

CHRISTMAS CONTROVERSIES

Every December the Catholic League goes on high alert over the ever-predictable Christmas controversies. The controversies started early this year when it was revealed in October that there will be no religious displays allowed during the holiday season at Saluda Shoals Park in Irmo, North Carolina.

Last year the league was busy restoring the right of employees in King County, Washington, to say "Merry Christmas." It got so absurd last year that icicle lights were banned from display by government officials in Northdale, Florida. Red poinsettias were banned in Ramsey County, Minnesota, and Christmas cards were banned in Frederick County, Maryland schools.

The Catholic League does not engage in lead-counsel lawsuits. Our strategy is to put the public spotlight on those who have decided to neuter our public square by censoring Christmas-related speech. It works well and costs little.

There is nothing in the First Amendment that demands censoring freedom of religious expression, even on public grounds. But over the years some courts have become increasingly hostile to this speech. If you want to know what's allowed and what's not, write us a note saying you want a copy of our timely publication, *Religious Expression at Christmastime*; include \$3 to cover postage and handling.

By the time you read this article we will already be in full swing. It never fails to amaze us that those who boast the loudest about freedom and diversity are usually its greatest enemies. We wish they'd just lighten up.