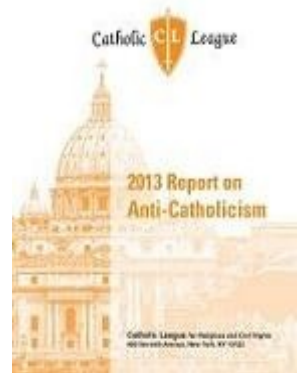


GOVERNMENT

January 23 – March 23

Denver, CO – On January 23, Colorado's State Judiciary Committee held a hearing on a civil unions bill. In 2006, the people of Colorado said no to gay marriage. In 2012, lawmakers took up the issue of civil unions for homosexuals, allowing religious adoption agencies an exemption. In 2013, the religious exemption was gutted. This was a clear example of bias and posed a problem for the religious liberty of Catholics. To demand that Catholic adoptive agencies place children in a household of two adults of the same sex is to eviscerate their Catholicity. Catholics rallied on the steps of the State Capitol. The Catholic League urged all local Catholics to attend. Unfortunately, on March 23, Gov. John Hickenlooper signed the bill into law. One of his staffers demonized support for traditional marriage when he tweeted : "From hate state to great state?"



January 24

Forward Operating Base Orgun-E, Afghanistan – When a soldier complained about Christian symbols at a forward operating base in Afghanistan, American Atheists sent a letter to the Pentagon. In response, the U.S. military ordered soldiers to board up cross-shaped windows and to remove a steeple and cross from atop a chapel. An Army spokesman at the Pentagon stated that local command had "taken appropriate action to ensure that it is changed into a neutral facility," effectively cleansing the chapel of its Christian symbols. The Military Religious Freedom Foundation praised the military's decision.

January 26

San Francisco, CA – An official celebration of *Roe v. Wade* took place in accordance with a declaration issued by the San

Francisco Board of Supervisors. This was the same board of supervisors which the Catholic League sued for its anti-Catholic statements. The Catholic Church has led the fight against abortion more than any other religion going back to 1973. Thus, it was clear that this “celebration” was a direct attack on the Catholic Church.

January 30

Hawthorne, CA – After the City Attorney recommended a resolution to remove St. Joseph’s Fiesta from its list of city-approved events due to fear of violation of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution, the Mayor returned the resolution to the City Attorney for further evaluation. Bill Donohue wrote a letter to the Mayor expressing his hope that the Mayor and his City Council would agree that the St. Joseph Fiesta should remain on the list of city-approved events, noting that such an event “is in no way a violation of the separation of church and state.” The resolution did not receive further consideration during 2013.

February 14

Springfield, IL – After Illinois State Senator Martin Sandoval, a Catholic, voted in favor of homosexual marriage, he engaged in a rant mocking the Catholic Church.

Speaking sarcastically, Sandoval spoke of the “stellar record of morality and example” set by the Catholic Church. This was followed by, “Quite the contrary my fellow senators, quite the contrary.” He then went on a rant about his days in the seminary. Sandoval said he experienced alcoholism and homosexuality, and “even met men that were pedophiles.” But none were guilty of any wrongdoing, he insisted. Indeed, it was through “no fault of their own” that they descended to such a level. Then he unloaded: the culprit was “the Church and its leaders who did not provide any support to these—to these good men of faith.”

The Catholic League noted: “Senator Sandoval owes Catholics an

apology; then this issue can be put to rest. If he wants to disagree with the Church, that is his business. But to let loose this way is inexcusable.”

March 8

New York, NY – New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey held a rally outside City Hall in Manhattan in an attempt to persuade the public to support her Child Victims Act. Over the past several years, Markey had introduced legislation addressing the sexual abuse of minors. Her bills focused unfairly on private institutions, leaving public institutions virtually untouched. This year’s version of her bill offered no change; it would open up a one-year window for alleged victims who were abused in a private institution regardless of when it took place.

In 2009, after months of protest by the Catholic League, Markey amended her bill to cover both public and private institutions, but it was quickly shot down by public school groups. Early in 2012, the Catholic League contacted Markey’s office about the continuing disparity in treatment, but never heard back.

March 14

Detroit, MI – Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff of the Eastern District of Michigan granted a motion for a preliminary injunction against enforcement of the HHS mandate to Thomas Monaghan, a member of the advisory board of the Catholic League. Monaghan and his property management company, Domino’s Farms Corporation, was being represented by the Thomas More Law Center. The Obama administration’s lawyers contended that once a business owner chooses to enter into the marketplace, he no longer is entitled to exercise his religious rights. But Judge Zatkoff disagreed, saying, “It is in the best interest of the public that Monaghan not be compelled to act in conflict with his religious beliefs.” The attorney for the Thomas More Law Center commented: “The HHS Mandate forces our clients to provide abortion-causing drugs to their employees

when doing so is a direct violation of the teachings of the Catholic Church and our clients' sincerely held religious beliefs. The Court's decision today upholds everyone's freedom of religion and rights protected by the Constitution."

April 5

Boston, MA – At the 2013 "Banned in Boston" fundraiser hosted by Urban Improv, an organization that uses "improvisational theater workshops to teach violence prevention, conflict resolution, and decision-making," former Massachusetts Governor Bill Weld and a local television anchorwoman, Heather Unruh, performed a skit mocking the papacy. Weld dressed up as "Cardinal Bonaducci." Unruh was "the new pope from South Boston." Weld said the following during the skit: "We at the Vatican thought that we would try to modernize how we elect a pope, and, thus, make Catholicism more democratic and inclusive. So, we just gave away the papacy to the one millionth customer at the Little Peach on Broadway." Weld also said to Unruh, "Your butt is so small, your Excellency."

April 6

Catholicism was cited as an example of "religious extremism" in U.S. Army Reserve Equal Opportunity training documents. In particular, it was reported that a slide was used by a U.S. Army training instructor to list examples of extremism in a presentation to an Army Reserve unit based in Pennsylvania. The slide included Catholicism, Evangelical Christianity, Al Qaeda, Hamas, Sunni Muslims, and the Ku Klux Klan. An Army spokesman said that the slide was not produced by the Army and did not reflect Army policy. While the offensive slide was removed, it remained an open question to what extent similar training materials were being used elsewhere in the armed forces. Additional documents obtained in August under a Freedom of Information Act request showed that the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) "hate group" list was cited as a "reliable" guide to extremists. Furthermore, the documents also showed that an unknown number of "equal opportunity

officers" were trained at Fort Jackson, South Carolina using SPLC propaganda.

April 9

Fort Campbell, Kentucky – An email was written by a lieutenant colonel advising three dozen of his subordinates to watch out for soldiers who might belong to "domestic hate groups." While the Catholic Church was not identified as a "domestic hate group" explicitly, the "Christian Right" was singled out as being "anti-gay" for its opposition to the homosexual activist movement. The Family Research Council and the American Family Association were mentioned by name. The general categories addressed included the following: "Anti-Gay, Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Muslim, Black Separatist, Christian Identity, Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Confederate, Neo-Nazi, Patriot Movement, Racist Skinhead, Sovereign Citizens Movement, and White Nationalist."

April 11

Sacramento, CA – California lawmakers weighed a decision to revoke the tax-exempt status of the Boy Scouts of America. At issue was whether the Boy Scouts are a discriminatory organization for upholding Christian teaching on homosexuality. This was a clear instance of anti-Christian bigotry. The Catholic League responded with a letter to Sacramento legislators asking them to determine whether the San Francisco-based group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, should lose its tax-exempt status. This anti-Catholic homosexual group dresses as nuns and mocks every conceivable Catholic belief and practice.

April 23

Washington, DC – The Pentagon opened its doors to Mikey Weinstein, the president and founder of the anti-Christian group, the Military Religious Freedom Foundation. Weinstein met privately with generals and a military chaplain to call for regulations that would prohibit anyone in uniform from proselytizing, making it an offense subject to court martial. "Someone needs to be punished for this," Weinstein said in a

television interview. “Until the Air Force or Army or Navy or Marine Corps punishes a member of the military for unconstitutional religious proselytizing and oppression, we will never have the ability to stop this horrible, horrendous, dehumanizing behavior.”

April 23

Fort Wainwright, AK – The U.S. Army ordered the scrubbing of Bible inscriptions etched into the serial numbers of weapons scopes manufactured by Trijicon. John 8:12 and Second Corinthians 4:6 appeared at the end of scope serial numbers as “JN8:12” and “2COR4:6.” Soldiers had to turn in their scopes so the references could be removed. Specific instructions were given for removal. After scraping off the letters and numbers, soldiers were directed to apply black paint to ensure the verses were completely blotted out.

April 24

At an unknown number of military bases, access to the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) website was blocked because it contained “hostile content.” While it was unclear what specifically was deemed to be “hostile” about SBC’s website, it was alarming that a Christian group could be deemed “hostile” to the Department of Defense.

April 30

The Pentagon released a statement confirming that soldiers could be prosecuted for promoting their faith: “Religious proselytization is not permitted within the Department of Defense...Court martials and non-judicial punishments are decided on a case-by-case basis.” However, the difference between freedom of religious speech and proselytization was not adequately defined by the Pentagon. This lack of definition created a chilling effect on the freedom of speech of military and religious personnel.

May 1

Chicago, IL – Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s City Council floor leader,

Pat O'Connor, attacked the Catholic Church after Cardinal Francis George joined a coalition of churches and nonprofits, which rejected the mayor's compromise offer on water fees for nonprofits. Water had previously been free for nonprofits. The phase-out of the water waiver would result in a cost of \$2.5 million a year for Catholic churches, forcing them to close schools and reduce social services.

The alderman's gratuitous tirade suggested a bigoted mindset. O'Connor said, "They're clearly not owning up to the fact that there are people out there damaged by the church and they're talking about free water. Really?" Describing himself as "a Catholic, not a happy one these days," O'Connor said, "The church has so many internal problems, they ought to satisfy their own problems and they ought to address the things that are in the paper every day and stop talking about free water. Quit saying that they handled things right in the past or...or, even worse, saying mistakes were made in the past, but they're not correcting those mistakes." The alderman said at one point, "Stick to praying and stick to saving souls and let us run the city."

May 8

West Springfield, MA – The City's Deputy Director of Operations sent a letter to the owner of a local pizza parlor, ordering him to take down a statue of the Virgin Mary which he had erected on a city-owned traffic island. The letter said: "Unfortunately, in this day and age, religious artifacts are not to be displayed on any city property."

May 15

Atlanta, GA – The Georgia Department of Natural Resources directed staff to remove Bibles from state lodges and cabins across the state after an atheist resident complained. Park officials told the resident that all Bibles would be removed while the state attorney examines the matter. A few days later when the attorney general determined the state was on solid legal ground because it had not paid for the Bibles, Governor

Nathan Deal ordered the Bibles back.

May 17

At a House Ways and Means Committee hearing, Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL) questioned outgoing IRS commissioner Steven Miller about two incidents in which the IRS ordered pro-life groups to detail the content of their prayers. A California IRS office demanded that Christian Voices for Life, located in Fort Bend County, Texas, explain its prayers. Similarly, the Coalition for Life of Iowa was told to “detail the content of the members of your organization’s prayers.” Schock wanted to know if this request was appropriate. Miller answered that he was unable to speak to either situation.

May 20

Philadelphia, PA – The Catholic League disseminated an ad that exposed the legal injustice perpetrated against three Catholic priests and one Catholic layman in Philadelphia. To read the ad, please visit the Catholic League’s website.

June 12

Philadelphia, PA – A miscarriage of justice culminated in the sentencing of Father Charles Engelhardt and teacher Bernard Shero. Fr. Engelhardt was sentenced to 6 to 12 years in prison; Shero was sentenced to 8 to 16 years in prison. A “Billy Doe” had alleged that he was raped by three different persons, two of whom were priests. It was a blatant attempt to exploit the prevailing animus against priests. The Catholic League disseminated an ad with a full account of the details in this matter. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* declined to run the Catholic League’s ad exposing this gross injustice.

June 12

Washington, DC – The Obama administration opposed an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would protect the religious liberty of men and women in the Armed Forces. The amendment, introduced by Rep. John Fleming of Louisiana, would ensure that the military accommodates religious

expression, while also allowing for exceptions based on “military necessity.” In a statement released by the Office of Management and Budget, it said officers need discretion “to address potentially problematic speech and actions within their units.” It also said Fleming’s amendment “would have a significant adverse effect on good order, discipline, morale and mission accomplishment.” The administration’s reaction neglected the crucial point: if the religious liberty of the Armed Forces were secure, there would be no need for an amendment to safeguard it.

July 9

The U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child attacked the Holy See by demanding that the Vatican turn over every document it has on priestly sexual abuse. The entity also wanted to know what the Catholic Church had done about discrimination between boys and girls; it was concerned about sexual stereotypes in school textbooks. The Catholic League responded with a news release highlighting the audacity of an entity comprised of 18 member nations, at least half of whom have a record of oppressing their own people.

July 25

Trenton and Newark, NJ – In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) did not provide funds for the recovery efforts to religious groups and houses of worship. Both the Archdiocese of Newark and the Diocese of Trenton saw extensive damage as a result of the storm and did not receive any assistance from FEMA. In the Archdiocese of Newark, the damage included several structures that were part of parishes and which served as community centers or meeting places for volunteers following the storm. In the Diocese of Trenton, the damage to structures and properties were expected to total between \$12 million and \$15 million. This was a clear instance of the government discriminating against religious groups in general and Catholic institutions in particular.

August 27

Albuquerque, NM – The New Mexico Supreme Court ruled that a small photography business owned by Christians does not have the right to decline to photograph a same-sex marriage ceremony. This was another example of the state using anti-discrimination laws to crack down on religious liberty.

September 30

Todd Starnes, host of the radio program Fox News and Commentary, wrote on FoxNews.com about how Evangelical Christian airmen at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas were facing “severe threats and retribution” for their religious beliefs relating to gay marriage. Starnes was told by Steve Branson, pastor of Village Parkway Baptist Church in San Antonio, about a private meeting at the church attended by at least 80 airmen who voiced “their concerns about religious hostilities at the Air Force base.” Among those at the meeting was Senior Master Sgt. Phillip Monk, a 19 year veteran who was facing a court martial after he refused to tell his lesbian commander his position on gay marriage. He had objected to her intention to “severely reprimand a new instructor who had expressed religious objections to homosexuality.” Monk, “who has a spotless record,” was relieved of his duties. When he filed a religious discrimination complaint against the Air Force, he was subsequently accused of giving false statements to Starnes and read his Miranda Rights.

Among other anti-discrimination incidents at the base reported by Starnes:

- “Gay and lesbian airmen can talk about their lifestyle, but the rest have to stay completely quiet about what they believe.”
- “One airman was told that even thinking that homosexuality is a sin is discriminatory.”
- “One member of the military was written up for having his Bible out – while a Muslim was allowed to publicly display a prayer rug.”
- Parents of a 19-year-old airman reported that he was told to

disclose his religion, and when he said “Christian,” he had to repeat basic training.

October

In the October issue of *Catalyst*, the Catholic League published “Obama’s War on Religion in the Ranks,” a recent article by Congressman Tim Huelskamp. In 2012, he introduced the Military Religious Freedom Protection Act, a bill which would address the problems he detailed in his article. Congressman Huelskamp said that, since President Obama took office in 2008, “the persecution of Christians and conservatives has become increasingly brazen and pervasive.” In fact, Huelskamp stated that “with the exceptions of free enterprise and traditional marriage, no institution has been more ‘radically transformed’ by the Obama regime than the Armed Forces.” Huelskamp cited thirteen examples of anti-Christian animus on the part of the Pentagon:

- Walter Reed Army Medical Center banned the family members of wounded warriors from “bringing or using bibles” during visits.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs banned Christian prayers at a National Cemetery.
- Even before the Supreme Court struck down DOMA in part, the Department of Defense authorized same-sex “marriages” at military installations.
- At Ft. Leavenworth, evangelical Christians were identified as a national security threat in a war games scenario.
- Evangelist Franklin Graham was uninvited from the Pentagon’s National Day of Prayer service.
- A training exercise funded by the Department of Homeland Security portrayed homeschooling families as domestic terrorists.
- An army master sergeant’s superiors told him to remove the conservative, Republican, and scripture-quoting bumper stickers from his personal vehicle.
- The Utah Air National Guard cancelled the six-year re-

enlistment contract of a tech sergeant because he told a chaplain he thought the West Point chapel should not be used for a homosexual wedding.

- An Air Force officer was required to hide from view the Bible he once kept on his desk.

- An Air Force chaplain's video tribute to sergeants was banned out of fear of offending an "agnostic, atheist, or Muslim." In the video, the chaplain narrated the following words: "On the eighth day, God looked down on His creation and said, 'I need someone who will take care of the Airmen. So God created a First Sergeant.'"

- Army Reserve training materials listed Evangelical Christianity, Catholicism, and Orthodox Judaism as extremist religious groups alongside Al-Qaeda and Hamas.

- Several Generals consulted Military Religious Freedom Foundation head Mikey Weinstein in writing Air Force policies concerning "religious tolerance." Weinstein told the *Washington Post* that the Defense Department expressed willingness to ban proselytizing. He added, "We need half a dozen court-martials real quick." The Pentagon issued a statement days later that announced: "Religious proselytization is not permitted within the Department of Defense."

October 5 – 12

The Obama administration, true to its anti-Catholic colors, took advantage of the partial government shutdown to deny some Catholic priests their right to say Mass.

Because there are not enough priests in the military to service all Catholics, the government contracts with members of the clergy to celebrate Mass, baptize children, and the like. But when the shutdown occurred, non-active duty priests who are hired as government contractors were furloughed. For two weekends, October 5-6 and October 11-12, these priests could not say Mass, denying many Catholic men and women in the armed forces their constitutional right to practice their

religion.

While both parties were to blame for the shutdown, it was the Obama administration that decided to war on the civil liberties of Catholics; it has had plenty of practice.

"It is one thing to deny services that carry no constitutional weight," Bill Donohue was quoted as saying, "quite another to censor the First Amendment."

A resolution was passed in the House on October 5 calling on Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to allow these priests to resume their duties. The Senate did nothing.

We urged Catholics to ask their senators, and Secretary Hagel, to end this disgraceful assault on the constitutional rights of Catholics immediately. We also supplied those who receive our e-mails the contact information at the Department of Defense. No doubt about it, Catholics were exploited by the administration for political purposes.

Threatened with a lawsuit by the Thomas More Law Center, the problem ended after the House and Senate agreed on a bill to resolve the debacle.

October 31

Fort Sill, OK – After learning that a female soldier enrolled in Advanced Individual Training at the base had thrice been denied the opportunity to go to Mass on Sundays, Bill Donohue wrote to Major General Mark McDonald at Fort Sill's U.S. Army Fires Center of Excellence.

Donohue noted that the "battle buddy" system they have requires soldiers to travel in pairs. He conceded that this arrangement surely has its merits, but he hastened to say that "it is not an adequate defense to deny someone her constitutional rights simply because there are no other Catholics in her unit." He added that a cadre escort "would resolve this matter, while not doing anything to undermine the

policy of moving about in pairs.”

Within hours of registering the formal complaint Donohue received an e-mail indicating that his complaint was being taken seriously. Donohue then called the base and spoke to the official who had contacted him. The conversation was amicable, and it resulted in assurances that a cadre escort service would be arranged for those soldiers who lacked a fellow Catholic to “buddy” with. More important, reforms were immediately put into place guaranteeing the religious liberty rights of Catholics on the base.

November

St. Paul, MN – There was a concerted effort on the part of anti-Catholic lawyers, city officials, journalists and professional victims’ groups to attack the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, which is headed by Archbishop John Nienstedt. For reasons that remain unexplained, the St. Paul Police Department decided to reopen a case involving a priest from the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis who was accused in 2004 of having child porn on his computer. He was investigated for seven months, and when nothing was found, the case was dropped. Now it has been reopened.

The reopening of this case came on the heels of a public plea by Commander Mary Nash asking anyone who was molested by a priest to come forward. She did not ask if someone had been abused by a rabbi, minister, school teacher, stepfather or police officer—only if it was a priest. This kind of religious profiling is legally suspect and morally unethical.

November 20

New York, NY – New York City Mayor-elect Bill de Blasio announced the appointment of 60 leaders to his transition committee. He instructed them to “identify women and men from every part of our city and walk of life” that wants a better New York. Transition Co-Chair Jennifer Jones Austin said that committee members “come from every slice of civic

life—business and labor, science and the arts, *clergy...*”
(*Italic added.*)

In fact, there were two ministers, two rabbis and one imam on the transition committee. There were no Catholic priests. Catholics make up 52.5 percent of New York City, yet they had no clergy representation.

To make matters worse, de Blasio showed his contempt for Catholics by naming to his transition committee the man who insulted them in 1998 with the “Sensation” exhibit, Arnold L. Lehman, director of the Brooklyn Museum of Art. That exhibit featured a portrait of Our Blessed Mother with elephant dung and pornographic cut outs on it. Another member of the transition team was Darren Walker. Walker is president of the Ford Foundation, the most generous donor to the most anti-Catholic and pro-abortion organization in the nation, Catholics for Choice.

After the Catholic League brought light to this issue, de Blasio named two Catholic leaders to his ceremonial inauguration committee: a monsignor from the Diocese of Brooklyn and a lay official from Catholic Charities. The committee continued to exclude any representation from the Archdiocese of New York, despite it covering more than half of New York City.



The *Denver Post* published this Mike Keefe cartoon on March 17. The cartoon shows several cardinals driving a popemobile that is covered in pedophilia, scandal and abuse. It is implied that the cardinals were allowing these things to happen while previous popes went along for the ride.

IRS TARGETED CATHOLIC LEAGUE

When news stories surfaced on the way the IRS was selectively targeting conservative and religious groups, Bill Donohue decided the time had come to disclose how the IRS targeted the Catholic League in 2008. He described what happened in an article for Newsmax.

Just weeks after Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, Donohue was notified by the IRS that the Catholic League was under investigation for violating the IRS Code on political activities as it relates to 501(c)(3) organizations. What the IRS did not know was that Donohue had proof of who contacted them to launch the investigation: Catholics United, a George Soros-funded Catholic organization.

The IRS was contacted on June 5, 2008 to launch a probe of the Catholic League, and the letter sent to Donohue was dated November 24, 2008. The June 5 letter was sent to the IRS by lawyers from Catholics United; one of the persons to whom it was mailed was Lois G. Lerner, the woman cited in the recent IRS scandal.

The “evidence” was nothing more than news releases and

articles that Donohue had written during the presidential campaign on various issues. The lawyers also asked the IRS to question the source of new funding we had received, implying that the Catholic League received illegal contributions. The timing was not coincidental. On October 20, Donohue issued a news release, "George Soros Funds Catholic Left," and on October 23, he wrote another one, "Catholic Left Scandal Mounts"; both mentioned Catholics United. The same day, October 23, he was asked to go on CNN, and when Catholics United found out, they contacted the station trying to spike the interview.

The person who did this was the head of Catholics United, Chris Korzen. He said Donohue was not "an authentic Catholic commentator and representative of the Catholic Church," and that they should either drop him altogether or put him on with Alexia Kelley of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good (Catholics United is listed on the 990 of Catholics in Alliance as a related organization; Soros greases this group, and by extension, Catholics United).

The bid to keep Donohue off TV failed. But here's the key: Korzen was dumb enough to share with CNN the complaint issued by his group to the IRS. The document, which was leaked by someone at CNN, matches nicely with the IRS complaint of November 24.

In the end, the IRS concluded that although the Catholic League had "intervened in a political campaign," it was "unintentional"; thus, the Catholic League's tax-exempt status remained intact.

HHS MANDATE CONTINUES TO TARGET CATHOLICS

The federal government's war on Roman Catholics that began in 2012 plowed full steam ahead in 2013, and so did the Catholic League's efforts to fight back.

While the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare, does

not explicitly target Catholics, or any other religious group, it was originally promised that the bill would respect the conscience rights of religious individuals and organizations. This included not mandating abortion coverage, something that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) fought hard for. It turned out not to be true.

In January 2012, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius issued an order that required all employers to provide coverage for abortifacients, contraception and sterilization, including religious non-profit entities. Having to pay for services deemed immoral was bad enough, but what was most objectionable about the HHS mandate was an abuse of power: the government decided to redefine what a Catholic organization was. For centuries, Catholic-run facilities proudly hired and served people of all faiths, never discriminating on the basis of religion. Now they were being punished for doing so. The mandate said that any religious entity that hires and serves mostly people of other religions is disqualified from the traditional religious exemption.

The Catholic League was hard at work relentlessly defending the constitutional right to religious freedom enjoyed not just by Catholics, but by people of every religion. We exposed the media bias not covering a bill that pushed back against the HHS mandate (a bill that was supported by Cardinal Sean O'Malley and the USCCB). We supported the bishop's criticisms of revisions to the mandate, and pressed for further changes. Finally we collected tens of thousands of signatures asking for the mandate to be withdrawn and sent them to Secretary Sebelius.

We received some encouraging news at the end of 2013, but not enough to relax. Organizations affiliated with the New York Archdiocese and Diocese of Rockville Centre won an injunction against the HHS mandate, as did groups in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Right before midnight on New Year's Eve, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor issued an injunction

protecting the Little Sisters of the Poor from the mandate. We expect the legal challenges to continue throughout 2014.

The following is a chronicle of our response in 2013.

March 19: HHS MANDATE GOES UNREPORTED

On March 5, a bill was introduced by Rep. Diane Black that challenged the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate, and the mainstream media did not report on it. The bill, which had the explicit support of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), would provide conscience rights protections in health care. Specifically, the legislation would ensure that the ObamaCare regulation forcing employers to provide coverage for abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization and contraception could not override the conscience rights of objecting parties.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the head of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, wrote to every member of the House on March 8, asking for their support. He urged them to make this a priority, incorporating it in the upcoming "must-pass" legislation.

When it comes to Catholic issues, the big dailies don't lack for coverage. But on this dispute, which pitted the bishops against the Obama administration, there was a blackout. Among those not reporting on this story were the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Miami Herald*, the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Denver Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Los Angeles Times*. The lone newspaper that covered this subject was the *Washington Times*. Not surprisingly, the failure of these newspapers to report on this story accounted for the lack of coverage by the broadcast news programs, as well as cable TV.

Religious liberty should mean something even to those who are

not observant. At stake is whether the federal government can impose a secular agenda on people of faith. Catholics, in particular, have been involved in this fight ever since the HHS mandate was introduced. For the media to ignore this issue was simply irresponsible.

March 20: BISHOPS FIND HHS REVISIONS FLAWED

A March 20 statement by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (made by general counsel Anthony Picarello and associate general counsel Michael F. Moses) on the HHS revisions was the most definitive assessment to date. Though they conceded that “the definition of an exempt ‘religious employer’ was revised to eliminate some of the intrusive and constitutionally improper government inquiries into religious teaching and beliefs that were inherent in an earlier definition,” the changes were still inadequate. Even the Obama administration admitted that its definition of a “religious employer” excluded many organizations that are widely understood as such.

Individual business owners also would not receive the relief they sought from the mandate. Moreover, the terms of what qualifies as an “accommodation” lacked clarity, thus creating unnecessary confusion. Most important, the HHS mandate as written represented “an unprecedented (and now sustained) violation of religious liberty by the federal government.”

In other words, despite some movement on the part of the administration, most Catholic entities were still vulnerable to the HHS edict. The only way to truly resolve this issue was for the administration to withdraw the mandate. Surely it could accommodate women seeking services that the Catholic Church sees as morally objectionable with a tax credit, or by some other means without burdening religious institutions.

June 28: HHS MANDATE FINAL RULES

The HHS mandate forcing Catholic non-profits to pay for

abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization did not kick in on August 1, as scheduled; an extension was granted to January 1, 2014.

There were some changes in the rules worth noting, but they are not satisfactory. Attempts to distance Catholic non-profits from directly providing insurance coverage for these morally objectionable services are admirable, but we've been there before: five months earlier Catholics were told that more in the way of accommodation was forthcoming, and we applauded that gesture. But now we know that the Obama administration came up short.

The Catholic community, and many others, are not asking for anything new: all we were asking for is to respect the status quo ante as it applies to this issue. It is not people of faith who sought this confrontation—it was President Obama.

August 29 – September 30: PETITION TO WITHDRAW HHS MANDATE

At the end of the summer, the Catholic League asked its online audience to sign the following petition that was posted on our website:

I am requesting that the Obama administration withdraw the Health and Human Services mandate.

Considering the amount of time and money that has been spent trying to fix the problems that are inherent in this legislation—without a satisfactory resolution—it makes no sense to continue this process any longer. Religious liberty is a First Amendment right that cannot be abridged by any administration or policy initiative. Indeed, it is our most important inalienable right: it is not a bargaining chip that can be traded for some other purpose. That is why I urge the Obama administration to withdraw the Health and Human Services mandate.

Tens of thousands signed the petition, and during the first

week of October we mailed all of the names to Kathleen Sebelius, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). We did not get a chance to contact our mailing list, but the point we wanted to make had been served: Catholics want their First Amendment right to religious liberty respected, and that meant dropping the HHS mandate.

We also contacted the Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court about our initiative. They will likely decide the ultimate fate of the HHS mandate, and they need to be aware of the resistance there is in the Catholic community to it. Obviously, one does not have to be Catholic to oppose this draconian edict; many Christians, Jews and others are equally outraged over this violation of religious liberty.

The Catholic community, led by the bishops, has voiced its objections to the HHS mandate on several occasions. The Obama administration has made "accommodations" and other revisions, but the fundamental problem remained: the HHS mandate adopted a definition of what constitutes a "religious employer" that is entirely too narrow; and the religious liberty abridgement entailed in this edict represented an unfair burden on Catholic non-profit organizations, and Catholic-owned private businesses.

The amount of time and money spent trying to reconcile the HHS mandate with legitimate First Amendment concerns was considerable, and without a satisfactory conclusion. Indeed, almost 70 lawsuits have been filed. The only sensible outcome for the administration was to withdraw the mandate altogether.

The problems inherent in ObamaCare are serious. From delaying "out-of-pocket costs" to postponing the employer mandate, it is evident that even those who support this legislation were growing weary. Add to this the more than a thousand waivers that were granted, and the loss of support by labor unions, and the result is alarming. But none of these factors are as important as the constitutional issues that the HHS mandate

presents: even if ObamaCare can be salvaged, the problems posed by the mandate remain.

UNJUST CALIFORNIA BILL VETOED

On October 12, California Governor Jerry Brown vetoed a bill that would have allowed adults who were allegedly molested when they were minors to file lawsuits, provided the abuse occurred in a private institution. The bill would have lifted the statute of limitations for one year. Gov. Brown's veto culminated a successful fight against this discriminatory bill led by Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez, the California Catholic Conference, and the Catholic League.

What follows is a summary of how the events unfolded.

On May 29, the full California State Senate passed SB 131. The bill would then be considered by the State Assembly.

On June 6, Bill Donohue wrote an open letter to members of the California Assembly showing that SB 131 was "irrational, discriminatory and grossly unjust" toward Catholic schools. Moreover, he cited extensive reports disproving a statement later made by Sen. Jim Beall, the bill's sponsor, that "public schools and teachers have been held to a higher standard of care when it comes to the protection of children and reporting of child sexual abuse, than have the clergy and private youth-serving institutions." In fact, unlike Catholic schools nationwide, there was still no mandatory training program in place for public school teachers and staff to combat the problem of sexual abuse of minors.

The letter was sent to every member of the California legislature. On June 18, the California Assembly Committee on the Judiciary kept the bill alive by voting in support. It was then sent back to the Senate for refinement.

Over the summer, the Catholic League contacted well over 10,000 members in California alerting them to a vote on a bill

in the Assembly Appropriations Committee that unfairly targeted the Catholic Church. We also e-mailed over a thousand pastors throughout the state. On August 14, the bill failed 6-4; there were seven abstentions. But on August 21, it passed 12-4, with a mighty push by the Democrats.

The final proof that this bill was driven more by anti-Catholicism than any alleged interest in child welfare came on September 4 when Republicans tried to amend the Beall legislation to include public institutions. It was defeated.

On September 6, the California Senate passed SB 131. The legislation was sent to Governor Jerry Brown to sign.

On September 10, Bill Donohue wrote a letter to Governor Brown outlining his concerns. It was delivered the next day. Donohue detailed the bill's rank injustice and provided many examples of the sexual abuse of minors in the public schools in California. His letter was sent to every bishop, including the auxiliary bishops, in California.

To view the text of Bill Donohue's letter to Governor Jerry Brown click [here](#).

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