

GIULIANI ALLOWS GAYS TO BASH CATHOLICS BY CATHEDRAL

On June 8, Catholic League president William A. Donohue sent a letter to New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani requesting that he intervene to move the starting point of this year's Gay Pride Parade from 52nd Street and 5th Avenue (which is one block north of St. Patrick's Cathedral) to 42nd Street and 5th Avenue. The request was made in light of last year's ugly anti-Catholic demonstration that took place in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral during an illegal gay march that was allowed by the Giuliani administration. Last year, gays went naked in the streets pointing their middle fingers at the Cathedral while screaming obscenities on command.

Dr. Donohue has asked New York Attorney General Dennis Vacco to send observers to the march. He offered the following remarks at a press conference today:

"Last year's Gay Pride Parade was the most incredibly anti-Catholic exhibition that I ever witnessed. What happened in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral was obscene, inexcusable and illegal. And it happened with impunity.

"The Catholic League does not object to the right of gays to parade or hold demonstrations. What we are requesting is that the starting point of the Gay Pride Parade be moved from 52nd Street and 5th Avenue to 42nd Street and 5th Avenue. Doing so would allow Catholics to practice their First Amendment right to freedom of religion without the threat of provocation or harassment. Given that the exercise of free speech has always been conditioned by time, place and manner, the Catholic League's request is both reasonable and unexceptional.

"If those who are to march in the Gay Pride Parade seek only to demonstrate their pride- and not to bash Catholics-then our

request should pose no problem. Unfortunately, we have good reason to believe that assaults against Catholics are not tangential to the parade, rather they are central to it. Indeed, when the parade's co-chair, Janice Thom, was asked about my charge that the parade was arranged to target St. Patrick's, she cavalierly replied 'That's an interesting idea,' thus sustaining the basis of my accusation.

"To allow Catholic-bashing gays to begin a parade by St. Patrick's Cathedral is tantamount to allowing the Klan to assemble near a Harlem Baptist church or the Nazis to start near a Jewish synagogue. If Giuliani allows this to happen, it will be the biggest mistake of his political career."