

SECULARIZING EASTER

There appears to be a growing trend to secularize Easter. More and more greeting cards and gifts are centered around bunnies, not Christ. And when it comes to Christ, attempts to debunk his divinity are given broad coverage. The three major weeklies, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report*, all featured cover stories at Easter that questioned the historical Jesus.

One of the most significant changes occurred when New York's Radio City Music Hall announced that its annual "Easter Show" would now be dubbed the "Spring Spectacular." In 1995 the "Easter Show" was renamed the "Easter Extravaganza" (an acceptable change), but this year the closest association with Easter was found in the small print below "Spring Spectacular," which read: "The Glory of Easter."

We got curious and called Radio City and the ad agency that handles its business. What we were told was that the change in name was done in the interest of broadening the appeal of the program.

The reason we called was because someone in Catholic circles had given us a tip. It seems that when he called the person in the ad agency that handles the account for Radio City, he was told that the reason for the change of names was, "We're trying to take the Christianity out of Easter." That's a more honest way of handling the issue instead of falling back on the need for "inclusive language." We only regret we weren't given the same explanation.

In any event, that didn't stop the Catholic League from raising the issue with the president of Radio City Productions. We've asked him to return to the original title of the show. We'll keep you posted.