

D.C. LIBRARY PIVOTS

Over the summer we learned that the Library of Congress had scheduled a presentation titled, "The Book and the Reformation," sponsored by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division.

We certainly did not object to an event on the Reformation, but what caught our eye was the way the Library of Congress flagged it. The flyer it disseminated was clearly anti-Catholic: There was a drawing of the pope as Satan, with the inscription, "Ego sum Papa," or, "I am the Pope."

We issued a news release asking those on our email list to contact the communications director at the Library. The first reaction was defensive and sophomoric. We received a phone call from the chief of the Rare Books Division saying he has been "inundated" with criticism by people who are upset with a "600-year-old image" that he says is not anti-Catholic. He failed to say why a drawing of the pope as Satan might not be seen as offensive. Bill Donohue commented, "If I were to draw a picture of his loved ones depicting them as Satan, perhaps a light bulb would go off in his head. Perhaps."

The second reaction was more mature: the bigoted depiction of the pope as Satan was deleted. This was a quick victory.

Mr. Rare Books who called our office ended his conversation by asking, "Is the Catholic League connected to Bill Donohue?" When he found out the answer, he said, "That explains a lot." Donohue replied, "And it explains a lot about him that he had to be told how to do his job."