

# “JOHNNIE WALKER RED” IS NO CATHOLIC

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on media reports that label John Walker, the American Taliban fighter, a Catholic:

“No newspaper has been more irresponsible in reporting on John Walker’s upbringing than the *Houston Chronicle*. In its December 4 headline on Walker it said, ‘Catholic teen molded into bloodied Taliban fighter.’ It then commented on his ‘middle-class Catholic parents.’

“The first mistake is in thinking that Walker’s father is a practicing Catholic. He told the *San Francisco Chronicle* (12/5) that he was ‘raised Catholic,’ suggesting he no longer is. Walker’s mother converted to Buddhism years ago (*Sunday Telegraph*, 12/17). As for their son, it is hard to see how he can accurately be called Catholic when his own mother trained him in Native American spirituality and Buddhism (*Boston Globe*, 12/10) and encouraged him to dabble in Hinduism (*Calgary Herald*, 12/9). Indeed, a friend of Ms. Walker said of her that she ‘opened all doors for her kids’ in contrast to ‘dragging her kids into Catholicism like she’d been dragged into it’ (*Time*, 12/17). Shelby Steele in the *Wall Street Journal* (12/10) remarked that Walker’s upbringing was anchored in the kind of ‘fashionable relativism’ that ‘makes places like Marin County so cool.’

“In terms of formal religious training, John Walker had none. Not until he traveled to Pakistan to attend an Islamic school in the village of Bannu, that is (*Washington Post*, 12/3). As a matter of fact, he was home schooled by his Buddhist mother (*Newsweek*, 12/17), then went to Kensington-Parkwood Elementary School in Montgomery County (*Washington Post*, 12/4) and finally graduated from an ‘elite alternative high school where

students are allowed to shape their own studies' (Newsweek, 12/17). That hardly sounds like a typical Catholic education.

"In short, Johnnie Walker Red is no Catholic. He was raised by flower children and wound up a confused filthy Hippy Dippy treasonous lout."