

DEMOCRATS GIVE UP ON RELIGIOUS OUTREACH

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the decision by the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to quit its religious outreach program:

“On August 2, the Catholic League exposed Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson, the DNC’s first-ever Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach, as someone who had signed on to an amicus brief supporting atheist Michael Newdow in his attempt to excise the words ‘under God’ in the Pledge of Allegiance. She quit two days later. Ever since, we have been tapping into the DNC’s website on a daily basis seeking to learn who the new religious outreach advisor is. Today, for the first time, typing ‘religious outreach’ into the search engine of the home page yields nothing; it says, ‘Sorry, we detected an error....’ No results are listed.

“Before today, Rev. Peterson’s name was the first to show up whenever we typed either ‘outreach’ or ‘outreach programs’ into the search engine. But now ‘outreach’ yields 40 listings and ‘outreach programs’ yields 10, and neither has a listing for religious outreach (but 12 of the 40 and 2 of the 10 are listings for GLBT—Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender).

“What is most disturbing is the hypocrisy over this issue. For example, in the current edition of *Commonweal* magazine, Democrat advisor Amy Sullivan starts her article by saying, ‘This may well be remembered as the year of the Democratic Revival, when Democrats stopped allowing religion and God to be co-opted by the Republican Party and started to fight back.’ Last weekend, Michael Meehan, a spokesman for John

Kerry, said, 'We have one of the largest efforts any Democrat has made to reach out to people of faith.' Democratic strategist John Podesta said something similar over the weekend. Yet the Kerry campaign has silenced its religious outreach director, Mara Vanderslice (blaming us for exposing her resume), and the DNC has now given up altogether.

"The message the Democrats are sending to people of faith is 'Take a Walk—we've had it with you religious types.' We'll be sure to get the message out."