

ATTEMPTS TO SANITIZE CHRISTMAS OCCUR IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS ALIKE

Catholic League president William Donohue today listed recent attempts to sanitize Christmas in both the private and public sectors:

- Every year on New York's Park Avenue the Helmsley Building nightly features a huge display of lights in the shape of a cross. This is the first year it has been discontinued.
- GAP stores on the East Coast have banned Christmas decorations because they might make some feel "uncomfortable."
- For the first time in 30 years, a Rossmoor retirement community in Walnut Creek, California has banned a nativity scene.
- The song "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" has been censored from this year's Old Town School of Folk Music holiday party in Chicago because some Jews labeled it anti-Semitic.
- All religious songs were forbidden by the Los Angeles Unified School District and replaced by tunes about snowballs.
- Teachers in a public school in Sacramento, California have been told they are not allowed to utter the word "Christmas."
- Virginia Tech has issued a memo to all university employees warning that they "do not promote one cultural/religious tradition at the exclusion of another" and that they should "make all students and employees feel included."

Yet it was reported this week that the U.S. Supreme Court

refused to erase a stay of Justice John Paul Stevens' ruling that Cincinnati could not ban a menorah from Fountain Square during the holidays. It is because there is so much madness in the land that the Catholic League—after fighting with New York City for over a year—arranged to find a plaintiff for the Thomas More Law Center to sue New York for banning crèches from the public schools while allowing menorahs and crescents and stars.

It is so much bunk to say all religious displays must be banned because some feel excluded or uncomfortable. Christians, who are 86 percent of the population, feel excluded and uncomfortable by this kind of censorship! The answer is respect for diversity and free speech.