

6,000 LONG ISLAND CATHOLICS SIGN PETITION IN SUPPORT OF BISHOP MURPHY

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the results of the league's [petition drive](#) in support of Rockville Centre Bishop William F. Murphy:

"Two months ago today, I issued a news release announcing a petition drive in support of Bishop Murphy. The results are in: more than 6,000 Long Islanders have signed the petition. And more are coming in every day.

"The petition was sent to Catholic League members in Nassau and Suffolk counties following a demand from Voice of the Faithful that Bishop Murphy resign. As I stated then, there was nothing in the report by Massachusetts Attorney General Thomas Reilly that warranted the resignation of Bishop Murphy. But this wasn't enough to satisfy those bent on 'paying back' the Church: their anger is such that they have lost all sense of rationality and proportionality. That is why Voice of the Faithful, at least on Long Island, can no longer be taken seriously—they have discredited themselves by engaging in a witch hunt against Bishop Murphy.

"We answered the accusations of Voice of the Faithful with a point-by-point refutation of their charges; our [report](#) is available on our website at www.catholicleague.org. We proudly stand by that report.

"It is amazing to see the names of thousands of priests, brothers, nuns and lay people who signed the petition and wrote letters of support. Like other Catholics, they are outraged at those responsible for the scandal. But what makes our supporters different is their ability to discern the difference between innocence and guilt. That is why they are

justly angry at those who seek to exploit the scandal to further their own political agenda.”

BILL MAHER BRANDS MEL GIBSON ANTI-SEMITIC

“I do think Mel Gibson is anti-Semitic.” According to NewsMax, this is what comedian Bill Maher told radio talk-show host Don Imus today. Responding is Catholic League president William Donohue:

“The character assassins will not stop trying to malign Mel Gibson. Not that Bill Maher is any stranger to the subject of bigotry—in recent years he has consistently been listed in the Catholic League’s *Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism*. Indeed, we have criticized him so many times for his Catholic bashing that just two months ago Maher—in a rare display of Catholic guilt (he is half Catholic, half Jewish)—confessed to Larry King, ‘The Catholic League has condemned me as an anti-Catholic bigot. I am not an anti-Catholic bigot.’ Who’s he trying to convince?

“The crusade against Gibson is immoral and Christians are increasingly losing patience with it. For the last quarter century, virtually every movie out of Hollywood that has depicted Christians has sought to malign them; the movies that Catholics have had to endure are particularly obnoxious. Finally, along comes a film that all Christians can be justly proud of, ‘The Passion,’ and wham—we’re told we’re the bigots.

“Take Abe Foxman of the ADL, for example. When he was recently interviewed for a story in *The New Yorker*, he was

asked if Mel Gibson is anti-Semitic and he said no. Then last Thursday it was reported in the *Jewish Week* that Foxman branded recent remarks by Gibson as painting 'the portrait of an anti-Semite.' We immediately accused Foxman of seeking to poison Catholic-Jewish relations by labeling Gibson (and by extension all those who love his movie) anti-Semitic. Then Rachel Zoll of AP asked Foxman to comment on his charge against Gibson: he said, 'I'm not ready to say he's an anti-Semite.' So what changed?

"Foxman can dance all he wants but the damage he has done is real. As for Bill Maher, his own deep-seated bigotry against Catholics gives him no moral authority to call anyone a bigot."

ADL SEEKS TO POISON CATHOLIC-JEWISH RELATIONS

In the September 18 edition of the *Jewish Week*, Anti-Defamation League (ADL) director Abraham Foxman accuses Mel Gibson of being anti-Semitic. Foxman also attacked Gibson's father for saying that fewer than 6 million Jews died in the Holocaust; the ADL leader imputed guilt to Mel Gibson as a result of his father's remarks.

In addition, Foxman notes that after Gibson reluctantly removed from the movie the passage from Matthew that says, "His blood be on us and on our children," Gibson sounded off against the ADL. Foxman was upset with Gibson's remark that had the comment from Matthew not been excised, the ADL and others would be coming after him. Foxman also objects to Gibson's comment to Peter Boyer in *The New Yorker* that "modern

secular Judaism wants to blame the Holocaust on the Catholic Church.” For Foxman, this amounts to “classic anti-Semitism.”

Catholic League president William Donohue sharply disagrees:

“Abe Foxman is seeking to poison relations between Catholics and Jews. His attacks on Mel Gibson have little to do with some off-the-cuff quips and everything to do with waging a frontal assault against all those people—Catholics, Protestants, Jews et al.—who have seen ‘The Passion’ and love it.

“To attack Gibson’s 85 year-old father shows that the ADL knows no bounds of decency. Moreover, if Gibson’s father, and by implication Mel himself, is guilty of anti-Semitism for questioning the figure of 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust, then that makes Jewish historian Raul Hilberg an anti-Semite as well: he puts the figure at 5.1 million.

“Similarly, it is no secret that extremely secular Jews have teamed up with profoundly alienated Catholics to blame the Catholic Church for the Holocaust. Quite frankly, most Catholics are fed up with the lies of Goldhagen and Cornwell. Finally, in the September 15 *New Yorker*, Foxman said, ‘Per se, I don’t think that Mel Gibson is an anti-Semite.’ Foxman was right then and is wrong now. The fact that he suddenly did a 180 shows that his game is now in sudden death overtime.”

VATICAN OFFICIAL VINDICATES MEL GIBSON

Cardinal Dario Castrillon Hoyos, an influential Vatican official, has spoken highly of the Mel Gibson movie, “The

Passion.” After seeing it in Rome, Cardinal Hoyos rejected the charge that it is anti-Semitic. Indeed, he said it was inspiring: “I felt moments of deep spiritual intimacy with Jesus Christ.” He encouraged all Catholic priests to see the movie, and hoped that all Christians would see it as well.

Commenting on this is Catholic League president William Donohue:

“The big winner in this is Mel Gibson. The big loser is the ad hoc committee of scholars who condemned the movie without seeing it. Regarding the latter group, the most embarrassed must be the Catholic scholars. They were the ones who read a stolen script of the screenplay and then set themselves up as the supreme authority on the New Testament. Now they look rather silly.”

JUSTICE SCALIA’S CATHOLICISM COMES UNDER FIRE

Michael Newdow, the atheist who wants the courts to ban the words “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance, is now seeking to bar U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia from having any say in this case. Newdow’s court filing maintains that Scalia’s public remarks on religion disqualify him from objectively ruling on this case. The high court will soon decide whether to hear the case.

Catholic League president William Donohue sized up the issue this way:

“Atheist Michael Newdow is not satisfied to censor the words ‘under God’ from the Pledge of Allegiance. Now he wants to

censor Justice Scalia. While the case before the court is a non-sectarian one, the attack on Justice Scalia smacks of anti-Catholicism.

“A disturbing trend is under way to remove practicing Catholics from the judiciary. Over the summer, U.S. Senators on the Judiciary Committee sought to employ a *de facto* religious test against circuit-court hopeful Bill Pryor. Then we had the spectacle last week of Cleveland attorney Jay Milano contending that no Catholic judge should be allowed to sit on a case he is bringing against the Catholic Church. Now we have Newdow trying to silence Justice Scalia for expressing his Catholic views on religion.

“Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wasn’t in office a few months before she gave an impassioned address on women’s rights at Columbia Law School. Twenty months into her tenure as a Justice of the Supreme Court the *Washington Post* wrote a lengthy front-page story on how vocal she is about her convictions. But no one then, or now, has ever said she is unfit to hear cases that touch on sex or sexuality. If such a rule were operative, then she would have been denied the chance to rule on the recent sodomy decision: at an ACLU board meeting in 1975, she addressed the ACLU’s policy on homosexuality by arguing against laws that criminalize sex between adults and minors! Statutory rape laws, she said, were suspect.

“Ginsburg is safe because her critics are not despotic. Pryor, Cleveland Catholic judges and Scalia are not because their critics are.”

BRIEF BEFORE SUPREME COURT CONFRONTS ACTIVISTS WHO SEEK TO JUSTIFY BIGOTRY

A brief of *amici curiae* has been filed before the U.S. Supreme Court by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty and the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights in the case of *Locke v. Davey*. The brief argues that it is unconstitutional for the state of Washington to disqualify a student “from an otherwise available government benefit, only because the student would use the benefit for a religious purpose.”

At issue is the right of a student who won a partial scholarship to attend a college affiliated with the Assemblies of God; he was denied use of the scholarship because of the religious nature of the college. The law reflects the thinking of the Blaine Amendment, a 19th century piece of federal legislation that expressed nativist sentiments against Catholics; though that law never passed, many states incorporated Blaine amendments into their constitution and 37 still have them.

Richard W. Garnett of Notre Dame Law School is responsible for the Catholic League’s contribution to this brief. The brief not only seeks to demonstrate the bigoted historical basis for the Blaine Amendment and its progeny, it seeks to challenge *amici* for the petitioner who even now seek to obfuscate the historical record. Perhaps most important, the brief takes aim at those who seek to legitimate religious discrimination.

Catholic League president William Donohue explained what’s at stake:

“It is nothing short of amazing that the American Jewish Congress would file a brief in the year 2003 that argues that some of the fears expressed by 19th century anti-Catholic bigots were real. The AJCongress brief says that anti-Catholic laws ‘were undertaken in response to positions of the Catholic Church as authoritatively enunciated by consecutive Popes in well publicized encyclicals’ prompting ‘a legitimate fear’ of Catholic domination. Our brief, not surprisingly, shows how impoverished this conception of history is. But the real travesty is that it has to be argued at all. Shame on the American Jewish Congress and its ilk for seeking to resurrect discredited and pernicious ideas about the Catholic Church.”

CATHOLIC BISHOPS OKAY PRO-MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

Leaders of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) went on record today offering their “general support” for a constitutional amendment that would define marriage as a union between a man and a woman. The amendment is being pushed by those who want to defeat attempts to codify homosexual marriage in some states.

Catholic League president William Donohue praised the bishops today:

“The administrative committee of the USCCB was right to speak to the inherent dignity that homosexuals share with heterosexuals. But they were also right to insist that nothing should disturb the traditional understanding of marriage. Quite frankly, to grant the right of men to marry

each other is to devalue the institution of marriage.

“If marriage is not to become an alternative lifestyle, then we must maintain its privileged position in law. Society has no interest in affirming the sexual desires of individuals, but it does have an interest in providing children with a stable and patterned relationship. For society not to take its cues from nature on this subject is to render it sociologically clueless: there is a reason why nature denies children to those who have sex with members of the same sex. Lawmakers who seek to deny nature and nature’s god run the risk of alienating our social institutions from our being. Such a disjunction is morally intolerable.

“Those who say that a constitutional amendment on this issue would violate federalist principles are not living in the 21st century. It is pretty late in the game to assert states’ rights when those committed to gay marriage will stop at nothing to get their way. Add to this the phenomenon of highly politicized judges who regard judicial restraint as an anathema and the stage is set. Here’s what we’re faced with: either we amend the constitution to protect society’s most fundamental unit or we suffer the consequences of establishing a smorgasbord of sexual liaisons.

“We look to the leaders of other religions to speak as courageously as the U.S. bishops have. We’d also like to hear from presidential contenders.”

HOUSE PASSES VOUCHER PLAN FOR

D.C.

By a narrow margin, 205-203, the House of Representatives passed legislation today that permits vouchers for poor District of Columbia students; four Democrats joined 201 Republicans in approving the bill. The Senate will now consider similar legislation.

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed this issue today:

“This is a significant victory for those who truly seek to champion the interests of the poor. The social science evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that nothing allows the children of the poor to succeed more than having access to private and parochial schools. This is exactly what voucher plans provide, and nowhere are they more needed than in D.C. After all, D.C. has long spent more money per pupil, with less bang for the buck, than any state in the union. It’s time for a change.

“The professed allies of the poor—teachers’ unions and many prominent African American leaders—have done more to retard progress in the black community than any organized effort of bigots. By constantly seeking to deny school choice to those most in need of it, they have made upward mobility extremely difficult. Their reliance on affirmative action as an engine of progress is similarly tainted: affirmative action can only help quicken the pace of progress for those who already possess an adequate education.

“In addition to those wedded to government programs, there is another segment of the population that stands in the way of progress for the poor: civil libertarians and church-and-state activists. If these people were given the choice of seeing indigent kids graduate as illiterates from a public school, or seeing them graduate with honors from a Catholic school, they

would choose the former. Indeed, it wouldn't even be a tough decision, so strong is their animus against all things Catholic.

"We look forward to the Senate acting as courageously as the House."

STEEPLE-CHASING LAWYER LIBELS CATHOLICS

Jay Milano, a victims' lawyer who is suing the Cleveland Diocese for racketeering, has asked the Ohio Supreme Court to disqualify any Catholic judge from presiding over his lawsuit. Milano maintains that from the day Catholic youngsters enter a parochial school, they are taught that an attack on their Church is an attack on God. "We believe it is too much to ask any judge to rule against their God, their diocese, their church and their bishops."

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to this issue today:

"Jay Milano has publicly stated that the Catholic Church is engaged in organized crime. He has abused the notorious RICO statute by seeking to apply it to the Catholic Church. Now he is libeling all Catholics by saying they are unfit to preside over cases involving the Catholic Church.

"We commend Milano for his honesty. For some time now, the Catholic League has been saying that some of the victims' lawyers are fundamentally dishonest men. Indeed, the recent revelation that victims' lawyers are greasing victims' advocacy groups (see the September 15 edition of *Forbes*) shows

how utterly political the Get-the-Catholic Church movement has become. Now we know some of the victims' lawyers are inveterate bigots as well.

"When the scandal in the Church first broke at the beginning of last year, the Catholic League said it would not defend wrongdoing committed by the Church. We hold to that principle. But we also said, and continue to say, that we will always honor our mission—the defense of individual Catholics and the institutional Church against defamation and discrimination. Jay Milano is defaming the Catholic Church and is lobbying to discriminate against Catholics.

"I am writing today to Jonathan Coughlan, Office of Disciplinary Counsel of the Ohio Supreme Court, seeking disciplinary action against Jay Milano. Disciplinary Rule 1-102 of the Ohio Code of Professional Responsibility dealing with discrimination is the operative provision."

VICTIMS' LAWYERS GREASE ADVOCACY GROUPS

Dan Lyons has written an article in the September 15 edition of *Forbes* magazine detailing how some lawyers for alleged victims of priestly misconduct have generously donated to victims' advocacy groups.

For example, SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests) receives more money from Laurence E. Drivon than anyone else (\$20,000 last year alone); Drivon is one of the most active victims' attorneys in the nation. Jeffrey Anderson, who has made tens of millions of dollars suing the Catholic Church, is also one of SNAP's biggest donors. Then

there is Michael S. Morey, a victims' lawyer known for writing generous checks to another victims' advocacy group, Linkup.

Catholic League president William Donohue doesn't like the odor:

"The nexus has now been revealed: victims' lawyers are greasing victims' advocacy groups. Shame on SNAP and Linkup for allowing these lawyers to pimp them. If this were happening in the corporate world, everyone would see this as another Enron scam. But just because it involves the Catholic Church, those who are hostile to the Church will no doubt find it difficult to slam SNAP and Linkup.

"Nonetheless, the mask has now been pulled off SNAP and Linkup. How dare they lecture attorneys for the Catholic Church for defending their client in an aggressive manner when they are on the dole of their sycophant lawyers. If ethical standards mean anything to them, they will immediately announce that they will model themselves on Survivors First and forswear any funding from victims' attorneys in the future. No wonder these groups are holding out for more money in Boston—the more they can squeeze the Church the more their rebate is likely to be.

"I am sending the *Forbes* article and our news release to every cardinal and bishop in the nation. Hope their lawyers put it to good use."