

# PENN STATE ALLOWS CATHOLIC-BASHING TO CONTINUE

Two recent episodes of Catholic-bashing have occurred at Penn State's main campus. The first case involved the creation of a huge bloody vagina with real human hair, constructed in the shape of a grotto, with a statue of the Mother of Jesus placed inside; it was placed on the grounds of the campus by a female student (it was her response to an art assignment and was removed by her after Catholic students protested). In the second incident, the same student submitted artwork to the School of Visual Arts Undergraduate Juried Exhibition that consists of a five by five matrix of panties with a cross stitched to the crotch. The student, who says she is a Catholic, maintains that her work is a statement about the oppression of women in the Catholic Church.

After the first episode, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote to Penn State president Graham Spanier asking for disciplinary action against the student. Acknowledging Donohue's letter of December 13, president Spanier assured him that steps had been taken "to educate and sensitize" the offending student. But this was followed by the second incident; it occurred under the tutelage of Jim Stevenson, Director of Visual Arts. The latest display is scheduled to remain at the Zoeller Gallery of the School of Visual Arts until March 23.

League president William Donohue delivered the following remarks about the Penn State matter today:

"After the first incident, the Catholic League was told that remedial action had been taken. But now the same student has struck again, only this time with the express sanction of some school officials. This suggests that either the initial response of the university was too soft or that the school has

no real interest in combating anti-Catholicism.

"It is shocking to learn that a school official has said of the most recent outrage that 'the exhibit was balanced' because two offending art pieces occur alongside two positive statements about religion. But since when can it be said that indecency can be balanced with decency? Would it wash to say that a skin-head Nazi fraternity should be allowed on the theory that many other decent fraternities exist?

"The league is taking its case to Penn State's trustees, state legislators in Pennsylvania, Middle States Association and the public."