

ARTIST DEFILES VIRGIN MARY: EPISCOPAL BISHOP OFFERS HIS BLESSINGS

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The next time someone tells you that all the Catholic bashing in this country comes from secularists, let him know about the Episcopal Bishop of New York. Donohue's letter is self-explanatory. Thus far, there has been no response from Bishop Sisk.

February 3, 2005

The Right Reverend Mark S. Sisk Bishop of New York
Episcopal Diocese of New York 1047 Amsterdam Avenue New
York, NY 10025

Dear Bishop Sisk:

I recently learned of C.J. DeStefano's letter of complaint to you regarding the work by Diane Victor, "The Eight Mary's"; it was part of the "Season South Africa" exhibit at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

In his letter to you, DeStefano described Victor's depiction of Our Blessed Mother as follows: "Blood cascading from between her legs, as a wire hanger dangled from her left hand. Another scene had a dog precariously positioned under her raised skirt. Mary then appears as a wash woman with clothespins attached to her naked torso. One final image is a Pieta representation where both are nude and Jesus is lying across Mary's lap with his penis intentionally and prominently as a focal point."

In your response to DeStefano, you say that the work did not violate the Cathedral's criteria. Explicitly, you say that it was not deemed "blasphemous or demeaning to religion."

I have one question for you: Would you object is an artist portrayed your own mother the way the Virgin Mary was shown in this exhibit? I would like to share your response with the Catholic community.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D. President