

EMMY WINNER KATHY GRIFFIN: “SUCK IT, JESUS, THIS AWARD IS MY GOD NOW”

On September 8, at the 59th Annual Creative Arts Emmy Awards, comedian Kathy Griffin won Outstanding Reality Program for her Bravo show, “My Life on the D-List.” In her acceptance speech, Griffin said, “Suck it, Jesus, this award is my God now.” Fox will televise the Primetime Emmy Awards on Sunday, September 16 from the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded as follows:

“Mel Gibson. Michael Richards. Isaiah Washington. Imus. Jerry Lewis. Every time a celebrity offends a segment of the population, he pays a price, in one way or another. The question now is whether Kathy Griffin will pay a similar price for her outburst. And as we have learned, her verbal assault was calculated.

“In an interview with Houston’s gay magazine, *OutSmart*, Griffin described herself as a ‘complete militant atheist.’ Unfortunately, her kind of vulgar in-your-face brand of hate speech found a receptive audience on Saturday: The Hollywood Reporter says her foul remark ‘drew laughs.’

“It is incumbent upon Dick Askin, chairman and chief executive officer of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, to denounce Griffin’s obscene and blasphemous comment; a statement should also be read on Sunday. After all, it is his organization that is responsible for the Creative Arts Emmy event. Moreover, given the way the Hollywood crowd received Griffin’s remark, it falls to Askin to distance the Academy from this outrageous incident. We are contacting Griffin’s agent as well.

“It is sure bet that if Griffin had said, ‘Suck it, Muhammad,’ there would have been a very different reaction from the crowd and from the media who covered this event. To say nothing of the Muslim reaction.”

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WORKPLACE RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION THREATENED

According to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the House will vote on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act either this month or next (hearings were held this week). The bill would prohibit workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Included in the latest version is a narrowing of the exemption typically afforded religious institutions.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addressed this issue today:

“The Catholic League strongly opposes tampering with the wording of the religious exemption section of this bill. Previous versions have simply said that ‘This Act shall not apply to a religious organization’; now the wording is conditional. For example, the current version holds that this exemption would only apply to religious organizations which ‘have as its primary purpose religious ritual or worship or the teaching or spreading of religious doctrine or belief.’ Would Catholic schools in the inner city that service a mostly black Protestant population not be exempt any longer? It is unclear what would happen, though it is a sure bet that such questions would wind up in the courts, costing a fortune.

“Then there is the section which says that religious institutions must identify ‘which of its religious tenets are significant’ enough to warrant an exemption. So now judges will be asked to decide what constitutes a ‘significant’ religious tenet. Isn’t this why we have First Amendment religious-liberty rights? To stop this kind of encroachment?

“There is another problem with this bill. It states that when it comes to enforcement, the 1964 Civil Rights Act should be operative (even though sexual orientation was never mentioned in that bill). Worse, if the workplace bill passes, it could mean that religious organizations would have to develop an affirmative action plan for hiring gays. Why? Because even though the 1964 Civil Rights Act expressly prohibits preferential treatment on the basis of race, the courts have nonetheless cited this law as justification for exactly that.

“We are writing to every member of the House asking that the original language regarding religious exemption be maintained.”

Mother Teresa Loved the Eucharist

On August 28, in a debate with Bill Donohue, militant atheist Christopher Hitchens said on the MSNBC show, “Hardball,” that “Mother Teresa did not believe that Jesus was present in the Eucharist....” Donohue denied this was true.

Hitchens was relying on a *Time* magazine article of August 23 wherein it said that “for the last nearly half-century of her life she [Mother Teresa] *felt no presence of God whatsoever.*” (Our emphasis.) The claim was said to be supported by Rev.

Brian Kolodiejchuk, the editor of the newly released book, *Mother Teresa: The Private Writings of the "Saint of Calcutta."*

We called Father Brian last week in San Diego and was told by a nun (he was traveling) what we thought was the case: there is a profound difference between "feeling" and "believing." Did Mother Teresa not always feel the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist? Yes. Did she therefore not believe in the Real Presence? Nonsense.

On p. 213 of the new book, it talks about Mother Teresa's "early love of the Eucharist." She shared her thoughts about this matter with Father Joseph Neuner, who wrote, "Though she no longer felt Jesus' presence, she 'would not miss Holy Com. [Communion] for anything.'"

On the same page are the reflections of a senior sister in her order, the Missionaries of Charity. Here is what she said:

"Mother received Holy Communion with tremendous devotion. If there happened to be a second Mass celebrated in Mother House on a given day, she would always try to assist at it, even if she were very busy. I would hear her say on such occasions, 'How beautiful to have received Jesus twice today.' Mother's deep, deep reverence for the Blessed Sacrament was a sign of her profound faith in the Real Presence of Jesus under the appearances of bread and wine. Her adoring attitude, gestures such as genuflections—even on both knees in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, and that well into old age—her postures such as kneeling and joining hands, her preference for receiving Holy Communion on the tongue all bespoke her faith in the Eucharist."

Looks like Hitchens got it wrong again. Mother Teresa loved the Eucharist and passionately believed in the Real Presence.