

DECEIT UNMASKED

An editorial in the *Asbury Park Press* struck the Catholic League as deceitful and that is why the incident did not go unchallenged. The New Jersey newspaper was good enough to print a letter registering our complaint.

To the average reader, the editorial in question sounded reasonable enough. The *Asbury Park Press* was taking issue with a decision by the New Jersey Historic Trust to grant funds to a Catholic church for historic preservation purposes. What the reader didn't know was that St. Mary's Church in Wharton, New Jersey was only one of nine churches that received a grant for historical preservation, or that it was the only one on the list of recipients with the initials "R.C." after it. Nor did the reader know that there were other churches which received funding—like St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Freehold—that are closer to Asbury Park's backyard. As we said in our letter, "Put together, this smacks of bigotry, as well as deceit."

We also commented that churches, temples and mosques are integral to the communities in which they exist and should not be treated as if they were somehow inferior to the local firehouse. We reminded the editors that the reason why there are tax breaks for houses of worship is because they are deemed to be in the public interest, just as schools, hospitals, universities, foundations and other institutions are. So if all houses of worship are worthy of public support for their mere existence, we wondered, why aren't the most prominent among them worthy of a grant for the purpose of historical preservation?

The league is grateful to one of its members, who wants to remain anonymous, for giving us the tip we needed in order to protest this incident.