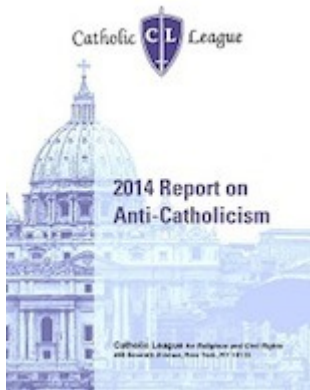


# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



It is a sign of great progress that the Catholic League spends relatively little time defending Catholics from defamation or discrimination. It is not a good sign that we are busier than ever combating anti-Catholicism directed at the Church. But whether it is individuals or the institution we are defending, we take every case

seriously.

One of the ugliest battles of the year involved a series of relentless assaults on bishops, led by activists and lawyers; some in the media gave cover to these malicious propaganda artists. The mid-west was the hub of most of the action. St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt has been hounded for years, and in 2014 he was exonerated of charges that he “inappropriately touched” a young man in 2009. The charge came literally out of the blue: the man claimed that Nienstedt touched his buttocks while posing for a Confirmation photo. It was an utterly baseless accusation, but it gave pleasure to those opposed to the archbishop.

St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson was the target of Jeffrey Anderson, the most irresponsible attorney in the nation. Anderson claimed that Carlson had maintained that he did not know whether it was against the law for an adult to have sex with a child. Worse, a Catholic magazine, *Commonweal*, took Anderson’s side, as did the *National Catholic Reporter*. My analysis of the deposition transcript where Anderson grilled Carlson showed how preposterous the charges were. If anything, Carlson was framed.

The assault on the bishops got so bad that in September I issued a special report, “The Quest to Scalp a Bishop.” I detailed the attacks on Nienstedt and Carlson, as well as on

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Cardinal Raymond Burke, Archbishop John Myers, and Bishop Robert Finn. What do they have in common? They are regarded as conservatives. More important, in many cases they took over dioceses that were reeling from the destructive work of left-wing Catholics. The hit jobs against them were clearly in retaliation to their resolve to clean house.

Bishop Frank Dewane, who heads the Florida diocese of Venice, was also ganged up on, only this time the ones leading the charge were disgruntled Catholics. Ten priests took aim at Dewane by making wholly unsupported accusations. Their cowardice was openly on display: they refused to come forward and identify themselves, preferring to sucker-punch the bishop in the media. Not surprisingly, some ex-priests and ex-nuns jumped on board. We gladly rushed to Bishop Dewane's side.

Lafayette Bishop Michael Jarrell refused to publish the names of 15 priests who were accused of abuse prior to 1984. His decision was identical to the one that the leaders of every other institution, public and private, have long honored: it is unethical to make public the names of those who have been accused, but not found guilty, of an offense. Yet for some reason bishops are expected to be held to a different standard. Bishop Jarrell bravely refused to play this game. We were happy to support him.

Evil is a word that should be reserved for extreme instances of truculent behavior. Satanism qualifies as a classic example. In 2014 it surfaced on several occasions. As the academic year wound down at Harvard, Satanists scheduled a "Black Mass" on campus. The initial response of the administration was unsatisfactory, but after being pounded in the media, campus officials reconsidered their approach. Harvard president Drew Faust issued a statement defending the freedom of speech of the offending students, but she also condemned the obscene nature of the event; she joined a demonstration orchestrated by the protesting students. I

commended her for her words and deeds, noting that more could have been done. As it turned out, the “Black Mass” was held off-campus.

Another “Black Mass” was slated to be performed at the Oklahoma City Civic Center in the fall. Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley won our assistance when he objected. The Satanist who planned this event was a registered sex offender: he was determined to desecrate a consecrated Host. In the end, the Host was returned and the sick event was carried out with a faux Host, thus turning the episode into a farce.

At the end of the year, Satanists garnered the assistance from Barry Lynn, the head of Americas United for Separation of Church and State. The Devil worshippers from Florida sought to put a Satanist display next to a nativity scene in the Capitol rotunda. Lynn proved what I have been saying for decades: Americans United, founded as an expressly anti-Catholic group, has no true interest in defending the First Amendment. Its real interest is to exploit the First Amendment, using it as a weapon to limit religious speech. By joining arms with Satanists, Lynn removed all suspicion as to what its real mission is.

One does not have to be a Satanist to traffick in unseemly attacks on Catholicism. Philip Kennicott, the art critic for the *Washington Post*, was aghast to learn that an obscene portrait of Our Blessed Mother was not included in a Washington D.C. exhibit of Catholic art. He blasted the National Museum of Women in the Arts for not displaying Chris Ofili’s “The Holy Virgin Mary.” This portrait, which is laden with elephant dung and pornographic pictures, was dubbed by Kennicott as “perhaps the most famous image of Mary painted in the last quarter century.” I led a demonstration outside the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1999 when it was first exhibited.

Hatred of Catholicism regularly surfaces in the schools, but

what happened at a Woodbury, Connecticut high school was unusual. They implemented a firewall blocking access to the Vatican's website, claiming it contained "hate speech." I asked the superintendent to identify examples of "hate speech" listed on the Vatican's website. He wrote back saying there wasn't any and tried to argue that the whole thing was due to a technological error. But he wasn't persuasive: the filtering service provider shot back saying there was no "glitch," maintaining that someone at the school triggered the censorship. We gave this story quite a ride in the media, and in the end the Vatican website was restored.

Sometimes those we seek to assist prefer not to go public with their complaint. Such a decision must be respected: private persons who are not used to the public spotlight often don't think it is worth it to come forward. This happened during the election cycle in New Hampshire. A Catholic woman who worked a voting station frequently greeted voters with "God bless you." No one complained but her intolerant boss fired her nonetheless. We jumped in, but the woman who was terminated said she did not want to make a public fuss of it. She thanked us for our offer. This didn't stop us from registering a complaint against the woman's boss, making sure she wouldn't dare strike a second time. I wrote to William Gardner, the Secretary of State, and he responded in a professional manner.

One guilty person who paid a price for her anti-Catholicism in 2014 was Rebekah M. Nett. In 2011, we filed a grievance against her for making stridently anti-Catholic remarks against United States Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher, and others. Dreher, who is not Catholic, was called a "Catholic Witch Hunter" and a "dirty Catholic." The Catholic Church was also branded as a "bloody and murderous" organization. The Supreme Court of Wisconsin, acting on our complaint, revoked Nett's license to practice for a year. We don't expect to hear from her again.

"I want more rights, quite frankly. I have never seen an

administration which is less religion-friendly than the Obama administration.” That is what I told Fox Business host Lou Dobbs in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming the religious conscience rights of some business owners in the *Hobby Lobby* case. The heart of religious liberty is conscience rights, so if that is lost, the core is gutted. This high court ruling was very important, but as I told Dobbs, it was not enough: we are dealing with an administration that is no friend of religious liberty, which is why we need more protections.

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which has a positive ring to it, is actually a very controversial law: it fails to insulate religious institutions from government overreach. In particular, it fails to distinguish between sexual orientation and sexual behavior. This is one reason why the Congress failed to pass this Act for 20 years. President Obama, who continually looks for ways to expand his authority, issued an Executive Order imposing the essence of this Act on the public. He could have signed a version of the Act that allowed for a religious exemption, but he purposely decided not to do so.

The Health and Human Services mandate that requires Catholic entities to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization, was the subject of new revisions by the Obama administration. But as with previous amendments, it failed to provide the kind of protection that Catholic institutions need. The bishops rejected the revisions, as did the Catholic League.

Anti-Catholicism is a problem wherever it emanates from, but it is most problematic when it stems from government, especially the federal government. We were shocked to learn that over the summer the Library of Congress was slated to host a presentation, “The Book and the Reformation,” sponsored by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. We did not object to the content of the presentation, but we did object

to the way it was advertised: the flyer for the event showed a drawing of the pope as Satan, with the inscription, "Ego sum Papa," or, "I am the Pope." After we registered a protest, the offensive depiction was deleted.

A Hispanic colonel in the U.S. Air Force published an article in the base newspaper that was a tribute to his mother, and was then accused of destroying the morale, order and discipline of the Air Force. What did he do to merit such a strong reaction? He explained how his mother's trust in Jesus acted as a positive force for him growing up. That was it. The article was immediately taken down—treated as if it were obscene—and the colonel was reprimanded. I wrote to several parties objecting on free speech and religious liberty grounds. I also pointed out how the plain language of the Air Force rules that were cited as justification for punitive action were not violated by the colonel. This incredible act of censorship shows just how far political correctness has penetrated the armed forces.

It was not just the U.S. government that the Catholic League tackled in 2014; we fought the U.N. The U.N. Committee Against Torture, led by Felice Gaer, conducted a show trial against the Holy See. This U.N. body tried to pressure the Holy See to force four Irish religious orders to provide "restitution, compensation and rehabilitation" for the so-called victims of the Magdalene Laundries. I say "so-called" because according to the McAleese Report on this subject, the most definitive study of its kind, not a single woman was ever tortured or sexually abused in all the decades that these shelters for troubled women operated.

We lodged a formal complaint with the U.N. against Gaer. We specifically charged her with violating two sets of U.N. strictures governing the objectivity of committee members. Gaer, we contended, was not an impartial or independent observer; rather, she was an abortion-rights activist who took her directives from the Center for Reproductive Rights, a

notoriously anti-Catholic organization. We were pleased when officials from the Holy See warmly noted the Catholic League response.

International issues took front and center in 2014 with the unspeakable crimes committed by Muslim extremists against Christians in the Middle East. On September 15, we ran an op-ed page statement in the *New York Times*, "Christian Genocide Must End," that called attention to this outrage. We appealed to the U.N. and to the Obama administration to do more, emphasizing that the fight against Islamists met the Catholic Church's test for a "just war." The response this ad engendered was phenomenal, attracting positive comments from people of all faiths.

Ireland was very much in the news in 2014, and so was the reaction of the Catholic League to perceived acts of cruelty generated by the Catholic Church. The movie, "Philomena," was up for several Oscars. Based on the book by that name, it asserted that Philomena Lee got pregnant when she was 18-years-old and that Irish nuns stole her baby and then sold him "to the highest bidder." It was a malicious lie. Philomena's father took her to an abbey asking for assistance. At the age of 22, she voluntarily signed a contract placing her son up for adoption. He was adopted by a Wisconsin couple who then offered a donation to the abbey. He was not sold to anyone and there was no bidding war.

It was hardly surprising to learn that Bob and Harvey Weinstein, no strangers to anti-Catholicism, spent an enormous amount of money lobbying to win an Oscar. They failed. But this didn't stop Philomena Lee from lying about her quest to find her son in the U.S. In fact, she never stepped foot in the U.S. until it was time for her to hawk her dishonest story. I wrote a lengthy report on this issue, documenting my sources.

More lies were told about Irish nuns when the "mass grave"

hoax surfaced. Again, I wrote a report detailing exactly what happened. Media reports exploded in the spring claiming that almost 800 children were buried in a mass grave outside Galway between 1925 and 1961. But there was no mass grave: the skeletons of 15 to 20 children had been found, and the man who found them came forward to debunk the lies. It was not uncommon during that period for children to be buried in unmarked graves. A local historian started the hoax and an ever compliant media joined the fray to spin this anti-Catholic yarn. Once again, it was those cruel Irish nuns who were allegedly responsible, we were told. And once again, after I showed how utterly false the accusations were, the story died a quick death.

The Irish in the U.S. also made news when it was announced that the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade would include a homosexual unit. For two decades, I had said that parade officials were acting fairly in banning all activist groups from marching under their own banner. Gays, I said, were treated no differently than pro-life groups; both could march with other units but not on their own. So when a gay group was allowed to march in 2015, I asked if a pro-life contingent would also be marching. I was told there would be one. As it turned out, this was a lie. That is why I pulled the Catholic League from marching in the parade. I do not take kindly to being double-crossed, especially by my own people.

The year ended as always: we fought the proverbial Christmas wars. This time we ventured to the west coast posting a billboard along a heavily trafficked strip in Los Angeles. We called attention to Christians being beheaded overseas, and to non-violent hate speech at home. "The Differences Are Profound; So Are the Similarities." It set off a predictable firestorm of approval and disapproval. Overall, we declared the Christmas wars to be a draw: both the pro-Christmas and the anti-Christmas sides won and lost an almost equal series of battles; our side did slightly better.



From time to time, we also fight defamation and discrimination aimed at other segments of the population. In 2014, we joined hands with our Jewish friends in protesting the anti-Semitic opera, "The Death of Klinghoffer." The play, which was performed at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in the fall, was a classic case of moral equivalency: it maintained that an innocent handicapped Jewish senior citizen, Leon Klinghoffer, who was shot in the face and then thrown overboard on the Achilles Laura Italian cruise ship in 1985, was somehow as morally culpable as the PLO barbarians who killed him. I spoke at one of the rallies, and the Catholic League staff joined me in attending a follow-up demonstration.

These are just some of the more prominent struggles we faced in 2014. This volume documents many more, and from a wide range of sources and venues. The fact that in the second decade of the third millennium we are still fighting anti-Catholicism is not a good sign. But matters would be considerably worse if the bigotry did not occasion a strong rejoinder. We are proud to lead the charge against the enemies of the Catholic Church.

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