

CROSS ON CITY LOGO SCARES ATHEISTS

Recently a group of atheists tried to intimidate city officials in Steubenville, Ohio into banning a proposed new city logo that includes a chapel and a cross; the symbols represent the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Nothing scares atheists more than religion, none more so than than Catholicism. That is why atheists from the Freedom From Religion Foundation threatened to sue Steubenville over the proposed new city logo: the design shows a silhouette of the campus chapel and cross, along with such landmarks as Fort Steuben and the Veterans' Memorial Bridge.

As is commonplace, city logos reflect the people and institutions associated with the municipality, and in the case of Steubenville, this means including symbols that represent Franciscan University. Because of its national reputation as a first-class Catholic university, any depiction of the school that does not reflect its Catholic identity would be dishonest.

Initially, city officials were wary of the costs involved (if the city loses it has to pick up court-ordered legal fees), so they opted for a new logo: the university would be featured without a depiction of the cross and chapel. But after a groundswell of support for the initial logo, experienced pro-bono lawyers stepped forth. Everything was put on hold.

It is entirely constitutional to have religious symbols outside City Hall at Christmastime, provided they are accompanied by secular symbols. It should also be constitutional to have religious symbols accompany secular ones on a city logo, especially when the former clearly represent an institution that is integrally associated with

the municipality.

We hope Steubenville Mayor Domenick Mucci, Jr., who is on our side, refuses to buckle.