

# BILL MAHER SAVAGES CATHOLICISM

On the November 11 edition of the ABC show, "Politically Incorrect," host Bill Maher interviewed "Dogma" director Kevin Smith. In doing so, Maher blasted Catholics: "Catholics practice what they want to practice. They go to see the Pope 'cause he's a big celebrity, but they go home and they masturbate, they practice birth control...well they do."

When someone remarked that a lot of people are not attending churches or synagogues these days, Maher stepped up his attack on Catholicism: "But if I may pause to correct something, you shouldn't, I don't think, lump in the synagogue with the Church. They've operated very differently, OK. The synagogue—and I'm not Jewish, but I was raised Catholic—was never as corrupt as the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church, which is people, not God running it, OK, hugely corrupt, did horrible things through history, maybe OK because they were that powerful."

The Catholic League's statement to the press read as follows:

"This is not the first time that Bill Maher has proven to be an anti-Catholic bigot. Not surprisingly, the audience laughed at his comments, showing how utterly acceptable anti-Catholicism is these days. Indeed, Maher's remarks prove that it is anything but politically incorrect to bash Catholics on 'Politically Incorrect.'

"If ABC had as low a tolerance for Catholic bashing as it does other expressions of bigotry, it would terminate Maher immediately. At the very least, the Catholic League wants an apology. We await the network's response."

Susan Fani, our staff attorney, called ABC to complain and spoke to Nellie Hadden. At first she was startled to hear

Maher's remarks, but then she settled into more relaxed mode. She had the audacity to say that she was reading a book on the history of the papacy which indicated the Church was corrupt. She also offered that she was an Episcopalian.

It's time that ABC heard from you about this incredible episode. Write to Ms. Christine Hikawa, Vice President, Broadcast Standards & Practices, ABC, 77 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, New York 10023.