

CENSORING CHRISTMAS IN THE SCHOOLS

Catholic League president William Donohue issued the following news release today:

“Two years ago, a public school teacher in Queens called the Catholic League to inform us that the principal of her school had issued a memo inviting teachers to bring religious symbols to school that represent the Muslim, Kwanzaa and Jewish religions. Leaving aside the fact that Kwanzaa is not a religion (it is secular holiday invented in 1966), what mattered to the Catholic League was the exclusion of Christian symbols. To make matters worse, the principal of the school had previously ordered a three-foot Christmas tree taken down because it was larger than a cut-out display of a menorah and crescent and star.

“At first we thought this was an anomaly. However, we soon learned that it was the official policy of the New York City public schools to declare the menorah and crescent and star secular symbols, thus making them analogous to a Christmas tree. When I received no satisfaction from Chad Vignola, the general counsel for the schools, I pledged to find a plaintiff and arrange a lawsuit. In 2002, Andrea Skoros, a Catholic League member from Queens with children in the public schools, agreed to be party to the suit. I then acquired the assistance of the Thomas More Law Center to do the litigating. The lawsuit was filed in federal district court on December 10, 2002. Oral arguments were heard on November 13, 2003. Judge Charles Sifton will soon rule on this case.

“It is time this issue was settled once and for all. In Denver, a Jewish couple is seeking to ban the singing of even ‘Frosty the Snowman’ and ‘Jingle Bells’ from an Elbert County

Charter School holiday program. School officials at the Charlestown Elementary School in Malvern, Pennsylvania, are allowing the display of menorahs but not nativity scenes. A lawsuit has been filed against the Balch Elementary School in the Worcester, Massachusetts area seeking to ban crèches, including those accompanied by secular symbols.

“Those who want to censor Christmas are the enemies of Christianity, diversity and tolerance. There is no place in America for cultural fascism.”