

“BLACK MASS” NIXED IN OKLAHOMA CITY

There was to be a “Black Mass” performance at the Oklahoma City Civic Center on September 21, using a consecrated Host. But on August 21, after Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley succeeded in getting a judge to issue a restraining order, on the grounds that the Host had been stolen, the attorney for the Satanic group returned the Host to a Catholic priest. The archbishop then dropped his lawsuit.

Here is how the story played out over the summer. When we learned of this scheduled performance, we issued a news release on July 2 calling attention to what a “Black Mass” entails. We quoted directly from the website of the Satanic group: “The consecrated host is corrupted by sexual fluids then it becomes the sacrifice of the mass. The blasphemy remains intact along with corruption of the Catholic Mass.” The person who was to lead this obscene event is Adam Daniels, a registered sex offender.

Bill Donohue quickly put the authorities on notice: “Oklahoma City had better think twice about this. The Civic Center is funded by the taxpayers, many of whom are Catholic, and they are not obliged to pay for attacks on their religion. Moreover, there are strictures that must be respected. To be specific, performances at the Civic Center are not permitted if they violate ‘community standards,’ including works that are ‘illegal, indecent, obscene, immoral or in any manner publicly offensive.’ One does not have to be Catholic to know that if Catholics believe that a consecrated Host is considered sacrosanct, then public displays of desecration meet the criteria as outlined.”

Donohue also warned that Oklahoma City was setting itself up for a lawsuit, calling attention to the 1984 *Lynch v. Donnelly*

decision. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Warren Burger explicitly said that the Constitution “affirmatively mandates accommodation, not merely tolerance, of all religions, and *forbids hostility toward any*” (our italics).

Kudos to Archbishop Coakley on a great victory.