

BIGOTRY ENTERS MICHIGAN COURTROOM

Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is filing a formal complaint today with the Michigan Attorney Grievance Committee regarding the anti-Catholic comments made by defense attorney Henry Scharg; it is also pursuing other avenues of redress.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue explains why:

In a Wayne County Circuit Court trial concerning a woman charged with smothering her newborn daughter to death, her attorney, Henry Scharg, has sought repeatedly to malign trial judge Dan Ryan, accusing him of allowing his Catholic religion to color his judgment in the case. Not only has Scharg called into question Ryan's affiliation with Ave Maria Law School, he has sought to remove the judge from the case.

What happened on March 1, however, was much worse. Scharg was angered over the fact that Ryan was taking vacation time to teach at Ave Maria on Mondays (the fact that Ryan rearranged his Monday schedule this past week to accommodate Scharg undercuts his complaint). In any event, on p. 10 of the transcript from Monday's hearing, Scharg is quoted as saying, "This is the equivalent to an African-American man being on trial and the judge taking Mondays off to attend Klan meetings."

Scharg has no business representing anyone. To compare an accredited Catholic law school to a racist terrorist organization is more than despicable—it constitutes rank anti-Catholic bigotry. Indeed, this remark is so egregious as to warrant severe punitive sanctions, if not disbarment. We will do what we can to see that justice is done.

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