

**A WVOX/WVIP Interview**  
**Conducted by William O'Shaughnessy**  
**March 8, 2016**

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**William O'Shaughnessy:**

Timothy Cardinal Dolan ... Eminence, you honor us with your presence.

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Bill, you honor me with the invitation. And it's good to be with you. You are a legend, you know. Although this is my first visit to your beautiful, modern station ... I know you were close to Cardinal O'Connor ... he was here some years ago – and you've written about him and would introduce him to your friends and at dinners very often. I mean – you're like Georgie Jessel! And you were kind enough when I got to New York to send me some of your excellent books. I'm kind of awed to be with you ...

**WO:**

Thank you, Eminence. Your imprimatur means a great deal to me. Speaking of which ... you know, you're like a rock star, if you'll forgive me ... the way you walked in the station only to be met with photographers, microphones and television cameras ...

**Cardinal Dolan:**

I thank you for saying that. I've never been called that before. Now you know Saint Peter was

called “The Rock.” Are you comparing me to Saint Peter then? I don’t mind being compared to a saint, but I don’t know about a rock star.

**WO:**

Eminence ... we read in the paper and we know you give many eulogies. You pray over people who go to a better – and we’re sure – a better world. But you’re always in a great mood! How the hell do you do it?

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Have you ever heard of Guinness Stout! (laughter) No ... it’s your faith, it’s your hope, right? It’s especially hope, Bill.

Look ... what hope means ... that we believe everything is in God’s hands and that everything, ultimately, is going to work out for the good for those who believe. So even in moments of trial and adversity, tears and sorrows ... yes ... we don’t want to deny them. But you know this isn’t the last word. God has the last word and God’s last word is always life and light and goodness and eternal life. So why would you get down? Why would you get depressed? Maybe every once in a while, momentarily. But life’s attitude would always be upbeat and hopeful.

**WO:**

Cardinal Dolan ... a friend of yours of sainted memory – one Mario Matthew Cuomo – said he prayed for “sureness.” You seem pretty sure of things.

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Well I hope there's a confidence there. But you know what, Bill, there's also a wisdom – especially in our Catholic belief – that sometimes confidence comes in knowing that an absolute sureness and certainty ... you're not always going to have. And sometimes there's an ambivalence, sometimes there's reason to be afraid and you stare them in the eyes and you just say I know they are out there, but darn it, I ... am ... confident! Be silent, be calm, be confident. The Bible tells us Be not afraid, I'm with you! If you believe that, Bill, think of what we can do. There's nothing we can't do with Him.



**WO:**

Cardinal Dolan, Your Eminence, you're not only possessed of a great personality ... but if you'll allow me ... you're also a hell of a writer! You write these gorgeous columns in Catholic New York. And what's your slogan, your motto, right across the top of the column ...?

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Oh ... you know what it is: To Whom Should We Go? See Bill, we bishops, when you're made a bishop they say to you – and you don't have much time to decide – what will your motto be? And you've got to choose a Latin phrase – a phrase in the Bible in Latin. And I said what do you mean to the cardinal who told me the Holy Father wanted me to be bishop.

He said what's one of your favorite phrases in the Bible. And I had to think for but a minute and said, "Well ... when Saint Peter said to Jesus, Lord to whom shall we go? You have the word of everlasting life. To whom shall we go? Ad quem ibimus?" Can we use that? He said you bet! And I got it as my motto.

**WO:**

Eminence ... speaking of a rock star ... The Pope ... the Bishop of Rome ... you guys had a wonderful visit ...

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Did we ever ...!

**WO:**

Tell us something we haven't heard – that we don't know about him.

**Cardinal Dolan:**

First of all he was happy to admit he didn't know too much about New York. So the whole time we're stuck in the back of that tiny Fiat, he's asking me questions – as he's waving to the people about New York. And what fascinates people about Manhattan except the huge skyscrapers, right? So as we're driving down one of the streets, he says "Timothy (he and my mom can call me by my first name!) Look at that! What is that monument?" I said, Holy Father, that's an apartment building! (laughter) He said, "Oh my!" and it dawned on him that's maybe the way New Yorkers live!

**WO:**

So you had a good time?

**Cardinal Dolan:**

We did, indeed, you bet!

**WO:**

Do you think his trip was successful?

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Well, I know he thought it was successful and I sure do. And when I saw him later – I had to spend three weeks in Rome for the Synod on Marriage and Family ... and when we had a couple of minutes to chat, he said, “You Americans are so friendly.”

And he said he was “overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of my reception.” Now, Bill, at first I was startled by that, but then it dawned on me, what’s the caricature of we Americans beyond our shores? The rest of the world thinks we’re pagans, we’re materialists. We hate religion ... we don’t like God. We know different. Americans are deeply religious and believers. There are churches all over. But a European or South American has this caricature ... and when he came here and saw this exuberant reception and welcome, it moved him very much. And he said, my Lord, this is America and they’re open to the Word ... they’re open to the Message. They’re open to the Gospel. They’re open to me! And I think that moved him.

**WO:**

Your Eminence ... thank you for being with us today.

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Invite me back, will you, Bill. And don't forget ... I hope I can have you on my radio program on Sirius XM to talk about that book on Mario Cuomo which we all await.

**WO:**

Sir, here's one more and this is the one where I probably shouldn't do another thirty seconds ... but as I mercifully yield ... what about the political scene here? Will I lose you forever if I ask you to comment on the Republicans and Democrats? You haven't got a horse in the race, have you?

**Cardinal Dolan:**

No ... I don't. (laughter) But I am really interested in politics. I don't know if you knew that I did my graduate work in American History, so I'm a historian of politics. I follow it closely. But I don't allow myself to get tangled up in the details. Let me just say that every morning I've been lighting a candle in front of Saint Jude (laughter) at Saint Patrick's! There would seem to be a lot of political uncertainty and I pray we'll soon bring about some type of "clarity" in the political scene.



**WO:**

Mario Cuomo, Eminence, would have been crazy – over the moon – about this Pope. But I'm going to reveal something you may not know. He was rooting for you for that job!

**Cardinal Dolan:**

You're kidding?

**WO:**

No, I'm not kidding.

**Cardinal Dolan:**

Well, how did he win three terms and I didn't get one! (laughter)

**WO:**

Sir, you honor us ...

**Cardinal Dolan:**

You honor us, Bill ... God bless you and your radio stations ... and their listeners ... particularly those who are struggling. Know that the Lord is with you ... and may these beautiful airwaves carry the Lord's blessing through all who are privileged to work for this station – especially Father Chris Montaro, your newest talk show host

*William O'Shaughnessy, a former president of the New York State Broadcasters Association, was chairman of Public Affairs for the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington. He has been a point man and advocate for the broadcasters of America on First Amendment and Free Speech issues and is presently chairman of the Guardian Fund of the Broadcasters Foundation of America, the national charitable organization. He is also a longtime director and member of the Executive Committee of the Foundation. He has operated WVOX and WVIP, two of the last independent stations in the New York area, for over 60 years as president and editorial director.*

*He is the author of "AirWAVES" (1999) ... "It All Comes Back to Me Now" (2001) ... "More Riffs, Rants and Raves" (2004) ... and "VOX POPULI: The O'Shaughnessy Files," released in January, 2011. He has also written "Mario Cuomo: Remembrances of a Remarkable Man," a tribute to his late friend Governor Mario M. Cuomo. His newest book RADIOactive for Fordham University Press, another anthology with interviews, commentaries, speeches and tributes was published in 2019. He is presently working on Townies, a paean to those without wealth, influence or high estate in suburban Westchester County, the heart of the Eastern Establishment.*