

MEDIA INTEREST IN KERRY'S CATHOLICISM GROWS

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"The Catholic League does not possess a theological micrometer that judges, with digital precision, how 'good' a Catholic is. Furthermore, it is not our business anyway. But it is also true that we will not pretend disinterest in subjects that touch on the issue of Catholics in public life.

"This week's issue of *Time* magazine says Senator John Kerry 'sought an annulment of his 18-year first marriage before marrying again.' News reports indicate, however, that Kerry didn't seek an annulment until after he married Teresa Heinz in a civil ceremony in 1995. Today's *New York Times* says Kerry 'sought an annulment from the church when he was divorced from his first wife.' Notice that neither *Time* nor the *New York Times* says that an annulment was granted. They say it was 'sought.'

"Kerry cannot claim that this is a private matter since he publicly joked about his quest for an annulment on the Don Imus show of May 8, 1997. 'Seventy-five percent of all annulments in the world take place in the United States,' Kerry said, 'and I guess the figure drops to 50 percent if you take out all Massachusetts politicians.' He continued saying, 'It's one of those special Catholic things. It's like confession or feeling guilty about things you haven't even thought of doing.'

"On February 16, 2004, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reported that 'Kerry's office didn't respond to several e-mail and telephone requests' regarding the question of whether an annulment was granted. On March 23, 2003,

the *Providence Journal-Bulletin* said that Kerry 'will not say whether he obtained an annulment of his first marriage....' Why the reticence, especially since Kerry says his 'current marriage is in good graces with the church?'

"Why does this matter? If Kerry did not receive an annulment, then he is not married in the Catholic Church and cannot receive the sacraments. But even if he was annulled, did he and Teresa Heinz get married in the Catholic Church following the annulment? If not, then Kerry is not married in the Church, thus raising all sorts of questions."