

# HE WHO LAUGHS FIRST, LAUGHS LAST

The school staff thought it was cute. The local newspaper thought it was cute. The Catholic League didn't, and that is why we brought the issue to the attention of the authorities.

The Halloween celebrations at Tillamook High School in Tillamook, Oregon, took a different turn this year. On November 4, in the pages of the *Headlight-Herald*, was a picture of five female staff members from the school dressed as nuns and a male staff person dressed as a priest. All were photographed holding long rulers aimed at the body of a young boy who was squatting in front of them. The "nuns" were wearing huge rosary beads around their neck. The newspaper thought this scam hilarious, dubbing it "'Divine' intervention?"

Our response was to notify the Department of Education in the state capitol of Salem, alerting them to a problem at Tillamook High School. When asked what the problem was, we simply said it involved staff members who brought religious artifacts (the rosary beads) to a public school. What we want to know is what the policy is regarding such an infraction of church-state lines, and what penalties are ascribed. We then want the policy to be applied to the offenders.

In the event we are told that this was just in fun, then we'll contact the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice asking for an investigation: we want to know what the penalties are for public institutions which take public monies to mock a world religion.

We know there are plenty of school officials who wouldn't blink an eye confiscating rosary beads from Catholic students

in public schools, but who would gladly turn a blind eye to antics such as these. But they can't have it both ways any longer.