

NO POST-IMUS CULTURE FOR CATHOLIC BASHERS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the latest attacks on Catholics by comedians:

“In the wake of the Imus controversy last week, CBS chief Les Moonves said that Imus ‘has flourished in a culture that permits a certain level of objectionable expression that hurts and demeans a wide range of people. In taking him off the air, I believe we take an important and necessary step not just in solving a unique problem, but in changing that culture, which extends far beyond the walls of our Company.’ It was a great statement, but no sooner had Moonves spoken when Catholics learned that his words represented wishful thinking.

“Friday night on the HBO show ‘Real Time with Bill Maher,’ the comedian showed a picture of guitarist Keith Richards in his ‘New Rules’ segment and said, ‘New rules, snorting your father isn’t crazy’ (this was a reference to Richards’ hoax about snorting the ashes of his dead father). Maher then showed a picture of a Catholic priest giving Communion, saying, ‘Eating your father, that’s crazy.’

“The next day Seth Meyers read a news story on ‘Saturday Night Live’ wherein he remarked, ‘For the second consecutive year the number of sex abuse claims against the nation’s Catholic priests had dropped. Undisputable proof that fewer kids are going to church.’

“Even the TV Guide Channel got into the act on Sunday when John Henson questioned why anyone would want to blow himself up to get into heaven just to be with 72 virgins when you could have ‘72 naughty Catholic schoolgirls.’

“It is one thing when comedians like Maher label all religions ‘childish, destructive and nonsense’ (as he did today on ‘The

View'), quite another when the Eucharist is mocked and priests are slandered. The Catholic schoolgirls' remark was not offensive, per se, but it was entirely gratuitous in both forum and context. All in all, it goes to show that Catholic bashing will survive in a culture that penalizes race and gender bashing."