

LANDS' END NEUTERS CHRISTMAS

When the Catholic League got a tip from one of its members that Lands' End refuses to use the word "Christmas" in its catalog—even though it sells Christmas items—we verified its authenticity. Printed below is part of the reply we received from Merlin W. Gorsline in the Customer Relations Department to an inquiry we made regarding the refusal of Lands' End to mention the word "Christmas":

"We find ourselves in a difficult position with this issue. As a result, we have adopted the 'holiday' terminology as a way to comply with one of the basic freedoms granted to all Americans: freedom of religion. We recognize that Christmas is a Christian holiday, and one of the foremost teachings of the Christian faith is a love for one's fellowman—no matter what his race, religion or creed.

"If we knew which customers feel as you do, we would be delighted to send them catalogs with 'Merry Christmas' splashed throughout the pages. However, we don't."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

"Freedom of religion is an important constitutional right, but to say that fidelity to that right demands that retailers censor the term Christmas at Christmastime wouldn't even be believed by the judges from the Ninth Circuit. Nor is it good customer relations to tell Christians who desire to buy Christmas gifts at Christmastime that they are a loveless bunch of bigots who have an impoverished understanding of their own religion.

"And it's not as though the decision to neuter Christmas is done to protect Jewish sensibilities: the company doesn't sell Hanukkah gifts, but it does sell Christmas gifts (108 of them).

“Lands’ End says that if it knew who to send a ‘Merry Christmas’ catalog to, it would. So do it: contact landsend@landsend.com right away.”