

GIULIANI'S VOUCHER PROGRAM DESERVES SUPPORT

New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has unveiled plans to spend \$12 million on a school voucher program, the funding of which will come from his office.

Catholic League president William Donohue offered his support today:

“By supporting vouchers and braving the public school industry, Mayor Giuliani has proven once again that he is prepared to put the best interests of children first, even if it means angering those whose only agenda is to protect a failed monopoly.

“The incredible record that private and parochial schools have in educating the so-called uneducable makes opposition to vouchers morally suspect. No one who truly believes in helping the poor can logically be opposed to school choice anymore. The success of the Children's Scholarship Fund, announced this week, is one more piece of evidence that school choice is what parents want.

“On March 17, in a full-page ad in the *New York Times*, dozens of ‘progressive’ activist organizations and labor unions registered their fear that vouchers will succeed. Most interesting to us was the comment that ‘public funds should not be used to send our city's children to *religious or other* private schools.’ (Our emphasis.) This is telling: the real fear is that if parents are given a choice, many will opt to send their kids to a Catholic school. The anti-choice crowd needs to explain why this is troubling.

“One reason why Catholic students do so well is because of discipline. And having a dress code means that Nazi kids don't walk the halls wearing black trench coats. Nor do they show up

with their Satanic T-shirts. Come to think of it, they don't have metal rings hanging from their nostrils either. And yet—given all these restrictions on 'freedom of expression'—they are all capable of reading their diploma on graduation day."

INTERVIEW MAGAZINE INSULTS CATHOLICS

On the cover of the latest issue of *Interview* magazine, actress Rose McGowan appears wearing only a veil and a pearl rosary; at the end of the rosary is a bouquet of roses covering her genitalia. Her arms are extended outward in a manner that resembles the way many Catholics position themselves at the consecration of the Eucharist, and there is a halo effect in the background. Some believe that McGowan, who is engaged to rock singer Marilyn Manson, is impersonating Mexico's Lady of Guadalupe.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, spoke to this issue today:

"We've long known that Marilyn Manson is a Satanist and now we know that his bride-to-be is also one. Some Satanists like to blow up schools while others like to target Catholicism. Their hatred runs deep and their maladies are many. We'll pray for them. We'll also let *Interview* know what we think of them."

CNN HAS A PROBLEM WITH CATHOLICISM

Voices of the Millennium is a series of short clips that CNN has been running during commercial breaks on featured programs. On April 21, during the "Larry King Live" show, a two-minute segment was run on "Women in the Pulpit." In it, a female minister, a male author and a Harvard feminist offered their thoughts on women clergy. The latter two criticized the Roman Catholic Church for not ordaining women.

Swanee Hunt, who heads the Women's Leadership Institute at Harvard University, said that if the Catholic Church was to "live, grow and thrive," it will have to ordain women. She further stated that "As long as God looks like Michelangelo's image of the Sistine Chapel with a long, flowing white beard, we will continue to worship maleness."

Catholic League president William Donohue commented on this today:

"CNN has a problem with Catholicism and the problem begins at the top. Two months ago, CNN owner Ted Turner sent an apology to the Catholic League after we criticized him for making anti-Catholic remarks at a pro-abortion conference in Washington, D.C.; he is currently being investigated by Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig for his behavior. In 1990, Turner apologized for stating that 'Christianity is the religion of losers.' In 1994, CNN apologized to Cardinal Bernardin for running an unsubstantiated story about him, accusing him of sexual abuse. And now it has the audacity to offend Catholics by lecturing them on the wisdom of their doctrinal prerogatives.

"Here's the Catholic League's Voice of the Millennium: It is no more the business of CNN to criticize the Catholic Church's

house rules than it is the business of the Church to criticize CNN's house rules.

"As for the Harvard feminist, we have news for her: only a sexist like her would equate worshipping God with worshipping maleness."

"SOUTH PARK" MAKES SEXUAL ATTACK ON JESUS

Last evening's edition of the Comedy Central show, "South Park," opened with a boy, Kyle, telling his friends that he needs to get an "erection" for his father. We learn that the boy's father is unable to get an erection and that this is the source of marital discord. Kyle, not knowing what an erection is, thinks he can buy one in a store for his father.

The boys meet a priest who invites them to make the Stations of the Cross. The priest explains that Jesus was crucified, and that after three days had a resurrection. "Res-erection?" exclaims Kyle. "That's what my dad needs." So they designate another boy, Cartman, as Jesus, hang him on a cross and wait for him to die and have an erection. The show ends with a reverential statement about Christ's suffering.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, had this to say about the show:

"On Good Friday, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an excellent editorial on the anti-Christian fervor that is now so commonplace. In it, the contribution of 'South Park' was mentioned. Last night's edition just adds to this show's lousy reputation.

“There was no need to try to bail out at the last minute by tacking on a nice commentary on Jesus at the end of the show. The damage the writers wanted to do was already done and was thus beyond redemption.

“There is a reason why blasphemy frequently tracks obscenity: those who entertain a perverse understanding of freedom know that religion is an obstacle to their desires. This is particularly true of Roman Catholicism and that is why they trash it. In one sense, this is a backhanded compliment, for if the teachings of the Catholic Church were indistinguishable from the ruling orthodoxies of the day, there would be no need to attack it. That is why we expect more attacks in the future, not less.”

LOUISIANA PHARMACISTS SEEK RIGHTS PRO-LIFE

A bill has been introduced by Louisiana state Representative Tony Perkins that would give “right of conscience” protection to pro-life pharmacists. The bill is designed to protect pharmacists who are opposed to filling certain prescriptions from disciplinary measures.

For Catholic pharmacists, this would mean that they would not be forced to dispense contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs, as well as drugs intended to administer euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide or capital punishment.

Catholic League president William Donohue praised the bill today:

“We have written to all members of the Health and Welfare

Committee of the Louisiana House of Representatives asking them to support House Bill 1064. This legislation would provide a conscience clause for pharmacists, protecting them against the prospect of being forced to dispense drugs for purposes that would violate their religious beliefs. As such, this is a straight First Amendment religious liberty issue.

“It is the position of the Catholic League that such legislation is needed throughout the nation. Those who are truly pro-choice should have no problem joining with us.”

DISNEY DUMPS “DOGMA”; WEINSTEINS STILL DEFIANT

On April 7, Miramax announced that their co-chairmen, Bob and Harvey Weinstein, will personally buy the film rights for “Dogma” and will look for a new distributor for the film. Miramax is owned by Disney.

In a letter dated July 17, 1998, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote to Disney CEO Michael Eisner regarding the film. “From what I have learned,” he said, “it looks as though Catholic sensibilities will be offended once again. Perhaps it is not too late for something to be done about this.” Donohue requested a meeting with the Disney chief, but Eisner never replied.

Donohue, who has read the script, announced the Catholic League’s new position today:

“Michael Eisner made the right move to dump ‘Dogma.’ As a result, the Catholic League will not target Disney. But the Weinstein brothers, and writer/director Kevin Smith, are

another story.

“Smith says the movie is ‘intended as a love letter to both faith and God almighty.’ But in the movie, Joseph and Mary have sex and a descendant of theirs is a lapsed Catholic who works at an abortion clinic; it is said of Mary that ‘Believing a wife never humped her husband—that’s just gullibility’; God is played by a singer known for her nude videos and songs about oral sex; the 13th apostle resembles Howard Stern; the Mass is compared to lousy sex. This sounds more like hate mail than a love letter. Ben Affleck, who stars in the movie, was more honest: ‘these things, definitely, are meant to push buttons.’

“The Catholic League has a few buttons of its own to push, and we will not hold back. In 1995, we dealt successfully with the Miramax movie, ‘Priest,’ and just last year we crushed the Disney/ABC show ‘Nothing Sacred.’ Now we’ll tackle ‘Dogma.’ One thing’s for sure—Eisner is a lot brighter than the Weinsteins.”

DISNEY/MIRAMAX POISED TO ANGER CATHOLICS AGAIN

In today’s *New York Post*, there is an article on the upcoming movie, “Dogma,” that says the film’s distributor, Miramax, and its parent company, Disney, are “wringing their hands” over the fate of this Kevin Smith-produced film. Their wariness is a reflection of the expected response that the movie will receive from the Catholic League. In 1995, the Catholic League was the first organization in the nation to call for a boycott of Disney; this was a result of the Miramax-distributed movie,

“Priest.”

According to *Premiere* magazine, Miramax is so worried that it is even considering selling “Dogma” to another distributor. The movie stars Ben Affleck and Matt Damon and other Hollywood stars. The plot is an irreverent look at Catholicism, one that maintains that Mary and Joseph had sexual relations; Mary gives birth to a daughter who works in an abortion clinic. God (played by Alanis Morissette) and the apostles (a foul-mouthed 13th is introduced) are also subjected to director Smith’s brand of humor.

The Catholic League’s position was stated by its president, William Donohue:

“If Michael Eisner is worried how the Catholic League will react, he ought to be. Last July, I wrote to Mr. Eisner requesting a meeting with him over the movie, ‘Dogma.’ I explicitly said, ‘Perhaps it is not too late for something to be done about this.’ He never responded.

“In December, *Playboy* commented on ‘Dogma’ by saying, ‘If members of the Catholic League don’t picket this one, they’re comatose.’ And in today’s *New York Post*, we have Independent Film Channel host John Pierson stating, ‘The Catholic League probably will have a problem.’

“If the movie is anything like it is shaping up to be, Mr. Eisner will surely regret not having engaged the Catholic League in dialogue. And if some other producer is dumb enough to pick it up, we’ll deal with them.”

WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY LIES ABOUT HORMEL

At a White House press briefing yesterday, Press Secretary Joe Lockhart said there was “no basis in fact” that James Hormel, the administration’s nominee as Ambassador to Luxembourg, saluted a group of actors who mock nuns and the Catholic sacraments. Baltimore broadcaster Les Kinsolving raised the question with Mr. Lockhart; he was referring to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, an anti-Catholic group from San Francisco.

Kinsolving asked Lockhart if President Clinton agreed with Mayor Willie Brown of San Francisco that the “Sisters” should cancel their public celebration on Easter Sunday. Kinsolving also wanted to know if the President would ask Hormel to join with Mayor Brown in opposing the Easter event that the “Sisters” are planning. Lockhart characterized the questions as a “sort of ad hominem attack on Mr. Hormel.”

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, commented as follows:

“White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart lied to reporters yesterday when he said ‘there was no basis in fact’ to the charge that James Hormel saluted the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence in San Francisco. In 1996, Hormel laughed approvingly as this anti-Catholic group paraded in front of him while he was doing commentary on KOFY TV; Hormel was covering the Lesbian, Gay, Transgender Pride Parade.

“Lockhart did not make a mistake yesterday—he lied. He said to Les Kinsolving that ‘having spoken to Mr. Hormel directly on this subject, it has no basis in fact.’ But the truth is there is a video of Hormel greeting the ‘Sisters’; the Catholic League has a copy of this video. In addition, Senator Tim

Hutchinson gave Hormel the opportunity to repudiate this group, and Hormel refused to do so. None of this is news to Lockhart. He prefers to discredit critics of Hormel by saying that Hormel is the victim of 'ad hominem' attacks. This is spin control as perfected by the masters in the White House."