

# **“MAD TV” BASHES CATHOLIC PRIEST**

The April 25 edition of Fox's "Mad TV" contained a skit about an Irish Catholic priest who visits a patient in the hospital. It is intimated that the priest is a child molester and an alcoholic. It shows him grabbing the behind of the mother of the dying patient and repeatedly fondling the breasts of the patient. The patient calls him "Father Fellatio" and remarks that it is clear that his "Crucifix swings both ways." The skit ends with the statement, "To be continued."

Catholic League president William Donohue offered the following comment on the show:

"This is not the first time that 'Mad TV' has offended Catholics, nor is it the first time that it has made a cheap sexual statement about Catholic nuns and priests. To our knowledge, the show has not sought to ridicule any other religion, thus raising serious questions about motive.

"It is one thing to poke gentle fun at a priest, quite another to set him up as a depraved cleric. The language used was deplorable and it makes absolutely no difference to the Catholic League that it was a late-evening show: there is no legitimate time slot for Catholic bashing.

"We will register our concerns with Fox and ask them to withdraw any scheduled sequel to this episode."

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# SCRANTON-AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOL DRAWS BUSY-BODIES

On April 17, Auxiliary Bishop John Dougherty of the Diocese of Scranton spoke at Bishop O'Reilly High School. During his talk, Bishop Dougherty was greeted with disrespect by members of the junior class. School administrators and faculty overwhelmingly decided that all juniors would be barred from the May 15<sup>th</sup> junior/senior prom; the junior class has a record of misbehavior, stemming from its freshman year. Most seniors, including the senior class president, support the school's action against the juniors.

What makes this incident a news story is the reaction to it by outsiders. An area radio show, "Hot 97" (WBHT, 97.1), has announced that it will host a free prom for the juniors; a local businessman has promised to donate space for the prom; music and flowers have been extended by other businessmen; and a dentist has offered free check-ups for the juniors. The radio show has also welcomed on-air calls by those opposed to the school's decision.

There are signs that the radio show and some businessmen may be backing away from their commitment, but it is not certain that they will.

Catholic League president William Donohue issued the following remarks:

"If school officials at a Catholic high school were to publicly challenge the workplace decisions of local media and business operations, they would be summarily denounced in the press for sticking their nose in where they do not belong. Why there hasn't been an outcry of public sentiment against the Bishop O'Reilly busy-bodies is itself worthy of investigative reporting.

“The lesson that the busy-bodies are selling is that bad conduct ought to be rewarded and that Catholic schools should forfeit their autonomous status. If they actually had an opportunity to meet Bishop Dougherty, they would no doubt agree with the Catholic League that he is one of the finest bishops in the nation, as is his superior, Bishop Timlin. We will watch this closely and take whatever steps are necessary to defend Bishop O'Reilly.”

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## **PRESS CONFERENCE TARGETS ABC-TV**

On Thursday, April 16, at 6:00 p.m. in the Terrace Room at The Plaza Hotel, the Catholic League will hold a press conference responding to the ABC program, “That’s Life,” that aired on April 7. This show, which the Catholic League has branded as the most bigoted anti-Catholic show ever to appear on network television, attacked virtually every aspect of Catholicism. That it made specific reference to Easter, and that it appeared during Holy Week, made the offense particularly egregious. A phone call to ABC made by Catholic League president William Donohue resulted in the usual “we never meant to offend” response.

At the press conference, Donohue will discuss the problems that the league has had with ABC ever since the network was bought by Disney.

Donohue will be joined at the press conference by members of the Catholic League staff, board of directors, board of advisors and supporters. The press conference immediately precedes celebration of the Catholic League’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Dinner, which will be held at The Plaza. The keynote speaker at the dinner is John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York.

All members of the media are invited to come to the press conference. If they would like more information, they should contact Rick Hinshaw, director of communications.

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## **ABC'S "THAT'S LIFE"—THE MOST BIGOTED SHOW OF ALL**

The phones at the Catholic League have been ringing off the hook in response to the outrageously anti-Catholic show that aired last night on ABC, "That's Life." After watching a tape of the show today, league president William Donohue released this statement:

"No show that I have ever seen was as viciously anti-Catholic as last night's episode of 'That's Life.' It was relentless in its bigotry, mocking Christ's crucifixion, the Host, transubstantiation, Holy Water, Catholic prayers, Midnight Mass, salvation, Catholic rituals, the Vatican, the New Testament, the Stations of the Cross, Confession, nuns, priests and, of course, those stupid laypersons who swallow all this moonshine. Reference was made in the show to Easter, offering further evidence that malice was at work; as the producers know, this is Holy Week.

"There is no doubt that there are some at ABC who have a problem with Roman Catholicism. I will personally seek a meeting with senior executives at the network so that this animus can be explained.

"I will also see to it that as many influential persons in the Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim communities get a copy of this show. Those in Washington who get exercised over the moral bankruptcy of some TV shows will certainly be contacted. Obviously, the 350,000 members of the Catholic League will be notified as well. Not to be overlooked are senior executives from the other networks. We want everyone to see this show.

"Just this week, ABC president Robert Iger told the National Association of Broadcasters that he questioned the logic of putting the Jerry Springer show on TV, saying that 'Programs that are embarrassments to our business will, in the long run, alienate our viewers.' What he will say about last night's contribution to the legacy of broadcasting shame—on his own network—will be interesting to learn. One thing is for sure: ABC has done more than alienate Catholics, it has angered them in a way no other network ever has."

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## **MUHLENBERG PRESIDENT MAKES BIGOTED REMARK**

The president of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, recently made an anti-Catholic remark in his response to a letter sent to him by Catholic League president William Donohue.

Last month, Donohue wrote to Muhlenberg president Arthur Taylor registering his concerns over a statement that accompanied the display of an icon of Mary in the school's chapel. The statement, "Captive Daughter of Zion," chastises Christians for failing to come to terms with Mary's Jewishness. It also blames Pope Pius XII for being "silent"

during the Holocaust. Donohue disputed both points and questioned the appropriateness of using a chapel for this purpose; he suggested that a library or art gallery would have been a better choice.

Taylor's letter to Donohue is the reason why the Catholic League is bringing this matter to the attention of the public. Taylor accused the league of trying to "force your point of view on us," stating that this "violates our freedoms and *brings the Catholic Church to a position which it held centuries ago.*" (Our emphasis.)

Donohue issued the following comment on this matter today:

"Having spent most of my professional career in the academy, I am absolutely astounded that any college president would actually make such a bigoted remark. Had this happened on a radio or TV show, it would have been equally inexcusable, but at least it might have been understandable as a slip of the lip. But to commit oneself in writing to such an anti-Catholic comment is mind-boggling.

"It is hard to imagine anything like this being said about virtually any other segment of the population. What Taylor has done is to demonstrate, however unwittingly, the reason why the Catholic League exists. If I were on the board of trustees of Muhlenberg, I would take some fast action."

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## **SINEAD DEFILES VIRGIN MARY**

The Catholic League reacted with revulsion today to Sinead O'Connor's foul-mouthed portrayal of the Virgin Mary in Neil Jordan's movie, "The Butcher Boy." In one of a series of appearances to the film's main character, a young boy,

Sinead's Mary gratuitously throws in the F-word while counseling him about the loss of his best friend.

Catholic League director of communications Rick Hinshaw, after viewing the film, commented as follows:

"It was to be expected, given her past record, that a portrayal of the Blessed Mother by Sinead O'Connor would have to include something outrageously offensive. There is absolutely no context in which it would be appropriate to depict the Mother of Christ uttering such an obscenity. In this instance, moreover, the utterance is totally unnecessary, except perhaps for its shock value.

"There are those in the entertainment industry who constantly confuse shock value with creativity. It is the Jerry Springer syndrome, in which any vulgarity, obscenity, or offensive remark is seen as not only acceptable, but desirable—a cheap substitute for real creative talent."

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## **"SOUTH PARK" INDICTS CHRISTIANS**

In last week's episode of the Comedy Central program, "South Park," Christians were linked to Nazis as oppressors of homosexuals. The show, which aired on March 25, and which was repeated on March 28, had a segment that described homosexuals throughout history. In the midst of this discussion, "Big Gay Al" interrupted his commentary to say, "Uh, oh, look out, it's the oppressors—Christians and Republicans and Nazis." The scene showed a Catholic priest on the right, Hitler in the middle and a Republican on the left (the priest was waving a cross and the Republican was waving a flag).

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

“Sodomy has long been regarded as taboo, which is why it is condemned in the Old Testament, as well as in the New Testament. Christianity, along with Judaism, finds homosexuality to be just as sinful as adultery, yet neither religion rejects homosexuals anymore than they reject heterosexuals. This being so, it is curious why the creators of ‘South Park’ found it necessary to single out Christians and then link them to Nazis. Such calumnies have unfortunately become the stock in trade at ‘South Park’s’ studios.

“Appeals to decency work well with those who have unintentionally engaged in unethical behavior, but they have little force with those who proudly proclaim their immorality. This explains why the Catholic League does not expect much in the way of response from the gang at ‘South Park.’”