

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS APOLOGIZES

Father Thomas Haren walked into the Library of Congress on January 22nd and was told by a security guard that he had to remove the sweatshirt he was wearing over his Roman collar. He was informed that his sweatshirt was “political” and therefore could not be worn in the library. The sweatshirt read, “St. Jerome Church Marches for Right For Life.”

When he returned to Cleveland, Father Haren complained to the head of security for the Library of Congress. He got no response. Then he wrote to James Billington, the Librarian of the Congress, and got nowhere. Next stop was to contact his congressman, Dennis Kucinich, who, in turn, wrote a letter making plain his objections. But no one answered. Lawyers got involved after that, but they, too, got the same treatment. Then Father Haren contacted the Catholic League.

William Donohue told the Library’s general counsel that he would take this case to the courts, the media, or both. In short order, Father Haren received an apology from the Library’s Director of Security.

“We agree that the Library acted inappropriately by denying you entry to the Library because you were wearing a garment with a church-related statement,” said the director. “I apologize to you for the inconvenience and any embarrassment caused by this regrettable incident.”