

CATHOLICISM TRASHED BY GREETING CARD COMPANY

NobleWorks, a greeting card company from Hoboken, New Jersey, has two categories of greeting cards: “nice” and “Extra” (which they call “naughty”). There are no cards in the latter category for Ramadan, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa. But there are more than a dozen tailored to Christian holidays.

For example, the “Extra” selection has a Christmas card that comments on how someone exposed himself at a party. Another card has a picture of Our Blessed Mother holding baby Jesus with the inscription, “Losing those 15 pounds was sure to be a bitch.” And there is another one with the picture of an angel that remarks how she will still enjoy the holidays even though she is having her period.

The “Extra” selection of birthday cards include the following: two cards that mock Christ on the cross; one that shows a priest by a urinal with a sign overhead that reads, “Holy Water”; and a nun who is shown buying a card not from the “Wedding” or “Birthday” section of a card store but from the one that reads, “Castration.” There is also a Mother’s Day card that shows Mary commenting to Christ, “Uh, excuse me, Mr. Savior of Mankind, but did you remember to put on clean underwear in case you get crucified?”

Catholic League president William Donohue opined as follows:

“NobleWorks does not make these cards purely because they hate Catholics. They do so because there is a market for them. Indeed, just this week a young woman called our office early in the morning and, almost in tears, told us that she spotted one of these cards at a Christmas party the night before in someone’s house.

“Sadly, there is also a market for Jew-bashing cards.

Millions of people hate gays. Ditto for Muslims. White racists abound. But there are no cards, thank God, that attack these groups. Just Catholics.”

MAKING CHRISTMAS DISAPPEAR

Many examples of making Christmas disappear have recently come to the attention of the Catholic League. Here are some of them:

- An insert in the *New York Times Magazine* of November 18 entitled, “The Best of the Season,” had a calendar section that listed events for Hanukkah on December 9 and Kwanzaa events for December 26. For December 25, the only listing was for “A walking tour through a century-and-a-half of Jewish history” on the Lower East Side.
- On December 3, the Copley News Service ran an article on “Travel and Adventure” in New York. The only event listed for December 25 was a “Jewish Lower East Side Tour.”
- “Holiday Light Spectacular” is the name of a booklet that covers events at Jones Beach that runs from November 17 to January 1. Released by New York State’s Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the “Holiday Trivia” section lists questions regarding Hanukkah, Winter Solstice and Kwanzaa. Christmas is not included.
- The *Farmer’s Almanac Every Day Calendar 2002* highlights Jewish holidays in a respectful way while ignoring or treating lightly Christian holidays.

Catholic League president William Donohue remarked as follows:

“None of this is by accident. All of it is by design. Though none of it is organized, it remains true that many of our elites are at war against the values that have undergirded our society from the beginning. The instances cited above are no less invidious than the more blatant attacks on Catholicism that we’ve recorded. Those responsible for making Christmas disappear are not against cultural celebrations, per se: it’s just Christian ones they deplore.”

RABBI HIER TWISTS THE FACTS TO INDICT PIUS XII

On November 14, Rabbi Marvin Hier, founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, issued a news release that was challenged by Catholic League president William Donohue. On December 7, Donohue asked Rabbi Hier to substantiate the following italicized parts of his comments: “Prime Minister Churchill and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden adamantly refused, *pointing out that the Pope had overstepped his neutrality by declaring himself ready to protest damage to historic buildings in Rome while remaining silent regarding the crimes of aggression committed by the Fascists.*” (Donohue’s emphasis.) Donohue asked: “At issue are two things: (a) that Churchill and Eden actually charged the Pope with ‘overstepp[ing] his neutrality’ and (b) that they also charged him for ‘remaining silent’ regarding the crimes of aggression committed by the Fascists.”

In his December 19 letter to Donohue, Hier directed him to pp. 245-46 of John Cornwell’s *Hitler’s Pope*, citing notes 8-9. Donohue branded Hier’s evidence “wholly unconvincing.” Donohue wrote the following: “It is one thing to say that England did not agree with the pope’s request, quite another

to accuse him of 'overstepping his neutrality.' Cornwell, in fact, sympathetically says of the pope (p. 246) that 'As he was the bishop of Rome, it would have been strange had he not been anxious for the state of the Eternal City and had he failed to use all the influence in his power to secure its safety.' The question is why did you twist what Cornwell said about this event?

"Even more disturbing, you charge that (citing Cornwell) Churchill and Eden accused the pope of 'remaining silent' in the face of Nazi aggression. Yet even Cornwell, who has been roundly condemned *by critics of the pope* for labeling Pacelli 'Hitler's Pope,' never says that the two English statesmen ever made such a charge. In short, there is no proof that Churchill or Eden criticized the pope for being 'silent,' precisely because they never did. Therefore, I ask you the same question: why did you twist what even Cornwell said about this event?"

Donohue has told Rabbi Hier "it is not too late" to retract this statement.

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION SPONSORS ATTACK ON CATHOLICISM

The December 17 episode of the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) show, RAW, featured a big screen presentation of Booker T. and Stone Cold Austin that mocked the Catholic Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Booker was shown hiding from Austin in a confessional. A

young buxom woman walks into the confessional and proceeds to confess to the sin of adultery. Booker, posing as a priest, insists on the details. According to the narrative posted on www.wwf.com, when she admitted videotaping her sexual experience, "Booker said if she did 18 Hail Marys and sent him the videotape, she would be forgiven!" This scene was soon followed by one that saw Booker questioning a man in the confessional if he had ever been to a red-light district or smoked marijuana. Then there was another offensive scene between the two wrestlers and several nuns.

Here is what Catholic League president William Donohue said about the show:

"Vince McMahon runs the WWF and he is personally responsible for this irresponsible show. But given his track record of promoting the most vile and obscene behavior associated with his 'sport,' it is doubtful that anything can shame him. Indeed, his greatest ambition in life seems to be how low he can drop society's ethical bars, putting him in direct competition with the likes of Larry Flynt and Howard Stern.

"Given the large number of angry complaints we received about this episode, it's an indication that McMahon's base may be eroding. In the meantime, on the hunch that McMahon is an equal opportunity sort of guy, we suggest he pick on another religion next time. Maybe then he'll regard Catholicism as a kinder and gentler religion not deserving of his stupid antics."

ARIZONA GOVERNOR OPPOSES BAN

ON SANTA; STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL DEFENDS IT

Arizona Governor Jane Hull called Catholic League president William Donohue yesterday thanking him for notifying her of the ban on Santa Claus in public areas of the Attorney General's office. The ban is the result of a memo written by attorney Gale Garriott, chief counsel of the Agency Counsel Division of the Arizona Attorney General's office. Defending the ban is Attorney General Janet Napolitano. She justified the ban by saying that her office constitutes a "people's lobby" that does not allow displays that might offend those of various "faiths and cultures."

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"Arizona Governor Jane Hull is a model of reasonableness. She not only understands that the ban on Santa is 'idiocy,' she is baffled (as we are) that given the events of 9-11 why anyone would want to censor freedom of expression—of such an innocent kind—during the holiday season. Unfortunately, the state's attorney general supports censorship.

"It is important to note that there is absolutely nothing in either federal or state law that requires Attorney General Janet Napolitano to support a ban on the display of Santa Claus in her 'people's lobby.' It is purely a matter of her desire: she has a preference for certain types of gag rules.

"It is a ruse to say that some might be offended by Santa. Many more are offended by his absence. And what exactly is Napolitano going to say to those who say they are offended by pictures of Martin Luther King in her lobby next month? Is she going to take down the pictures in deference to those who are offended or is she going to brand those who object as

bigots? What she refuses to recognize is that anyone who is offended by either the display of Santa, or by pictures of Martin Luther King, in her People's Republic of Arizona lobby, is, in fact, a bigot. And by definition that would certainly include her."

NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM DISCRIMINATES AGAINST CHRISTIANS

The Catholic League is charging the New York City school system with discrimination against Christians. It plans to sue New York once a family with children in the New York City public schools agrees to be party to the suit; this is a requirement for the league to achieve standing. Working cooperatively with the Catholic League in this effort is the Thomas More Center for Law & Justice, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"On November 29, Dr. Fran Levy, principal of PS 22 in Flushing, ordered a Christmas tree taken down and then on the very next day she invited Jewish and Muslim teachers to bring religious symbols to school. When we protested, Dr. Levy reversed herself on both counts. But in the course of our complaint, we learned that on November 28, Chad Vignola, general counsel to the chancellor, released a memo to all superintendents and principals declaring all secular holiday symbols to be permissible in the schools. This was unexceptional save that Vignola listed as examples 'Christmas

trees, Menorahs, and the Star and Crescent.'

"On December 4, I faxed a letter to Dr. Harold Levy asking that nativity scenes be placed next to menorahs and crescents and stars in the schools. On December 14, I faxed another letter, this time commenting on the memo by Vignola. I said, 'It will come as a surprise to constitutional scholars, to say nothing of most of those in the Jewish and Islamic communities, to learn that their *religious* holiday symbols, namely the menorah and the star and crescent, have been declared by your office to have solely a secular meaning.' His office promised to get an answer to me by the end of the day on December 17 but did not.

"As soon as we get standing, we will sue. But one thing's for sure: we will not allow the current policy to stand. It is outrageous that Christians are given a secular symbol while Jews and Muslims get their religious symbols in the schools."

NATIVITY SCENE GOING UP IN CENTRAL PARK

On December 19, the Catholic League will erect its annual nativity scene in Central Park. It will be situated on the corner of 5th Avenue and 59th Street. The nativity scene will be blessed by Msgr. John Woolsey, pastor of St. John the Martyr in Manhattan, at 4:30 p.m. He will be joined by the Catholic League staff.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, offered the following remarks today:

"There are those who maintain that it is unconstitutional to

put a nativity scene on public property. We hope they do not let this Christmas go by without seeing our nativity scene. More important, we hope they discover the real meaning of diversity and the virtue of tolerance.”

OBSCENE ITEM PULLED FROM eBAY AUCTION SITE

Following a complaint by the Catholic League, eBay, the online auction site, withdrew an Open Wound CD by The Grey Wolves entitled, “Catholic Priests F— Children.” There is a sketch of naked boys and girls on the cover and a picture of a Catholic priest.

Here is what Catholic League president William Donohue said about the CD:

“After what happened on 9-11, we thought perhaps that Catholic bashing would retreat, however temporarily. Not so. Indeed, there is plenty of evidence that the anti-Catholics have stepped up their efforts. The latest example is the CD by The Grey Wolves. It is beyond a doubt the most vile recorded attack on Catholic priests that we have seen.

“We appreciate the quick and decisive response of eBay officials to our complaint. Because those responsible for hawking this item are from Germany, the Catholic League will monitor what is going on in that country more closely. It is our hope that the anti-Catholics there do not succeed in spreading their virus to the U.S.”

ARIZONA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE BANS SANTA CLAUS

Gale Garriott, chief counsel of the Agency Counsel Division of the Arizona Attorney General's office, has issued a memo banning the display of Santa Claus from areas open to the general public. In his memo of November 28, Garriott banned any items "that have a religious significance attached to them." He personally listed Santa Claus as an example. When workers complained, he issued a memo on December 6 that left in place all the banned items save that he excised the words "religious significance."

In an employee's own work area, "reasonable decorations that are respectful of the views of others and that are consistent with the mission and professionalism [sic] standards of the Office are permissible." In the general work area, "Unacceptable decorations would include nativity scenes, crosses, Stars of David, Christmas trees, Santa Clauses, Santa Claus related items, and other similar items that may be offensive to some of our employees or the public."

As a result of Garriott's decision, workers have now sarcastically displayed Holiday Greetings from the Loch Ness monster and Bigfoot.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented as follows:

"Gale Garriott, Arizona's Commissar of the Commonweal, needs to explain more fully what he means by decorations that are 'respectful of the views of others.' For example, snowflakes may be innocuous to him, but not to others. Therefore, why should he imply a tolerance for snowflakes when he could

simply have added them to his censorial bag? After all, it makes no sense to ban Santa and allow snowflakes.

“We are contacting Garriott’s boss, Attorney General Janet Napolitano, as well as Arizona Governor, Jane Hull, to inform them of their commissar’s edict. We trust they will share our fascination with his mind.”

WESTCHESTER PRO-ABORTION UNIT PENALIZED FOR VIOLATING FEDERAL ELECTION LAW

Rye, New York attorney Aldo Vitagliano has just been notified by the Federal Election Commission that he has prevailed against a pro-abortion group from Westchester, New York. On March 1, 1999, Vitagliano filed a complaint against PROCHOICE VOTER, the Westchester Coalition for Legal Abortion PAC, and the Westchester Coalition for Legal Abortion, Inc., for violating federal election law. WCLA signed a settlement agreement that penalizes it \$1,117.70.

Vitagliano charged that WCLA committed “gross and substantial violations of the Federal Election Law in the 1998 Federal Election cycle for the U.S. Senate in New York, as well as for Congressional races in the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th Congressional Districts.” Specifically, he was able to demonstrate that WCLA made 86,000 phone calls on behalf of senatorial hopeful (and eventual winner) Charles Schumer. Vitagliano decided to file his complaint once WCLA executive director Polly Rothstein denied that any corporate funds were utilized by her organization.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League, offered the following remarks today:

“Polly Rothstein previously slandered the late John Cardinal O’Connor by holding him responsible for the killing of the Buffalo abortionist, Dr. Barnett Slepian. Never mind that Cardinal O’Connor always condemned violence—whether committed by abortionists or by violent pro-life activists. Moreover, the New York Archbishop explicitly denounced the killing of Dr. Slepian in a homily at St. Patrick’s Cathedral. But none of this mattered to Rothstein. Now she has been caught not only violating elementary standards of decency, she has been caught violating the law.

“Congratulations to Aldo Vitagliano, a Catholic League member, for teaching Polly Rothstein a lesson.”