

LET'S HAVE A PARTY—BUT NOT A CHRISTMAS ONE

Catholic League president William Donohue today addressed what's been happening to Christmas parties in the workplace:

“For decades, employees at *Time* magazine had a Christmas party and looked forward to receiving a Christmas bonus. But starting three years ago, the party was banned and so were the Christmas bonuses. This is not to say that bonuses are no longer given—they are—it's just that the dreaded ‘C-word’ is no longer associated with them. This is progress.

“The mayor of Somerville, Massachusetts recently apologized for calling the city's Christmas party a Christmas party. It's now a Holiday party.

“ProGroup diversity specialists advise that one way around the ‘December Dilemma’ is to ‘keep holidays inclusive and informative.’ So they suggest, ‘try using seasonal themes rather than a holiday one.’ Good idea—holiday themes remind people of Christmas.

“Simm Lieberman Associates bluntly advises, ‘make sure your Holiday party isn't a Christmas party in disguise.’ Off with the red and green!

“The Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding is not too understanding of Christmas this year, and that is why it wants a ‘Seasonal’ or ‘Winter’ party and a ‘Seasonal’ or ‘Holiday’ exchange.

“Matt Cherry of the Institute of Humanist Studies also favors ‘Holiday’ parties over Christmas parties and advocates secret ‘Snowflakes’ instead of secret ‘Santas.’

“An AP story says corporations are ‘barring religious music

from cubicles' and are calling their Christmas parties 'end of the year' parties.

"If you're looking for an explanation for all this, consider what Arlene Vernon of HrxInc says: employers need to be 'sensitive to the fact that holidays don't make everyone happy.' If she had any guts, she'd advocate banning Christmas altogether, but that may affect her profits."