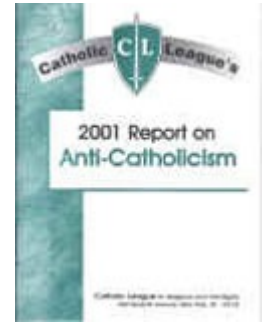


# Business / Workplace

**January 13**

**San Diego, CA** – The “Usual,” a nightclub in downtown San Diego held a “Catholic School Girl Contest.” Posters on windows of shops in downtown San Diego advertising the event offered a \$200 grand prize for the “hottest Catholic school girl.”



**April**

**New Albany, OH** – The Spring Break 2001 catalogue of Abercrombie & Fitch included an “Ask A&F” column with two questions posed by supposed Catholic high school students. The questions and answers mock nuns and priests under a theme of homosexuality. On another page, readers are advised to adorn their spring break hotel rooms with palm fronds that can be taken “for free if you crash a Catholic mass on Palm Sunday.” Another page reviews cult movies and includes “Cemetery Man.” “One viewing is all it’ll take,” the piece instructs, “but learning to make wry comments after bashing a dead nun’s head to a pulp couldn’t hurt either.”

**May**

The Book-of-the-Month Club continued to hype John Cornwell’s Hitler’s Pope. In a catalogue the book was described as “the explosive story of the Pope who helped sweep the Nazis to power.” In short, our problem was more with the Book-of-the-Month Club for uncritically endorsing the most radical interpretation of Cornwell’s thesis.

**May**

**Fairmont, MN** – At an On Cue store, T-shirts for the rock group “Rage Against the Machine” were sold. The T-shirts pictured five men dressed in full traditional nuns’ habits armed with rifles.

## **May 17**

**Santa Rosa, CA** – Fridge Fun, Inc. offered a line of bath soaps under the name “Sonoma Bath Company.” They included titles such as, “Immaculate Consoaption: A Virgin Bath” and “Mother Soaperior: Cleanliness is Next to Godliness.”

## **June 7**

**Bradenton, FL** – Firskins Chrysler Plymouth, Jeep, Suzuki ran an advertisement in the Bradenton Herald announcing a Mother’s Day special. The ad featured a semi-hidden picture of Mother Teresa along with an invitation to find the clues in the ad and win a prize. Among the clues was the phrase, “Lowest prices from Bradenton to Calcutta.”

## **June 12**

**Los Angeles, CA** – The AIDS Healthcare Foundation’s thrift store ran an ad in print and on their website featuring a nun in a suggestive manner. The nun was shown with her hand covering a nude statue’s private parts. She had a shocked expression on her face.

## **June 15**

**New York, NY** – Lipton, makers of everyday, household food items, ran an ad in the alternative weekly New York Press for the company’s “Lipton Recipe Secrets” onion dip. The ad showed a man waiting in line for Holy Communion holding a bowl of the dip. The ad quite obviously suggested the man was prepared to dunk the Host in the dip.

Following a number of complaints, the Catholic League contacted Unilever, Lipton’s parent company. Company officials wasted little time in apologizing for the ad, admitted it was an error in judgment and pledged to never let it happen again.

## **June 29**

**Cannes, France** – The agency that designed the offensive Lipton Onion Dip ad (showing a person in line for Communion holding a bowl of the onion dip, ready to dip the Host in it) submitted

the ad for an award at the Cannes Film Festival. B.B.H. of New York entered the "Press and Poster" competition given for print ads. They won. At the request of B.B.H.'s client, Lipton/Unilever, the award was declined in order to head off any more controversy.

## **August**

**Medford, OR** – The billboard advertising company Outdoor Media Dimensions decided to rent billboard space to Larry Weathers, a local barber. The message on the sign read, "The Pope is the Antichrist" and then directed readers to a website. When the Catholic League voiced its objections, company officials said while they did not agree with the message, they supported Weathers' free speech rights. The league then offered to rent a billboard of its own with the message, "Outdoor Media Dimensions sponsors anti-Catholicism." The company at first hung up the telephone when they heard the proposal but finally relented and agreed to rent the space. The league felt it unnecessary after the company agreed not to rent any more space for anti-Catholic ads.

## **August**

The September catalog put out by the Book-of-the-Month Club contained a description of James Carroll's *Constantine's Sword*. The book, which some critics denounced as simply the ruminations of an ex-priest, was described in the catalog as "confronting the Catholic Church's historical hatred of Jews from the gospels to the church's silence during the Holocaust." Once again, the Book-of-the-Month Club featured a book highly critical of the Church by promoting the most radical interpretation of its thesis.

## **August**

An Internet bookseller called Book Closeouts featured a write-up for the book *Hitler's Pope* by John Cornwell. Despite being panned by critics as a work filled with errors of historical fact, Book Closeouts said Cornwell "shows that, even before the Holocaust, Pope Pius XII was instrumental in negotiating

an accord that helped the Nazis rise to unhindered power—and sealed the fate of the Jews.” After we protested, the company apologized and rewrote the blurb for the book.

### **August 23**

**Englewood, CO** – Dean Evans & Associates, a company that markets organizing software, launched a mass mailing to advertise its products. Many recipients were Catholic parishes and other religious organizations. The mailing featured a man with a displeased frown dressed as the pope. Attached to the pope’s mitre were a note and a pen. The note read, “Is managing your calendar by hand a nuisance?” The tag line on the mailing answered, “Does the pope wear a funny hat?” Following our complaint, the company issued a new mailing to every address that had received the offensive one, apologizing. The company also sent a letter of apology to the Catholic League.

### **September 20**

The Internet auction website eBay listed as an item for auction a “Virgin Mary Immaculate Conception Condom.” On the condom was a picture of the Virgin Mary holding baby Jesus; the tag line read, “If you conceive, its [sic] a miracle.” On the back of the condom was a picture of Pope John Paul II. “It also includes inside the flap,” said the description of the condom, “instructios [sic] on how to put on the condom (drawings!) showing a certain someone on a cross with a woody and a glove...” Following a complaint from the Catholic League, eBay removed the item almost immediately. Before the company’s action, the item had reached a high bid of \$11.50.

### **October**

A company called Iparty published a flyer showing its Halloween costumes available. Featured were costumes of a priest’s cassock and gold cross and a nun’s outfit with a very short skirt and high heels. No other religion was represented.

### **October**

**Great Falls, NY** – The company Party Universe published a flyer advertising all its Halloween items including costumes. Among the costumes available was one of a priest—with a gold cross accessory sold separately—along with a nun costume. No other religions were represented as costumes.

## **November**

**Deer Park, NY** – The greeting card company Magic Moments put out a birthday card that stated on the front, “Happy Birthday To A Woman Who Can Be Best Described As Another MOTHER THERESA [sic]. The inside message then read, “You’ve Spent Half a Century in the Missionary Position.” There was a halo above the phrase.

## **December**

**St. Paul, MN** – The Wireless Holiday 2001 catalog included a T-shirt that showed a crowded nativity scene. The caption above it read, “It’s a Girl.” No mention of Christmas is made in the catalog, only “Holiday.”

## **December**

**Melbourne, FL** – Executives at the Melbourne Square Mall allowed menorahs to be placed around the mall but would not allow a nativity scene anywhere on the premises. When asked to defend the decision, a mall executive said a local rabbi convinced them the menorah was not a religious symbol.

## **December**

**Hoboken, NJ** – the greeting card company NobleWorks offered two categories of greeting cards: “Nice” and “Extra” (which they call “naughty”). While there are no cards in the latter category for Ramadan, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, there are more than a dozen tailored to Christian holidays.

For example, the “Extra” selection has a Christmas card that comments on how someone exposed himself at a party. Another card has a picture of Our Blessed Mother holding baby Jesus with the inscription, “Losing those 15 pounds was sure to be a bitch.” And there is another one with the picture of an angel

that remarks how she will still enjoy the holidays even though she is having her period.

The "Extra" selection of birthday cards include the following: two cards that mock Christ on the cross; one that shows a priest by a urinal with a sign overhead that reads, "Holy Water"; and a nun shown buying a card not from the "Wedding" or "Birthday" section of a card store but from the one that reads, "Castration." There is also a Mother's Day card that shows Mary commenting to Christ, "Uh, excuse me, Mr. Savior of Mankind, but did you remember to put on clean underwear in case you get crucified?"

## **December**

A review of the more than 350 Christmas cards available on the home page of Yahoo! revealed that only 25 of them have a religious content. There are at least eight objectionable cards in the "Humorous" and "Naughty" categories. For example, these categories have cards that show naked buttocks, animals urinating, Santa on the toilet, etc. Most of the 48 Hanukkah cards show a picture of a menorah or a Star of David. Of the five "Humorous" cards, none was as offensive as any of the Christmas cards in this category. There was no "Naughty" category. American Greetings is the worst offender of the mainline greeting card producers.

## **December 17**

**Lafayette, LA** – The World Wrestling Federation (WWF) show, RAW, featured a big-screen presentation of the wrestling characters Booker T. and Stone Cold Austin that mocked the Catholic Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Booker was shown hiding from Austin in a confessional. A young buxom woman walks into the confessional and proceeds to confess to the sin of adultery. Booker, posing as a priest, insists on the details. In a following scene, Booker questions a man in the confessional if he had ever been to a red-light district or smoked marijuana. Another offensive scene involved the two wrestlers and several people posing as nuns.