

“RELIGULOUS” IS MORE ABSURD THAN HATEFUL

Catholic League director of communications Susan A. Fani attended a preview of the Bill Maher movie, “Religulous,” in New York City on September 25. In her report to league president Bill Donohue, it was clear that the film is more absurd than hateful. Here is Donohue’s take on the movie as informed by Fani’s observations:

“Maher has been on a crusade smearing Catholicism for many years, sometimes viciously so. It was therefore expected that ‘Religulous’ would offer more of the same. But in fairness, this did not happen. As we already knew, Maher’s movie was not going to single out Catholicism for derision—Protestantism, Judaism, Islam and other religions are afforded cheap shots—but what we did not know is that he wouldn’t succumb to the kind of slanderous assaults on priests, for instance, that he has made in the past. Nor did we know that he would resist making vile comments about core religious beliefs.

“On the other hand, it is pure nonsense to play Catholicism off against science. After all, were it not for the role of the Catholic Church, there would have been no Scientific Revolution and no early breakthroughs in astronomy. Equally dumb is the assertion that the Ten Commandments are flawed because they don’t speak to child abuse, rape and torture. Had Maher gone to more religion classes, he would have learned that the central taboos listed are umbrella strictures that cover a host of subsidiary sins. And why did he bother to take out of context statements from people like John Adams that make the Founding Fathers sound anti-religion? Adams has often been quoted as saying that the Constitution was made ‘only for a moral and religious people.’

“More important, if Jesus is not the Son of God, as Maher

contends, then why does he waste time—and make himself look silly in the process—by invoking Jesus' name to give homosexuality a pass? In the flick, Maher argues that homosexuality couldn't be so bad if Jesus never mentioned it. And, of course, Maher's contention that religion kills looks rather feeble given that the 20th century was the most violent in history. Hasn't he noticed that Hitler, Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot were expressly atheistic and anti-religious? In any event, Catholicism will survive 'Religulous.'"