

# CHAPTER NEWS

## Chicago Chapter

The chapter hosted League president Bill Donohue at its August advisory board meeting.

While in town Donohue was interviewed by the *New World* (Archdiocese of Chicago) and the *Northwest Indiana Catholic* (diocese of Gary).

Effective October 1, the chapter office and executive director Tom O'Connell (A.K.A. *Midwest Regional Director* O'Connell!) will be relocating to a new office. Please make a note of the office address and new phone number. Easy access to public transportation and parking make this new location a winner. Anyone with clerical or computer skills interested in volunteering a few hours on a regular basis should contact Tom O'Connell.

The chapter has once again obtained two round-trip tickets to Warsaw, Poland compliments of LOT, the Polish national airline. Area members can shortly expect to be offered an opportunity to purchase chances to win this great trip.

The chapter is launching a major parish-based recruitment drive. If you can be of help, call Tom O'Connell at his new office. The goal is to more than double chapter membership over the next year.

## California Chapter

The chapter is gearing up for a visit from League president Bill Donohue who will address its annual dinner on Friday, October 22. Several meetings and media appearances are being scheduled around Donohue's visit.

An IBM employee upset at his company's support of ACT-UP has obtained copies of "Stop The Church" from the League

office and hopes to educate corporate officials as to the true character of that organization.

Both the chapter office and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Public Affairs office have taken KFI Radio to task for promotional pieces seeming to imply that Michael Jackson and all Catholic priests are sexual deviants. The pre-recorded spots promoted the station's "Tammy Bruce Show."

### **Massachusetts Chapter**

The chapter is pleased to announce that Fr. James M. DePerri, parochial vicar of St. Agnes Church in Arlington, and an enthusiastic League supporter, has accepted appointment as chapter chaplain.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue will be visiting with the chapter leadership in early October.

The Rutherford Institute will be filing an amicus brief in support of the South Boston Allied War Veterans, embattled sponsors of the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade which has been marred in recent years by the forced inclusion of gay and lesbian marchers.

### **Washington, D.C. Chapter**

Chapter executive director Dr. Patrick Riley has moved back to Wauwatosa, Wisconsin where he will continue writing for League publications and serve as Director of Research for the League.

The chapter is being restructured on a volunteer basis. Watch this newsletter for further developments.

### **Long Island Chapter**

Invitations have gone out to more than 1,800 members and friends of the Catholic League for this year's Awards Dinner-Dance on Saturday, October 16 at the Powell Council Knights of Columbus hall.

Brother Syriac reports that the Chaminade High School chapter has 65 members this year.

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## The Write Stuff...

**NEW YORK NEWSDAY**

**9/8/93**

I read with amusement Gabriel Rotella's Cityscape column, "Catholic Bashing: The Cry of Cowards." As president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization

... I can assure Rotella that the Catholic League does not object to criticism of the Catholic Church. But that doesn't mean that we don't object when militant gays disrupt a mass.

And for the record, the disruption of a church service by gays has not been limited to one occurrence at St. Patrick's. Indeed, gays disrupted a mass said by Bishop Daily on Aug. 29, fully three days before Mr. Rotella's piece appeared. In short, his piece was as erroneous as it was embarrassing.

*-William A. Donohue*

**CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

**9/5/93**

Once again I must ask the editors of the *Tribune* to look inward toward what appears to be the continued bashing of Catholics. I speak of the cartoon depicting the pope ... presiding over a church that is out of control. The cartoon was so offensive that our office received a barrage of phone calls voicing disapproval of the cartoon. To be ridiculed by

Rob Rogers, a cartoonist for a Pittsburgh paper, is injury upon insult. The interesting part of this cartoon is that it continues to lampoon the Holy Father rather than salute his efforts to bring the youth of the world his message of peace. A cartoon of ridicule that portrayed the Jewish hierarchy or African-American leadership in the same vein would result in justified outrage. Please consider the way you choose to show the Catholic faith and its leaders. In our opinion, the manner in which you have addressed this issue is ridiculous.

– Tom O’Connell

*Mid-west Regional Director*

## **BOSTON GLOBE**

**9/16/93**

It is sad and petty, and rather vindictive, that on the happy occasion of the pope’s visit to the United States, a major newspaper serving a largely Catholic community could not resist the temptation to deliver a slap at the Catholic Church. (“The pope’s catholic church,” Aug. 12 editorial).

The Globe’s assertion that the Catholic Church was last officially recognized in Mexico when it was allegedly “the ally of dictators and landowners,” is not only gratuitously offensive but historically inaccurate.

The Holy See last enjoyed diplomatic recognition from Mexico in 1865 during the liberal and somewhat anticlerical monarchy of Maximilian. Most of the dictators in Mexico’s history have been violent persecutors of the church.

It is unfortunate that the Globe chose to repeat a piece of anti-Catholic propaganda that has been used to justify repression against the Catholic Church in Mexico. One might not unreasonably infer that the editorial writer views the Catholic Church as an ideological opponent to be relentlessly attacked, no matter how remote the pretext or how inappropriate the occasion.

– *Daniel T. Flatley*  
*President, Massachusetts Chapter*

**PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE**  
**8/22/93**

Whether Rob Rogers is just another anti-Catholic bigot working in the media or someone who hasn't evolved from adolescence, I do not know. But his cartoon portraying Pope John Paul II as presiding over a church that is out of control was so offensive that I received a barrage of phone calls from Pittsburgh Catholics.

The cartoon also misrepresents the level of dissension within the church. Most Catholics are no more prepared to abandon their church today than they were in the past. Indeed, as a proportion of the population, Catholics have actually gained ground in the last few decades, making suspect the charge that the pope is presiding over a recalcitrant flock.

If church enrollment is up, and if the most orthodox seminaries are registering the largest increases, it suggests that Mr. Rogers does indeed have something to worry about. That's right – we're here, we're everywhere and most important, we're not going to take it anymore.

– *William A. Donohue*

**BOSTON HERALD**  
**9/21/93**

Margery Eagan persists in giving theological advice to a religion she neither comprehends nor believes in ("Annulment flap points up flaw in church doctrine," Sept. 9).

Eagan's assertion that the Catholic Church should recognize divorce is just one more example of her willingness to exploit any opportunity, even the tragedy of a broken marriage, to pursue her relentless ideological vendetta against the church.

The church's defense of the sanctity of marriage is not rooted in policy or politics, but in the words of Jesus Christ: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." It is a teaching that is 2,000 years old, and it is not likely to be changed because some disaffected ex-Catholics in the feminist subculture find it objectionable.

Within the United States there are nine major Protestant denominations, unions of the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox jews, and 14 Eastern Orthodox churches.

It would be a refreshing exercise in diversity if we could hear Eagan express her views on a religious body other than the Catholic Church for a change.

*Daniel T. Flatley*

*President, Massachusetts Chapter*

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## **Clinton's Surgeon General nominee nailed for anti-Catholic statements**

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's nominee for the post of Surgeon General, is on record as being anti-Catholic.

The Catholic League, in a July 22 news release, quoted several public statements by Elders indicative of her hostility towards the Catholic Church. (The full text of the League news release appears on pg. 2).

Bishop James T. McHugh, chair of the USCC pro-life committee, in a letter to Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, criticized Elders for her "bigoted and contemptuous remarks about Catholics and

other Christians.”



Msgr. William F. Murphy, in a *Boston Pilot* column, called Elders “an anti-Catholic bigot [who] advocates extreme positions regarding health care, sex education and abortion referrals for young people.” Msgr. Murphy, secretary for community relations in the Boston Archdiocese, went on to note the American “double standard” which accepts anti-Catholicism but condemns all other forms of bigotry.

The League’s charges against Elders received national exposure during a heated exchange on CNN’s *Crossfire* between former White House chief of staff John Sununu and Dr. Reed Tuckson, President of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science.

Tuckson praised Elders’ “behavior, thought, word” as something “all Americans could be proud of.”

Sununu countered: “The Catholic League disagrees with you. Catholic groups across the country disagree with you. These are the folks against which her language was directed. You certainly should understand from the history of the country that those are the kinds of things that divide and don’t unite the country.”

Later in the broadcast Catholic opposition to Elders was tied to the Church's stand on abortion. Kay Coles James of the Family Research Council quickly noted: "It is not politically correct to to be anti-black. It is not politically correct to be against women. It is not politically correct to be anti-Semitic, but in America today, it's totally acceptable to make the comments that she made about the church, not only the Catholic Church, but the comments she made about the Christian community as well."

A letter from League president William Donohue has been sent to all members of the U.S. Senate. In his letter, Dr. Donohue cited the blatantly anti-Catholic comments of Elders and pointed out that there is no place in public office for such bigotry.

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## Washington Post says League is right

In a lead editorial on Monday, August 2, the *Washington Post* called Catholic League criticism of Dr. Joycelyn Elders "right."

The editorial dismissed opposition to Elders because of her stands on "sex education, abortion and contraception." But when it came to the League's criticism of Elders as anti-Catholic, the *Post* acknowledged there was a problem:

*Over the years, Dr. Elders, as a state official, has given as well as got in controversies about her positions and her manner of advocacy. But she has a different charge as the nation's highest ranking public health official. The federal post can be used to spur a national response to critical*



*public health problems. It is not, however, a stage from which a surgeon general is free to put down, put off or trash segments of the American public with whom he or she disagrees. We have in mind the broadside that Dr. Elders leveled against the Catholic Church during a pro-choice rally in Little Rock last year. The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights said it smacked of ignorance or malice and that it was "a rank distortion of history to say that the Catholic Church was 'silent' or did 'nothing' about past instances of societal injustice." The League was right. With all her professional accomplishments, that aspect of Dr. Elders' approach to public discourse is troubling.*

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## **From the President's desk...**

My children still play many of the same games that I used to play as a child. One of them is make-believe. The point of this game is to pretend, to make-believe that you are someone else. As such, kids can quickly become firefighters, nurses, detectives, teachers, and so on. All that is needed is some "dress ups" and a little imagination.

Just recently, while Pope John Paul II was in Denver, we saw how popular the game of make-believe is with some adults. For example, it was fashionable for some adults to pretend they were Catholics. When asked by the media if they were Catholics, they said yes. Though they had long stopped going to church, they pretended to be Catholics when asked by inquiring journalists. Tragically, the same was true of a few nuns as well.

Pretend-type Catholics have become alienated from the church for many reasons. But above all, they are alienated because

the church has stood firm on its positions on human sexuality and its criteria for the priesthood. It would be a mistake, however, to think that even if the church were to reverse itself and become accepting of all that its critics want that that would make any difference. No, these individuals are just too far gone to bring them back.

Pretend-type Catholics are not just alienated from the church, they are alienated from American society and, more generally, from Western civilization. These are the same people who, as Jeanne Kirkpatrick once said, like to "blame America first." On July 4th, for example, they are the type who blush in disgust with all the patriotic fanfare. Why? Didn't you know about the history of Native Americans? Or slavery? Or women? Or water pollution? Didn't you know that the West invented sin and America perfected it?

No one, of course, denies that these Catholics have a right to sulk or to bask in their alienation. But is it too much to ask them to stop playing make-believe? For beginners, could they at least stop lying and stop telling pollsters that they're Catholics?

The media, of course, love pretend-type Catholics. Dissent always makes for good copy, and it matters not a whit if it is real or contrived. That's why they fawn over Catholics for Free Choice (an oxymoron if there ever was one), Catholics Speak Out and other fringe groups. These "Catholics" continuously charge that the church is rigid and unbending because it won't change its mind on certain issues. Take abortion as an illustration.

It would seem only fair that the Catholic Church ought to be accorded as much right to decide the question of abortion as the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU, it should be noted, is flatly pro-choice on abortion. Indeed, it brags that it goes to court to defend a woman's right to abortion more than any other organization in the country. All, repeat *all*,

ACLU officials in the national office and in the affiliates are pro-choice. They have every right to be. But interestingly, no one charges foul play or complains about the ACLU being too rigid and unbending in its policy on abortion. Why, then, should the Catholic Church be treated any differently?

Does anyone doubt what the ACLU response would be if an official of the organization took a public position against abortion? He or she would be gone tomorrow. Now it is as unfair as it is incongruous to charge that the Catholic Church ought to tolerate pro-choice persons in its leadership positions when secular organizations don't tolerate division within their own ranks. There are no pretend-type ACLU'ers in the ACLU. Everyone either accepts a pro-choice position or they're gone (just ask Nat Henthoff). Why the Catholic Church should be held to a different standard is not clear.

No one is forced to join the Catholic Church. And those who join are free to leave. Honest disagreement of the application of church principles can be expected and may in fact prove fruitful for everyone. But there is a distinction between dissent and heresy. Furthermore, it is not acceptable to pretend that there are two churches, the American church and the institutionalized church of Rome. No one in the ACLU who disagrees with the national office, for instance, could get away with pretending that there are two ACLUs, one made up of the rank-and-file and one that is institutionalized in the national headquarters. Again, what's considered fair for the ACLU should certainly be considered fair for the Catholic Church.

At bottom, what pretend-type Catholics really want is for the Catholic Church to stop being Catholic. That, however, is not going to happen and that is why those who play make-believe will forever be disappointed.

-William A. Donohue

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# An open Letter to Father Virgil Blum...

Dear Father:

If, from your place in Heaven, you give an occasional glance towards earth, I know you are pleased with the League you founded and with its strong new leadership. Even more you rejoice that people of every faith, and even nonbelievers, are now laboring all over the nation to achieve your goal of freedom of choice in education.

June 18 the Supreme Court took a major step toward that reality in its decision in the *Zobrest* case. I thought of you many times during the five years of that struggle – your clear vision of parental rights, religious liberty, and of the evils of state educational monopoly.

I fear there are some misunderstandings of the case. Many press accounts have called it a “five-four decision.” It was a five-two decision on the great issue which the case posed at the Supreme Court level – namely, whether government’s furnishing a sign-language interpreter to a deaf boy on the premises of his religious school violated the Constitution’s Establishment Clause.

Some, too, have said that, in spite of the Court’s ruling in favor of the *Zobrest* family, they might still have to fight in the lower courts to get reimbursement. Not so. On July 25 they got paid in full. The public school district had had enough of the fight – a fight which never should have been.

Father, the old enemies of justice – in particular, Americans United for Separation of Church and State – are now trying to

downsize the *Zobrest* decision. They say it is a very narrow ruling simply allowing a sign-language interpreter to serve a deaf boy on the premises of a religious school. Oddly enough, some supporters of school choice are saying the same thing. But they are both failing to recognize the *principle* involved in the case – namely, that *public aid may be given to individuals qualifying for it, on religious premises, where the aid is made available to all and where it is religiously neutral in character.*

I realize that, in subsequent cases where freedom of religious choice in education is sought, the narrow view will be pressed and secularist judges may buy it. But our job, following your great example, will be to fight *for the principle*. We now, in *Zobrest*, have a beachhead, and we must and can push from there to full victory for the cause you championed.

We know we have your prayers. Thanks again.

*-Bill Ball*

Ed. Note – William Bentley Ball is the distinguished constitutional lawyer and former member of the League's Board of Directors who represented the *Zobrest* family in *Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills School District*.

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## Catholic League News Release

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is unalterably opposed to anti-Catholicism whenever and wherever it occurs. That is why it views with alarm the public statements of Dr. Joycelyn Elders, presidential nominee for Surgeon General.

When Dr. Elders was serving as Director of the Arkansas Department of Health, she made several statements that demonstrated an animus against the Catholic Church. To be specific, on January 18, 1992, Dr. Elders made an address to the Arkansas Coalition for Choice charging that the Catholic Church was “silent” and did “nothing” about slavery, the treatment of Native Americans, the Holocaust and the disenfranchisement of women.

Now such a statement smacks either of ignorance or malice. It is a rank distortion of history to say that the Catholic Church was “silent” or did “nothing” about past instances of societal injustice. Worse still, however, is Dr. Elders’ demagogic characterization of the clergy and the Catholic Church’s position on abortion.

At the 1992 pro-choice rally, Dr. Elders made the following statement:

“Look at who’s fighting the prochoice movement – a celibate, male-dominated Church.” More recently, on January 11, 1993, Dr. Elders referred to people who oppose abortion as “non-Christians with slave master mentalities.” Both statements evince a disposition toward the Catholic Church, and to Catholics in general, that is inimical at best, and downright hostile at worst.

If Dr. Elders has legitimate differences with the teachings of the Catholic Church, she should say so in a professional manner. What we at the Catholic League find deeply troubling is the cant and calumny associated with Dr. Elders’ remarks. There is simply no place for bigotry in public office.

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# League protests Russian religious freedom limits

In the wake of new restrictions on religious activities adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, Catholic League president William Donohue has written a letter to the Russian delegation at the United Nations calling attention to League concerns about limitations on religious liberty in Russia.

"It is our belief," wrote Dr. Donohue, "and we believe it is the belief of President Yeltsin as well, that society is best served by not restricting the beliefs and practices of organized religion."

President Yeltsin has not yet signed the bill, which amends the 1990 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, but final approval is expected. Under the new law, foreign religious organizations may only operate under the authority of a Russian religious organization and will be subject to state accreditation procedures. There are also provisions in the law prohibiting foreign religious organizations and non-Russians from engaging "in missionary-religious, publishing, or advertising-propaganda activity."

Dr. Donohue concluded his letter to the delegation by wishing President Yeltsin every success and expressing hope that "religious liberty takes root in Russia in a way that men and women the world over will come to admire."

Other Russian republics are also passing laws which curtail religious liberty. For example, the Russian Republic of Klamyk proclaimed in July there would be two state religions, Buddhism and Christianity. The Catholic League will continue to monitor the developing situation.

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# Ruth Ginsburg's Role With the ACLU

By Bill Donohue

*Editor's Note: The following article by Catholic League president William A. Donohue, Ph.D., appeared in the July 3, 1993 issue of Human Events. In it, Dr. Donohue, a nationally recognized authority on the ACLU, offers some very enlightening background on Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, whose nomination hearings were compared to a canonization by more than one observer.*

Ever since President Clinton selected Ruth Bader Ginsburg to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, the media have repeatedly referred to Judge Ginsburg as a centrist. Perhaps her writings from the bench suggest that she is, but there is other evidence that suggests otherwise.

On April 12-13, 1975, the board of directors of the American Civil Liberties Union passed a new policy on "Homosexuality" (Policy #257). In doing so, the board accepted the proposed revision of its existing policy that was forwarded from the Due Process and Privacy Committees. One of the persons who played a key role in the revised policy was Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Indeed, the most controversial suggestions came from her.

Before considering the new policy, and Ginsburg's role in framing it, mention should be made of the earlier ACLU policies on homosexuality. The ACLU issued its first policy on homosexuality on January 7, 1957.

At that time, the board stated that it was not the business of



the ACLU "to evaluate the social validity of laws aimed at the suppression or elimination of homosexuals." Homosexuality constituted a common-law felony, argued the ACLU, and "there is no constitutional prohibition against such state and local laws on the subject as are deemed by such states or communities to be socially necessary or beneficial."

Homosexuals were regarded by the ACLU as belonging to a "socially heretical" and "deviant group." As such, homosexuality may be regarded as a "valid consideration in evaluating the security risk factor in sensitive positions."

On December 13, 1965, the board met to reconsider its policy on homosexuality. It now declared that it "supports the idea that this kind of sexual behavior [homosexuality] between consenting adults in private, as distinct from acts in public and improper public solicitation, should not be made the subject of criminal sanctions."

It still maintained, however, that homosexuals were members of a "socially heretical" and "deviant group" and continued to argue that gays could be screened as a security risk in "sensitive" employment .

Eleven months later the board met to draw up another new policy on homosexuality. Like the policy of 1965, it stated that what consenting adults do in private was not the business of the state. Although it stopped labeling gays as "socially heretical" and "deviant," it nonetheless said that the public had a right to be protected from "solicitation, molestation, and annoyance in public facilities and places"; minors, in particular, deserved protection against "adult corruption."

As for government employment, the ACLU maintained that no person should be disqualified because of private sexual conduct. But there was this caveat: "in certain jobs there may be relevancy between the job and a person's private sexual conduct, including homosexuality."

In 1975, the ACLU issued its most absolutist policy on homosexuality. "Homosexuals," the policy stated, "are entitled to the same rights, liberties, lack of harassment and protections as are other citizens." In every respect, discrimination was condemned whether in employment, public or private ("sensitive" jobs or not), housing and the like.

And in a major departure from previous policy on the subject, the board voted to oppose criminal sanctions for "public solicitation for private sexual behavior between or among adults of the same sex." Joining her colleagues from the Due Process and Privacy Committees in this unanimous decision was Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

The evidence shows that Ginsburg did more than vote with her colleagues. She led the fight by introducing two controversial motions. She objected to the words "in great detail" in the following statement: "The government practice of inquiring *in great detail* into the sexual practices and preferences of its employees or prospective employees and of disseminating such information to other government and non-government agencies is an unconstitutional invasion of privacy."

Ginsburg objected to the phrase "in great detail" because she did not want the ACLU to imply that the government had any right to make such an inquiry. Her motion carried.

*Most alarming, however, was Ginsburg's motion to delete the following sentence from the proposed revised policy on homosexuality: "The state has a legitimate interest in controlling sexual behavior [sic] between adults and minors by criminal sanctions." The minutes of the board state that Ginsburg "argued that this implied approval of statutory rape statutes, which are of questionable constitutionality. "*

As a result of her effort, David Isbell offered a new statement, which was approved by a vote of 18 to 7: "The state has an interest in protecting children from sexual abuse, an

interest underlying some laws concerned with sexual conduct between adults and minors. Such laws may not properly discriminate on the basis of the sexual preference involved in the conduct.”

The senators on the Judiciary Committee will now have to decide whether someone who opposes the laws on prostitution, thinks that statutory rape statutes are of dubious constitutionality and has a problem with criminalizing all sexual conduct between adults and minors is qualified to be on the Supreme Court.

Furthermore, Mr. Isbell’s substitute motion arguing that the state has an interest “underlying some laws concerned with sexual conduct between adults and minors” suggests that some laws should be stricken. It would be instructive to know which ones Ginsburg thought should have been deleted – and to what extent, if at all, she still holds such views.

Since Clarence Thomas was almost denied a seat on the Supreme Court because of unsubstantiated charges of “talking dirty,” it seems that simple justice calls for a more severe judgment regarding someone who finds fault with the state’s banning all sexual relations between adults and minors. But fairness also dictates that Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg deserves the opportunity to explain herself.

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## The Ugly

American Atheists, based in Austin, Texas, organized "Pope Picket '93" in order to defend "freedom of choice for women ... rights of gay men and women ... freedom of expression ... separation of government and religion."



Their slick brochure informs its readers that "The pope of Rome has no business trying to dictate politics, finance and life-style behavior to the American people." It goes on to say that "Catholic brainwashing has corrupted young people through religious indoctrination, sexual repression, ritualized absurdities, and foolish beliefs."

The mailing included an offering of assorted anti-Catholic books including a few gems of the genre. You can phone or fax your order and they accept Mastercard and VISA!

We're not sure how many atheists showed up in Denver, but we hope they weren't disappointed.