

NATIVITY SCENE IN NYC



The Catholic League's annual nativity scene in New York City's Central Park was erected today in a spot just south of the Park: It is on 5th Avenue, between 58th and 59th Street, in front of the Plaza Hotel. Tourists are showing up in

droves for pictures.

We deliberately put it in this spot so that everyone who takes the bus down 5th Avenue cannot fail to see it. It is our Christmas gift to believers, as well as devout atheists.

Those who object to a religious symbol on public property—unadorned by secular symbols (we are anti-reindeer at the Catholic League)—will be outraged. If they object, they can always call the New York City Parks Department which issued us a permit.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

To see a picture of the nativity scene, click [here](#).

Catholic schools vs. public

schools

Click [here](#) to read Terry Jeffrey's column from Townhall.com on Catholic schools vs. public schools.

Star Parker: Court ruling on ultrasound law worth celebrating

Click [here](#) to read Star Parker's syndicated column on how sonograms and ultrasound technology are changing the face of the abortion industry.

Donohue Replies to Kinsley

Bloomberg: Michael Kinsley, ["Catholic Bishops Issue Hollow Plea for Sympathy"](#)

Bill's rejoinder:

Mike,

The fact that most of Americans are Christian hardly vetoes the idea that anti-Christian sentiment isn't alive and well. Most of the people in South Africa during apartheid were

black. Were they not oppressed? Numbers don't count: what counts is the profile of those who are at the command posts of the culture, and in this country, they are decidedly anti-Christian, especially anti-Catholic. By the way, the most notorious Catholic bashers these days are ex-Catholics (you know about self-hating Jews—well, there are more self-hating Catholics).

The fact that six of nine SCOTUS judges are Catholic is an indicator that Catholic individuals are not subjected to the kinds of discriminatory treatment they once were. But there is another genre of anti-Catholicism, one which you pass over: the unrelieved bashing of the institutional Church (and I am not talking about fair criticism of the Church). See the Catholic League website if you have any doubts. Besides, Sotomayer, to take one example, is a non-practicing Catholic, and her constitutional jurisprudence hardly indicates a generous understanding of religious liberty.

I would rather have nine agnostic Jews who are not unfriendly to religious liberty on the bench than nine Nancy Pelosis.

One more thing. Notice how the *New York Times* discussed religious liberty in the article this week that touched on what Archbishop Dolan had to say. It put religious liberty in quotation marks.

All the best,

Bill Donohue

Penn State and Kansas City

By John Paul Wauk

In the case of Penn State, the campus police and the Center County district attorney's office knew – for many years (the first accusation was in 1998) – about specific accusations of abuse against Sandusky. Nevertheless, they did nothing to prevent him from abusing other children. The entire janitorial staff of Penn State seems to have known of another incident in 2000, which went unreported. Then, in 2002, an assistant coach told various university authorities that he had witnessed Sandusky engaged in sexual activity with a child in a shower.

No one from Penn State called the police. When the police eventually returned to the Sandusky case in 2008, after a complaint from a victim's mother, they didn't notify Sandusky's foundation until 2011, and during that period Sandusky was, according to reports, a fixture on the Penn State campus.

In short, we are talking about years of unrestricted access to children and, as a consequence, years of abuse – after serious, specific allegations of abuse were made both to the police (in 1998) and university authorities (in 2002). Even when the police were on the case, after 2008, Sandusky remained at large.

In Kansas City, we are talking about less than five months between the diocese's discovery (not as a result of an accusation of abuse) of a non-sexual photo of an unclothed child on a priest's computer and a phone call to the police – a call that came from the diocese itself! During those few months, Fr. Ratigan was in a coma, in psychiatric treatment and then removed from his job and placed under strict restrictions with regard to cameras, computers and contact with kids (all of this, again, in the absence of any specific accusation against him). As soon as it became clear that he

was not respecting those diocesan-imposed restrictions, the police were notified by the diocese. All in less than 5 months.

The two cases – Penn State and Kansas City – could not be more different. In Penn State, the police, the DA, the janitors, and various university authorities all knew of serious allegations of criminal activity. For years, they did nothing. In Kansas City, no one had witnessed criminal abuse or received an allegation of criminal activity. The diocese was forced to make a judgment call about a photo on a computer. The diocesan authorities sought advice from reasonable sources (in the law enforcement and legal communities) and followed it. Despite the decision that the photo did not constitute a criminal offense, the diocese made a serious effort to reduce any possible danger to children. Within a few months, concerned by Ratigan's subsequent behavior, the diocese itself called the police.

KINKY MUSEUM

✖ There is a story in today's New York *Daily News* on a window display at New York's Museum of Sex. The street-level display shows skeletons engaging in a number of erotic positions. Bill Donohue told the paper, "There is an unintended irony here. Those who practice the promiscuous sex that the Museum advocates tend to die prematurely, hence the Freudian slip of using skeletons."

Click [here](#) to read the original story

“THE MIGHTY MACS” OPENS FRIDAY

This Friday, October 21, the inspiring true-story “The Mighty Macs” opens in movie theaters nationwide. The movie is based on the improbable run by Immaculata College—a small, Catholic women’s college—at the first of three straight Women’s National Collegiate Basketball Championships.

The Catholic League is happy to agree with the following endorsements of the film:

“The Mighty Macs is a must see—not only for sports fans, but for everyone. It is exciting, inspiring, heart-warming and just wonderfully entertaining... It is a great movie that you do not want to miss.”

Tom Monaghan

Ave Maria University

“A wonderful movie of hope, commitment and belief in self and others.”

Most Reverend Martin Amos

Bishop of Davenport, Iowa

“We are all indebted to the Mighty Macs for what women’s basketball is today. Tim Chambers [writer/director] has done a wonderful job capturing the essence of Cathy Rush [the team’s coach] and the story, and I hope everyone will be in the theaters October 21 to see this movie.”

Geno Auriemma

MICHAEL MOORE ON JESUS

Over the weekend, Michael Moore gave a talk at Georgetown University during which he implied that Jesus was gay: "You know those 12 men Jesus was always hanging out with? Mhm."

Bill Donohue replied to Moore's comments: "If Michael Moore had gone to an orthodox Catholic school and said something reverential, that would be big news. But for him to go to Georgetown and say something stupid—implying Jesus was gay—is on the order of dog bites man."

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

The following article by William McGurn can be found in today's Wall Street Journal:

"Religion and the Cult of Tolerance"

Earlier this summer, the chief rabbi for Great Britain warned about a new intolerance being imposed in the name of tolerance.

"I share a real concern that the attempt to impose the current prevailing template of equality and discrimination on religious organizations is an erosion of religious liberty," Lord Sacks told a House of Commons committee in June. "We are beginning to move back to where we came in in the 17th

century—a whole lot of people on the Mayflower leaving to find religious freedom elsewhere.”

Though not as pronounced on this side of the Atlantic, we can see the same trend that so worries Lord Sacks. Here too the imposition comes in the guise of nondiscrimination laws and codes. Here too the result is the same: Faith organizations are told whom they must employ and what they must assent to, or face being shoved off the public square.

The latest example is a case called *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*, which the Supreme Court has just agreed to hear. It stems out of a dispute involving a teacher who was replaced at a very small school when she became ill and absent from work. When the teacher threatened to take her complaint to the EEOC, she was sacked.

School leaders say that taking disputes outside the community violates church teaching. Their argument didn’t fly at the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Now the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a sort of American Civil Liberties Union for people of faith, has taken up the cause.

“The Becket Fund is involved in this case because it’s not just about one little Lutheran school in suburban Detroit,” says Fund attorney Eric Rassbach. “It’s about the ability of people of all faiths to work out their relationship with God and one another without the government looking over their shoulder.”

Indeed. That helps explain why the many briefs filed in support of *Hosanna-Tabor* include one jointly authored by the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, the Catholic bishops, the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons).

At the core of their concern is just this: the politically

correct rewriting of the First Amendment. Post-1791, what made America's religious freedom truly radical was not simply that it allowed people to worship (or not to worship) as they saw fit. The radical part was the guarantee it gave to corporate freedoms: to hold property together, to own newspapers, to run schools, to open hospitals and clinics, etc.

That understanding is now up for grabs. Last week, Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear said approval for a local merger that would create a new Catholic hospital system will depend on maintaining a "public mission"—by which he means the performance of procedures, such as sterilization, at odds with church teaching.

In San Francisco, opponents of circumcision recently attempted to outlaw it via state ballot. The California State University system has been found within its legal rights to deem a Christian fraternity and sorority unfit for recognition. Meanwhile, the National Labor Relations Board declared that two Catholic colleges are not in fact Catholic.

These are not cases of people trying to impose their beliefs on the rest of us. Instead they involve the question whether faith communities are free to live their own beliefs in their own institutions. Somehow the more "tolerant" we become, the more difficult that becomes.

In the debates over same-sex marriage, for example, the question is often asked of opponents: What can it possibly mean to you if two people of the same sex have their commitment to each other recognized as marriage? We're now finding out. To give but one example, in Washington, D.C., it means that Catholic Charities no longer qualifies to do adoptions and foster care because it will not place children with or extend health benefits to gay couples.

So much for live and let live.

The radical uniqueness of what our Founding Fathers bequeathed

us becomes more vivid when you set it against contrasting nations. In China, for example, you will find any number of churches holding worship services on Sunday. It would, however, be a huge mistake to think that China has anything close to freedom of religion.

To the contrary, governments such as China's fully appreciate that opening the public square to organized faith groups has consequences for government control. After Tiananmen, Chinese officials told one another: Look what happened in Poland.

During a 1785 debate in the Virginia legislature over state subsidies for Christian teachers, the future author of the First Amendment, James Madison, opposed that measure as state coercion. His alternative was giving all religions free exercise, which he said would add a "lustre to our country." When it comes to how we treat religion, 21st-century America is, of course, nowhere near China. The question is how far we've moved from Madison.

LOUSY ANALOGIES

In a story in the sports section of the August 11 *New York Times*, it discusses how a public high school in Michigan has rearranged its football practice schedule to suit Muslim players during Ramadan; most of the student body is Muslim. Instead of practicing during the day, when Muslims are fasting, the workouts were shifted to late at night. For the second consecutive year, practice is being held between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.

The reporter, sensing that this was a highly unusual thing for a public institution to do, tried to come up with some analogous situations. After noting that "the accommodation of

a sport and religion has any number of interfaith precedents," he listed three examples.

"Sandy Koufax, who is Jewish, declined to pitch Game 1 of the 1965 World Series because it was scheduled on Yom Kippur. Brigham Young University, owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, does not play athletic events on Sunday. And the Hall of Fame basketball player Hakeem Olajuwon, a Muslim, also fasted during Ramadan."

All three analogies are lousy. No one in Major League Baseball did anything to accommodate Koufax—he simply decided not to pitch on the Jewish Holy Day. Brigham Young is a private school that calls its own shots, so the issue of religious accommodation is a red herring. And Olajuwon, like Koufax, simply practiced his beliefs, neither seeking nor getting any kind of accommodation from anyone.

In other words, what we have here is one more case where favoritism of Muslims by public institutions is being justified as if it were common practice.