

SUPREME COURT PERMITS HOLIDAY DISPLAYS ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

On November 29, U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens ruled that the city of Cincinnati cannot bar the display of a menorah on a downtown plaza during the holidays. The municipal ordinance that was overturned said that only the city can use Fountain Square during the last two weeks of November through the first week of January. Stevens, who oversees the Sixth Circuit, upheld U.S. District Court Judge Susan Dlott's ruling that the city could not grant itself exclusive use of the square during the holidays; Stevens overruled an appeals court decision blocking the display of the menorah.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"The Catholic League is delighted with this Supreme Court ruling. Now is the time for Christians and Jews to demand that all municipalities accommodate public displays of religious symbols during the holiday season. Supreme Court Justice Stevens has given us the green light to proceed and it is up to the rest of us to get the job done.

"U.S. District Judge Susan Dlott was right to say that the city's ban was 'offensive.' It was also a frightening reminder of just how intolerant many public officials are of the concept of diversity. Moreover, no one should be fooled when separation of church and state zealots cloak their contempt for the public expression of religion by invoking terms like 'inclusive.' To wit: Balboa Park officials in San Diego justified changing the name of a holiday event from Christmas on the Prado to Balboa Park December Nights by saying the new name was more 'inclusive.' The truth is the name was changed because of an anti-religious animus. But to

admit to this is to admit to bigotry.

“As we do every holiday season, the Catholic League will closely monitor how public officials handle this issue. What we want is an even playing field: where a menorah has been displayed, a nativity scene should follow. A Christmas tree is no substitute for a crèche.”