

MEDIA SPIN OVER “THE PASSION”

Here is what Catholic League president William Donohue said today about the way the media are spinning the furor over “The Passion of the Christ”:

“In today’s *Los Angeles Times*, it says there are ‘some conservative Catholics’ who like ‘The Passion.’ The next sentence describes me as the ‘president of the conservative Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.’ This, I guess, is an improvement over what happened on January 24 when the *Los Angeles Times* called us ‘the conservative Catholic League (which is not affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church).’ Really? Yet we are listed in the *Official Catholic Directory*, and our brochure lists endorsements from Cardinal Mahony, Cardinal Egan, Archbishop Chaput, Archbishop O’Malley and Father Benedict Groeschel. Not exactly what one would expect from a schismatic group.

“The ADL is leading the fight against the movie. But no one in the secular media calls it the ‘liberal ADL’ when writing about its objections. Indeed, a Nexis search of U.S. news for all available dates for the term ‘conservative Catholic League’ turns up 136 hits (135 of which have come since I began as president in 1993); the number of times the ADL has been called the ‘liberal ADL’ is zero. This is called being neutral.

“A.O. Scott in today’s *New York Times* lists three anti-Christian movies, ‘Hail Mary,’ ‘Last Temptation of Christ’ and ‘Dogma.’ Not only does Scott refuse to call them anti-Christian, he says there was ‘an ugly undercurrent of anti-Semitism [that] ran through some of the attacks on those *supposedly sacrilegious movies*.’ Scott also says that anti-Semitic ‘insinuations bubble beneath the surface of some of the defenses of Mr. Gibson’s *reportedly pious picture*.’ (Twice my emphasis.)

“In short, there are no liberal critics of ‘The Passion’; there are only ‘conservatives’ who like it. Similarly, those who complain about anti-Christian films are anti-Semitic, and those who like good Christian films are also anti-Semitic. The upshot is that most Americans are anti-Semitic. Either that or those who hate Christians have no problem getting a job in the media.”