

CHRISTMAS VICTORIES

This is the article that appeared in the October 2023 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).

The anti-Christmas censors started early this year, both at home and abroad. Fortunately, they are off to a lousy start.

City employees in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin were told not to put up Christmas decorations. They even banned the colors of red and green. But after a huge outcry and a threatened lawsuit, they backed down.

Placerville, California officials wanted to change the name of their Christmas holiday celebration from Festival of Lights to Hometown Holidays—from lame to worse—and take down the [Christmas] tree two weeks *before* Christmas. After the public protested, it was renamed Hometown Christmas and the tree will stay through Christmas.

K-mart in Australia was selling a bag to put a ham in for Christmas with the inscription, “Merry HAM-MAS.” Because it looked like a shout-out for Hamas, they pulled it.

Santa’s village at Pacific Werribee, near Melbourne, had a huge sign behind Santa’s chair that read, “Merry Everything.” After a backlash, it was renamed, “Merry Christmas.”

The British retailer Marks & Spencer was forced to apologize after a Christmas ad showed red and green paper hats in a burning fireplace (some even compared it to a Palestinian flag).

Shoppers at the English supermarket, Sainsbury’s, were not happy with a Christmas card that featured two snow-covered pigs. It was shelved.

Some of these are minor infractions; others are not. No

matter, there is no other holiday that is targeted for censorship like Christmas. That's why victories are so sweet.

WAR IS UGLY; NOT RESPONDING IS UGLIER

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[Bill Donohue](#)

"Witness to War: World Trade Center Bombing." That was the title of the lead story in the October 2001 edition of *Catalyst*. I made a personal statement about what we witnessed that day: we saw the Twin Towers crumble before us.

Once again, I am taking the occasion to address war, only this time the war is against Israel. I am writing this at home on the "Day of Rage," Friday, October 13. I closed the office today because of the huge anti-Jewish rally in Times Square, just blocks from our office. I have seen enough of the New York crazies to know what to expect.

Catholics are fortunate to have a long history of Church teachings on war. Thanks to St. Augustine and St. Aquinas, it is helpful to recall what "Just War" theory is.

For a war to be just, it must abide by several criteria. There must be a just cause; it should meet the standard of comparative justice; a legitimate authority must execute it; the right intention must be evident; the probability of success should be operative; the means used should be

proportionate to the situation; and it should be done as a last resort.

Israel has met these criteria. The vicious attack on Israeli citizens, including the beheading of children, was unprovoked. Even more vile, its leaders pledged to kill all the Jews. That's what Hamas has said over and over again. Ergo, Israel had a just cause.

It also met the definition of comparative justice, meaning the injustice suffered by Israelis justifies the damage done to Hamas. The decision to defend Israel was made by its elected leader. The prime minister's intent was noble—to defend his people. Given the Israelis past success in combat situations, the probability they will prevail is realistic.

Israel alerted residents of Gaza to leave their neighborhood—giving them ample time to clear out—before their soldiers entered, thus was their response proportionate to current conditions. Despite decades of diplomacy, and the total withdrawal of soldiers from Gaza in 2005—giving the Palestinians what they wanted—it was not enough to satisfy Hamas, which is why they attacked Israel two years later. Thus, the decision to fight back was the last resort.

The left-wing indoctrinated American students who hate Israel also hate America. As a Catholic leader, a veteran, and a professor, I know what motivates these maniacs. Israel had no other choice but to defend itself and seek to defeat Hamas, once and for all.

Pray for Israel, but also pray for Catholics in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as those innocent Palestinians who have long suffered under Hamas.

D-BACKS SHOW GUTS

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On September 29, the Arizona Diamondbacks hosted a “Catholic Night” at Chase Field. This was the first of its kind in Arizona, or in any other baseball park.

Last year, Catholics, and those from other faith communities, turned out in big numbers to attend the first “Faith and Family Night” game; another one was held in August. But the “Catholic Night” event was different: it was a joint effort by the Diamondbacks and the Diocese of Phoenix.

There were four levels of tickets, ranging from \$24 to \$46. The Diamondbacks pledged \$5 of each ticket will go to the diocese’s “Catholic School Support 365” program. It provided funding for Catholic families who need assistance to pay tuition due to a hardship situation—medical emergencies, lost jobs, death of a parent or sibling—allowing them to grow in their Catholic faith.

In June, we led a culture war against the Los Angeles Dodgers for honoring a vile anti-Catholic gay group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The message was delivered to Major League Baseball—Catholics are fed up being insulted by the elites. That is why events like “Catholic Night” are welcomed. It is a stark rebuke to religious bigots.

We were delighted to have our email subscribers congratulate the Arizona Diamondbacks and Bishop John Dolan of the Diocese of Phoenix; we received media coverage and much chatter on social media. The diocese declared “Catholic Night” a huge success.

UNION HEAD RIPS CHRISTIANS; SHE SHOULD RESIGN

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On September 12, Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), ripped Americans who are in favor of school choice and parental rights, comparing them to segregationists. Even worse, she lashed out at Christians who support these initiatives. She made her remarks to Seth D. Harris, a senior fellow at the Burnes Center for Social Change at Northeastern University.

Weingarten said she got the idea that there is little difference between the segregationists of old and today's promoters of school choice and parental rights from the Southern Poverty Law Center, the seriously disgraced far left-wing organization. She concluded that these Americans want to "divide parents versus teachers."

Now it is well known that Catholics have long been the mainstay of the school choice movement; they are also among the most vociferous supporters of parental rights. Let's be clear: this does not mean that anyone who opposes both of these causes is necessarily a bigot. But in Weingarten's case, she took the next step: she engaged in Christian bashing.

After speaking at length, with utter contempt and derision, about those who are pro-school choice and pro-parental rights, Weingarten let her guard down and went right for the jugular. "They want to have, basically, a Christian ideology, their

particular Christian ideology to dominate the country as opposed to those that was born on the freedom of the exercise of religion.”

The subject under discussion had nothing to do with religion, so it tells us volumes about Weingarten that she would indict Christians, without cause.

What she said just prior to her bigoted remark puts her animus against Christians in perspective. She had just commented that some parents want school choice because they want universal vouchers, and “others want it because they hate knowledge.”

So who is it that “hates knowledge?” Those Americans who are bent on shoving their “Christian ideology” down our throats. The context says it all.

In other words, taxpaying parents who believe that they should have the right to send their child to the school of their choice—which includes most African Americans—and insist that their rights as parents be respected by the state, are somehow seeking to impose a Christian ideology on the nation. To top it off, these same religious zealots “hate knowledge.”

Weingarten should resign. The hatred that she has for millions of school choice and parental rights advocates—especially those who are Christian—disqualifies her from serving in any public role.

ROME SYNOD BEGINS

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Some bishops and lay people from six continents are assembling in Rome for the Synod on Synodality; the laity constitute 21 percent of the participants. It runs from October 4-28.

The Synod is less an event than a process. Begun in October 2021 by Pope Francis, it started with listening sessions in local churches around the world. It will culminate in October 2024.

There will be discussions on many topics, the purpose of which is to consider ways to improve the Church. Some of the more contentious topics deal with homosexuality, same-sex marriage and acceptance of transgender persons.

The Catholic League is officially agnostic: it is not our role to advise the hierarchy on what to do. But we are interested in bringing to the attention of Catholics, lay and clergy alike, the effects of heterodoxy, namely, the consequences to religious bodies when they stray from their orthodox moorings.

On pp. 4-5, there is a report on this subject that illuminates the difference between the way nations with a large Catholic population have fared in following an orthodox and a heterodox approach. The big winners are the orthodox. This is also true of other religions.

Our finding is applicable not only within dioceses and among religious orders in the United States; it is true worldwide. When the hierarchy adopt a heterodox stance—becoming more “relevant”—they tend to become increasingly irrelevant to the flock.

We wish all synod attendees well and hope it is a success.

FBI WAR ON CATHOLICS HEATS UP; SO DOES OUR RESPONSE

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Three times over the summer Bill Donohue wrote to Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, imploring him to demand that FBI Director Christopher Wray come clean with the real reason why the agency was investigating Catholics.

For reasons still unexplained, it was revealed earlier in the year that the FBI's Richmond Field Office was investigating "Radical-Traditionalist Catholics," or what they call RTCs. The whistle-blowing article on this subject said the agency distinguished between RTCs and "traditionalist Catholics."

On February 9, Donohue made a public statement, raising questions on whether the FBI would stop at investigating RTCs. "What's next? Will it be a war on Catholics who are orthodox?"

On April 11, Donohue wrote a letter to Wray, copying Jordan, requesting to see the evidence that RTCs are a threat. Then he addressed a new revelation. "Now the FBI has upped the ante," he said, "going after 'mainline' Catholics and dioceses." This is exactly what Donohue predicted.

On July 24, in the first of three letters Donohue sent to Jordan this summer, he wrote about the FBI's new target. "This is totally indefensible. It smacks of religious profiling and opens the FBI door to monitoring traditional Catholics, simply because they are loyal sons and daughters of the Catholic Church."

On July 26, after the FBI finally turned over requested

documents to the House Judiciary Committee, Donohue contacted Jordan asking him to raise several questions with Wray.

On what basis did the FBI conclude that these [RTCs] Catholics warranted a probe? Do they have a history of violence? If so, where is the evidence? If not, why were they singled out?

On what basis did the FBI decide it was necessary to enlist “mainline Catholics” to spy on their fellow parishioners? Where is the evidence that ordinary practicing Catholics pose a security threat to the United States or to other law-abiding Americans? How common is it for FBI agents to infiltrate houses of worship—of any religion—employing “tripwire sources?”

On August 10, Donohue wrote to Jordan about another revelation. Wray was wrong when he said it was just the Richmond Field Office that was probing Catholics. Now we know that agents in Los Angeles and Portland were also involved. “This calls into question Wray’s forthrightness,” Donohue said, “and it also begs the question: What else does the FBI know about this matter?”

We commended Jordan for his effort, pledging our assistance in any manner he deems necessary.

This has to end. The FBI needs to undergo major reforms and those involved in the war on Catholics need to be punished.

MEDIA IGNORE FBI STORY

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We made the FBI's probe of Catholics the lead story in this issue not only because it is an outrageous abuse of power, but because it signals something sinister about the way the top brass at the agency views Catholicism.

When the latest chapter in this story broke on August 9, we checked on August 10 to see how the mainstream media covered it. With the exception of Fox News, Newsmax, the *New York Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, none of the big media touched it. So what did they find worthy of coverage on August 10 that was considered more important?

On the front page of the *New York Times* there was a story titled, "Overrun Miami Suburb to Clip Its Peacocks (Not the Feathers)."

CBS News put this same story on the front page of its website, offering the title, "Miami-Area Village Plans Peacock Vasectomies to Try to Curb Their Population."

The Associated Press featured on its front page a story, "Ailing and Baby Hummingbirds Nursed to Health at Woman's Apartment-Turned-Clinic in Mexico City."

ABC News gave front page coverage to this "breaking news" story: "Dog Hilariously Flies Through the Air Trying to Catch Water from Hose."

NBC's front page story included, "13 Top-Rated Products to Keep Your Dog Cool in Warm Weather."

These stories were all considered more news worthy than the FBI's war on Catholics. The media preferred to highlight throw-away stories on animals.

DODGERS LOSE; MESSAGE DELIVERED

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The least serious thing that happened to the Los Angeles Dodgers over “Pride Night” weekend, June 16-18, was to lose all three games to the San Francisco Giants; the Dodgers scored a total of 8 runs; the Giants scored 29. The worst thing that happened was being trashed by Catholics, tarring their reputation.

In the five weeks prior to the June 16 game, we conducted a relentless campaign against the Dodgers for inviting, disinviting, and reinviting the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a vile anti-Catholic group of drag queen bigots.

Our campaign began on May 16. That was the day we asked our huge list of email subscribers to contact Rob Manfred, the Commissioner of Major League Baseball (MLB). They did so in droves, bombarding him with criticism; MLB had given its blessings to the event.

The next day, May 17, the Dodgers disinvited the “Sisters.” We were delighted with the outcome, but Bill Donohue warned the staff that given that the game was about a month away, it was possible the Dodgers might succumb to pressure from the large LGBT community in Los Angeles. Over the weekend they did.

On May 22, the Dodgers reinvited the “Sisters,” apologizing for disinviting them. Donohue immediately got to work preparing a report on the anti-Catholic activities of the drag queens since 1979. On May 23, the report was made available to the public.

On May 24, we started our campaign in earnest. We did a massive mail campaign, sending the report to over 300 parishes in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, asking pastors to pass the word about not attending the June 16 game.

In the weeks that followed, we did not walk away from this issue. We contacted Catholic schools and universities in the archdiocese; residences of priests and brothers; endowments, foundations and trusts; retreat houses; hospitals and healthcare systems; seminaries; convents and residences for women. In every case, we sent the report and our plea to boycott the June 16 game.

We also hit the public airwaves. Two weeks before the game, we ran 25 ads, 30 seconds each, imploring Catholics not to attend the game. We did the same thing the week of the game. Our media blitz on KABC radio caught the eye of the *Los Angeles Times*, which ran a story on our initiative. Moreover, Donohue did multiple TV, radio, newspaper, and internet interviews on the controversy.

Almost no one showed up for the ceremony honoring the “Sisters,” and our goal of driving down the attendance from last year’s “Pride Night” game was realized (there were 3,500 less this year).

We did our job. The Dodgers lost. Message delivered.

HIGH COURT VICTORY

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On June 30, in a 6-3 decision, the U.S. Supreme Court held that the First Amendment rights of a Colorado woman, Lorie Smith, must be respected when it comes to forcing her to express beliefs that are contrary to her conscience. This was a great victory for free speech and freedom of religion. The Catholic League submitted an amicus brief in this case.

Our brief was prepared by Kathleen A. Gallagher and Russell D. Giancola of Gallagher Giancola LLC, a Pittsburgh-based law firm.

They argued that “it is clear that the First Amendment provides dual protections for religious expression (or non-expression) in its guarantees of free speech and free religious exercise. This reality compels the conclusion that religious speech enjoys the highest constitutional protection.”

Colorado tried to compel Smith to design a website that celebrates same-sex marriage. Smith had never refused to service anyone on the basis of sexual orientation. But she drew a line when it came to compelling her to violate her Christian beliefs. That’s a big difference.

Justice Neil Gorsuch, writing for the high court, said, “The First Amendment protections belong to all, not just to speakers whose motives the government finds worthy. In this case, Colorado seeks to force an individual to speak in ways that align with its views but defy her conscience about a matter of major significance.”

We are delighted with this outcome, and we are just as delighted to have played a role in it.

DODGERS REINVITE “SISTERS”; L.A. PARISHES CONTACTED

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As we went to press, we learned that the Los Angeles Dodgers have reinvited the anti-Catholic homosexual drag group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, to an LGBT event. But this issue is not over.

It was announced in mid-May that the “Sisters” were to be presented with a Community Hero Award at the “10th Annual LGBTQ+ Night” on June 16 at Dodger Stadium.

On May 16, Bill Donohue sent a letter to the head of Major League Baseball, Commissioner Rob Manfred, asking, “if a group of white boys in black face—a modern day Al Jolson ensemble—were to be honored by an MLB team, there is little doubt that the event would be cancelled and sanctions would be forthcoming. There is no difference between this and the hateful farce of awarding the ‘Sisters.’”

On May 17, the Dodgers disinvited the “Sisters.” But then gay and trans activists, along with local government officials, besieged the Dodgers. On May 22, after meeting with these people, the Dodgers reinvited the “Sisters.”

The Dodgers not only reinvited the bigoted drag queens, they apologized to them, thus endorsing anti-Catholic bigotry.

In a statement released to the press, the Dodgers said they had “much thoughtful feedback from our diverse communities, honest conversations within the Los Angeles Dodgers organization and generous discussions with the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.”

There was no indication that Catholic leaders, clergy or lay, were invited to participate in these “honest conversations.” Only one side was listened to—the side that sponsors hate speech. The fact that gay and trans leaders agreed with the vulgar anti-Catholic rhetoric and behavior of the “Sisters” means they now have no moral leg to stand on when asking for an end to bigotry against them.

Donohue anticipated that the decision to disinvite the “Sisters” could happen, which is why he personally prepared a report on them the day before they were reinvited. It is available now on our website and will be published in the next edition of *Catalyst*.

Donohue said he would love to sit down with Stan Kasten, president and CEO of the Dodgers, and Manfred, after they have read the report, and then ask how can they possibly defend such an obscene anti-Catholic group. No decent person could possibly defend such a vicious assault on Catholic sensibilities.

Our next step is to persuade Catholics in the Los Angeles area not to attend Pride Night on June 16. By boycotting this event, we can send a message to the Dodgers, and to Major League Baseball, that anti-Catholic bigotry cannot be tolerated.

To this end, we sent the report to every parish in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.