

# BAN ON RELIGIOUS STAMPS SIGNIFIES INTOLERANCE

On November 17, the U.S. Postal Service announced that beginning in 1995 there will be no more printing of the famous Christmas Stamp of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. Indeed, there will be no more religious stamps of any kind. For 28 years the Postal Service printed the Madonna stamp but now it thinks that the time has come to issue a picture of an angel instead.

Commenting on this decision was Catholic League president William Donohue:

“The decision to ban religious stamps constitutes censorship, pure and simple. It also represents a meanness of spirit and contempt for the mores of American society. The same government that authorizes public monies for an artist to show his hatred of Christianity by submerging a crucifix in a jar of urine now thinks it unconstitutional to allow religious stamps. Evidently the only religious displays that the federal government finds acceptable these days are those that have been sufficiently blasphemed.

“It does not bode well for liberty when the government embarks on a mission to eradicate from public life every vestige of religious symbolism. There is absolutely nothing in the First Amendment which requires the Postal Service to ban religious stamps, and there is absolutely no evidence that the Postal Service is simply reflecting the will of the people by mandating this prohibition. On the contrary, the decision smacks of the politics of bigotry.

“There are two ways that the government can show neutrality with regards to religious stamps: it can practice tolerance and allow stamps that depict the symbols of a wide variety of

religions, or it can practice intolerance and ban them all. Regrettably, it has chosen the intolerant path.

“The Catholic League asks all Americans of good will to join with it in requesting the Postal Service to rescind its decision.”

The Catholic League is the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization. It defends the right of Catholics—lay and clergy alike—to participate in American life without defamation or discrimination.