

GAY PRIDE PARADE SHOULD BEGIN BELOW CATHEDRAL

On June 30, New York's annual Gay Pride Parade will take place on Fifth Avenue beginning at noon. The starting point of the parade is just above St. Patrick's Cathedral at 52d Street and 5th Avenue. Repeated attempts by the Catholic League to request that the Giuliani administration prevail upon the gay leadership to start the parade below the Cathedral have not worked.

William Donohue released the following statement on the status of the parade:

"The Catholic League calls upon New York's gay leadership to proclaim and honor a declaration of tolerance toward Roman Catholics. To be specific, we are asking that the parade's organizers accede to our request to move the starting point of the march to a point below St. Patrick's. Because the parade is proceeding south anyway, it should be no problem for the marchers to step off ten blocks south of the Cathedral at 42d Street.

"The Catholic League does not question the right of gays to march. What it objects to is the anti-Catholic behavior and lewd exhibitions that take place every year in front of St. Patrick's. If straights dressed up in Catholic garb and made insulting gestures at the Cathedral, we would complain just as much. If straights went naked in the streets, we would complain just as much. If straights simulated oral sex in front of the Cathedral, we would complain just as much. Our complaint, then, is with the behavior of some of the marchers and with the failure of gay leaders to condemn the vulgarity that is attendant to the Gay Pride March.

"If Catholic bashing is not central to the march, then the

parade's organizers should willingly accede to the league's request to move the starting point of the parade below the Cathedral. Not to do so suggests ill-will toward Catholics. We call on Mayor Giuliani to watch the parade from the steps of the Cathedral so that he can see firsthand what our objections are."

NOTE: Catholic League president William Donohue will be present immediately following the parade on the southeast corner of 49th St. and 5th Avenue to answer any questions that the press might have.