

LEAGUE PROTESTS KLAN RALLY IN PITTSBURGH

On April 5, 50 members of the American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan marched in downtown Pittsburgh, drawing public denunciation from the Catholic League. Some wore Nazi uniforms and organizers of the march declared it a victory for white supremacists. The league denounced the march and was particularly upset with the attempt by the Klan to appeal to Roman Catholics for support.

The league also objected to a bogus story in the Tribune-Review, a newspaper from the eastern Pittsburgh community of Greensburg, suggesting that the Klan has "dropped its anti-Catholic message." This story, along with Klan propaganda, fed the rumor that the Klan is now receptive to Catholics.

Bishop Donald Wuerl criticized the Klan rally and held a special Mass before the march. William Donohue addressed both the Klan's appeal and the story in the Tribune-Review in a news release; it is printed below.

"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."