



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 10, 2021

Lawsuit: Catholic School Went Woke. Couple Wants Big Pledge Rescinded, Tuition Returned

A Catholic school in Tampa, Florida, went woke, and might soon find itself broke if Catholic parents in the city follow the lead of Anthony and Barbara Scarpo.

The Scarpos have filed a lawsuit to rescind a \$1.35 million pledge to Academy of the Holy Names. The school is peddling the usual fashionable narrative, the lawsuit alleges. In this case, the [Tampa Bay Times reported](#), it's the leftist take on race and the Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name.

Understandably, the Scarpos want to terminate their pledge because they didn't intend to pay for fashionable leftism.



BCFC/iStock/Getty Images Plus

A lawsuit from two Tampa philanthropists claims the Academy of Holy Names has "become woke" and strayed from the Catholic education they believed they were signing up for. <https://t.co/luyc7nIWxd>

— Champa Bay Times (@TB_Times) [July 7, 2021](#)

The Pledge

The couple pledged the money in 2017, and "asked for their donation to be used toward the school's master plan and for scholarships for disadvantaged students," the *Times* reported. As of 2018, the couple had donated \$240,000 of the pledge and served as major fundraisers.

They raised more than \$9 million. Such was the couple's munificence that the auditorium now bears their name. It's called the Scarpo Family Theater.

Now, though, the Scarpos are "alleging fraud and a lack of fidelity to Catholic teaching," [the newspaper reported](#):

With one daughter graduated and the other transferred to a different high school, the couple last week filed a 13-count, 45-page lawsuit asking that their pledge be rescinded.

The school, they charge, has "lost its way" by distancing itself from mainstream Catholicism and embracing a divisive "woke culture" where priority is given to "gender identity, human sexuality and pregnancy termination among other hot button issues." The lawsuit makes clear the couple's displeasure with the way the school has dealt with issues of race, saying students are made to feel guilty for being white and having enough money to attend the academy.

The Scarpos also want tuition money refunded. The school should stop advertising itself as Catholic,



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they argue. And the Florida Catholic Conference should not accredit it.

The lawsuit includes Anthony Scarpo's letter to the school detailing its dive into daffy leftism.

"The continued indoctrination of your twisted version of social and racial justice, equity, inclusion, sexuality and today's politically correct narrative has permeated like a stench through the halls of the Academy and been allowed to seep into the minds of our children, causing stress, anger, guilt and confusion," Scarpo wrote when his older daughter graduated.

Continued Scarpo:

You were always eager to solicit our hard-earned money and take what you could but held firm as you dragged dozens if not hundreds of conservative families and teachers through your reimagined, highly progressive world, even as parents and students asked you ... pleaded with you to stop, slow down.

As well, the lawsuit cites a letter from the school's former president and its board chairman that burbled the usual leftist platitudes, the newspaper reported:

The letter stated that "rejecting the racism and hatred reflected in the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd and Breonna Taylor ... it is imperative we have conversations that are uncomfortable, learn from them, reconcile and grow."

It also said that "the social teaching of the Church and our participation within this teaching should be at the heart of what guides our work as a community. The well-being of all — staff and pupils — requires the removal of any barriers of prejudice, discrimination and oppression if we are all to strive and realize our full potential as unique and fulfilled human beings."

The lawsuit says the letter didn't "recognize the harm to their White, non-Diverse students by making them believe that they and their families are personally responsible for the historic harm(s) some members of our society have visited on other members of our society."

And parents were fuming about a blackboard with a pro-homosexual message.

"Not Being Heard"

The lawsuit, Fox News added, alleges that the school is focused on "gender identity, human sexuality and pregnancy termination among other hot button issues" and required white students "check their white privilege."

"They were paying \$23,000 per year for a Catholic education which they felt strongly about," attorney [Adam Levine told](#) the network:

Over the last couple of years, the school has embraced the new woke culture and the Scarpos don't really object to teaching the kids about almost anything but they object to the teaching of kids in the absence of what the church says or in the absence of the church's positions.

Of course, the school denies the claim, the [Times reported](#). "We can discern no motivation behind the



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lawsuit other than attention-seeking by your clients, and a desire by you to build a brand,” attorney Gregory Hearing wrote to Levine.

A court, he wrote, cannot “delve into whether the substance of matters taught by a Catholic school are consistent with a Catholic education” because it would “violate the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution.”

Hearing said the school might file a counterclaim to force the Scarpos to meet their pledge.

The school says its curriculum is fully Catholic.

Hat tip: [Daily Caller](#)



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