

# Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church

December 4, 2006

Mr. John P. Sarcone  
Polk County Attorney  
206 - 6th Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Mr. Sarcone:

Cannabis is my Sacrament and my right to use Cannabis is protected by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000bb et seq. and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000cc et seq. as interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court on February 21, 2006, in *Gonzales v. O Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao do Vegetal (UDV)*, No. 04-1084, and *Cutter v. Wilkinson*, No. 03-9877:

<http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/05pdf/04-1084.pdf>

<http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/04pdf/03-9877.pdf>

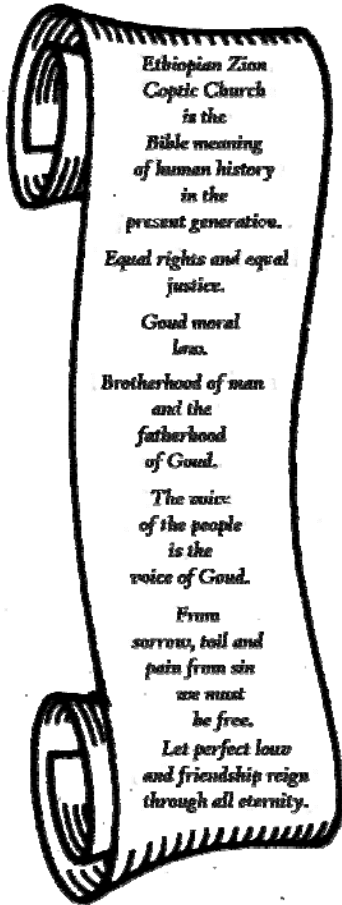
Copies of these two decisions are attached (55 pages double sided).

The Supreme Court of the United States held that the drug laws are not determinative in situations involving the religious use of drugs:

“Under the more focused inquiry required by RFRA and the compelling interest test, the Government’s mere invocation of the general characteristics of Schedule I substances, as set forth in the Controlled Substances Act, cannot carry the day.” Slip Opinion No. 04-1084 at page 11.

“The fact that the Act itself contemplates that exempting certain people from its requirements would be ‘consistent with the public health and safety’ indicates that congressional findings with respect to Schedule I substances should not carry the determinative weight, for RFRA purposes, that the Government would ascribe to them.”

Slip Opinion No. 04-1084 at pages 11-12.



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I have been arrested numerous times for practicing my religion, in Muscatine County, Iowa in 1977, in Jasper County, Iowa in 1978, in Bangor County, Maine in 1980, and in Dade County, Florida in 1984. In light of the fact that I've been repeatedly arrested for practicing my religion, I want to know if you are going to prosecute me if I exercise my Sacramental right to use, grow, possess, and distribute marijuana?

I have incorporated and I am preparing to go forward in terms of establishing and exercising my religion, including the use, growing, possession, and distribution of marijuana. Before I go forward I want to know if you will prosecute me.

I've attached copies of correspondence between State Representative Ed Fallon (letters dated July 19, 2006 and October 4, 2006) and the Attorney General of Iowa (letters dated July 25, 2006 and November 3, 2006) regarding this question, as well as a copy of my letter to Sheriff Dennis Anderson dated November 20, 2006 regarding this question.

Pursuant to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000bb et seq. and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000cc et seq. you have a duty to respond to me and answer my question regarding my establishment and free exercise of religion.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Rev. Carl Olsen  
Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church  
130 E Aurora Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50313-3654  
515-288-5798

Sent by Certified Mail:  
Return Receipt No. 7005 3110 0003 2963 1948