

IS CUBA MORE RESPECTFUL OF GOOD FRIDAY?



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the way Cuba and the United States commemorate Good Friday:

The Cuban government has acceded to Pope Benedict XVI's request to declare Good Friday a holiday. Yet in the U.S., nine major league baseball games will be played. It's time Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig took a page from the Communists and exercised some prudence: there should be no games on Good Friday.

In 2009, Congressman Anthony Weiner asked Selig to move the start of the New York Yankees' home game against the Boston Red Sox to 1:00 p.m. so that observant Jews could attend services on Yom Kippur; it was scheduled for an 8:00 p.m. start, after sundown. Selig conceded, as he should have. But it should not take a congressman to get Selig to be more respectful of holy days.

While it may be too late to cancel the games this Friday, at the very least Selig should respect the "O'Connor Rule" in the future: in 1998, John Cardinal O'Connor was critical of the decision to play major league baseball on Good Friday, and was particularly disturbed by playing during the 12 to 3 hours (the period of the crucifixion). Cardinal O'Connor said it well when he remarked that "playing on Good Friday, at the very least from 12 to 3, is cheap and cheapens our culture, no matter how big the box-office receipts."

The Catholic League commends the Cincinnati Reds for moving

their home opener from Good Friday to Thursday. I will ask Commissioner Selig to respect the "O'Connor Rule" in the future.