

HARD ROCK HOTEL PULLS ALTAR

After responding to pressure brought by the Catholic League, the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino of Las Vegas, Nevada withdrew an offensive altar from its bar. The league mounted a protest of the misuse of a Catholic altar by taking out a half-page ad in the pages of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*. The altar was removed on November 27, three days ahead of schedule.

The league involved itself in this case after it had become apparent that the Hard Rock Hotel was not willing to accede to the requests of area Catholics that the altar be removed. By giving the incident publicity, both nationally as well as locally, the Catholic League was able to secure the support of many influential Catholics, some of whom put pressure on Hard Rock to pull the altar. It cost the Hard Rock approximately a quarter million dollars to remove the altar and replace it with some other fixture.

Stephen Cavallaro, the Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Las Vegas Hard Rock Hotel, had earlier told Dr. Donohue that the altar was not really an altar, rather it was "a wooden object found in someone's basement." In his letter to Dr. Donohue explaining the decision to remove the altar, he said that on "November 27, 1995, the antique architecture in the Viva Las Vegas Lounge was fully dismantled and removed." At last.