

MOTHER TERESA STAMP OKAYED; ATHEISTS LAUNCH BOYCOTT

As soon as the U.S. Postal Service announced that it would celebrate the centenary of Mother Teresa's birthday with a commemorative stamp, it drew fire from atheists. No organization was angrier than the Freedom from Religion Foundation: it called for a boycott of the stamp. The Catholic League joined the fight, assailing the group.

Annie Laurie Gaylor is co-president, with her husband Dan Barker, of the atheist group; she is leading the atheist crusade against the Mother Teresa stamp. She reasons that the Post Office should not honor a religious figure. The Post Office replies that Mother Teresa was selected because of her humanitarian work.

When asked about a previous stamp honoring Malcolm X, a leader of the Nation of Islam, Gaylor said, "Malcolm X was not primarily known for being a religious figure." She is correct in this observation. But she sounded like a white racist when she dressed down Rev. Martin Luther King: she said he "just happened to be a minister."

As we said to the media, "We'd like to hear her explain that to African Americans at a Sunday service. Perhaps she can get the NAACP to recast King as a secular orator, and not as a black clergyman, during Black History Month."

What is really driving Gaylor's hatred of Mother Teresa, besides her virulent anti-Catholicism, is the saintly nun's opposition to abortion. Gaylor accused the Albanian nun of making an "anti-abortion rant" during her Nobel Prize acceptance speech. In fact, the "rant" amounted to her saying that "abortion was the greatest destroyer of peace in the world."

Gaylor was not above trotting out some of Christopher Hitchens' criticisms of Mother Teresa. But neither he, nor Gaylor, we told the press, has ever laid a glove on her.

We pointed out to the media why abortion hits a nerve with Gaylor. Her mother, Annie Nicol Gaylor, founded the Freedom from Religion Foundation in 1978. And just two years after the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion-*on-demand*, *she released a book titled*, Abortion Is a Blessing. This kind of book, we said, "could only be written by someone who sees abortion as a positive good." Her daughter is obviously cut from the same cloth.

Gaylor is not alone in protesting the Mother Teresa stamp. Elizabeth Tenety, who writes for the *Washington Post's* "On Faith" blog, weighed in against the nun on similar grounds. The Catholic League will not only lead the defense of Mother Teresa, we will bestow our own honors when the stamp is released on August 26.