

# ERIE, PA SCHOOL DISTRICT YIELDS TO LEAGUE PRESSURE

In the last edition of *Catalyst*, we published a letter from William Donohue to the president of the Millcreek Township School District in Erie, Pennsylvania stating the league's objections to a school district ruling that barred students from drawing a nativity scene in the "Holiday" card contest. The league threatened a lawsuit unless immediate action were taken to rectify the situation. Fortunately, corrective measures were taken and the matter has been resolved.

The league was notified by the law firm that represents the school district that the memo to the teachers forbidding the drawing of a nativity scene "was an error which the school district and the board of school directors have admitted at a public meeting."

Following the meeting, a memo was sent by the school district to all teachers advising them of "the mistake and correcting the problem in regard to the future." In addition, the superintendent of schools scheduled a meeting with Bishop Donald Trautman so as to assure him that "Millcreek Township School District is following the United States Constitution in regard to religion in the schools."

The league is satisfied with this action and has notified the law firm of its decision.

The league was prepared to sue and to notify the U.S. Department of Education of the violation. It was President Clinton who sent a memo to Attorney General Janet Reno and Secretary of Education Richard Riley in 1995 instructing them on the religious expression rights of students in public schools. A copy of that memo was sent to the Millcreek School District.

This just goes to show that some educators, like others, will try to get away with implementing their politics if allowed to do so. It also goes to show what the league can accomplish without going to court.