

RICHARDS, GIBSON AND JILLETTE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue issued the following remarks today on the reaction to Michael Richards' racial outburst:

"Michael Richards gets interrupted by hecklers, unleashes a racist tirade, gets blasted by the cultural elite and apologizes. Mel Gibson gets drunk, unleashes an anti-Semitic tirade, gets blasted by the cultural elite and apologizes. Penn Jillette, without any provocation, unleashes an anti-Catholic tirade, gets a free pass from the cultural elite and never apologizes.

"Because the cultural elite did not blast Jillette, it is worth remembering what he said on his CBS radio show on April 5, 2006. He said that Mother Teresa 'had this weird kink that I think was sexual,' compared her to Charles Manson, and commented that she 'got her [sexual] kicks watching people suffer and die.' This was not the first time he attacked the beloved nun: last year, on Jillette's Showtime TV show, he branded her 'Mother F-ing Teresa' and called her fellow sisters 'f-ing c--.' When I complained to Sumner Redstone, chairman of Viacom (which owns Showtime, as well as CBS), he wrote a letter defending Jillette's 'artistic freedom.'

"In other words, racism and anti-Semitism are unacceptable, even when expressed in frustration or when inebriated, but anti-Catholicism is okay, even when expressed repeatedly and done intentionally. The problem here is not with Richards, Gibson or Jillette—the problem is with all the phonies who claim to be horrified by bigotry."