

League Ad Praises Holy Father, And Sends Message to Critics

On Sunday, October 16, an ad by the Catholic League praising Pope John Paul II was published in the Opinion-Editorial section of the *New York Times*. The ad congratulated the Holy Father for his 16 years of service, drawing attention to his importance as a world leader ([see Ad](#)). What the Holy Father has accomplished is unparalleled: he is the supreme role model – not just for Catholics, but for everyone.

The ad also sent a message to those who habitually find fault with the Catholic Church. We Catholics are proud of Church teachings, proud of what the Church has done and proud to be a part of it. Those who set themselves against the Church may be in the limelight, but in the end that hardly matters. What matters transcends the politics of the moment and that is why the Catholic Church is never at the risk of being outdated.

We all looked forward to the Pope's trip to New York, but we all understood the reasons why he could not make it. Had the Holy Father been able to make the trip, we would have been able to show the press nearly 20,000 petitions that were signed by Catholic League members calling on the media to act responsibly in its reporting of the events surrounding the Pontiff's visit. Though delivery of the petitions will have to wait until the Pope's visit of November 1995, the decision to go ahead with the *New York Times* ad was unaffected by the surprise cancellation.

We decided to go forward with the ad for several reasons. We had already pledged to do it and did not want to go back on our word. Besides, we wanted to extend a public congratulations to Pope John Paul II and wanted to make a

statement to the public about the Catholic League's thoughts on several matters.

We live in a world that, though more at peace than in times past, nonetheless suffers from cultural turbulence, much of it the product of false and debilitating ideas of freedom. In the midst of this storm lay the Catholic Church, the steadiest anchor to be found anywhere in the world. And at the helm, of course, is Pope John Paul II, a person recognized by non-Catholics, as well as Catholics, as offering the clearest example of what it means to be virtuous and free.

Our ad speaks to the sharp differences that separate the reigning orthodoxy from the teachings of the Holy Father. It also touches on issues that are central to the Catholic League, namely the problem of anti-Catholicism. We will leave it to the next edition of *Catalyst* to report on the public's response to the ad.