

KLAN RALLY IN PITTSBURGH SEEKS CATHOLIC SUPPORT

On Saturday, April 5, the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is scheduled to march in downtown Pittsburgh. This branch of the Klan, which is headquartered in Indiana, is making an appeal to Roman Catholics, hoping to garner their support. A recent story in the *Tribune-Review*, a newspaper from the eastern Pittsburgh community of Greensburg, suggested that in the past decade "the Klan dropped its anti-Catholic message." Stories like this have fed the rumor that the Klan is now receptive to Catholics.

Commenting on this development is Catholic League president William Donohue:

"From its inception, the Klan has been viciously anti-Catholic, as well as anti-black and anti-Jewish. All the phony appeals to Catholics that are now being made can never change the Klan's notoriously anti-Catholic heritage. That is why it is important for all Catholics, and especially Catholic leaders, to denounce without equivocation the march in Pittsburgh.

"It is especially disturbing to read news reports, like the one that appeared in the *Tribune-Review*, that say that the Klan has dropped its anti-Catholic message. It has done nothing of the kind. Indeed, I personally contacted the sociologist who was cited in the story as the basis for this conclusion and she quickly branded the statements attributed to her as false. Professor Kathleen Blee, Director of the Women's Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh, maintains that the Klan has not ceased to be anti-Catholic and nothing in her scholarship has ever suggested otherwise.

"Because the Klan is a paramilitary terrorist organization, it

should be given no presumptive right to exist in a democratic nation. However, the authorities have seen fit to protect their right to march. This makes it all the more imperative for Catholics to reject the Klan's overtures by joining the scheduled counter-demonstration against them."