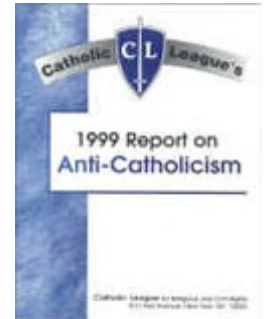


# Executive Summary

Some of the highlights of 1999 are recounted here, drawn from the various thematic sections that make up this report.



There are many activist organizations in the nation which pursue goals that are in opposition to the teachings of the Catholic Church. This is clearly the case with pro-abortion groups. Unfortunately, when a conflict arises between pro-abortion groups and Catholic ones, it is not unusual to see prejudice come to the surface.

To be fair, there are Catholics who themselves are guilty of prejudice towards the religious or ethnic affiliation of the pro-abortion activists. But only someone hopelessly inflamed with ideology could possibly conclude that the problem is equally shared. Insensitive, even cruel, things are said by pro-abortion activists about Catholics. Take, for example, the way a pro-abortion group greeted Ted Turner's cheap shot at the pope.

Media mogul Ted Turner has earned a reputation for putting his foot in his mouth many times. He did at least that when in February of 1999 he went before the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association and berated the pope for not getting with the 20th century; he added some ethnic humor as well. "Ever seen a Polish mine detector?" is what Turner asked the crowd. He said this while lifting his foot toward the audience as if to crush the imagined object. Turner finished his remark by lecturing the pope to "get with it," adding, "Welcome to the 20th century."

The Catholic League sought, and instantly got, an apology from Turner. Our effort to have him suspended from baseball—the way Marge Schott was for making racial slurs—was dropped after baseball commissioner Bud Selig persuaded us that the analogy was not as tight as previously thought (Turner is not the principal owner; he never attends the meetings of the owners; he also owns a football team—to which no one sought any penalties—etc.)

But what was perhaps most disturbing about this episode (Turner, by the way, has made other anti-Christian statements in the past) was the way it was greeted by the pro-abortion activists. They loved it.

Now had Turner rabbit-punched a leading figure in the African-American or Jewish community, it is a sure bet that the crowd's reaction would have been much different. Indeed, even if one allows that Turner might be given to make such a remark, is there anyone who would doubt that he would elect to keep his mouth shut? This is the same guy, after all, who no longer does the “chop-chop” salute at Atlanta Braves games; to do so might offend the sensibilities of Native Americans, and that would be politically incorrect.

One of the most notoriously anti-Catholic groups in the nation is the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. They mock nuns in a way that is so vicious that it goes well beyond the bounds of parody. And it is not just nuns that they attack: obscene assaults on the Eucharist have repeatedly been made.

Sadly, just because “the Sisters” are non-violent, and occasionally contribute to charities, this seems enough to convince some observers that they should be given a pass for their offensive antics. We don't see it that way. If there were an Al Jolson society of white boys with black faces who mocked African Americans, no one would defend them because they give a few bucks to AIDS research.

It was with such reasoning that the Catholic League objected to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence in San Francisco when they were given the opportunity to hold a public festivity on Easter Sunday (they were first denied by the Department of Parking but then were overruled by the Board of Supervisors). The league asked the Board of Supervisors to refuse "the Sisters" a permit to engage in an anti-Catholic event on Easter Sunday on public grounds. This same group, we said, had held a "Condom Savior Mass" wherein condoms were distributed as Communion wafers, and even held a public exorcism of the pope when he visited the U.S. in 1987. None of this falls within the bounds of good humor. More properly, it is called hate speech.

The two-faced reaction of San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown was most disconcerting. He publicly sided with those who thought that "the Sisters" should choose another day for their celebrations, but he privately denounced the Catholic League for mounting a protest. Hostage to radical homosexuals, Brown gave voice to anti-Catholicism by not standing solidly against the bigotry of "the Sisters."

The ADL was also guilty of taking a two-faced stand: it advertises itself as an organization opposed to all forms of bigotry, but had no problem registering its outrage against the Catholic League's protest, never once criticizing "the Sisters" for their anti-Catholic behavior.

The Catholic League took out an ad in the San Francisco Chronicle stating its objections to the event. Media coverage of our reaction to the Easter Sunday event was quite good, ranging from USA Today to the "Today Show."

In the end, more than 7,000 homosexuals took to the streets the day of the event, holding a "Hunky Jesus" contest along the way. But our point was made: we galvanized unprecedented support for our position and got some members of the Board of Supervisors to switch to our side on a second vote. Just as

important, when “the Sisters” were scheduled to appear in a Gay Pride Parade later in the year in Nevada, Governor Kenny Guinn, who had previously signed a gay rights bill, took note by refusing to sign a proclamation supporting the march because of their inclusion.

If “the Sisters” triggered Catholic League activism in the spring on the west coast, the Brooklyn Museum of Art accomplished the same in the fall on the east coast. The publicly-funded museum played host, and as it turned out, pimp, to a British exhibition, “Sensation.”

“Sensation” featured displays of dead animals with maggots flying about, a bisected pig in formaldehyde, an enormous portrait of England’s most notorious child molester, and a painting, “The Holy Virgin Mary,” with elephant dung placed on Mary’s breast surrounded by pictures of vaginas and anuses. It was this last item, by the British-born artist of Nigerian ancestry, Chris Ofili, that ignited the Catholic League most of all.

If the animal abuse, obscenity and blasphemy weren’t enough to inflame, the corruption that colored the exhibition pushed the issue over the top. The owner of the art, Charles Saatchi, coughed up \$160,000 to the museum to inflate the value of the so-called art in the marketplace. Then tried to hide his unethical behavior from the public. Christie’s, the prestigious auction house, also contributed big bucks, and was given perks in return by the museum. Indeed, museum officials literally lied to the press when asked about these shenanigans.

But none of this mattered to the champions of the museum. This was art, they said, and no one but bona fide artists were in a position to judge the merits of the displays (ironically, by any rational measure, this would seem to exclude virtually everyone associated with the exhibition). As for the Catholic League, we argued that since art had now been reduced to dung,

public funding of the arts was indefensible.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani mounted a legal challenge to the right of the museum to use public funds in this manner. Though he did not prevail in the courts, and was opposed in public opinion polls for his stand, he did score politically with Catholics: his favorable rating hit 80 percent with this group in the aftermath of the protest. The Catholic League submitted an amicus brief against the museum.

Two protest rallies were held by the Catholic League at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. The first occurred on October 2, the day the exhibition opened; the second was held on December 8, Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception.

At the first rally, the Catholic League staff passed out vomit bags; this was in response to the museum's warning that seeing the exhibition could induce vomiting. We readily concurred and thus sought to facilitate the process. We passed out "Vomit Bags" to the first 500 attendees, complete with an inscription that said, "Compliments of the Catholic League."

The league was happy to learn that following the opening of "Sensation," a similarly crude exhibition was canceled in Detroit, and the planned opening of "Sensation" in Australia was nixed. In both instances, the decision-makers cited the furor that accompanied the Brooklyn exhibition. This goes to show the prophylactic power of the Catholic League: we may not succeed the first go-round, but we can create enough pressure to win the next battle.

The world of business is generally not so exciting by comparison. But even here, the Catholic League finds reason to swing into action. Our engagement with CompuServe is illustrative both of problems in the workplace and our strategies for dealing with them.

Early in 1999, in the "What's New" section of the CompuServe website, up popped a quiz about how the Vatican was "built on

the site of the temple of a sect of transgendered priests." The pope was mentioned as "acknowledging" this "historical fact," and was said to apologize for Christian intolerance of transgendered people. Moreover, the statement read that "His Holiness confirms that henceforth only post-operative trans-men would be allowed to become Cardinals."

When confronted with our objections, a CompuServe official apologized for this "mistake." But then we learned that the offending statements had not been removed; they were simply moved from the "What's New" section to the "Transgender" forum. When another complaint was made, we were told that nothing could be done to stop people from using this forum.

We decided that the time had come for us to develop a forum of our own on the CompuServe website. We requested a Klan forum, one that would target blacks and Jews. That did it. Suddenly they got the message and quickly dropped the offending statements.

There are some issues that draw anti-Catholic venom from several sources. Take school choice, for example. There is much at stake in the debate over school vouchers, and there are many contours to this issue. Unfortunately, virtually every time this issue heats up, anti-Catholicism raises its ugly head. It did so most conspicuously in 1999 in Pennsylvania.

When Governor Tom Ridge placed his "Academic Recovery Act" before the Pennsylvania state legislature in May, the anti-choice crowd went mad. School superintendents from Bucks County signed a letter that compared the effects of school choice to the genocidal war in Kosovo.

"The current war in Kosovo is a graphic example of what happens in a society that separates its people and fosters elitism," the statement said. The school officials concluded that if the governor's legislation were adopted, it "may lead to the Balkanization of our society." All this would happen,

they contended, if we allowed the parents of poor children the same right to choose the school of their choice as presently exercised by the rich.

Going a step further was David J. Gondak, the head of the state's largest teachers union. He actually instructed his members to indoctrinate students with anti-choice propaganda. Gov. Ridge's proposal, he said, was "stealth voucher legislation," the kind that merited the label "voucher scheme." Worse, vouchers were fascistic: a photo of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet was put on the home page of the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

Not unexpectedly, the education monopoly received help from demagogues in the legislature. In this regard, no one came to their rescue more than Joseph Preston, Jr., a representative from Pittsburgh.

Preston reached for the bottom of the barrel when he said that school vouchers would enable certain religious schools to pay for the cost of lawsuits involving pedophilia. So as not to misunderstand which religion he was speaking of, Preston specifically referred to "certain religions hit hard by a lot of lawsuits," saying that "millions of dollars of certain faiths" were used to pay for court settlements.

"I don't want to see our money to be able to go for those different lawsuits for certain people who do not act appropriately," Preston commented. When pressed by the Catholic League to come clean, Preston got nervous, arguing he was not referring to any "religion," but to certain "systems." His attempt at clarification amounted to obfuscation, thus giving weight to the charge that he was appealing to anti-Catholic sentiments.

That Preston later apologized meant nothing. Not only did the bigots prevail in defeating the voucher bill, Preston refused to say which group he was apologizing to for his remarks.

When the Catholic League took on the U.S. Air Force and the Navy, some of our supporters wondered if we had overreached a bit. When we won both battles, the skepticism ended.

Over the summer, the Catholic League took on the Air Force when it learned that a young officer, Lt. Ryan Berry, was being penalized for refusing to serve with a woman in an underground missile silo the size of a school bus. Lt. Berry, who is married, said that as a matter of conscience—grounded in his Catholic upbringing—he would not put himself in an environment that would create “an occasion of sin.”

What angered the Catholic League was the Air Force’s change in policy: for 18 months, Lt. Berry had been granted a religious exemption from such an assignment. Then, responding to a few complaints made by other officers, the Air Force decided to take a politically-correct position by forcing the young lieutenant to take the assignment. When Lt. Berry balked, he was given a negative evaluation, thus calling into serious question his chances of ever getting a promotion (those who evaluated Berry strictly on his work performance gave him very high marks).

To call attention to this issue, the Catholic League sponsored a press conference on Capitol Hill on August 4. This effort garnered considerable public support for Lt. Berry. Significantly, he was supported by John Cardinal O’Connor of New York and Archbishop Edwin O’Brien of the Archdiocese of Military Services, U.S.A. The Becket Fund provided legal assistance to Lt. Berry, following the initial work of attorney Henry Hamilton. Representative Roscoe Bartlett of Maryland, as well as many other congressmen, stood squarely behind the young officer.

At the end of the year, Lt. Berry received the good news: he was promoted to the rank of captain. This was a gratifying moment for the Catholic League as many of our members had pressured the Air Force to reassess its position.



The Catholic League's fight with the Navy also had a happy ending, the principal beneficiary of which was our good friends at the Knights of Columbus. But not before unnecessary harm had been done.

In a very strange decision, the Knights of Columbus were barred from meeting in a naval base in Chesapeake, Virginia. The reason? The Knights discriminate against women.

The Catholic League jumped on this immediately, arguing that the Department of Defense directive that bars "unlawful discrimination" allows for discrimination which is lawful. It was unreasonable to assume, we said, that the K of C, which has a unit for women as well as men, was engaged in discrimination. Separate rest room facilities exist on the base (and elsewhere), yet no one thinks that such accommodations are discriminatory. The same logic applies to the Knights.

As with the case with the Air Force, we appealed to our members to write to the appropriate officials defending the Knights. It didn't take long before the Navy issued an apology and the ban on the K of C was rescinded.

The largest section in this report is on the media. It would be unfair, however, to assume that therefore the media are more responsible for Catholic bashing than any other source. The term is so encompassing, especially these days, that it can be misleading to treat all the subsections of the media as if they were one. Hollywood and the internet have some things in common, but they also have much that merits treating them discretely.

One of the TV shows that used to bother the Catholic League, "The Simpsons," no longer does. And that is because Fox finally got the word that the league did not take kindly to the Catholic bashing that marked the show. Here again, our members proved to be decisive.

Repeated appeals to our members in our monthly journal, Catalyst, to write to Fox complaining about "The Simpsons," paid off in June. That was when word came from on high that future episodes of the cartoon series should not be offensive to Catholics. Roland McFarland, vice president of broadcast standards at the network, advised that it was okay to target "Methodists, Presbyterians or Baptists"—any group but Catholics. The cited reason for the change: pressure from the Catholic League.

The reaction by Howard Rosenberg, a media critic for the Los Angeles Times, to the Fox decision was interesting, to say the least. To McFarland's comment, Rosenberg raised the question, "Different standards for different religions?" Now that's a bizarre way to think about the issue. Instead of objecting to bigotry against Protestants, Rosenberg instead questioned the propriety of not bashing Catholics.

Nothing absorbed more of the resources of the Catholic League in 1999 than its protest of the movie, "Dogma." Written and directed by Kevin Smith, the film was about as dumb and boring a comedy as ever hit the screen. But that didn't stop the movie critics from liking it, nor did it impact on our decision to brand it anti-Catholic.

The Catholic League protest of "Dogma" actually began on July 17, 1998. That was the day we told Disney that "it looks as though Catholic sensibilities will be offended once again"; Miramax, which is owned by Disney, was slated to release the movie. Disney chief Michael Eisner never replied to our letter, but later events proved he got our point.

On April 5, we sent a news release to all the major media outlets in the nation, as well as to Disney and Miramax. "If the movie is anything like it is shaping up to be, Mr. Eisner will surely regret not having engaged the Catholic League in dialogue."

On April 7, Miramax faxed a letter to the Catholic League stating that the Disney/Miramax label will not appear on "Dogma." That was good news. But the statement also said that Miramax co-chairmen, Bob and Harvey Weinstein, were going to personally buy the film rights to the movie. In response, our press release was appropriately titled, "Disney Dumps 'Dogma': Weinsteins Still Defiant." It ended with the statement, "One thing's for sure—Eisner is a lot brighter than the Weinsteins."

Now that Kevin Smith and the Weinstein brothers were the target, a game plan on how to handle "Dogma" had to be established. It was decided that our protest would break like a wave, with salvos being launched at the beginning, middle and end of summer (the movie opened November 12).

June 23 was the date of the first strike. We hit the op-ed page of the New York Times with an appeal to Disney that they should dump Miramax the way they did "Dogma." The second strike occurred on August 2 when we announced the release of our "Dogma" booklet; it detailed the frank comments that movie reviewers made describing the anti-Catholic nature of the film (the movie had been shown at the Cannes Film Festival). The third salvo was our New York Times op-ed page ad of September 12; it accused Kevin Smith and attorney Dan Petrocelli of trying to censor us.

The attempt by Smith and Petrocelli to silence the Catholic League was the most hideous aspect of the entire "Dogma" episode (Petrocelli is an attorney for the Weinsteins; he is also the L.A. lawyer who beat O. J. Simpson in the civil suit). They literally said that they would hold the Catholic League legally responsible for any violence that might take place over the protest of the movie. This was nothing but an attempt at gag speech, a desperate move to squash the Catholic League protest dead in its tracks. But it didn't work.

Before explaining my response, it is worth recounting how and why this happened. We need to back up a bit to do this.

In a Catholic League news release of April 8, I replied to actor Ben Affleck's revealing statement that "The movie is definitely meant to push buttons." My reply was "The Catholic League has a few buttons of its own to push, and we won't hold back." This was a fairly innocuous remark, but on June 16, I received an Overnight Priority Federal Express letter from Petrocelli that sounded the alarms over this comment.

"Statements like these may be interpreted to announce or imply an intention by the League to go beyond the bounds of legitimate and peaceful dissent or protest, and to stimulate, motivate, or incite danger or violence," said Petrocelli. He then promised to hold the league responsible for any violence that might occur when the film appears.

A reporter from the Boston Globe asked me to explain why it took Petrocelli over two months to make his move (over my throw-away line!). I told her that the only thing I had done about "Dogma" since April was on June 15: that was the day that the lawyers for the New York Times saw my op-ed ad for June 23 (they had to approve it)—the ad that asked Disney to dump Miramax. Petrocelli's fascistic letter arrived the next day, June 16. Curious, isn't it?

In any event, when I got Petrocelli's letter, I had only one response. I sent him a memo indicating that I had received his "threatening letter," and even took the time to tell him that our correct address was 1011 First Avenue, not 101 First Avenue. "Please make a note of it," I instructed.

One of the pet peeves of the Catholic League is the extent to which non-Catholics stick their noses into the affairs of the Catholic Church. Many are like voyeurs looking into the Catholic Church, picking away at all that they dislike. In 1999, the year ended with the grand-daddy award for voyeurism being given to the Kansas City Star.

In October, the Kansas City Star, Missouri's largest newspaper, conducted a sex survey of Catholic priests. The

questions centered around HIV and AIDS; the motive for doing so, it seemed plain, was to undermine public support for the Church's teachings on homosexuality and celibacy. In fact, the last two questions in the survey asked the respondent whether he thought the Church's teachings in this area should be changed.

When the Catholic League learned of the survey, our response was to fight fire with fire. So we instituted a survey of our own: we inquired of the sex lives of the editors and reporters of the newspaper, mailing our survey to the whole lot of them. In almost every regard, our questions were identical, as was the cover letter. But we did make some changes.

The Kansas City Star asked, "Do you know any priests with HIV or AIDS?", so we decided to ask, "Do you know any journalist who doesn't have HIV or AIDS?" They got the point. Quick. Unlike the newspaper, we did not hide our intent: "Our objective is to undermine your efforts at Peeping-Tom journalism."

Most of the issues tackled by the Catholic League are one-shot deals: once the event is over, so is the league's interest in it. This is not true, however, of historically-debated questions such as the role the Vatican played in the Holocaust.

During and after World War II, Jews the world over praised Pope Pius XII for his rescue efforts during the Holocaust. This was also true at the time of his death in 1958. Indeed, it wasn't until a play was made, "The Deputy," that anyone seriously thought of Pius XII as anything but a hero. The play appeared in Germany in 1963 and hit Broadway the following year. It contended that Pius XII had been silent during Hitler's reign of terror.

Over the past two decades, critics of Pius XII have multiplied, but their evidence has not. What is at work here is more propaganda than scholarship, more emotion than truth

seeking.

No one's agenda to get Pope Pius XII is more transparent than that of the English journalist, John Cornwell. In a particularly deceitful account, Cornwell marshaled arguments to buttress the accusation that Pius XII was, as the title of his book says, Hitler's Pope. What he didn't marshal was evidence.

No one was more willing to swallow Cornwell's moonshine than the editors at Vanity Fair: they published an excerpt from his book. It was not lost on the Catholic League that Vanity Fair, owned by Condé Nast, had a particularly lousy track record on matters Catholic. In 1990, the publication savaged John Cardinal O'Connor; in 1995, it attacked Mother Teresa; and now it was assaulting Pius XII.

Our response was to place a full-page ad in the New York Times that effectively called the question: "Condé Nast Has A Problem With Catholicism." We then pressed our case and defended the three Catholic stalwarts. More than anything else, however, we wanted to directly confront Cornwell himself. But that was not to happen.

When Cornwell was about to make his book tour of the U.S. in the fall of 1999, I relayed to him—via ABC-TV of Philadelphia—an invitation. I promised to give him a one-week, all expenses paid vacation in New York (sponsored by the Catholic League), provided he agree to debate me every day on radio and TV. He formally declined my offer on September 10.

What makes Cornwell so distasteful is his dishonesty. As the Vatican has been able to demonstrate, he misled the public regarding the length of his archival research and the nature of his disclosures (e.g., "previously never-published documents" had, in fact, been previously published). Most disconcerting, however, was the way Cornwell sold himself as a "devout Catholic" to the public.

In 1991, Cornwell wrote that he had become “increasingly convinced that human beings were morally, psychologically, and materially better off without a belief in God.” To punctuate his point, he added that “nothing short of a miracle could shake these firm convictions.”

Well, if the Cornwell of 1999 is to be believed, then he must have experienced a miracle sometime during the Nineties. That no one who interviewed him bothered to ask about this—indeed never even bothered to question his alleged “devout Catholic” status—is as scandalous as is his case against Pius XII.

The critics of Pope Pius XII are not going to go away. Neither are those who, like the Catholic League, are convinced that he is being scapegoated and maligned by those with an agenda.

When all is said and done, the evidence in this report speaks for itself. Our goal is to combat anti-Catholicism and thereby witness its decline. We are not an all-purpose moral elixir trying to check all the latest outrages. The one and only mission of the Catholic League is to make American society safe for Catholicism. Whether the voice of the Church proves to be persuasive is not our problem. Whether that voice gets a fair hearing is.

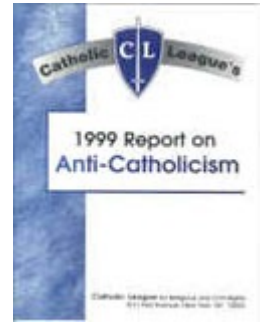
**William A. Donohue**  
President

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## **Activists Organizations**

## January 21

**Staten Island, NY** – American Atheists announced plans to greet Pope John Paul II with a protest when he arrived in St. Louis the following week. Charging that “the Vatican’s Political Agenda for America” is a “pro-absolutist, pro-submissive agenda,” the group called the pope “a very real threat” to separation of church and state, and called for the United States to withdraw from its diplomatic relationship with the Vatican. Catholics, the group charged, “want non-adherents to support their schools, they advocate and promote prejudice and bigotry toward Atheists, gays, and other minorities, and they are buying up American hospitals in order to limit or eradicate women’s health services.”



## February

**West Union, OH** – The American Civil Liberties Union sued the West Union school board to demand removal of marble tablets displaying the Ten Commandments from the grounds of four Adams County public high schools. The ACLU acted on behalf of Berry Baker, who had formed the Center for Phallic Worship and insisted that if the tablets remained, he should be permitted to put up a six foot marble penis next to them.

## March 10

**Spokane, WA** – Planned Parenthood of Spokane and Whitman Counties sought to exploit both St. Patrick’s Day and the success of the Gonzaga University basketball team to promote its agenda and sell its birth control products. A March 10 newspaper ad, promoting the abortifacient “morning after” pill, featured a cartoon character named “Joe McSperm” wearing a derby with a shamrock, under the heading, “This St. Patrick’s Day, don’t underestimate the luck of the Irish.” On March 18, prior to the Catholic Gonzaga’s first round NCAA playoff game, another PP newspaper ad had Joe McSperm holding a placard reading, “Go Zags.” The ad, which wished “Good Luck Zags,” was signed by PP of Spokane and Whitman president and



CEO John Nugent, who identified himself as a “Gonzaga University Graduate.”

### **March 16**

**Hartford, CT** – On the day before St. Patrick’s Day, Planned Parenthood of Connecticut mocked the Irish patron saint by handing out green condoms at the State Capitol. The condoms featured such slogans as “Kiss Me, I’m Irish,” “Put on the Green,” and “Four Leaf Cover.” State Senator Louis DeLuca immediately demanded an investigation into how the state chapter of Planned Parenthood spends the \$1.1 million it gets annually from the taxpayers of Connecticut.

### **March 24**

**New York, NY** – Distraught by the Catholic Church’s efforts to offer a pro-life perspective within the United Nations, Catholics for a Free Choice launched an effort to revoke the Vatican’s non-member state permanent observer UN status. The group’s leader, Frances Kissling—whose organization has no membership, no standing within the Church, and is funded primarily by the Ford Foundation—questioned the legitimacy of the Vatican state. “Why should a few acres of office space and tourist attractions in the center of Rome have a voice in making United Nations policy?” she asked.

### **March 28**

**New York, NY** – At the 10th annual Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) Awards, the organization gave its Off Off Broadway honor to an anti-Christian play by Paul Rudnick, “The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told.” The play, a gay retelling of the Bible, featured full male frontal nudity, filthy language, discussion of body parts, butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, ranting against nature, and damning God for AIDS.

### **March**

Jane Kramer wrote a piece about the Italian government spending money to rebuild earth-quake damaged pilgrimage

sites. In the process she managed to comment about the Vatican "spending its money and its craft on the institution of its own power." She also wrote the Vatican spends its money "paying to discipline its dissident priests or to keep Catholics in the Third World having babies."

## **April**

**San Francisco, CA** – The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence held a public celebration in the streets of San Francisco on Easter Sunday. The group was first denied a permit to close off some streets by the Department of Parking and Traffic only to be overturned by the City Board of Supervisors.

The "Sisters" are known for their past celebrations including a "Condom Savior Mass" where condoms were distributed as Communion wafers as well as a public exorcism of the pope. Catholic League President William Donohue asked San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown to intervene. While saying he opposed the celebration being on Easter, he also objected to the Catholic League's protest.

## **April**

**Toronto, Canada** – A pro-abortion group protesting Human Life International's convention here went by the name Anti-Racist Coalition. The group apparently has no qualms about religious bigotry, however. One of its posters, under the headline "Know your scumbags," depicted a very muscular, masculine-looking nun, brandishing a crucifix like a machine gun.

## **April**

**Washington, DC** – TV mogul and baseball owner Ted Turner made remarks regarding the Ten Commandments, Pope John Paul II and people of Polish descent in general in a speech to the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association. Turner said adultery should not be a Commandment if there are only ten. He indicated Pope John Paul II should "get with it." Turner asked the crowd, "Ever seen a Polish mine detector?" He said this while lifting his foot toward the audience as if to crush an imagined object.

## **April**

**Boston, MA** – Students at Harvard were protesting what they saw as the underpaying of University employees. During a demonstration students held up a sign that read, “The World’s Richest Non-Profits: #1 The Vatican, #2 Harvard.” The Vatican is a nation-state, not a non-profit organization.

## **April 14**

**Chicago, IL** – The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed suit seeking to stop federal agencies and public schools from sponsoring or assisting Boy Scouts because the Scouts require an oath to God. The ACLU objected to scout leaders being required to recognize “an obligation to God,” and scouts pledging “to do my duty to God and country.”

## **April 29**

**Parsippany, NJ** – American Atheists fueled its opposition to educational vouchers with a vicious appeal to anti-Catholic bigotry. Vouchers are “anti-American,” the group charged, because they would “force Americans to support schools whose agenda is Vatican propaganda.” Charging that “a large portion of religious schools in America are owned by the Vatican, a foreign, anti-democratic dictatorship with diplomatic ties to the United States,” the atheists declared it “outrageous for our elected officials to want to send American dollars overseas—laundered under the guise of ‘vouchers.’”

## **May 7**

**London, England** – Angered by Vatican opposition to its campaign of distributing “emergency contraceptives” to Kosovo refugees, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) reacted not simply by disagreeing with the Vatican position, but by calling for the Church’s voice to be stifled by the United Nations.

The IPPF urged “governmental, non-governmental and other institutions to endorse existing appeals for a review of the Vatican’s status within the United Nations.” The IPPF further charged the Vatican with “indifference...towards the human

suffering” of the refugees—ignoring all of the food, clothing, shelter and medical supplies being provided at the time by Catholic Relief Services.

## **July**

**New York, NY** – It was no surprise that the National Organization for Women would attack Air Force Lt. Ryan Berry for his opposition to serving alone with a woman for extended time periods in the cramped quarters of an underground missile silo. It was also no surprise that they couldn’t do so without defaming Lt. Berry’s Catholic faith. “The theory that women can’t serve because men can’t control themselves...has strong roots in Catholic teachings,” said NOW’s New York City chapter president Galen Sherwin—misrepresenting both Church teaching and Lt. Berry’s position. Sherwin also attacked Cardinal O’Connor, calling his support for Lt. Berry “no more than a veiled endorsement of sexism.”

## **August 24**

**St. Louis, MO** – John Hickey, a member of the Missouri Citizen Education Fund, held a press conference on a recently vetoed bill that would have outlawed partial birth abortion. In his support for the veto, Hickey answered a question about the Catholic Church’s opposition to partial birth abortion by saying “the hierarchy of the Catholic Church supported Hitler in Germany, let’s be honest...it’s a well documented thing and that’s what was used to get these guys out of Germany...It’s not fine to say violence is OK.”

## **October 23**

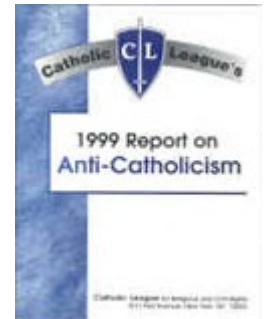
**New York, NY** – The Ku Klux Klan staged a “White Pride” rally in New York City. The Klansmen were forced to march without their hoods when the U. S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals upheld an 1845 New York statute barring groups from congregating in public places in masks or disguises, except for authorized parties or entertainment. The Catholic League opposed the march due to the anti-Catholic history of the KKK.

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# The Arts

## January

**Chicago, IL** – “The Madonna In Spite of Herself,” billed as a spoof on the Nativity, continued its Christmas season run at the Sweet Corn Playhouse. According to a review in the Chicago Tribune, the play depicted Mary as “a big-haired, gum-chomping resident of Berwyn, Joseph (a.k.a. Joey)” as “a genial sexual predator, and the angel Gabriel” as “a screaming vamp in a hot outfit.” It also contained “profuse profanity and sexual banter.”



## January

**New York, NY** – New York Times reviewer Anita Gates felt “trapped at a pornography display” when she attended “The Erotica Project: Cunnig Stunts” at the Joseph Papp Public Theater’s Joe’s Pub. Among the “cunning stunts” was a portrayal of Mary Magdalene as “an impressionable teen-age girl who falls for a sexy radical while he’s preaching the Sermon on the Mount.” “The sequence is sure to offend many,” Gates noted, “since it includes vivid descriptions of oral sex.”

## January

The work of sculptor Thierry De Cordier, featured in the January issue of Artforum, included “a cross coated with tarry paint, wax, hair, and bits of hardware...The whole assemblage had been doused in wine and urine.”

## January 29

**Swarthmore, PA** – The notoriously anti-Catholic play, “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You,” opened at the Players Club of Swarthmore. When this play appeared in New York in the

1980s, it was denounced not only by the Catholic League, but also by the Anti-Defamation League, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the American Jewish Committee, and others. Drama critics Clive Barnes and Frank Rich both termed it anti-Catholic as well.

## **February**

**Albany, NY** – The Fulton Street Gallery featured two works by Michele Molea which made irreverent use of sacred Catholic figures. “Banana Mary” featured bunches of bananas carved into images of the Blessed Mother. “Bobbing for Jesus” offered apples, with protrusions forming the image of Jesus, bobbing in water.

## **March**

**New York, NY** – Among the works in photographer Prinny Alavi’s “Crucifixion of the Female Spirit” collection, on display at A Different Light Bookstore, was a photograph of a crucifix stuffed into a flimsy wrap covering the genitalia of a female model.

## **March**

**New York, NY** – The New York Performance Works presented twelve performances of the play “’Tis a Pity She’s a Whore.” The postcard that was sent to prospective theater-goers showed an illustration of the Virgin Mary with the Immaculate Heart. The inscription “’Tis a Pit She’s a Whore” was written across her. The New York Performance Works said the play was not about Catholicism.

## **March 12**

**Albany, NY** – “The Pope and the Witch,” a play by notorious anti-Catholic playwright Dario Fo, opened at The Albany Civic Theater. The satire has Pope John Paul II endorsing birth control and legalization of drugs after being confronted with thousands of third world orphans. The pope is also portrayed as suffering from paranoia and being cured by a witch doctor. Producer David Girard actually expressed disappointment that

the play's anti-Catholic nature had not gotten it more notoriety. "I thought there would be a little bit of a hubbub," he complained to the Albany Times Union, "but as far as I know there hasn't been anything."

### **March 19**

**Maui, HI** – The Maui Academy of Performing Arts began a two-weekend run of the notoriously anti-Catholic play, "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You."

### **April**

**San Francisco** – The Eureka Theatre featured a play by Carl Djerassi, hailed by the San Francisco Chronicle as "the world-renowned father of the contraceptive pill." While the play was about a scientist trying to make history by impregnating herself with a single sperm taken from her infertile lover, Djerassi apparently could not resist using a title sure to offend Catholics. He called his play "The Immaculate Misconception."

### **April 1 – May 2**

**Washington, DC** – The Chamber Theatre staged "Clean," a play involving "the conversion of a drag queen and sins of a priest," which ends with an unambiguous attack on the Catholic Church's teachings on homosexuality.

### **April 9**

**Philadelphia, PA** – "Sacraments," billed as "A hillbilly Catholic tragedy" written by Stan Heleva, opened at 2nd Stage. The circular advertising the play featured a picture of a crucifix immersed in a jar of moonshine.

### **June 1**

**Washington, DC** – "The Complete Millennium Musical (Abridged)" opened at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. According to a review by Sister Mary Ann Walsh of the U.S. Catholic Conference, the performance, by the Reduced Shakespeare Company, repeatedly labeled the Catholic Church

“intolerant.” She also found that “the barbs against the Church convey an intolerable, mean-spirited stereotyping.” The Kennedy Center receives a sizable portion of its annual budget from the federal government.

### **June 8**

**New York, NY** – “Nuns who rock” proclaimed a promo for “The Nuns,” a “bondage-clad trio, now with new whip mistress Tania,” who were “headlining Jackie 60’s launch party for WAP (Women who Administer Punishment),” an S&M show at a club called “Mother.”

### **June 23 – 28**

**New York, NY** – The Guggenheim Museum hosted “The Mexperimental Theatre” which included “a roller-skating nun” who “spray paints prophecies...on the walls of Mexican high rises,” and “a feminist prankster” who “wreaks havoc in a monastic order by adding LSD to the drinking supply.” Promotional material for the event features a woman in a low-cut dress with a prominent symbol that resembles the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

### **July 3**

**Green Bay, WI** – The Neville Public Museum, which is run and funded by Brown County, opened an exhibit by artist Norbert Kox entitled “To Hell and Back.” Scheduled to run through October 10, the exhibit featured:

- the Virgin Mary depicted as the “Great Harlot”;
- Christ labeled the “Son of Perdition”;
- God the Father represented as a monster;
- Our Lady of Guadalupe pictured with a cross-shaped knife, cutting out the heart of a baby;
- Jesus wearing a necklace with the Satanic symbol “666”;
- A headless statue of Mary with black filth running out of her Immaculate Heart;
- A rewritten blasphemous version of the “Our Father.”

There was also blasphemous misuse of Catholic sacramentals, such as rosary beads, medals, crucifixes, scapulars and votive candles. The league’s protest to the museum’s board of



directors went unanswered.

### **July 6-7**

**New York, NY** – A theater called H.E.R.E. staged “Walking on Sticks,” a left-wing dramatization of the experiences of four women during the Contra-Sandinista civil war in Nicaragua during the 1980s. One of the characters, a Catholic nun, ridicules her first days in the convent as “Nun boot camp,” and portrays Pope John Paul II as insensitive to the suffering of mothers whose sons were killed by the Contras.

### **July 8 – 14**

**Huntington, NY** – The Cinema Arts Center featured “Original Sins”, a film that was part of the Center’s “Theatre of the Wild” presentation. The Long Island Voice described it as “the story of three devout, Catholic school girls” who are directed by a supernatural force “toward an orgy of sex and murder.” This was certainly not a first for the Cinema Arts Center. Last year they showed “Lilies”, hailed as “exposing the Church’s hypocrisy regarding homosexuality as well as a Planned Parenthood benefit that attacked the Pope.”

### **July 30, 31; August 2,6,7**

**Louisville, KY** – A local homosexual theater group presented “Corpus Christi” at the Artswatch Playhouse in Louisville. A resolution condemning the play is drafted by the City of Louisville Board of Aldermen.

### **July 31**

**Chatham, NJ**– An evening of one-act plays at the Chatham Playhouse included “Confessional,” which, according to a Protestant couple who attended, was an exercise in “Catholic bashing.” They described a plot featuring a homeless, alcoholic excommunicated priest coming to his old church for a handout, and being told by the pastor that he will give him more alcohol if the older priest brings a certain prostitute to the rectory. The older priest also communicates his sexual attraction for the young priest, according to this account.

Contacted by the league, the playwright—a professor at a local college—insisted that this was not an accurate account of the play. He insisted that it was a portrayal of two priests—one admittedly fallen—still struggling to do good and overcome temptation. When asked if he might provide the league with a copy of the script, however, he refused, contending that to do so voluntarily would somehow “violate my civil rights.”

## **August**

**New York, NY** – The play “Minha Rosa,” written by Mary Best Barber is presented at St. Mark’s Studio Theatre in Manhattan. Director Joseph Furnari says about the play: “Hopefully this play says ‘the Church doesn’t get it,’ because somewhere along the line, they separated love and sex.”

## **September**

**Valdosta, GA** – Valdosta State University sponsored an art exhibit by Peter Lenzo at its Fine Arts Gallery. The exhibit featured extensive use of the image of the Virgin Mary including one piece that showed leather straps over her mouth, eyes, pelvic area, breasts and legs.

Another piece called “21 Virgin Guns” showed a group of statues of Mary alongside a pile of guns. Two other pieces called “Virgin and Child II” and “Virgin and Child IV” are described as calling into question the virgin birth of Christ.

## **September**

**Buffalo, NY** – Actress Carolyn Gage performed a one-woman show “The Second Coming of Joan of Arc” at the Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in Buffalo. In it, Gage is described in a review as “an angry, lesbian Joan demythicizes her martyrdom.” In her play, “God the Father...is really the boys behind the curtain, amplified and using lots of special effects.”

## **September 10 – 25**

**Raleigh, NC** – The Raleigh Ensemble Players presented “Sacrilege” at Artspace. The play bills itself as about “a

devout nun fight[ing] the Vatican to allow women in the priesthood, forcing all to re-examine the meaning of faith.” The Raleigh Ensemble Players is partially funded by the state of North Carolina and the city of Raleigh.

## **October**

**New York, NY** – The play “The Wind on the Water” had a run at the Greenwich Street Theater. It is about a young Jewish man who wakes up one Christmas morning with the wounds of Christ. The man becomes a celebrity. The man’s doctor is a character who is described as a “recovering Catholic.”

## **October**

**New York, NY** – Writer/actress Tara Greenway performed the one-act play “Missionary Position” at the Grove Street Theatre in New York’s Greenwich Village. The play is about “vulvar vestibulitis” a medical condition that makes it painful for a woman to have sex.

The main character has a sexual encounter with a woman and a married man while declaring the Bible “is not true” after looking up verses pertaining to women. Upon having her condition diagnosed, she concludes her religious upbringing is responsible for her medical condition.

## **October 2**

**New York, NY** – The art exhibit “Sensation” opened at the Brooklyn Museum of Art to much controversy and protest. The exhibit included a work by British artist Chris Ofili titled “The Holy Virgin Mary.” The work was a depiction of a woman with elephant dung placed around and on the body. Also, cut out pictures from pornographic magazines (anuses and vaginas) were placed on the linen. Other pieces of the exhibit featured sliced-up and decomposing animals as well as a mural of Britain’s best known serial killer.

The Brooklyn Museum of Art is subsidized by the taxpayers of New York (\$7 million a year). Approximately one third of its operating budget is public money.

## **October 2**

The cable television channel Bravo aired the film "The Last Temptation of Christ." Fourteen months prior, Bravo pulled a showing of the film and issued a statement to the press saying they "have decided not to renew the licensing agreement to air the movie, therefore this feature will no longer be aired."

## **October 15**

**Youngstown, OH** – Youngstown State University's Blackbox Productions presented the play "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You" by Christopher Durang. In the press release announcing the production, the group billed the play as "one of Christopher Durang's best works, the one-act focuses on the doctrine and fantasies that make up the Catholic Church. This delightful comedy will shake your beliefs as it tickles your funnybone."

## **November**

A new movie, "Julien Donkey-Boy" is reviewed in the New York Post. The reviewer says the movie features "masturbating nuns," a man who wears a "large image of Christ around his neck while he rubs himself during an erotic phone chat with his sister" and other "blasphemous" elements.

## **November**

**Syracuse, NY** – Father Jeffrey Keefe of the Church of the Assumption in Syracuse runs the local chapter of COURAGE, a church ministry to homosexuals and those with homosexual leanings who want support in adhering to the Church's teachings on sexuality. He also runs ENCOURAGE, a service to family members. Father Keefe wanted to run an advertisement in the local newspapers, the Post-Standard and the Herald Journal, to get the word out about his ministry.

The newspapers, owned by the same company, refused to run the ads saying they were inappropriate. After some pressure from the Catholic League and some minor changes to the ad, the newspapers relented and Father Keefe's ad ran.

## **November**

***Santa Fe, NM*** – Santa Fe Community College displayed an artwork titled “And God Gave Dominion.” Given to the school by artist Monica Steinhoff, the painting depicted a crucified gorilla. After many complaints from the community and an act of vandalism, the painting was removed.

## **November**

***New York, NY*** – New York City’s Museum of Modern Art played host to the premiere of the one-hour documentary, “Women in Black.” The film was described as a “kaleidoscope of baby boomers memories” that featured “childhood experiences of physical and psychological punishment during their education by Catholic nuns, especially in the 1950s and 1960s.”

The director, Claudia Sherwood, said she actually “became ill at times when research required me to contact the archdiocese, a nun or clergy.”

## **November**

The play “Corpus Christi” featuring a promiscuous, gay Jesus resurfaced in Denver, Houston, Santa Ana, Edinburgh and London. The Denver production closed almost as soon as it opened.

## **November**

***Dunedin, FL*** – The Dunedin Art Harvest Festival featured a hand-painted photograph by Lance Rodgers called “Lucid As Hell.” It was a photo of a girl holding a crucifix. Hanging on the crucifix was Mickey Mouse.

## **November 17**

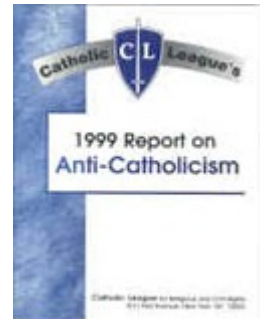
***Detroit, MI*** – The Detroit Institute of Arts opened the exhibit “Van Gogh’s Ear.” The one room exhibit featured a toy Jesus wearing a condom, a brazil nut with a racial epithet across it, a video of a woman in a shower menstruating and a jar of urine labeled as that used in Andres Serrano’s “Piss Christ.” Museum director Graham W. J. Beal closed the exhibit citing concerns that the “artwork” would offend the community.

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# Business / Workplace

## 1999

Off The Wall, a greeting card subsidiary of West Graphics, featured a Christmas card with a parody of the Nativity scene transposed onto a modern-day talk show. Joseph is seated next to Mary, who is holding the baby Jesus, as an audience member says to Joseph: "You never slept with her, she gets pregnant and you blame it on God. Joseph, you got to wake up!"



## 1999

**Hoboken, NJ** – Nobleworks, a card company whose owner prides himself on the anti-Catholic nature of his cards, offered a Christmas card entitled "Mary Decides on a Name." It shows Mary, undergoing excruciating labor pains, grabbing Joseph by the shirt and screaming, "Jesus H. Christ."

## January

CompuServe, one of the nation's leading computer companies, posted on one of its websites a "Transgender Forum" laced with anti-Catholic commentary. One quip declared that the Vatican was "built on the site of the temple of a sect of transgendered priests." Another had the pope "acknowledging" this "historical fact" and apologizing for Christian intolerance of transgendered people. Moreover, the statement added, "His Holiness confirms that henceforth only post-operative trans men would be allowed to become Cardinals." After several calls from the league, the offensive material was removed.

## January

**New England** – A sales circular for Building #19, a chain with

outlets throughout New England, included a page on books for sale. Inserted among the various book titles being promoted was a picture of a nun reading to a group of little girls. "Sound It Out," the nun is saying. "She Look-ed In-to His Steel-Gray Eyes and Sighed, 'Take Me, I'm Yours.' Now you try it, Darlene."

## **January**

**Cambridge, MA** – ON Technology, a computer software company, advertised its Y2K JumpStart automated desktop as a miraculous solution to "your critical Y2K challenges." "Centralized desktop remediation so easy, it's a religious experience," the ad read. No problem so far. But to emphasize their "religious experience" theme, the ad trivialized the Eucharist, by featuring a picture of a Catholic bishop raising a computer disk as though he were elevating the sacred Host.

## **January 13**

**New York, NY** – An anti-Catholic chain letter was disseminated through the internal e-mail network of the Bear Stearns Corporation. The letter involved a tasteless joke about a newly-ordained priest who, having been sipping vodka during Mass to overcome nervousness, received a note afterward about subsequent errors in his homily. The most offensive lines included:

- "Jesus was consecrated, not constipated."
- "The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are not referred to as Daddy, Junior and the Spook."
- "David slew Goliath, he did not kick the shit out of him."
- "We do not refer to the Cross as 'The Big T.'"
- "When Jesus broke the bread at the Last Supper, he said, 'Take this and eat it, for this is my body.' He did not say, 'Eat me.'"
- "The Virgin Mary is not called 'Mary with the Cherry.'"
- "Next Sunday there will be a taffy-pulling contest at St. Peter's, not a peter-pulling contest at St. Taffy's."

## **February 7**

**Naples, FL** – Hurricane Jane's, a nightclub, was being transformed into Hades, an "industrial techno bar" featuring gothic imagery, leather, body piercing and tattooing on site, exotic dancers and a lesbian kissing contest. To help generate controversy, and thus publicity, the club hired three people to dress up as a priest and two nuns who would stage a "protest" outside.

## **March**

An ad for the video game "Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri" appeared in Popular Science magazine. The first line of the text of the ad, beneath pictures of rocketships, read "Upon This Rock I build My Church" followed by "my network node, my command center, my war room, my punishment sphere...my mankind."

## **March**

**Chelmsford, MA** – Catalog Ventures continued to feature the "Nunzilla" doll among its collectibles: "Sister Nunzilla corrects any and all classroom transgressions, breathing fiery sparks as she makes her way to your desk. Terrifying!"

## **March 11**

**New York, NY** – "MM the Harlot," a play by Maureen Tomson-Villante, opened at Arci's Place. A publicity flier from Arci's Place indicated that the musical portrayed Mary Magdalene and Jesus as lovers, and Jesus as "only a man." When the league protested, Arci's Place proprietor John Miller wrote back that both he and Ms. Thomson-Villante "are devout Catholics," and insisted that the play's theme did not "mock our Divine Savior nor the faith we so ardently believe." He did not deny the play's portrayal of Jesus and Mary Magdalene as lovers.

## **April**

**Staten Island, NY** – The Burrito Bar tastelessly exploited Christ's resurrection to advertise its Easter Sunday specials. An image of Jesus rising from the dead was accompanied by the words recited at Mass: "He will come again to judge the living



and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.” Under the illustration, the flier read: “Easter Sunday @ Burrito Bar. Jesus rose from the dead, so come have \$2 cans and free wings all damned nite!”

## **April**

**New York, NY** – A circular promoting The Crane Club featured a picture of a scantily clad male and female embracing, in a pose that seemed designed to depict the crucifixion.

## **April 2**

**Bothell, WA** – A woman who was five months pregnant was forced to get off a Community Transit bus and walk more than a mile in the rain, after she refused to stop talking about God while on the bus. Michelle Shocks struck up a conversation with another passenger about their churches and their faith in Jesus, when the driver warned her that talking about religion might offend other passengers. Mrs. Shocks then moved next to the other passenger, so that they could continue their conversation more quietly. The driver, however, again summoned her to the front of the bus, and told that she would have to get off if she did not stop talking about religion. When asked if there was a law that prohibited passengers from talking about Jesus, the driver responded by throwing Mrs. Shocks and the male passenger off the bus at the next stop. As a result, Mrs. Shocks was late picking her children up from day care. By the time she arrived home, her frantic husband was about to call the police.

## **April 7**

**Altavista, VA** – The Alta-Gret Chapter of the American Business Women’s Association (ABWA), as part of a “Womanless Beauty Pageant” in which male performers grossly exaggerate female characteristics, featured a man dressed as a pregnant nun dancing provocatively on stage. A protest by the league elicited immediate and sincere apologies, from both the Alta-Gret chapter and the national headquarters of ABWA.

## **May**

The Marcel Schurman company offered a Mother's Day card with a photograph of a stern-faced nun menacingly brandishing a ruler.

## **May 29**

*Portland, ME* – A flier promoting an establishment called The Bitter End advertised an act called "Broken Clown with very special guest Neon Jesus." A drawing showed a clown, wearing a "The Bitter End" tee shirt, crucified on a cross.

## **June**

Egreetings, an e-mail greeting card service, featured a card called "Celibacy Sucks." It pictured a Catholic monk copying manuscripts while a hymn played in the background.

## **June**

*Chicago, IL* – A fetish lingerie store, Taboo-Tabou, graced its window with a mannequin, dressed as a nun (in full habit), standing over a naked female mannequin, and spanking her with a whip-like object. The naked mannequin was made to appear as though it had bruises on its legs. Called by the league, a spokeswoman for Taboo-Tabou said that the display "was just an expression of people's fantasies." She did acknowledge, however, that she could understand how some people might be offended by it; and shortly afterward, the display was removed.

## **June**

*Miami, FL* – Norwegian Cruise Lines featured as part of their cruise ship entertainment a comedy duo called The Shennagins (sic). The comedy act included anti-Catholic jokes and referred to the Virgin Mary as "Our Lady of Instant Gratification" and then simulated masturbation.

## **August 17**

*New York, NY* – A branch of the international bookstore chain, Rizzoli, placed in its storefront window a picture from a book

entitled *Visonaire 28*, published by Visionaire. It was a picture of the Last Supper that showed a bare-breasted woman standing in the middle of the table with her arms outstretched.

In addition to the picture in the front window, *Visonaire 28* contains: a) the “Virgin Mary” with her breasts exposed wearing pink panties b) “Salome and John the Baptist” featuring a young woman squatted, with legs spread, in front of the bloody head of John the Baptist c) “Judas Kiss,” a homoerotic picture of a man kissing a young boy.

### **August 26**

**New York, NY** – Dancer Clare Byrne performed her version of stories and characters of the bible at The New York International Fringe Festival. Byrne’s dances about religion are described as being reminiscent of Fractured Fairy Tales cartoons. The dancer admits she does not research her subject but it is “my take on holiness.”

### **December 10**

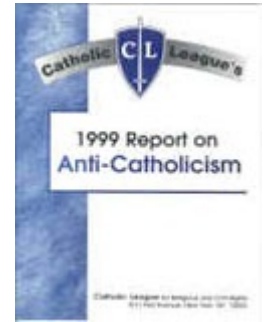
**New York, NY** – The Couch Potato Video store used its store windows to make light of the controversy at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. The windows had positive depictions of the Jewish menorah but placed the face of New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani in the middle of a cross. Also, a Christmas tree had a condom wrapper in the shape of a star on its top.

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## **Education**

## **January 28 – February 20**

**New Haven, CT** – The program for the Yale Repertory Theatre's presentation of Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure" was filled with Scriptural references and Catholic imagery, juxtaposed with lewd images and what appeared to be commentary about the impeachment of President Clinton.



## **February**

**New York, NY** – A band called Tammy Faye Starlight sang a song played on Columbia University radio station, WKCR. The song was filled with slurs against nuns, Jews and brain-injured children.

## **February**

**Scarborough, ME** – The school system in Scarborough determined St. Valentine's Day is, in fact, a religious celebration. As such, the schools banned any celebration of Valentine's Day including school dances.

## **March**

**Detroit, MI** – A suburban Detroit high school student sued her school arguing she has a constitutional right to wear the symbol of her faith on school grounds – the practice of witchcraft. She is being backed by the ACLU. The ACLU has opposed the right of nuns in habit to teach at public schools.

## **March**

**Houston, TX** – A federal appeals court in Houston has ruled that prayer in a huddle before a football game, even when student-led, is unconstitutional.

## **March 13**

**Washington, DC** – The National Cathedral School, a Protestant prep school, held its Third Annual Celebration Dinner fundraiser, and some guests came dressed in the habits of Catholic monks and nuns. The school's newsletter subsequently applauded this mockery of the Catholic Church with pictures

and favorable commentary.

## **April**

**St. Louis, MO** – “Contagion of the Night,” a blatant mockery of Catholicism and of nuns, in particular, was staged at St. Louis Community College. Billed as “one nun’s crisis of faith and one anti-christ’s journey of self-discovery,” the play depicts Catholic nuns as greedy, insane, and sexually repressed. The Virgin Mary is held up for particular derision and ridicule, and Christianity is trivialized as a contest between two “cosmic jokesters,” God and Satan. The play was scheduled to run again at the college in the fall; but after hearing the league’s concerns, college chancellor, Dr. Vivian B. Blevins, immediately apologized, and promised that it would not be staged on the campus again.

## **April 1**

**Poughkeepsie, NY** – The Miscellany News, Vassar College’s student newspaper, added a special April Fool’s supplement, dubbing it Pisscellany News. It included an article ridiculing Pope John Paul II. “When an old man from New Jersey asked if the Pope himself had ever experienced same-sex tendencies,” read one of the more tasteless lines, “His Holiness expressed his desire to attend next year’s HomoHop scantily clad as Buddha.” The piece also featured an illustration of the Pope in a diaper, described as “his new ‘Dancing Baby’ outfit for the HomoHop.”

## **April 2**

**Tucson, AZ** – On Good Friday, the Arizona Daily Wildcat, student newspaper of the University of Arizona, ran several items offensive to Catholic believers. A commentary announced “Top 10 things about Christianity that kick ass.” It derided the Catholic Church for “burning heretics at the stake” and “wasting holy Islamic sites” during the Crusades. A cartoon accompanying the article showed a cross hatching out of an Easter egg. Another cartoon in the same paper showed an Easter bunny crucified on a cross, hearing the voice of God berating

him for taking "credit for my holiday."

#### **April 16**

**Middletown, NY** – Orange County Community College hosted a "goddess conference" designed to "explore the social costs of patriarchy." With workshops on "Medieval Images of Mary" and "The Traditional Christian View of Women," the conference, entitled "God the Mother: Sexual Politics and Civilization," promised to be yet another academic assault on the "patriarchy" of the Catholic Church. To make sure it was, the conference starred Donna Woolfolk Cross, author of "Pope Joan," a work of fiction about a woman pope.

#### **April 20**

**Littleton, CO** – Among the murder victims in the Columbine High School shooting massacre was Cassie Bernall, killed because of her Christian faith. Asked by the shooters whether she believed in God, Cassie reportedly answered emphatically, "Yes." She was shot to death on the spot. Yet, even as the killings led to an outpouring of calls for prayer and expressions of faith—led by President and Mrs. Clinton—some were indignant that Miss Bernall was being hailed as a Christian martyr. This was in stark contrast to the unquestioned martyrdom bestowed on Matthew Shepard, the gay man savagely beaten to death in Wyoming several months earlier.

#### **May**

**Bucks County, PA** – Opposing Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge's pro-school choice "Academic Recovery Act," 14 school superintendents from Bucks County signed a letter comparing the effects of school choice to the genocidal war in Kosovo. Citing the war as "a graphic example of what happens to a society that separates its people and fosters elitism," the letter warned that such could be the fate of Pennsylvania if the poor were to enjoy the same freedom of choice in education that the rich "elite" already have. "Voucher plans," the superintendents warned, would weaken "democratic principles,"

“undermine the public good,” and possibly “lead to the Balkanization of our society.”

## **May 15**

**New York, NY** – Sen. Charles Schumer, in a speech to the Spring Education Conference of the United Federation of Teachers, charged that supporters of school vouchers want to sacrifice education in order to proselytize. “Those who argue that we should have vouchers and those who argue that the money ought to be sent to the private system—look who they are,” Schumer told the union. “They’re not interested in educating—they’re interested in proselytizing.” After the league issued a statement denouncing those remarks, Schumer telephoned league president William Donohue. He insisted that his concerns were not directed at the Catholic Church, but at groups like the Christian Coalition and Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam.

## **May 21**

**White Plains, NY** – A federal judge ruled that the Bedford Central school district violated the rights of three Catholic school families by having students cut out elephant-head images of a Hindu god, make toothpick “worry dolls,” and build an altar for an Earth Day liturgy.

## **June**

**Albany, NY** – The league’s attention was called to the New York State Regents exams, standardized aptitude tests given to high school students in all the traditional subjects. A question on the 1998 Global Studies exam asked, “Which statement best illustrates the contradictory actions of the Catholic Church in colonial America?” All four choices—including the “correct” one dealing with Catholicism and slavery—were highly subjective and negatively framed, making the Church look bad. When the league contacted Dr. Gerald DeMauro, Coordinator of Assessment in the New York State Education Department, he agreed that the question was inappropriate, and promised that it would no longer be used on the exam. He also invited the league to serve as a “sensitivity reviewer” of future exam

questions—a most welcome opportunity, given that in the meantime another problematic question had been brought to our attention, this one on the 1999 English Regents exam.

## **June 7**

**Harrisburg, PA** – David Gondak, head of Pennsylvania's largest teachers union, urged his members to use their classrooms as platforms for indoctrinating their students with anti-school choice propaganda. Gondak told the Pennsylvania State Education Association to teach students that Gov. Tom Ridge's school choice proposal was "stealth voucher legislation" and a "voucher scheme."

## **June 7**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Stepping up its campaign against Gov. Ridge's school choice proposal, the Pennsylvania State Education Association posted a photograph of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet on its home page—suggesting that if educational vouchers are implemented, Pennsylvania will turn fascist. There were apparently no concerns, however, that fascism could result from such demagogic fear-mongering—or from teachers abusing their authority to indoctrinate their students (see above).

## **July**

**New York, NY** – Prentice Hall published a text book called *The Practice of Public Relations*. A statement in the text read: "Hill & Knowlton, one of the world's largest public relations firms, as noted, was embarrassed in recent years by taking on clients, such as the antiabortion National Conference of Catholic Bishops...." The passage was contained in a chapter on ethics that included: "honesty and fairness are two critical components that will continue to determine the ethical behavior of public relations professionals."

## **August**

**Cleveland, OH** – Federal Court Judge Solomon Oliver, Jr. blocked Cleveland's four year-old school voucher program and



virtually promised to kill it altogether. The judge said since the vast majority of parents were choosing religious schools, the program had the primary effect of advancing religion. The ruling promised massive disruption for almost 4,000 students participating in the voucher program.

## **August**

**North Dartmouth, MA** – Parents of some in-coming freshmen students at Dartmouth High School were concerned about a book on a mandatory reading list for their children. The Chocolate Wars by Robert Cormier features profanity, derisive references to Catholic theology, explicit sexual references and the portrayal of females only in the context as the objects of male lust. The parents wanted the book placed on an optional reading list.

## **August 17**

**Cooperstown, ND** – Public school teacher Larry Volk distributed handouts in seventh grade social studies and tenth grade history classes. The handouts were from Ralph Woodrow's Babylon Mystery Religion which shows an anti-Catholic perspective of periods of history. The author, Mr. Woodrow, himself indicated his main source "presented as history" some things that "were not history at all, but only an arbitrary piecing together of numerous ancient myths – not a sound basis for history."

## **September**

**Harrison County, MS** – Citing concerns over gangs, the Harrison County, school board announced the Star of David was now banned from school property. The County school superintendent cited the need to protect the students' welfare. The school board considered banning crosses as well but did not.

As the Catholic League prepared to file an amicus brief against the school board, the board overturned its decision. It voted unanimously to exempt religious symbols from its policy prohibiting gang apparel.

## **September**

**Central Florida** – School teacher Michael Ducharme resigned from his job at Eustis High School just before he was about to be fired. Ducharme, complaining about the heat, told his students “I’m as hot as a pregnant nigger.” He later apologized by saying he meant to say “I’m as hot as a pregnant nun.”

## **November**

**Cincinnati, OH** – Mary Buse of Cincinnati was upset that the Sycamore School District noted the days upon which Jewish holy days fell, but not Christian ones in the school calendars. Mrs. Buse complained that Yom Kippur was listed but Christmas was “winter break.” After her input, the calendars were changed to reflect no religious holidays. She considered it a “small victory” for a level playing field.

## **November**

**Syracuse, NY** – A kindergarten student from suburban Syracuse used a reference to God during a school project. The student was trying to show his concern for the environment and used God as part of his project. The teacher and principal would not allow it. The issue is now in court.

## **November**

**New Paltz, NY** – An “art” work by a former student at State University of New York at New Paltz featured four large penises in the shape of a cross in front of what appeared to be the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Catholic League president William Donohue called university president Roger Bowen and asked what was going to be done with the artwork. Bowen eventually determined it would be removed because the student was no longer on campus, not because of any outside pressure.

## **November 29**

**Marina del Rey, CA** – Dr. Gary Hull of the Ayn Rand Institute gave a speech at the University of Virginia. Among the statements he made: “for centuries, Catholicism has been

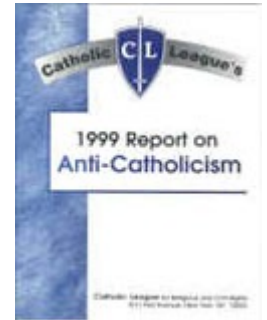
shoving misery down humanity's throat."

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## Government

### January 22

**Washington, DC** – A Catholic priest entering the Library of Congress was ordered by a security guard to remove a sweatshirt he was wearing that read: "St. Jerome Church Marches for Right to Life." The guard told Father Thomas Haren of Cleveland that the sweatshirt was "political" and therefore could not be worn in the Library. Following numerous unanswered complaints by Father Haren, his congressman, Dennis Kucinich, and others, he finally received an apology—five months later—after the league contacted the Library's general counsel.



### February

**White Plains, NY** – A proposal before the Westchester County Legislature to establish a Westchester County Human Rights Commission included a provision requiring the commission to develop "courses of instruction" for public and private schools—suggesting the threat of government intrusion into the autonomy of Catholic schools. Following intervention by the league, the provision was changed to a call for developing "informational materials" that would be distributed only to people who request them.

### March

**Sacramento, CA** – California Assemblywoman Sheila James Kuehl introduced legislation that would deny to Catholic hospitals the right to raise funds through the sale of revenue bonds. Kuehl's concern is that as secular hospitals merge with

Catholic hospitals, they are willingly accepting Catholic ethical directives in health care—most conspicuously, a prohibition against doing abortions. So Kuehl proposed revoking the right to sell revenue bonds for any health facility that does not provide for “the full range of reproductive services.”

### **March 31**

**Washington, DC** – White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart claimed at a press briefing that there was “no basis in fact” to the charge that James Hormel, President Clinton’s nominee for Ambassador to Luxembourg, supported a group of gay men who dress in nuns’ habits and mock the sacraments of the Catholic Church. In characterizing that charge as a “sort of ad hominem attack on Mr. Hormel,” Lockhart ignored a tape which has Hormel laughing approvingly on television as the “Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence” marched by in their nuns’ habits during a San Francisco gay pride parade. Moreover, when Sen. Tim Hutchinson of Arkansas later invited the nominee to repudiate the group, Hormel not only refused, but stated that he found their antics “humorous.”

### **April**

**Minot Air Force Base, ND** – A scathing report from a superior threatened to end the military career of Air Force Lt. Ryan Berry because he refused to compromise his Catholic religious beliefs. Lt. Berry had objected to performing missile silo duty in complete isolation with a female colleague, for days at a time, in very close quarters 80 feet underground. The married father of an infant child, he cited Catholic teaching about avoiding “near occasions of sin.” His application of Catholic teaching was affirmed by Archbishop Edwin O’Brien, vicar for the military; John Cardinal O’Connor, himself a former senior military chaplain; and Msgr. William Smith, a prominent moral theologian. After accommodating Lt. Berry for 18 months, the Air Force suddenly reversed course; and despite a glowing April 1999 performance report describing him as a

“highly capable officer” and “cool performer under pressure” with “boundless potential,” his wing commander, Col. Ronald Haeckel, savaged him as “unprofessional,” and as having “adversely impacted good order, discipline and morale.” Fortunately, Lt. Berry was promoted to captain at the end of 1999.

## **April 16**

**Montgomery, MD** – Appeals to anti-Catholic bigotry have long been a staple of the pro-abortion movement, and Maryland House of Delegates member Dana Lee Dembrow continued that shameful record. Writing in the Montgomery Journal, Dembrow suggested that a bill to ban partial-birth abortion be granted a “Confused Catholic Conservatism Award,” because it was “offered by representatives who ordinarily work to restrict government intrusion into private affairs.” Dembrow never offered any evidence that the bill’s supporters were exclusively Catholic, nor any other justification for singling out Catholic legislators as objects of ridicule.

## **May**

**Seattle, WA** – The Washington State Liquor Control Board granted a license for the sale of beer and wine to the 99 Cent Plus Smoke Shop, which was located just several hundred feet from St. Alphonsus Catholic School. Noting that Washington state law prohibits the issuance of a liquor license to any establishment within 500 feet of a public school, parish and school officials questioned why students attending a Catholic school should not be afforded the same legal protection. In response to a letter from the league, the state liquor board explained that the “concerns and objections” were not received until after the license had been granted. While declaring itself powerless to reverse this particular decision, the board announced “a new policy relating to private schools,” promising “to give substantial weight to the objections filed by a private school and not issue a liquor license within 500 feet of a private school if the school objects.”

## **May**

**Lewiston, ME** – Maine's Department of Human Services (DHS) threatened to withdraw the license of Monique Dostie's group home for mentally retarded adults unless Dostie, a devout Catholic, changed her rules forbidding pornography and sexual activity. As an Associated Press (AP) story noted, "None of the three residents in the group home is complaining about Dostie's rules. In fact, some of their guardians placed them in the home for the very reason that sex was not permitted." Describing one 29 year old resident who "likes to color, watch cartoons and play with animals," AP observed that the woman "is clearly not interested in sex." Thanks to the intrusion of the Department of Human Services, however, "sex is the reason she may have to find a new home." As it turned out, Dostie lost.

## **May 7**

**Washington, DC** – An obscene joke about nuns made its way onto the Daily Digest e-mail service of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Following protests from a number of subscribers, the FCC issued an apology, acknowledging that "the transmission was completely inappropriate and inexcusable," and promising that "appropriate disciplinary action" would be taken.

## **May 17**

**Salem, OR** – The Oregon State House voted down a pharmacist conscience clause that would have given Catholic pharmacists and others protection against having to dispense drugs designed to destroy human life. The bill would have permitted pharmacists to refuse, as a matter of conscience, to fill prescriptions for abortifacients, abortifacient contraceptives and drugs used to carry out assisted suicide, recently legalized in Oregon. It was defeated by a 33-27 vote, with some opponents arguing that pharmacists who refuse to fill such a prescription should be required to help the customer find a pharmacist who would. As State Rep. Bill Witt pointed

out, however, it would be a grave sin for a Catholic to in any way assist a customer in obtaining a drug used for an abortion.

### **May 26**

**Philadelphia, PA** – The Philadelphia Public Library offered a display entitled “Social Issues In the American Christian Churches,” designed to equate the injustice of slavery with modern treatment of homosexuals. The religious imagery accompanying the exhibit was all Catholic: a Madonna and Child, Crucifix, and chalice. A book by Pope John Paul II was the only work offered that was critical of the homosexual lifestyle, giving the message that the Pope stands alone in opposition to that lifestyle. After several complaints by the league’s Philadelphia chapter, the Catholic icons and symbols were removed from the display.

### **May 30**

**Washington, DC** – Stripes Sunday, the Sunday edition of the nation’s official military newspaper, Stars and Stripes, ran an article ostensibly about the military’s acceptance of female chaplains. It was, however, a thinly veiled attack on the role of women in the Catholic Church. The article falsely alleged that women “are not welcome as leaders of Catholic...organizations,” ignoring the many Catholic organizations led by women. It accused Archbishop Edwin O’Brien of the military vicariate of urging parents to consider “pushing” their sons into priestly service, distorting the Church’s desire that parents simply be open to a priestly or religious vocation for their children. Most egregious was a quote about women’s ordination from Margaret Wiborg of the Boston University School of Theology: “I don’t have much hope for the Catholic church. It’s going to take the death of at least the next couple of popes.”

### **June**

**New Jersey** – A film shown as part of New Jersey’s mandatory education program for convicted DWI offenders included a scene

showing a priest molesting a young altar boy. There was no indication of what this depiction had to do with combating DWI offenses. Following a protest by the league, the film was withdrawn from use.

#### **June 4**

**Washington, DC** – Ignoring objections about the nominee's enthusiasm for an anti-Catholic gay group, President Clinton used the Memorial Day recess to bypass the Senate confirmation process, and issued a "recess" appointment of James Hormel as ambassador to Luxembourg. Mr. Hormel's nomination had been blocked by the Senate for more than a year. The league had opposed Hormel's appointment to serve as ambassador because of his public approval of the anti-Catholic Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a group of gay men who dress as nuns and mock the sacraments of the Catholic Church.

#### **June 9**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Attacks on Gov. Ridge's school choice proposal reached a new low, as State Rep. Joseph Preston, Jr., a Democrat from Pittsburgh, implied that the Catholic Church might use educational vouchers to pay off lawsuits involving pedophilia. Referring to "certain religions hit hard by a lot of lawsuits," Preston said, "I don't want to see our money to be able to go for those different lawsuits for certain people who do not act appropriately." When questioned, he refused to say what religions he was talking about, saying only that he was referring to different "systems" which have made out-of-court settlements. His remarks were widely interpreted as being directed at the Catholic Church, however, particularly since he preceded them with several caustic comments about Catholic education. Preston "apologized" several days later, but wouldn't identify to whom he was apologizing.

#### **July**

**Chesapeake, VA** – Having banned Catholic civilians from attending Mass at the base chapel—as they had been permitted to do for more than two decades—a Navy commander also revoked



permission for a Knights of Columbus council to meet at the chapel, where it had been founded. In barring the Knights, Captain R.W. Jerome, Commander of Naval Security Group Northwest, charged the Catholic men's fraternal organization with discriminating against women. The operative Department of Defense directive, however, bars "unlawful discrimination"; and the right of private voluntary groups—particularly those of a religious nature—to determine their own membership guidelines, has always been upheld by the courts.

After the Catholic League's public statements to the Navy and the press, Captain Jerome reversed his course. He retracted his charge that the Knights were discriminating and he apologized for the mischaracterization.

### **July 13**

**Republic, MO** – A federal judge ordered the City of Republic to remove a fish symbol from its seal because he viewed it as a Christian symbol. A spokeswoman for a group defending the symbol insisted that it was "designed to show community values and community morals," and was "never intended to promote religion." The judge, however, sided with the American Civil Liberties Union, which had brought suit to ban the symbol on behalf of a plaintiff who is a practitioner of Wicca, or witchcraft.

### **August 3**

**Washington, DC** – As the league hosted a Capitol Hill press conference featuring Air Force Lt. Ryan Berry, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Michael Ryan wrote to Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD) rejecting a Congressional plea that Lt. Berry's Catholic religious convictions be accommodated. On July 14, 77 members of the House of Representatives had written to Gen. Ryan, urging that Lt. Berry's religious objections "to sex-integrated assignments in the intimate confines of a nuclear missile launch center" be respected. In his response, however, Gen. Ryan categorically rejected the Congressional request, insisting that Lt. Berry's "personal

convictions could no longer be accommodated,” and stating that he would instead be transferred to another assignment. Lt. Berry’s lawyer labeled Gen. Ryan’s response “vapid.”

## **October**

**Boston, MA** – Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci nominated two state judges to the Supreme Judicial Court. Both judges, Margaret Marshall and Judith Corwin “evidenced a certain mindset which at times is open to the serious charge of anti-Catholicism” according to Cardinal Bernard Law. Corwin was the presiding judge in a case where a jury had found that the church-run Carney Hospital fired a worker because he was gay. The man was awarded \$1.2 million dollars. Judge Corwin increased the award citing problems inherent in suing a respected Boston charitable institution and the strength of the Catholic Church.

Marshall, while general counsel at Harvard, had written a letter to law professor and anti-abortion advocate Mary Ann Glendon. Marshall admonished Glendon for writing about her anti-abortion views using university letterhead. Pro-abortion faculty members had used Harvard stationery in writing about their views before Marshall was general counsel.

## **October**

**Yuma, Arizona** – The Yuma, Arizona Office of the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Yuma Area Government Alliance decided to celebrate “Women’s Equality Day” by featuring Sheila Dierks, a dissident Catholic radical feminist. The Catholic League protested the propriety of having someone who is anti-Catholic offer a presentation of her work at a state-sponsored event. Dierks is identified on her website as someone who is “often saddened and horrified by positions the Church hierarchy supports.” She was dropped in favor of someone more mainstream.

## **November**

In the November issue of Playboy magazine, Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura gave his views on a wide range of topics

including religion. “Organized religion is a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people,” he said. “It tells people to go out and stick their noses in other people’s business.” Ventura later tried to explain the remark, saying his wife was very religious, as an example of what he meant by weak-minded people.

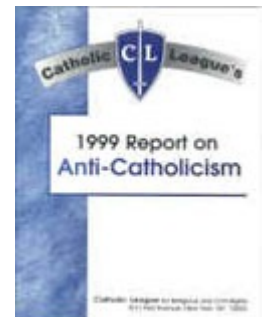
## **December 22**

Elizabeth, NJ – The Elizabeth Immigration Detention Center suspended religious and educational programs for detainees. Officials thought some of the Gospel was a security risk and said “unreasonable hope” was being given to detainees.

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# **Media**

## Movies



## **January**

“The Ogre,” a film about a naïve Catholic man in the Paris suburbs who is seduced into the pagan lifestyle of Nazi Germany, contained “minor attacks on the Catholic clergy,” according to a review in Human Events.

## **March**

The film “Relax...It’s Just Sex” featured the following line: “You know how lesbians are. They’re like Catholics or ‘Saturday Night Live.’ They go on forever, no matter how bad it gets.”

## **March**

**Philadelphia, PA** – Irish-American actor Aidan Quinn, explaining the “explosion of great filmmaking coming out of Ireland in the last 10 or 15 years,” attributed it to “the prying off of the cement lid of oppression in Ireland,” that “has exposed the sexual abuse, the Catholic Church’s domination, the repression of sexuality, the repression of freedom.”

## **April 5**

**New York, NY** – The New York Post reported that Miramax and its parent company, Disney, were “wringing their hands” over the fate of Kevin Smith’s anti-Catholic satire, “Dogma.” Having read the script, the league responded by citing some of its more egregious items: a tasteless remark positing sexual relations between Mary and Joseph: “Believing a wife never humped her husband—that’s just gullibility”; God played by Alanis Morissette, a singer known for her nude videos and songs about oral sex; a descendant of Joseph and Mary who works at an abortion clinic; a foul-mouthed 13th apostle; and the comparison of Mass to lousy sex.

## **April 7**

Bob and Harvey Weinstein, heads of Disney-owned Miramax, were forced to buy the rights to the movie “Dogma” and find a new distributor for it, after Disney refused to allow its release through their subsidiary. A Disney official reportedly termed the movie “inappropriate for all our labels.” The league hailed Disney’s decision, and promised an all-out campaign against the film. Noting that actor Ben Affleck, who stars in “Dogma,” had called it “a satire on the Catholic Church” that “is definitely meant to push buttons,” league president William Donohue said, “The Catholic League has a few buttons of its own to push, and we will not hold back.”

## **June 15**

**Los Angeles, CA** – The attorney for Bob and Harvey Weinstein sent the Catholic League a threatening letter, in an obvious

effort to intimidate the league from continuing its protest of the movie "Dogma." While expressing "no desire to interfere with the League's freedom of speech," attorney Daniel Petrocelli attempted to do just that, by promising to "hold the League fully accountable for any wrongdoing, injury or damage it causes." He asserted that the league's "public pronouncements" suggest "that the League may endorse or induce unlawful restraints on the freedom of others to exercise their right to see and enjoy 'Dogma.'" What pronouncements led to such a conclusion? Responding to Ben Affleck's declaration that the film is "definitely meant to push buttons," league president William Donohue had simply said, "The Catholic League has a few buttons of its own to push, and we will not hold back."

## **July**

Actress Heather Graham, in an interview in Premiere magazine, lashed into her Catholic upbringing, misrepresenting and then attacking the teachings of the Church:

- "I grew up thinking sex is bad and feeling really guilty," she said. "Catholicism says you should never masturbate; you should never have sex. Meanwhile, you're a human being. It's beyond your morality. It's survival of the species."
- "There's a rule in Catholicism: Obey your father and mother. But what if your father and mother are fucked up? Are you supposed to obey them anyway because it's part of Catholicism?"
- On her nudity in the film "Rollergirl": "I was a little scared being naked. But it was kind of freeing. I just felt like I didn't have to live by the rules of Catholicism if I wanted to express myself artistically, and I'm not going to hell."

## **August 13**

New Line Cinema released "Detroit Rock City," a movie set in 1978 about four teenagers who go on a wild spree on their way to a KISS concert. The film featured:

- A foul-mouthed priest who steals money from the collection box to pay for pizza;
- A fanatical Catholic woman who, while carrying rosary beads and sporting a “Smile, Jesus Loves You” bumper sticker, is coarse and hypocritical—dragging her son to Confession when she discovers his interest in attending the KISS concert, while harboring a lust for the priest herself;
- The priest questioning the boy in Confession about whether he has something to confess like “carnal knowledge with a neighborhood girl” or “finding a box of magazines under Dad’s bed”;
- The boy losing his virginity with one of his girlfriends in the confessional when the priest leaves;
- The priest returning, and asking the boy about “crotchless panties.”

## **September**

The MGM movie “Stigmata” opened to reviews raving that the movie was “jaw-droppingly anti-Catholic” (New York Post). The plot of the movie revolves around a supposed lost gospel of Christ, whose message – that the kingdom of God is inside us and all around us, not in buildings of stone – would undermine the legitimacy of the Church. In the movie, the Church proceeds to do anything and everything (including violence) to suppress the plot-created gospel.

The movie also includes mentions of Padre Pio and St. Francis of Assisi along with sexual innuendo involving priests and a demonic possession associated with the stigmata.

## **December**

A film called “All About My Mother” features a character that is a pregnant, HIV-infected nun. One reviewer (who liked the film) described the movie as “a loose homage to ‘All About Eve’ populated by an outrageous assortment of drag queens, transvestite hookers and pregnant nuns.” The movie was by Spanish director Pedro Almodovar, described by the Village Voice as the only Spanish director who can make a bigger joke

out of Catholicism than Luis Buñuel. Buñuel, it is generally considered, has made some of the most anti-Catholic movies in history.

## **November**

The movie "The Omega Code," financed by Trinity Broadcasting, the nation's largest Christian broadcaster, did more business than most other films out at the time. And it opened in only 300 theaters. Some reviewers, however, questioned whether some of the characters and imagery are anti-Catholic. The movie, about a secret biblical code and the end of the world, had "not-so-subtle flourishes of Catholic bashing," according to Dennis King of Tulsa World. Kathleen Croughwell of the Los Angeles Times wrote that "one of the more troubling aspects of 'The Omega Code' is the seeming demonization of Roman Catholicism."

## **December**

The movie "End of Days" starring Arnold Schwarzenegger featured an end of time theme that used Catholic imagery amid torture and violence. Several priests were depicted as being brutalized; one is even crucified on a ceiling. There were a vacuous pope, pathetic-looking cardinals, and lay Catholic thugs in rebellion against the Vatican.

## **December**

A movie called "The Body" is being filmed in Jerusalem. The story involves a female Israeli archeologist who finds the body of Christ. The Vatican dispatches a priest (played by Antonio Banderas) to investigate the woman's claim. The woman leads him to challenge both his faith in God and his celibacy.

## Music

## **March 5**

**Toledo, OH** – A performance by Motley Crue included two female dancers, one dressed in a nun's habit with crucifix, who stripped down to topless outfits and proceeded to spank each

other.

## **April**

"Cradle of Filth," an English "death metal band," continued to market its revolting "Vestal Master" T-shirt, depicting a topless nun masturbating, with the phrase "Jesus is a Cunt" printed in large letters.

## **June 14**

***Philippines*** – Ex-Spice Girl Geri ("Ginger Spice") Halliwell came to this overwhelmingly Catholic nation with a message for its non-white, minority population: limit your numbers, in part, by practicing birth control. Halliwell, who in her solo video, "Look at Me," had mocked Catholicism by dressing as a nun, offended the sensibilities of Filipino Catholics by advocating condom use and "safe sex."

## Newspapers

## **January**

***New York, NY*** – Writing about a teen-age boy convicted of manslaughter for a killing in Central Park, the New York Post repeatedly referred to the convict as a "former altar boy." No mention was made of the religious affiliation of his female accomplice.

## **January 11**

***Long Island, NY*** – Newsday columnist Sheryl McCarthy found that even a column defending President Clinton against impeachment can be turned into a vehicle for Catholic-bashing. "Here you had Henry Hyde," McCarthy wrote about the Catholic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, "leading what looked like the march of the cardinals and bishops, and you had this 96 year-old man [Sen. Strom Thurmond, president pro tem of the Senate] who couldn't get a job anywhere else playing the role of grand inquisitor. The only thing missing were the red cardinal hats and the Pope's hat."

## **January 13**



**Seattle, WA** — In a column disparaging the Seattle mayor's proclamation of Thanksgiving week as Bible Week, Susan Paynter of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer made a point to identify "sex columnist" Dan Savage, "who is gay," as "a Catholic." Yet she made no mention of the religion of any of the other principals in her column: the Mayor who issued the Bible Week proclamation, his secretary and assistant secretary who commented on it, the city council members who expressed their views, or the spokesman for the American Civil Liberties Union who opposed it.

### **January 24**

**Harrisburg, PA** — The Patriot-News ran an ad by "'Thus Saith the Lord...' Ministries," attacking the Catholic Church as "The Antichrist Beast and the Harlot Woman."

### **January 25**

**St. Louis, MO** — On the eve of Pope John Paul II's visit to St. Louis, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch ran a full page ad from the Eternal Gospel of Seventh-Day Adventists Church, attacking the Catholic Church as, among other things, "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The paper also ran a 14 page color magazine insert by a group called "The Prophetic Song of Songs," which interspersed pictures of the Pope with unfavorable comparisons of Catholic teachings with Protestant beliefs. Contacted by the league, the Post-Dispatch immediately apologized for the SDA ad, and promised that it would not run again. The paper also apologized in print for failing to properly identify the magazine piece as a paid advertisement.

### **January 27**

**Pittsburgh, PA** — Pittsburgh Post-Gazette columnist Gene Collier used a column on Catholic Schools Week to denigrate Catholic nuns ("Sister Mary Inyourface") and engage in the usual exaggerated stereotypes of Catholic school discipline.

## **January 31**

**Greensburg, PA** – Writing in the Tribune-Review, Barbara Reynolds, a Baptist minister, lectured the Catholic Church about its treatment of women. Complaining that she is not permitted to preach in some Baptist churches, Reynolds implied that this is somehow the fault of the “sexism perpetrated by the [Catholic] church with the pope as a ringleader.”

## **February**

**Waco, TX** – The Waco Tribune Herald ran a picture during the pope’s visit of a woman kissing the pope’s ring. Over the picture was a banner reading, “Papal Worship.”

## **February 4**

**Buffalo, NY** – Buffalo News columnist Mary Kunz wrote that “The feast of St. Blaise...cracks up non-Catholics, and we can see why.” She went on to mock the annual Blessing of the Throat on St. Blaise’s feast day, ridiculing “the idea of a saint specializing in ailments of the throat.”

## **February 4**

**Portland, OR** – “The Edge,” a humor column in The Oregonian, featured “Top 10 Items at the Vatican Garage Sale.” Among the more offensive were “‘World’s Funniest Confessions’ audiotapes,” and “Commemorative rack of crushed skulls from the Spanish Inquisition.”

## **February 8**

**Richmond, VA** – An item in the Richmond Times-Dispatch entitled, “Just Asking...” wondered, “What explains the Catholic church [sic] being so desperate for priests that it is trying to recruit them through billboard ads?” That this snide comment was juxtaposed as a box insert inside a favorable editorial on Israel underscored the double standard by which the internal practices of only the Catholic Church are considered fair game for criticism in the secular media.

## **February 18 – 24**

**Albany, NY** – Acknowledging that artist Michele Molea's "Banana Mary" and "Bobbing for Jesus" works were "inspired by a professed cynicism of religion," Metroland reviewer Stacey Lauren nonetheless found them "reverently irreverent and refreshingly so."

## **February 19**

**San Rafael, CA** – The Gannett-owned Marin Independent Journal ran an old cartoon showing a woman being forced by the Pope and several bishops to carry a heavy cross up a hill. On the cross is the word "liberal." The message was clear: The Church is crucifying liberal-minded Catholic women who advocate change in Church teachings on issues related to women.

## **March**

**Cherry Hill, NJ** – Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Cherry Hill put up a banner across the street that read, "Life, What a Beautiful Choice." The Cherry Hill Courier Post wanted the banner removed because it said the phrase on it was "a nationally advertised, partisan political catch phrase." On the other hand, the paper said a banner that held the phrase "Do a Random Act of Kindness Every Day" did not take a political stance.

## **March**

After some items in the Hunter College student newspaper, Envoy, led to criticisms and apologies, some anti-Semitic letters were received at the Envoy office, portions of which were reprinted in the newspaper. The hate mail was superimposed on Catholic League letterhead.

## **March**

**Pittsburgh, PA** – The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported on a murder story involving seven teenagers. One of the accused, Jessica Holtmeyer, was identified by the paper as being a former "altar server at St. Francis Catholic Church." The paper failed to identify the religious affiliation of any of the other teenage suspects.

## **March 11**

**Hunterdon County, NJ** – Columnist Jim Cegielski, in a piece in the Hunterdon County Democrat entitled, “Why Don’t Other Saints get Holidays?” ridiculed the Church’s process for canonizing saints. “Back in the early 100s,” he wrote, “you could become a saint if you were really good at magic tricks, could wiggle your ears, or were related to the Pope.” Later, he wrote, “the rules were tightened up. No longer could you become a saint by slipping a bishop 20 lira.” In particular, Cegielski wondered, “how did St. Patrick...get his own day? The answer is quite simple: the Irish were looking for an excuse for a party.”

## **March 21**

**Reno, NV** – The Reno Gazette-Journal reported that Michelle Lyn Michaud, one of two prime suspects in a series of kidnappings, sexual assaults and murder, was portrayed “as a drug addict and pathological liar, as well as a former prostitute—and a former altar girl in a Catholic Church.” As Michaud was 40 years old, and female altar servers have been permitted in the Catholic Church for only the last five years, the statement was patently false. It seemed like yet another case of a newspaper jumping at the chance to highlight a dubious Catholic connection of a person accused of a particularly heinous crime. In this case, however, the newspaper was not at fault. They were accurately reporting false information contained in Michaud’s court records.

## **March 28**

**Chicago, IL** – On Palm Sunday—the beginning of the most solemn week in the Catholic calendar—the Chicago Tribune, in its arts section, ran a huge photograph of “a paint-by-numbers picture of a dog, which has the face of Christ imposed on the head.”

## **March 28**

**San Francisco, CA** – Cartoonist Don Asmussen of the San Francisco Examiner drew a story line featuring a war between “Catholimania” and “Homoslovakia.” The story featured gay

activists dressed as nuns and described “homosexuals...flaunting their homosexuality in front of the frightened Catholics.”

#### **April 1**

**Duluth, MN** – The April Fool’s edition of the Northland Reader contained a parody that turned a popular, positive billboard message into a vicious defamation against Catholic priests. The bogus ad took the message, “Tell the kids I love them–God,” and changed it to: “Tell the kids I love them–Any Catholic Priest.”

#### **April 4**

**San Francisco, CA** – San Francisco Examiner cartoonist Don Asmussen was at it again. This time the comic strip parodied the controversy between the Church and the Sister of Perpetual Indulgence – the group that regularly ridicules nuns, Catholics and the Eucharist.

Archbishop William Levada was depicted as the coyote from the Road Runner cartoon. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence were depicted as the road runner named “Gay Nunner.” Levada’s effort to stop the “Sister’s” street festival from taking place on Easter was labeled “Looney Tune Mission.”

#### **April 8**

**Los Angeles, CA** – New Times, in a repulsive send-up of the Budweiser slogan, “This Bud’s For You,” ran a drawing of a weeping Jesus on the Cross above the phrase, “This Blood’s For You.” Adding insult to injury was the caption: “No doubt countless devout Budweiser drinkers suddenly turned from worshipping brew to you-know-Who when they saw this clever pitch.”

#### **April 11**

**Boston, MA** – Boston Herald columnist Margery Eagan, hailing a court challenge to a Massachusetts law prohibiting retail sales of alcohol on Sunday, mocked the story of Jesus’ first miracle: transforming water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana. “Perhaps at this point we should recall,” Eagan wrote,

“that the man Sunday blue laws were created to honor described himself as both a glutton and a major wine enthusiast.” At Cana, she wrote, Jesus “took a bunch of 30 gallon jugs, filled them with water and, so the story goes, turned them into enough wine to satiate everyone 10 miles south of New Hampshire and probably all of misguided Massachusetts, too.”

#### **April 20**

**Passaic, NJ** – The North Jersey Herald & News printed a news story from Scripps Howard News Service that read more like an editorial, flatly declaring that “Catholic hospital mergers threaten reproductive rights.” The familiar complaint was that across the country, many community hospitals are willing to forego providing abortion and contraception in order to affiliate with Catholic health care institutions. While focusing on the loss of these “services,” the article made no mention of the many services that will be preserved, precisely because floundering community hospitals will have access to the resources of Catholic hospitals.

#### **April 21**

**New York, NY** – The New York Press Illustrated writer Jonathan Ames wrote an inane piece about his travels, with a huge cartoon showing three girls in Catholic school uniforms performing oral sex on each other (a scene Ames reported having witnessed in a Mexican strip club). To make matters worse, the piece was headlined, “I Have the same Nose as Jesus,” referring to a sculpture in which Ames said that Christ’s nose “looked eerily like my own nose.”

#### **April 21**

**St. Thomas, Virgin Islands** – The Island Trader contained two jokes at the expense of Catholic nuns. One involved a drunk assaulting a nun in habit because he thought she was Batman. The other, far worse, involved a nun relating to two other Sisters how she found pornographic magazines while cleaning a priest’s room. A second nun reported that while putting away laundry, she found a bunch of condoms in the same priest’s

room. “‘Oh my!’ gasped the other nuns. ‘What did you do?’ they asked. ‘I poked holes in all of them,’ she replied.” Whereupon, “the third nun just fainted.” Following letters of protest from readers, the newspaper published an apology in its April 28 edition, promising to “guard against such material in the future.”

#### **April 24**

**White Plains, NY** – The Journal News, owned by Gannett Newspapers, attacked Iona College. The newspaper accused Iona of “censoring the free verse of student poets,” because the Catholic college refused to publish an obscenity-laced poem in the school’s student literary magazine. Interestingly, the Journal News article, while describing the offending passages as “sexually explicit” and “an expletive,” did not print them—suggesting that Gannett reserves for itself the right to set ethical standards in determining what it prints—the same right that Gannett would deny to Iona College.

#### **May 2**

**Boston, MA** – The Boston Herald published a piece by Margery Eagan ridiculing Bernard Cardinal Law for refusing the use of Church facilities to a dissident Catholic women’s group. In doing so, Eagan first presented the group, Massachusetts Women-Church, as an insignificant band of only 10 members, suggesting that Cardinal Law ought to have more important things to do than to worry about such a tiny group. In her next breath, however, she accused the Cardinal of delivering a “blow to the soul” of all “serious, sincere Catholic women”—suggesting a following among Catholic women that this group clearly did not have. Eagan never explained why an organization whose existence is based on its opposition to Church teaching should feel entitled to demand the use of Church facilities to organize its dissent.

#### **May 18**

**Los Angeles, CA** – Theatre reviewer Michael Phillips reviews “Late Nite Catechism” in the Los Angeles Times. He describes

it as “squeaky clean.” He goes on to describe “recovering Catholics” and “uber-nun” while saying the Catholic Church’s “stock as comic fodder has risen while its general influence and popularity have gone south.”

## **May 20**

***Santa Rosa, CA*** – The calendar page of the Sonoma County Independent contained an ad for something called “Indy Online,” which featured a drawing of a three-eyed Jesus over a blurb for “Gifts of the Ages: In search of religious epiphanies—and the world’s tackiest souvenirs.”

## **May 20**

***Chicago, IL*** – The Chicago Tribune’s Achy Obejas reviewed “Passion Follies,” a series of plays making fun of stories of Jesus, Mary and the Apostles. The directors hoped the plays would bring them some notoriety: “We’d figured we’d stir up a big controversy and, boy it’d be great for business.” Obejas endorsed the plays.

## **May 30**

***Orange County, CA*** – Writing in the Orange County Register, D. R. Segal asserts the Catholic Church, in the 1400s, concluded the Virgin Mary conceived Jesus through her ear. He goes on to say he read it, and has not researched such a claim. Segal went on to say St. Thomas Aquinas was “the all-time know-it-all.”

## **June**

***Seattle, WA*** – The Seattle Times, noting Seattle University was considering changing the name of their mascot (Chieftains) suggested “The Runnin’ Rosaries” and “The Holy Waters” before inviting readers to suggest their own names.

## **July**

***Rutland, VT*** – The Letters-to-the-Editor pages of the Rutland Herald contained letters that start out as a spirited religious debate, but degenerated into a protracted assault on



the teachings and beliefs of the Catholic Church. The paper printed the letters nonetheless.

### **July 3**

**Hutchinson, KS** – The Hutchinson News ran an article about practitioners of paganism and their complaints that their beliefs are distorted. It quotes a young man who says he left the Catholic Church because he couldn't accept the Church's position "that all non-Roman Catholics were going to hell." The paper let the statement stand as if it were fact.

### **July 7**

**New York, NY** – The New York Times, in an article on the proliferation of hate groups, accurately described them as "Promulgating an anti-Jewish, anti-black, anti-Christian doctrine." The breakout quote, however, read, "Pushing an anti-black and anti-Jewish doctrine"—omitting, for the attention of the casual reader, any mention of anti-Christian victimization.

### **July 17**

**Albany, NY** – Rolf Ahlers wrote in The Record of "Church and Papal involvement in the Holocaust," ignoring the multitude of prominent Jewish voices who heaped praise and gratitude upon Pope Pius XII during World War II.

### **August 3**

**St. Petersburg, FL** – St. Petersburg Times columnist Mary Jo Melone writes a piece berating Catholic hospitals for their choice not to perform abortions at their facilities. Melone then goes on to say: "They say it's about respecting life and then they (Catholic Church) run roughshod over the lives of so many."

### **August 10**

The Eternal Gospel Church of Seventh-Day Adventists placed a full-page ad in USA Today attacking the Catholic Church. The splinter group does not represent the Seventh-Day Adventists.

League president William Donohue wrote a letter to USA Today editor Karen Jurgensen asking for assurances that the ad would not run again. Jurgensen failed to commit not to run the ad again.

### **August 28**

**Vero Beach, FL** – The Press Journal in Southern Florida printed a quote from comedian Bill Maher under the section “P.J. Chuckle.” Maher remarked that Catholicism has changed over the years to include a salad bar with communion.

### **September**

**Philadelphia, PA** – Ellen Gray of the Philadelphia Daily News wrote a piece on HBO’s documentary on comedian Lenny Bruce. Gray pointed out Bruce engaged in “diatribes on religion” which “angered many Catholics”. She went on to say that Bruce’s drug arrests were carried out by “the largely Roman Catholic police forces in many cities.”

She also wrote “the relatively small Catholic League” was successful in killing the television show “Nothing Sacred” and was now pressuring Miramax about the movie “Dogma.” She concluded “some of the walls Bruce sought to tear down are still standing.”

### **September 25**

The cartoon titled “The Piranha Club” featured a character identified as a “minister” who has “accomplished” the miracle of the loaves and fishes. He tells his companion he wants to move onto to bigger miracles such as turning water into wine. In the last panel he is seen trying to turn his dinner from “mullet soufflé ” into a t-bone steak.

### **September 27**

**Newark, NJ** – In reporting on the tragic death of a woman shot by a former boyfriend on her wedding day, the Newark Star-Ledger included a paragraph about the alleged killer’s religion, “He was known to attend church with his daughter at Our Lady of Fatima,” as if the information added anything to

the crime story.

### **October 15**

**Kansas City, MO** – The Kansas City Star conducted a survey of Roman Catholic priests' sex lives. The survey, sent out by editor and vice president Mark Zieman, was aimed at priests randomly selected from the Kenedy Official Catholic Directory. The survey addressed AIDS and HIV. Zieman wrote, "We have come to understand that the disease also has a devastating impact on groups who's members are unable to speak up about the difficulties they have endured."

The survey also asked the priests if they thought the Church should change its teachings on homosexuality and celibacy.

### **October 15**

**Los Angeles, California** – In a letter to the editor printed in the Los Angeles Times, Daniel Sullivan of San Diego wrote, "It isn't Catholics who are the target of pop culture's ridicule, it's the bloated bureaucracy of the Holy See. Like the proverbial emperor, the papacy dresses in the invisible rags of medieval doctrine. The bigot is the church itself, which makes second-class citizens of Catholic women, gays and anyone with the temerity to question the pontiff's lack of attire."

### **October 15**

**New York, NY** – In a letter to the editor printed in the New York Daily News in the aftermath of the Brooklyn Museum of Art controversy, Richard Seca of Manhattan wrote, "Catholic-bashing? Who is Crazy Rudy kidding? It's politics, stupid! Frankly the Catholic Church needs to be bashed! Lest we forget, these are the folks who brought you the Crusades, the Inquisition, the trial of Galileo, missionaries, the Borgia Popes and Hitler's own Pope, Pius XII."

### **October 24**

**Houston, TX** – The cartoon "Shortcuts" by Jeff Harris appeared in the Houston Chronicle with a special Halloween edition. It in, a section read "Pope Innocent III sanctioned witch-hunting

in 1484 and went on for 300 years. During this time millions of people, mostly women, were hanged or burned as witches.”

### **November 12**

**Springfield, IL** – A review of the television movie “Mary” appeared in the Daily Herald. Reviewer Ted Cox didn’t like the movie because it was too reverent. He suggested Mary Magdalene be “put in a tube top or some slinky pants Elisabeth Shue wore in ‘Leaving Las Vegas?’ I mean, she was a prostitute, right?”

### **October 7**

**Dubuque, IW** – A column in the Telegraph-Herald by Thomas Gifford contained comments about John Cardinal O’Connor of New York. In regard to the Brooklyn Museum of Art controversy, Gifford referred to the Cardinal as “New York’s other great know-nothing.” He said the cardinal commented about the controversy “based on prejudice, preconceptions and utter lack of knowledge.” While disagreement and criticism are acceptable, the column showed disdain for the Cardinal and went beyond disagreement. The Catholic League’s Susan Fani wrote a letter to the editor which the paper published.

### **October 28**

**Wausau, WI** – The advice column “Mother Nurture” in City Pages answered a question about the use of Latin phrases. “Mother Nurture” in her answer, maintained “it’s a historical fact that the whole point of Latin Masses was to keep the peasantry from knowing anything.”

### **November 14**

**San Francisco, CA** – Stephanie Salter wrote an article in the San Francisco Examiner called “Please explain to William that God wouldn’t have wanted him to kill gays.” The article attributed responsibility for the murder of a gay couple by Matthew Williams to the teachings of the Church and beliefs of Christians. The Catholic League’s Susan Fani wrote a letter to the editor which the paper published.

### **December 3**

Dan Rattiner wrote a piece in Dan's Papers regarding an effort by he and his Catholic female companion (he is Jewish) to get a cross blessed. The cross had been purchased while the two were vacationing in New Mexico. When several efforts to find an available priest failed, the article took a decided tone of derision against the Church and its rituals.

### **December 16**

*New York, NY* – The New York Yankees baseball club traded outfielder Chad Curtis. Curtis had had his problems with his teammates over the past season, including criticizing one player for talking to an opponent during an altercation between the teams.

Sportswriter George King, writing in the New York Post, alleged Curtis' problems with his teammates were due to his "...deep Christian beliefs." He did not back the statement with any evidence. Many of the Yankees are devout Christians. The Catholic League's Patrick Scully wrote a letter to the editor which the newspaper published.

### **December 16**

*New York, NY* – The publication Lesbian and Gay New York featured a listing for the television show "Women on Fire" and an episode that featured a discussion on the nude photography of Alvi Prinney. The listing was accompanied by a photo of a woman's midsection with a garment wrapped around her crotch area. Sticking out of the scarf-like garment was a crucifix.

### Periodicals

#### **January**

Adult Video News featured an ad for Extreme Associates, a provider of pornographic films. In the center of the ad, surrounded by illustrations of porn videos, was a topless woman, wearing a crown of thorns and holding a cross, with a nun and a priest on either side of her.

## **January 6**

**Washington, DC** – “All they need are two miracles, connections in Rome—and plenty of cash,” read a subhead in U.S. News and World Report for a story on the process of canonization in the Catholic Church. The negative and misleading headline marred an otherwise balanced article by creating the impression that sainthood is dependent on political influence, or, worse, that it is for sale to those with “plenty of cash.”

## **January 25**

**New York, NY** – Nation magazine carried an article by Jennifer Baumgardner lamenting the loss of certain “reproductive health services” (i.e., abortion) when community hospitals merge with Catholic health care facilities. Ms. Baumgardner could not stick to the issue, however. She had to throw in some gratuitous anti-Catholic comments, snidely questioning “Whether poor women should be subject to the morals of the Vatican,” and sarcastically observing that “At some Catholic hospitals, a woman having a baby is treated like the Virgin herself.”

## **February 2**

Wired magazine, in an article entitled “Papal Bull,” savaged Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Church following the Pope’s visit to Mexico and St. Louis. The article accused the Pope of “acting like a self-indulgent rocker” who “managed to blend perfectly sanctimonious social messaging with rank hypocrisy.” It dismissed his pro-life message as “in-your-face moral integrity” coming “from a guy who fronts a cult that once christened the Pep boys of fascism – Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco – as righteous ‘defenders of the faith.’” And it compared his preaching to “Mick Jagger riding one more inflatable penis,” or “Marilyn Manson simulating fellatio on stage yet again.”

## **Spring**

**Amherst, NY** – Free Inquiry magazine carried a piece by John Patrick Michael Murphy entitled, “Hitler Was Not an Atheist.”

In trying to defend this thesis against all the damning evidence to the contrary, Murphy launched into a defamatory attack on the Catholic Church. He flagrantly distorted Church teachings and Hitler's own alleged Catholic background, to try to make the Catholic Church the culprit in the Holocaust—when all the evidence shows that the Church, under the leadership of Pope Pius XII, did more than anyone else to “halt the dreadful crime and alleviate its consequences,” in the words of Jewish scholar Jeno Levai.

## **April**

**New York, NY** – Equity magazine ran a profile on Dona Gracia Nasi, the 16th century Portuguese widow who headed one of the most important banking houses in Europe—and who also fought against the Inquisition. Typically, author Andree Aelion Brooks deplored the “reprehensible behavior” of the Vatican during the Inquisition. There was no indication that she examined or was even aware of recent scholarship suggesting that the Church's abuses during that period have been greatly exaggerated, and that the Church in fact exerted a mitigating influence on the harshness of secular authorities.

## **April**

**New York, NY** – The cover of Interview magazine featured actress Rose McGowan, fiancée of Satanist rock singer Marilyn Manson, posing nude except for a veil and a pearl rosary; at the end of the rosary was a bouquet of roses covering her genitalia. The pose appeared designed to conjure the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

## **May**

Self magazine offered a wholly one-sided article attacking hospital mergers involving Catholic facilities, and advocating various strategies for blocking such mergers. The article, “Their Religion, Your Rights,” quoted Catherine Weiss, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Reproductive Freedom Project, suggesting that by exercising its right not to do abortions, the Catholic health care system is “imposing

its religious views on people who may not agree with them. This raises serious constitutional issues," she added, suggesting that the U.S. government should impose her views on Catholic hospitals.

## **May 10**

**New York, NY** – Time magazine's coverage of the beatification of Padre Pio was unnecessarily snide. The headline read "Bleeding-Hands Man Gets Star Treatment." The lead sentence declared, "On the road to sainthood, it helps to have connections." And a reference was made to Padre Pio as "a mystic with blood on his hands." As the rest of the article made clear, Padre Pio's "connections" involved not the kind of political favoritism that the phrase implies, but rather Pope John Paul II's personal experience with this man's extraordinary gifts. Writer Emily Mitchell, however, could not bring herself to report that without a display of condescension.

## **June**

**Edmond, OK** – "Germany and the Vatican: The Fourth Reich in Disguise," blared a headline in the Philadelphia Trumpet, a magazine published by the Philadelphia Church of God. The thrust of the magazine's sensational anti-Catholic charges is that the Vatican has been in league with Germany from the days of Hitler, and is currently involved in a modern day "Vatican-Euro-Russian triumvirate" bent on world domination. The magazine accuses the Church of having been "closely allied with the Nazis during World War II," and subsequently "trying to perpetuate what Hitler built!"

## **August**

Nickelodeon, in an insert in its August issue entitled "The Village Idiot," offered a "humor" item: "The Police Bladder." Among the fictional items was one about a police officer who had been cited for bravery for not relieving himself for 10 hours: "In lieu of flowers, dixie cups can be sent to him at Our Lady of the Distended Belly Hospital."



## **September**

**New York, NY** – In its premiere issue, Talk magazine featured “The 50 Best Talkers in America.” In listing Ted Turner as one of the “50 Big Mouths We Hope Will Never Shut Up,” however, Talk highlighted Turner’s comment that “Christianity is for losers.”

## **October**

The October issue of Maxim magazine featured several anti-Catholic elements including its section called “Laughing.” Two of the six jokes involved nuns and sex.

In the “Religious Studies” section, there is a list of Catholic saints for people with problems or questionable occupations, including arms dealers. It said, “Thought Catholicism was all about wine and crackers on Sunday? Hardly. It’s also about finding folks to pray to who are just as screwed up as you are.”

## **October 25**

The evangelical magazine Christianity Today ran an article called “Stop the Dating Game” about end time prophecies. The article had an accompanying photograph entitled “Antichrists We Have Known.” Pictured between Napoleon and Benito Mussolini was Pope John Paul II over the title “The Roman Papacy.”

## **November**

An article in Time magazine called “The Catholic Hospital Boom” examined the mergers of Catholic hospitals with non-Catholic institutions. The Catholic-run hospitals insist on Catholic standards – abortions are not performed. Time wondered whether that amounted to “church-run institutions imposing their faith on patients?”

## Radio

## **January 20**

**New York, NY** – Singer Steve Lynch, a guest on WNEW Radio’s “Opie and Anthony Show,” performed a graphic song about a

homosexual priest, and what he would like to do to altar boys. Contacted by the league, WNEW's program director, Gary Wall, explained that the hosts had "no idea" that Lynch was going to sing the song on the air. Mr. Wall agreed that it was "an unacceptable song" that was "clearly offensive." He added that he had just come from a meeting of station executives at which all agreed that the song was "very objectionable." He apologized, and assured the league that "it will not happen again."

### **January 25**

**New York, NY** – On his morning talk show on WABC radio, host Rocky Allen kicked off a week-long mockery of the Catholic Church to coincide with Pope John Paul II's visit to Mexico. His thought for this day involved a reference to "refried wafers and wine with a worm in it."

### **January 27**

**Los Angeles, CA** – The hosts of "The John and Ken Show" on KFI Radio used Pope John Paul II's visit to St. Louis to launch into an hour of pope bashing. Referring to the Pope as "some Polish guy," they ridiculed his statements on sex, abortion, contraception, euthanasia and the death penalty. They also implied that Pope John Paul II is anti-Semitic, and questioned whether priests and nuns really live chaste lives.

### **January 27**

**Los Angeles, CA** – KFI Radio just couldn't get enough Catholic-bashing during Pope John Paul II's visit to the United States. On "The Bill Handel Show" the host ridiculed the pope's Polish accent, and charged that Catholicism is "insane," "stupid," "out of touch," and has "no concept of reality."

### **January 28**

**New York, NY** – On WABC Radio, Rocky Allen contrived a dialogue in which Cardinal O'Connor flirts with a female waitress while in Mexico with the pope, telling her that if she accommodates him "I'll give you my funny little hat."

## **February 10**

**Green Bay, WI** – Wisconsin Public Radio's "Conversations with Jean Feraca" featured author Pat Zander whose book "Leadership Development for Females Who Went To Catholic Grade School" was discussed. Zander made remarks critical of Catholic Schools while Feraca aired calls making fun of Catholic school education.

## **February 24**

**Cleveland, OH** – An afternoon drive-time sports program on WTAM degenerated into a two hour harangue against the Catholic Church. Host Mike Trivisonno began by criticizing a local Catholic high school for running a Las Vegas weekend as a fund-raiser. He then launched into a wide-ranging recitation of anti-Catholic stereotypes: cruel nuns, priests driving big cars, etc. Additionally, he cut short callers who phoned in to defend the Church, while giving free rein to those who wanted to join in on the Catholic-bashing.

## **April**

**Columbus, OH** – WTVN Radio advertised its "Habit Forming John Corby" show with a billboard showing four people –including one mustached man–dressed in nuns' habits, holding rosaries with their hands folded in prayer.

## **April 1**

**New York, NY** – Commenting on Pope John Paul II having sent a peace delegation to Belgrade, "Imus in the Morning" host Don Imus, whose WFAN program is nationally syndicated, commented: "The Pope should butt out and stick to handing out wafers and grape juice."

## **April 17**

**Sacramento, CA** – KSTE talk show host Marie Sanchez asserted Vatican complicity in the Holocaust, and a sinister effort on the part of the Vatican to discourage relief efforts for the suffering people of Kosovo.

## **April 27**

**Santa Cruz, CA** – “The John and Ken Show,” a syndicated radio program heard in Santa Cruz over KSC0, used a report of a vocations day at a New Hampshire Catholic high school to launch into a ridicule of Catholic priests and nuns. With Ken playing straight man, John fired the following salvos:

- It would be “sad if my sons became priests” because it would “mean an absence of critical thinking.”
- It would cause him to “wonder what’s up with his sexuality here,” whether “he were gay” and “just going to run into the priesthood to cover it up.”
- “It’s hard for me to understand anyone wanting to give up sex for the rest of their life.”
- He wondered why anyone would want to “walk around” in the “weird costume” of a priest.
- “The nuns I knew were pretty narrow...there wasn’t much to talk to them about...the same preachy stuff...I found nuns boring to talk to.”

## **May**

**Toledo, OH** – A billboard for WVKS (KISS-FM) radio depicted a smirking morning host Denny Schaffer clad in priestly garments, head bent and hands folded in prayer. Underneath was a paraphrase of the words spoken by Christ while he was dying on the Cross: “Please forgive him, for he knows not what he does.”

## **May 8**

**Portland, OR** – In a newspaper interview, talk show host Rick Emerson of KOTK attributed his outlandish style, characterized by one listener as “a sheer verbal assault” to his Catholic education. “Probably the biggest impact on my life was that I went to a Catholic school for nine years,” he said. “It gave me a pretty strong inclination to rebel against authority figures.”

## **May 10**

**Rochester, NY** – Bob Lounsberry, afternoon host of WHAM,

asserted that Catholic priests make up the largest numbers of child molesters.

### **June 7**

**New York, NY** -- Appearing on WOR's Bob Grant Show, writer Christopher Hitchens engaged in one of his favorite pastimes: bashing the Catholic Church, and Mother Teresa in particular. Hitchens commented that Mother Teresa was a "hypocrite," and that faithful Catholics are "fanatics."

### **July 22**

**Washington, DC** – A discussion of Kosovo on WAVA's Don Kroah show turned into a forum for Serb-American journalist Bill Dorich's anti-Catholic rantings. He accused the Church of having slaughtered thousands of Serbs during World War II, of aiding and abetting Nazi war criminals, and stealing statues, relics and money from the Serbian Orthodox Church. He claimed that the Vatican had supplied Catholic Croats with \$2 million to buy weapons with which to kill Serbs, and accused Pope John Paul II of having asked President Clinton to bomb the Serbs. When listeners tried to call in to defend the Church, Dorich constantly interrupted and ridiculed them.

### **December 14**

**Miami, FL** – Neil Rogers of WQAM radio in Miami has been widely known as anti-religion and anti-Catholic in particular for years. He decided to advertise his show in the Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel by attacking Catholicism. He appeared dressed as a Catholic clergyman, replacing the mitre with a microphone under the title "Neil god."

### Television

### **January 1**

NBC's "Late Night with Conan O'Brien" kicked off the New Year with the host resolving "to have more respect for my Catholic upbringing." Then he approached an actress dressed as a nun, and, with the song "Feelin' Groovy" playing in the background,

punched her in the face.

## **January 2**

A Fox network show called “Fox Pet News” repeated the silliness previously advanced by the Greenhill Humane Society, that the problem of homeless dogs in Puerto Rico—an after-effect of the devastation of Hurricane Mitch—was actually caused by the fact that “the Catholic Church is opposed to contraception.” No effort was made to clarify the Church’s teaching on artificial birth control, which does not forbid the neutering of animals.

## **January 9**

HB0 reran Denis Leary’s “Lock-N-Load” comedy performance, in which Leary is surrounded by sacred Catholic images as he spews forth an endless stream of profanity. After the league had protested its first airings in November of 1997, HB0 had promised that the show—which concluded with a savage attack on Catholic priests, bishops, and Pope John Paul II—would not air again. However, after the January 9 broadcast, an HB0 spokeswoman told the league that it was scheduled for one more airing—on January 27.

## **January 15**

Conan O’Brien was at it again, featuring a Jesus figure dressed in jeans on this edition of NBC’s “Late Night with Conan O’Brien.” O’Brien kept repeating the name of Jesus over and over again, with great disrespect, and mocking the personage of Jesus.

## **January 25**

Host Dennis Miller and actor Don Cheadle savaged Catholic priests, the pope, and pro-life Catholics on HB0’s “Dennis Miller Live.”

“Well, you know, faith doesn’t mean you don’t wanna (have sex),” Miller commented. “At some point if you’re a Catholic priest there are clear rules delineating that. You can’t (have sex). You just flirt with the altar boys.” Cheadle then chimed

in: "These zealots are like, you know, 'I believe in the sanctity of life, and I will kill you if [you don't agree].'" Miller topped it off by referring to Pope John Paul II as "good popeye Pope."

### **January 29**

ABC's "Politically Incorrect" led off with host Bill Maher doing a parody on Pope John Paul II's new CD. Among the songs Maher said would be included on the album were "Still Celibate After all These Years"; "An Altar Boy Named Sue"; "Hey Jew"; "Don't Lay Down Sally"; "Don't Beat It"; and "I Want Your Sex to Stop."

### **January 31**

Continuing its recent pattern of targeting Catholicism, Fox Broadcasting's "The Simpsons," in its post-Super Bowl episode, included a scene in which a scantily clad woman was shown wearing a huge cross as she gyrated to rock music. "The Catholic Church," a voice-over intoned—"we've made a few changes."

When the episode reran in May, however, the word "Catholic" had been edited out. According to Los Angeles Times media critic Howard Rosenberg, Fox—in response to the outpouring of protests initiated by the league—had issued a directive saying it was time to lay off the Catholic Church.

### **February**

Actress Anne-Marie Johnson appeared on the "Leeza" television show. During the appearance, Ms. Johnson stated as fact that Pope Pius XII collaborated with the Nazis.

### **February**

The Comedy Central production "The Daily Show" commented on the pope's visit to St. Louis. They made fun of the pope's mental health, ridiculed teenagers who turned out to see the Holy Father and managed to include remarks about the Crusades and the Inquisition.

### **February 3**

Bill Maher, host of ABC's "Politically Incorrect," prefaced a discussion of the pros and cons of abortion by saying Pope John Paul II "had his dress up" about the abortion issue during his visit to the United States.

### **March**

The cable television station TNT aired a movie about a priest who tried to break the color barrier in the sports program in a Louisiana High School. In the film, the priest is shown wearing his collar and is portrayed as a hero. In the promotional material, the collar is missing and there is no indication the hero of the movie is a priest.

### **March 1**

Fox's "Ally McBeal" featured a scene in which Ally feels guilty for kissing the husband of one of her colleagues. In her mind, she sees an image of the Pope, who looks at her, shakes his head and says "Malla Donna, Malla Donna" ["Bad girl, Bad girl."] Later, discussing her feelings of guilt, she says "...and the pope is stalking me."

### **April**

After watching an episode of "The Practice" on ABC Television, a viewer sent an e-mail to ABC—citing the Bible—to express his unhappiness with the show's promotion of homosexual marriage. Here is the e-mail he received in reply from the ABC Online Webmaster:

"How about getting your nose out of the Bible (which is ONLY a book of stories compiled by MANY different writers hundreds of years ago) and read the Declaration of Independence (what our nation is built on) where it says 'All Men are Created Equal'—and try treating them that way for a change!?

"Or better yet, try thinking for yourself and stop using an archaic book of stories as your crutch for your existence."

After the matter was brought to the attention of ABC executives, they wrote to the offended viewer offering their apologies. They assured him that they had conducted a thorough



investigation, which resulted in the termination of the individual responsible.

### **April 2**

HBO's "Dennis Miller Live" used Good Friday to poke fun at the Pope, and to joke about a man relieving himself on a picture of Christ on the Cross.

### **April 14**

Comedy Central's "South Park" used Christ's suffering and death on the Cross as part of a skit about sexual dysfunction. The show opened with one of the characters, Kyle, telling his friends he needed to get an "erection" for his father. The boy had learned that his father's inability to get an erection was causing marital discord. Not knowing what an erection is, Kyle thought he could buy one for his father at the store. Then he and his friends met a priest, who invited them to participate in the Stations of the Cross. The priest explained that Jesus was crucified on the Cross, and after three days had a resurrection. "Res-erection?" Kyle exclaimed. "That's what my dad needs." So he and his friends designated another boy, Cartman, as Jesus, hung him on a cross and waited for him to die and have an erection.

### **April 21**

CNN devoted one of the "Voices of the Millennium" clips that it runs during commercial breaks to the subject of "Women in the Pulpit." Two of the three sources featured in the two minute segment took the opportunity to hammer the Catholic Church. Swanee Hunt, who heads the Women's Leadership Institute at Harvard University, declared that if the Church is to "live, grow and thrive," it will have to ordain women. She further lamented that "As long as God looks like Michelangelo's image of the Sistine Chapel with a long, flowing white beard, we will continue to worship maleness."

### **April 23**

Referring to Pope John Paul II's plans to say Mass at a

raceway in Mexico, Conan O'Brien ("Late Night with Conan O'Brien," NBC) declared that "Apparently, the Pope had a special vestment designed for the occasion." He then held up a picture of the Pope wearing a vestment covered with the kinds of decals usually seen on race drivers' jump suits: "Texaco," "STP," "Prestone," and the like. While not the most egregious offense, it continued O'Brien's obsession with making the Pope and the Catholic Church the constant targets of his ridicule.

#### **April 24**

Fox's "MAD-TV" reran a skit depicting Mother Teresa as a voluptuous woman who strips off her clothes to warm a dying man, then performs an exotic dance while clad only in red bikini underwear.

#### **May 16**

*Miami, FL* – Throughout the CBS TV movie "Joan of Arc," CBS Miami affiliate WFOR ran a promo plugging a story on Catholics and the sacrament of Penance, which would be featured on its late night news following the movie. When the piece ran, it typified the forced symmetry so popular with certain segments of the media: the strategy that puts Catholics who reject Church teachings on the same ground as those who are loyal to the Church. "The fact is that many Catholics never go to confession," observed one of the commentators. "They simply don't feel comfortable confessing their innermost thoughts to a priest. Yet these same people consider themselves to be good Catholics." The segment used Confession scenes from the movies "Moonstruck" and "Mortal Sins" to further trivialize the sacrament.

#### **May 19**

An interview with Madonna on "60 Minutes II" (CBS) contained her predictably denigrating comments about the Catholic Church: "The Catholic Church needs to move into the 21st century. I mean I'm all for rules and discipline and all of those things, but they have to make sense." More shocking was host Charlie Rose's gratuitous remark when Madonna's daughter

was brought on camera: "... and for a moment we glimpsed a portrait few have seen—Madonna and child."

## **June 14**

Appearing on "The Late Show With David Letterman" (CBS), comedian Dane Cook ridiculed the Catholic Mass and the Eucharist. He began by mocking the sign of the Cross, then continued: "...And the only reason you knew peace was even coming cause the priest would say 'peace' like five times rapid fire. He'd be like [chanted in an Italian-like accent] 'and the peace for disciples said my peace I leave my peace I give to you as we eat Reeses pieces with the Lord. "The priest would do this thing during the Mass that I never understood as a kid. He wasn't singing, but he wasn't talking either. It was this weird kinda like [again, chanting in an Italian accent] 'and the Lord said after the dinner, um, wasn't that delicious' [then Cook made a "ding-a-ling" sound, imitating the ringing of a bell to mark the moment of transubstantiation]. And then after that it was snack time, right in the middle of Mass. Yeah, the priest would look and be like [chanted again] 'let's have some yum yum.' And then you would go and get in line, you'd get in line like you were waiting for concert tickets...The best thing is you could take it two ways, you could play...it's like you had options. You could either take it like [he held out his hands in an exaggerated form] or if you were really tired [he hung his tongue out in an exaggerated fashion]. I always wanted to mess with the priest, though, just go up [both his hands and his tongue were extended in an exaggerated manner]... 'your move, holy man.'"

## **June 23**

New York, NY — A segment of the "Today" show featured a news story on Scott Falater, who claimed that he killed his wife while sleepwalking. Reporter George Lewis referred to Falater as a "former altar boy" while never pointing out his current status as a member of the Mormon Church which was reportedly a

critical factor in his relationship with his wife. Nor did he relate any other aspects of his childhood.

### **August 2**

Fox Network's "King of the Hill" featured a child who, while performing a magic trick for the PTA, declared that for his next trick he was going to change water and wine into the body and blood of Christ. He then asked if there were any volunteers to get up on the cross.

### **August 25**

An episode of the HBO series "Oz" featured a nun allowing one of the inmates she counsels to fondle her breast. She then held his hand to her and looked as if she was enjoying the encounter. Later, she went to see the priest at the prison and tells him she is leaving the convent.

### **October 25**

The NBC show "Law and Order: Special Victims Unit" featured a story line about a young woman who was raped and killed on the campus of a Catholic college. The school is shown as corrupt. The school president is a priest who, when asked to have the male suspects provide a semen sample, says it is a "venial sin in the eyes of the Church." The police captain responds, "Is confession still at five, Father? Because I think we'll done by then."

### **November 11**

On ABC's "Politically Incorrect," host Bill Maher discussed Catholicism with several guests including Kevin Smith, the writer/director of the movie "Dogma." Maher remarked, "Catholics practice what they want to practice. They go to see the Pope because he is a big celebrity, but they go home and they masturbate, they practice birth control...well they do." When someone remarked that people are not attending churches or synagogues, Maher continued, "But if I may pause to correct something, you shouldn't, I don't think, lump the synagogue in with the Church. They operate very differently, OK. The

synagogue...was never as corrupt as the Catholic Church."

## Internet

### **July**

Among the items being advertised online by a company called FISH were the "Nunzilla" doll that mocks Catholic religious Sisters, and an "Immaculate Conception Shirt" described as "Perfect for Xmas with the family. An alien looks on at a blessed Virgin and innocent babe."

### **September 13**

The internet site "Heckler's Online" offered a new "Pokémon" character called "Popémon." It depicted the character (complete with animal-like fangs and paws) in religious garb, holding a staff. The object of the game is to capture another character, "condemn it as a sinner...when you come back, Popémon will be there."

### **September 25**

The internet website "Humor Database" sponsored by "BigWarehouse.com" posted a joke about a monk and a nun having sex in their old age. The punch line had the monk saying he had a beautiful wife and children and the nun saying she was actually a male.

### **October 4**

The internet website "Salon.com" featured a piece on the Virgin Of Medjugorje by Christopher Hitchens. Titled "Our lady of lies," the piece attacked Pope John Paul II, the process of sainthood, the wartime record of the Church and Catholic sensibilities in general.

Of the Medjugorje site he wrote, "So holy mother church has reached a compromise, whereby the faithful were neither enjoined to worship...nor discouraged from doing so. On the verge of the new millennium, Rome does not need another embarrassing bogus revelation."

### **November**

The internet website "Public Offender" featured sections attacking Catholics, gays, Jews and blacks. The material, written by a Paul Taylor, insinuated Catholic priests and nuns are all homosexuals and enter religious life as "the perfect cover." He also accused the Vatican of stealing artwork in support of the Nazis and buying up expensive oceanfront land for retired priests and nuns. The site featured tasteless jokes about each group.

Jews are referred to as "barbarians" and blacks as "niggers."

### **October**

The large internet auction house eBay made available for sale "Catholic School Girl Used Panties." Making such items available for sale violated eBay's own policies against selling such items as well as the policies of Hotmail, the e-mail provider used by the vendor to advertise the items.

### **October**

The internet magazine Salon.com featured an article about seeing a recent concert by singer Tom Jones. The author, Virginia Vitzmun, was describing the act of women throwing their underwear onstage. She described it as follows: "In a different context it might have seemed that Jones was burying his face in p-- by proxy, but the middle-aged innocence of the crowd made the ritual seem more like the transubstantiation of the communal wafer."

### **December**

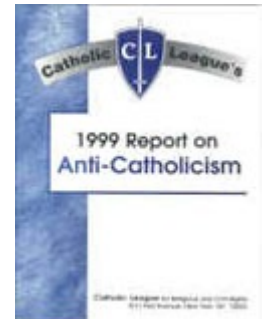
The internet website [www.juicycerebellum.com](http://www.juicycerebellum.com) started up what is being called the "Anti-Catholic League." The site claims to "keep Americans who are not crazy, safe from psychotic Catholics." Among other things, the site claims William Donohue is the anti-Christ.

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# Miscellaneous

## January

Watchtower, the official website of Jehovah's Witnesses, published an article falsely accusing Pope Pius XII and the Catholic Church of "silence" during the Holocaust. The article sought to contrast this "silence" with the suffering of Jehovah's Witnesses who were persecuted for denouncing Nazi brutality. The article pointedly ignored the millions of Catholics who suffered imprisonment and death at Nazi hands, the glowing tributes paid to Pope Pius XII by Jewish leaders of the time, and his condemnation by the Nazi SS, who accurately accused the Pope of "one long attack against everything we stand for."



## January

**Fillmore, NY** – Most Holy Family Monastery, a dissident organization that challenges the papal authority of Pope John Paul II, published a pamphlet entitled "101 Heresies of Anti-Pope John Paul II." A chief concern, running throughout the list of the Holy Father's alleged heresies involves his outreach to other faiths and efforts at ecumenism. The pamphlet's message is that by virtue of Pope John Paul II's heresies, his papacy is no longer valid.

## January

Day of Confession, a novel by Allan Folsom, conjures up various tired anti-Catholic stereotypes and propaganda, including scheming cardinals and corrupt Vatican bankers. "As a sampling of shocks and horrors," offered Kirkus Reviews, "try these: a Vatican cardinal who's a megalomaniac and another who's a murderer; a nun whose concupiscent fantasizing foreshadows the rescinding of her vows; a Vatican-inspired

conspiracy aimed at bringing China to its knees as a first step toward restoring the Holy Roman Empire. Or how about the top Vatican cop hiring the world's most deadly terrorist?"

## **January**

**Fillmore, NY** – The first issue of *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, published by the dissident Most Holy Family Monastery, carried a 17 page cover story by Brother Michael Dimond charging that Rome has become "The Seat of the Anti-Christ."

## **January 29**

**Knoxville, TN** – "What Is The Pope Doing In America?" pastor Dr. Bob Bevington of Knoxville Baptist Tabernacle asked cryptically in a paid advertisement in the Knoxville News-Sentinel. The Pope "represents enormous wealth and power," Pastor Bevington warned. "This publicity bolsters his church's interests," and "he is here to promote Roman Catholicism." Bevington then went on to deride Catholic teachings on Limbo and Purgatory, the primacy of the Pope, veneration of Mary and the saints, confession, and priestly celibacy. Two weeks later, in another ad responding to letters critical of this one, Bevington invoked his freedom of speech. He did not explain, however, why his ministry of evangelization required him to attack the Catholic Church rather than espouse the merits of his own denomination.

## **February**

**Riverdale, NY** – A letter-writer to the Riverdale Press, attacking the editor's January 28 pro-life editorial, charged that the editor's "views are pro-Catholic, pro-Nazi and pro-KKK." Continuing his hate speech linking Catholicism to Nazism, the writer, Daniel Jean Lipsman, added that the editor's "political philosophy mirrors that of Karol Wojtyla and his journalistic integrity is on a par with that of Joseph Goebbels."

## **February**



**Houma, LA** – “666 The Mark of the Beast 666” was the title of a letter being distributed by the Better Living Seventh-day Adventist Church, claiming that “the beast mentioned in Revelation 13 is the Roman Catholic Church!” The proof? Well, if you add up “the Roman numerical value” of “the official title for the pope” (“‘Vicarius Filii Dei,’ which is Latin for ‘Vicar of the Son of God’”), you get the number 666. Case closed. The letter also cites the sacrament of Penance, the Sunday Sabbath, and “allegiance to Rome instead of God,” as among the sins that prove the demonic nature of the Catholic Church.

### **February 7**

**Washington, DC** – In “one of the worst cases of vandalism in the Washington area,” according to the director of cemeteries for the Washington Archdiocese, some 400 headstones were flipped over, smashed and broken at Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Given the damage, police estimated that as many as 15 individuals may have been involved in the desecration of the cemetery, which included a statue of the Virgin Mary being turned on its head. On March 5, two former students of nearby Gallaudet University, a school for the deaf, were arrested in connection with the incident. Police said they had arrest warrants for six additional current or former Gallaudet students. By May, four men had been charged, and three others were still being sought.

### **February 14**

**Darien, CT** – Literature from the notoriously anti-Catholic Alamo Christian Ministries was left on the car windshields of people attending a Baptism at St. John’s Catholic Church. Among the eight pages of anti-Catholic nonsense was Tony Alamo’s charge that Catholics are “pagan idol worshippers” because we hold Mary “to be the mother of God.”

### **February 15**

**South Ozone Park, NY** – A suspicious fire destroyed the altar, damaged the roof and charred statues at St. Anthony of Padua

Catholic Church. The blaze was labeled suspicious because of its intensity, and arson investigators were called in.

## **February 16**

**Washington, DC** – Media mogul Ted Turner ridiculed the Ten Commandments, Pope John Paul II, and the Polish people during his population control speech to the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association. Turner called the Ten Commandments “a little out of date,” postulating that “If you’re going to have only 10 rules, I don’t know if prohibiting adultery should be one of them.” Asked how he would deal with Pope John Paul II, an opponent of abortion and contraception, Turner lifted his leg and asked, “Ever seen a Polish mine detector?” He added that the Pope should “get with it. Welcome to the 20th century.” A day later, after a protest from the league, Turner’s office sent an apology to league headquarters.

## **March**

Pop music star and actress Cher was asked whether she ever dated men her own age. Her reply was, “I would never have gone out in my whole life if I waited for guys my own age to ask me out. I would have been a nun – what a waste.”

## **March**

**New York, NY** – Teen singer Britney Spears made an MTV appearance in New York. Newsweek magazine described the scene: “Teenage girls mimicked the naughty Catholic-school uniform she wears in the video for ‘...Baby One More Time’: unbuttoned white shirt, sexy bra and a gray miniskirt hiked so high it makes Ally McBeal look like a nun.”

## **March**

**Los Angeles, CA** – Former talk show host Phil Donahue spoke to a gay and lesbian bash in Los Angeles and “railed against the Catholic Church’s ‘promotion of homophobia.’”

## **March 11**

**Milwaukee, WI** – Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig received a fax from the league questioning whether Major League Baseball has a double standard in dealing with bigotry. The league noted that Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott had been suspended and fined for racist and anti-Semitic remarks, but that no such punishment had been meted out to Ted Turner, part owner of the Atlanta Braves, for his anti-Catholic comments. In a May 3 telephone call to league president William Donohue, Selig explained the difference: Schott was principal owner of the Reds, while Turner's connection to the Braves is indirect: he owns 11 per cent of Time Warner, which owns the Braves. Nevertheless, Selig assured the league that the Turner matter was under investigation by Major League Baseball.

### **March 13**

**Franklin Square, NY** – Copies of "Earth's Final Warning," a tract accusing the Catholic Church of bowing to paganism, "deadly compromise" with the forces of evil, and a conspiracy bent on world domination, was distributed door to door in this Long Island community.

### **March 17**

**Muskegon, MI** – At first glance, the words on the sign outside Bible Baptist Church—"THE COLOR OF THE GOD I WORSHIP IS NOT GREEN"—appeared to be a commentary on the rampant materialism of our age. An alert Catholic passerby, however, noting the week during which the sign was posted, called the church to inquire. The pastor's daughter confirmed his suspicion: The message was not meant to criticize materialism, but rather to denigrate the Catholic celebration of St. Patrick's feast day.

### **April**

**San Diego, CA** – Various publications from a group calling itself Mission to Catholics International accused the Catholic Church of "bigotry and priestcraft," "pagan corruption," and the slaughter of fifty million people since the birth of "Popery" in the year 606 A.D.

## **April**

**Westchester, IL** – The league received a pamphlet from Good News Publishers, “A world-wide, nonprofit Christian literature ministry.” As with other such publications, its focus was not on promoting the positive aspects of this group’s own beliefs, but rather on denigrating the faith of Catholics. The pamphlet was entitled “Can a Roman Catholic be sure of Heaven?” The answer, of course, was no.

## **April 8**

**Palm Beach Gardens, FL** – Thieves broke in to the Palm Beach diocesan Cathedral of St. Ignatius Loyola, ripped the tabernacle from its moorings and left it smashed in a drainage ditch, scattering Communion Hosts in the grass. The vandals also made off with the ciborium that they stole from inside the tabernacle. There was no evidence that the break-in was an act of Satanism or a hate crime, according to Msgr. Thomas Klinzing, rector of the Cathedral. Still, he added, “The desecration of the tabernacle and Hosts into a drainage ditch is a blasphemy and it tears at my heart.”

## **April 19**

**Green Bay, WI** – “Smashed windows, broken doors and damaged computers were discovered by a janitor at 4 a.m. Monday, April 19, at St. Jude [Catholic] School,” reported Green Bay’s diocesan newspaper, The Compass. An answering machine and student medication stored in the school office were reported missing after the incident, which forced closure of the school for one day.

## **April – May**

**Brooklyn, NY** – When Italian immigrants Vincent and Letizia Coppola renovated their home in the Manhattan Beach section of Brooklyn, they had a big round sculpture of Madonna and Child engraved on the second floor balcony that extends in front of their house. Immediately, they became the targets of threatening letters. “You have some nerve putting such an offensive symbol in your home,” read one letter. “This is not

Bensonhurst or Bay Ridge [largely Catholic neighborhoods in Brooklyn], where all of your mob friends live." Another letter, instructing the Coppolas to sell their home "to a fine, honorable Russian Jew and move back to Bensonhurst," warned that "action will be taken" if the images of Jesus and Mary were not removed.

## **May**

**Mooreville, IN** – Rev. Tony York of Victory Baptist Church launched a billboard campaign against Pope John Paul II and evangelist Billy Graham.

"The Pope enslaves. But Jesus saves," proclaimed one such billboard. "Beware of false prophets in Indy Around June 3-6" said another one, in reference to Rev. Graham's upcoming crusade.

His complaint with Rev. Graham was also rooted in Rev. York's anti-Catholicism. "Billy Graham teaches that the pope is a great man," Rev. York told the Indianapolis Star. "But the pope is anti-Bible in a lot of areas."

## **May 11**

**Brick, NJ** – The Brick Branch of the Ocean County Library was used by a group calling itself Good News for Catholics, Inc., to present a 54 minute anti-Catholic film, "Catholicism: A Crisis of Faith." The film featured wide-ranging attacks and misrepresentations of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church. It was followed by a 20-25 minute verbal attack on Catholic doctrine, leaving little time for questions, rebuttals and discussion before the library closed. Anti-Catholic books, leaflets and pamphlets were also distributed.

## **May 26**

**New York, NY** – New York Post columnist Susan Brady Konig, a Catholic, detailed the unabashed anti-Catholicism that she and her husband, who is Jewish, regularly encounter in everyday conversation.

When her husband, "chatting with other dads," mentions that he

and his wife are sending their children to Catholic school, “he gets the oddest reaction: ‘Why? You’re not Catholic!’ ‘No, I’m Jewish, but my wife is Catholic.’ ‘How can you allow her to send your kids to Catholic school?’ ‘Allow? I encourage it. They’re Catholic, my wife’s Catholic, so we’re sending them to Catholic school.’

“This is followed,” Ms. Konig wrote, “by much sputtering and then: ‘How could you do that to your own kids?’”

She thought her husband might have been exaggerating, she wrote, until she was present for such an exchange: “We were chatting with another parent and the big topic came up. ‘We’ll send them to Catholic school,’ my husband said. ‘You guys are Catholic?’ (This line delivered with eyes popping in surprise.) ‘Well, my wife is. I’m Jewish.’ ‘And you’re going to allow her to send the kids to Catholic school?’ (Pop-eyed surprise has now progressed to disdainful sneer.)

“I’m standing right there,” Ms. Konig continued. “The guy knows I’m Catholic—he asked, we told him. But, without missing a beat, he felt absolutely no compunction about insulting my religious beliefs.”

By contrast, she asked in her column, “If my husband were Catholic and I was Jewish and he told people we were sending our kids to yeshiva, would they do anything less correct than nod and smile? Of course not, because to say, ‘How can you allow her to do that?’ would be anti-Semitic. But anti-Catholic? People don’t think twice.”

## **July**

**Washington, DC** — A middle-aged man posted himself daily in front of the Vatican Embassy, holding a sign that read “Catholic Clergy Molest Boys World Wide.” He had a large bell attached to the top of the sign, presumably to ring to draw increased attention to his message.

## **July 1**

**Phoenix, AZ** — The Arizona Republic, in a feature on the Phoenix Mercury of the Women’s National Basketball Association

(WNBA), highlighted two fans who dress in nuns' habits and ridicule Catholic nuns as part of their cheering act.

"Nuns are liberated now, and we're trying to Halloween). Speaking of his Catholic upbringing, Sec says that "I perceive that in every way we (his family) were very religious and huddled together in fear."

## **November 8**

**Stockton, CA** – A fire gutted the Church of the Presentation. The incident is being investigated as a hate crime by police after a swastika was painted on an outside wall. A mass had just been completed an hour before the fire was discovered. The blaze also closed the 300-student elementary school

## **November 28 – December 22**

From November 28 to December 22, ten major American newspapers carried anti-Catholic ads. All of the ads were sponsored by the Eternal Gospel Church of Seventh-Day Adventists (a splinter group from the Seventh-Day Adventists). The ads identified the Catholic Church as the "WHORE" and the "BEAST," and charged the Holy Father with breaking down the barriers between church and state.

The "Earth's Final Warning" full-page ads were run on November 28 in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch; on December 1 in the Miami Herald ; on December 1 in El Nuevo Herald (Miami); on December 2 in the Dallas Morning News; on December 5 in some copies of the Greenville News (South Carolina); on December 10 in the Indianapolis Star; on December 13 in Diario Las Americas (Miami); on December 14 in the Los Angeles Times; on December 20 in the Tallahassee Democrat; and on December 22 in The Herald (Everett, Washington).

After being contacted by the Catholic League all the newspaper with the exception of St. Louis Post-Dispatch made quick and sincere apologies to the Catholic League, pledging never again to run these ads. In fact, when the publisher of the Greenville News spotted the ad in print, he ordered the printing press stopped and thus not all copies of the South

Carolina daily published the ad.

#### **December**

**Brooklyn, NY** – The Brooklyn district attorney's office and the Police Department's bias unit are investigating four instances of vandalism at Catholic churches over the past three months. Statues of Our Lady of Fatima and three young seers that stood in front of St. Jerome's in Flatbush were toppled and smashed

#### **December**

**New Jersey** – Seven statues of the Christ child were stolen from lawn Nativity scenes at churches and homes in Oradell, Dumont and Emerson.

#### **December**

**St. Louis, MO** – Nearly all the statues in a Nativity scene were stolen from Fontbonne College.

#### **December**

**Brooklyn, NY** – A statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary which had stood outside the front door of Our Lady of Refuge Rectory since the early 1930s was smashed to pieces. A statue of baby Jesus was also destroyed.

#### **December**

**Brooklyn, NY** – A stained glass window outside Holy Innocents Church was damaged when beer bottles were thrown through it.

#### **December**

**Brooklyn, NY** – The body of Christ was taken down from the crucifix at Holy Cross Church and burned.

#### **December**

**Brooklyn, NY** – Statues at Holy Fatimas and the young seers were pulverized in front of St. Jerome's. They had stood there for four decades.

#### **December**

**Day Island, WA** – A popular nativity scene in Day Island never



saw Christmas. The entire Nativity scene was stolen.

#### **December**

**St. Albans, WV** – The baby Jesus was stolen from a nativity scene in St. Albans.

#### **December**

**Chicago, IL** – A yearly Nativity scene in Daley Plaza was vandalized when, despite security, baby Jesus was stolen. The figure was later found in a locker in the Daley Plaza bus station.

#### **December**

**Meredith, NH** – A Nativity scene was vandalized not once but twice. The baby Jesus was stolen twice in one week.

#### **December**

**Galveston, TX** – A rash of thefts occurred when statues of the Virgin Mary were stolen from lawns and cemeteries all over Galveston.

#### **E-Mail**

***The Catholic League often receives hate e-mail. Many times the authors remain anonymous but the messages certainly reveal the hatred that exists for the league and its work. Below is just a samll sample.***

#### **January 18**

An anonymous e-mail to the league railed against "Your ludicrous, pagan, idol-worshipping religion." "Instead of being so concerned about people making fun of your ridiculous beliefs," it urged, "why don't you worry about racist little Catholic school bastards beating up African-American kids, neo-fascists such as Catholic Pat BuKKKhannan, etc?"

"Your church is a hotbed of hypocrisy," the writer continued. "Your pedophile priests molest and scar little boys for life, but yet you rail against homosexuality. Your 'Holy Father' is a senile old fool in drag who lives like a king while millions

wallow in poverty because of his crazy opposition to birth control."

While allowing that "your stance against abortion is the only Catholic belief I agree with," the anonymous writer complained that Catholics even "mess that issue up by waving your rosaries in peoples' faces."

"In other words," the hate letter concluded, "CATHOLICS SUCK!"

### **March 15**

The league received an e-mail message from a person who said he represented "Friends of a Catholic-Free Amercica (sic)." The message then went on to disparage Catholic priests (calling them all pedophiles). It ended with "Horray (sic) for Ted Turner. Christianity is based on the Bible written by moronic old men that thought the earth was flat. Close up shop and get a real job. The Virgin Mary wasn't even a real virgin!"

### **March 20**

An e-mail from Berkeley, CA, disagreeing with our call for a boycott of San Francisco in protest of the "Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence" Easter Sunday desecration, declared, "Well, sooner or later the old Pope will die (one can pray that will happen today) and with any luck a Molslem (sic) terrorist will bomb the Vatican. What a pity! All that lovely art work. Bishop Lambada (sic) will probably catch aids (sic) living here anyway. It really wounds us to think a few Catholics might not visit San Francisco. Meanwe'll (sic) try to keep Jesus dead. Have a nice resurrection party but no Nazi Catholic I've ever been to bed with could get it up anyway.

### **April 9**

An anonymous piece of e-mail hate mail declared support for Miramax and the hope that the company's next film would include a obscene situation involving the pope and the Virgin Mary.

### **September 2**

The Catholic League received e-mail from a person identifying himself as "Anthony Ranieri" who obviously has a problem with Catholicism. In part, the author wrote, "The catholic 'faith' is a disease that needs to be rooted out by any legal artistic means. I fully support any project that ferrets out and exposes your corruption."

### **November 8**

The Catholic League received hate mail from an anonymous source who wrote, "You narrow-minded idiots!! You wouldn't know god or love or acceptance or forgiveness or passion, if it came up and bit you in the ass. A creator gave us free will to challenge and explore who we are and the world that we live in. You people are nothing but a bunch of Zombies."

### **December**

The Catholic League received hate mail from an unidentified person who wrote an obscene message more than 6,000 times. The mailer also identified himself as "William of Orange" with his address as "NO POPE OF ROME."