

SUMNER REDSTONE DEFENDS CATHOLIC BASHING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue just received a hand-delivered letter from Viacom chief Sumner Redstone. Donohue's reply is as follows:

"After Showtime, a Viacom company, aired the most obscene attack imaginable on Mother Teresa last May (e.g., she was called Mother F-ing Teresa), we mobilized Catholic bishops, priests, nuns, religious and lay persons to protest. And not without success: the vile episode of 'Penn and Teller' that we objected to, 'Holier Than Thou,' will never air again. That should have been the end of the story, but now Viacom CEO Sumner Redstone has made matters worse.

"Redstone's letter (click reeks with arrogance. Showtime, he says, 'frequently airs programs with controversial, differing points of view.' So we are supposed to believe that calling nuns 'f-ing c-s' is just a 'differing point of view.' When he says that 'we as an organization are committed to artistic freedom,' Redstone is being deceitful: CBS is a Viacom holding and CBS refuses to air the reruns of 'Amos and Andy.' So much for artistic freedom. But nothing tops his remark that 'it is tolerance for that which may be uncomfortable, unpopular and perhaps even offensive to some that defines and protects the liberties that all of our society enjoys.' In other words, Viacom's intolerance of Catholics is really a demonstration of its commitment to tolerance. And by beating up on Mother Teresa and the Catholic Church, Viacom is defending the liberties of all Americans. Just like the Marines. Then why doesn't Viacom bash gays and then promote it as a vital contribution to liberty?

"Of course, Viacom would never (nor should) bash gays. Indeed, it boasts on its website that it has launched a new gay and

lesbian channel, LOGO, and even has a diversity program that includes 'same-sex partners financial counseling.' Now if only Viacom treated Catholics the way it treats gays, we could all enjoy 'differing points of view,' 'artistic freedom' and 'tolerance' without ever being the target of its hate speech. Come to think of it, we might even qualify for financial counseling."