

# ORLANDO FRINGE FESTIVAL BASHES CATHOLICS

The Catholic League has been criticized for bringing attention to movies like "Angels & Demons" by exposing its anti-Catholic agenda. With that movie, we felt it was important to educate the public about its myths, smears and lies. The record needed to be corrected. But not every offense is of the same caliber. We determine our approach to each anti-Catholic event on a case-by-case basis. Some offenses are not deserving of public attention. The Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival is a classic example of the league not taking the bait to give free publicity to a marginal festival.

Prior to the opening of last month's festival, we received an email about one of its productions, "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You." We began an investigation and quickly realized that the director of the show wanted us to publicly object to the notoriously anti-Catholic play so that he could increase ticket revenue. We decided not to call attention to the play nor did we issue a statement to the media. Instead we contacted the State of Florida Division of Cultural Affairs and the Orange County Arts and Cultural Affairs; these entities provided public money for the festival, which also staged "Corpus Christi."

We pointed out that we are fully aware that fringe festivals feature edgy material but noted that such events should not include bigoted productions. In addition, one of the purported aims of this annual festival is to promote diversity. By definition, that would not include showcasing intolerance. We asked for an explanation as to why public money was being used to promote Catholic-bashing plays. We have not received a response as of press time.

We used this approach so that these government agencies know

that Catholics object to taxpayer dollars funding anti-Catholic bigotry with the expectation that there will be a more careful review of grants in the future. We were able to make our point without giving unwarranted publicity to those who are admittedly on the fringe. We say to those bigots: stay there!