

Arts



January 4 – February 5

Millburn, NJ – In the play *Forever Plaid*, performed at the Paper Mill Playhouse in New Jersey, a bus filled with Catholic youths hits a car, killing the occupants. This incident triggered a barrage of insults aimed at the Catholic teenagers, e.g., “What a way to die—being slammed by a bus of parochial virgins.”

January 20

Louisville, KY – The Kentucky Opera Association staged a production of *Side by Side by Sondheim*, which included the song, “I Never Do Anything Twice.” The song made numerous references to things specifically Catholic and to things Christian. Derogatory references were made to habits worn by religious, to the Rosary, to nails and a hammer, etc. The references to habits and the Rosary were made in the midst of a scene involving sex in a brothel.

February

Bill Bell designed a limited edition collector plate, *Holy Cats*, which was available through the Franklin Mint. Described in an advertisement as “the convent cats and the feline friars, making merry and dancing the night away” in a cathedral, the plate features colorful cats in medieval garb. One cat is reading a book from a pulpit while on the ground a feast is being shared by some cats. One dressed as a pope has what looks like a chalice in his hand. Bubbles are coming out and food is present. Some of the cats are dancing together. Stained glass images show one with a cat standing like Jesus with His Sacred Heart being emphasized and the other with Mary as a cat holding her baby cat, presumably Jesus. The ceiling shows a cat as the human about to touch God, Who is drawn as a

lion.

March

New York – *Art Now Gallery Guide*, published in New York, published an ad for the exhibit of "Initiation," a painting which depicts an angel, seen from the back, legs spread wide, having sex up against an altar. On the white marble altar, seen between the legs of the angel, is an ornate gold cross. The backdrop for the entire image is a large gold cross reaching from side to side, and top to bottom. The ad content reads, in part, "'Initiation,' a painting by Houston artist Donell, pushes the limits of conventional thought regarding the connection between spirituality and sexuality. It has received international media attention due to its censorship by the Catholic Church." The ad noted that "Initiation" could also be seen in the February issue of *Playboy*.

March 8 – April 9

Saint Paul, MN – The Great American History Theatre staged the production *Pope Joan: A Divine Comedy*, written by Lance S. Belville. An ad for the play read as follows: "*POPE JOAN* is a comedic and provocative exploration of the myths behind Pope John VIII. John was a woman. Or was he? A priest searches for the truth behind the myths and legends of the medieval church. The journey will lead him through the battlefields of Christendom to the bedchambers of the Vatican, all in the name of truth. Laugh with Pope Leo IV, Charlemagne and Cardinal Odilo as they unfold Joan's existence. Could this powerful woman have been scratched from the history books? She was everything a pope should be...except a woman."

March 26-April 28

Quincy, IL – The 45th Annual Quad-State Juried Art Exhibition was presented by The Quincy Art Center and Dame & Hurdle Jewelers. An exhibit which won a Merit Award was "Madonna Enthroned in Sewer with Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" by

Andreas Fischer. This exhibition was underwritten in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

April

Hartford, CT – The Hartford State Company premiered *Clean*, a play which focuses on the (never consummated) relationship between a 30-year-old Catholic priest and Gustavito, a ten-year-old boy. Set in New York City and a Puerto Rican village, *Clean* portrays the romantic involvements of the Delgado family, which, in addition to Gustavito, includes a “tradition-bound Catholic father given to outbursts of drunken violence.” The *New York Times* described *Clean* as a work “unlikely to win an endorsement from John Cardinal O’Connor.”

May 18

New York – *Party*, a play from the pen of David Dillon, is about seven gay men in a rap session in various stages of undress. What separates this from other gay genre plays is the most outrageous character—Father Ray. He is celibate because he has taken vows, but he has, according to a *New York Newsday* review, “the randiest tongue of the bunch...[and] gets all the saucy lines...” The *New York Daily News* noted that the “bitchiest of the guests, the priest” enabled the play to feature “Catholic-bashing.” *Party* moved from off-off Broadway to the respectable Douglas Fairbanks Theatre in its run in New York.

June

Philadelphia, PA – *Bad Girls Upset by the Truth*, a play that was performed at the Plays and Players Theater, featured a pious nymphomaniac who views her 157 sexual experiences as a way to find Jesus. Among the incidents pertaining to Catholicism is a character depicting the Virgin Mary who has an immaculate conception in a supermarket.

July

Santa Ana, CA – At a Santora Arts Complex exhibit Connie Sasso featured “condoms floating in an amber liquid with a rosary draped around the jar.” Sasso said that her work reflected the suffering of women as a result of “church policies on human reproduction.” She added that “the church’s policies on abortion and birth control contribute to everything from poverty to AIDS and prostitution.”

July

Chicago, IL – Maile Flanagan’s *One-Woman Sound of Music* is an offensive spoof of the family classic musical starring Julie Andrews. Shown at the Zebra Crossing Theatre, this account consisted of nuns who are lesbians, Captain Von Trapp is shown as a sadist, and Liesl is a bisexual. It was said in the *Chicago Reader* that this production gave Flanagan “one more opportunity to react to Catholic school sadomasochism.”

September 6 – October 15

Millburn, NJ – The Paper Mill Playhouse featured an offensive production, *Nine*. Among the jabs at Catholicism was the transformation of the character of a nun into a “voluptuous whore.” It received funding from the NEA and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Gov. Christine Todd Whitman is the Honorary Chairperson of the playhouse’s Board of Trustees.

September 24

Bravo cable network aired a program called *Windows* as its Texaco Performing Arts Showcase. The program featured a number of dance routines, the last of which included a priest, a nun, and a choir. Called “Temptation” after the song sung during the performance, the routine centered around a dancing priest’s battle with temptation. The object of his struggle was the nun—dressed as a hooker. She was wearing a habit and Rosary beads around her neck; she was dressed in a black strapless minidress and high heels. Seductively holding a pole on a dark street in an alley, she was grabbed at by the

priest. He crossed himself, outlined the female form with his hands, and made sexual gestures toward the nun. Among the other objectionable elements of this production were his repeated dropping of the Bible, his stealing from a homeless woman, and, most offensive of all, his consumption, along with the choir, of white wafers—obviously meant to indicate the Host—followed by them all spitting it out.

October 7

Omaha, NE – Artist Nick Chiburis took photographs inside area churches and then superimposed images of naked women on them for display in a show at the 13th Street Gallery. The Archdiocese threatened action, forcing the artist to put a disclaimer on his work. He used Eve motifs complete with snake. The model's breasts are apparent as she appears to sit in a pew with religious images surrounding her.

October-November

New York, NY – *Sacrilege*, a play about a disaffected activist nun who wants to become a Catholic priest, ran on Broadway. Ellen Burstyn played the nun who serves the poor while defying Church teaching. She “hears” confession and gives the last rites to a dying man. The Cardinal who removed her from her order ends up having her hear his confession. The play invited the audience to see the Catholic Church as an oppressive institution, portraying the dissenters in a positive light and adherents to tradition as authoritarian.

November 4

Plymouth, MA – Plimoth Plantation, a historical preserve, planned to host a celebration of Guy Fawkes Day, an anti-Catholic holiday that was celebrated in colonial America. Traditionally, the event included burning the Pope in effigy. The plantation planned to celebrate it like a Halloween-type festival, irrespective of the historical context. After a protest by the league, the plantation decided to cancel the

event.

Cartoons 1995





[Back to Top](#)

Commercial Establishments



March 12

Rochester, NY – The *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* featured a story on the Automatic Confession Machine, which was developed by Greg Garvey of Concordia University in Montreal. The machine has a menu which includes the Ten Commandments. The machine's assigned penance is more severe than that received at confession. Thus, a Personal Pocket Penance Assistant says the prayers for the person using the machine. Garvey described this as "Perfect for the busy sinner on the go." Further, *National Geographic* showed a picture of this machine in its magazine, commenting that the "work [i]s a warning against the intrusion of technology into the most private aspects of life." However, the machine has a kneeler and a picture of Jesus on it along with a neon cross on top.

April

New York, NY – Bubby-Gram Singing Telegrams are cards which featured a woman, dressed as Grandma. One card showed Grandma or Bubby gesturing toward a statue of the Blessed Virgin, carrying two shopping bags, one in each hand. Grandma says,

“In honor of your birthday...a donation has been made to Our Lady of Perpetual Shopping.” The other card features Grandma saying with an incredulous look on her face, “You? 29?!...Right. And the Pope’s wife shops in K-Mart.”

May

New York – Saks Fifth Avenue had a display over Mother’s Day weekend in which Rosary beads were worn around the neck of a mannequin, who was indiscreetly attired. The store received numerous complaints and quickly removed the display.

Summer

A Benetton ad showed Jesus on the cross with the soldiers nailing the cross into the ground. The theme of the ad was “DO YOU PLAY ALONE”. The product was being advertised next to this image; it was the Asolo boot. The words in the corner were: “WHEN THERE IS NOTHING BUT YOU AND THE MOUNTAIN DON’T FEEL ABANDONED. YOU HAVE SOMETHING STRONG TO BELIEVE IN. ASOLO ASF COUNT ON IT FOR EXTREME PERFORMANCE.” In its description of the ad Benetton stated that Jesus was being shown as a “regular man whose performance in life made him larger than any man in history. When you play life and play alone, only a superior performance counts.”

July 21

Costa Mesa, CA – Interviewed in the *Orange County Register*, the owners of the Spanish Fly, a boutique, sell vintage clothing and many things with Catholic overtones. It was no accident that there was a white-plastered altar in the store, with a statue of the Virgin Mary. A co-owner sold “decidedly Catholic icons” because his family was devoutly Catholic and people tend to worship these images.

July 28

In a letter to Catholic Answers, LifeLine, the Christian long

distance company, told the organization that it would not do business with them because of their "*Roman Catholic Faith.*" LifeLine has done business with Catholic organizations (including the Catholic League before we quit), but there are some Catholic organizations (Catholic Answers, Franciscan University of Steubenville, St. Joseph's Radio) that apparently are too orthodox for LifeLine. When challenged by the league, LifeLine issued a statement which claimed the reason for not accepting Catholic Answers was because of the "demands and threats of its leadership." LifeLine failed to specify what these "demands and threats" were. That this was the case has been disputed by Catholic Answers and the agent involved. Despite the fact that LifeLine pledged to apologize to Catholic Answers, this was not done.

August

New York – Calvin Klein, Inc. ran ads featuring young teens in sexually suggestive poses that caused an uproar. Besides the fact that the league felt these ads were exploitative, it was further outraged that some of the models were wearing crosses around their necks. The message of the ads was therefore doubly offensive. After a successful protest led by the league and Councilman Noach Dear, the ads were removed from the sides of city buses. Further, Klein took out an ad in the *New York Times* in self-defense and to announce he was pulling the campaign, which was subsequently voted the worst of the year by top ad makers (as conducted by *USA Today*).

August 1

Boston, MA – Four Points Hotels by ITT Sheraton started an ad campaign with the motto "Because You Deserve Better." In an ad appearing in *USA Today*, a large picture with four monks was shown. Underneath it read: "Is this the comfort level of your midpriced business hotel?" The theme of the description is a comparison between the deprivation of the monastic lifestyle as contrasted with the comfort of the hotel chain. "Do their

rooms have all the charm of a Monk's cell?...To give you a room rate that meets your budget, do they ask you to 'sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice?'...(The Monks have chosen self denial, but a hotel shouldn't expect you to do the same.)" It ended with "The experience will convert you."

August 11

Corpus Christi, TX – An ad for "Tattoos; Body Piercing" appeared in the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*' "Weekend Magazine." The ad showed a crucified man in blue jeans. The ad was removed after numerous complaints were received.

August 27

Los Angeles, CA – Neiman Marcus ran an advertisement featuring a woman wearing Rosary beads around her neck as if it were a piece of jewelry. The ad was placed in the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*. The ad was withdrawn after the league protested.

August – September

Maryland – On a billboard off US route 40 in Catonsville was an artist's rendition of the Pope wearing headphones. The slogan was "Father Knows Best." It was an ad for 98 Rock, a radio station.

September

"Tomato" greeting cards featured a sexually suggestive card with a picture of the Pope with his arms in the air. A cartoon box had the words "IT'S UP! AND IT'S GOOD!" Inside the card, it read: "LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE'S EXCITED YOU CAN STILL 'DO IT' AT YOUR AGE! HAPPY BIRTHDAY."

September 22

New York – Tower Outlet used religious imagery in an ad to sell compact disks and cassettes. Using a picture of the Virgin Mary, the headline read: "Are you still in the dark?"

It said: "See the Light...Baptize Yourself in...Brilliant Bargains!" It concluded "BEHOLD! A Retail Revelation!"

September 26

PC Magazine featured an advertisement for Berkeley Systems in which a nun holding a computer was used to promote *Totally Twisted After Dark* Screen Saver. Dressed in full habit, Sister Mary Josephine, Mother Superior, was quoted as saying, "These are absolutely, morally reprehensible. That's why I am personally confiscating Sister Alice's copy for an undetermined amount of time."

October

J00P! Jeans ran an ad in magazines like *Buzz* which said "God is not a celebrity." The two page spread showed a jean clad man with guitar hanging from a cross. The message, according to Heiner Maasjost, was "profound." It was supposedly meant to emphasize people's "wrong values" in that they should be doing as the Church says rather than following trendy idols.

October 16

The magazine *Computerworld* featured an advertisement for syncsort called "Conversions in no time at all." Half of the full page ad showed two images of the Pope. On the left was the Pope as the Bishop of Rome; on the right was the Pope dressed as an Orthodox Jew, wearing black, a star of David, and featuring a beard and yarmulke. This tasteless ad urged consumers to "be strong; have faith; your prayers have been answered."

October 18

New Orleans – Philip Anselmo, of the rock group Pantera, has established the House of Shock in a warehouse with the help of friends. Criticized for being satanic, the house featured last year a decapitated statue of the Blessed Mother. This year the

horrors included organizer Steve Konos dressing up as “The Evangelist” and giving a “mock sermon,” chanting “the Lord’s Prayer.”

November 27

Las Vegas, NV – On this date, the Hard Rock Casino and Hotel finally removed a restored carved gothic altar that was in its Viva Las Vegas Lounge. Complaints about the altar were ignored by the chain from the March opening. The league took out ads in local papers, getting the attention of the management, which claimed that the altar was just “a wooden object found in someone’s basement.” Under league pressure the Hard Rock was forced to remove the altar.

December

“Tomato” cards featured a birthday card which showed a color picture of the Pope with President Clinton. The Holy Father said, “Now, Bill...You’ve got to learn to keep ‘Mr. Happy’ in your pants!” The President responded, “Yeah, yeah, yeah...whatever you say...” Inside the card it read, apparently the end of the president’s quote, “I can’t keep it in any longer–Happy Birthday!”

December

An ad for 1-800-DEDICATE featured a caricature of the singer Madonna. It read: “A Blessing from Madonna–We can’t send the real Blessed Virgin, but this one says she’s like a virgin.”

December 18

New York – Rudolph and Beer, an entertainment law firm, sent holiday cards that made a play on the partners’ names. The card showed Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, clad as a Wise Man, bringing a mug of beer to the baby Jesus. After a protest from the league, an apology was granted.

Criminal Behavior

March 11-12



Waukesha, WI – The \$10,000 statue of St. William at St. William Catholic Church in Waukesha was vandalized when it was pushed off its pedestal sometime during the night. The head of the five-foot-statue was knocked off by the force of the fall, and the front of the statue was chipped and scratched. This was not the first time the statue, a gift to the church, had been damaged. Previously, the fingers had been damaged and the head removed, but the damage was reparable. This time the statue was beyond repair.

July 18

Fairfax County, VA – A statue of St. Francis of Assisi was spray-painted at the Catholic Church of the Nativity of Our Lord in Burke. Satanic symbols and references were found on the property.

October 13

Eugene, OR – St. Mary's Church was victimized by the theft of a statue of the Blessed Virgin. The statue was later returned.

December 28

New York, NY – In two separate incidents, St. Agnes Church in New York City had parts of its crèche stolen. The Baby Jesus and His wooden crib were taken as well as the statues of Mary, Joseph and an angel.

Education

January



Ypsilanti, MI – A graduate student at Eastern Michigan University was ordered to remove a crucifix that was affixed to the wall above his desk.

February 7

Tinton Falls, NJ – The Monmouth Regional High School Board of Education adopted a policy that would prohibit a Christian group from displaying Bible passages on school bulletin boards. The officials had previously barred the display of a manger scene.

April 13

Fullerton, CA – A student group at California State University at Fullerton sponsored the showing of the anti-Christian movie, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, in the UC Titan Theatre on Holy Thursday.

April 17

New Orleans, LA – A film featuring a pregnant nun was being made by the University of New Orleans film department. *The Rest of the Oyster* used Catholic symbols—like a shrine of the Blessed Virgin—to make a hostile statement against Catholicism.

September 16

Money Magazine's college ratings discriminated based on religious commitment. Unlike other publications that rank schools using diverse criteria, this magazine also considered

religion—as an impediment. According to Terry Mattingly, a professor at Milligan College, “150 schools were eliminated because they were too religious.” However, what was the criteria for too religious since a variety of Catholic and Christian schools made the list? Jillian Kasky, associate editor, said that “editors focused on two issues—mandatory chapel services or requirements that students take courses based on one approach to faith.” This locked out schools in the Coalition for Christian Colleges and Universities as well as many others.

October 12 – 14

New York – Pace University’s Pace Players performed *Agnes of God* with student funds and the approval of the Student Government Association. The play shows a nun in a convent murdering her baby and flushing the bloody corpse down the toilet. It also shows the Mother Superior covering up the crime.

October 26

Virginia – Regent University hosted Rev. Ian Paisley, Europe’s best known anti-Catholic bigot. Paisley called the Vatican “Harlot City” and the Pope the “Antichrist.” The Rutherford Institute, whose student chapter at Regent sponsored the event, defended the talk as a free speech issue and refused to condemn Paisley for his bigotry.

October 28

Hartford, CT – In a letter to the editor of the *Hartford Courant*, the chairman of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education, Robert Norton, wrote: “One of the leading groups arguing for the implementation of vouchers is the Roman Catholic Church. I find it interesting that the church looks on the infusion of cash into its schools as the only way to save some of its failing schools.”

December 7-10

Middlesex County, NJ – *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*, perhaps the most anti-Catholic play ever produced, was performed at Middlesex County College, a state funded institution. The play, which came to New York in the early 1980s, was condemned by the Anti-Defamation League, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the American Jewish Committee and the Catholic League. Noted play critics from Clive Barnes to Frank Rich also observed the anti-Catholic nature of the play.

Government



October 13, 1994 – April 2, 1995

Fort Worth, TX – The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History presented an exhibit on “The History of the Bible” which included 25 Bibles dating from the 12th century to the early 19th century. It also included a video which accused the Catholic Church of trying to suppress the Bible due to the Church’s fear of losing power. The video claimed the Church resisted the translation of the Bible into the vernacular because it did not want it to get into the hands of the people. Scenes of books burning were included to illustrate the charge that the Church bought and burned several copies.

January

Milwaukee, WI – Governor Tommy G. Thompson’s proposal that state vouchers be offered to parents to send their children to religious schools drew strong reactions from opponents. According to *Education Week*, “some [opponents] claimed that it

masked the Roman Catholic Governor's real motive: to funnel public dollars into the coffers of the Catholic Church." The president of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, said, "What this is designed to do is aid the Catholic Church."

February

Hennepin County, MN – Catholics in Hennepin County charged that the mandatory county employee diversity program singled out their faith for criticism as a "rigid and inflexible belief system counter to the goals of cultural diversity." The program and materials accuse the Pope and the Vatican with having supported the Holocaust and imply that the Catholic Church condones the persecution of homosexuals. In response to protests, the county agreed to drop all references to Catholicism and the pope from the diversity program and launch an investigation into all aspects of the program.

March

Steubenville, OH – Within minutes of dropping off a letter addressed to Opus Dei in Washington, D.C. in a nearby mailbox, a man received the letter back in his own mailbox marked "Return to Sender" because of an incomplete address. However, in the short time between his depositing the letter in a U.S. Post Office box and the return of the letter, a swastika had been drawn next to the name "Opus Dei."

September 16

Eugene, OR – The city of Eugene held its annual Celebration parade and awarded \$200 of taxpayer money to a group called the "Rickies" for their entry "Pope Goes the Weekend," a play on the parade theme, "Pop Goes the Weekend." The eighteen person group featured people in clerical garb, including the Pope. As the float passed by St. Mary's Church, some of the Rickies ran onto the steps and made exaggerated bows and genuflections. As a result a local citizen filed a complaint with the Human Rights Commission. Mayor Ruth Bascom would not

denounce this until they made a decision. The case was eventually accepted by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission when it was not adequately handled by the authorities in Eugene.

October 24

Phoenix, AZ – The city is apparently rejecting ads for the sides of buses if they are religious in nature. A group called Children of the Rosary, a not-for-profit group, wanted to buy ad space to feature quotes from Scripture and a pro-life message. The groups submitted another ad idea, a Scripture quote about helping the poor. It was not accepted based on the rationale that, since it was religious, some people would probably be offended.

November 7

California – An attempt to force Judge John Noonan to recuse himself from an abortion case failed when Judge Noonan defended himself on Constitutional grounds. An attorney cited Noonan's Catholicity as a detriment to his objectivity, asserting that his "fervently-held religious beliefs would compromise his ability to apply the law."

November 11

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt maligned Catholics in a speech before the National Religious Partnership for the Environment by saying that the Church, along with the Judeo-Christian ethic, was "silent on our moral obligation to nature." He said such silence "implicitly sanctioned the prevailing view of the earth as something to be used and disposed however we saw fit, without any higher obligation." The league objected to Babbitt's speech, charging him with historical revisionism and a false presentation of Church teachings on the subject.

Media



January

Request magazine published a painting under the headline, “10 Things Jesus Christ and Michael Jackson have in Common,” in which Michael Jackson was made to look like Jesus Christ, complete with halo. Among the ten things held in common were: “Oprah claims personal relationship to both;” “Suffer the little children to come unto me;” “Needed 12 PR men to handle spin control;” and “Never really had a serious relationship with Brooke Shields.”

January 10

The John Larroquette Show aired an episode called “Faith” which dealt with the characters’ reactions to an alleged apparition of Jesus. The apparition was seen at a bus station loading dock and people flocked to it, leaving votive candles, flowers, even a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

January 18 – 24

The cover story of the *New York Press*, “The Angel Factory: Making Martyrs & Monsters,” by William Monahan, used John Salvi, the gunman who opened fire in two abortion clinics in late 1994, as an example of “a Catholic success story...the sort of Catholic the Church has been sadly lacking for years—which is to say, a Catholic.” The article attacked the Church at length, criticizing the sacraments, religious, saints, martyrdom, the Pope, Catholic education, etc. In explaining Salvi’s behavior, Monahan wrote, “Salvi was thinking crazily, but he was thinking in Catholic terms,” and that “the Church definitely can’t say that he wasn’t listening in catechism

class.”

January 20

Cincinnati, OH – A guest, Rich Walberg, on radio station WCKY read his list of “news events” of the past week. One item on his list read in part: “little boys who play with little boys grow up to be archbishops.”

January 22

FOX-TV’s *House of Buggin’* contained an offensive ten-minute satire on priestly celibacy, including numerous sexual comments.

January 29

MTV aired the program, *The State*, which depicted a crudely altered recreation of the Last Supper. Jesus Christ, as well as each of the twelve apostles, were demeaned and, using a play on words, each character was shown repeating the offensive term “balls.” Jesus was mocked and blasphemed.

February

In an interview with Timothy Leary in *Psychology Today*, Leary attacked the Catholic Church, and charged that the Pope and Mother Teresa were “the two most evil people alive.”

February 9

Fort Lauderdale, FL – The local *Sun-Sentinel* published a four page ad by a Seventh Day Adventist splinter group in which the Catholic Church was maligned. The Church was accused of trying to establish a New World Order with the Pope conspiring with President Clinton to take over the world. The paper later offered an apology and a pledge not to run such ads again.

February 19 – 20

Arts and Entertainment Network (A&E) aired the film *The Boys*

of *St. Vincent*, which even PBS would not touch. The movie is about priestly pedophilia in an orphanage in New Foundland. It was so vile that even the *Village Voice* viewed it as deliberately offensive.

April

The Basketball Diaries is a film about Catholic school boys who have gone wrong. The *Washington Post* wrote that "The movie's grotesque parade of corrupted Catholic schoolboys, sadistic priests and sexually predatory basketball coaches just might throw them [the Catholic Church] off the scent of the currently controversial *Priest*." Former New York City Mayor Ed Koch was highly critical of the movie. "In keeping with Hollywood's unfair depiction of the clergy, the teacher is portrayed as an ogre who is devoid of compassion and enjoys the flogging."

April 7 – 13

Hampton, NH – "Another Pope Bashing?!", a piece published in the *Seacoast Times*, concludes with this: "If Catholics cannot separate their religious obligations from their...secular...constituency, then they must not be allowed to hold public office...unless a Catholic candidate either renounces his religion or publicly states his intent to disobey papal rule...It would be unfortunate to have to cast votes according to candidates' religion. But that would be less troublesome than returning to Dark Ages-style Catholic rule."

April 17

The *New Yorker* featured a cover during Holy Week of the Easter bunny, clad in a business suit, crucified against the backdrop of a tax form. In making a point about conservatives' reverential views about tax cuts, the artist unnecessarily abused Christian symbols during the most sacred time of year for Christians.

April 19

Priest opened after it was originally scheduled for a Good Friday debut. The Disney-Miramax film not only showed five priests with serious problems, it also placed responsibility for their dysfunction on the Church. Two priests were having affairs, one with a woman, the other, with a man. A third priest was a drunk, another was psychotic, and the bishop was evil and cruel. There was not one well-adjusted priest in the film. The Church was depicted as the cause of all the troubles; the celibacy requirement was targeted. Stereotypes abounded which served to stigmatize the Church and presented it as contemptible and destructive. Director Antonia Bird said her feeling about the Church "seethe[d] with rage." Jimmy McGovern, the writer, called the priests that he knew as a child "reactionary bastards."

June

Nickelodeon's *Toaster Man* featured an opening scene on one episode that had nothing to do with the plot. Toaster Man is at a podium, raising what looks as if it were the Eucharist while speaking solemnly. After speaking, he calls out a number with the scene turning to a bingo hall.

June 4

CBS' *The Wright Verdicts* featured a bigoted anti-Catholic episode. Negative stereotypes were used including a child abuse scandal which was covered up; sexism in the Church; bullying bishops, hypocritical priests, and brutal nuns. Further, there was a nun who had had an abortion before entering the convent. There was persecution of a gay priest. Papal infallibility was trivialized and the seal of the confessional was mocked. Dick Wolf's program showed the nun and the homosexual priest in sympathetic terms. The real culprit—the nun was accused of killing the Archbishop—was a cruel Monsignor, who also happened to be a pedophile.

June 6

New York – Howard Stern was heard on WXRK-FM interviewing a Catholic high school girl applying for a job. He asked her if she wore panties. He commented that he liked to have sex with Catholic high school girls.

June 13

Dateline, an NBC news program, featured an interview with Scott O'Grady, the American who was shot down over Bosnia. Jane Pauley commented, "A devout Roman Catholic, O'Grady made his confirmation at age thirteen, *and unlike many of his peers never left the Church.*" [our emphasis] Dr. Donohue issued a statement that this comment was "snide, [and] gratuitous." Jane Pauley denied that bigotry motivated her comment.

June 19

In a commentary, Ray Richmond of the *Los Angeles Daily News* discussed Michael Jackson and Lisa Marie Presley, writing "What are these kids...gonna say? No, we aren't doing it. We're planning on going the Immaculate Conception route."

July 8

The HBO comedy special, *Kathy and Mo: The Dark Side*, included characters who said, "If there is a God, I believe that he or she is definitely within us...I can't believe we fell for that all-powerful, judgmental, Catholic God shit..." Another character said, "I haven't been to confession in like 15 years, right? I could like quote the Bible. I was so into that Catholic garbage."

July 16

Los Angeles, CA – KFI radio talk show host Bill Press insulted the Catholic Church and the celibacy requirement for priests. Among his remarks were the following: "You don't need a penis

to be a priest...Do you need a penis to be a penis? I say no, not even a Catholic priest...I mean, what is that job all about? It is not molesting little boys...."

August

Puyallup, WA – The *Heralds of Truth* published *Earth's Final Warning* which predicted in its headline "A New World Order Is Coming!" The blame for this development was placed on the papacy. Headlines inside the publication included: "Will Rome Rule the World Again?" A history of the Catholic Church was presented and comments like "Popery had become the world's despot" abounded.

August

Jeffrey is the story of homosexual couples and love made complex as well as deadly because of AIDS. Jeffrey (Steven Weber), according to the *New York Post's* movie reviewer Thelma Adams, was "(f)ed up with the demands and tensions of safe sex...[and] is ready for celibacy." But, then he met a "dream-boat" who was named Steve (Michael T. Weiss); however, he had AIDS, which is a stumbling block to their union. What made this interesting to Catholics was the character Father Dan (Nathan Lane), who was described as "a horny, gay Catholic priest...[He] sees shades of the divine in sex..." Further, Father Dan said, "Maybe you didn't hear me. I'm a Catholic priest. Historically that falls somewhere in between chorus boy and florist."

August 2

Newsweek featured an article on singer Alanis Morissette whose lyrics are bawdy and, as the writer Jeff Giles pointed out, reminiscent of Sinead O'Connor. Instead of just discussing the singer and her background, Giles added editorial comment. "She grew up in Ottawa...and was sent to Catholic school. (Which may explain the blue lyrics.)"

August 10 – 16

Orlando, FL – The *Orlando Weekly's* Liz Langley wrote an article entitled "Possession is nine-tenths of the fun." She purchased Communion Wafers at a religious store. She wrote, "These are the little wafers that Catholics believe are the body of Christ. These, I thought, might come in handy if you were possessed and couldn't get to a priest right away...If you have the box of Jesus on your hands, you might be able to get out of this pickle on your own." Although she was informed by a priest that the bread does not become the Body of Jesus until transubstantiation occurs, she thought it would be fun to "[m]ortify your Catholic friends by setting them out with the hors d'oeuvres at a party." She suggested that using a more pleasant tasting food such as Twinkies might be more of a crowd pleaser.

August 11

Arts and Entertainment Network (A&E) aired a program called *A&E Investigative Reports: The Pope and the Nazis*, which said that Pius XII was guilty of passive acquiescence with the Nazis. The investigation concluded that the Pope was a failure who did little or nothing to thwart the Nazis slaughter of the Jews; this was the conclusion despite statements to the contrary from his contemporaries, Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, *The New York Times*, Pinchas Lapide, Jeno Levai, Emilio Zolli, the World Jewish Congress, etc.

August 12

Queensboro, KY – In his syndicated column, Clark Morpew charged that some in the Catholic hierarchy "love secrets more than they love themselves." He continued, "The thing I have never understood about Catholicism is why there is a need for all the levels of power, where problems can be hidden...." He concluded, "The secrecy of the Catholic Church has to end."

September

A promotional spot for FOX's *The Preston Episodes* featured the show's star, David Alan Grier, taking a cheap shot at Mother Teresa. Grier pretended in this radio ad that she was walking toward him while he was naked; after a short pause there was the sound of a woman screaming. The ad was carried on several stations without the consent of the local FOX affiliates. FOX headquarters in Los Angeles apologized and pledged not to run the ad again.

September 8

TV Nation, a FOX program, aired a segment in which the sacrament of reconciliation was mocked. The host and executive producer, Michael Moore said, "Sinners can be winners." The story was designed to present a "consumers' guide" to obtaining the best penance by having a young Catholic woman confess a sin at twenty-six New York area churches. Moore insisted that actual sins be confessed and he hired a male model to function as a constant temptation as the young woman repeated the same sin—expressed in different ways—in confession. Another person was shown using an adding machine to tally her penances. In the end, Moore said, "The preceding was a re-enactment. All the churches and penances, though, were real. The participants were bona fide Roman Catholics who believe in the pains of Hell and the existence of a merciful God." On the screen were the words "No actual commandments were broken during the broadcast."

September 11

New York — *New York* magazine previewed the papal visit to New York. "The church will make room in a separate field for all you lapsed Catholics who didn't make it to the parishes where tickets will have been distributed...The whole hoo-ha may make John Paul a bigger star than Paul Simon..." In addition to the irreverent prose, the magazine included a picture of the Pope with a sign in the background with the word CONDOM colorfully spelled out.

September 12

Los Angeles, CA – Cyndi Lauper, a pop singer, was Tom Snyder's guest on *The Late, Late Show* and the two discussed Catholicism and her childhood experience for much of the program. Among the disparaging remarks, Lauper presented a "theory" that God had nothing to do with nuns who "tried to be good but the whole theory of that organization [Catholic Church] is about oppression, oppression of women..." She discussed the Blessed Virgin and said that "the only way that she conceived the Son of God was through this big miracle which means that the gift God gave women to give birth, the one gift...for us is an evil basically..." Her commentary extended to the clothing of nuns and priests. "I'm supposed to feel bad about being a woman; these dames [nuns] they gotta look ugly and this guy's [priest] wearing a flowing skirt...He wants to wear a skirt, he's got the whole drag thing going, he's got a hat like a penis..." The ridicule ended with Snyder saying, "Bless me, Father, for I've had impure thoughts."

September 16

A Seventh Day Adventist pastor on cable television presented "eight points" to demonstrate his thesis that the papacy is the beast. With "love and compassion" the pastor asserted the eight characteristics which he said indicated the Church is the fulfillment of the Book of Revelation about the Antichrist. Among these are that the beast would have world wide power, would rule for forty-two months, and would be guilty of blasphemy. Also, the Antichrist would war with and persecute the saints. To him this is the Catholic Church and he positively identified the papacy as the beast of the Antichrist.

September 21

New York – In a column in *New York Newsday*, Jimmy Breslin took a shot at the Pope. "He [the Pope] can be counted on for a

liberal's exciting, searing attack on a greedy society....then can be counted on to turn the rest of his speech into an attack on women, on sex, on condoms, abortion, anything to do with women, and wreck the effect of his marvelous social expressions."

September 22

The United Artists' movie, *Showgirls*, was not only extremely lewd, but it also featured attacks on the Blessed Virgin Mary. The "f—g Virgin Mary" was said by one person and in the same scene a heavy set woman showed her breasts while making another lewd reference to the Blessed Mother.

September/October

The End Times and Victorious Living newspaper, a ministry of the Paw Creek Church, featured anti-Catholic diatribes and ads for books and cassettes from well known bashers. One article on the front cover was called "A Marriage From Hell: Catholics and Protestants Together." The article asserted "that Catholicism is totally bankrupt and the very instrument of the Antichrist. It is as dark as hell itself...." The newspaper also claimed that Marian apparitions approved by the Church as genuine are demonic deceptions.

October 1

San Francisco, CA — In describing in the *San Francisco Examiner* why Dublin has become a European capital, Pete Hamill opined that the lessening of Church authority has liberated the people who can now enjoy life. Hamill wrote: "That Stalinesque censorship was executed at the bidding of the Catholic Church...The traditional obsession with sex extended to movies, television...[and] power was wielded like an ax." Later, after further explaining the Church's oppression of the people, Hamill said, "An archbishop was exposed as a cruel hypocrite...Other priests were charged with pedastery, using their ecclesiastical powers to seduce schoolboys." He

was triumphant in declaring that the liberated people would not go back to the days before abortion, contraception, and divorce.

October 5

NBC Nightly News did an "In Depth" report on the Church featuring representatives from the groups Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC) and Dignity. Presented as authentic, neither group is recognized by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. They are dissident groups. One report showed an engaged couple who thinks premarital sex and birth control are acceptable. Also featured was a Dignity member who "hasn't given up on Catholicism, but the Catholic mass he attends each week is said in an Episcopal church." CFFC's Frances Kissling presented her view: "You can be a good Catholic and be pro-choice."

October 5

New York – Howard Stern took the text of a papal speech during the Holy Father's visit and added sexual comments that were obscene.

October 5

Newark, NJ – The Bible Students Congregation of New Brunswick took out an advertisement in the *Newark Star-Ledger* in which they asserted their Protestant belief that sees the "papacy as the Antichrist."

October 8

San Francisco, CA – In the sports section of the *San Francisco Examiner*, Ray Ratto wrote, "Since the Sharks Sharks invented teal, angry looking animals with hockey sticks in their mouths, bungee-jumping stuffed seafood mascots and a product distribution scheme that would shame the Catholic Church, a lot of things have happened in the National Hockey League."

October 9

East Brunswick, NJ – *The Home News & Tribune* accepted an advertisement from the Bible Student Congregation of New Brunswick called “John Paul II: World Statesman”; it read, among other things, that “the Pope has an intelligence gathering network that is the envy of every government.” Who does the work? Priests. It asserted that “many Christians believe any attempt to establish the Kingdom of God before Christ’s return is identified in Scripture as the work of the ‘antichrist.’”

October 9

San Francisco, CA – In an article about the Twentieth Annual San Francisco Comedy Competition, an *Examiner* staff critic commented on the second place winner. He said that he “risked an eternity in hell by referring to the Catholic communion hosts as ‘Christ Chex’ and ‘Croutons 0 Christ.’” In an editorial comment, Marine opined, “After all, what’s damnation when there’s serious money on the line?”

October 10

Miami, FL – Alexander Veiga, the Opinion editor of *The Beacon*, the newspaper of Florida International University, penned a commentary on the Pope right after his visit to the U.S. comparing the Pontiff to Don Corleone, saying he should not be heeded because “we don’t need anything he’s selling.”

October 11 – 17

John Spain in a column for the *Irish Voice* mocked the Pope for his accent and for his teachings on sexuality. He discussed the problems of sexual abuse among priests in Ireland, condemning the Church’s teachings as “stifling.” “[T]he fear and guilt induced by a traditional Catholic upbringing means that they cannot cope with an adult sexual relationship, and are reduced to getting what satisfaction they can by molesting

kids."

October 12

Eugene, OR – Alan Siporin, in his column wrote a piece called "Pope Friction." In it, he said the Pope was "going to be a target for humor and even ridicule." He commented, using slang terminology, that the Pope "allegedly" never had sexual intercourse yet "condemns these women as sinners unless they abstain from sex except for the expressed purpose of procreation." He further opined, "That a man who has never experienced the joys of sex would put forth the abstention proposition is understandable. What is so outlandish is that that anyone pays attention to him."

October 16

Brooklyn, NY – In a column called "A Britisher's View," Shavanna Abruzzo imagined a conversation between O.J. Simpson and His Holiness. The Pope told Simpson that he watched the trial, neglecting the faithful. Simpson replied that the Pope's concern undermined what is said about the Church and its desire to gain riches for itself. The Pope confided to him that he was charging him less than his lawyers and that he could guarantee him a happy afterlife "'just as soon as the check's cleared.'" In discussing the case, the Pope said to Simpson that the athlete had a lot in common with the Church. The Pope explained, "'Just look at my own priests, one's molesting a kid here, another's having his way with a parishioner there...'" And the Pope's motivation for consoling Simpson? "'Actually, I was rather hoping to snag a spot on your pay-per-view special... 'cause I'm getting too old to gallivant around the world.'"

October 20

Montauk, NY – The "Gospel According to Harold" was a piece in the *Montauk Pioneer* that satired the life of Jesus in a most disrespectful way. Among the quips that mocked the Gospel

included the use of the image of Jesus jumping into the river, cannonball style, where He was baptized. In listing the Apostles, one line described Judas, "who often kissed the Lord in public, causing him much chagrin and embarrassment." On Jesus' preaching, it read: "This caused the Pharisees...to make circles around their ears with their index fingers when His back was to them." Further, "He gave them all glasses of wine...[saying] 'This is my blood.' Hearing this, the Apostles all spat...After they had come to the realization that it was...only wine, there was much laughter..."

October 26

Albany, NY – A local poet/musician, Mary Panza, displayed her vulgarity in degrading the Blessed Virgin on her CD called *Volume*, which she co-produced. In mocking her posterior she put words in Mary's mouth that belong in the gutter. A sample from "I Saw the Blessed Virgin at the Lancome Counter at Macy's": "You've been agonizing over that butt of yours for years now. From the time you were in Catholic school...Honey, shut the f-k up." The writer of an article about her thought the verse was "hilarious."

November 10

San Francisco, CA – Gene Burns guest hosted Ron Owens' program on KGO-AM and launched into a diatribe against clerical celibacy. "When pedophiles come out of the Roman Catholic Church, does it cause you any surprise? This is a Church which has an unnatural policy of asking its clergy and its nuns to be asexual beings...that's a perverted posture..." He further elaborated when called by a listener who disagreed with him, "I'm not condemning anybody except the pedophiles and the policy of this organization which encourages pedophiles to become priests and to hide in the ranks of the clergy." He claimed that the Church knew its policy was perverted and that he would debate someone from the "anti-defamation Catholic organization" on this topic since he feared no

“contradiction.” For one final swipe, he said that the hierarchy wanted Catholic women “to launder the linens and arrange the flowers while they’re diddling their daughters.”

November 24

Pittsburgh, PA – In a front cover story, senior editor Peter Benesh of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* wrote about the divorce controversy in Ireland: “The subtext of the emotion-laden debate is a brutal question: Should clerical pedophiles be allowed to dictate Irish family values?”

November 26

New York – “Lives of the Super Saints” discussed supermodels as saints of a kind in the Style page of the *New York Times Magazine*. Bob Morris used religious imagery in writing about various models who had been written off, but whose careers still continued. He said that these women “still inspire a religious kind of awe.” He stated in giving his advice: “Like the Greeks...Roman Catholics have saints for nearly every occasion...Now, if cute people with dental issues could invoke Kate Moss, they might surely find inspiration in the legend of her ascension...Similarly, failed new movie stars could invoke Cindy Crawford giving St. Genesius...a break.”

November 29

Law & Order featured a story about a devout Catholic mother who killed her baby. She pretended that, while she was in Confession, her child was stolen. As the show unfolded, it became known that this outwardly religious woman murdered her child. Her defense attorney urged a defense based on mental defect; however, the prosecutor demonstrated her sanity when he got her to admit she killed her daughter for a more mundane reason—she was crying. The league’s central objection to this show was that it depicted the devout characters as dysfunctional and all the dissidents as well-adjusted, thus promoting a negative stereotype of practicing Catholics who

are loyal to the Church.

December 4

In *The New Yorker* Ann Landers gave her opinion on many public figures including the Pope. She called His Holiness a “Polack” and added that the Polish people were “anti-women.”

December 8

Picket Fences’ episode caricatured Catholic teaching on marriage and sexuality. This episode featured a visit from the Holy Father to the show’s fictional town, Rome, Wisconsin. He saw a murder and was a witness at a trial of a gay man who killed his lover. The Pope underwent questions on such things as Church teaching on homosexuality. The Holy Father was presented as stupid, unable to answer the defense attorney’s questions. Thus, Catholic teachings were misrepresented and negative stereotypes of the Catholic view of sexuality were advanced.

December 19

Andrei Codrescu, a commentator for the tax supported National Public Radio (NPR), made the following comment in his *All Things Considered* broadcast: “The evaporation of four million [Christians] who believe in this crap would leave the world a better place.” Codrescu issued an apology for the tone, but not the substance, of the commentary.

December 20

New York – A program called *In the Life—Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell* appeared on PBS’ New York station, WNYC. In this program about homosexuals’ lives, the Catholic Church came under fire for many unsubstantiated reasons. A gay professor at the University of Notre Dame opined that the Church is uncomfortable about sexuality and “terrorized” by homosexuality.

December 25

Green Bay, WI – Gannett News Service issued a story about the Virgin Mary which the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* put in its Lifestyle section. In a column called “Booyah,” the story appeared in which Mary’s “ultimate crisis pregnancy” was discussed. “Bible interpreters resistant to the virgin birth story argue that either Mary and Joseph had normal sexual relations, or Mary was a victim of rape.”

1995

Texe Marrs sold a tape called “Satan 2000: The Unity of World Religions.” In this audio talk, Marrs claimed that the devil picked John Paul II for a mission. Among his charges against the Catholic Church were that the Church re-sacrifices Jesus in the Mass and that Catholics in bowing before a Marian shrine are worshipping her. He asserted, “Catholics worship Mary, who’s the form of a goddess.” He made many accusations about priests being gays and pedophiles; he stated that Vatican City has three Masonic lodges.

1995


Joan Osborne became a new singing sensation with a record called *Relish*. On the album were songs such as “St. Teresa” and “One of Us.” The former discussed drugs, prostitution, and the saint with lines like “Every stone a story like a Rosary.” The latter song wondered what if God were “one of us” and “just another slob.” Produced by PolyGram Records, Inc., the album also solicited donations for Rock For Choice and Planned Parenthood, among others.

1995

A group called Down put out an album called *Nola*, which featured a “Parental Advisory” for “Explicit Lyrics.” The album’s cover featured an image of a man, meant to resemble the face of Christ with a crown of thorns. Out of his mouth

was dangling a marijuana cigarette. Songs like “Hail the Leaf” and “Bury Me in Smoke” indicated the drug references that are rife in this work, and which have nothing to do with Jesus. It was distributed by Elektra Entertainment Group, which is a division of Warner Communications, Inc.

Executive Summary

Examples of anti-Catholic bigotry that appear in this  report are culled from activist organizations, the arts, commercial establishments, education, government, the media and the workplace; acts of violence are also detailed. The commentary that follows will address each of these areas. But first a word about the difference between criticism of the Catholic Church and rank bigotry.

There is a difference between those who choose to disagree and dispute and those who prefer to disdain and disparage. There is a difference between criticism and insult. And there is a difference between dialogue and diatribe. Our concern is with the latter responses only. To be frank, it is not always easy to discern whether a line has been crossed. Context is surely important, as is tone. Patterns matter, too, for if we see that the same person or organization repeatedly comes to our attention, it suggests that something other than criticism might be at work. Inevitably, there is no substitute for sound judgment in making these assessments. In the end, the public will judge whether we have made the right calls or not.

There was no shortage of ill-will expressed by activist organizations against the Catholic Church in 1994. The anti-Catholic group, Catholics for a Free Choice, took to the airwaves lambasting the Vatican for its teachings governing

the family. This was especially noticeable at the Cairo Conference and the Preparatory Committee hearings that preceded it at the U.N. Frances Kissling led a band of population control activists in a vain attempt to persuade U.N. member states to expel the Holy See from the Vatican. But that didn't stop Kissling, Bella Abzug and others from trying to discredit the Catholic Church.

The degree of anti-Catholic venom was so bad in Cairo that the Ambassador from Benin rose to say how "disgraceful" the behavior was. Indeed, the booing that greeted Catholic delegates was so great that the Ambassador said he never saw anything like it. He was not the only one who noted that the incivility that was accorded representatives of the Holy See was so unprecedented that even acknowledged terrorists who have spoken before the august body have never had to endure such badgering. Evidently, the Church's positions on the integrity of the family and the rights of the unborn is so distasteful to some that they can't restrain from making vitriolic attacks.

If Cairo demonstrated anything, it is that there is a close alliance between the activists involved in the anti-natalist, feminist, gay and lesbian causes. The unifying thread between organizations like Planned Parenthood, the National Organization for Women and the various gay and lesbian organizations is their belief that all expressions of human sexuality are equally meritorious and that eliminating the consequences of unlimited sexual expression is a fundamental human right. As such, these organizations entertain a view of life that is anathema to Catholic doctrine. More important, it puts these organizations on a political collision course with the Vatican.

If there was one event in 1994 that activist organizations engaged in that was particularly offensive to Catholics it was the illegal gay march that took place up New York's Fifth Avenue on June 26. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani succeeded in getting

a court order to stop the march (another, much bigger, gay parade had already been given the right to march up First Avenue), but when the group decided to march anyway, Mayor Giuliani not only allowed it to proceed with impunity, he ordered the New York Police Department to escort the criminals up the street. But it is what happened on Fifth Avenue that angered Catholics most of all.

The radical gay contingent that chose to march up Fifth Avenue did so for one reason: so that they could partake in an anti-Catholic demonstration in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral. When the marchers reached the Cathedral, they yelled—in unison—four-letter epithets and pointed their middle fingers at those on the steps of the church. Some were dressed as Cardinals, others as nuns and priests, and many wore nothing at all. They sat down in the street, did satanic dances and generally showed as much disrespect as they could. No one was arrested, not even those who went fully naked through the streets.

What was particularly odious about this case was the refusal of anyone in the New York media to brand the marchers as anti-Catholic bigots. Yet had this happened in front of a Jewish synagogue or a black Baptist church, the charge of bigotry would have been quick and decisive. Indeed, it is doubtful that the Mayor would even have authorized the parade in the first place. And even though Mayor Giuliani is a Catholic, he not only allowed the march to take place,

he never blasted the parade for what it was—a vile, public exhibition of anti-Catholic bigotry.

The arts community weighed in with contributions to Catholic-bashing as well. Ron Athey not only put on several despicable anti-Catholic shows, he received public monies for doing so. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) showed in 1994 that it was not going to flinch from critics who have labeled some of what it funds as anti-Catholic. It is an outrage that

Catholics, and others, are forced to fund Athey's abuse of Catholic imagery so that he can indulge in sexually explicit and vulgar statements. Yet when pressed on this issue, Jane Alexander of the NEA continues to recite the same old lyric about free speech, never questioning the right of artists to pick the pocket of the public to pay for their perversities.

Even commercial establishments proved not to be immune from anti-Catholic artists in 1994. Barneys of New York, the upscale clothing store, put a vulgar nativity scene in its window on Madison Avenue and 61st Street, explaining to its critics that no one has any right to pass value judgments on the work of artists. The display, "Hello Kitty Cat," showed our Blessed Mother as a cat with six nipples exposed and her legs spread wide apart. Fortunately, the Catholic League was able to mount public pressure to get Barneys to pull the obscenity within hours after going public with our objections.

Catholic-bashing in the schools is a real problem and this is especially true at the level of higher education. Carnegie Mellon University, Western Michigan University, the University of Kansas, William Paterson College and Metropolitan State College in Denver all drew fire from the Catholic League in 1994. Though the incidents were different at each school, there was a common denominator: the Catholic Church was targeted because of its beliefs. What was most disturbing, however, was the extent to which administrators tolerated such intolerance, especially given the much vaunted interest in multiculturalism that all of them claim to have.

The Catholic League is concerned that programs in multiculturalism are actually fomenting the bigotry they claim to be fighting. Where is the evidence that suggests that respect for the traditions and beliefs of Roman Catholic students are taken seriously in such curricula? Where are the sensitivity seminars and workshops to stop religio-phobia from breaking out all over? Why is it that some cultures are to be valued more than others and that the Judeo-Christian heritage

is fair game for bashing?

At the local, state and national levels of government, many incidents of anti-Catholicism were reported. In local communities, there was much dissension over the inequitable treatment that was afforded expression of the Christmas season. At least in some parts of the country, it proved to be quite controversial for nativity scenes to be placed on public property and in the schools, even when every precaution was taken to be in compliance with Supreme Court rulings on this subject. Yet the placement of menorahs met with relatively little complaint, making Catholics, and Christians in general, wonder what was going on. They were even more perplexed to learn that at the federal level, there was an attempt to nix religious stamps.

The Catholic League was particularly disturbed by the lame response of Governor Christie Todd Whitman of New Jersey to a serious incident of Catholic-bashing at a state college. When the Catholic League asked Governor Whitman to do something about the outrageously anti-Catholic antics of Professor Vernon McLean, and the equally outrageous response of the administration, we got nowhere. It took Governor Whitman four months to answer our request for assistance and then we got nothing but a "I've-accepted-the-findings-of-the-college" type response. In short, the same woman who publicly condemned one boardwalk vendor for selling anti-gay T-shirts couldn't muster one word of protest over an egregious anti-Catholic incident at a school that is under her tutelage.

The Clinton Administration also drew fire from the Catholic League in 1994. We were particularly incensed with the way administration officials tolerated the Catholic-bashing that took place at the Cairo Conference. We took note, too, that even President Clinton's own Ambassador to the Vatican, Raymond Flynn, complained to the President in a letter about the "ugly anti-Catholic bias" that some in the administration have shown. Indeed, the Catholic League even paid for a half-

page Open Letter to the President in the *New York Times* to address the bigoted remark of a State Department spokeswoman made just prior to the Cairo Conference.

This report cites many examples of bias in the media, including offensive cartoons. Do the newspapers ever caricature rabbis or ministers? Or do they only pick on the Pope, priests and nuns? It certainly does not exaggerate by much to say that they “only” pick on our clergy and religious. Sure, the hierarchal nature of the Catholic Church, coupled with its countercultural positions, makes for an easy target, but the fact remains that there are lots of easy targets in society, yet only a few seem to be fair game. In short, the Catholic Church is not one of the sacred cows that the media like to protect.

When assessing anti-Catholicism in the media, it is important not to confuse criticism of Church policies with unadulterated bigotry. One index of bigotry, however, is the constancy of critical commentary to the exclusion of anything favorable. For example, those who read the columns of Margery Egan in the *Boston Globe*, or have read the pieces that Anna Quindlen used to write for the *New York Times*, are not wrong to wonder whether there is an animus at work. Why is it that they consistently choose to portray the Church in the most negative possible way? While any one column, standing on its own, might not warrant the tag of bigotry, the cumulative effect of persistently critical articles might very well merit such a charge.

Here's another example. The media like to report on divisions—contrived and real—within the Catholic Church. But few reports were as obviously shaded as the one that took place in the fall of 1994 when nuns protested in St. Peter's Square. The *Washington Post* gave it a big spread and the *Today Show* featured it as well. So what's wrong with giving wide coverage to nuns demonstrating in St. Peter's Square? When the number doing so is exactly four, it begs the question, “Just

how few would it take for the media **not** to report on it?"
Three? Two? One?

Bigotry in the workplace is another problem, though it is markedly different than the type that took place in the past. There was a time, not too long ago, when it was commonplace for Catholics to be excluded from jobs because of their religion. The more common problem these days, as this log indicates, occurs when religious symbols are displayed at works.

It must also be said that if a Catholic employee makes public his or her commitment to the rights of the unborn, problems on the job may very well be forthcoming. Indeed, college graduates who have been active in pro-life work would be well advised not to flag their contribution in a resume. But if the students were involved in abortion rights affiliations, that would be acceptable. Problems like these do not show up in a report like this because of the difficulty of proving bigotry, but anyone who is in a position to know about situations like this will verify its veracity.

It is our expectation that this report will provide skeptics with information that they might not have come upon otherwise. We also hope to educate fellow Catholics to the nature of the assault that is being waged against their religion. Most Americans are fair-minded people who, when presented with a record of indefensible behavior, will respond with indignation. The time has come to rally that indignation in a manner that is as constructive as it is effective. By issuing this report, the Catholic League hopes to contribute that end.

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President

Activist Organizations

2/9/94



Washington, DC – The League defended Pope John Paul II against attacks by a representative of a splinter group of Seventh Day Adventists on a local radio station. The sect had been sponsoring billboards in southern states displaying a drawing of the Holy Father with the caption “Man of Sin.”

2/18/94

Franklin County, VT – The Franklin County Superior Court dismissed the case brought by Catholics for a Free Choice against Charles and Susan Baker, owner of Regal Art Press, who refused to print membership cards for the anti-Catholic, pro-abortion organization. Judge Linda Levitt, ruling on behalf of the Bakers (who are Catholic) said “it cannot be said as a matter of law that the state of Vermont’s interest in eliminating discrimination overrides a person’s rights to free speech and the free exercise of religion.” On appeal, the Vermont Supreme Court sent the case back to Superior Court for retrial.

3/4/94

Brooklyn, NY – Khalid Abdul Muhammad, spokesperson for the Nation of Islam, spoke at the Slave Theatre in Brooklyn. There he asserted that the Catholic religion was filled with “homosexuality and pedophiles” and likened Catholic priests to mass murderer and cannibal, Jeffrey Dahmer.

3/11/94

Boston, MA – The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts

upheld a lower court ruling that the annual Boston St. Patrick's Day Parade, sponsored by the South Boston Allied War Veteran's Council, had to include the Irish American Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston (GLIB) with a banner. Judge Harold Flannery, in his ruling, held that the parade was "more akin to a social association" than a parade, and ruled the parade "an open recreational event," subject, therefore to the laws governing public accommodations. In response to the decision, the South Boston Allied War Veterans Council canceled the parade.

3/17/94

New York, NY – Members of ILGO, the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization, and other homosexual protesters and supporters, were arrested after holding a protest and blocking the street in response to their exclusion as a marching unit in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Protesters anti-Catholic statements included signs; a "choir" (including one member dressed as a nun) singing "God is a Lesbian" to the tune of "My Country 'Tis of Thee"; etc.. New York State Attorney General Oliver Koppell, Al Sharpton and City Councilman Thomas Duane were among those on hand to show their support. All charges against the protesters were later dropped on the grounds that their arrest violated their free rights.

4/3/94

Washington, DC – ACT-UP threatened to demonstrate against James Cardinal Hickey and break into the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Easter Sunday while the Cardinal was saying Mass. The threat came in response to remarks the cardinal made in a letter to President Clinton. The League threatened to use the RICO statute if a church break-in did occur. None did.

4/4-22/94

New York, NY – The three-week-long Preparatory Committee

meeting of the International Conference on Population and Development included numerous vicious attacks on the church. Planned Parenthood launched an especially vicious attack when they, along with various population control organizations around the world, signed the "Letter To The Delegates At Prep Com III" in which they said, "To impose one religious perspective on a whole continent or world-wide is imperious and unacceptable." (Emphasis in original.) Those representative of non-governmental organizations opposing the position of the Holy See passed out anti- Catholic stickers, buttons with the words "Papal Control" covered over by the international "No" symbol, and anti- Catholic literature. The unofficial daily newspaper of the conference, *Earth Times*, regularly included cartoons and articles mocking the Pope and the Vatican envoy present at the conference.

5/9/94

Los Angeles – Frances Kissling, president of Catholics for a Free Choice, charged in the *Los Angeles Times* that the Catholic Church was full of "hatred of women and fear of sexuality," explaining that this is what accounts for the Church's positions on birth control and abortion. "Misogyny is alive and well at the Vatican," she added, and "women's lives still rank at the bottom when it comes to respect, much less value."

6/18-26/94

New York, NY – Numerous groups participated in commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion. Many of the activities, both those endorsed by the official organization (Stonewall 25) and those planned by other groups to coincide with the celebration, were blatantly anti-Catholic. The most outrageous examples of the deep-seated hostility directed at the Catholic Church included the following:

June 24 – Dignity, an organization of homosexuals who purport

to be faithful Catholics yet live in direct opposition to Church teachings, held a demonstration across the street from St. Patrick's Cathedral and featured a defrocked priest as one of their speakers.

June 25 – Dignity hosted a "Mass" at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church on Park Avenue. Attendees were greeted by a man wearing earrings, a necklace and short leather pants, and were treated to a New Age hymn, the Lord's Prayer beginning with "Our Mother/ Father in Heaven..."; and a homily by Dr. Mary Hunt. Dr. Hunt attempted to make a distinction between the "hierarchical Church" and the "real Church." Episcopal priest (and former Catholic priest) Ronald E. F. Hoskins presided.

June 26 – An illegal gay parade was held with marchers proceeding up Fifth Avenue past St. Patrick's Cathedral. Many of the demonstrators were either fully or half-naked. Participants in the parade shouted four-letter words, on command, and pointed their middle fingers at the Cathedral. The marchers laid down in the street, holding up traffic. Some were dressed in mock religious attire, some in satanic garb. The choice of an illegal march down Fifth Avenue was made specifically to lambaste the Church and Cardinal O'Connor.

6/23/94

New York, NY – The Youth Education League of ACT-UP began a campaign of destruction when it printed and posted handbills denouncing an anti-condom ad being run by the Catholic League. The handbills, which were placed directly over the League's ad, read in part "It is no secret the Catholic League would sooner see you die than use a condom." This action came following calls to censor the ad, numerous threats of destruction, and the defacement and removal of countless posters, some of which were then returned to League

headquarters.

7/11/94

Washington, DC – In a statement designed to discredit the Vatican and stir up old prejudices, Catholics for a Free Choice president Frances Kissling charged that “The Vatican cannot be allowed to set policy for the whole world.” What she was referring to was the free speech of Vatican officials who, as representatives of a nation state that was duly elected to the United Nations, were expressing their concerns over the use of abortion to resolve the alleged world population crisis. Her attempt to characterize the Vatican’s position in terms of a world-wide conspiracy is consistent with the approach of her organization. Kissling’s remark dovetailed with her call for the Vatican to be expelled from the U.N.. She also accused the Catholic Church of greed, saying it was “money and power,” not doctrine, that drove the Church’s position on abortion.

7/27/94

Idaho and Washington – A 16-page tabloid, distributed to nearly every household in certain towns, entitled *Earth’s Final Warning*, accused the Catholic Church of seeking world domination and viciously attacked the Pope. The paper attempted to show that the United States, the United Nations and the Papacy are involved in a conspiracy to create a “New World Order” controlled by Rome, with the ultimate goal of restoring the “Dark Ages.” Members of an anti-Catholic group splintered from the Seventh Day Adventists, based in Western Washington, were responsible for the bigotry. Anti-Catholic billboards and newspaper inserts believed to be sponsored by the same group appeared about a year ago in Portland, Oregon and Walla Walla, Washington. Adventist leaders in Silver Spring, MD, placed the organization on the list of renegade assemblies that refuse to halt anti-Catholic rhetoric.

10/7-8/94

New York, NY – The Lesbian and Gay Cultural & Business Expo, sponsored in part by the Ramada Milford Plaza Hotel and distributors of Dewar's' scotch, contained anti-Catholic material, primarily in an exhibit touted as a "Haunted House." That exhibit consisted of a maze of rooms, with the first, a "prayer room," containing a spinning statue of Jesus with red eyes and dreadlocks. Hand-clapping caused the statue to emit an eerie laugh. Sitting in front of Jesus were several Jack-in-the-Box-type items called "Cracker Crumbs," featuring likenesses of Cardinal O'Connor and others. Bowls on the table contained a yellow liquid which resembled urine. A crucifix sat in one of them and was adorned with the letters "NEA," referring to the NEA's funding of Andres Serrano's "Piss Christ." Another bowl contained a reference to Cardinal O'Connor's plea that anyone thinking of killing an abortionist should kill himself instead. Another scene had a small statue of an altar boy with a noose around his neck kneeling in front of a small statue of a pope or bishop. In the center of the room was a four-sided cardboard box punctured by holes, one of which was labeled "Cardinal O'Connor's Sphincter." There was also a room which identified enemy organizations and included the Catholic League among the display.

12/22/94

Jersey City, NJ – The ACLU filed suit against Jersey City Mayor Bret Schundler for allowing the display of a Nativity scene in front of City Hall. Mayor Schundler had previously allowed, and in fact encouraged, other cultural and religious displays in front of City Hall. He displayed a Menorah during Hanukkah, and has in the past encouraged displays celebrating Pakistani and Indian religion and culture.

12/22/94

Monmouth County, NJ – The ACLU filed suit against the Monmouth

County government for its display of a Christmas tree, Nativity scene and a Menorah at the Hall of Records in Freehold, the county seat. The ACLU contends the display violates separation of church and state. This despite the fact that the Supreme Court has ruled permissible the display of religious symbols so long as the display also includes secular symbols.

The Arts

January-February, 1994



New York, NY – The Whitney Museum presented a vulgar display entitled “Catholic Tastes,” featuring the work of “lapsed Catholic” Mike Kelley. “Catholic Tastes” was a scatological exhibit designed to offend Catholics. The book of the same name which was included as part of the exhibit was even more revealing of Kelley’s bigotry. The exhibit also ran at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from June to August, 1994.

4/11/94

Wyomissing, PA – The Community Players of Wyoming, a suburb of Reading, PA, announced plans to stage a performance of “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All To You,” by Christopher Durang. The play has been cited for its virulent anti-Catholicism.

6/18 – 7/17

New York, NY – The posters advertising “Stonewall: Night Variations,” a musical theater version of the 1969 Stonewall

uprising presented by En Garde Arts, depicted a man wearing a crown, holding the body of another male across his draped lap in the direct imitation of Michaelangelo's *Pieta* in which the Virgin Mary cradles the body of Christ crucified.

6/19/94

Houston, TX – Everett Evans, in a theater review of a local production of "Nunsense," published in the *Houston Chronicle*, described the play as a "one joke show, stretched way past the breaking point." The play's "format is 'Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour' in convent attire." Evans decided that "much of the humor...is cheap shot."

9/10/94 – 10/21/94

St. Paul, MN – The College of St. Catherine sponsored a display by Croatian artist, writer and poet Neda Miranda Blazevic in St. Catherine's G. Murphy Gallery. The exhibit included the painting "Virgin Mary and Zeus Play Chess," in which an abstract topless woman in a pleated mini-skirt and sunglasses floated in the sky opposite Zeus and a chess board.

October

Kansas City, MO – The Missouri Repertory Theatre presented a revival of Rolf Hochhuth's "the Deputy," a play largely credited with creating the myth that Pope Pius XII was silent during the Holocaust. In panel discussions and "educational presentations" set up by the theater both before and after the run of the play, anti-Catholic venom was spewed where discussion and clarification were intended, and the theater representatives did nothing to clarify the misconceptions.

10/16/94

Pennsylvania – WYIEP FM, a community public radio station in Pennsylvania, sponsored the play "Loot," a benefit performance by Joe Orton. Local papers described it as a farce filled with

“a scathing attack on the Catholic Church...a satire on priests and elements of the Catholic religion.” It was scheduled as the season-opening play for the radio station.

10/27/94

New York, NY – Ron Athey, a homosexual performance artist with AIDS, began four performances of his “Four Scenes in a Harsh Life,” at P.S. 122 in Greenwich Village today. Athey is perhaps most remembered for a 1993 performance in Minneapolis, MN, in which he cut into the back of another performer, blotted the blood with towels, attached them to a clothesline and spun the towels out over the audience. His current show is no less bloody, though audience members are not quite so intimately involved. Athey draws heavily on religious, and particularly Catholic, symbolism in crafting his shows. He recreates images of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, the crown of thorns and Michaelangelo’s Pieta, and reporters have made note of the proliferation of images of bloody Catholic martyrs found in Athey’s home.

11/3-23/94

Lancaster, PA – The Art department of Franklin and Marshall College sponsored an extremely anti-Catholic art exhibit in the student center. The exhibit consists of large panels, many of which were derogatory of Pope John Paul II. One panel depicted the Holy Father with Mickey Mouse ears, another with condom balloons, still another driving through desert wasteland in a Nazi jeep. In the center of the exhibit was a book where visitors could write personal notes to the Pope, the majority of which were blasphemous or obscene. When protests were registered with the President, he responded by saying that the exhibit was chosen because of its dimensions and that he did not believe the exhibit was anti-Catholic.

11/11/94

College Park, PA – The University of Pennsylvania sponsored an

Andres Serrano exhibit at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) which included his "Piss Christ." Wendy Steinberg, PR coordinator for the ICA, commented, "I think it's very, very beautiful...actually kind of reverent." The exhibit ran through January 1995.