

JAY LENO'S DUPLICITY IS APPALLING

Jay Leno apologized yesterday for asking actor Ryan Phillippe to give his "gayest look" during a recent show. The actor was quite uncomfortable with Leno's quip and the late-night host came under fire by gay rights groups for his remarks.

Commenting today is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

"We have a fat file on Leno's anti-Catholic comments, and with the lone exception of his phone call to me apologizing for his Catholic-bashing rant on February 7, 1997, we haven't heard a word from him regarding our many complaints. Just last July we issued a news release calling him to task for bashing priests and the pope six times in five weeks. And he was at it again on February 18 of this year, leading me to ask the show's executive producer Debbie Vickers the following question: 'It is not likely that all of Leno's writers are bigots, so could you please identify the person who is obsessed with bashing the Catholic Church?'

"This is not the first time the show has shown that it has a conscience. On October 19, 2007, an anti-Semitic remark by Halle Berry was bleeped on air.

"So what conclusion are we to draw? The same one we've drawn before: Gays and Jews are protected classes in Hollywood, but Catholics are not. Looks like Hollywood needs an affirmative action plan to hire Catholics. In the event it happens, we recommend that they advertise, *Only practicing Catholics need apply*. We won't get our hopes up, and in the meantime it is worth noting that Jay Leno's duplicity is appalling."

Contact Leno's executive producer at Debbie.Vickers@nbc.com