

AL ROKER'S BRAND OF HUMOR OFFENDS CATHOLICS

NBC's weatherman, Al Roker, has written a book about parenting and fatherhood, *Don't Make Me Stop This Car*. In making the rounds on TV talk shows, he has repeatedly told a story about his wife's use of a fertility drug, perganol, making the claim that the drug is made by a company that is a subsidiary of the Vatican. Roker contends that perganol is extracted from a hormone, FHS, which itself is obtained from the urine of "menopausal nuns" who live in the Vatican. As he told Larry King on June 16, the drug is "expensive stuff," adding that "it was cheaper to adopt a nun, you know, and just have her pee in a cup."

When Roker appeared with Tim Russert on CNBC and with Regis and Kathy Lee on ABC, he made similar comments. And just last night, he told Conan O'Brien the same tale, saying that it would have made more sense to get Sister Bertrille of "The Flying Nun" to go into the lab and urinate.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, issued the following statement on Roker's humor today:

"Not that it makes any difference, but for the record, the Vatican sold its shares in Serono, the fertility-drug maker, in 1970; the company collected urine samples from 110,000 postmenopausal women volunteers in Italy, Spain, Brazil and Argentina.

"But what matters is not historical accuracy, it is the coarseness of Al Roker's brand of humor. He just can't wait to tell everyone his little story how it would be cheaper to adopt a nun and have her pee in a cup. How much it would cost to rent a slave, he does not say. And with good reason: it might hit home. Perhaps Mr. Roker would benefit from a course

in diversity run by the Catholic League, but unfortunately we're too busy dealing with anti-Catholic bigots to have such a luxury."