ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, trans. G.M.A Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991), 6.

¹⁹ Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, trans. Margret Nims (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2010), 78.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. George Bull (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), 76.

²² Desiderius Erasmus, *On Copia of Words and Ideas*, trans. Donald B. King and H. David Rix (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2005), 21.

ish terms in the same breath as American Independence is prodigiously incongruous, perhaps, even seditious, and certainly sends the wrong message. Beyond this, the turgidity of the term “fortnight” mirrors or reinforces the ecclesiastical authority’s own swollen opulence, visual extravagance, esoteric and insular tradition. Then again, why should we be surprised with grandiloquent and pretentious prose from the Church hierarchy when one considers Pope Benedict’s penchant for flamboyant fashion: Prada loafers, Gucci eye-wear, ostentatious vestments, oversized mitres, diamond studded crucifixes, his own personal cologne, and camauros (hats) that had not been seen in public for half a century.²³ Frigid diction was not the only problem the US Bishops’ Fortnight for Freedom campaign possessed. Their arguments in the form of allusions and analogies also proved to be less than palatable to the Catholic public.

Heretical Analogies

Lori’s homily opens with an account of his pilgrimage to London where he visited Tyburn Hill, where martyrs, including St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher are buried. Lori’s allusions to More and Fisher become his central arguments and capitalize on both context and kairos. The US Catholic Bishops commenced the “Fortnight for Freedom” campaign on the Feast Day of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher at the first Roman Catholic Cathedral in the United States, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption in Baltimore, Maryland. The national basilica is the first Roman Catholic Cathedral in the United States and according to Lori a “monument to religious freedom.”²⁴ “We do well to speak of St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher in the same breath, because each in his own way symbolizes two aspects of religious freedom.”²⁵

Lori provides some brief historical context on the life of Thomas More. Later he explicitly asks “What does St. Thomas More teach us about religious liberty?”²⁶ More was a devout Catholic whose education and profession as a lawyer are said to have formed his principled and virtuous conscience at a time when “both were routinely scarified for political expediency.”²⁷ More served as Chancellor of England in the days of King Henry VIII. When asked by Henry VIII to sign the Act of Supremacy, repudiate papal authority, and violate his sacred principles and conscience, More intrepidly accepted martyrdom. “Thomas More and John Fisher were beheaded because they refused to comply with the Act of Supremacy, a law which made King Henry VIII Head of the Church and which broke ties of communion with the Roman Pontiff”²⁸ Both More and Fisher are used here as representative anecdotes, “imperishable example[s] of moral integrity” and defenders of individual religious freedom and the religious freedom of church institutions. Beyond this, as a figurative argument the references to More and Fisher function as allusive analogies and invite a linkage between Thomas More and “that conscientious private employer or employee who, seeks to avoid doing or facilitating moral evil in the course of daily

²³ Igor Ogorodnev, “Vatileaks, Holy Tweets, Santa Hats: Pope Benedict XVI in facts & photos,” *Reuters*, February 11, 2013, <http://rt.com/news/pope-facts-media-gaffes-controversy-948/>.

²⁴ Lori, “Fortnight,” 1.

²⁵ Lori, “Fortnight,” 2.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Lori, “Fortnight,” 1.

work.”²⁹ In this extreme analogical pole vault from 1534 to 2012, the Affordable Care Act is compared to the Act of Supremacy, and a tacit intertextual comparison is made between Henry the VIII and President Barack Obama.³⁰

Christopher Tindale explains the oblique rhetorical work of allusions. “Intertextual references... evoke ideas in the mind of an audience and draw them toward a conclusion. Allusions convey and indirect reference in passing without making explicit mention.”³¹ Likewise, analogies are inventive argumentative strategies that enable the expansion of imaginative and critical thought. However, when evaluating analogic or any arguments from a rhetorical perspective, we must always ask, as Christopher Tindale suggests, “how is this argument *experienced* by its audience?”³² Lori has provided background on the central conflict of More’s life and his martyrdom thereby aiding the audience in understanding the evocation of the allusion. So, even if Catholics did not know the story of Thomas More, Lori has increased their appreciation of More’s religious freedom in the exposition of his homily and primes them to perform the analogical labor that reasons More to “that conscientious private employee or employer who, seeks to avoid doing or facilitating moral evil in the course of daily work.”³³

Yet, the argumentative work of analogy is more complicated and its effect is contingent on whether auditors indeed find the symmetrical connections convincing. In the words of Tindale “Is the connection between *x* and *A* sufficient to increase *A*’s plausibility? This requires a judgment on the part of the evaluator, as assessing plausible reasoning often will.”³⁴ Questions pertaining to the strength of the resemblances, shared structural relations, and parallel contexts evinced by the analogy will be probed. For example, does the passing of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 place a Catholic employee or employer in the same position as Thomas More in 1534? Does the Catholic employee face confinement in federal prison for holding steadfast to their religious convictions? If they refused to comply with specific tenets of Obamacare do they risk violent bodily injury or death? Could not the Catholic employer, employee, or institution opt out of or simply refrain from action that they believe to be depraved?³⁵ Moreover, additional criteria for

²⁹ Ibid., 3.

³⁰ The unholy ad hominem attacks were not confined simply to Lori’s rhetoric. Elsewhere Obama’s Healthcare policies were described as “despotism” and “totalitarian incursions against religious freedom.” More explicit comparisons of Obama to Stalin and Hitler were made by Bishop Daniel Jenky. See the sermon of Daniel Jenky, Bishop of Peoria, IL, “Bishop Jenky: Obama Like Hitler, Stalin,” YouTube, April 17, 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJOnVLSFyE8>. Also see David Gibson, “Catholic Bishops Start ‘Fortnight For Freedom’ Initiative, Issue Rallying Cry for ‘Religious Freedom.’” *Huffington Post*, April 12, 2012. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/12/catholic-bishops-fortnight-for-freedom_n_1421971.html.

³¹ Christopher W. Tindale, “Textual Allusion as Rhetorical Argumentation: Gorgias, Plato and Isocrates,” in *Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on Argumentation*, Frans H. van Eemeren, J. Anthony Blair, Charles A. Willard, Bart Garssen, eds., 1359-1363 (Amsterdam: Sic Sat, 2007), 1359.

³² Christopher W. Tindale, *Rhetorical Argumentation: Principles of Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004), 75.

³³ Lori, “Fortnight,” 3.

³⁴ Tindale, *Rhetorical Argumentation*, 76.

³⁵ As was the subsequent case when the Obama Administration, in an effort to accommodate religious organizations’ concerns over birth control, established the allowance of religious organizations (other than solely churches) to opt out of including birth control coverage in their employee insurance plans. In those instances, the insurers themselves will offer contraception coverage to enrollees directly, at no additional cost. See Jonathan Cohn, “UPDATED: Obama’s Deal on Birth Control Coverage,” *New Republic*, February 10, 2012.

evaluating the veracity of an analogy is whether it associates two ideas or objects in the same category that share essential resemblances applicable to the conclusion being advanced by the rhetor. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca remind us of the analogy's unstable status; they are "no different than any other kind of reasoning, since the conclusion of all of them can always be subjected to further testing."³⁶ Perelman also inquires "just how far can an analogy be extended?"³⁷ I.A. Richards notes that stretching an analogy too far runs the risk of collapse.³⁸

Upon further scrutiny of the analogies used by Lori and the US Bishops, the skeptic is compelled to evaluate if similarity has trespassed beyond its parallel boundaries into transgression. Perelman admonishes "from a probative viewpoint, an analogy must be kept within certain limits if it is not to impair its function of strengthening conviction."³⁹ As we examine Lori's central allusive analogies of More and Fisher as paradigms of heroic religious freedom we begin to see just how unorthodox and even hypocritical the analogies are. Tables 1 and 2 codify and extend the erroneous contextual and ideational similitudes between both the More and Fisher analogies.

By far the most egregious abuse of resemblances is evident when one recalls the history of Thomas More's own political career as Lord Chancellor from 1529-1532. His chief responsibilities included the prosecution, torture, and execution of heretics. While contrary historical apologies and questions of: "Is what More did considered torture?" abound, there is historical evidence that he was directly involved in "burning at the stake" at least six "reformers," who sought their own religious freedom from corrupt ecclesiastical dogma, i.e. the sale of indulgences, etc.⁴⁰ What else could burning a human being alive be other than torture? In light of More's historical and occupational objectives regarding others' desire for religious freedom, Lori's repeated extolling of More's moral conscience as a steadfast champion of religious freedom gives one pause in adhering to the analogy.

Table 1. Analogical extensions between the Affordable Care Act of 2010 and the Supremacy Act of 1535

St. Thomas More	Catholic Employer or Employees (opponents of Affordable Care Act)
Henry the VIII	Barack Obama
Monarchy (No Separation of Church and State)	Democracy (Separation of Church and State)
Violation of act results in loss of physical freedom and martyrdom	Violation of act results in breach of religious freedom and neglect of civil rights

³⁶ Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Norte Dame: University of Norte Dame Press, 1969), 372.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 385.

³⁸ I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press 1936), 133.

³⁹ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, 386.

⁴⁰ See Richard Rex, "Thomas More and the Heretics: Statesman or Fanatic?" in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas More*, ed. George M. Logan, 93-115 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

If Thomas More became the dominant analogy for the Catholic “conscientious private employer or employee, then, John Fisher came to “symbolize for us [Catholics] our struggle to maintain religious freedom for church institutions and ministries such as our schools and charities.”⁴¹ As we are told John Fisher, priest and bishop, found himself in trouble with King Henry VIII when he stalwartly opposed state interference in Church matters. When forced to sign the Act of Supremacy, Fisher refused and experienced the same fate as Thomas More.⁴² Lori quotes the martyr’s final words: “I cannot in anywise possibly take [the oath], except I should make shipwreck of my conscience, and then were I fit to serve neither God nor man.”⁴³ Lori also informs his flock that in the aftermath of Fisher’s beheading, “churches, monasteries, and centers of learning were seized and destroyed by royal power.”⁴⁴ In what follows I briefly analyze the aforementioned examples: Fisher as a synecdoche of Catholic institutions, the “shipwreck of conscience” figurative analogy, and consequent seizure and destruction of Church property by royal power.

In Lori’s attempt to yoke together religious freedom and personal political freedom, he uses Fisher as a synecdoche functioning as a partial representative of the right to religious freedom granted to institutional wholes. He also operates as a representative of all individual citizens afforded the personal freedoms by the US Constitution. Lori states “Our church and their institutions have freedom not only because they are made up of individual persons endowed with freedom, but also because our institutions are like persons.”⁴⁵ Here the rhetorical critic cannot help but read Lori’s analogy as an enthymematic allusion and subtle endorsement of Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. Recall at the Iowa State Fair in August 2011, Romney remarked that “corporations are people.”⁴⁶ Lori compares institutions to people because he wants to make an argument against the Obama administration’s narrow definition of a “church.” But again what becomes the issue here is whether the audience is likely to be persuaded that institutions are indeed people. Moreover, the implicit Romney endorsement is another attempt to bridge the historical chasm in the analogical contexts (1535 and 2012) being proffered.

Next, Lori’s articulation of Fisher’s figurative analogy “shipwreck of my conscience” may be read as nothing more than a dramatic and elegant metaphor. However, it is not until analyzing what Lori says a paragraph later that rhetorical work of Fisher’s metaphor is more clearly advanced. Lori invites the audience to analogically connect Fisher’s metaphor to the contemporary controversy between the HHS mandate and Church institutions. “We surely are not facing the dire brutality that confronted St. John Fisher, but our Church and her institutions do find themselves in perilous waters.”⁴⁷ Lori’s disclaimer takes the form of the *paralepsis* or a *praeteritio*, the figure of speech that employs strategic disregard and omission in which the speaker or writer emphasizes something by pro-

⁴¹ Lori, “Fortnight,” 4.

⁴² More and Fischer were tried and found guilty of treason. They were sentenced to death by torture; however, deemed to be too weak to endure torture, the King commuted their torture and both were beheaded.

⁴³ Lori, “Fortnight,” 4.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ See Philip Rucker, “Romney Says ‘Corporations Are People’ at Iowa State Fair,” *Washington Post*, August 11, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mitt-romney-says-corporations-are-people/2011/08/11/gIQABwZ38I_story.html.

⁴⁷ Lori, “Fortnight,” 4.

fessing to ignore it. And if it is true that the destructive upshots of Fisher’s sixteenth century defiance are not parallel to the implications of Obamacare as Lori acknowledges, then, why extend the figurative analogy of “shipwreck of conscience” with the phrase “perilous waters.” I contend that Lori’s *paralepsis* of claiming to disclaim similarities between the two contexts actually does argue for resemblances through the prolongation of the nautical analogy. Moreover, the aforementioned connection is buttressed implicitly by Lori’s use of feminine pronoun “she”, applied to both ships and the Church. Finally, the interlacement of *paralepsis* and analogy precipitates an enthymematic slippery slope fallacy that if Obamacare is not opposed the outcome for religious organizations will be deleterious.

Table 2. Analogical extensions between St. John Fisher and contemporary Catholic institutions

St. John Fisher	Catholic Church and her institutions (institutions are persons)
After Fisher’s martyrdom, churches, monasteries, and centers of learning seized and destroyed by Royal power	Under the ACA Churches (and later religious organizations) are granted exemptions and opt outs
“Shipwreck of conscience”	Catholic institutions in “perilous waters”

To summarize, in addition to the archaic diction of “fortnight,” the campaign unsuccessfully galvanized Catholic laity primarily because the chief analogies of More and Fisher were not accepted by auditors and failed to be adequately persuasive. The representative analogies were perceived to have stretched the case too far, or were applied too narrowly to those affected Catholics.

Conflating Religious and Individual Freedom

Hitherto I have been arguing and analyzing the discursive pitfalls of Lori’s homily and the broader US Catholic Bishops’ “Fortnight for Freedom” campaign. However, this section explicates Lori’s rather inventive and effective attempt to yoke examples and historical expressions of religious freedom and individual liberty. His section titled “Linking the Two Freedoms” culminates with the caveat: “If we fail to defend the rights of individuals, the freedom of institutions will be at risk and if we fail to defend the rights of our institutions, individual liberty will be at risk. More needs Fisher and Fisher needs More.”⁴⁸ From a micro-stylistic and syntactical vantage point, what we witness in the above passage is an elegant instance of linguistic iconicity performed through the conflation of form and content. As Leff and Sachs explain, “discursive form often enacts representational content.”⁴⁹ In other words, Lori’s rhetorical goal of conjoining individual freedom and religious institutional freedom is enacted through the use of a graceful *chiasmus*, or double reverse antithesis. The order of the terms in the first two parallel clauses is reversed in the second. Its rhetorical effect is powerful, and as Richard Lanham maintains

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁹ Michael Leff and Andrew Sachs, “Words the Most Like Things: Iconicity and the Rhetorical Text,” *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54, no. 3 (1990): 258.

“seems to set up a natural internal dynamic that draws the parts closer together.”⁵⁰ Lori’s *chiasmus* engenders a balancing and unifying rhetorical effect; his message of the necessity of holding the two freedoms as an inseparable whole is reinforced again by his central allusive analogies this time crafted by *chiasmus*: “More needs Fisher and Fisher needs More.”

American politicians have long paraded using the Cross as a political prop, exemplifying a form of what Robert Bellah has labeled “civil religion” and Roderick Hart “civic piety.”⁵¹ Despite the eloquent aesthetic attempts in the argumentative forms of allusions, analogies, *paralepsis* and *chiasmus*, perhaps another rhetorical reality that explains the failure of Lori’s homily and the Fortnight for Freedom campaign is a politico-religious axiom proposed by Hart. Civil religion is not an activist form of rhetoric.⁵² Perhaps unaware of this, Lori’s peroration alludes to two final religious civic saints, George Washington and the lesser known Charles Carroll.⁵³ “For as George Washington said in his Farewell Address, “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports.”⁵⁴ Capitalizing off the ideographic and cultural mythic status of George Washington as a representative spokesman for the amalgamation of religious and individual freedom is perhaps an expected *topos* in a speech for a campaign that culminates on the Fourth of July. However, the demythologist as well as the historian will note the fact that many of the Founding Fathers were agonistics, atheists, and Deism, not Christianity, was the paradigm for America’s national faith.⁵⁵

Lori’s final allusive bridge between faith and personal freedom ends where he began with a reference that connects to his homily’s physical context. Charles Carroll, “the cousin of Archbishop John Carroll, who laid the cornerstone of this Basilica in 1806 was the only Catholic who signed the Declaration of Independence.”⁵⁶ Carroll’s history and own testimony provides Lori with the clearest link between the two freedoms. As a Catholic, Carroll was prohibited by Maryland colonial law from participating in the civic arena. Lori suggests Carroll’s motives for joining the revolution by quoting him directly “to obtain religious as well as civic liberty.”⁵⁷ Lori closes with a call for action by employing unifying parallelism “for the glory of God, for the good to the Church and for the love of country” in one final effort at conflating religious and ecclesiastical institutions with patriotism.

⁵⁰ Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 33.

⁵¹ Robert N. Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975); Roderick P. Hart, *The Political Pulpit* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1977).

⁵² Hart, *The Political Pulpit*, 81.

⁵³ *Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty* is more extensive, referencing James Madison’s delineation of conscience as “the most sacred of all property” and Thomas Jefferson’s assurances to the Ursuline Sisters that the government would not interfere in their ministries. See The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, *Our First, Most Cherished Liberty*, 6.

⁵⁴ Lori, “Fortnight,” 7.

⁵⁵ Richard T. Hughes, *Myths America Lives By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 54.

⁵⁶ Lori, “Fortnight,” 7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

Conclusion

According to the US Catholic bishops, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) mandate is an attack on religious liberty and a violation healthcare employee's conscience and sacred principles. The rhetorical purpose of the homily and larger campaign was to rally Catholics to see the individual mandate as an assault on religious liberty and to respond by participating in the "Fortnight for Freedom." The purpose of this paper has been to conduct a micro-stylistic analysis of two principal rhetorical strategies in Archbishop William Lori's Opening homily which kicked-off the US Catholic Bishops' "Fortnight for Freedom" campaign. Despite some elegantly crafted rhetorical arguments in Lori's homily, to date, the overall "Fortnight for Freedom" campaign lies anemic and moribund. Perhaps the better question to ask is "What to the US Catholic is the Fortnight for Freedom?" To which I answer a campaign that failed due to rhetorical missteps on the micro-level of diction and the figurative level of employing enthymematic allusions in the form of false and ineffective analogies. An effort to conflate religious and individual freedom over a highly narrow provision in the Affordable Care Act only reinforced the distance between the majority of US Catholics and their leaders.