

CHRISTIANS PROVOKED IN ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue is making public a letter he sent today to Patrick W. Hayes, Legal Director, City of Rockford, Illinois. Here is the text of that letter:

I am aware that the Northern Illinois Women's Center has long been the subject of controversy in Rockford; the rights of pro-life demonstrators have allegedly been violated. That is an important issue, but that is not the reason why I am contacting you. My concern rests with the egregious provocation of Christians attendant to the enclosed graphic of Jesus Christ extending his middle finger; the inscription, "Even Jesus Hates You," appears below it. This graphic is currently being displayed in the window of the Center, in full view of adults and children; it has also been displayed, at various times, in the past.

Under Part I, Chapters 19-3 and 19-4, "Offensive Uses of Property" and "Permitting Offensive Use of Property," respectively, of the City of Rockford's Code of Ordinance, it is illegal to "disturb or destroy the peace of the neighborhood in which such building or premises are situated, or be dangerous or detrimental to health."

This incendiary picture, designed to inflame Christian passions by assaulting their sensibilities and denigrating their religion—in a vile and obscene manner—constitutes such an infraction. As such, I am requesting that you take appropriate action against the Center to put an end to such needless provocation. Thank you for your consideration.