

SACRED SYMBOLS, PUBLIC SPACE

For more than three decades, Jersey City, New Jersey, has erected a crèche and menorah outside City Hall. When the ACLU sued a few years ago, citing the usual separation of church and state argument, Mayor Bret Schundler added Santa, Frosty the Snowman, a sleigh and Kwanzaa ribbons. But the ACLU still wasn't happy and so it wound up in the courts.

The latest ruling on this issue proved to be a victory for Mayor Schundler and a loss for the ACLU. A federal appeals court ruling has said that the mix of secular and sacred symbols passes constitutional muster. The ACLU is appealing the decision. Members should know that for the past few years, the Catholic League has made a financial contribution to this cause, helping to defray the legal costs. The victory belongs to the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, headed by Kevin Hasson.

At four southern Ohio high schools there are Ten Commandment monuments. The ACLU is now suing to have them removed. Fighting back, the Adams County/Ohio Valley school board has decided to press the case in court. The man who brought the suit, Berry Baker, has formed the Center for Phallic Worship and has asked the school board for permission to put a 6-foot marble penis next to the tablets. School officials ignored his request.