

QUALITY JUDGE GETS THE NOD

On July 6, the U.S. Senate voted 51-46 to put J. Leon Holmes on the federal bench in Arkansas. The Catholic League had worked hard to persuade the lawmakers to appoint this quality judge; Holmes is a practicing Catholic who accepts the teachings of the Magisterium.

For about a year, the Catholic League has publicly criticized some Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee for their unfair treatment of Holmes. To be specific, pro-abortion Catholic senators on the committee like Patrick Leahy, Dick Durbin and Ted Kennedy have subjected Holmes to a *de facto* religious test. Indeed, when Holmes was considered for the federal bench last year, Leahy, Durbin and Kennedy, along with non-Catholics like Chuck Schumer, ganged up on Holmes because of his orthodox Catholic beliefs.

When this issue first arose, the Catholic League made it clear that we were not accusing any senator of being anti-Catholic. But we hastened to add that religious profiling, even when indirectly invoked, was anathema. In the case of Leon Holmes, some of the Democrats were upset with a biblical remark the judge previously made about gender roles. They would have been on more persuasive grounds had they been able to point to a single instance when the private religious beliefs of Holmes had unfairly colored his ability to render a fair judgment. Their failure to do so proved to be telling. It was a narrow but important victory. Justice was finally done.