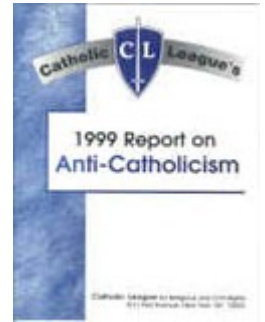


Education

January 28 – February 20

New Haven, CT – The program for the Yale Repertory Theatre's presentation of Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure" was filled with Scriptural references and Catholic imagery, juxtaposed with lewd images and what appeared to be commentary about the impeachment of President Clinton.



February

New York, NY – A band called Tammy Faye Starlight sang a song played on Columbia University radio station, WKCR. The song was filled with slurs against nuns, Jews and brain-injured children.

February

Scarborough, ME – The school system in Scarborough determined St. Valentine's Day is, in fact, a religious celebration. As such, the schools banned any celebration of Valentine's Day including school dances.

March

Detroit, MI – A suburban Detroit high school student sued her school arguing she has a constitutional right to wear the symbol of her faith on school grounds – the practice of witchcraft. She is being backed by the ACLU. The ACLU has opposed the right of nuns in habit to teach at public schools.

March

Houston, TX – A federal appeals court in Houston has ruled that prayer in a huddle before a football game, even when student-led, is unconstitutional.

March 13

Washington, DC – The National Cathedral School, a Protestant prep school, held its Third Annual Celebration Dinner fundraiser, and some guests came dressed in the habits of

Catholic monks and nuns. The school's newsletter subsequently applauded this mockery of the Catholic Church with pictures and favorable commentary.

April

St. Louis, MO – “Contagion of the Night,” a blatant mockery of Catholicism and of nuns, in particular, was staged at St. Louis Community College. Billed as “one nun’s crisis of faith and one anti-christ’s journey of self-discovery,” the play depicts Catholic nuns as greedy, insane, and sexually repressed. The Virgin Mary is held up for particular derision and ridicule, and Christianity is trivialized as a contest between two “cosmic jokesters,” God and Satan. The play was scheduled to run again at the college in the fall; but after hearing the league’s concerns, college chancellor, Dr. Vivian B. Blevins, immediately apologized, and promised that it would not be staged on the campus again.

April 1

Poughkeepsie, NY – The Miscellany News, Vassar College’s student newspaper, added a special April Fool’s supplement, dubbing it Pisscellany News. It included an article ridiculing Pope John Paul II. “When an old man from New Jersey asked if the Pope himself had ever experienced same-sex tendencies,” read one of the more tasteless lines, “His Holiness expressed his desire to attend next year’s HomoHop scantily clad as Buddha.” The piece also featured an illustration of the Pope in a diaper, described as “his new ‘Dancing Baby’ outfit for the HomoHop.”

April 2

Tucson, AZ – On Good Friday, the Arizona Daily Wildcat, student newspaper of the University of Arizona, ran several items offensive to Catholic believers. A commentary announced “Top 10 things about Christianity that kick ass.” It derided the Catholic Church for “burning heretics at the stake” and “wasting holy Islamic sites” during the Crusades. A cartoon accompanying the article showed a cross hatching out of an

Easter egg. Another cartoon in the same paper showed an Easter bunny crucified on a cross, hearing the voice of God berating him for taking "credit for my holiday."

April 16

Middletown, NY – Orange County Community College hosted a "goddess conference" designed to "explore the social costs of patriarchy." With workshops on "Medieval Images of Mary" and "The Traditional Christian View of Women," the conference, entitled "God the Mother: Sexual Politics and Civilization," promised to be yet another academic assault on the "patriarchy" of the Catholic Church. To make sure it was, the conference starred Donna Woolfolk Cross, author of "Pope Joan," a work of fiction about a woman pope.

April 20

Littleton, CO – Among the murder victims in the Columbine High School shooting massacre was Cassie Bernall, killed because of her Christian faith. Asked by the shooters whether she believed in God, Cassie reportedly answered emphatically, "Yes." She was shot to death on the spot. Yet, even as the killings led to an outpouring of calls for prayer and expressions of faith—led by President and Mrs. Clinton—some were indignant that Miss Bernall was being hailed as a Christian martyr. This was in stark contrast to the unquestioned martyrdom bestowed on Matthew Shepard, the gay man savagely beaten to death in Wyoming several months earlier.

May

Bucks County, PA – Opposing Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge's pro-school choice "Academic Recovery Act," 14 school superintendents from Bucks County signed a letter comparing the effects of school choice to the genocidal war in Kosovo. Citing the war as "a graphic example of what happens to a society that separates its people and fosters elitism," the letter warned that such could be the fate of Pennsylvania if the poor were to enjoy the same freedom of choice in education

that the rich “elite” already have. “Voucher plans,” the superintendents warned, would weaken “democratic principles,” “undermine the public good,” and possibly “lead to the Balkanization of our society.”

May 15

New York, NY – Sen. Charles Schumer, in a speech to the Spring Education Conference of the United Federation of Teachers, charged that supporters of school vouchers want to sacrifice education in order to proselytize. “Those who argue that we should have vouchers and those who argue that the money ought to be sent to the private system—look who they are,” Schumer told the union. “They’re not interested in educating—they’re interested in proselytizing.” After the league issued a statement denouncing those remarks, Schumer telephoned league president William Donohue. He insisted that his concerns were not directed at the Catholic Church, but at groups like the Christian Coalition and Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam.

May 21

White Plains, NY – A federal judge ruled that the Bedford Central school district violated the rights of three Catholic school families by having students cut out elephant-head images of a Hindu god, make toothpick “worry dolls,” and build an altar for an Earth Day liturgy.

June

Albany, NY – The league’s attention was called to the New York State Regents exams, standardized aptitude tests given to high school students in all the traditional subjects. A question on the 1998 Global Studies exam asked, “Which statement best illustrates the contradictory actions of the Catholic Church in colonial America?” All four choices—including the “correct” one dealing with Catholicism and slavery—were highly subjective and negatively framed, making the Church look bad. When the league contacted Dr. Gerald DeMauro, Coordinator of Assessment in the New York State Education Department, he agreed that the question was inappropriate, and promised that

it would no longer be used on the exam. He also invited the league to serve as a “sensitivity reviewer” of future exam questions—a most welcome opportunity, given that in the meantime another problematic question had been brought to our attention, this one on the 1999 English Regents exam.

June 7

Harrisburg, PA – David Gondak, head of Pennsylvania’s largest teachers union, urged his members to use their classrooms as platforms for indoctrinating their students with anti-school choice propaganda. Gondak told the Pennsylvania State Education Association to teach students that Gov. Tom Ridge’s school choice proposal was “stealth voucher legislation” and a “voucher scheme.”

June 7

Harrisburg, PA – Stepping up its campaign against Gov. Ridge’s school choice proposal, the Pennsylvania State Education Association posted a photograph of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet on its home page—suggesting that if educational vouchers are implemented, Pennsylvania will turn fascist. There were apparently no concerns, however, that fascism could result from such demagogic fear-mongering—or from teachers abusing their authority to indoctrinate their students (see above).

July

New York, NY – Prentice Hall published a text book called *The Practice of Public Relations*. A statement in the text read: “Hill & Knowlton, one of the world’s largest public relations firms, as noted, was embarrassed in recent years by taking on clients, such as the antiabortion National Conference of Catholic Bishops...” The passage was contained in a chapter on ethics that included: “honesty and fairness are two critical components that will continue to determine the ethical behavior of public relations professionals.”

August

Cleveland, OH – Federal Court Judge Solomon Oliver, Jr. blocked Cleveland's four year-old school voucher program and virtually promised to kill it altogether. The judge said since the vast majority of parents were choosing religious schools, the program had the primary effect of advancing religion. The ruling promised massive disruption for almost 4,000 students participating in the voucher program.

August

North Dartmouth, MA – Parents of some in-coming freshmen students at Dartmouth High School were concerned about a book on a mandatory reading list for their children. The Chocolate Wars by Robert Cormier features profanity, derisive references to Catholic theology, explicit sexual references and the portrayal of females only in the context as the objects of male lust. The parents wanted the book placed on an optional reading list.

August 17

Cooperstown, ND – Public school teacher Larry Volk distributed handouts in seventh grade social studies and tenth grade history classes. The handouts were from Ralph Woodrow's Babylon Mystery Religion which shows an anti-Catholic perspective of periods of history. The author, Mr. Woodrow, himself indicated his main source "presented as history" some things that "were not history at all, but only an arbitrary piecing together of numerous ancient myths – not a sound basis for history."

September

Harrison County, MS – Citing concerns over gangs, the Harrison County, school board announced the Star of David was now banned from school property. The County school superintendent cited the need to protect the students' welfare. The school board considered banning crosses as well but did not.

As the Catholic League prepared to file an amicus brief against the school board, the board overturned its decision. It voted unanimously to exempt religious symbols from its

policy prohibiting gang apparel.

September

Central Florida – School teacher Michael Ducharme resigned from his job at Eustis High School just before he was about to be fired. Ducharme, complaining about the heat, told his students “I’m as hot as a pregnant nigger.” He later apologized by saying he meant to say “I’m as hot as a pregnant nun.”

November

Cincinnati, OH – Mary Buse of Cincinnati was upset that the Sycamore School District noted the days upon which Jewish holy days fell, but not Christian ones in the school calendars. Mrs. Buse complained that Yom Kippur was listed but Christmas was “winter break.” After her input, the calendars were changed to reflect no religious holidays. She considered it a “small victory” for a level playing field.

November

Syracuse, NY – A kindergarten student from suburban Syracuse used a reference to God during a school project. The student was trying to show his concern for the environment and used God as part of his project. The teacher and principal would not allow it. The issue is now in court.

November

New Paltz, NY – An “art” work by a former student at State University of New York at New Paltz featured four large penises in the shape of a cross in front of what appeared to be the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Catholic League president William Donohue called university president Roger Bowen and asked what was going to be done with the artwork. Bowen eventually determined it would be removed because the student was no longer on campus, not because of any outside pressure.

November 29

Marina del Rey, CA – Dr. Gary Hull of the Ayn Rand Institute

gave a speech at the University of Virginia. Among the statements he made: "for centuries, Catholicism has been shoving misery down humanity's throat."