

BILL MAHER'S UGLY HISTORY

On the March 22nd episode of HBO's "Real Time," Bill Maher launched one of his most obscene assaults yet on the Catholic Church. This time he attacked Pope Francis. After labeling him a "virgin bachelor," Maher opined, "What other business could you be in where your company gets caught running a child sex ring since forever and you still keep your customers?" Maher then mocked key Catholic teachings. It's not clear whether HBO is afraid of Maher, or if it likes what he has to say. It's also unclear whether HBO's parent company, Time Warner, feels the same way that Maher does.

In response to Maher's latest of many tirades, the Catholic League mailed a copy of his anti-Catholic remarks, dating back to 1998, to Time Warner's board of directors. Having given up on HBO to do anything about Bill Maher's bigotry, the Catholic League contacted Time Warner, the parent company of HBO. All the members of the board received a report detailing Maher's relentless assaults on priests, dating back to 1998. Maher's hatred of Catholicism is pathological, pure and simple. Here is the letter that Bill Donohue sent to Jeff Bewkes, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Time Warner:

"There is no other entertainer in the nation who has repeatedly spoken about the Catholic Church, especially its priests, in more vile and obscene terms than Bill Maher. Vicious beyond belief, his remarks would be condemned—indeed he would be fired—if directed at any other demographic group. Over and over again he libels priests, portraying all of them as sexual abusers. And he does so with impunity.

"Catholics need to know just how far Time Warner is prepared to play the role of spectator. Does stewardship not count at all? HBO has been contacted many times, but nothing changes. From the enclosed report, it is evident that Maher's bigotry is not merely visceral, it is relentless. The time has come

for someone in a position of responsibility to have a serious talk with this man.”

Although Time Warner did not respond directly to the Catholic League, our campaign may nonetheless have reaped some positive results. For one thing, since the release of the report, Maher has backed off considerably as far as attacks on Catholicism go. In a recent newspaper interview, when Maher was asked about a separate topic altogether, he brought up the Catholic League report out of the blue. Clearly he had this on his mind. (During the same interview, Maher even called anti-Catholicism “very traditional Southern bigotry.”)

Nonetheless, the time has come for both HBO and Time Warner to own up to Maher’s history of rabid anti-Catholic bigotry which goes back for over two decades.