

CHRISTMAS PARTY ETIQUETTE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on Christmas party etiquette:

“This is a big week for Christmas parties in the workplace, so be careful. Monster.com doesn’t mince any words: ‘A Christmas party may alienate some staff.’ Unfortunately, it doesn’t give any advice on who these anti-Christmas party people might be. Jacqueline Whitmore, the founder of The Protocol School of Palm Beach, says that company policies on Christmas ‘can make the office a stressful place.’ Fun is now stressful. Lynn Ruby, director of development at Henry & Horne, doesn’t want fun to be stressful, which is why last year before one of the staffers dressed as Santa, ‘we asked people to make sure it wouldn’t be offensive to anyone.’ How sensitive. Lydia Ramsey, an ‘expert’ on such matters, says the best way to cut down on stress is to ‘Be careful of anything that sings or dances’ in your cubicle. Elvis included?

“Diane Hershberger, an official at a Kansas City diversity resource organization, says her idea of fairness is to have a Jewish religious symbol, namely the menorah, alongside a secular Christmas symbol, the tree. Mike Blumenthal, an attorney in Kansas City, says a Christmas tree is not necessarily a Christmas tree: ‘A Christmas tree is appropriate, because in our culture it’s not necessarily a Christmas symbol.’ What he doesn’t like are nativity scenes because ‘it can look exclusionary.’ One solution is to destroy both Christmas and Hanukkah, equally. Catherine Thoele of Kirkwood Florist in St. Louis recommends a Christmas tree trimmed in blue and silver (the colors of Hanukkah).

“Kathie Lingle, director of Alliance for Work-Life Progress in Scottsdale, Arizona, poses the question: ‘What can we do to offend the least number of people?’ Her answer—provide ‘food stations that sample various ethnic offerings.’ Not quite.

Olivia Burley of *Business Journal* warns that 'dietary restrictions because of health, religious and cultural beliefs and personal convictions may limit food options.' Right.

"We at the Catholic League will be celebrating Christmas by going to Lazarra's for pizza and beer. There will be no options. Our motto is—eat it or starve. And the beer is mandatory."