

College Democrats Apologize for Desecrating Crosses

College Republicans (CR) at George Washington University stored crosses in their office, shared with College Democrats (CD), which had been used at a pro-life event last week. When the CRs returned to the office this past Monday, they found that a number of crosses had been desecrated.

One cross had a penis drawn on it with a condom placed over the cross; it was hung upside down from a sign in the CD's office. Another had the word Darwin scrawled on it and a third featured the words "take a condom," with a wrapped condom attached to the bottom. The last desecrated cross showed a stick figure of a crucified Jesus crudely drawn onto it.

The CDs issued an apology after conducting an investigation into the desecrations; a member of the club confessed to the outrageous vandalism.

While we are pleased that the club quickly and sincerely apologized, we are concerned at the mindset of the member, who surely has been taught by his university about sensitivity to various groups. There is no surprise that the tolerance training did not extend to Christianity.

Virgin Mary Defiled

The image of Our Blessed Mother remains under attack. In Chicago, an image believed to be the Virgin Mary on an expressway underpass has been repeatedly defaced. Demonic

graffiti is the latest assault on the image. In Kansas, vandals smashed part of a statue of Mary, along with statues of Christ, St. John and St. Bernadette, which were arranged in the grotto at the Redemptorist Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Finally, in Chile, a well known fashion designer recently dressed his models up like Our Lady but with little covering for the models' breasts. His show was condemned by the local Catholic diocese and others, but it proceeded. Ricardo Oyarzun defended his religious-themed show as "artistic expression," per Reuters.

Oyarzun's statement about "artistic expression" is the same old tripe uttered when a Catholic symbol is attacked. We do not see people like him defacing or demeaning images of Mohammad's daughter, Fatima. That would take guts.

"The Last Templar"—Another Bomb

Based on the Raymond Khoury novel, the NBC mini-series "The Last Templar" is a poor knock-off of "The DaVinci Code" that tries to fuse fast action with religious mystery. According to the reviews, it fails miserably at both. The story is about the hunt for a relic of the Knights Templar; the relic leads to their hidden treasure, the lost diary of Jesus.

The book apparently did not transfer well to the small screen. The *Los Angeles Times* reviewer comments, "What begins as a more than slightly fantastic revision of the Templar legend takes an ill-advised turn toward theological theorizing and New Agey spiritual advice." USA

Today concurs: “Soon, we’re trodding the well-worn Da Vinci path of faith-bursting relics and Catholic conspiracies.” Even entertainment periodical *Variety* understood the limits of this production: “As for a thread regarding [the main character’s] lack of faith, any serious contemplation of religion seems several notches above [its] pay grade.”

If it’s this bad, Catholics have nothing to worry about.

Phony Atheists

To his credit, President Barack Obama did not shy away from mentioning God several times in his Inaugural Address. We couldn’t help but notice, however, that the very same pundits and organizations that branded President George W. Bush a “theocrat” for referencing God were noticeably silent in their reaction to Obama’s God-talk.

Maybe that’s because they think he is a closet secularist who is just going through the motions to please the faithful. At least that’s what the American Humanist Association seems to think: it took out a full-page ad in the *Washington Post* yesterday hailing Obama as “*Living Proof that Family Values Without Religion Build Character.*”

In other words, it’s not the religious message that atheists object to most of all—it’s who the messenger is. If he’s believable, he’s a threat. If he’s posturing, he’s okay. How that’s for character?

The Politics of “Jeopardy”

On January 9, the game show “Jeopardy” featured the following comment: “He denounces materialism from balcony of marble, gold-doomed building...while wearing giant gold cross.” The question for the contestants was, “Who is the pope?”

We never knew that “Jeopardy” had a political side. But now that we know, we’d like to offer the following entry: “They denounce bigotry on every occasion while constantly serving up anti-Catholic fare.” The right answer, of course, is the entertainment industry.

Our submission is being forwarded to Harry Friedman, the executive producer of “Jeopardy.”

Positive Fallout from Ponzi Scheme

Bernard Madoff, who allegedly fleeced countless numbers of persons and organizations, was also a generous supporter of the abortion rights industry, managing the assets of groups like the Picower Foundation. This now-defunct foundation funded the organizations that handled the vast majority of abortion rights litigation in this country. The good news is that the losers are “the Center for Reproductive Rights

[which] needs to make up a \$600,000 shortage in 2009; Planned Parenthood [which] is out \$484,000; the ACLU’s Reproductive Freedom Project [which] is off \$200,000,” per *Slate.com*. Their loss is a win for the unborn.

UPDATE: The shortfall for Planned Parenthood is even more significant than initially reported. Between the loss

of foundation funding and the downturn in the economy, Planned Parenthood is laying off approximately 20% of its staff. This just goes to show that every cloud has a silver lining.

Father Neuhaus, R.I.P.

The Catholic League notes with great sadness the passing away of Father Richard John Neuhaus. He was a brilliant and devoted son of the Church who will be sorely missed. Indeed, he is irreplaceable.

Why “Doubt” Is Not Anti-Catholic

We’ve gotten a number of inquiries about the movie “Doubt.” The reason we said nothing about it is because the film, like the play, was focused on a particular miscreant priest, and at no time did it take liberties by making sweeping condemnations of all priests. That’s not an unimportant distinction: it’s the difference between being critical and being bigoted. Moreover, when Meryl Streep was interviewed, never did she take a cheap shot at the Catholic Church.

In short, there was nothing to complain about.

Paul Weyrich, R.I.P.

The Catholic League notes with deep regret the passing of Paul Weyrich. He was a principled and patriotic man whose contribution to social conservatism will never be forgotten. He will be sorely missed.

“Golden Compass” is a Golden Bomb

New Line Cinema has a dud on its hands. They spent upwards of \$180 million making “The Golden Compass,” and American audiences just aren’t buying it. After debuting with a mere \$26 million, it plummeted to a measly \$9 million its second weekend out.

Compare the numbers for “Golden Compass” with those of the Will Smith flick “I Am Legend,” also rated PG-13: “Legend” brought in over \$76.5 million opening weekend. And “Alvin and the Chipmunks” opened at number two, raking in \$45 million.

The success of “Chipmunks,” “Legend,” and the recent Disney film “Enchanted” (which opened with \$34.4 million and took in \$16.4 the next week) gives lie to the claim that the problem is just that people aren’t going to the theater. While it may be a tough time for studios across the board, there are still plenty of families willing to plunk down the cash for movie tickets. That is, of course, if the movie isn’t based on the first book of a profoundly anti-Christian and pro-atheist trilogy.