

# LONG ISLAND PARISHES WILL NOT JOIN PETITION DRIVE

Catholic League president William Donohue learned today about the request by Bishop William F. Murphy not to involve Long Island parishes in the dispute between Voice of the Faithful and the Catholic League.

Voice of the Faithful wants Bishop Murphy to resign. In response, the Catholic League has begun a petition drive in support of him. On July 29, Donohue sent a letter to all the pastors in the Diocese of Rockville Centre requesting that they ask parishioners to sign the petition. But today Bishop Murphy sent a letter asking the pastors to stay out of it.

Accordingly, William Donohue revised the league's position as follows:

"The Catholic League is deeply appreciative of the kind words that Bishop Murphy has written about our support for him. Regarding our petition drive involving the parishes, his instincts are right on target: this is a dispute between lay Catholics that should not involve the parishes. Indeed, to do so would unnecessarily politicize matters. That is why we are now faxing and mailing a letter to every pastor requesting he accede to Bishop Murphy's request. 'I fully understand his reservations,' I said, 'and respectfully second his call to keep the parishes out of this conflict.'

"In my letter to the pastors I added, 'The Catholic League is a team player that will never do anything to undermine the Church, and that is why Bishop Murphy's request will gladly be honored.' I concluded by saying, 'Unlike some other organizations, we do not have a hidden agenda.'

"Board members of the Long Island chapter of the Catholic League are holding an emergency meeting tonight to discuss

various methods by which the petition can be distributed. I am delighted by their energy and commitment to this important cause. Regarding Catholic League members on Long Island, they will be mailed the petition tomorrow and should receive it some time next week."