

School District Defends Teacher, Parking Lot New Testament Scripture Remains

Read Time: 1 Minute 29 Seconds

A Jewish instructional assistant at a Florida high school is upset about a Bible verse painted on a colleague's parking spot, but the school district says no violation has been committed and the Bible verse will remain.

Marina Gentilesco, who works at Winegrass Ranch High School in Pasco County, says she is angered each day when she passes by the parking spot and sees the New Testament scripture of Philippians 4:13, which reads, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me," local Fox affiliate Fox 59 recently reported. Gentilesco says she would not mind such a biblical display at a church, but believes it is out of place on a state-funded school ground.

"You put it on a state-funded property, and I'm not OK with it," she says.

Gentilesco complained that the scripture offended her as a Jewish person, but Pasco County Schools Public Information Officer says no laws or ordinances have been broken, and that the scripture is simply "personal expression."

Hegarty told Fox 59 that "there is no proselytizing going on," and that the parking spot is "not compelling students to do anything one way or the other."

"It's just a teacher expressing themselves just like they might wear a crucifix on their shirt," Hegarty says. "Teachers and students are free to express themselves."

A refreshing attitude, for sure, but Gentilesco brought up the

Holocaust from World War II, saying her parents told her stories of the awful extermination of millions of Jews during the war and infers that it is a form of antisemitism.

Gentilesco said the verse, in the apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians, brings back painful memories when she sees it.

"It brings me to the verge of tears because it brings me back to the 6 million that perished," she says. "Six million perished because of our faith—because we're Jews." {eo}

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