

HBO SHOULD LEARN FROM NBA

Bill Maher's obsession with Catholicism was on display again recently. His joking around about the pope being an atheist crossed no lines, nor did his swipe at Jesus being a hippie. But he just can't get through a conversation about the Catholic Church without getting dirty.

Guest Paul Rudnick, a homosexual playwright known for his filthy and anti-Catholic productions, quoted a Vatican official who said, "People who truly know the Catholic Church cannot be saved if they refuse to enter or remain in her." Maher replied, "Remain in her?" To which Rudnick said, "Yeah, presumably without using a condom."

Over the weekend, Indiana Pacers center Roy Hibbert apologized profusely for saying "no homo" (and an obscenity) in a news conference. The NBA did not consider his remorse sufficient: he was fined \$75,000.

Maher is a recidivist: his vulgar characterizations of priests, dating back decades, make him the most anti-Catholic bigot in the entertainment industry. But he pays no price for his bigotry. Time Warner (the parent company of HBO) knows all about his record—we recently sent its officials a detailed list of his Catholic-bashing remarks—and still does nothing.

Fining Maher for his speech would be absurd, but there are other things that could be done to get him to treat Catholics as if they were, say, gays. One thing is for sure: the NBA takes bigotry and obscenity seriously, which is more than we can say for HBO/Time Warner.