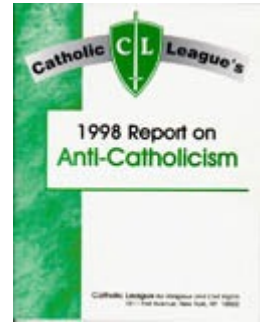


Miscellaneous

1998



Lodi, CA – *Is the Virgin Mary Dead or Alive?* published by Modern Manna Ministries, accuses the Catholic Church of leading people “to regard Mary as the most important being there is, greater than Jesus himself.” Deploing Pope John Paul II’s popularity with young people, the book declares, “Obviously, the pope of Rome is a major player in selling the counterfeit Mary to the world, youth included.”

Other “highlights” of the 90 page work:

“Only one ‘religious’ organization has been responsible for more persecutions and deaths of faithful Bible-believing Christians than any other sect in history–The Holy Roman Catholic Church!”

“The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome.”

“Ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of councils before unheard of were discovered, establishing the universal supremacy of the pope from the earliest times. And a church that had rejected the truth greedily accepted these deceptions.”

“The name Vatican, therefore, is literally interpreted–The Divining Serpent.”

January

Las Vegas, NV – A memo to corporate presidents—sent to a number of Catholic businessmen—was forwarded to the league. The writer alleged that his now-deceased personal physician had “set up and directed killing fields throughout the United States,” using the Catholic Church as his network for the killing of 50,000 people between 1977 and 1989. The writer alleged that his doctor “took over the reigns of power in the American Catholic Churches” by engaging in sodomy with thousands of Catholic businessmen, then blackmailing them to support his schemes.

January 17

St. Clair Shores, MI – A statue was stolen from outside St. Isaac Jogues Church, broken, then returned to the church with the painted inscription, “Your God is Dead.”

January 26

Commenting on Pope John Paul II’s visit to Cuba, *Balaam’s Ass*, an on-line “journal for Bible believers,” accused the pope of “trying to buy the heart of Cuba by making their fetishes sacral and official. What a cheap yet historic trick,” the editor continued. “This has gone on for centuries...It will be interesting to see if Castro falls on his face before the Pope and kisses his holy toe like so many other dip heads have lately.”

February

Ocala, FL – An obscene and blasphemous T-shirt, of unknown origin, was the subject of a court dispute. The shirt that depicted a topless nun masturbating, with a vile comment about Jesus on the flip side. The shirt also promoted an English “death metal band” called Cradle of Filth, known primarily for songs filled with references to Satan and devil worship.

February

Cincinnati, OH – “The Journals,” a novel published by DaScribe Literary Marketing Services, Inc., tells the story of Allison, who from age six has been raised in a Catholic orphanage—complete with a harsh Mother Superior whom she nicknames “Mother Peculiar.” Allison is a female messiah, parented by God and Earth—the wife of God. Allison is given “Agnostics,” a heretofore undiscovered book of the Bible, containing new revelations. The Church hierarchy, however, panicked that these new revelations will threaten their power, seeks to suppress them by imprisoning Allison. For good measure, as this female messiah comes of age, she commences a lesbian relationship with her roommate at the orphanage.

February 10

Enclosing some anti-Catholic tracts from a Seventh Day Adventist minister, an anonymous letter-writer sent the league a piece of hate mail identifying “the Crusades, the Inquisitions, the pogroms...these major happenstances of murder, rape, torture and theft” as “the history of the Roman Catholic Church—state military dictatorship and despotism. Untold millions have been slaughtered in the name of Jesus, Mary and the pope.

“The day fast approaches,” the writer worried, “when your great big worldly neo-pagan ‘Christian’ organization will once again rule the nations. And once again it will persecute those who disagree.”

Noting that “Jesus often told people not to tell the authorities about his whereabouts,” the writer said he felt “safer” remaining anonymous. “However I know that someday, like my Lord Jesus I will suffer at the hands of the beast which you represent.”

February 14

Baton Rouge, LA – Certain religious leaders find it impossible to promote their own beliefs without denigrating the Catholic Church. The *Baton Rouge Advocate* featured an ad from Minister Clinton W. Palmer of the Christian Church of Baton Rouge, which questioned whether Catholics are “Allowed to Believe the Truth regarding the Eternal Virginity of Mary; Prayer and Baptism?”

February 28

Miami, FL – “Earth’s Final Warning,” an apocalyptic anti-Catholic ad which the Eternal Gospel SDA Church has been putting in papers around the country, found its way back into the *Miami Herald*. Last year, the *Herald* had responded to a league complaint by promising not to again run the identical ad, which warns, among other things, that we are all doomed because the Catholic Church has succeeded in making Sunday the Sabbath. After being again contacted by the league, a *Herald* spokesman explained that they had not realized it was the same ad, and that they would take up our concerns at a subsequent staff meeting.

March

A new novel by Mary Gordon, *Spending*, is a sex novel about a jaded artist who wants to profane images of “dead Christs.” Her desire is to do “a series of paintings of postorgasmic men based on the great Italian Renaissance portraits of dead Christs.” Gordon also takes a shot at the league in the novel, portraying a “Catholic Defense League” as an agent of censorship.

April

Kingston, PA – Bishop O’Reilly High School was the target of community busy-bodies seeking to interfere with the school’s discipline policies. After students in the junior class were rude and disrespectful to a visiting auxiliary bishop, the school announced that the junior class would be barred from

the school prom. A local radio station, "Hot 97" (WBHT, 97.1), began a crusade to reward the juniors for their misbehavior, announcing that it would organize a free prom for them. Other businesses quickly joined in, offering facilities free of charge, music and flowers, and even free dental check-ups for these students. The school stood its ground however, with strong support from parents and backing from the league, and ultimately the busy-bodies backed down.

April

Hays, KS – Vandals wreaked havoc at cemeteries and churches in three small western Kansas communities. Figures of Christ were smashed to smithereens, headstones were broken, crucifixes were pulled from an altar and destroyed, and a memorial to unborn children was vandalized.

April

Dallas, TX – A man distributing anti-Catholic literature at the Dallas/Forth Worth Airport also set up a poster display denigrating Catholicism. One poster was a blow-up of the *Time* magazine cover honoring Pope John Paul II as "Man-of-the-Year." On the bottom, however, under the Pope's picture, was written "The Anti-Christ." Another poster warned, "Don't let Catholics control our Constitution." The literature being handed out included a newspaper, *The Protestant*, which consisted of 16 pages of anti-Catholic fear-mongering. Some examples:

"Is it Rome's Purpose to make America Catholic?"

"Hearest Thou the Dragon Speaking"

"Roman Dogma and Tradition – Freedoms (sic) Foe!"

"The Civil War and Rome's Involvement"

"New United Catholic States of Europe"

"Why Is The Vatican Trying To Change Our Constitution?"

"Protestants Seek Unity – Rome's After A Takeover"

Even a seemingly positive story—"Pope Brings Down Iron Curtain"—concludes that there is "some connection" between Catholicism and Communism, and that in fact "Roman Catholicism is the more dangerous of the two for Protestants."

April

An anonymous piece of hate mail told the league to "keep your religious crap inside your tax-exempt churches," and to "tell that paranoid moron Donohue he does not have a right to stick all his religious crap all over our public property."

April 2

Tulsa, OK – Parishioners attending noon Mass at Holy Family Cathedral were greeted with profanity, swastikas and anti-Catholic messages carved into the cathedral door.

April 12

Ocala, FL – Parishioners at Queen of Peace Catholic Church found the notoriously anti-Catholic comic booklets of Chick Publications on their cars as they left Easter Sunday Mass. Among the publications: "Why is Mary Crying?" (Answer: Because Catholics have "embarrassed" her by referring to her as the Mother of God.) "Are Roman Catholics Christians?" "The Death Cookie" (The Eucharist), and "Last Rites."

April – May

Brooklyn, NY – Three times in two months, Holy Cross Catholic Church in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn was vandalized.

On Palm Sunday, two trees were set on fire in front of Providence House, a parish residence for battered women and their children, as well as for 20 nuns.

The following Tuesday a fire was set at the foot of a life-size crucifix, and another one in a mattress at the rear of the Church property.

On May 5, the large wooden corpus was stolen from the same crucifix.

May

Washington, DC – The United States Holocaust Museum came under criticism from several prominent Jewish intellectuals, and subsequently from the league, for its unfair depiction of Christianity. Most offensive is the museum's film, "Anti-Semitism." Beyond its failure to distinguish between anti-Judaism and Hitler's murderous, neo-pagan anti-Semitism, the film actually places blame on Catholicism for the Nazi genocide of the Jewish people. Hitler is identified as "Austrian born and baptized a Catholic," and is quoted as saying, "The difference between the Church and me is that I am finishing the job." When asked by the league, and others, for verification of this astounding quote, the museum could offer none.

May

Novelist John Irving, asked by *George* magazine what he would outlaw, responded, "Visits to the country by the pope, unless he stops proselytizing. When he says that abortion is 'an abominable crime, a senseless impoverishment of the person and of society itself,' he's just blowing more right-to-life hot air." Waxing more intellectual by the minute, Irving concluded that the pope "should be pelted with ripe tomatoes."

May

Boston, MA – "The Gospel Standard," a tract published by The Peoples Gospel Hour, assailed the Catholic Church for "Mary worship," "idolatry" and "blasphemy" because of the Church's veneration of the Blessed Mother. Particularly offensive was

the illustration on the cover, which depicted Pope John Paul II holding a crucifix with Mary, rather than Christ, on the Cross.

May 8

Los Angeles, CA – The Eternal Gospel SDA Church ran its anti-Catholic “Earth’s Final Warning” ad in the *Los Angeles Daily News*. After the league protested, the Los Angeles Newspaper Group, which comprises five major papers in southern California, agreed not to run the ads again.

May-June

Prospect, CT – *Trumpet Sounds*, the newsletter of New Ministries, Inc., featured an article by the 11 year-old daughter of editor-in-chief Peter O’Neill, defending her father’s publication against complaints that it is anti-Catholic. “All we try to do is help you break free of the Catholic church,” she explained. “Let me ask you why you go to the Catholic church and pray to Mary who has to tell Jesus what you asked her for.” Conceding that there are probably “more Catholics than any other religion,” she hastened to add that that is “not because the Catholic church teaches the right things.”

June

Eastport, NY – The figure of the baby Jesus was stolen from the nativity scene at Our Lady of the Island Shrine on Long Island. Father William Vigliotta, one of the Montfort Fathers who tend the shrine, told *Newsday* that such vandalism was nothing new at the shrine. Buildings have been broken into, chalices stolen, donation boxes robbed, and other life-size statues either broken or stolen.

June

Edmond, OK – The June 1998 issue of the *Philadelphia Trumpet*,

published by the Philadelphia Church of God, contained an article by Ron Fraser, "Unholy Union." The piece posited an ongoing alliance between the Vatican and Germany—an alliance which produced both World Wars, and is now using the European Union as a vehicle for establishing a world government with the pope as supreme religious and secular leader.

June

The Pope's Armada, by Gordon Urquhart, was released. The book focuses on "the three most powerful ultra-traditionalist movements in the Catholic Church"—"Focolare," "Communion and Liberation," and the "Neocatechumenate"—which, the author charges, use "brainwashing techniques involving ego destruction, moral and spiritual intimidation, and dangerous psychotherapeutic practices on members and parishioners." The book claims that "these self-contained personality cults" which enjoy "the strong support of Pope John Paul," are "task forces of extreme right-wing values." It also accuses these Catholic groups of having a "mafia-style underworld," and depicts them as "a potent, sinister force" that "may just be the church's most enduring legacy."

Summer

"Beatification of War Criminal?" read the headline over an item in *Response*, the newsletter of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, reporting on Pope John Paul II's imminent beatification of Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac. The item reported that following World War II Cardinal Stepinac had been "convicted as a [Nazi] collaborator," yet "the Church hails him for his resistance against religious persecution by the post-war Communist regime." Conspicuously absent from the report was any mention that Cardinal Stepinac's conviction took place in a Communist show trial, and that in 1985 the man who originally tried him, Jakov Blazevic, publicly admitted that the Cardinal had been framed for his refusal to break with the Roman Catholic Church. Nor did the Wiesenthal Center

report the words of Louis Breier, president of the American Association of Jews at the time of Stepinac's trial, who decried the accusation of Nazi collaboration as a "slander" of a "great man" who "was the greatest defender of the persecuted Jews."

Summer

The Berean Call, an apparently fundamentalist Christian group out of Oregon which boasts of "the millions who have been saved out of the Catholic Church" (i.e., have been saved by being lured out of the "false gospel" of the Catholic Church) turned its hatred on Pope Pius XII with a diatribe accusing Pius not only of silence during the Holocaust, but of having actively assisted Hitler and the Nazi regime.

July

"The Battle for Hunger Hill," by Daniel P. Bolger, was brought to the league's attention. In the midst of this book on military tactics, the author inexplicably digresses into a denigration of Catholic beliefs. Writing of those who adhere to a "practical, situational" doctrine of military tactics, he writes, "In this, American soldiers resemble Roman Catholics, who also pick and choose, grabbing at half-understood Biblical verses in order to justify a daily faith principally founded on tradition. You can search both testaments of the bible from stem to stern and you will not find a pope, saints, rosary beads, or seven sacraments rattling around, and yet Catholics think these conventions are in there, and even contrive to find them when they look."

August

A publication of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (Jehovah's Witness) depicted a person kneeling in prayer before a statue of the Virgin Mary, with the caption, "'Some worship idols. God says you must not use idols or images in worship.' -Exodus 20:4, 5; Isaiah 44: 9-17; 1 John 5:21."

August 4

Cincinnati, OH – Attorney Richard Ganulin filed suit in U.S. District Court arguing that it is unconstitutional for Congress to declare Christmas a national holiday. Because he does not believe in Jesus, Ganulin contended, he is “damaged” by the nation’s official observation of Christmas as a holiday.

August 17

Indiantown, FL – After Don Kazimir, director of the Respect Life Office for the Diocese of Palm Beach, had a letter printed in the *Palm Beach Post* taking issue with Planned Parenthood, he received a vile piece of hate mail attacking him personally and his Catholic faith. The writer claimed she was a law student planning to “seek a career in reproductive rights” where she hoped to “become a thorn in the side of men like you. Of course, I do not expect you to feel any sense of remorse or compassion for me because I’m sure you would consider me just another ‘christ-killing Jew.’

“You may be interested to know,” she continued, “that my Catholic friends frequently joke that the only advice on sex that they would seek from the church is how to get away with being a pedophile!” The letter went on for two hate-filled pages, attacking “Catholic ideas about sexuality and birth control” that “come from a celibate man struggling to maintain control over his followers.” She concluded by declaring as the “goal” of the Catholic Church “keeping women pregnant, subjugated, and at home raising children.”

September 7

Carmel, NY – A rare Italian statue of the Blessed Mother was beheaded on the lawn of St. James the Apostle Church, the latest in a series of incidents directed against the parish. About a month earlier, a deacon at St. James had received an anonymous 1:00 a.m. voice mail message that the pastor

described as “satanic in a way.” Two weeks later a rock was thrown through the glass casing of the Church’s sign display.

September 18

San Francisco, CA – A series of attacks on Catholic churches culminated with the smashing of windows at St. Mary’s Cathedral the night before a new bishop was to be ordained there. Prior incidents involving San Francisco area Catholic churches had included a similar incident at the same cathedral in July, when seven large window panes were damaged with a slingshot; the hands of religious statues having been cut off at St. Brendan’s Church; graffiti painted on a statue outside Notre Dame des Victoires Church; reports of vandalism at St. Monica’s Church and Star of the Sea Church; and graffiti painted on the Archdiocesan Chancery building.

Fall

A proliferation of ersatz nativity sets, in which animal figures or other objects replace the Holy Family, were being featured in holiday catalogs. The fall edition of the catalog Celebration Fantastic offered the Apple Whimseys collection set, featuring two bears, a donkey, a rabbit and a rodent—no Christ child, Virgin, or St. Joseph. The Cotton Gin catalog had a set of mostly mice, and no humans, while the holiday edition of Casual Living featured a nativity set made up of four snowmen.

November

A year after giving its Nobel Prize in literature to an Italian anti-Catholic bigot, Dario Fo, the Swedish Academy awarded the 1998 prize to a Portuguese anti-Catholic, Jose Saramago. Saramago’s 1991 novel, “The Gospel According to Jesus Christ,” was a vile attack on the Holy Family—“testimony of a substantial anti-religious sentiment,” in the words of the Vatican. According to the *National Catholic Register* the book “portrays the Holy Family as wildly dysfunctional, its

members torn apart by guilt and a climate of religious delusion. Saramago disputes the Virgin Birth, portrays Joseph as a nightmare-haunted neurotic and Mary as a hysterical mother, has Jesus abandon her and cohabit with Mary Magdalene, and depicts God as the cynical deity of a religion founded on pain, death, and intolerance."

November 5

Front Royal, VA – A writer seeking to distinguish between witchcraft and Satanism charged in the *Warren Sentinel* that "The only people I know of who worship Satan are the confused young people who have had the Christian or Catholic religion forced upon them." The writer claimed that practitioners of the "Wiccan religion" "were a part of life until the popes and priests raped, tortured and killed those who did not conform, mostly women and children, all in the name of the Prince of Peace."

November 28

Greeley, CO – The tabernacle of St. Peter's Catholic Church was broken into and Communion hosts scattered about the floor. In addition, a metal pipe had been used to punch a hole in the heart of a rare statue of the Virgin Mary. The statue's hands were also broken, beer was poured on the Scriptures and on a crucifix, and the Scriptures were dumped into a baptismal font filled with holy water. "This is an act of desecration; this is not an act of vandalism," said pastor Father Greg Ames. Three weeks later, an escaped convict was arrested in connection with the crime.

December

A tourist reference book, *Rome*, by Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls, was brought to the league's attention because its discussion of Vatican City was nothing more than an anti-Catholic diatribe. The book, published by Cadogan Books, Ltd., lamented that, "Unfortunately, thanks to Mussolini, much of

the evil of the Papal States has been concentrated in a country the size of a golf course—one where the duffers don't always count all their strokes. For instead of creating a realm of the spirit, as Vatican brochures would like you to believe, members of the Curia who run Vatican City have used its sovereignty (read unaccountability) to create a Corporate Papacy, the world's last real autocracy, with a tiny tax haven all its own." Under the guise of providing tourist information, the authors used this section of their book to accuse the Vatican of having "Mafia connections" and of "laundering...drug money through the Vatican bank," and also to imply something sinister in "the circumstances surrounding the sudden death of John Paul I."

December 7

The World Wrestling Federation (WWF) staged a match between Stone Cold Steve Austin and the Undertaker, in which Austin was strapped by his wrists to a cross-like structure. As the cross was raised, Gregorian chants played in the background, and the image of a Celtic cross flashed behind Austin. The intent to evoke images of the crucifixion of Christ was unmistakable. On request by the league, WWF agreed to modify the stunt in the future so as not to offend.

December 7

Tucson, AZ – A life-size baby Jesus figure was stolen from the nativity display at the Pima County Courthouse. "It usually does happen at least once a year," said a Parks official.

December 10

The league received the following anonymous hate message via e-mail:

"You people are so fucking worried that others don't agree with your beliefs you have a comments page for it? People like me don't want you fucking around in our business. Stay in your

churches and among your closed minded cults. When I see you protest wrestling, current music or anything it makes me realize you are the people that will be going to hell, that is if you believe in hell (I don't.) Jesus was a bastard, Mary was a whore, evolution will ultimately (sic) be proven correct, the world will not end on or near the year 2000, and Jesus is never coming back to earth so face it all you stand for is shit."

December 20

Meredith, NH – For the second time in a week, an infant Jesus figurine was stolen from a nativity scene. Five days earlier, it had been replaced by a can of spam. This time, the thief left a can of kidney beans in its place.

December 22

A website calling itself www.vatican.com featured an altered photo of Pope John Paul II, bare-legged with his robes cut off at the thigh, and wearing a Christmas tree as a tiara. "Happy Ho-Ho-Ho Holidays, Sinners!" read the accompanying inscription.

December 24

Santa Fe, NM – A woman stood on the steps of St. Francis Cathedral on Christmas Eve, shouting "hateful things about the Catholic Church" as Archbishop Michael Sheehan greeted worshippers following Midnight Mass. Archbishop Sheehan said the woman was "clearly disruptive," standing in front of parishioners and blocking their path as they exited the cathedral. "I could see fear in their eyes," the archbishop said of churchgoers. "To take the celebration of the Prince of Peace to spew hatred is very displeasing to God." A parish priest told Archbishop Sheehan that the same woman makes similar outbursts at the church "every so often."

December 26

Boston, MA – The baby Jesus figure was stolen from a nativity scene on Boston Common. Parks Commissioner Mary Hines said that Jesus figures had been stolen several time over the past fifteen years, and none of them had ever been returned.

December 30

Aurora, IL – Police determined that arson was the cause of a December 1 fire which destroyed one hundred year-old Sacred Heart Catholic Church.