

GUINNESS BEING PINCHED

June 17 marked the three month anniversary of our boycott of Guinness. We did an online survey of pub owners in several cities, and the results were as follows:

- 75 report a decrease in sales
- 24 report no difference
- 4 report an increase

From what we have determined, it appears that the decrease in sales is due to three factors: (a) there is a drop off in sales following St. Patrick's Day (b) the increase in the sales of craft beers is hurting Guinness and (c) the boycott is working. Here is a sample of the responses:

"In April-May 2014, we sold 1,030 pints but in April-May 2013, we sold 1,245 pints"; "I have switched to other stouts"; "Holding back on buying Guinness"; "Our sales are down 3-4%"; "I was gonna pull Guinness but instead I put Murphy's in beside it"; "I own 12 bars in Manhattan and I will let you know that we are disgusted with Guinness"; "My Guinness sales have declined by about 40%"; "I sold my stock in Diageo when I first heard the news."

We notified officials at Diageo, the Guinness owner, of our results. We also sent them the names of thousands who signed our petition. Many thanks to everyone for participating in this boycott. Please keep it up. This concludes this phase of our campaign.

Look for future announcements. It is important that Guinness understands that it cannot treat Catholics with impunity.

COMPLAINT TO U.N. FILED; BIAS AGAINST HOLY SEE NOTED

On May 15, Bill Donohue lodged a formal complaint with Ms. Navanethem Pillay, High Commissioner for the Human Rights Office of the U.N. in Geneva, Switzerland.

Donohue charged that Felice Gaer, Vice–Chairperson of the Committee Against Torture, has compromised her objectivity and thus has no legitimate role to play in policing the policies of U.N. member states, or states that have been awarded a Permanent Observer status.

He specifically charged Gaer with violating two sets of U.N. strictures governing the objectivity of committee members: the “Guidelines On the Independence and Impartiality of Members of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies,” and the “Existing Rules and Regulations on Enhancing and Strengthening the Expertise and Independence of Treaty Body Members.”

Both of these documents demand that U.N. committee members show independence and impartiality. “Any reasonable observer would conclude,” Donohue said, “that Felice Gaer has violated these ‘Guidelines’ and ‘Rules’ by openly taking her directives from the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR), an organization whose animus against the Catholic Church’s teachings on sexuality is palpable. If CRR were just another abortion-rights entity, I would not be lodging a complaint. But its attack on Roman Catholicism is visceral.”

Donohue cited a 2000 CRR report, “The Holy See at the United Nations: An Obstacle to Women’s Reproductive Health,” that seriously crossed the line: it concluded that “the Holy See uses its status at the UN [sic] to obstruct the sexual and

reproductive health and rights of women throughout the world.”

Donohue noted that Ms. Gaer’s relationship with CRR is incestuous and that she takes more than talking points from it—she cites its reports verbatim in her official U.N. capacity. He provided several examples. He also focused on her violation of the U.N. Charter. He demonstrated how Gaer abuses her authority by challenging the autonomy of the Holy See: She wants to force the Catholic Church to change its teachings on sexuality.

“If it were reversed,” Donohue said, “if the Holy See demanded that U.N. member states align its position on abortion with the teachings of the Catholic Catechism—howls of protest would be heard worldwide. It is just as outrageous when a U.N. committee member instructs the Holy See to get in line with her secular beliefs.”

Donohue also said that the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which issued a report in February, had violated its authority when it told the Holy See that it had to change Canon law on abortion.

To read Donohue’s letter in its entirety, see the section on Special Reports listed on the Catholic League’s website.

SATANISTS AT HARVARD

On May 7, the Catholic League protested a scheduled “Black Mass” on the campus of Harvard University; the Satanic event, which was designed to ridicule the Mass, was set for May 12. But it was cancelled just hours before it was to take place.

The initial response from the university was wholly

unsatisfactory, but on the day of the mock reenactment of the Mass, Harvard University President Drew Faust issued a letter condemning the event. She stated that students have freedom of speech, but she also spoke against the obscene content of this speech.

President Faust branded the mocking of the Catholic Mass “abhorrent,” saying it was “deeply regrettable that the organizers of this event [a student group affiliated with the Harvard Extension School]...have chosen to proceed with a form of expression that is so flagrantly disrespectful and inflammatory.”

President Faust attended a Eucharistic Holy Hour and Benediction at St. Paul’s Church on campus that evening, and she joined Catholics to denounce the event. The students who sponsored it decided to move the Satanic presentation off-campus, but found trouble finding a home.

Bill Donohue issued another statement after President Faust released her letter. He commended her for her words and deeds, but said she could have done more. He drew a distinction between an arena and a university, maintaining that the latter is a community engaged in the pursuit of truth. Hence, it is not obliged to welcome speech that is wholly designed to insult.

GUINNESS ANGERS CATHOLICS; BOYCOTT LAUNCHED

As we reported last month, on the evening of March 16, the day before St. Patrick’s Day, Guinness announced that it was pulling its sponsorship of New York’s parade because gays were

allegedly banned from marching.

This 11th hour decision, which angered pub owners who had already stocked their bars with Guinness, was based on a lie: contrary to what Guinness said, gays have never been banned from the parade; they simply cannot march under their own banner (the same is true for pro-life Catholics). The timing, the reason given, and the punitive response, explains why we called for a boycott.

This issue of *Catalyst* provides plenty of information on how the boycott unfolded. We do not call for a boycott without good reason. But when Catholics are insulted—and this insult extends to every Catholic ethnic group, not just the Irish—it must be taken seriously. We cannot allow these corporate bullies to get away with this decision with impunity.

Our campaign is growing. We contacted the senior officials at Guinness in London and in Norwalk (the Connecticut office is home to the U.S. headquarters). We did several eblasts—we tapped our extensive email list asking our allies to support the boycott. We wrote to the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Knights of Columbus, beer distributors, and others. We started an online petition drive.

We have no hard data on how the boycott is working, but we are attempting to access it. Anecdotal-ly, we have plenty of reason to believe that we are scoring. Pub owners have pulled the Guinness tap, replacing it with Murphy's Stout. Pub customers have stopped ordering the famous Irish brew. The word is out: Guinness is no friend to the Catholic community.

We are under no illusions that a behemoth like Guinness can be taken down. But it can be wounded; even a small decline in sales causes corporations angst. Moreover, no company wants bad PR, no matter how wealthy it may be.

Guinness made a rash decision, hoping it could get away with sticking it to Catholics while befriending homosexuals. How

dumb. Almost everyone who drinks Guinness is *not* gay, and the average consumer is disproportionately Irish, Catholic, and male. But sometimes ideology overrules business interests, as well as common sense.

On pages 4-6, you can read how we presented our case to the media (there is some unavoidable repetition). We are very appreciative of those who have joined the boycott, and we ask that everyone spread the word. See p. 7 for information about contacting Diageo, the parent company of Guinness. Your voice matters.

DIVERSITY LIE

It is one of the biggest myths of our day to say the United States is a religiously diverse nation. It manifestly is not. But there is a lot of money, and ideological investment, at stake in pretending otherwise. Consider the following.

A Pew Research Center study on global religious diversity was released on April 4: with the exception of the *Washington Times*, not a single large-circulation newspaper in the nation ran a story on it.

The study found that “from a global perspective, the U.S. really is not at all that religiously diverse.” Indeed, “95% of the U.S. population is either Christian [78%] or religiously unaffiliated, while all other religions combined account for less than 5% of Americans. As a result, the U.S. ranks 68th out of 232 countries and territories.” Similarly, as a Gallup poll found, 95% of all Americans who identify with a religion are Christian.

The Pew study classified the U.S. as “moderate” in terms of

religious diversity. With good reason: Jews are 1.8%, Buddhists are 1.2%, Muslims are .9%, Hindus are .6%, and folk religions are .2%. Moreover, the U.S. is less religiously diverse than such nations as Jamaica, Bermuda, France, Germany, Sweden, Tanzania, and Ethiopia.

The media blackout is not hard to explain: the data undercut the multicultural argument used by anti-Christian organizations. We are overwhelmingly Christian, and as such we should not flinch from acknowledging this verity whenever appropriate. Our roots are Judeo-Christian; they are not Hindu-Islamic.

McCARTHYITES STAB THE POPE; BISHOPS SENT OUR RESPONSE

BishopAccountability.org purports to be an abuse watchdog, but in reality its only real agenda is to discredit the Catholic Church. Its latest stab at Pope Francis brings further discredit to its reputation. Indeed, it represents McCarthyism.

BishopAccountability.org highlights five cases where Cardinal Bergoglio may have had knowledge of abuse allegations, but it is clear that it has no evidence that he knew about any of these cases. Moreover, only one of the priests was an archdiocesan priest from Buenos Aires (more on him below); two were religious order priests and two were from other dioceses.

The report estimates that between 1950 and 2013, “more than 100 Buenos Aires archdiocesan priests offended against children.” Again, the report cites no evidence for this claim. It further undermines its credibility when it makes a strained

analogy: it compares the size of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires to the number of priests accused in the dioceses of Manchester, New Hampshire; Providence, Rhode Island and Los Angeles, California. Even a high school dropout would have chosen a Latin American analogy.

The report tries to sound authoritative by compiling a list of 42 clergy who have been accused of abuse in Argentina. Perhaps it thought that no one would check its own sources. We did. Here is what we found:

- Thirty-four of those priests had no connection to the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires.
- One was acquitted when the allegations could not be proved.
- One was tried in the U. S. and the charges were dismissed before he moved to Argentina.
- One priest admitted to abusing a 15-year-old in the Diocese of Quilmes, and was transferred to the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires to live.
- One priest was credibly accused in the United States, and was then assigned to missionary work by his order. He was sent to Buenos Aires in August 2013, after Bergoglio was elected pope.
- One priest was accused of abuse in Uruguay, and was then transferred to Buenos Aires.

Of the three remaining clerics, only one was an archdiocesan priest, Father Carlos Maria Gauna. He was accused of inappropriately touching two girls (he allegedly touched their buttocks) at a Catholic school, and was disciplined as a result. One was a Marianist brother, and there is no evidence that Bergoglio ever heard about, much less failed to report him. Finally, he is accused of commissioning a “secret” study of a Salesian priest, aimed at discrediting the accuser, but absolutely no evidence is provided to support this charge.

We sent a copy of our response to the heads of each U.S.

diocese.

NIENSTEDT EXONERATED

On March 11, 2014, the Ramsey County Attorney's Office announced that they would not file charges against St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt; he was accused in December of "inappropriately touching" a young man in 2009.

When the charges were first made in December, Bill Donohue said, "Archbishop Nienstedt has been the subject of a non-stop crusade orchestrated by ex-Catholics, and Catholics in rebellion against the Church, simply because he stands for everything they are not: he is a loyal son of the Catholic Church." Donohue noted that "out of the blue" came an unidentified male who claims he was touched on his buttocks in 2009 by the archbishop while posing for a group photo.

After the accusation was made, the police identified and interviewed everyone who was in the photograph when the archbishop allegedly touched the boy's buttocks. No one at the Confirmation ceremony reported seeing anything like this happening. The photo shows Nienstedt standing behind the boy, one step up, meaning that he would have had to bend down to touch the boy's behind. Moreover, the photo shows Nienstedt with one hand on his crozier and the other on the boy's left shoulder.

The police asked if anyone recalled a touching episode meant as a joke, or saw any touching between people, or remembered if someone was startled during the photo session. The answer to all three was unanimous: No.

Archbishop Nienstedt is a good man who was unfairly accused.

We never doubted his veracity.

POPE'S JOYOUS ANNIVERSARY; WORLDWIDE ACCLAIM

The Catholic League chose Monday, March 3 to make a special tribute to Pope Francis on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*; it is ten days before his one-year anniversary as the leader of over one billion Catholics. We will publish our op-ed ad in the next edition.

By all accounts, the pope has won the acclaim not only of practicing Catholics, but of many who have fallen away. Those from other religions, as well as many who are not religious, have also recognized his gifts: he is a populist pope, one who resonates well with the average person.

We chose to make a statement in the nation's most influential newspaper the week before the Holy Father's special day because we wanted to influence the impending discussion on his first year. To be exact, we are concerned about those who have previously been at odds with the Vatican, but are now trying to claim the pope as one of their own. These are more than cafeteria Catholics—they are playing politics.

In other words, some of his new fans have an agenda. They want practicing Catholics to think that Pope Francis is unhappy with their traditional focus on the rights of the unborn and other cultural issues. This is untrue, but it is an idea that has gained currency: it is not the pope who feels this way; rather, it is those who seek to alter public discourse on some important Catholic teachings.

Owing in large part to Pope Francis' relaxed style of conversing with the media, his words have proven to be fodder to those who are bent on parsing them. Some of the misinterpretations may be innocent, but some are not: the deliberate twisting of his comments to fit a particular political vision is not uncommon.

What is particularly odious is the increasing tendency of agenda-ridden Catholics to trash Pope Benedict XVI, as well as Blessed Pope John Paul II: this is done so that their inflated image of Pope Francis stands in sharp contrast to Benedict and John Paul. What they hope to achieve is a sense of momentum—things are moving their way and we need to get in line. Their goal is as transparent as it is dishonest.

The Catholic League loves all three popes, and we implore everyone to give due recognition to their very different strengths. But to those who constantly look at the world through a political lens, there are good popes (Francis) and bad ones (his predecessors). This is a jaundiced view of reality, and it is unfair to all of them.

Congratulations Pope Francis!

HHS MANDATE BLOCKED

The U.S. Supreme Court has put the brakes on the infamous Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate that would force Catholic non-profits, and objecting private businessmen, to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization. The issue has yet to be fully resolved.

On January 24, the Supreme Court issued an injunction blocking enforcement of the HHS mandate. It affirmed Justice Sonia

Sotomayor's New Year's Eve order in the case; she acted on an appeal from the Little Sisters of the Poor to stop enforcement of the edict.

The issue was decided on procedural grounds. The high court enjoined the Obama administration from enforcing the mandate on the sisters while the case is pending before the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

What is significant about this ruling is that it weakens the administration's argument that it was accommodating Catholic non-profits by allowing the Little Sisters to designate a third-party administrator to provide for these morally objectionable services.

The record is mixed on the many appeals heard by the courts on this issue; we have won some, and lost some. That is why the Supreme Court will eventually decide this matter once and for all.

It is revealing that among those who are working against the First Amendment religious liberty rights of Americans are many atheist and left-wing civil liberties organizations. So-called victims' groups are also involved, as are Catholic dissident groups. We expect them to lose in the end.

CHRISTMAS WARS ABATE; PROGRESS EVIDENT

There are signs that the "War on Christmas" is abating. That the Catholic League has had something to do with it is questioned by no one.

In 2013, we laid down our anchor, sending a message to militant atheists: we will not allow you to occupy the public square unanswered. To be specific, we displayed a gigantic Christmas billboard in Times Square, and we posted digital billboards along two New Jersey highways. We are proud of the fact that we have led the pro-Christmas side of the Christmas wars for two decades.

In 1994, we scored our first major victory when we successfully pressed Barneys, the upscale clothier on Madison Avenue, to remove an obscene manger scene from its storefront window. We erected a nativity scene in Central Park a year later, something we've done every year since. In subsequent years, we've been actively engaged in scores of skirmishes, winning some and losing some.

An examination of Catholic League activities in the "War on Christmas" is not dispositive, but it is an index of what has been happening in the dominant culture. Our records show that our involvement peaked in the years 2005-2007. Those were the years when we took on Wal-Mart, exacting an apology after we threatened a boycott following revelations that the mega-store was discriminating in its treatment of Christmas. Things got so bad that Jackie Mason and other Jewish leaders joined with us in protesting anti-Christmas attacks.

In 2013, we saw a clear downward tick in attempts to bash Christmas. Indeed, even vandalism was down: the number of nativity scenes being trashed was relatively low. But not all was well. As usual, public schools and public parks were targeted.

As compared to previous years, the "War on Christmas" in 2013 was led more by national organizations, and less by local activists, than ever before. American Atheists, Freedom from Religion Foundation, the Secular Humanist Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Military Religious Freedom Foundation led the way.

This past Christmas, a decided pushback was evident, involving local residents: they took things into their own hands, pressuring local authorities to accede to their reasonable demands.

Contrary to those who sell the bogus idea that the "War on Christmas" is not real, Christians who are fighting back are not obsessed with who is saying "Happy Holidays," and who is saying "Merry Christmas." On the contrary, they are fighting those who are bent on banning, trashing, and diluting the public expression of Christmas.