

# MENORAH IS A RELIGIOUS SYMBOL

The *Sun-Sentinel*, a south Florida newspaper, has an editorial today criticizing the Catholic League for its claim that Christians are being discriminated against in Boca Raton: the City allows a menorah in public buildings, but not manger scenes. The editorial says, "local governments have been fairly consistent that nativity scenes are religious symbols that violate the separation of church and state when on public property, but that secular symbols like menorahs and Christmas trees do not."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds:

This is the most remarkably ignorant editorial I have ever read on this subject. If what the *Sun-Sentinel* said were true, then there would be no nativity scenes on public property anywhere in the United States. In fact, they appear in State Capitols, Governors' Mansions, outside municipal buildings, and in public parks. They even allow nativity scenes in Boca Raton's Sanborn Square Park! On December 16, the Catholic League will display a life-size nativity scene on public property—it's called Central Park—just as we have since the mid-1990s; Jews displayed the world's largest menorah there over Hanukkah.

If the *Sun-Sentinel* were correct, then all of these crèches are illegal. I have a wager for them: tell those who share your ignorance to sue the Catholic League once we put our manger scene up in Central Park. And remind them to sue the New York City Parks Department as well—they granted us the permit.

Someone at the *Sun-Sentinel* needs to tell an Orthodox rabbi that a menorah is a secular symbol. They also need to educate the public: they should explain why a symbol that represents a *miracle* is considered secular in nature. And then they need to

inform all federal judges that the Second Circuit erred when it said, in its 2006 ruling, *Skoros v. City of New York*, that “The Supreme Court and our sister circuits agree that the menorah is a *religious* symbol.” (My italic.)

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