

PETA RIPS OFF CATHOLIC IMAGERY

Beginning today, People for The Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is launching an advertising campaign that shows The Shroud of Turin along with the words, "Make a Lasting Impression—Go Vegetarian." The international campaign, which will originate in Turin, Italy, argues that Jesus was a vegetarian; it begins on the eve of the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. Many Catholics believe that Jesus was wrapped in The Shroud of Turin.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"PETA wants the world to believe that eating meat is immoral. To that end, it seeks to appropriate symbols held sacred by Christians all over the world. But this latest campaign is a misappropriation: it hijacks Catholic imagery in service to a secular crusade.

"In July, PETA dropped its 'Jesus Was a Vegetarian' campaign after the Milwaukee-based Priests of the Sacred Heart registered a complaint; it was the priests' Sacred Heart imagery that PETA was abusing. Now PETA is back, this time ripping off The Shroud of Turin to make a political statement.

"PETA has a track record of offending Catholics. In 1996, the Catholic League went after the animal rights group for slandering Boys Town. In that instance, PETA was upset with the Catholic institution for doing research on animals, and in the course of doing so, engaged in a 'malicious libel' against the famous home for troubled boys. In 1997, PETA continued its war on Boys Town when one of its members dressed up as Satan while screaming from the roof of the hospital.

"If PETA were as ethical in dealing with Catholics as it is in dealing with cats, there wouldn't be any problem. It's time they took an ethics course taught by someone who knows the difference between the sacred and the profane, as well as the difference between mice and men."