

Miscellaneous

January 4



Philadelphia, PA—The 2003 New Year's Day Mummers Parade was to include a "parody" of the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. To be performed by the Slick Duck Comic Brigade, it was to feature men dressed as priests and young men dressed as altar boys; cops were to be shown chasing after the priests. The parade was funded by the City of Philadelphia. WPHL, the station that was to televise the parade, announced in advance that it would not show the skit. The general manager of the station, Leslie Glenn, rightly dubbed this display "disgusting." After public complaints were made by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, the Diocese of Camden, NJ and the Catholic League, the skit was dropped from the parade.

January 12

Newark, NJ—Vandals damaged three statues in the courtyard of St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral.

January 13

Los Angeles, CA—Actress Salma Hayek, who starred in the movie "Frida," about bisexual Frida Kahlo, said, "I am a big advocate for the gay community. I think the church is not fair to women in general. How come a woman cannot be a priest? And I disapprove of their lack of acceptance of gay people as equals. I think that most gay women in Mexico won't come out because it's difficult on them. It's very bad. I am very angry about the way gay people are treated around the world. I think religion has a lot to do with it. I think that God doesn't make any differences—I think that we are all loved by God the same. He has accepted gay people. It's part of creation but it's a lot easier to judge than to learn."

January 14

Newark, NJ—13 statues were damaged by vandals at St. Lucy's

Church.

January 15

Brooklyn, NY—A sign on Immaculate Heart of Mary church property was defaced. The sign read: "Abortion Stops A Human Heart From Beating...4000 Times A Day." The word "bigot" was spray-painted in red on the sign.

January 17

Newark, NJ—The right hand of a statue of the Sacred Heart was smashed off by vandals at the Cathedral-Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

January 18

Newark, NJ—A statue of St. Michael the Archangel was decapitated by vandals outside St. Michael's Hospital.

January 23

Brooklyn, NY—For the second time in a month, Immaculate Heart of Mary parish was vandalized because of its pro-life stance. One hundred metal hangers were thrown about the bushes in front of the rectory. A sign reading, "Happy 30th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade" was placed on the rectory door. It was signed, "local feminists."

February 28

Port Jefferson, NY—A 20 year-old man stole a crucifix from Infant Jesus Church. He was arrested while walking down Route 25A carrying the large wooden crucifix.

March 28

Baton Rouge, LA—A man vandalized St. Joseph's Cathedral, doing \$10,000 in damage. Damaged were a marble sanctuary stand, statues of St. Joseph and St. Peter, the altar cloth, the celebrant's chair, a flagpole, an alms jar, marble holy water fonts and candles. The man told workers at the cathedral that it was a "house of Satan and that he wanted to kill all Catholics." The same man vandalized St. Bridget's Church in Schriever the same day.

April 13

Hartford, CT—Members of the Kansas-based Westboro Baptist Church protested outside St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church during Palm Sunday Mass. They claimed the parish supports same-sex marriages. Margie Phelps, daughter of Fred Phelps (who founded the Westboro group) yelled at parishioners, "Don't bring your children in there to be molested! Read a newspaper, people!"

April 16

An anonymous writer sent a letter to the Catholic League criticizing a reference in [*Catalyst*](#) that referred to Divine assistance for Catholics. The writer states: "The Catholic Church is going to need a LOT of help from someone when GOD discusses the things you people put out in the name of GOD. The Bible fully explains GOD's view of human behavior and what he expects from ALL of us. This book did not require re-writing to fit the Catholic point of view." The letter was signed, "A Baptist concerned for your souls."

May 1

Rockford, IL—Vandals spray-painted "Catholics will die," derogatory statements about the Blessed Mother, and phrases in praise of Satan on the side of Boylan High School. The graffiti also included gang symbols, lewd phrases, pornographic symbols and the names of two female students. Local police classified it a hate crime.

May 3

Pascagoula, MS—Our Lady of Victories and Resurrection Catholic School were vandalized. Forty-seven glass windowpanes, nine glass and two screen doors, the chapel door, and candle vases and holders were damaged.

May 22

Omaha, NE—Police recovered the 40-pound head of a statue of St. Thomas More taken by a 16 year-old boy from the front of a church by that name. It was the second time in two years that the head was stolen.

May 24

Chicago, IL—The January-March 2003 newsletter of the Alamo Christian Ministries was found in local mailboxes. It included excerpts from Tony Alamo's book, *The Messiah*. Alamo claims the Church is ruled by the Antichrist and "has been preaching a Jesus and a God who do not exist." And, "Rome uses its influence over politicians to create war and rumors of war...." He concludes, "These truthful statements have been made for centuries by millions of Roman Catholic defectors, including priests, nuns and laity, from what they call the wicked and demonic Roman Catholic religion."

June 4

Bakersfield, CA—A massive coordinated attack shut down Catholic Online, the world's largest Catholic Internet network, for 12 hours. More than 1,000 websites were affected, including that of the Catholic League.

June 7

Altoona, PA—Security guards were provided for the ordination of a priest for the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The priest had received hate mail along with two other priests of the diocese, demanding they leave the priesthood or "face the consequences." The priests were known as critics of the diocesan policies on abortion, liturgy and homosexuality.

July 15

Roseville, MN—Two Roseville police officers noticed that a woman injured in an automobile accident called her priest before going to the hospital, and they questioned her about her religion. She was unable to lock her car doors, but the police promised to do so for her. When she returned from the hospital, she found two anti-Catholic Chick Publications tracts inside her locked car.

July 20

An anonymous writer sent a series of e-mails to the Catholic League, with such messages as "F- OFF BACK TO THE VATICAN, YOU

CHILD-RAPING SODOMITES," "F- THE POPE," "F- THE NUNS," and "F- THE ROMAN CATHOLIC NAZI SODOMITE CHURCH."

July 26

Middletown, NJ—A group of teens charged with twice vandalizing St. Catherine's Church were found to be members of a hate group, calling themselves Agnostic Neo-Nazis.

July 31

A torrent of hate mail was sent to the Catholic League in response to the Pope's statement reaffirming the Church's teachings on marriage. A few examples are as follows: "Why do you not keep your hands of [sic] the genitals of 12 year olds instead of speaking on gay marriages?"; "Who are they, the frikken' Catholic Church, bastion of perpetual inhumanity and blatant subjugation of historically poor, uneducated peasants, to cast aspersions against those who overpopulate their own rectories?"

August 23

Lebanon, PA—Vandals spray-painted "kill the pope" on a wall of St. Mary's Catholic Church.

August 24

New York, NY—In an interview with Deborah Solomon of the *New York Times*, tennis star Martina Navratilova was asked about gay marriage. She replied, "So many distinguished priests were part of the antiwar movement. And look at them now! You see the Catholic Church denouncing gay marriage when they have been doing worse in their own church. And never mind how they behaved during World War II! The Holocaust didn't bother them. But gay marriage bothers them. I think they should clean their own house before telling me how to clean mine." When asked if she was a "lapsed Catholic," Navratilova replied, "I am not any religion. I don't know if my mother is Catholic or not."

August 25

New York, NY—Three weeks after the theft of a donation box

from a votive candle rack at the Church of the Holy Cross, thieves made off with a 200-lb. plaster statue of Christ, which they removed from a crucifix.

August 28

New York, NY—New York State Assemblyman Dov Hikind held a press conference outside News Corp. headquarters demanding that 20th Century Fox not distribute Mel Gibson's film "The Passion of the Christ" Catholic League president William Donohue attended. A rabbi from Brooklyn charged that the story of the Passion was pornographic. When Donohue asked him if he was saying the Gospels were pornographic, he backed down. But then the rabbi told Donohue that he would hold him personally responsible if violence broke out. Donohue responded by saying, "I'll be no more responsible than if violence broke out against Germans after you show a film on the Holocaust."

September 1

East Alton, IL—St. Kevin's Church and School were vandalized. The school was forced to close with \$20,000 in damage. Statues and windows were broken, graffiti written in classrooms, the church's altar was urinated on, and a life-size statue of the Blessed Mother was thrown down a stairway and broken. Non-religious items in the school were ignored.

September 6

Walnut Creek, CA—The *Contra Costa Times* published answers from readers to the question, "Where should sex offenders go?" Out of seven replies, four said either the Catholic Church or Vatican City: "The Vatican has a very long history of harboring pedophiles, so that way they would be among their own kind. Another thing, it's the only place on the planet where there are no children. Except, of course, for their wall carvings and frescos, and they would probably enjoy them." ; "I then thought who is most tolerant of child molesting predators? Hands down, the Catholic Church. There have been thousands of victims, hundreds, if not thousands of violators worldwide and more than a billion people still belong to this

group.”; “Oh, but they might want to attend the Pope’s ‘World Youth Day.’ That’s the event the Pope himself came up with; it’s really a 10-day gathering of many priests with little ones in tow, many from Third World countries, without their parents. The pope says he loves children, and if the chief priest tells you he loves children, we should believe him. So, the Vatican would be all right; right?”

September 16

The Catholic League received a volume of hate mail and calls in response to its ad “Why are the Democrats Insulting Catholics?” on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*. Some examples are: “Its [sic] good to see that you are putting resources towards insignificant issues, rather that[sic] accepting responsibility for the culture of raping and torturing young boys.”; “You are superstitious, self-righteous, obnoxious, and hypocritical a-holes.”; “What I choose for my body is my business and GODS. [sic] Not yours. You sanctimonious pieces of crap.”; “Stop trying to force your vindictive and cruel ‘god’ on the free peoples of this world. More humans have been killed in the name of god than any other cause. (the inquisition, crusades etc.)”; “The Pope should mind his own business and stay out of US politics. The Church is rotting from the inside and the Pope is responsible.”

September 16

Columbus, OH—The Ohio Supreme Court threw out victims’ lawyer Jay Milano’s request that the Ohio Supreme Court disqualify any Catholic judge from presiding over his lawsuit against the Diocese of Cleveland. Milano sued the diocese for racketeering. Milano maintained that from the day Catholic youngsters enter a parochial school, they are taught that an attack on their Church is an attack on God.

“We believe it is too much to ask any judge to rule against their God, their diocese, their church and their bishops.” On September 5, William Donohue wrote to Jonathan Coughlan, Office of Disciplinary Counsel of the Ohio Supreme Court,

seeking disciplinary action against him. Disciplinary Rule 1-102 of the Ohio Code of Professional Responsibility dealing with discrimination is the operative provision.

October 7

Savannah, GA—An armed man entered the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist and set fire to the bishop's chair and the pulpit before being arrested by a SWAT team. The pulpit was badly damaged, and columns and walls nearby sustained smoke damage. When arrested the man responsible made a "statement" expressing his opposition to organized religion.

October 10

After William Donohue appeared on NBC's "Today" to discuss a Vatican official who said that condoms do not completely protect against the AIDS virus, the Catholic League received a large amount of feedback. Some examples: "As with most Church propoganda [sic], it's based on religious dogma which may have been appropriate 600 years ago when ghastly diseases were ravaging Europe."; "Is this the very morality that forbade church officials from reporting pedophile priests?"; "If your religion really cared about third world countries you would cash in your VAST WEALTH and put it to use healing and helping those people."; "You really think that god's [sic] will is being served here? You think you f-ing morons have any idea what god's will is? You met him lately? No, you haven't[sic]. Nobody has. You, the f-ing pope, what a joke."; "Thanks again for reinforcing that fact the Catholicism is a joke."; "The Catholic Church is a fossil, a relic from the Dark Ages. People are not as stupid as they have been in the past. Your Hocus Pocus Mumbo Jumbo in churches every Sunday is losing its grip all over the world."; "Well, if the morality of the catholic church [sic] involves pedophilia and covering up such acts by it's[sic] priests, then the rest of the world has a lot of catching up to do."

October 14

Sacramento, CA—Loretto Catholic High School was vandalized

with graffiti that read “Die Catholic F—.” There were also pictures of genitalia and marijuana smokers. The damage was estimated at \$3,100. Police investigated the vandalism as a hate crime.

October 24

Bellerose, NY—A statue of the Blessed Mother that had been on the lawn of a private house for 30 years was removed and thrown onto a neighboring lawn and damaged. The owners repaired the damage and put the statue back. Three days later the statue was again removed and thrown onto another lawn. This time it was damaged beyond repair. The police investigated the incident as a bias crime.

October 25

St. Paul, MN—Calvary Cemetery, the oldest Catholic cemetery in the city, was vandalized. Ninety headstones were toppled or smashed. Damage was estimated at \$25,000.

November 2

Santa Ana, CA—Vandals stole a crucifix from Our Lady of La Vang Church and threw a statue of Jesus into the bushes. Within days the crucifix was replaced, and then it was stolen again.

November 6

Elkhart, IN—Roman Catholic families said that the Faith Mission, a Protestant homeless shelter, took away their rosaries and prayer books and refused to allow them to attend Mass. The director of development for the mission said that a staff member recently apologized to some Catholic clients for comments they found offensive.

November 6

Santa Ana, CA—At St. Barbara’s Church, vandals toppled an outdoor statue of the Blessed Mother, punched a hole in the sanctuary wall, broke windows and smeared feces on the faces of statues inside the church.

November 21

Garden Grove, CA—At St. Callistus Church a pew was set on fire.

November 22

Monsey, NY—At the convent of St. Zita's Villa, a 40-year-old statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was toppled from its pedestal and heavily damaged.

December 9

Kalamazoo, MI—The city's nativity scene in Bronson Park was destroyed by arson.

December 20

Manhattan Beach, NY—Vandals destroyed two statues of the Magi in the nativity scene outside of St. Margaret Mary Church.

December 22

Long Beach, NY—A sign saying, "Merry Christmas, Feliz Navidad and Happy Chanukah," which was displayed for 15 years outside of St. Mary of the Isle Church, was torn down and stolen.

December 22

Sarasota, FL—A homeowners association told a family to remove a three-foot tall statue of the Blessed Mother from their front lawn that they had placed there a year before. The association said it violates deed restrictions, however the association's covenant does not mention statues. The family refused to remove the statue.

December 27

Plainview, NY—A statue of the Infant Jesus was stolen from the nativity scene outside of St. Pius X Church. It was later found lying in a gutter.

December 31

New York, NY—The Infant Jesus statue was stolen from a nativity scene outside of St. Anthony of Padua Church.