

# **“HAIL MARY” BAR NIXED**

There will be no “Hail Mary’s Last Chance Sports and Spirits” bar in Rock Island, Illinois. Here’s what happened.

Two entrepreneurs, Bruce Millage and Jeffrey Guthrie, recently purchased a building that housed a former synagogue in Rock Island. They planned to turn it into a sports bar by the name, “Hail Mary’s Last Chance.” Their intent was to borrow the famous football quip about a “Hail Mary” pass and use it as the name of their new bar. But area Catholics weren’t amused.

Priests like Father James Ramer of St. Anne’s in East Moline quickly complained, as did many area lay Catholics. Bishop Daniel Jenky of Peoria, Illinois made public his criticism. Then the Catholic League entered the fray.

William Donohue wrote to Jeff Guthrie explaining what the Catholic League is all about. He then said, “What you and Mr. Millage are planning to do is disturbing, but perhaps it is not too late for you to reconsider.” He ended by saying, “Please let me know what your plans are regarding this important matter as it will impact on my decision.”

Just days after the letter was mailed, Donohue fielded a phone call from Bruce Millage. He said there was never any intent to offend Catholics, and that is why he and his partner have dropped the name “Hail Mary” from the bar’s name. They are now running a contest to decide what would be an appropriate name.