

Miscellaneous

January



A wrestling tag team, known as the “Flying Nuns,” disbanded after the league protested their mocking of Catholicism. The team, part of the World Wrestling Federation, performed as “Sister Angelica” and “Mother Smucker,” complete with habit. The men participated in jokes during their bout, including comments about their facial hair and sexuality. They folded their hands in prayer and bowed to add to the farce.

January 11 & 20

Queens, NY – Almost 130 headstones were overturned at Calvary Cemetery. Police investigated it as a bias crime. Previously, on Christmas Eve, over 400 headstones were overturned along with statues, including one of Mary. In still another incident, more headstones were knocked over and a mausoleum window smashed with a sledgehammer.

January 25

New Orleans, LA – A parade, the Krewe du Vieux, billed as a controversial alternative to Mardi Gras, featured marchers dressed as nuns with exposed plastic breasts.

March 28 – March 30

USA Volleyball scheduled its Junior Olympic trials on Easter weekend without accommodating Catholic participants who wanted to attend Good Friday services and Easter Sunday Mass. After the league protested, such accommodations were arranged.

April

A vile, hate-filled response to the league’s direct mail survey included lewd pictures of Christ, obscene descriptions and satanic symbols, and graphic sketches of enlarged

genitalia. Answers to some of the questions contained the following comments:

- "Genocide is great!"
- "Catholics aren't shit on enough."
- "I like it when they show priest F—g altar boys."
- "ALL CATHOLICS GO TO HELL. HA. HA."
- "The Catholic Church should be treated with utmost disrespect."
- "Catholicism should be scourged from the face of the earth."
- "Pope John Paul is the Anti-Christ."
- "I insist that you purge my name and address from your evil files. P.S. F___ You."
- "How funny that my name ended up on your list to fight Catholic bashing! Must be someone's idea of a joke! I happen to love cartoons, cards, jokes and satires on the Church. It's far better for me to laugh AT the Church...than build up anger about it."
- "Just thinking about the Catholic Church makes me angry! So on your Survey, you can chalk me up to being anti-Catholic."
- "In my opinion, the Catholic Church deserves the criticism it gets—and in fact should get more."
- "I'm glad it [Hollywood] doesn't offer a respectful picture of the Catholic Church."

May

A hand-out provided by the Mennonite's "Star of Hope" took the following jabs at the Catholic Church:

- "A church system that forbids to marry...and supplants the priesthood of Christ is false from its foundations."
- "You should get out of that church, lest by association you share in its punishment..."
- "It is worth noting whether a church disciplines sin promptly and consistently, or only when necessary as a

publicity measure.”

May

San Antonio, TX – The league viewed and protested a video produced and distributed by John Hagee Ministries, which cited certain “historical facts” designed to link the Catholic Church with Hitler’s program of genocide in Germany. In its apparent attempt to drive a wedge between Catholics and Jews, the video, *Southern Steps: Jerusalem and Bible Prophecy*, ignored statements by various Jewish leaders citing the Catholic Church for its efforts to save Jews from the Nazis during World War II.

May 15

Miami, FL – A statue of the Virgin Mary was beheaded and its face smashed with a metal object outside St. Philomena Church in the Little Havana section of Miami. The mostly Nicaraguan parishioners decried this “sacrilege,” which the pastor, Father Timothy Hopkins, labeled a “hate crime.” Noting that this was the second incident in several months, Father Hopkins suggested that it was part of a wave of Catholic-bashing—perhaps attributable to a local TV station run by Protestants which smashes Catholic statues on the air and encourages viewers to do the same. The league contributed \$500 toward the purchase of a new statue.

August 4 – August 5

Staten Island, NY – Vandals did upwards of \$15,000 in damage to Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in West Brighton, smashing statues, breaking the church sign in two, tearing up flowers and shrubs and shattering the glass doors of the parish school. A day later, a Bay Terrace synagogue was defaced with graffiti, including a swastika and a disparaging remark about Jesus Christ. These acts of vandalism followed by one month an assault on Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church in South Beach, Staten Island, where shrubs were torn up,

graffiti scrawled on the parish school, and windows of the school and rectory shot at with a pellet gun.

Fall

Puyallup, WA – *Earth's Final Warning*, a publication put out by a group calling itself "Heralds of Truth," is a 16 page diatribe against the papacy and the Catholic Church, linking the Church to paganism, to Satan, to "the mark of the beast," and to the New World Order.

December

Medford, OR – A billboard posted on Interstate 5 declared, "It is Written: The POPE is the ANTI-CHRIST. Proof? Write Box 34, Talent, OR." While the sponsors of the message were apparently unwilling to identify themselves on the billboard, the league wrote requesting the promised "proof."

December 22

New York, NY – The league ran an ad on the op ed page of the *New York Times*, quoting from the *Times'* Christmas day editorials of 1942 and 1943 which praised Pope Pius XII as "a lonely voice" crying out "squarely against Hitlerism." Negative reaction to the ad ranged from the respectful, to the angry, to outright hate mail. Some of the more hysterical and defamatory examples:

- "Bullsh*t," one anonymous correspondent scrawled over the *Times* quotations. "Nazi bastard," he or she added next to the illustration of Pope Pius; and, for good measure, "F**k you!" was written across that illustration.
- "Your revisionism is obscene," another writer scrawled at the top of a copy of a letter he had sent to Pope John Paul II. "Pius XII supported a Catholic Hitler all the way." The writer's letter to the Pope accused the Church of defaming and desecrating "the memory of all

the Jews murdered in 'Christ's name' with support of the Church," and charged the Vatican with a "role in supporting a Catholic Hitler in the biggest theft, and genocide to wipe out a race of people, and then for the Church to take in \$millions (sic) stolen while giving safe haven to those who committed the mass murder of 7 million Jews..."

- "Your *New York Times* ad is a pathetic excuse at trying to vindicate the almighty church...What dastardly political machinations really go on behind closed doors at the Vatican?...The modern-day Roman Catholic Church ought to start *helping* humanity instead of manipulating society and hoarding the money. Pass the collection plate, mail out those contribution envelopes..."
- "This is garbage! Pure self-serving weasel-word garbage...You ought to be ashamed of yourselves."
- "Your ad is an outrageous distortion, fully worthy of Dr. Goebbels!"
- "The Vatican aided and abetted the Nazis."
- "The Holocaust was in many respects organically evolved from policies and practices established by the Church during much of its history."
- "The Church does not condemn evil, but is its partner."
- "Pious (sic) XII was a cowardly self aggrandizing pretender, and a disgrace to the world Catholic organizations...It would appear that Christian collective guilt, and that of organized Catholicism specifically, is so deep as to demand a re-write of history."
- "Who are you trying to fool? The 'Church' has crucified the Jewish people for centuries. Hitler exploited mass anti-Semitism fostered by the Church's blood libel...The blood of 6,000,000 Jews will be upon the Church and will surely evoke divine retribution."
- "Pope Pius 12th was the most anti-Semitic pope who ever lived."

West Cameron Township, PA – A statue of the Blessed Mother which stood outside Our Lady of Angels Friary was smashed to pieces early Christmas morning, in what Brother Benedict, who operates the friary, said was the latest in an ongoing series of anti-Catholic incidents. Brother Benedict, the last remaining member of his order living at the friary, said he had gotten used to harassment and insults from a particular group of neighbors during his 12 years there. Over the years he and other brothers who have lived there have been the targets of slurs, he said, and he even received a death threat. He had previously attached plexiglass to the wooden case holding the statue of the Virgin Mary, to protect it from bottles and other objects which had been tossed at it over the years. On Christmas morning, however, the vandals toppled the wooden case, broke through the plexiglass and smashed the statue, severing its head. Considering the previous anti-Catholic incidents, and the fact that the vandalism took place while he was away from the friary attending midnight Mass, Brother Benedict said he believes it was premeditated, and not just a random act. This latest incident had him “seriously considering closing the friary and joining another group of brothers or priests in some other place,” he said.