

MILWAUKEE HATE SPEECH PUBLICLY FUNDED



Bill Donohue comments on the Milwaukee Art Museum's anti-Catholic exhibition and its reliance on public funding:

Anti-Catholic art is always objectionable, but it is doubly so when it is publicly funded. Such is the case with the Milwaukee Art Museum: it is now showcasing a portrait of Pope Benedict XVI made up of condoms; it was supposed to be displayed in November, but they moved the date to July 30. I have already addressed this hate speech, disguised as art, for what it is, and the lame defenses that officials associated with the museum have offered (click [here](#)). Now it's time to examine the museum's funding.

At the federal level, the National Endowment for the Arts gave this museum an \$80,000 grant during the period of August 2008 to April 2010. In addition, it received \$212,500 in federal aid from other sources. Statewide, it receives monies from the Wisconsin Arts Board; it was given \$17,500 in fiscal year 2015. At the local level, it receives funding from the Milwaukee Arts Board for some exhibitions.

The arts community typically defends itself by saying that not every controversial exhibition receives public funding. But money, being fungible, means the taxpayers are on the hook for contributing to institutes that sanction hate speech.

Catholics in Wisconsin, and in Milwaukee, should not be forced to have their hard-earned dollars underwrite a museum that denigrates their religion. If Catholics are forbidden from erecting a nativity scene on public property, the state should be forbidden from funding speech that trashes Catholicism.

We are contacting public officials in the executive and legislative branches of both the state of Wisconsin and the city of Milwaukee. Because officials from the Milwaukee Arts Museum refuse to act responsibly, the time has come to deny public funding to this establishment.

Perhaps Governor Scott Walker can prod the state legislature to act.

Contact Governor Walker's office: govgeneral@wisconsin.gov