

FIRESTORM OF PROTEST GREET'S BEASTLY ART EXHIBIT

A beastly art exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum of Art drew a strong response from the Catholic League and quickly attracted international attention. A British art exhibit, "Sensation," not only displayed dead animals and sexually mutilated bodies, it featured a painting, "The Holy Virgin Mary," that was laced with elephant dung and spotted with pictures of vaginas and anuses.

In mid-September, when a reporter for the New York *Daily News* notified the Catholic League of the impending exhibit, we immediately secured a copy of the "Sensation" catalog. On September 16, we issued our first news release on the subject and shortly thereafter New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani labeled the exhibit "Catholic bashing" and threatened to close the museum; he succeeded in stopping all checks to the museum.

The league's first response was to call for a boycott of the Brooklyn Museum of Art. In the pages of the *Tablet*, the newspaper of the Brooklyn diocese, we placed an ad asking all Catholic teachers not to take their students to any exhibit at the museum over the course of the current academic year. We also wrote to every member of the City Council requesting that the museum be defunded.