

NYPD MONITORS "THE PASSION" FOR HATE CRIME

The following letter by Catholic League president William Donohue was sent to New York Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly:

March 2, 2004

Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly

1 Police Plaza

New York, New York 10038

Dear Commissioner Kelly:

There is a story in the March 2 edition of the *New York Post* claiming that Hate Crimes Unit supervisor Dennis Blackman ordered 20 detectives to see "The Passion of the Christ" when it opened last week; some watched the movie during working hours.

Accordingly, I would like to know the answer to the following questions: a) Is it common practice for detectives of the NYPD to watch movies during working hours? b) What prompted the request? c) What criteria are used to assess whether this is a useful function for the police to provide? d) What is the purpose of such an exercise? e) What exactly would the police be empowered to do if they determined the film constituted hate speech?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President