

PREFACE

People often ask me what's hopping at the Catholic League, and what issue we will be tackling next. After I bring them up to date, they're usually perplexed to learn that I really don't know what's sitting in the dock. That's because we typically react to events—we don't generate them—and this means we often have no idea of what's coming down the pike. Unfortunately, this indicates that an anti-Catholic outburst can occur at any time and at any place. Fortunately, we're up for the fight.



Indeed, that's where the fun comes in. While it is never pleasant to see unprovoked attacks on Catholicism, it's invigorating to quickly develop a strategy to combat them. No two instances are identical: every situation demands its own unique response.

Those who work at the Catholic League intuitively know what I've said is true. After all, they experience the challenges before us. Vice President Bernadette Brady, our veteran officer who straddles both the policy and processing departments, directs most of the business traffic. Jeff Field, Don Lauer and Marcus Plieninger bring their verve to policy issues; Alex Mejia, Tom Arkin, Mary Ellen Kiely, Suzon Loreto, Dolores Varley and Michael O'Halloran ably cover the processing department. We may have different roles, but we are one team.

This annual report is not exhaustive of everything we did in 2012, but it does offer an accurate overview of the most pressing matters we faced. Because it is hard to quantify what are essentially qualitative incidents, there is room for disagreement on how serious the entries in this volume are. To be sure, they are not uniform. On the other hand, no fair-

minded observer is likely to conclude that anti-Catholic bigotry is a myth.

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Anti-Catholicism is as ugly as any other form of bigotry, though many do not agree. That is why some bigots are condemned while others are tolerated, if not commended. Generally speaking, it's the elites who are the problem, not ordinary Americans. Many have an authority problem, and often their issues revolve around sexuality. In their eyes, if the Catholic Church is being picked on, it's probably justified.



No institution targeted the Catholic Church with greater vengeance in 2012 than the federal government. The year started with a January 20 slam: President Barack Obama informed the Catholic community that his ObamaCare legislation was adding a provision from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): Catholic organizations that serve mostly non-Catholics—charitable groups, schools, universities, hospitals, social service agencies, and the like—were deemed not to be sufficiently Catholic and must therefore provide insurance coverage to their employees. Such insurance must cover abortifacients, contraception and sterilization. Of course, what makes Catholic entities truly Catholic is that they do not serve only their own people. Now the federal government was threatening to punish them for not discriminating against non-Catholics.

After the winter dustup between the head of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan (he would soon be named cardinal), President Obama offered what he generously called an “accommodation”: the organizations wouldn’t have to pay for these services; however, their insurance companies would. But this was a distinction without a difference. After all, who pays for the insurance premium but the employer and the employees? And in the case of self-insured institutions (including many dioceses), the distinction rings completely hollow.

The media lined up, almost single-file, behind Obama. They did so by calling this the “contraception mandate,” thereby deflecting attention from the abortion-inducing drugs and the sterilization services that were also included in the HHS mandate. As virtually everyone conceded, poor women are never denied free birth control pills from Planned Parenthood. For middle class women, the cost of contraception is typically cheaper than going to Starbucks for coffee each month. So few were fooled.

The bottom line for Catholic non-profits was to stop being Catholic if they wanted the exemption. In other words, the Obama administration (following the thinking of the ACLU) intentionally crafted a perverse Catch-22 condition for Catholic organizations: the only way to avoid paying for abortion-inducing drugs was to start discriminating against Jews and Protestants. Either way, Catholic entities were being forced to prostitute their mission.

The Obama administration did not stop there. It went ballistic when the Archbishop for Military Services exercised his free speech rights by sending a letter to his military chaplains protesting the HHS mandate. On another matter, the Obama team quickly dispatched HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to misrepresent her mandate by maintaining there was an ongoing dialogue with Catholic leaders about this issue. In fact, there had been only one meeting between President Obama and

Archbishop Dolan (and it was in late 2011); there were none during the contentious winter of 2012. Furthermore, under pressure from Senator Orrin Hatch, Sebelius admitted that the religious liberty issues involved were never subjected to a legal analysis, though 27 senators had asked for one. The deceit was rampant.

The good news is that the response from other religions, especially from evangelical Protestants, Mormons and Orthodox Jews, was considerable. They stood by Catholics, often saying they knew they would be next if they were silent in the face of the anti-Catholic onslaught. Meanwhile, major media outlets continued to refer to the religious liberty issue as the "religious liberty" issue. Thus did they make plain their contempt for what most Americans saw as a clear First Amendment matter.

The Administrative Committee of the USCCB released a statement on March 14 that was the clearest exposition of contemporary Catholic thought on religious liberty in America. The bishops refused to budge, knowing there were certain constitutional issues that were not open to compromise. Importantly, Bishop William Lori (who was to become the Archbishop of Baltimore) was named to head the bishops' *Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty*.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the legality of the ObamaCare legislation. But it didn't change matters dramatically for the Catholic community: the HHS mandate was not issued until after the high court accepted a challenge to ObamaCare; thus, the religious liberty implications of the directive were not addressed.

Still, the USCCB raised three objections to the ruling: (a) ObamaCare allowed the federal government to fund elective abortions, as well as plans that cover abortion (b) it did nothing to ensure conscience rights (something Obama pledged to do when he gave his commencement address at the University

of Notre Dame in 2009), and (c) it did nothing to protect immigrant workers in need of healthcare. The second objection was the most serious as it set the stage for the HHS mandate to become operative.

The fall was dominated by the presidential debates. For eminently good reasons, the HHS mandate did not receive as much attention as fiscal matters. But it never went away. When the year ended, the issue was still unresolved as dozens of lawsuits were still pending. Filing suit were dozens of dioceses, Catholic business owners, universities, and other Catholic entities. Importantly, they were joined by a host of non-Catholic groups.

Speaking of the presidential election, if there was one subject the media did not want to touch, it was the reaction which the two Catholic candidates for vice president had garnered from bishops over their careers. This matters because the media gave considerable attention to those few bishops and lay Catholics who questioned the Catholicity of Paul Ryan's budget. What the media did not want to discuss was the large number of bishops who had sanctioned or otherwise reprimanded Vice President Joe Biden over the years; most of their problems with him stemmed from his pro-abortion positions. For practicing Catholics, at least, this was not exactly a side issue.

In previous years, we exposed the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) as a small band of professional victims' advocates who hate the Catholic Church. In 2012, I issued a report, *SNAP UNRAVELS*, that critically analyzed statements made by its leader, David Clohessy, at his court-ordered appearance in Missouri.

As it turned out, Clohessy has been lying to the media about his work for years. He has also falsely advertised his group as a rape crisis center. Worse than working with some unseemly lawyers, Clohessy has engaged in counseling men and women,

though he has absolutely no qualifications in this area. Even more disturbing, it was revealed that SNAP has never contributed funds for licensed counselors. All in all, Clohessy's court appearance did more to undermine his credibility than anything his critics have ever said about him. SNAP, it is fair to say, will never be the same.

Another activist group with an animus against the Catholic Church is American Atheists. Owing partly to competition with other atheist outfits, American Atheists went for the jugular at Christmastime by displaying a huge billboard in Times Square depicting Jesus with a Crown of Thorns. The billboard, which showed a picture of Santa above Jesus, offered the message, "Keep the merry! Dump the myth!" The hate-filled campaign not only crossed the line with Christians, many agnostics and atheists said it was offensive.

When TV talk-show host Jon Stewart laughed at what he called the "vagina manger," we knew we had to act. As he spoke, a picture was shown behind him of a naked woman with her legs spread; a nativity scene ornament was placed in between. This offense was so vulgar and uncalled for that it demanded much more than a statement condemning Stewart's antics. So we unleashed a relentless campaign that lasted approximately six weeks.

We did not seek to get Stewart fired; all we wanted was an apology. He refused. So we contacted his sponsors asking them to put pressure on him to do so. The best of the lot was Delta, which pulled its advertising. The worst was Kellogg's; it brazenly took a dismissive attitude. We also contacted the board of directors at Viacom, the parent company of Comedy Central, sending them all a copy of the photo. Indeed, we mailed the photo to a select number of secular and religious elites all over the nation. The response was incredible. We know this because many bishops and civic leaders sent us a copy of their letter to Comedy Central. We ended our campaign with an op-ed page ad in the *New York Times* titled, "Jon

Stewart's Legacy."

At the end of the year, the *New York Times* was itself of interest to us. After BBC chief Mark Thompson was chosen to be the new president of the *New York Times* Company, questions surfaced about his possible role in a cover-up at the BBC. Here's what happened.

Jimmy Savile, a BBC icon, died at the end of 2011, and shortly thereafter he was exposed as a serial molester. "Newsnight," a BBC version of "60 Minutes," decided to do an exposé on Savile, but it was suddenly spiked. At issue was Thompson's role, if any, in killing the story. At the very least, many parties wanted to know what he knew, and when he knew it.

Thompson survived, but his reputation took a hit. Our interest had less to do with Thompson than it did with those commentators—and there is no end to them—who have said that everyone at the Vatican, from the pope on down, knew of priestly sexual abuse and did nothing about it. Well, if Thompson had no knowledge of the Savile issue, and he ran an organization with 23,000 employees, why should we expect the pope, who runs an organization in excess of one billion members, to know what his people are doing? It is one thing to know that some priests are molesters, quite another to know exactly who they are; there are more than 400,000 stationed around the globe.

The universities are hot beds of anti-Catholicism. Much of the hostility, it seems plain, is a function of the Church's teachings on marriage and sexuality. This issue surfaced in a really ugly way when a professor of sociology at the University of Texas, Austin, Mark Regnerus, was attacked for merely publishing a study on parenting that homosexual activists didn't like. It is a sad chapter in higher education when radical activists off-campus can lead a charge against a scholar and receive a serious hearing from university administrators.

Those who led the attack were bereft of academic credentials, yet the University of Texas said the episode met its standards for launching an inquiry; if matters warranted it, an investigation would follow. We were happy to get involved by alerting the university of our concerns: at stake was more than academic freedom—Regnerus' religion (he was a recent convert to Catholicism) had been called into question by one of his accusers. Thus, the civil rights of the professor were in play (as a sociologist myself this case was of special interest to me). In the end, Regnerus was cleared of any wrongdoing and no investigation was initiated.

Besides marriage and sexuality, if there is one issue that is a perennial for Catholic bashers, it is the role of Pope Pius XII in combating Nazism. In the spring, the University of Minnesota, Duluth, hosted a series of events commemorating the Holocaust. What got our attention was a postcard that was sent to the Duluth community about the conference: on the front of the postcard was a drawing of a Catholic prelate and a Nazi standing on top of a Jewish person; the drawing suggested that the Catholic Church supported Hitler.

There were many other facets of the conference that we objected to as well, and we made plain our objections. For the record, we don't object to serious scholarship that seeks to uncover the response of world leaders to the Holocaust, and we don't regard mere criticism of the pope as evidence of bias. But we do take strong exception to those who harbor an agenda. When seriously discredited work is presented as authoritative, it must be exposed for what it is. We did our part by offering a lengthy rebuttal to the conference's most absurd claims.

No year would be complete without an assault from artists. What surprised us was the decision of a New York gallery to go back to the well ("sewer" would be more accurate) by hosting Andres Serrano's classic, "Piss Christ." Now it is likely that we would have given this "art" a pass had it been displayed in some obscure venue in Queens, but when a noted gallery on 57th

Street off of 5th Avenue in Manhattan welcomed it, that changed matters. We knew we had no choice but to protest Serrano's crucifix in a jar of urine.

We assembled outside the gallery on the night Serrano's exhibit opened. I was holding a jar with a bobblehead of President Obama sitting in what appeared to be feces (it was actually brown Play-Doh). I wanted to let the media know that this was my contribution to art. Moreover, I wanted to interview Serrano (who was inside the gallery). Specifically, I wanted to know the best way to secure a federal grant to support my *magnum opus*. After all, the National Endowment for the Arts funded his "art" in 1989, so maybe I could get in on this game as well. But I didn't get the chance. When I tried to enter the gallery, the free speech mavens from the gallery told security not to let me inside.

It is important to note that this report does not include information about all the incidents that have come to our attention in 2012. For example, lots of material crosses our desks that some have found objectionable, but we don't. If there are some skits or lyrics that are untoward, but are not patently offensive, then we throw them out. We look at context, as well as other factors, and ultimately make a decision based on those criteria.

To be sure, the range of offenses varies widely, as does the range of our concerns. While some of our critics say we respond too harshly, we say there is a difference between being responsibly aggressive (which is what we are) and being ballistic. In the end, our many victories have taught us a valuable lesson: If you truly want to defend the faith, then learning to raise your voice is a must.

William A. Donohue, Ph.D
President

ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

January – February

Cranston, RI – The Cranston School Committee voted not to appeal a decision by U.S. District Court Judge Ronald Lagueux mandating the removal of a prayer mural from the wall of an auditorium at Cranston High School West because the process could be prohibitively expensive. In January, the judge had sided with the complainants—a student atheist and the ACLU. The atheist group, American Humanist Association, applauded the school’s decision not to appeal.



January 2

David Clohessy, president of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), was deposed regarding his role in cases of priestly sexual abuse pursuant to an order by a Missouri judge issued at the end of 2011. Clohessy fought the order vigorously, but he lost. The deposition was made public in March and is available on the Catholic League website. It demonstrated SNAP’s fraudulence beyond any reasonable doubt. Bill Donohue noted in a news release, “Even if Clohessy started out as an activist for justice, it is crystal clear that he has evolved into something altogether different.” *For Donohue’s special report, SNAP UNRAVELS, [click [here](#)].*

January 6 – 8

Boston, MA – The “10th Anniversary Celebration & Conference” was convened to “celebrate” media reports of 2002 on the Boston clergy sexual abuse scandal. The speakers included actors, artists, activists from the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, psychiatrists, lawyers, and journalists. They were all representatives of the professional victims’

lobby and had a demonstrated history of anti-Catholicism. The event ended on a Sunday at Boston's Holy Cross Cathedral, not for the purpose of going to Mass, but to hold a demonstration, even though the scandal ended in the 1980s. Seventy-five people attended the conference, 25 of whom were the speakers.

February – November

Kalispell, MT – Since 2010, the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) had waged a campaign to remove a statue of Jesus from a mountainside location; the Knights of Columbus (KofC) erected the statue in 1955 as a memorial to the fallen of World War II. FFRF had initially pressured the U.S. Forest Service to remove the statue from its location on federal land in Montana. After public outcry, the Forest Service reversed its decision in February. FFRF responded by suing to have the memorial removed permanently.

On May 30, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, on behalf of the KofC and several other members individually, petitioned the U.S. District Court to intervene as defendants on First Amendment grounds. The petition was granted the next day by order of the judge, who acknowledged that the First Amendment rights of the KofC were at stake.

The KofC had asked the judge to throw out FFRF's legal challenge because it had not named anyone actually harmed by the statue. In response, FFRF found an atheist who submitted a statement saying he had skied past the statue many times and had been offended by it. As a result, on November 27, a U.S. District Judge threw out the KofC's request. A trial was scheduled for March 2013.

February 6

Republican lawmakers wrote a letter of protest to Air Force Secretary Michael Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz, urging them to restore the original logo of the the Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office (RCO). In December 2011, RCO expunged a reference to God on its logo, changing it from

the Latin phrase for “Doing God’s Work With Other People’s Money” to “Doing Miracles With Other People’s Money.” The Air Force capitulated after months of pressure from the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers, which claimed victory.

March 7

Vatican City – After a failed attempt in August, the activist hacker group Anonymous twice attacked the Vatican’s website, rendering it inaccessible. The group issued an anti-Catholic statement saying why it targeted the “corrupt” Catholic Church: “Anonymous decided today to besiege your site in response to the doctrine, to the liturgies, to the absurd and anachronistic concepts that your for-profit organization spreads around the world.”

March 9

The opening salvo of the Freedom From Religion Foundation’s anti-Catholic ad campaign was a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. The timing of the ad coincided with threats to religious liberty from the Obama administration. Variations of the ad appeared on May 8 in the *Washington Express* as well as the *Washington Post*, on June 1-3 in the weekend edition of *USA Today*, and on July 4 in the the *Los Angeles Times*.

The pretext of the ad was the Catholic Church’s opposition to the Health and Human Services mandate forcing Catholic non-profits to include abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization in its insurance plans. Many in the media vilified the bishops in framing opposition to this mandate as a “war on women.”

The ad began: “It’s time to quit the Roman Catholic Church. Will it be reproductive freedom, or back to the Dark Ages?” The ad blamed the Catholic Church for promoting “acute misery, poverty, needless suffering, unwanted pregnancies, overpopulation, social evils and deaths.” It said the bishops are “launching a ruthless political Inquisition” against

women. It talked about “preying priests” and corruption “going all the way to the top.” In an appeal to Catholic women, it opined, “Apparently, you’re like the battered woman who, after being beaten down every Sunday, feels she has no place else to go.” The ad took the form of an open letter to “liberal” and “nominal” Catholics. It ended with a pun on the phrase “exiting en masse,” imploring Catholics to “Please, Exit en Mass.”

March 24

Washington, D.C. – A “Reason Rally” attended by atheists expressed an animus against Christianity in general, and Catholicism in particular. “Hey Kids,” one sign read, “It’s Okay—GOD is PRETEND.” “Religion is Like a Penis,” another sign read. “It’s OK to have one...But it is NOT OK to whip it out in public, shove it in my face, or tell me what to do because you have one...” One woman held a sign demanding that adherents of the three monotheistic religions “Get Out of My Panties.” There were signs such as “So many Christians, so few lions.” There was a man dressed as Jesus riding an inflatable dinosaur; another man held a large wooden cross with a mask of “The Joker” on top.

The entertainment featured Australian songwriter Tim Minchin, who thrilled the crowd with “The Pope Song.” The lyrics were explicit: “I don’t give a f*** if calling the pope a motherf***er means...You see I don’t give a f*** what any other motherf***er believes about Jesus and his motherf***ing mother.”

The big draw was atheist Richard Dawkins. He implored the crowd to “ridicule and show contempt” for people of faith. “Mock them, ridicule them in public,” he bellowed. Dawkins not only mocked the Eucharist, he advised the crowd to ask Catholics, “Do you really believe...that when a priest blesses a wafer, it turns into the body of Christ?”

March 28

The Air Force removed a mandatory reading from its Squadron Officer School correspondence course in response to pressure from the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). The document was intended for a part of the course called "Spiritual and Ethical Responsibilities" and connected regular chapel attendance with good leadership: "If you attend chapel regularly, both officers and Airmen are likely to follow this example. If you are morally lax in your personal life, a general moral indifference within the command can be expected." These words offended one atheist captain taking the course. He enlisted the help of MRFF to expunge any mention of the connection between religion and morality.

March 31

Fort Bragg, NC – Atheists organized a festival called "Rock Beyond Belief" at Fort Bragg in retaliation against "Rock the Fort," a Billy Graham Evangelistic Association event that took place in 2011. The organizer of the festival stated that he was personally offended by a Christian event on the base. The festival was promoted with a music video celebrating the burning of churches and synagogues.

April 12

Americans United for Separation of Church and State issued a press release attacking the "Fortnight for Freedom" as "thoroughly misguided." Americans United executive director Barry Lynn accused the bishops of seeking to "maintain their privileged status."

April 16 – 30

Woonsocket, RI – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) issued letters to the mayor and fire chief demanding that a memorial cross dedicated to fallen soldiers of the two world wars be removed from its location outside the fire department headquarters. FFRF's demands also extended into cyberspace when the group effectively called for censorship by requesting that the Fireman's Prayer and the image of a grieving firefighter consoled by an angel be removed from the

Woonsocket Fire Department's web page dedicated to honoring fallen firefighters. The Mayor of Woonsocket stood his ground and said: "I'm not going to fold. This monument is not going to go away."

April 19

Americans United for the Separation of Church and State filed a formal complaint with the IRS against Bishop Daniel Jenky of the Diocese of Peoria. In a press release, Americans United executive director Barry Lynn claimed that Bishop Jenky was in "violation of federal law" when he said that "every practicing Catholic...must vote their Catholic consciences." This was an attempt to intimidate and silence a bishop who had every right to voice his opinion on the political process.

April 25

The Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers (MAAF) pressured the Air Force to remove Bibles from on-base lodging. A legal review by the Air Force Services Agency demonstrated "no requirement to have Bibles in the lodging checklist." Although the Air Force did not comply with MAAF's demand and cited "multiple First Amendment practices and obligations," a revised checklist was slated to take effect in October 2013. Although MAAF declared, prematurely, that "Air Force Services Operations has promised to end their Bible requirement," whether or not the Air Force will comply with the atheist demand remains to be seen.

April 25

Faithful America, a non-Catholic group, petitioned Bishop Robert McManus of the Diocese of Worcester to change his mind after he disinvited pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage Catholic Victoria Kennedy (widow of Sen. Edward Kennedy) from giving the commencement address at Anna Maria College. After collecting 20,000 signatures, Faithful America delivered them to the bishop, who remained firm in his decision.

April 27

Catholics for Choice (CFC) issued a dissident “open letter” in a ploy to discredit the bishops’ authoritative defense of Catholic teaching on contraception. This was an attempt to frame the bishops’ defense of religious liberty against the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate as a “war on women.” What was more pernicious, however, was that CFC, an anti-Catholic front group, claimed to speak for all American Catholics, pitting them against the authority of the bishops.

Predictably, instead of the Magisterium, the letter invoked “our tradition of social justice.” The letter said: “The bishops’ insistence on eliminating access to contraception does not reflect our view or the views of many of the 68 million Catholics in the United States.” The letter concluded by saying that “if you want to know what Catholics think about contraception, ask us—not the bishops” and implored readers to sign on in support.

May 23

Hamilton County, TN – The Freedom From Religion Foundation lashed out at the Hamilton County Commission for holding Christian prayers before meetings. The group sent a letter asking commissioners to “discontinue official, government prayers before government meetings.”

June 7

John Gehring, an official at Faith in Public Life (an organization funded by atheist billionaire George Soros), sent a memo to his comrades in the media, a copy of which was leaked to the Catholic League. He instructed them on how to handle the bishops and the “Fortnight for Freedom” events that were to be conducted from June 21 to July 4. He recommended they begin by questioning the prelates why the Obama “accommodation” wasn’t good enough. “You have to ask why the bishops can’t take yes for an answer,” he wrote.

Teaching them how to handle the “war on the Catholic Church,” Gehring advised, “Several bishops have used inflammatory and

irresponsible rhetoric that conflates a process of working through complex policy issues with a fundamental attack on the Catholic Church.” He also worried about the politicization of the religious liberty campaign, an effort made possible, he neglected to say, because of the politicization of religion by President Obama.

Gehring pressed his lackeys to victimize the victim, beckoning them to ask the bishops—all of whom refuse to prostitute their principles— “Are you willing to sacrifice Catholic charities, colleges and hospitals if you don’t get your way on the contraceptive mandate?”

Finally, Gehring provided a go-to list of Catholic activists who can be counted on to subvert the bishops’ message.

June 13 – August 6

Clifton Park, NY – In a June 13 letter, the Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) wrote to Shenendehowa Central Schools of Clifton Park demanding that a music teacher refrain from having children pray. FFRF also took offense at “pervasively Christian music.” FFRF followed with another letter on July 24 and another on August 6, insisting on the removal of songs which mention God from the curriculum. One FFRF lawyer stated in a letter, “It is deeply troubling that the school district will not take action to remove prayers—even in the form of songs—from the curriculum.” The offending songs were “Thank You for the World So Sweet,” which contains the line, “Thank you God for everything,” and “Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep,” which contains the verse, “I pray the Lord my soul to keep.” FFRF accused the school district of “improper proselytizing” and threatened the use of “legal options.” In response, a school attorney said that the songs “did not violate any of the District’s First Amendment obligations” and that “none of the songs were taught, or used, as a prayer.” The attorney was careful to point out that “the musical selections...were used appropriately to teach specific musical concepts, and as the basis for secular classroom

activities.”

June 19

St. Louis, MO and New York, NY – After placing its “Quit the Church” ads in papers across the country, the Freedom from Religion Foundation erected billboards in two major cities. In New York, the billboard was located in a prominent part of Manhattan: Times Square. In St. Louis, the billboard was located at I-70 and North Broadway, allowing 300,000 people driving by each week to see it during its four-week run. The billboard read, “QUIT THE CHURCH.” Underneath this headline were the words, “PUT WOMEN’S RIGHTS OVER BISHOPS’ WRONGS.” This was an attempt to denigrate the U.S. bishops and frame Catholic opposition to the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate as a “war on women.”

June 20

Westchester, NY – A class-action lawsuit was filed on behalf of a lesbian employee of St. Joseph’s Medical Center. She was seeking medical coverage for her “spouse.” Because St. Joseph’s Medical Center is self-insured, it is not bound by New York State law that recognizes gay “marriage”; it is therefore exempt from granting medical benefits to a “married” lesbian. That is why the attorney for the lesbian employee was challenging the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act, a federal statute.

June 21

The Freedom From Religion Foundation launched a major TV ad campaign. In allusion to the French Revolution, the militant atheist group described their campaign as “storming the ‘Bishops’ Bastille.” The campaign ran for two weeks on CNN, Comedy Central, Discovery, History Channel, Science Channel, MSNBC, and Fox. In the ad, actress Julia Sweeney declared that she is a “cultural Catholic” and is “no longer a believer.” She demonized the U.S. bishops for their opposition to the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate: “...the Catholic bishops are framing their opposition to contraceptive

coverage as a religious freedom issue, but the real threat to freedom is the bishops, who want to be free to force their dogma on people who don't want it."

July 10

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) ran an ad in the *New York Times* demonstrating just how disgraceful the professional victims' lobby had become. The ad was part and parcel of SNAP's agenda to sunder the Catholic Church while purporting to protect children. Instead of looking at the positive reforms made by the U.S. bishops over the last decade, SNAP rehashed its claim that there is an ongoing abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, despite all the evidence to the contrary. Indeed, 99.98% of Catholic priests did not have a credible accusation made against them in 2011.

July 31 – October 5

Frankenmuth, MI – A steel cross was erected with private funding in 1976 as part of the city's celebration of America's Bicentennial. It came under attack from Americans United for Separation of Church and State. In July, Americans United demanded that the city promptly remove the cross, threatening litigation on the grounds that it violated the constitutional prohibition against the "establishment of religion." In a letter, the group claimed to have received a complaint regarding the cross, but did not disclose the name of the complainant. The Thomas More Law Center sprung into action on September 6 to defend the city against this attack. On October 5, the city rejected the demand. Chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center responded on behalf of the city: "The cross was raised up by a grateful community. And this community will fight to keep it."

August 13

Cranford, NJ – At a press conference, American Atheists unveiled their billboards that were to appear in Charlotte, North Carolina in time for the Democratic National Convention. The billboards attacked Mormonism and Christianity as part of

a campaign that “exposes the foolishness of religion in the political landscape.” The billboard attacking Christianity read “Christianity: Sadistic God; Useless Savior / 30,000+ Versions of ‘Truth’ / Promotes Hate, Calls it ‘Love’ / Atheism: Simply Reasonable.” The billboard attacking Mormonism read: “Mormonism: God is a Space Alien / Baptizes Dead People / Big Money, Big Bigotry / Atheism: Simply Reasonable.” Both billboards implored viewers to join American Atheists.

August 16 – 19

Milwaukee, WI – A complaint by the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) claimed that a promotion by organizers of the Milwaukee Irish Fest was discriminatory and violated civil rights laws. According to the Irish Fest website, “guests who donate nonperishable food items prior to the liturgy are admitted to the festival free of charge after the Mass.” In response to FFRF’s intolerance, Irish Fest organizers stripped their promotion of the Mass attendance requirement and offered free admittance to everyone who dropped off a food donation by 11 A.M. In the name of “tolerance,” a tradition that had been going on for years was stamped out to appease a few, described by FFRF as “some Irish folk who have been attending the event for years, but do not subscribe to the Catholic faith—or any faith for that matter—and felt ostracized by festival officials.”

August 18

The Freedom From Religion Foundation ran a feature spot on select national public television affiliates for three months, reaching three million people. There were two versions of the ad, which was called “Spotlight on Freethought and the First Amendment.” In the ad, the narrator ascribed the worst bloodshed in world history to religion: “More wars have been waged, more people killed, in the name of religion than by any other institutional force in human history.” Furthermore, the ad falsely spun American history to say that Christianity had no role in the founding of America.

August 21

Rossville, GA – The Freedom from Religion Foundation sent a letter to the superintendent of Walker County Schools, taking offense at the activities instituted by the coach of Ridgeland High School's football program. The alleged offenses included: team trips to a church; post-game prayers led by the coach; team apparel sporting Bible verses; the participation of the coach in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes; and advocating a Christian football camp for students.

August 21

The public relations director for American Atheists explained on Fox News that the reason the group was filing a lawsuit against the display of the Ground Zero cross at the 9/11 museum was that it made non-Christians "physically ill." However, the great majority of people who died in the September 11 attacks were Christians. The cross to be displayed was a non-denominational symbol formed by two beams retrieved from the rubble.

August 22 – September 28

Jefferson City, MO – The ACLU filed a lawsuit in federal court on behalf of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), Call to Action, and the Voice of the Faithful-Kansas City to block a new state law prohibiting the disruption of worship services. The "House of Worship Protection Act," was signed into law on July 8 and went into effect on August 28. It prohibits the intentional disruption of a house of worship through profanity, "rude or indecent behavior" or noise. It also prohibits "intimidation" of those "exercising the right of religious freedom in or outside a house of worship or seeking access to a house of worship." The plaintiffs claimed that the law would be used to "chill" them "from engaging in expressive conduct," which could potentially include SNAP's demonstrations near churches. After a hearing on the plaintiff's motion on September 11, their request for preliminary injunctive relief was denied on September 28.

August 23

Lyndonville, VT – Two lesbians settled a discrimination lawsuit filed against a Vermont inn that refused to host a homosexual wedding reception; they were represented by the ACLU. The Catholic owners agreed to the settlement because of the threat that litigation posed to their business. According to the settlement, the Wildflower Inn had to pay a civil penalty in the amount of \$10,000 to the Vermont Human Rights Commission for violating Vermont's Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act. In addition, the inn had to pay \$20,000 to a charitable trust which would be disbursed according to the couple's discretion.

September 3

Worcester, MA – A "married" homosexual couple filed a "discrimination" lawsuit against the Catholic Church, alleging that the Diocese of Worcester backed out of a transaction to sell them a mansion that they wanted to turn into an inn for the purpose of hosting homosexual weddings and other events. This was an attempt to criminalize the Church for its defense of traditional marriage. One of the plaintiffs said: "Here we are in the 21st century in Massachusetts and we're experiencing this kind of discrimination." Lawyers for the diocese said the plaintiffs did not come up with the financing.

September 18

New York, NY – A New York City Catholic priest was accused of promoting Mitt Romney for president after the weekly bulletin of an Upper East Side Catholic church included a letter by six former U.S. ambassadors to the Vatican; the letter endorsed Romney. The priest responsible for including the letter became the subject of a petition asking New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan to do something about it. The petition drive was a staged by two groups unconnected to the parish: Catholics United and Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

The Catholic League pointed out at the time that Catholics United is a left-wing group funded by atheist billionaire George Soros with virtually no support in the Catholic community. It continually misrepresents Catholic teachings while working against the religious liberty rights of Catholics. Americans United was founded in the 1940s as an expressly anti-Catholic organization (it was known as Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State), and was responsible for fomenting hatred against Catholics at the time. It has since worked relentlessly to diminish religious liberty.

September 18 – October 18

Kountze, TX – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) sent a threatening letter to the superintendent of the Kountze Independent School District claiming that the banners and signs used by football cheerleaders were unconstitutional because they contained bible verses. In response to FFRF's letter, officials prohibited the cheerleaders from displaying these messages. The edict went into effect on September 18. Students and parents were so outraged that they filed a lawsuit against the district on September 20. On October 18, the judge ruled in favor of the cheerleaders.

September 21

San Francisco, CA – Homosexuals paraded around naked at the annual Folsom Street Fair and, as always, mocked the Catholic clergy and religious. They dressed as cardinals, bishops, and nuns. There was even a group that disparaged the Jesuits, the "Society of Janus"; their specialty is BDSM (bondage, domination, sadism and masochism).

October 3

A petition demanding the resignation of Bishop Robert Finn was found on the website of change.org, home to mostly left-wing activists. Anyone could sign it—one didn't have to be Catholic or from Finn's diocese. There was no grassroots rebellion against Bishop Finn: Almost 7,400 signatures were sent to the

diocese, and all but approximately 150 were from outside the area; the signatories even included activists from foreign countries. The Catholic League responded with a press release exposing the petition and the real source behind the phony petition drive, none other than Bishop Finn's enemies: the *Kansas City Star* and the *National Catholic Reporter*. Both are located in Kansas City, Missouri. Both had been calling for Finn to resign. The petition drive was evidence of the most important goal of anti-Catholics for the past decade: to bring down a bishop.

October 5

Jon O'Brien, president of Catholics for Choice (CFC), issued a statement attacking Sister Mary Ann Walsh, director of media relations for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Sister Walsh had warned on her blog that "Some agenda groups who oppose one or more Catholic teachings, for example use the name 'Catholic,' even when there seems little evidence of Catholics in their ranks and no evidence that they represent Catholic teaching." She singled out CFC and pointed out that, for 25 years, the organization was led by the former director of the National Abortion Federation. O'Brien lashed out, going even so far as to say that "the bishops haven't said or done the right thing" when it comes to "matters of social justice."

October 18

Yelm, WA – A YouTube video captured the profanity-laced, vitriolic anti-Catholicism of JZ Knight, a spiritual leader of the cult, Ramtha School of Enlightenment. Her tirade included the following statements: "F*** you, you Catholics, you a**holes!" "I take your f***ing faith on." "We will come to you in a terror. We will quake your g**d*****, God-released country. We will bring ... Saint Peter's temple down and we'll swallow it in the sea." "F***ing, absolute, g**d*****, demon-possessed religion of the earth."

October 24 – January 15

Americans United for the Separation of Church and State filed an amicus brief with the First Circuit Court of Appeals concerning a case in which the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) gave the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) control over a program assisting sex-trafficking victims. The USCCB refused to fund other social service agencies that would not promise to not use public funds for abortion or contraceptive services.

The ACLU challenged this arrangement, claiming that it violated the separation of church and state and that it denied essential services to sex trafficking victims. Although a federal district court had ruled in the ACLU's favor, the USCCB and HHS were now both claiming that the case should be thrown out on the grounds that taxpayers lack the "standing" to bring such matters into court. Americans United claimed that there was a "taxpayer right" to "challenge government grants that violate church-state separation." In this tag-team effort, one activist group abetted another in trying to usurp the legal autonomy of the Catholic Church using the canard of "essential public services."

November

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) claimed five victories:

In Buhler, Kansas, as a result of a complaint from FFRF, the city of Buhler agreed to redesign its city seal and replace a large sign in the city's park. FFRF objected to the appearance of a cross on both.

In Rosenberg, Texas, the principal of Deaf Smith Elementary School was instructed by the school district to refrain from sending his newsletters because of their biblical references after FFRF complained.

In Elkhorn City, Kentucky, intimidation by FFRF resulted in the cessation of prayer at a public school. Religious fliers

were banned, as well.

In Barnsdall, Oklahoma, FFRF forced Barnsdall Junior/Senior High School into removing the reference to God in the Student Creed, which formerly included the words, “reverence to our God.”

In New Haven, Michigan, FFRF pressured Endeavor Elementary School into removing a promotional church sign located on the school’s lawn. The school would now only display the sign on Sundays, when the church rents its cafeteria.

November 7-13

For standing fast in their commitment to the civil rights of the unborn, the defense of marriage, and the cause of religious liberty, the bishops were condemned by three entities: Catholics for Choice (CFC), Catholics United, and Faithful America. CFC told the bishops that they need to “realize the error of their ways.” Catholics United and Faithful America told the bishops to “refocus their attention on caring for the poor and vulnerable,” by which they meant pushing for more welfare.

November 14

Riverside, CA – Americans United for the Separation of Church and State threatened to sue the City of Riverside unless it removed a giant cross atop Mount Rubidoux, where it has stood since 1907.

November 15

Brentwood, MD – Americans United for the Separation of Church and State retaliated against the Brentwood Town Council for reciting the Lord’s Prayer in council meetings. Americans United sent three letters asking that they terminate the practice or make it inclusive to also encompass other religions’ prayers.

December 4

The American Humanist Association, an atheist group, advised

all newcomers to the U.S. House of Representatives to stay away from the Congressional Prayer Caucus because it believes in the National Motto ("In God We Trust") and wants to continue the practice of opening Congress with a daily prayer.

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SNAP UNRAVELS

On March 13, the Catholic League issued this report [[click here](#)] by Bill Donohue examining the deposition of Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) director David Clohessy. The deposition made clear that Clohessy has been (a) lying to the media about his work (b) falsely advertising his group as a rape crisis center (c) working with unseemly lawyers (d) exploiting his clients by providing unauthorized "counseling" services (e) ripping off those who are truly in need of help by failing to contribute even a dime for licensed counselors, and (f) pursuing priests on the basis of legal criteria he admits he cannot explain. The report was also mailed to the bishops.

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SNAP'S DEFENDERS RETALIATE

After the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) was issued subpoenas demanding 23 years of the group's communications with victims in the course of lawsuits in St. Louis and Kansas City, supporters in the media as well as activist groups fell in line behind SNAP director David Clohessy and his discredited activist organization.

March 13: Terence McKiernan, the president of the activist group BishopAccountability.org, declared his belief that "SNAP's achievements, and their leading role in the worldwide movement for children's rights, will earn Barbara Blaine and David Clohessy the Nobel Peace Prize."

March 13: Terry O'Neill, president of the National Organization for Women, attacked the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: "In addition to playing a major role in the right-wing war on women, the all-male hierarchy of the Catholic Church is trying to silence an organization dedicated to helping women and men who have been victimized by clergy." She accused the bishops of "shooting the messenger," i.e., SNAP.

March 13: Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, said, "The bishops are playing hardball with survivors of priest abuse, but the bishops are not playing hardball with priest predators. The Conference of Catholic Bishops needs to focus on stopping cleric sexual abuse and the hierarchy's cover ups."

March 13: In a blog post entitled "The Hierarchy Re-Abuses the Sex Victims," Andrew Sullivan attacked Catholic League president Bill Donohue for defending the Catholic Church: "Donohue is a thug. But he is for the hierarchy what Hannity is for the GOP base." Sullivan took issue with Donohue's remark that the Church does not need "altar boys" for lawyers, who need to get tough. Sullivan remarked, "Sometimes, you realize that for some Catholics, nothing has changed since the revelation of the mass rape of children, altar boys often a prime target."

March 13: The *New York Times* ran a front-page story on Clohessy's deposition. Bill Donohue was quoted in the story, and his comments set off a firestorm.

March 14: A *New York Times* editorial entitled "Hurting Victims' Advocates" was critical of the Catholic Church for allowing "aggressive" lawyers to press Clohessy. In doing so, the newspaper provided cover to SNAP's rapacious activism abetted by vengeful lawyers using methods that are unethical at best and illegal at worst. Clohessy was quoted as saying, "The real motive is to harass and discredit and bankrupt SNAP,

while discouraging victims, witnesses, whistle-blowers, police, prosecutors and journalists from seeking our help.” To which the *Times* responded, “Given the aggressive legal tactics, it’s hard not to think that he is right. The judges asked to rule on motions to compel information must reject unfairly burdensome discovery requests. When the sex-abuse scandal erupted a decade ago, church leaders spoke of reconciliation with the victims. Now, in threatening to expose private files compiled by advocates for abuse survivors, they are giving victims new reason to retreat into fear and secrecy. For the church to target SNAP compounds the horror.” At the time, the Catholic League remarked, “When the *Times* is sued, does it hire wimpy lawyers? Does it allow itself to be a punching bag? Not on your life: they hire the most aggressive attorneys they can buy.”

March 19: In an opinion piece, *New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni said of the Catholic hierarchy that it “keeps giving American Catholics fresh reasons for rebellion.” He contended that widespread media coverage of priestly sexual abuse was not the result of “anti-Catholic and anti-religious bias,” but instead resulted from a “magnitude of the violation of trust.” If this were the case, the *Times* would have covered with equal intensity the epidemic of child sexual abuse by rabbis as well as the alarming rate of child sexual abuse in the public schools.

March 19: The *Newark Star Ledger* demonized the Church in no uncertain terms: “The church’s new legal assault on SNAP is unconscionable. For decades, pedophile priests created thousands of voiceless victims. SNAP gives those victims a voice—and now the bishops want to silence that, too.” Catholic League president Bill Donohue responded by sending our report on Clohessy to the editorial page editor, pointing out in no uncertain terms that “the man is a liar and a fraud.”

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This Joel Pett cartoon ran in the *Philadelphia Daily News* on February 20. It attempts to undermine the U.S. bishops' opposition to the HHS abortifacient mandate. The cartoon also paints all priests as abusers.

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THE ARTS

February 29 – March 4

Fort Lauderdale, FL – Parker Playhouse featured a five-day run of Matthew Lombardo's play, "High," with Kathleen Turner starring as a recovering alcoholic, gutter-mouth nun. Convinced of his special claim to victim status because of his own penchant for drug addiction and homosexuality, the playwright narcissistically invented a self-denigrating nun character as a reflection of himself. In doing so, he symbolically trashed the character of real-life nuns. The play ran for only six days when it opened on Broadway in 2011. Though Turner



protested that the “New York critics were wrong,” the play was anything but a success.

April 28-30

San Francisco, CA – The Terrence McNally play, “Corpus Christi,” which depicts Christ having sex with the apostles, was performed three times in San Francisco at Southside Theater at Fort Mason Center as well as at the Small Chapel in the First Unitarian Church. The performances were part of a national tour of both the play and a documentary about the play called “Corpus Christi: Playing with Redemption.” The director said his mission is to “change the story on religious bullying and homophobia.” Proponents of the play masquerade as advocates of tolerance only to attack Christians in the most vile terms. The play depicts the Christ-figure, Joshua, having sex with the apostles, branding him “King of the Queers”; it portrays Jesus saying to the apostles, “F*** your mother, F*** your father, F*** God”; and it shows Philip asking Jesus to perform oral sex on him. The script is replete with sexual and scatological comments.

May 19

New York, NY – Artist Sebastian Errazuriz handed out his magnum opus: his “Christian Popsicles”– wooden popsicle sticks shaped as a cross and inscribed with the image of Jesus. The flavors were reported by one news network as “frozen holy wine transformed into the blood of Christ”; the wine was “inadvertently blessed by the priest while turning wine into the blood of Christ during the Eucharist.”

September 27 – October 26

New York, NY – The Edward Tyler Nahem gallery in mid-town Manhattan hosted the exhibit, “Body and Spirit: Andres Serrano 1987-2012,” which featured Serrano’s “Piss Christ” showing a crucifix submerged in a jar of his own urine. The Catholic League objected not only to the work of “art,” but also to the venue and the timing. The gallery is located on 57th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues, the most expensive rent district

in the city, just two blocks from the Plaza Hotel, Central Park, and high-end jewelry stores. In other words, it was the artistic establishment of New York sticking it to Christians. Cheering for them were other segments of the cultural elite, e.g., the *New York Times* fawned over it. It was the political elites who made the timing of the exhibit so offensive. President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton were busy condemning an anti-Islam video that they (erroneously) said sparked Muslim riots in the Middle East. When Todd Starnes of Fox News called the White House asking if there would be a statement condemning Serrano's anti-Christian art, he got no response.

At a press conference organized by the Catholic League, Bill Donohue unveiled his own magnum opus: a bobblehead of Obama sitting in a jar of faux feces (it was actually brown Play-Doh). If Serrano got \$15,000 back in the 1980s for his "art," Donohue reasoned that his contribution should be worth about \$50,000 today, correcting for inflation. He wanted to ask Serrano (he was present at the exhibit) if he would help him write a grant. When Donohue went to enter the gallery to see the exhibit, he was turned away by gallery officials, effectively censoring him. In addition, a gallery spokeswoman lied when she told the *New York Times* that the police showed up after they were summoned, that thirty or so protesters barged into the building, and that Donohue balked when Serrano confronted him to discuss the controversy. The *Times* reporter confirmed with police that no officer showed up during the press conference; no one barged into the building, as was confirmed by the video that the Catholic League posted to YouTube; and Serrano and Donohue never met, as Serrano himself later admitted to the *Times* reporter.



Top left: Bill Donohue's *magnum opus*. **Top right:** Donohue unveils his "art" on YouTube.
Bottom: Donohue speaks to reporters at the Catholic League's protest of the "Piss Christ" exhibit.

November 27

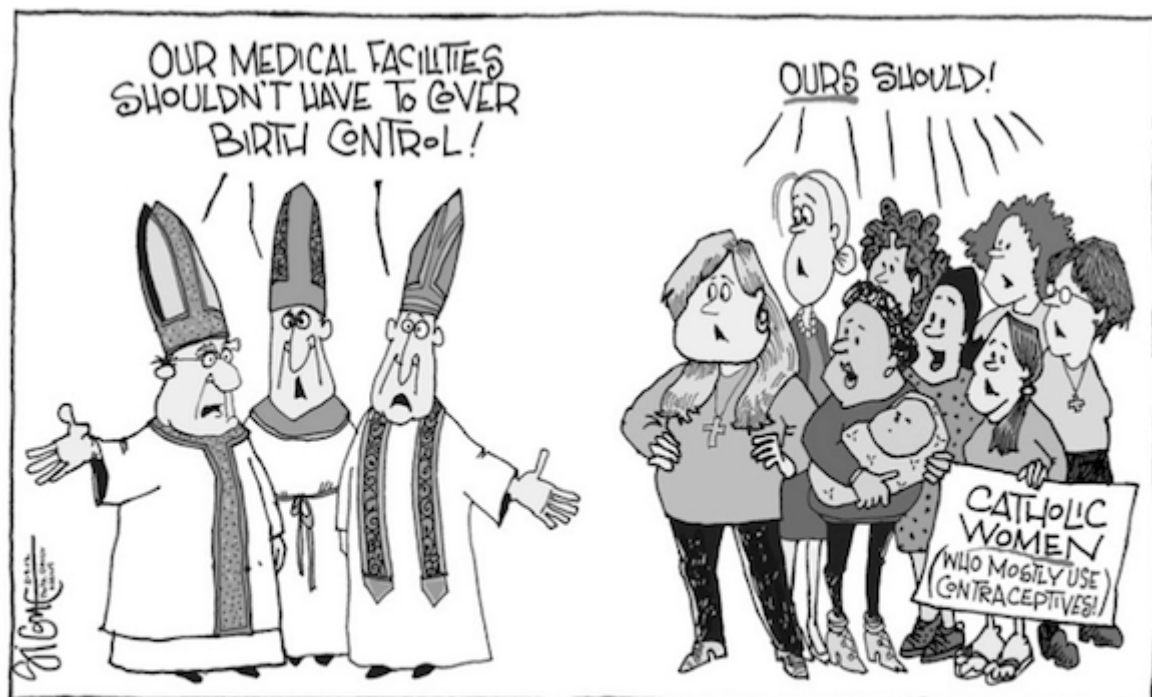
Boston, MA – The Bunker Hill Community College Arts Gallery hosted a painting by Michael D'Antuono, a left-wing artist known for exploiting racial tensions.

The painting was entitled "Truth" and depicted President Barack Obama with outstretched arms wearing a Crown of Thorns, against the backdrop of the Seal of the President of the United States.

"Truth" was supposed to debut on April 29, 2009 in New York's Union Square to commemorate the first 100 days of Obama's presidency. But D'Antuono withdrew his painting after being hit with angry e-mails. Now he was back, apparently thinking that after Obama won reelection, the time was ripe to rip off Christian iconography for the purpose of making a cheap political statement.

December 9

New York, NY – The off-Broadway musical “Bare: The Musical” opened at New World Stages. The show was a revival of “Bare: A Pop Opera.” According to the script, the story revolves around two high school seniors, adolescent boys, at a Catholic school who are in love with one another. The script contains many anti-Catholic elements and celebrates homosexuality. For example, confession is referred to as the “sacrament of oppression” and a “poor man’s therapy session.” In another scene, the Blessed Mother appears to one of the characters in a dream and tells him to tell his mother about his homosexuality. She says Joseph hasn’t done anything for her since he let her ride on the donkey to Bethlehem. In another scene, one of the characters in the play, a nun, tells another character to be proud of his homosexuality.

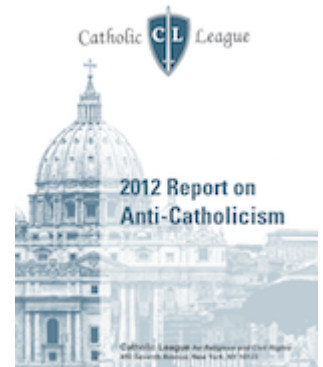


This Signe Wilkinson cartoon appeared in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* on February 12. The cartoon dishonestly omitted the fact that, when polled on the question of contraceptive coverage at the cost of religious liberty, a greater percentage of women polled in favor of religious liberty.

BUSINESS/WORKPLACE

February 24

New York, NY – Rep. Michael Grimm requested that the Empire State Building shine red in honor of the elevation of New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan to cardinal. Grimm's request was denied by the owner of the Empire State Building, Anthony Malkin. Similarly, in 2010, the Catholic League petitioned to have the tower of the Empire State Building shine blue and white on August 26, 2010 in honor of Mother Teresa's centennial; this petition was also denied. Yet in honor of the 60th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Revolution, which was responsible for 70 million deaths, the building was illuminated in red and yellow in 2009.



May 4

Battle Creek, MI – In the Catholic League's campaign against Jon Stewart's "vagina manger" stunt of April 16, we made sure the major sponsors of "The Daily Show" received a copy of the image that was flashed on the screen of a naked woman with her legs spread and a nativity scene ornament in between.

The image was used in a segment in which Jon Stewart attacked Fox News for not giving air to the "war on women" issue. He then ridiculed the cable station for covering the "war on Christmas," asking, "What can women do to generate the same sense of outrage from Fox as the removal of decorative slightly poisonous holiday plants? Perhaps they could play into the theme?" At this point, the image was shown.

Delta's response was responsible: It pulled its ads from Stewart's show. But Kellogg's response smacked of anti-Christian indifference:

"We understand that our customers come from a variety of

backgrounds, experiences, lifestyles, and cultures and we respect their individual decisions to choose the television programs that they deem acceptable for themselves and their families. Consumers speak most loudly when they vote with their remote control and change the channel or turn off the TV if a program does not fit their personal criteria.”

In response, the Catholic League went on the offensive, sending the indefensible picture to Kellogg’s senior management and board, as well as to community leaders, religious and secular, throughout Battle Creek.

Kellogg’s “Global Code of Ethics” boasts, “our heritage is based on a commitment to treat everyone fairly and with consideration.” The Catholic League noted that this apparently excludes the 80 percent of Americans who are Christian.

September 11

Pembroke Pines, FL – A group of 75 students at Coconut Palm Elementary was scheduled to sing “God Bless America” inside the local Wal-Mart on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks as a tribute to the victims. When the students arrived, the manager refused to allow them to sing. The choir director said that in an “effort to right a wrong,” the students went outside and performed the song in the parking lot. But, when students and parents were already heading to their cars, the police arrived and said they were responding to a “flash mob.” The manager on duty that night reportedly called the choir a “liability,” and the store manager with whom the choir director initially arranged the performance was fired. A spokeswoman for Wal-Mart later offered an apology to the school on behalf of the company and said the concert would be rescheduled.

December 7

Ranger Up, an apparel company that sells “shirts for the military and the patriotic Americans who love the men and women of the Armed Forces,” put up a photoshopped image of Pope Benedict XVI on its Facebook page. The image of the pope

was rendered to make him look like he is in the pose made famous by Marilyn Monroe in the movie, "The Seven Year Itch," holding his cassock down. The pope is not standing on the streets of New York; he is in a tropical park. A little girl is running away from the pontiff's bare legs. The image was also promoted on Ranger Up's Twitter account.



EDUCATION

January 21 – September 21

Nashville, TN – On January 21, Vanderbilt University administrators announced the new “nondiscrimination” policy that stipulated that religious student groups could no longer require their leaders to agree with the respective group’s religious beliefs. Furthermore, religious student groups could also no longer expect their leaders to lead prayer, worship, or Bible studies. Finally, leaders of religious student groups could no longer be asked to resign in the event that their religious beliefs change while in office.



In response, 13 Christian groups joined forces to resist the administration. A University Chair and Professor of Law at St. Thomas University in Minnesota wrote that the school was “despising Christianity” with a policy to “expel the expression of views of which it disapproves.”

On October 24, 2011, the Catholic Chaplain for Vanderbilt Catholic wrote a letter to Vanderbilt’s chancellor about the burden being placed on the group.

On March 26, Vanderbilt Catholic announced that it would leave campus before before complying with the policy and allowing members of other groups to occupy its leadership. It eventually changed its name to University Catholic. Since the group decided not to register as an official organization, it was prohibited from using the name “Vanderbilt.”

On May 2, Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam vetoed a Tennessee House bill aimed at rescinding the policy. Haslam said that, although he disagreed with Vanderbilt’s policy, he found it inappropriate for government to regulate a private institution.

According to Vanderbilt’s website, as of September 21, more than 480 student groups had complied with the policy and had

been conferred registered student organization status. Of this number, 29 were religious student groups. About 15 religious student groups had said they disagree with the policy. They chose not to comply.

February 10

Newark, NJ – Thomas Nast, the 19th-century artist who consistently inflamed hatred against the Irish and Catholics alike, was nominated to the New Jersey Hall of Fame (NJHF) in 2011. The Catholic League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians protested this decision. When the votes were cast and the results were announced in 2012, Nast did not make the cut.

February 29

Medford, MA – The campus newspaper of Tufts University, *Tufts Daily*, published an article called “Get Your Rosaries Off Our Ovaries.” The undergraduate author peddled anti-Catholicism, demonizing “uber-conservative” Catholic bishops as “an army of sexually repressed men who know nothing about birth control or women’s bodies and probably even less about sex.”

March 8

Washington, D.C. – In the March edition of *GW Medicine Notes*, Dr. Alan G. Wasserman, chairman of the George Washington University School of Medicine, attacked the Catholic Church in the front page section titled “From the Chairman.” He used the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate to make gross generalizations of the most vile sort about bishops and priests:

- He attacked clergy for not showing the same “passion” when “they did such an effective job at hiding the Pedophile scandal of the Church for so many years.”
- He wrote that “it’s not separation of church and state that is the problem but separation of church and boys.”
- He used the “Pedophile scandal of the Church” to recommend a change to the priesthood: “Would this be a non-issue if women were allowed to be priests?”

Bill Donohue pointed out that if a Catholic professor were to engage in a similar public trashing of Jews, Dr. Wasserman would respond with rightful indignation.

March 19

Stony Brook, NY – State University of New York at Stony Brook decreed that its students would no longer be off for religious holidays. The administration said that the change was made in the interest of academics, but students and faculty voiced opposition, saying that the new policy, which would be in effect for the next four years, disrespected those who observe religious holidays. It was as an example of intolerance of religious observance enforced by bureaucrats at a state school funded by taxpayer money.

April 12 – 19

Duluth, MN – The University of Minnesota Duluth hosted a series of events commemorating the Holocaust in a way that was patently anti-Catholic. The event was advertised with an anti-Catholic postcard depicting a Catholic prelate and a Nazi standing on top of a Jewish person. The drawing, depicting the 1933 Concordat signed between Pope Pius XI and Hitler, has been used by enemies of the Church to paint the Vatican as an accomplice of the Nazis. The events also featured a production of the 1963 anti-Catholic play, "The Deputy."



Detail of the image depicting a Catholic prelate and a Nazi standing on top of a Jewish person. It was used on a postcard advertising a series of Holocaust events at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

This attempt to smear the Church with ideologically motivated pseudo-scholarship was undertaken, in the words of one organizer, "to raise awareness." Bill Donohue wrote an extensive rebuttal that was sent to the Duluth community on April 10 (it is available in the "Special Reports" section of

the Catholic League website). In an opinion piece on May 5, Leonore Baeumler, a major planner and participant of the annual Holocaust commemoration events at the University of Minnesota, defended the events, insisting that “there was no censorship of any kind.”

April 13

Seattle, WA – Gay activist Dan Savage gave a keynote address at the National High School Journalism Conference sponsored by the National Scholastic Press Association and the Journalism Education Association. He insulted the students, used profanity, and trashed Christianity; many walked out. Ironically, Savage was there to protest bullying.

“We can learn to ignore the bulls**t in the Bible about gay people,” he said. “The same way, the same way we have learned to ignore the bulls**t in the Bible about shellfish, about slavery, about dinner, about farming, about menstruation, about virginity, about masturbation. We ignore bulls**t in the Bible about all sorts of things. The Bible is a radically pro-slavery document. Slave owners waved Bibles over their heads during the Civil War and justified it.”

After the students walked out in protest, Savage retorted, “It’s funny, as someone who’s on the receiving end of beatings that are justified by the bible, how pansy-a**d some people react when you push back.”

The National Scholastic Press Association initially defended Savage’s speech, commending him for his “level of thoughtfulness” and saying that it is important for journalists to “listen to speech that offends you.” Only after reconsideration did the group, along with the Journalism Education Association, say that Savage’s speech fell short of the standards of civil discourse and offer an apology.

April 20

Fort Wayne, IN – Emily Herx, a Catholic teacher at St. Vincent

de Paul School, was fired for violating Church teachings by receiving in-vitro fertilization. Not only did she sue the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, but the teacher also made the rounds on TV trying to gin up public support. The Diocese was very clear: "The process of in-vitro fertilization very frequently involves the deliberate destruction of embryos or the freezing of embryos, which the Church holds to be incompatible with the respect owed to human life."

April 26

Washington, D.C. – A letter signed by nearly 90 faculty members and priests at Georgetown University criticized Rep. Paul Ryan's visit to campus, saying his budget plan represented a "continuing misuse of Catholic teaching" because it allegedly hurts the poor. In the past, there were no letters of protest from the faculty about the "misuse of Catholic teaching" in response to Georgetown's pro-abortion clubs, the speech given by hardcore pornographer Larry Flynt on campus, or the removal of crucifixes and religious symbols by the Obama advance team.

April 29 – May 7

Elmhurst, IL – On the same day that gay activist Dan Savage issued an apology for the obscene remarks he made to high school students at the National High School Journalism Conference, he spoke before a crowd at Elmhurst College in Illinois. Here is what he said about Pope Benedict XVI's rejection of gay "marriage":

"What the pope is saying is that the only thing that stands between my d**k and Brad Pitt's mouth is a piece of paper."

"What the pope is saying, once we're all gay married, we're going to go extinct in a generation. Because once we're all gay married, we're going to forget which hole s**ts babies."

The Catholic League responded with a strongly worded statement condemning this outrage. It was sent to the Elmhurst media,

the college's board of trustees, local government officials, and every Catholic high school principal in the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Diocese of Joliet. They were informed how this college, which boasts of its commitment to diversity and tolerance, treats Catholics.

On May 7, Rev. Robert Ullman, a member of the Elmhurst College Board of Trustees, responded by e-mail to the Catholic League's news release on Savage's obscene talk. The United Church of Christ minister accused Donohue of making racist statements against Elmhurst College's president before wildly denouncing the Catholic Church:

"Given the recent *New York Times*' column exposing the pope's denunciation of women religious while at the same time defending the Roman Catholic church's position on male-only ordination and covering up sexual abuse by some of those same male-only clergy should give you pause in denouncing a College, a President and a Church willing to walk into the murky waters of human sexuality and Christian morality."

Bill Donohue responded in a press release, exposing Ullman as a "disgrace to higher education."

April

Tampa, FL – A fourth-grader at Lewis Elementary School in Temple Terrace brought in to class invitations to an Easter egg hunt organized by members of a local church. The invitations said his classmates "would have fun and learn the true meaning of Easter." The school's principal prohibited the distribution of the invitations and sent a note home. The boy's mother took the case to court. The school board's attorney found it objectionable that the invitation came not from the boy, but from the church. His explanation omitted the fact that the boy had a First Amendment right to religious expression and free speech, a right that was violated.

May 18

Washington, D.C. – Georgetown University invited Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to speak at a commencement ceremony. The Archdiocese of Washington strongly criticized Georgetown with an editorial in the *Catholic Standard*, calling the university's response to Sebelius "disappointing, but not surprising."

June 15 – July 31

San Bernardino, CA – The "Annual Student Art Exhibition" at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) featured the work of Humberto Reynoso, whose ceramic figure, "Self Portrait," depicted a man lying on his back with a red cross inserted in his anus. There was a warning posted in the Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art that housed this "art." It said, "This exhibition contains explicit adult content and works that may be disturbing to some. Viewer discretion is advised." Perhaps most telling was the statement below the warning: *"Art is about many things, including—and especially—ideas; and a university is precisely the place for the free expression of ideas, especially controversial ones. CSUSB supports students' rights to free expression."* (Italics in the original.) Bill Donohue noted that this statement was factually incorrect: "The university is not about 'the free expression of ideas': it is about the pursuit of truth."

July 19

Lansdale, PA – After Ted Udinski was fired as the lacrosse coach at Lansdale Catholic High School in 2011, he made several accusations over a seven-month period claiming that the football coach and the new lacrosse coach were sexually abusing students. He also maintained that the principal of the suburban Philadelphia school, Tim Quinn, knew about the offenses. False accusations against priests are hardly uncommon, but, in this instance, anti-Catholicism accounted for lies against lay Catholics. After detectives spent 184 hours on this case, interviewing 97 people (at a cost of more than \$8250), they determined that the charges were bogus.

Udinski's motive was revenge. He said, "I just wanted to *get back at the church*, Tim Quinn, and I was just generally mad." (Italics added.)

July 23 – August 29

Austin, TX – The July issue of *Social Science Research* featured the published findings of University of Texas at Austin professor, Mark Regnerus, concerning how well children fare in households where gay parents reside. They were found not to do as well as children raised in homes where both a father and a mother live.

The article unleashed the ire of gay activist, novelist and freelancer Scott Rose (his real name is Scott Rosenzweig), who lodged a complaint against Regnerus with University of Texas president William Powers, Jr. An inquiry was immediately made in order to see if an investigation was warranted.

Rose's letter to the university president was not the reasoned disagreement of a colleague in the field who sought to critique a peer-reviewed journal. Instead, it showcased the hateful attempt by an anti-Catholic bigot to malign a Catholic social scientist for his findings by suggesting that his faith played some nefarious role. Rose noted in his letter that, "Regnerus converted from evangelical Protestantism to Catholicism; his Church is very aggressively involved worldwide in fighting against gay rights, including in the United States..."

Bill Donohue weighed in on this issue, not on the content of Regnerus' article, but solely as it related to the anti-Catholic animus displayed by Rose, noting his well-documented history of anti-Catholicism, which includes particularly vitriolic remarks about New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan as a "gay basher and child rapist enabler." Rose had even contacted the IRS asking them to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status.

Donohue noted: "It is not the business of the Catholic League to sit in judgment of the way the University of Texas handles complaints against its faculty. But when it comes to bashing a professor because of his Catholicism, and when the Catholic Church is treated with vitriol in such a public manner, it takes on a dimension that transcends ordinary campus issues."

No investigation of Regnerus was undertaken.

October 10

Shorewood, WI – After one parent complained that the inclusion of a bishop's miter and cross on the logo of a school team's football helmet violated the Constitution, the Shorewood School District ordered the school to change its logo. The district has a unique relationship with Messmer High, a private Roman Catholic school, which joined forces with another school to form a football co-op. The logo was designed by a student and approved by administrators and coaches. It included not just the bishop's miter and cross, but also the greyhound logo of Shorewood. The superintendent of the Shorewood School District called the removal of the logo a "teachable moment."

November 8

Marion, NC – At West Marion Elementary School, administrators censored a line from a first-grade student's Veterans Day poem, referring to her grandfather's belief in God: "He prayed to God for peace, he prayed to God for strength." The student was supposed to read the poem at a Veterans Day ceremony to honor her grandfather, a Vietnam veteran. The Alliance Defending Freedom intervened and sent a letter to the school district requesting that administrators refrain from censoring students' religious views.

November 13 – December 5

Medford, MA – At Tufts University, Tufts Christian Fellowship (TCF), an evangelical Christian student group was in danger of losing its status after a branch of student government voted

to withdraw recognition. It was claimed that the group violated the school's nondiscrimination clause by requiring its leader to adhere to the faith that gives the group its specific character. TCF appealed the de-recognition. The Tufts University Committee on Student Life responded by making a policy change that safeguarded religious requirements for leaders of religious groups.

November 16

Hanover, NH – At Dartmouth College, the Atheists, Humanists, Agnostics club hosted an anti-Mother Teresa event. It featured the screening of an anti-Mother Teresa film and a discussion of Christopher Hitchens' book, *Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice*. Only a few people attended.

December 10

Berkeley, CA – The University of California at Berkeley considered a ban of Salvation Army donation boxes on campus after a formal resolution was passed by the Associated Students of the University of California at Berkeley. The organization came under fire for holding Christian beliefs on marriage and the family.

December 11

Ypsilanti, MI – A student won a settlement after being expelled from a counseling program at Eastern Michigan University for not endorsing homosexuality. She had told professors that her Christian faith prohibited her from affirming homosexual behavior. She had been expelled afterwards, just a few classes shy of her Master's degree. Her legal counsel from Alliance Defending Freedom said, "Public universities shouldn't force students to violate their religious beliefs to get a degree." The student emphasized, "I had never refused to counsel homosexuals, I had simply refused to affirm their lifestyle." After asking for a formal hearing, the student noted that, "I was met with more intolerance...unanimously, they decided to expel me from the program."

December 13

Philipsburg, NJ – A longtime substitute teacher at a middle school faced a 90-day suspension for sharing a Bible verse with a student and giving the student a Bible. The Philipsburg School Board said that the substitute teacher broke two policies. One prohibits the distribution of religious literature on school grounds; the other mandates that teachers be neutral when discussing religious material.



This Stuart Carlson cartoon ran in the *Portland Daily Sun* on June 27. It unfairly disparages Pope Benedict XVI.

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GOVERNMENT

January 11

Washington, D.C. – In a unanimous decision (*Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC*), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that churches are entitled to make employment decisions without interference by the government. In doing so, the high court affirmed what is known as the doctrine of “ministerial exception,” the long-standing right of churches to be shielded from discrimination lawsuits brought by employees.



The ruling was a victory for religious liberty and a defeat for the Obama administration. In October 2011, when the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in this case, the Obama administration’s lawyer stunned even the more liberal members of the high court: Leandra R. Kruger had made such an extremist argument that she even got Justice Elena Kagan to agree wholeheartedly with Justice Antonin Scalia.

When Justice Kagan asked Kruger whether she believed that the First Amendment protects the right of a church to hire and fire employees without interference by government, Kruger answered that the government’s argument was based on freedom of association instead of those parts of the First Amendment that deal with religious freedom. “We don’t see that line of church autonomy principles in the religion clause jurisprudence as such,” Kruger replied. “We see it as a question of freedom of association.” In other words, Kruger made the erroneous argument that ministerial exception is not in the Constitution, insisting instead on the same rights of secular organizations to freely choose their own affiliations.

When he heard this, Scalia responded: “That’s extraordinary! There, black on white in the text of the Constitution, are

special protections for religion. And you say it makes no difference?”

January 19

Rawlins, WY – A warden at the Wyoming State Penitentiary denied the religious rights of inmates: candles were denied use at Catholic Mass; a priest was forbidden to assist Jewish inmates or hand out Catholic reading materials to Catholic inmates; restrictions were placed on the use of holy water, scapulars, medals, crosses, etc. Finally, a prison chaplain engaged in anti-Catholic proselytizing. After the Catholic chaplain contacted us, Bill Donohue contacted the warden, and the situation was resolved with the Deputy Director of the Department of Corrections of the State of Wyoming.

January 23

Philadelphia, PA – The Archdiocese of Philadelphia was named an “unindicted co-conspirator” by prosecutors in a case involving clergy sexual abuse. At the pre-trial hearing, Assistant District Attorney Mark Cipolletti made accusations against a defrocked priest, Edward Avery, and against the archdiocese. Cipolletti said that “the archdiocese was supplying him [Avery] with an endless amount of victims.” With these words, Cipoletti maliciously crossed the line. Instead of attributing any alleged wrongdoing to bad judgment, he implied that the archdiocese as a whole was evil.

January 31

Philadelphia, PA – The presiding judge in the trial of two Catholic priests from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia expressed dissatisfaction with the following question for prospective jurors: “Do you believe child sex abuse is a widespread problem in the Catholic Church?” Common Pleas Court Judge M. Teresa Sarmina said, “Anybody that doesn’t think there is widespread sexual abuse within the Catholic Church is living on another planet.” The Catholic League called for Judge Sarmina to step down immediately.

Her remark, whether based on ignorance or bias, demonstrated her inability to preside over any trial concerning allegations of priestly sexual abuse. We argued that her use of the present tense demonstrated that she was unfit to rule. Almost all the problem with priestly sexual abuse occurred between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s. In other words, the scandal ended a quarter-century ago.

Judge Sarmina later claimed that her words were taken out of context and refused to step down.



This Taylor Jones cartoon ran in the *Staten Island Advance* on February 14. In depicting a wary Uncle Sam saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, this cartoon suggested that support for the U.S. bishops' fight for religious liberty compromised loyalty to America. In fact, it was the federal government that threatened the First Amendment rights of Catholics.

February 9

Detroit, MI – The Michigan Court of Appeals considered the question of whether a pastor should have to testify about a crime that a parishioner disclosed under the seal of Confession. The case involved a man, now 18, who allegedly confessed to his pastor at a Baptist church that he sexually assaulted a female cousin when he was 15. Prosecutors argued that priest-penitent privilege did not apply because Samuel

Bragg, the penitent, did not approach his pastor for “priestly consultation and guidance.” By arguing instead that the pastor interrogated Bragg about the allegations, the state sought to dictate criteria by which a confession must be divulged. The fact that this argument could be made at all indicates that even the seal of Confession is no longer held to be protected by those advancing arguments for state encroachment.

April – August

The Catholic League was asked by the Supreme Court of Wisconsin if it wanted to comment on a reply to our grievance against attorney Rebekah M. Nett; the league sought to get her and her attorney client, Naomi Isaacson, disbarred for making incredibly anti-Catholic remarks in the courtroom in 2011. Among her anti-Catholic smears, Nett referred to Judge Nancy Dreher and other court personnel as “dirty Catholics,” adding that “Catholic deeds throughout the [sic] history have been bloody and murderous.” Among other things, Nett maintained that “All references made throughout the document to ‘Catholic’ something or another do not necessarily refer to the Catholic religion per se or to being a person who considers him or herself to be of the Catholic religious faith.”

Here is an excerpt from our response: “This is a classic example of intellectual dishonesty: there is no other way to interpret Nett’s vicious comments on Catholicism than to see them for what they manifestly are—bigoted assaults on the Roman Catholic religion. Quite frankly, no amount of spin can rescue her at this point. And it hardly helps her cause to rebrand Catholicism as a ‘type of political movement.’”

Our initial grievance stood without emendation. Nett’s words were proof positive of her anti-Catholic bigotry and her unsuitability to function as an attorney. We maintained that because the evidence of Nett’s bigotry presented in the report was clear and overwhelming, she needed to be disciplined in a manner that is commensurate with the gravity of her offenses.

On August 8, the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility in Minnesota (where she is also licensed) said that Nett should be suspended. As of publication, sanctions are yet to be handed down although a referee suggested a six-month suspension. It is now in the hands of the State Supreme Court.

April 9

Osaka-Kobe, Japan – Patrick Linehan, Consul General at the U.S. Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe, Japan, wrote a viciously anti-Catholic post on his Facebook page: “We should all quit the catholic church...it is a corrupt organization run by nazis and pedophiles...flee this church while you still have your dignity and humanity intact...” After his post he linked to a New York *Daily News* report on a homosexual member of the junior board of Catholic Charities who had recently quit. If such comments were made about any other group, the person making them would be fired immediately.

The comment ran afoul of the American Foreign Service Association Guidance on the Personal Use of Social Media. Senior State Department officials responded quickly, and Linehan removed the offensive Facebook post after 36 hours.

April 13

Rep. Rosa DeLauro wrote to New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan lecturing him to mobilize the bishops in a campaign to combat poverty, specifically with respect to Rep. Paul Ryan’s budget. Her request was disingenuous. She worked to kill school vouchers for children with disabilities and has voted against scholarship grants for African American students in D.C. But she is a big champion of abortion, including abortions where the baby is 80 percent born; she has even voted to fund abortion with federal dollars and she has a history of working against the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

April 30

Westchester, NY – The Westchester County Board of Legislators

proposed a bill that would unjustly target pro-life protestors outside of abortion facilities. "Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances" would allow the facility to sue anyone for harassing or intimidating "any person whose ability to access the premises of a healthcare facility has been interfered with."

The Archdiocese of New York's Respect Life Office issued a statement condemning the legislation, calling the bill "vague and ambiguous." Bill Donohue wrote a letter to the lawmakers imploring them not to pursue additional legislation concerning access to abortion clinics and pointed out that pro-life protestors have a "distinguished record of protecting the rights of those with whom they disagree."

June 10

Honolulu, HI – Governor Neil Abercrombie signed into law a bill extending the statute of limitations on civil lawsuits in sexual abuse cases. It was changed to eight years from the alleged victim's 18th birthday or three years from the time the alleged victim discovers psychological injuries as the result of past abuse.

The governor had vetoed similar legislation in 2011 not only because it would have entirely done away with the statute of limitations for lawsuits involving allegations of child abuse, but also because it listed the state of Hawaii among those entities that could be targeted. The *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* reported that "the administration warned that the bill could have threatened due-process rights and exposed the state to unknown liability."

The protections which the state sought for itself in these matters were not construed so as to extend also to the Catholic Church.

June 18

Pittsburgh, PA – A regional director of the National Labor

Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that Duquesne University must accept NLRB jurisdiction over personnel issues, despite the fact that federal courts have directed NLRB to exempt religious universities from its oversight. Duquesne wasn't the only Catholic institution faced with this attack on religious liberty. Two other schools, Manhattan College in New York and St. Xavier University in Chicago, were also appealing NLRB regional rulings issued in 2010.

June 22

Philadelphia, PA – The jury in the trial of two Philadelphia Catholic priests reached a verdict. Msgr. William Lynn was acquitted of conspiracy; on the two charges of child endangerment, he was acquitted of one of them and found guilty of the other. The jury was deadlocked on two charges against Rev. James Brennan: one for attempted rape, and one for child endangerment.

The trial took place in the shadow of a failed witch-hunt that began in 2001, when Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham decided to summarily ignore what she was empowered to do, namely “to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations.” Had she done so, those cases of minors who may have been sexually molested by ministers, rabbis, and others would also have been investigated. Instead, absolutely nothing was done about these cases, and she focused exclusively on the Catholic community.

On March 31, 2011, Bill Donohue sent Abraham a letter asking her to identify which “religious organizations and denominations” she pursued other than the Roman Catholic Church. She never answered.

The verdict was a loss for the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests and Church-chasing attorneys like Marci Hamilton. Had they won on the conspiracy count, they would have been in the driver's seat to pursue other “conspirators”

nationally.

June 29

New York, NY – After battling New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg for the right to worship in a school, Robert Hall, pastor of the Bronx Household of Faith, won when a federal judge ruled that religious groups cannot be prohibited from using public schools to hold services.

July 25

Boston, MA – A bill was passed by voice vote in the Massachusetts House of Representatives expanding the time period on civil claims of child sexual abuse. The bill did not apply to child sexual abuse that occurs in the public schools; it applied exclusively to private institutions, such as the Catholic Church. Unless a bill specifically targets the sovereign immunity status of the public schools, they remain exempt.

August – October

Steubenville, OH – Efforts by the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) to intimidate city officials into banning a proposed new city logo that includes a chapel and a cross—symbols that represent the Franciscan University of Steubenville—incited the Catholic League to issue a news release calling on members to support the mayor.

Initially, city officials were wary of the costs involved. If the city had lost, it would have had to pick up court-ordered legal fees. Instead, they opted for a new logo: the university would be featured without a depiction of the cross and chapel.

After a groundswell of support for the initial logo, experienced pro-bono lawyers stepped forth. The Catholic League implored its members to e-mail the Mayor of Steubenville, Domenick Mucci, Jr., urging him not to buckle to the forces of censorship. On August 21, the *Intelligencer*, a local paper, reported that the mayor's office received "nearly

500 e-mails" urging the mayor to "stand strong."

At the "Stand up for Religious Freedom" rally on October 20, keynote speaker Michael Hernon, the vice president of advancement at Franciscan University, said outside secular forces were trying to force the city to alter its official logo "because there was a cross in it. We're not ashamed of the cross. It's happening right here in Steubenville."

August 2

Spirit Lake Indian Reservation, ND – A doctor's punishment for blowing the whistle on rampant child sexual abuse was rescinded only a day after being issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The whistle-blower, Dr. Michael R. Tilus, director of behavioral health at the Health Care Center on the reservation, had been reprimanded, reassigned, barred from promotion, and threatened with the loss of his professional license for trying to get HHS to do something about the atrocities at Spirit Lake. The crimes he reported included children abused, raped, and murdered—aided and abetted by negligence, tribal as well as institutional. The unprecedented scale of the abuse was underscored by the fact that while American Indians make up only 9 percent of North Dakota's population, Indian children constitute nearly 30 percent of the state's child abuse victims.

The Catholic League acted swiftly and decisively. We issued a press release noting that those who have been quick to condemn the Catholic Church remained silent about the atrocities at Spirit Lake. We also contacted three U.S. Senators. Justice was swiftly delivered when the doctor was reinstated, but we did not let go of the issue there.

Bill Donohue sought to uncover what disciplinary measures, if any, were taken against the HHS official who called for his punishment. He wrote a letter to Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, the director of the Indian Health Service, copying Senator John Barrasso, the vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian

Affairs. Donohue wanted to know whether the official who initially sought to punish the whistleblower was reprimanded.

August 6

Nationwide, supporters of traditional marriage flocked to the defense of Chick-fil-A president Dan Cathy's statement that we are "inviting God's judgment on our nation when we shake our fist at him and say, 'We know better than you as to what constitutes a marriage.'"

Cathy never mentioned homosexuals, yet created a firestorm labeling him and his fast-food chain anti-gay.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel said that "Chick-fil-A's values are not Chicago values. They're not respectful of our residents, our neighbors and our family members." Indeed, Chicago Alderman Joe Moreno attempted to block the construction of a new Chick-fil-A partly due to worry about its "business practices."

A *New York Times* editorial said, "Antigay remarks like these are offensive." Boston Mayor Thomas Menino made it clear he wouldn't welcome the restaurant in his city when he said, "I don't want an individual who will continue to advocate against people's rights. That's who I am and that's what Boston's all about."

The antipathy that Chick-fil-A provoked demonstrated not only a disturbing cultural trend but also a willingness to coerce and punish, with nothing less than the power of the state, those who hew to the traditional view.

Initial reports falsely indicated that Chick-fil-A had caved by withdrawing corporate giving from groups supporting traditional marriage. Chick-fil-A executives later reaffirmed the company's commitment to "programs that educate youth, strengthen families and enrich marriages, and support communities," while adding that their intent is "not to support political or social agendas."

September 4

Charlotte, NC – At the Democratic National Convention (DNC), Democrats allowed the most notoriously anti-Catholic organization in the nation, Catholics for Choice (CFC), to host a panel on religious liberty. It was entitled, “Keeping the Faith in the Democratic Party: Protecting Religious Liberty for Everyone.”

Speaking at the event were activists from a CFC-organized umbrella group, the Coalition for Liberty & Justice. Several of the groups that comprise this entity have hijacked the Catholic label in service of their anti-Catholic agenda. They include: CORPUS, DignityUSA, New Ways Ministry and the Women’s Ordination Conference. An array of radical left-wing groups with a history of Catholic bashing were also on hand.

September 4

Charlotte, N.C. – A major PR disaster erupted during the Democratic National Convention (DNC) when it was discovered that the word “God” had been excised from the Democratic Party Platform.

The Platform deleted the word “God” when discussing our “*God-given* potential.” In 2008, the Platform spoke to the issue of having a government that “gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their *God-given* potential.” The italics, added here, were deleted from the 2012 Platform.

The night that the news broke about the removal, CNN’s Piers Morgan pressed DNC chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz on the excision. She dodged the question by saying, “We have a commitment through all faith traditions that our values are reflected in our policy. And that means that we should look out for the least of these, that we should fight for the middle class, that we should let everybody in America have an opportunity to be successful.”

Morgan persisted. “This is, somebody has deliberately taken

out the word 'God' because it was in the last one," he said. In response, Wasserman Schultz remarkably said, "I can assure you that no one has deliberately taken God out of the Platform." Morgan pressed her again, "So it was an accident?" She refused to answer.

After taking heat for removing the word "God" from its Platform, the DNC finally decided to put it back in. When it was proposed to place "God" back in the Platform, the delegates were not persuaded, so the DNC did so by fiat, and then lied about the entire event.

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MEDIA

MEDIA RESPONSE TO VATICAN INQUIRY OF LCWR



Once again, an internal matter of the Catholic Church became fodder for media voyeurs, pundits and talking heads when a number of dissident nuns became the subject of an apostolic visit, announced in April 2012. It was disturbing to read the way some of the Vatican's critics were trying to defend the indefensible. Only 3% of the 55,000 nuns in the U.S. actually belong to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), a fact largely omitted by the secular press. Critics of Vatican efforts to reform the LCWR had their talking points

down so well that everyone just assumed that the reform initiative was triggered by concerns over these nuns pushing for ObamaCare. All of them were wrong, and it is not a matter of opinion.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare) legislation wasn't introduced in the House until September 17, 2009. The decision to undertake a doctrinal assessment of the LCWR was announced on April 8, 2008, while George W. Bush was president. In other words, the narrative about "payback" was untrue: the timeline undercuts the critics' argument.

What follows is a selection of the most vitriolic comments:

Melinda Henneberger, *Washington Post*, April 19: "The Vatican, of course, knows a lot about scandal—to the point that the nuns are the only morally uncompromised leaders poor Holy Mother Church has left...Keep right on like this, your excellencies, and before you know it even more Catholics will be 'moving beyond the church.'"

Joan Vennoch, *Boston Globe*, April 22: "Pope Benedict XVI can't wait to crack down on 'radical feminist' nuns. But will he ever really crack down on protectors of pedophile priests?"

Monica Yant Kinney, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 22: "Surely, fallout from the international sex-abuse scandal represents a more grave concern than devout old ladies saying health care is a human right. Rome is burning from fires set by collared arsonists, but the Vatican takes aim at women without so much as a match?"

Jamie Manson, *National Catholic Reporter*, April 23: "Essentially, the hierarchy is reducing them to the equivalent of spiritual enslavement."

Michele Somerville, *Huffington Post*, April 23: "The Vatican needs to flex its muscles. More urgent, still, is its need to push tales of Vatican corruption, child molestation and news

of its colossal failure to convince Catholics to vote in accordance with the Magisterium off of what we once called 'the front pages...' The Vatican needs to create fresh fear."

Joseph Ferullo, *National Catholic Reporter*, April 23: "Here's some comfort I can offer American nuns: It's not just you. If there is any theme that has formed around the statements and behavior of the Vatican and bishops in recent years, it's this: Doctrinal purity is valued above all else. It doesn't matter if lives are at stake or if doctrine flies in the face of tragic realities. It doesn't matter if dark measures must be taken to sweep disquieting contradictions under the rug, tucked away in places that only courtrooms and lawyers can pull out into the light. Purity—or the appearance of it—is prime."

Isabella Moyer, *National Catholic Reporter*, April 23: "Rightly or wrongly, the doctrinal assessment of the LCWR is being perceived by many as a bullying tactic from on high with little room for a spirit of mutual respect or collaboration... Clericalism and authoritarianism do not model mutual respect and collaboration and are no longer accepted by those who truly seek an adult church."

Maureen Fiedler, *National Catholic Reporter*, April 24: "What this ridiculous statement does show is the overwhelming desire of these men to 'regulate' women and to put a stamp of approval on everything we say. This is 'patriarchy' in its worst form."

Tom Roberts, *National Catholic Reporter*, April 24: "In the church, no greater challenge exists to hierarchical power and the traditional way of doing things than the sisters... Bishops' authority everywhere is compromised, their moral stature diminished as the world keeps hearing through trial testimony and released documentation how the leadership culture of the Catholic church ignored the horror that was being done to children in order to protect their priests and

the reputation of the clerical culture...The U.S. hierarchy is aiming its rage at the sisters, but the temblors moving the earth beneath their feet have little to do with women who serve the poor and dare to ask unsettling questions.”

Jim Wallis, Huffington Post, April 25: “Quite honestly, do most of us believe, or even most Catholics believe, that the bishops are the only ‘authentic teachers of faith and morals?’”

Mary Hunt, Religion Dispatches, April 25: “The truth is, most Catholics no longer look to Rome for guidance on our personal lives, or anyone else’s. Nor do we live within the narrow confines of a cultic Christianity, or, as women, accept male leadership and priestly ministry as if theirs were God-given and ours were not. We appreciate the complexity of these matters and strive to create forums in which to listen, discuss, discern, and pray...The question is how to stop the cycle of violence, how to refuse to cooperate in structures that oppress, how to ‘engage impasse’ as some of the most creative nuns have tried to do.”

Mark Morford, SFGate.com, April 25: “Funny how no one ever talks about the nuns. I suppose it makes sense. After all, Catholic nuns are so rarely embroiled in sex scandals. They are never caught pants down in the rectory with a 10-year-old altar boy, teaching him of the ‘mystical secretions’ of the Lord. They never cost the church billions in litigious payouts for rape, abuse, millennia of pedophilic atrocity and shame. For that, you gotta look to the priests.”

Steve and Cokie Roberts, News Tribune, April 27: “Really? Women religious in America will now have a bishop grading their morals? Shouldn’t it be the other way around? Given the sex-abuse scandals – in which many Roman Catholic bishops looked the other way at best and moved child molesters from parish to parish, perpetrating evil, at worst – you would think that a ruler rap on the hierarchical knuckles would be

in order.”

Maureen Dowd, *New York Times*, April 28: “Even as Republicans try to wrestle women into chastity belts, the Vatican is trying to muzzle American nuns.”

James Carroll, *Boston Globe*, April 30: “This month alone, the pope has rebuked the disobedience of European priests and, acting through a Vatican congregation, set in motion a severe disciplining of American nuns.”

Books

October 2

Former Playboy playmate Jenny McCarthy’s book, *Bad Habits*, was published; the cover featured her dressed as a nun holding rosary beads. After its publication, McCarthy was on “Access Hollywood,” where she recounted a story from the book. She claimed that, when she was in Italy in 1995, a few “mafia” guys brought her to the pope’s apartment (he was allegedly out of town) where she tried on some of his clothes. At the suggestion of her Jewish friends, she allegedly grabbed a crucifix as a souvenir for her mother. The Catholic League noted that 15 years ago McCarthy said she still thought of herself as a Catholic, insisting that “I broke free from the chain of the pope.” Free at last, she opined, “The Catholic religion was making me feel a tad bit guilty for everything I was doing.”

Internet

January 25

In his column, sexpert Dan Savage wrote that when Newt Gingrich was married to his second wife, he was “still f***ing the consecrated host out of his ‘devout Catholic’ mistress.”

February 24

In a piece on Catholic presidential candidate Rick Santorum, Larry Doyle at Huffington Post went beyond the candidate to

slam all Catholics for participating “in a barbaric ritual...a ‘mass’ in which a black-robed cleric casts a spell over some bread and wine...[resulting] in a cannibalistic reverie.”

March 7

In a Huffington Post article entitled “Imposing ‘Sharia’: Roman Catholic Version,” Rabbi Arthur Waskow compared the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to Muslims seeking to enforce sharia law. “During the last few weeks, we have seen an outrageous attempt to impose sharia law on the US government and the American public,” he wrote.

The following is a list of his comments:

- “The only threat to religious freedom was the attempt by the bishops to deny religious freedom to the employees of those institutions—Catholics and others—whose religious consciences are totally at peace with the use of contraception.”
- “The bishops are asserting that the only ‘Catholic’ consciences that count are those of—surprise!—the bishops! Not parishioners, not women, not the adults who as children were molested or raped by priests who were protected by the bishops.”
- “Those who brag that ‘The Church is not a democracy’ might better ask themselves, ‘Why not?’ Indeed, in the early centuries of the Church the people of Rome and other cities took part in electing their bishops—in Rome, the Pope. Time to renew the tradition, and not just in Rome?”

March 19 & 26

Washington, D.C. – Washington Archbishop Donald Cardinal Wuerl was attacked by Catholic writer George Neumayr in two pieces that were posted on the website of *The American Spectator*. The first one did not receive much attention. But then Neumayr struck again in response to a complaint registered by Wuerl’s communications director.

Neumayr alleged that a priest in Cardinal Wuerl’s archdiocese

was put on leave for denying communion to a lesbian at a funeral mass. His version was contested by the Washington Archdiocese: what led to the sanctions were “credible allegations” regarding the priest’s “intimidating behavior toward parish staff and others.”

Neumayr said Wuerl is one of those “cufflinked cardinals” who “worry not about punishment in the next world but slights in this one”; their goal, he says, is to curry favor with the “Pretty People.” Worse, he had the audacity to put the cardinal on notice, exclaiming that “Wuerl can only earn the red of his rich robes through a willingness to endure the blood of Jesus Christ’s martyrdom.” Neumayr was not above wallowing in the dirt: he referred to the Washington archbishop as “Wuerl the girl.”

Cardinal Wuerl’s communications director made a formal complaint with Neumayr’s editors. In response, he wrote a second article in which he became unhinged, charging that Cardinal Wuerl “exposed the Holy Eucharist to sacrilege.”

March 28

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend posted an article on the website of *The Atlantic* about how she spent her St. Patrick’s Day at a conference attended by homosexuals, lesbians, and “transgender” men/women. Without citing a single example, she asserted that the Catholic Church’s teachings “encourage bigotry and harm.” She also claimed that the conference was put on by a Catholic organization called New Ways Ministry. There is no Catholic group by that name (on St. Patrick’s Day in 2011 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops reaffirmed that New Ways Ministry is not a Catholic organization). Finally, even though the Catholic Church has no female priests, she claimed that two female priests gave her a special blessing at the conference.

April 7

On Holy Saturday, CNN’s Belief Blog website featured a post

called “The Jesus Debate: Man vs. Myth.” It was a classic example of religious profiling that subjected the reality of Jesus to scrutiny in the guise of historical analysis. No one objects to legitimate historical analysis. What is objectionable, however, is the pretence of objectivity when anti-Christian animus poses as hard science.

April 12

Sarah Posner’s article, “Bishops Release Religious Liberty Manifesto Vowing Disobedience to ‘Unjust Laws,’” appeared on the Religion Dispatches website. She attacked the bishops’ “Statement on Religious Liberty” as “even more pointed and hostile than previous statements.” She said the statement expressed “disdain for (and even a refusal to acknowledge) court rulings against the Bishops.” She referred to “the phony religious freedom wars” and looked forward to the “summer of the Bishops’ content.”

April 13

The “LGBT” blog of ThinkProgress, associated with the Center for American Progress, attacked a statement on religious liberty by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, saying that the Catholic Church wants to “impose its public services” on the public and accusing the hierarchy of caring about “its own dominance over society.”

April 16

When Pope Benedict XVI called for “radical obedience” to the Magisterium during Holy Week, writer Michele Somerville responded in the Huffington Post defending Catholic dissidents. In a piece called “Radical Disobedience: Why Roman Catholics Won’t Heed the Pontiff’s Call for Radical Obedience,” she attacked the Church’s hierarchy for upholding doctrine on matters like marriage, homosexuality, abortion, and birth control. She fantasized about the Vatican’s loss of “credibility.”

April 17

The Daily Caller exposed Media Matters for America's targeting of Christianity, with the goal of silencing the Christian voice.

It uncovered that, in 2004, Media Matters leader, David Brock, made clear his goals when he applied to the IRS for a tax-exempt status. "It is common for news and commentary by the press to present viewpoints that tend to overly promote corporate interests, the rights of the wealthy, and a conservative Christian-influenced ideology," the application said.

Anyone who has followed the history of Media Matters knows that it has evolved into something far more extreme than what its founding statement said. To be frank, it is one thing for left-wing activists to promote a radical agenda, quite another to finger a world religion for monitoring.

April 24

In the *Washington Post's* "On Faith" blog, Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo raised the question, "Is the Church Corrupt?" The answer implied the worst. He ended by saying, "Catholics are loyal enough to Jesus and to each other to prevail against the Gates of Hell that now besmirch the institutional church." We made the point that it would then logically follow that they are no longer Catholic.

Sally Quinn, the blog's moderator, contributed another rap, entitled, "A Catholic 'War on Women.'" She began with this insight: "The Roman Catholic Church is a hierarchical institution if there ever was one." Then she accused the Vatican of "condemning nuns, including those among the 55,000 members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR)." But the Vatican condemned no one and only 3% of nuns belong to the LCWR.

June 5

A post on Gawker.com carried the title "The Catholic Church

Should Not Expect to Be Taken Seriously,” and attacked the Vatican for censuring Sister Margaret Farley on the publication of her book *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics*. The post was an obscene rant claiming that she was censured because it was a “a book that did *not* say that your sexual urges are nothing more than the shameful pangs of demon penises f***ing your soul which should be repressed and repressed and repressed until you are absolutely *warped*, underneath that church outfit. Burn the witch! Ahh, apparently we don’t do that any more? Well... censure the witch!” [Italics in original]. The writer referred to leaders of the Church as “holy relics.” He accused the hierarchy of saying something “so patently stupid, backwards, hateful, discriminatory, and downright unrealistic that any 13 year-old can tell you that you’ve removed yourself from the sphere of reasonable discussion.” The article ended with “Go f*** yourself, The Vatican. It might make you feel better.”

August 6

A Salon.com article by Joan Walsh contained an attack on the U.S. bishops, suggesting that they are a “military group” as well as an “unregistered arm of the GOP.”

August 13

A lexicographical website, Wordsmith.org, engaged in anti-Catholic bigotry: “Latin is the preferred language of the Vatican, but don’t hold it against the language. It had no say in the matter. A language never hurt little kids, if you don’t count all the schoolchildren who had to memorize all those ‘amo amas amat’ conjugations.”

November 26

The website, AlterNet, published an article entitled “50 Reasons to Boycott the Catholic Church.” The author’s main gripe was that “the church isn’t a democracy” and that “progressives have no voice or vote in its governance.” Therefore, he advocated a boycott of the “institutional church and its abhorrent mission,” adducing 50 reasons which he felt

proved his point.

December 13

In an online article called, "Rare Pornographic Movie Shot at Vatican For First Time Since 1982s 'Pope Fisters IV,'" *The Onion* crossed the line between irreverent satire and vicious anti-Catholicism. The article elaborated at length about a "new hardcore pornographic movie being shot at the Sistine Chapel" and used pornographic terms to mock such things as First Communion, the Holy Eucharist, the Immaculate Conception, and Pope Benedict XVI's name.

Magazines

March 26

An article by Joel Mathis posted on the *Philadelphia* magazine blog site was a blatant attempt to silence Philadelphia Archbishop Charles Chaput. Mathis isn't Catholic, but that did not stop him from giving some advice to Archbishop Chaput: just tend to the problems in the archdiocese and drop your criticisms of the Obama administration. Mathis was angry that Chaput had a new e-book, *A Heart on Fire: Catholic Witness and the Next America*, which addressed recent attacks on religious liberty. Mathis counseled Chaput to "concentrate on fixing the Catholic Church in Philadelphia," adding that the archbishop's alleged "anti-Obama crusade" amounted to "a distraction."

Movies

April 13

"The Three Stooges" opened in theatres nationwide. The Stooges were depicted seeking to raise money for their orphanage run by habit-wearing, stereotypical nuns. One of the sisters was played by swimsuit model Kate Upton, who was shown wearing a "nun bikini" with a large rosary around her neck. Another nun, Sister Mary-Mengele, named after the Nazi war criminal, was played by Seinfeld creator Larry David. On his own show in 2009, David splattered urine on a picture of Jesus in a

Catholic home.

According to one AP movie critic, the directors “never wanted to tinker with the Stooges.” The *New York Times* agreed, saying the brothers “strove for absolute fidelity to the original.” CBS News also cited their “loyalty to the subject.”

The slapstick was there, but the TV show never mocked nuns. The film did.

May 4

“The Perfect Family” opened in 13 theaters nationwide, eight of which were in California. The movie portrayed Hollywood’s idea of a Catholic family: a neurotic devout Catholic wife, played by Kathleen Turner, married to an alcoholic; her pregnant lesbian daughter who wants to “marry” her girlfriend; and her adulterous lout of a son.

Turner is a left-wing atheist who serves on the board of directors of the Christian-bashing People for the American Way. She said her character tries to show the conflict between being a practicing Catholic and seeking to “live in the real world.” *Movieline.com* agreed, saying she plays “a religious dinosaur roaming a modern world.” Though the movie was riddled with intolerance toward Catholicism, Turner said, “I would hope tolerance” is the message that comes through. *Variety* concurred, adding that the film preaches “tolerance toward gays” (but not toward Catholics).

It is a staple of anti-Catholicism to say that Catholics are not independent thinkers. Predictably, Turner’s character admits, “I’m Catholic. I don’t need to think.” However, not all family members are stupid. *Shockya.com* noted that the pregnant lesbian daughter embodies “independent thinking and modern beliefs.”

When asked about the portrayal of Catholicism, Turner said, “I thought we were pretty nice.” The executive producer, Connie Cummings, agreed: “We didn’t want to take cheap shots or

villainise anyone.” Rex Reed takes a different approach, saying, “The movie is almost guaranteed to offend the humorless.”

September 8

Venice, Italy –The Venice Film Festival awarded a special jury prize to “Paradise: Faith.” In the film, a “devout” Catholic woman is shown masturbating with a crucifix. The movie begins with the woman whipping herself topless before a crucifix. She is shown walking around the house on her knees praying. She also likes to go door to door carrying a two-foot high statue of the Virgin Mary; this is her way of getting new converts. The film is part of a trilogy; Strand Releasing acquired the U.S. rights and planned to release it early in 2013.

November 28

New York, NY – At the prestigious Film Forum, a showing of the documentary, “Mea Maxima Culpa,” by director Alex Gibney was used by Margaret Markey to push her sex abuse reform law, which exempts public schools. She was joined by Marci Hamilton, a Cardozo School of Law professor who has singled out the Catholic Church in her work for the professional victims’ lobby.

Gibney’s documentary was mere propaganda purporting to establish a “direct connection of the Vatican” to the homosexual abuse scandal.

Much of the movie focused on Father Lawrence Murphy, a serial abuser from Wisconsin. Gibney’s propaganda omitted inconvenient facts: the crimes against Murphy extend to the 1950s; the civil authorities were not asked to investigate until the mid-1970s; following the probe, the case was dropped; the Vatican wasn’t notified until 1996 (it could have ignored the case because the statute of limitations had expired); a trial was ordered; the priest who presided over the case between 1996-1998 has said that in all the meetings he had in the U.S. and in Rome, “at no time...was Cardinal

Ratzinger's name ever mentioned."

One review of the movie said, "All the reports of sex abuse in the church since the 1960's went directly to the current pope, Benedict XVI, to the time when he was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger." There was no central command center until 2001 when Ratzinger took over, which is when things really began to change—just the opposite of what Gibney would have us believe.

Music

February 12

Los Angeles, CA – During her performance at the Grammy Awards, pop star Nicki Minaj trashed the Catholic faith. As a prelude to her act, she appeared on the red carpet with a man dressed like the pope. Her performance began on stage with a mock confessional skit that was followed by a taped video depicting a mock exorcism. With stained glass in the background, she appeared on stage again with choir boys and monks dancing.

Perhaps the most vulgar part was the sexual statement that showed a scantily clad female dancer stretching backwards while an altar boy knelt between her legs in prayer. Finally, "Come All Ye Faithful" was sung while a man posing as a bishop walked on stage; Minaj was shown levitating.

None of this was by accident, and all of it was approved by The Recording Academy, which puts on the Grammys. The Catholic League took The Recording Academy to task for its irresponsibility and selective tolerance, and our protest of this obscene assault was picked up by media outlets from the *New York Times* to the *Times of India*.

March 23

Madonna's new CD, *MDNA* was released. It embraced moral dissolution and bashed Catholicism.

The video for the song, "Girl Gone Wild," showed the 53-year-old tramping around in black hot pants and stiletto heels

while gyrating with well-greased topless guys adorned in tight black pants. The homoerotic show was so vulgar that YouTube said the video was not fit for those under the age of 18. YouTube even asked Madonna to recut a more appropriate video for teenagers.

“Girl Gone Wild” began with Madonna reciting the first few lines of “The Act of Contrition.” (Indeed, it was no accident that this song, and the album, were released during Lent.) She then pranced around to the backdrop of a light-show configured to resemble a cross. A man who was shown wearing a Crown of Thorns was no doubt meant as another swipe at Christianity.

The album also featured “I’m a Sinner.” With lyrics such as “I’m a sinner, I like it that way,” Madonna made it clear that she always has Catholicism on her mind. “Hail Mary full of grace” was followed by a quip about Jesus, St. Christopher and St. Anthony.

Madonna admitted that *MDNA* was chosen to reference both her name and the drug MDMA; the line from “I’m a Sinner” about “magic dust” was used to refer to the PCP drug by that name.

July 16

In Madonna’s video that accompanied the song, “Nobody Knows Me,” French National Front party leader Marine Le Pen was shown sporting a swastika on her head. After the video was played during Madonna’s performance in Paris, the National Front said it was going to sue her. In fact, Madonna bowed to pressure by changing the swastika to a question mark. Madonna’s vile attack on Pope Benedict XVI, however, did not attract much media attention, which explains why it went unchanged.

The full video of “Nobody Knows Me,” which was part of Madonna’s *MDNA* Tour, was replete with religious symbolism. The most offensive part for Catholics occurred when anti-gay protesters were shown just before Madonna’s face morphs into

that of Pope Benedict XVI; at the point where the pope's face appeared, protesters holding gay-bashing signs were shown on both sides of him. The accompanying lyrics, which included the refrain, "Won't let a stranger give me a social disease," tied the pope to hate speech directed at homosexuals. Moreover, photos of gay youths who committed suicide were also shown during this sequence.

What was particularly sick about this attack was that the protesters were not only not Catholic, they were anti-Catholic members of the Westboro Baptist Church. To demonstrate how relentlessly anti-Catholic these people are, they were going to picket St. Joseph Catholic Church in Shawnee, Kansas on July 22: the church was called a "whorehouse" and the priests were labeled "rapists."

Madonna not only libeled the pope, she attributed to Catholicism the hate speech of those who hate Catholics, as well as homosexuals. That the media gave scant coverage to this part of her bigoted performance was also disturbing.

August 27

Comic, singer, and actor Harry Shearer released a new album, "Can't take a hint." One of the songs was called "Deaf Boys," which was recorded two years earlier. The song takes as its subject a serial abuser from Wisconsin, Father Lawrence Murphy, as if he were singing. The video is shot inside a church and exploits Catholic iconography, including images of priests, bishops, and cardinals showing only the lower half of their faces as they are singing and without faces while clapping. Here is a sampling of the lyrics: "Deaf boys, can't hear me comin' / Deaf boys, got me hymnin' and hummin' / A shepherd with a closet full of toys / Let's hear it for those deaf boys."

Newspapers

January 5

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* ran an editorial sympathizing with the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and called on Catholics to rebel against St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson by refusing to put money in the collection basket. It also called Judge Ann Mesle, who ordered SNAP to hand over internal documents, “a minister’s daughter.” This was clearly a term of disapprobation, as no one would ever dare to ask how many reporters at the paper were raised by committed atheists, had a liberal rabbi as a father, or were born to an unwed mother.

January 11-17

SF Weekly featured an attack piece on Mother Teresa called “Tainted Saint,” which was given front-page prominence together with a picture of Mother Teresa and the caption, “New evidence suggests Mother Teresa told church officials to overlook a sex abuse allegation against her favorite Bay Area priest.” The magazine claimed to have obtained documents supporting its case, but none was even barely credible.

February 10

A Tony Auth cartoon in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* presented a caricature of the lawyers for Monsignor William Lynn, who was facing trial at the time on charges of child endangerment and conspiracy. The caricature said, “The trial judge says anyone who doubts there was widespread child abuse in the Catholic Church is living on a different planet. Outrageous!!” In the next frame, a bishop is shown in outer space. He is standing on a moon marked “denial” above the planet Earth.

February 12

A Signe Wilkinson cartoon in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* depicted a group of bishops and a group of women, one of which held a sign that read “Catholic Women (who mostly use contraceptives).” The bishops say, “Our medical facilities shouldn’t have to cover birth control!” The women say, “Ours should!” The cartoon portrayed the Catholic hierarchy’s opposition to the Health and Human Services contraception

mandate on the ground of religious liberty as not just a “war on women,” but a “war on Catholic women.” The cartoon dishonestly omitted the fact that, when polled on the question of contraceptive coverage at the cost of religious liberty, a greater percentage of women polled in favor of religious liberty.

February 14

Highlands Today ran a Gabe Closten cartoon depicting the hands of a priest holding above the cup of the Chalice not the consecrated Host, but a dispenser for birth control pills.

February 14

A Joe Heller cartoon ran in the *Frederick News-Post*. In the background, it depicted a crowd of people behind the phrase “Majority of U.S. Catholics use birth control.” In the foreground, President Obama is shown holding a document that reads “change in gov’t health care policy on contraception.” A bishop standing next to Obama has his arm around Obama’s shoulder and tells Obama: “See? Compromise is good...The last thing you want is everyone ignoring your rules!” This was a blatant attack on the Catholic hierarchy.

February 16

A Mike Luckovich cartoon in the *New Haven Register* depicted a priest telling congregants, “Parishioners, the government wants our hospitals and universities to cover contraceptives in their health care plans!” In the next frame he says, “That wasn’t supposed to be an applause line.” The cartoon was an attack on the parish letters on the threat to religious liberty posed by the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate that was read to congregants across the country in January. It suggested that Catholics welcomed the mandate and portrayed Catholic opposition to the mandate as a phenomenon of the bishops.

February 16

The Portland Press Herald ran a Clay Bennett cartoon depicting

a fully armored knight ineptly raising a medieval flail only to have the spiked ball at the end of the chain crush him square on the helmet. On his shield were the words "culture war." His tunic resembled those worn by crusaders, except the red cross was emblazoned with the letters "GOP." The cartoon was an amalgam of clichés suggesting that the Catholic Church is waging a self-defeating crusade-style "culture war" through the GOP.

February 16

The *Lanconia Daily Sun* ran a Mike Luckovich cartoon in which an elephant lawmaker in a suit, symbolizing the Republican Party, says "I'm taking a well-deserved break from job creation...." He was depicted playing monkey-in-the-middle with a bishop. A woman is in the middle, being kept from "birth control," which is being tossed over her head. The cartoon implied that the Catholic Church was conspiring with the Republican Party to keep access to birth control from women.

February 16

A Paul Laud cartoon in the *Caldwell Progress* depicted a birth control dispenser being broken in the hands of a priest as if it were the Host. The cartoon contained the following limerick: "The Constitution and lots of prayer helped bishops squash a terrible scare. / But it's over, Amen. / The flock safe again, / from family planning and pre-natal care." This was yet another cartoon attacking Catholics as a result of the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate.

February 17

A cartoon entitled "Santorum Discovers the New World" appeared in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and attacked presidential candidate Rick Santorum for his Catholicism. A man caricatured in a missionary robe labeled "Santorum" stands next to a woman labeled "21st Century." He is holding a document marked "Women's Issues," turning his head in repugnance at the sight. He exclaims: "Ugh! Naked savage!" This cartoon exploited the "war on women" narrative advocated by radical feminists and

their “liberated” cohorts in the media.

February 19

A Taylor Jones cartoon in the *Staten Island Advance* depicted Uncle Sam saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. This cartoon suggested that the support for the U.S. bishops’ fight for religious liberty compromised loyalty to America.

February 20

The *Frederick News-Post* ran a David Fitzsimmons cartoon vilifying the bishops for defending the First Amendment rights of Catholics. In the first frame of the cartoon, a caricatured bishop is shown “huffing” about the position that “hospitals and universities should not be asked to include contraceptives in their employee’s health plans.” In the next frame, he then says, “We believe in the principle of separation of church and state.” In the third frame, he adds, “And the principle of church and reality.” In the last frame, the cartoonish bishop is shown reading a newspaper with the headline, “98% of Catholic Women Use Contraceptives.”

February 20

The *Philadelphia Daily News* ran a Joel Pett cartoon in which, in one frame, a bishop tells a mother with a baby and young child, “You can take your immoral, evil desire for birth control somewhere else!” In the frame underneath, as mother and children are walking away, the bishop adds, “Adorable boy, by the way...” This was a swipe at all priests as child abusers.

February 20

A Jim Morin cartoon in *USA Today* depicted Rick Santorum, who was campaigning for president at the time, in the same bed with a couple and a bishop. The bishop says, “Mr. Santorum and I are here to make sure the government doesn’t interfere with your lives...”

February 21

The *Portland Press Herald* ran a R.J. Matson cartoon depicting the confessional from the outside. In a conversation bubble, the penitent says to the priest, "Bless me father for I have health insurance that pays for contraceptives..."

February 21

The Universal Press Syndicate issued a Pat Oliphant cartoon attacking the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform February 16 hearing entitled "Lines Crossed: Separation of Church and State. Has the Obama Administration Trampled on Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Conscience?" The panel featured eminent religious leaders from various faiths, including then-Bishop of Bridgeport William Lori.

In the cartoon, a woman faces a panel of experts, all male clergy, including a rabbi, a bishop, and a priest. She points indignantly at a sign saying "Reform Committee on Contraception – No Women Please." The priest replies, "I'm sorry, my dear. But contraception is far too important a matter to be left to women." In a corner of the cartoon, two small figures have a conversation. One says, "What would Jesus say?" The other says, "Verily, it taketh two to tango." The cartoon also ran in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* on February 25.

February 25

The *Times-Reporter* ran an Ed Stein cartoon in which Rick Santorum, in papal regalia, is being sworn into the Office of the President of the United States. The cartoon attacked Santorum for his Catholicism.

March 1-7

The *Monterey County Weekly* carried an elaborate Tom Tomorrow cartoon that depicted the bishops in alliance with conservative pundits as waging a "war on women." The Catholic resistance to the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate was depicted in the most vile anti-Catholic terms. In the cartoon, one bishop says, "The pursuit of the orgasm leads

women to have sex—which leads to abortions!” Another bishop continues, “And that’s why the female orgasm is a violation of our religious liberty!”

March 13

Following the Freedom From Religion Foundation’s (FFRF) anti-Catholic ad in the *New York Times* [see Activists, March 9], anti-Islamist activist Pamela Geller decided to submit an ad to the *Times* that played off FFRF by changing the wording to make it look like an attack on Islam. For example, she asked Muslims to quit their religion because they oppress so many people.

The *Times* rejected the ad with the excuse that “the fallout from running this ad now could put U.S. troops and/or civilians in the [Afghan] region in danger.”

The *Times*’ rationale for denying Geller’s ad was sound: we are opposed to unnecessarily putting our armed forces in harm’s way. But we wondered why it took fear to impel the *New York Times* not to run bigoted ads. Wouldn’t ethics suffice? It certainly wasn’t enough when they decided to run the FFRF ad assaulting Catholic sensibilities.

April 16

The *Indianapolis Star* ran a story about Maria Thornton McClain, a 71-year old former nun who had declared herself to be a priest. This Father Maria hoax was featured on page 1 of the B Section; the website featured 17 pictures of her and her fans. “The Roman Catholic Church does not recognize the ordination of women, but more and more women are answering the call as part of a reform movement,” the paper said. A spokesman for CORPUS, a group that actually thinks Maria is a priest, was quoted as saying “we have to stand up for inclusivity.”

April 29

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* ran a Steve Sack cartoon in which

a caricature of Pope Benedict XVI says to a cartoonish figure in habit labeled "U.S. Nuns," "I'm very upset with you for not speaking out against homosexuality!" In the next panel, the pope says to a caricature of Jesus, "Same goes for your friend."

May 7

In an editorial called "More Time for Justice," the *New York Times* criticized New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan for opposing legislation by New York Assemblywoman Margaret Markey which would lift the statute of limitations for one year on civil lawsuits involving the sexual abuse of a minor. The *Times* opined: "Cardinal Timothy Dolan has made defeating statute of limitations reform one of his top legislative priorities." It also attacked the Church more generally when it said that the Church "had been working hard to defeat statute of limitations reform across the country." The editorial also insinuated that opposition to the campaign to abolish the statute of limitations suggested an acknowledgement of guilt rather than a prudent requirement of law.

May 7

In an editorial called "The Passivity of the Catholic Church," the *Washington Post* pretended that the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) is a legitimate organization that "has championed the victims of pedophile priests" and that is being harassed by the Church. The editorial concluded that, "While Catholic leaders insist they have turned the tide against clerical sexual abuse, the church's behavior suggests that its default is to protect the abusers and their supervisors who turned a blind eye. Until that changes, the church's promises of zero tolerance will remain an illusion."

May 8

The *National Catholic Reporter* ran an editorial with the following comment against the Vatican and bishops in response to the Vatican investigation into the Leadership Conference of

Women Religious: “This is the latest episode of episcopal flailing about in a search for enemies anywhere and everywhere to explain how so much has escaped their control. This isn’t about authentic teaching and orthodoxy. This is about thought control and censorship.” In other words, the *National Catholic Reporter* regarded the hierarchy as no better than the totalitarian monsters who have ruled in communist and fascist nations. This assault represented a new low.

May 16

In an editorial entitled, “Georgetown gets it right on invitation to Kathleen Sebelius,” the *Washington Post* found it “shocking” that the Archbishop of Washington Donald Cardinal Wuerl found it “shocking” that the president of Georgetown University stood by the decision to invite Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to speak at a commencement ceremony in light of the HHS abortifacient mandate. In particular, the paper opined that, “What we find shocking is Cardinal Donald Wuerl’s failure to credit the proper role of a university and the importance of vigorous, open debate, even—or perhaps especially—involving matters of intense controversy and religious disagreement.” By framing the invitation as a way of facilitating the “exchange of ideas” proper to a university setting, the newspaper arrogantly attempted to portray the cardinal’s opposition as close-minded and out of place, when in fact it was a reasonable defense of the school’s Catholic identity.

May 18

In an editorial entitled, “Silencing Kathleen Sebelius,” the *Los Angeles Times* attacked the Archdiocese of Washington D.C. for criticizing Georgetown University’s decision to invite Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to speak at a commencement ceremony. In particular, the paper accused Washington Archbishop Donald Cardinal Wuerl of “censorship” for speaking out against Georgetown’s embrace of abortion champion Kathleen Sebelius.

May 19

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd accused Archbishop of Washington Donald Cardinal Wuerl of “dogmatic censorship” for opposing Georgetown University’s invitation of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to speak at a commencement ceremony. The entire article was malicious in its attempt to portray the Church as a coercive institution: “Absolute intolerance is always a sign of uncertainty and panic. Why do you have to hunt down everyone unless you’re weak? The church doesn’t seem to care if its members’ beliefs are based on faith or fear, conviction or coercion. But what is the quality of a belief that exists simply because it’s enforced?”

May 22

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd attacked the bishops in her article, “Father Doesn’t Know Best.” She wrote the following regarding the U.S. bishops’ opposition to the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate:

“The church insists it’s an argument about religious freedom, not birth control. But, really, it’s about birth control, and women’s lower caste in the church. It’s about conservative bishops targeting Democratic candidates who support contraception and abortion rights as a matter of public policy. And it’s about a church that is obsessed with sex in ways it shouldn’t be, and not obsessed with sex in ways it should be. The bishops and the Vatican care passionately about putting women in chastity belts.”

May 24

A *New York Times* syndicated cartoon by Jeff Danziger appeared in the Huffington Post. The cartoon depicted a Catholic pontiff next to a Muslim imam. The prelate says, “Religious leaders must be free to decide what women can do with their bodies.” The imam replies, “Great wisdom...inshallah [Arabic for God willing].” The cartoon also appeared in the Albany Times-Union.

May 27

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* ran a cartoon by Mike Luckovich. Entitled "Confession," it depicts a priest "confessing" to a woman on the other side of the confessional that, "the contraception debate's about controlling you." The cartoon also appeared in the *New London Day* on June 6.

June 8

The *Boston Herald* ran a Jerry Holbert cartoon entitled "Ninja Nuns." In the background a nun is shown in habit, with a ruler in one hand and a ninja-like covering on her face. Two bishops are shown in a state of alarm. One says: "The nuns have gone rogue!! We trained them, and now they are turning on us!" The other says: "Ow! Someone just hit my hand with a ruler!" The bottom of the cartoon reads: "Vatican to crack down on American nuns."

June 16

The *Seattle Times* ran a Chan Lowe cartoon in which a bishop and a nun are shown having a conversation. The bishop holds a newspaper with the headline, "U.S. Bishops' Contraceptive Fight." The bishop says, "Our fundamental concern isn't politics, but the protection of religious liberty..." The nun says, "Excuse me, your excellency..." The bishop replies, "Put a sock in it, sister."

June 17

The *New York Daily News* ran Rick Stromoski's "Soup to Nutz" cartoon in which a character reads a book called "Lies my father told me." In one panel, the cartoon implies that one of the lies is, "Don't question the Pope...he's infallible."

June 27

The *Portland Daily Sun* ran a Stuart Carlson cartoon showing cardinals following the pope. Each figure holds a stack of paper with one of the following signs: "U.S. nuns," "sex abuse," "butler scandal," and "bank scandals." Another cardinal is labeled "contraceptives." The pope asks: "What

would Jesus do?" One of the cardinals says: "It's obvious—hire a new P.R. guy!"

June 28

The *Valley Advocate* ran a vicious Tom Pappalardo cartoon entitled "And also with you" with the sub-heading "Variations on a Theme," in which a priest is shown holding the consecrated Host. A young man wearing a backwards baseball cap and earphones has his hand out and says the following:

- "I'll stop with the pedophile jokes when you get WIFI up in this beeyotch."
- "I always wondered where recycled styrofoam went."
- "...Is it true that Jesus' foreskin is hidden in the basement of the Vatican next to the Holy Spear of Longinus?"
- "...wait, whoa! Body and blood of who??"
- "...believe me, Padre. If I had my way, there'd be carvings of half-naked dead men crucified to each and every dang telephone pole in America."
- "...this is the smallest megachurch I've ever been to."
- "...you gonna finish that pimp cup o'wine, playa?"

July 26

Boston, MA – After a bill was passed by voice vote in the Massachusetts House expanding the time period on civil claims of child sexual abuse [see Government, July 25], an editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* called for Pennsylvania lawmakers to allow a two-year window for filing civil lawsuits in such cases. The bill that was passed did nothing about child sexual abuse that occurs in the public schools and applied exclusively to private institutions, such as the Catholic Church. The editorial said absolutely nothing about blanketing the public sector; unless a bill specifically targets the sovereign immunity status of the public schools, they remain exempt.

August 5

The *Washington Post* ran a review of two movies that addressed

“the highly controversial ACT UP protest” at New York’s St. Patrick’s Cathedral in 1989, noting that “the hostility directed at the group after disrupting a religious service is now seen in a broader more sympathetic historical perspective.” Such sympathy is not only a disgrace, it is a veil for a virulent anti-Catholicism. The reviewer had no intention of reminding readers of what actually happened at St. Patrick’s: The activists disrupted Mass, chained themselves to the pews, interfered with Communion and spit the Host on the floor. Bill Donohue contacted the author Philip Kennicott, remarking that, “In other words, they acted like Nazis who stormed synagogues.”

October 1-17

On October 17, FX premiered the first episode of the series, “American Horror Story: Asylum.” It depicted an evil Catholic home for the criminally insane where a promiscuous nun—in habit, of course—beats inmates; a Catholic doctor tortures them. When the Catholic League submitted a full-page ad to be run that was critical of the show on October 1, it was turned down by The Hollywood Reporter’s publisher, Lynne Segall, who responded by saying the ad “was not appropriate.” She did not say the show “was not appropriate.” After being rejected by *The Hollywood Reporter*, the Catholic League submitted the ad to *Variety* on October 2 where it met the same fate, this time because of the alleged “mudslinging” title, “FX Trashes Nuns.” No one at *Variety* said the show was guilty of “mudslinging.” *For the text of the ad that was rejected, please [click [here](#)].*

The Catholic League refused to amend its ad and took to the radio waves in Los Angeles to expose the Hollywood censors. On Monday, October 15, radio stations KFI and KTLK ran the following ad: “I’m Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League. On Wednesday, the first episode of FX’s ‘American Horror Story: Asylum,’ will air. The entire series portrays an evil Catholic home for the criminally insane where inmates are beaten and tortured by nuns and doctors. I recently sought to

place an ad critical of the show in *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety*, but was turned down by both because of the ad's content. In other words, not only does Hollywood delight in bashing Catholicism, it seeks to censor objections to it."

October 19

The *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* ran a Chan Lowe cartoon called "The Boy Scouts scandal," with the caption, "A boy scout leader goes to confession." The cartoon used the revelation of sex abuse in the Boy Scouts to attack the Church. The drawing shows the closed confessional with a speech bubble on one side saying, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned." Another speech bubble in response reads: "Believe me...I can relate."

November 1

The weekly *Miami Sun Post* ran an opinion piece by Charles Branham-Bailey attacking Miami Archbishop Thomas Wenski for issuing guidelines on how to vote. The article was called: "Can He Say That? Wenski the Buttinski: Archbishop Signals (Wink-Wink, Nod-Nod) Woe to Any Catholic Who Strays From the Flock." The article attacked Wenski's First Amendment rights, implying that he had no right to speak out on the complex moral issues that underlie public policy positions.

The article also attacked the Archbishop for upholding Church teaching on the common good and the human person: "That from a guy who is forbidden to engage in sexual relations, and who belongs to a profession all too many of whose members have scandalized their Church for decades thanks to their inability to keep their pants zipped up and their private parts unexposed when around children."

November 1

The cover of the weekly *Miami New Times* featured on its cover a picture of Jesus Christ with Mickey Mouse ears with the question, "How would Jesus vote?" The cover was meant to accompany its feature article on the fight for votes in the I-4 corridor that cuts through central Florida. The following

week, the paper ran two letters taking offense at the cover and apologized for any offense the cover caused.

December 6

The *Kansas City Star* ran a Mike Judge cartoon in which news of Pope Benedict XVI tweeting for the first time was used to bash the Catholic Church. At the top of the cartoon is a question: "Why did the man with archaic views on women, gays, birth control, sex, marriage, health care and child molestation open a Twitter account?" Underneath was an image of the pope caricatured to look like a dimwit with the words: "He wants to keep up with the times."

December 6

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* ran a Rob Rogers cartoon in which news of the pope tweeting for the first time was used to bash the Catholic Church. Pope Benedict XVI is shown tweeting on his smart phone the words: "OMG!! This 21st century technology is great for spreading my 15th century views on gays, women and contraception! LOL #say10hailmarys"

Radio

March 17

The National Public Radio weekend game show "Wait! Wait! Don't Tell me!" included attacks on Pope Benedict XVI, calling him "another famous gay icon." Using the news that the pope would receive his own cologne, the host envisioned a "pope product empire," including jeans ("nothing gets between me and my Benedicts") and cereal ("let's give this cereal to Popey, Popey condemns everything").

April 12

On his nationally syndicated radio show, Mike Malloy went on a tirade against Bill Donohue, whom he called "that piece of human waste" and "the fascist Bill Donohue Catholic Nazi." He also called Catholics "child-raping sons of bitches" and referred to "your scum, the Nazi Pope."

May 27

The web version of Barbara Bradley Hagerty's story, entitled "Just Doing His Job Is Catholic Official's Defense," was posted on the website of National Public Radio (NPR). It began: "A clergy sex-abuse trial in is [sic] reaching a crescendo in a Philadelphia courtroom. One defendant is James Brennan, a priest accused of trying to rape a minor, *which is not that unusual.*" [Emphasis added.]

In this day and age when it is considered taboo to make sweeping generalizations of a negative sort about so many demographic groups, it was astonishing that NPR allowed this bigoted swipe at Catholic priests.

The Catholic League asked NPR to respond to our complaint, which the ombudsman, Edward Schumacher-Matos, addressed in a separate posting on the NPR website. He claimed that Hagerty had contacted him "even before" we issued our statement and that "a number of other listener complaints came pouring in" to him. He claimed Hagerty had told him the phrase, "which is not that unusual," was "inartfully written" and "wished she could take it back." The ombudsman was quick to defend Hagerty's "sensitivity" as a religion reporter, even at the expense of the Catholic League, which he charged could use "a little bit more measure."

December 14

On the day that the nation was mourning the loss of 20 children in the Newtown, Connecticut elementary school shooting, employee of Rhode Island Public Radio (RIPR), Scott MacKay, had the following exchange on Twitter:

Scott MacKay: "Hug every child you see this evening."

Elayne C. Burke: "@ScotMackRI that's a good way to get arrested."

Scott MacKay: "@chatelainedc Don't worry I' [sic] not a priest or scoutmaster"

After it was posted, RIPR promptly had it removed. Providence Bishop Thomas Tobin responded swiftly and decisively with a letter to the CEO and General Manager of Rhode Island Public Radio about the offensive post defaming members of the clergy and gave credit to the organization for promptly removing the bigoted Twitter post.

Television

January 5

Jay Leno opened up his show with a monologue in which he commented on an auxiliary bishop from Los Angeles who had stepped down after admitting he fathered two children.

After explaining what happened, Leno said, "I thought bishops could only move diagonally. I didn't know they could move up and down." When making these remarks, Leno gestured with his hands, waving them side to side, and then up and down. Leno went on to say, "Isn't it amazing the bishop of L.A. confessed to fathering two children? But, hey, he didn't use birth control, so at least he followed the church rules. Ya gotta give him credit for that."

January 11

"Are You There, Chelsea?" debuted on NBC as part of its new lineup of mid-season shows. It was based on the bestselling book by Chelsea Handler, *Are You There, Vodka? It's Me, Chelsea*.

The real-life Chelsea Handler was in the show, and although she is Jewish, she played a Christian. Her character was described by various reviewers as the "judgy, super-Christian sister" [of Chelsea]; a "born-again Christian" who was "supposed to be a bit of a stiff"; and an "uptight born-again Christian." Another woman played Chelsea's "goofy virgin roommate"; she was also described as "a reliably funny gangly naif."

What was particularly interesting about the show was that the

Christian character did not appear in the book upon which the script is written; it was made up entirely by NBC.

February 14

Comedy Central aired an episode of the "Colbert Report" in which host Stephen Colbert addressed the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate in a segment called "Contraception Crusade." The show's website summarized the segment this way: "Barack Obama launches a vengeful health care crusade against the Catholic church, essentially forcing priests to hand out condoms at mass." The segment crossed the line from Colbert's usual over-the-top satire into anti-Catholicism. Below is a list of his remarks:

- He said that, "Catholic groups are forced to provide contraceptives, but the pope wants his hat to be the only thing with a reservoir tip."
- There was a close-up photo of a priest distributing condoms instead of the consecrated Host.
- He said that "If Jesus would have wanted everyone to have insurance, he would have been crucified on a Blue Cross Blue Shield."
- He mocked Catholic teaching on contraception, calling it a "central tenet" and then saying that it is as central as "marble, Jesus on toast, and unintentionally hot school uniforms."
- He mentioned the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* and then said, "If you use contraception, you are not only sinning, you are c**kblocking the Almighty."
- He used transubstantiation to mock how the Catholic Church receives money from "secular cash," i.e., taxpayer dollars, which is then "transubstantiated" into "Bishop bucks" that can be used for "legal settlements."

April 11

Two days before the opening of the film "The Three Stooges," in which he played a nun named after a Nazi, Larry David, who has a history of anti-Catholicism, said to Conan O'Brien that

dressing as a nun in the film made it easy to understand why nuns are “so mean.” He explained, “You know, the outfits might have something to do with that. Forget about the fact that they never have sex. If you gave me a choice of no sex or having to wear that outfit the rest of my life, I would definitely take the no sex.”

April 16

Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show” flashed a picture on the screen of a naked woman with her legs spread and a nativity scene ornament in between. The show’s host, Jon Stewart, called it the “vagina manger.” This was unabashed hate speech. Stewart was angry with Fox News for not being exercised over the alleged “war on women,” which is how the media was framing the defense of religious liberty against the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate.

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CAMPAIGN AGAINST JON STEWART

In all the years of monitoring anti-Christian bigotry, seldom have we seen something as vile as what happened on April 16. On Jon Stewart’s “The Daily Show,” they flashed a picture on the screen of a naked woman with her legs spread and a nativity scene ornament in between. He called it the “vagina manger.” We called it hate speech. Stewart was angry with the Fox News for not being exercised over the alleged “war on women” that is going on. Ironically, in the name of defending women, he degraded them. He also unnecessarily assaulted the sensibilities of Christians; they constitute the vast majority of the population.

We did not call for Stewart to be fired, but we did call for him to apologize. After hand-delivering our request to the offices of Comedy Central (it carries the show), and failing to garner a response, we contacted ten of his major sponsors; they were asked to put pressure on the network seeking an

apology.

Delta quickly apologized for Stewart's obscene stunt. Within days, the airline company went further and pulled its advertising. According to a public relations official, Delta claimed, "We just weren't comfortable with the graphic nature of their image that was used on the show."

What upset us the most was the response by Kellogg's—they blew us off. So we took them on. Bill Donohue did a lengthy interview on the number-one radio show in Battle Creek (home to Kellogg's). Interestingly, Kellogg's refused to dispatch a spokesman to explain its dismissive attitude. We also called for a boycott of Kellogg's cereals, and took out an ad in the *Kalamazoo Gazette*. *To see a copy of the ad [click [here](#)].*

We know we got to Stewart because during a performance in Tampa on April 21, he switched gears—going from comedic to serious—and made an oblique swipe at the Catholic League.

Our campaign against Stewart extended to the board of directors and the senior management of Viacom, the parent company of Comedy Central; we mailed them a copy of the offensive photo. Then we sent a copy to all the bishops, as well as to religious leaders in every faith community.

We also hit the op-ed page of the *New York Times*. On May 21, "Jon Stewart's Legacy," was published, reaching millions of readers. *To see a copy of the ad [click [here](#)].* No one in public life can afford to have his reputation damaged, not even cultural gurus like Stewart.

The avalanche of very sick e-mails we received from Stewart's fans was disturbing. It indicates that these angry young white men have a misplaced sense of priorities: if Stewart is their hero, it doesn't bode well for our nation's future. But we also received a ton of positive responses, suggesting that the culture war is still up for grabs. As always, we were relentless in our campaign.

CHRONOLOGY

The following is a chronological list of our campaign against Jon Stewart.

- April 16:** Jon Stewart performed “vagina manger” skit
- April 17:** First request for apology
- April 18:** Second request for apology
- April 19:** Start of Campaign: Allies contacted
- April 20:** Kraft Foods contacted
- April 23:** SUBWAY contacted
- April 24:** Mars, Inc. contacted
- April 25:** Kellogg’s contacted
- April 26:** Delta Air Lines contacted
- April 27:** The Wrigley Company contacted
- April 30:** The Hershey Company contacted
- May 1:** Ace Hardware Company contacted
- May 2:** Paramount Farms contacted
- May 3:** Anheuser-Busch InBev contacted
- May 4:** Press release, “Jon Stewart’s Record of Offending Christians”
- May 7:** Press release, “Jon Stewart’s Record of Apologies”
- May 8:** Viacom’s Board and Senior Management contacted
- May 9:** Catholic Bishops contacted
- May 10:** Mainline Protestant leaders contacted
- May 11:** Evangelical leaders contacted
- May 14:** Jewish leaders contacted
- May 15:** Mormon leaders contacted
- May 16:** Muslim leaders contacted
- May 17:** Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh Leaders contacted
- May 20:** *Kalamazoo Gazette* ad
- May 21:** *New York Times* ad

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April 19

On his MSNBC show, Lawrence O’ Donnell expressed antipathy towards the Catholic Church, attacking Peoria Bishop David

Jenky, Church teachings on abortion and gay rights, and the right of the Vatican to discipline its flock. He also attacked the Catholic League and interviewed Sister Jeannine Gramick and an official from Dignity, which has been rejected as a Catholic entity.

May 2

On Comedy Central's "The Daily Show," Jon Stewart opened with a replay of Lawrence O'Donnell's tirade against Mormons that had aired April 3 on MSNBC.

Stewart then said: "Mormons aren't the only religion whose origin story can be explained as a convenient alibi. You can easily say that Christianity was created by a knocked up teenage girl who told her parents an angel had come down and..." Stewart was then interrupted with laughter, but not before they showed a huge picture of a pregnant Virgin Mary on the screen.

May 2

E!'s show "Chelsea Lately" featured a roundtable discussion with three comedian guests. Host Chelsea Handler discussed a story out of Ireland about a priest who was asked to leave his parish because he "accidentally showed pictures of gay porn during a Power Point presentation" to parents at a grade school. The presentation was "supposed to be about the First Holy Communion." Handler continued: "Then he insisted he was not responsible for the presence of the offending images and immediately removed the memory stick from the laptop and destroyed it later that evening." Handler said into the camera sarcastically, "After he transferred the images to his desktop."

Guest Dov Davidoff then said, "The Catholic Church has got to be celebrating. The pope right now is just relieved, like, at least they were over 18, the actors. I don't know. They get a bad rap, these priests. They just had another thing with the Boy Scouts and the priests. I don't know. After a while maybe

we should start pointing the finger at sexy-a** boys.” Guest Ben Gleib ended the segment by saying, “People are still sending their kids to the same church, too. I would rather send my kids inside a tanning bed to be honest.”

June 15

ABC provided coverage of a daredevil crossing the Niagara Falls on a tightrope. Live footage and real-time live blogging of his death-defying feat blacked out any mention of his audible prayers to Jesus along the way, which included such shout-outs as “Praise you, Father God. Praise you, Jesus!” This was a glaring example of media intolerance of public displays of piety by Christians.

October 6-7

In the run-up to the debut of stand-up comedian ventriloquist Jeff Dunham’s new special, “Minding the Monsters,” on October 7, Comedy Central re-aired Dunham’s 2007 program, “Spark of Insanity,” in which he took a swipe at Catholic priests. The “joke” went as follows:

Puppet: I’m kidding, I would not kill the Jews, no. I would toss a penny between them, and watch them fight to the death. (laughter) Yes, yes. I did the same thing with two Catholic priests, but I tossed in a small boy. Yes, yes. and the winner had to fight Michael Jackson!

Dunham went back to the well in “Minding the Monsters.” One “joke” implied priests scared children:

Puppet: We were supposed to dress as whatever scared us as a kid.

Dunham: Oh, so for you, that was Frankenstein?

Puppet: Actually, it was a Catholic priest, but... (laughter, applause) But...everybody gets mad when I offend the Mexicans. (laughter, applause)

October 7

The second episode of a new Comedy Central animated series,

“Brickleberry,” contained an attack on priests. In the episode, Steve, a mean character who contracts a sexually transmitted disease and is told he has only two weeks to live, speaks to an Irish priest in the confessional. The conversation ends with a blatant shot against priests. After discussing what it means to do good deeds for other people, the following words are said:

Steve: “Wait. Wouldn’t it be better if I just followed you around? You’re a priest.

Priest: “Too busy, Steven. I’ve got this other gig where I dress as a clown.” [Priest puts on a clown costume.]

The clown costume was used to insinuate that the priest was a pedophile.

October 12

Addressing the vice presidential debate between two Catholics, Vice President Joe Biden and Congressman Paul Ryan, Bill Maher said the following on his HBO show: “I have not seen an old Catholic guy give it to a young Catholic guy like that since since I was an altar boy.”

October 17

The second season of the FX show, “American Horror Story,” began. The subtitle of this season’s series was called “Asylum.” FX decided to portray a sadistic nun who runs an evil Catholic home for the criminally insane. Prior to the season’s debut, the Catholic League went on the offensive against FX for trashing nuns.

October 19

On a segment of the Fox News show, “The Five,” commentator Bob Beckel made a bigoted statement about priests, suggesting they are criminals. When co-panelist Greg Gutfeld remarked that welfare has replaced charity and that government has taken on the role of churches in taking care of people. The following exchange ensued:

Beckel: I didn't know you were an expert on churches.

Gutfeld: Well, I spent a long time in them, Bob. I grew up in one. I was an altar boy for a long time.

Beckel: OK, you were an altar boy?

Gutfeld: Yes, I was. I'll show you some pictures.

Beckel: Who was your priest?

Gutfeld: Ah...Father Zoft.

Beckel: Was he arrested?

October 22

On the "Ellen DeGeneres Show," host Ellen DeGeneres showed her tolerance for Catholic bashing when she welcomed Jessica Lange to her show. Lange played an "evil nun" on the FX show, "American Horror Story: Asylum."

Lange and DeGeneres had a good time feeding the worst possible stereotype of "mean" nuns. Lange admitted, with typical Hollywood brilliance, that she "wasn't raised in any kind of religious situation, so, I mean, we didn't go to church or anything." That was apparent enough. In discussing nuns, words like "insanity" and "evil" were used.

October 23

An episode of the NBC sitcom, "The New Normal," a series about a male homosexual couple and a surrogate mother, was entitled "The Godparent Trap." The episode contained an offensive scene that attacked the Catholic Church for its teaching on marriage and homosexuality.

The pretext for the attack is that the homosexual couple decide it's time to find godparents for their baby. They want "spiritual guidance for their child since they have little themselves." One of the homosexuals, Bryan, grew up Catholic and decides to go to a church, where he makes offensive comments to himself: "12 dudes sitting around gossiping and drinking wine? You call that the Last Supper? I call that a Tuesday night. Hey, Mary. I'm a virgin, too. I've also slept in a barn with three wise men. I'm sorry. I shouldn't be

talking smack about your mother. But you know who judges me? Your father.”

Bryan is then shown in a confessional talking to a priest. The priest says about the pope: “Oh, yeah, the pope. Come on. Haven’t you ever had a lovable old uncle who popped off intolerant comments at a family barbecue?” He also says that the Church can “change,” specifically saying that “I’ve seen gay people battle discrimination and march for marriage equality.”

October 27

On the “Late Show with David Letterman,” the show’s host used the news that Pope Benedict XVI had announced seven new saints to launch into a skit featuring “Saint Jeffrey Tompkins of Massapequa, New York,” whom Letterman claimed was one of the saints. When Letterman asked him what his plans were, Tompkins responded, “First, I’ll stop by Saint Patrick’s...you know, company business. Then I’m going back to the hotel and get myself a cheeseburger and a whore.” The audience laughed at this joke. Later on in the show, Tompkins said to Letterman as part of the skit, “The Vatican found out about the whore. I’m no longer a saint. Thanks a lot a**hole!”

November 20

On the FX show, “Brand X,” host Russell Brand invited two representatives from the Westboro Baptist Church as guests. One of them was wearing a t-shirt that read “priestsrapeboys.com” and showed a skull with a clerical collar.

December 13

On TBS’s “Conan,” host Conan O’Brien made an attack on the pope which was remarkable for its utter lack of context. The gratuitous insult went as follows: “Pope Benedict’s in the news. Pope Benedict has come out with a children’s book. Yeah. The book is called stay the Hell away from Father O’Malley.”

December 24

On E! Entertainment Television's "Chelsea Lately," host Chelsea Handler's opening monologue featured "The Story of Christmas as Told by a Jew," in which she made stupid, vulgar, and obscene comments to mock Christians at Christmastime. Among them were:

- The Virgin Mary was a virgin because this was "the olden days before they invented the bikini wax so it was tough for any man to find her peekachu."
- She said St. Joseph "was not the baby's father," saying that "it was also rumored that Joseph had a lower sperm count because he smoked too much weed."
- She also created offense when she introduced Jesus, who was represented onstage by a dwarf wearing a beauty contest sash that said "Saviour."

December 27

On his MSNBC show, host Lawrence O'Donnell attacked the Church for its stance on traditional marriage and spoke derisively about the Church's teaching, accusing the Vatican of being "full of guys who have taken a lifetime vow to remain tragically ignorant about marriage."

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HHS MANDATE TARGETS CATHOLICS

This year, for the first time in American history, the federal government waged war on the First Amendment rights of Roman Catholics. When the healthcare bill was being considered, the Obama administration said it would respect conscience rights and would not mandate abortion coverage. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) was encouraged, but very quickly it became apparent that Obama's pledge was empty; the USCCB refused to support any legislation that might jeopardize conscience rights or mandate abortion coverage. The bill passed, over the objection of the bishops, and then came the directive of Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius ordering religious institutions like hospitals and universities to provide coverage for abortifacients, contraception and sterilization. On January 20, Sebelius said that only churches would qualify for an exemption from paying for these services (even then they had to apply for an exemption); all other religious institutions, like hospitals and universities, would have to comply. The latter would be punished because they do not discriminate insofar as they hire and serve both Catholics and non-Catholics.



This unleashed an uproar. Letters of protest from bishops were read in parishes across the country. Three weeks later, on February 10, Obama announced his "accommodation": employers did not have to pay for these services, just their insurance companies. Everyone knew this was a shell game—the insurance premium is paid by Catholic workers and employers. Hence, the call on the part of the bishops, the Catholic League, and others, to stand fast and call for legislation that would secure our First Amendment right to religious liberty.

The Catholic League vociferously and relentlessly defended the constitutional right to religious freedom not just of all Catholics, but people of all religions. We repeatedly made the

point that this was not just a Catholic issue, but an American issue. What follows is a timeline of our response to the Obama mandate, up to and concluding with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on ObamaCare.

January 20: OBAMA'S CONTEMPT FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The following was our response to the announcement of the Obama administration's edict mandating coverage of sterilization and contraceptive services in most healthcare plans:

Secretary of HHS Kathleen Sebelius said that aside from houses of worship, all other religious agencies and organizations will be required to provide sterilization and contraceptive services, including abortifacients, in their employee healthcare plans; none will be allowed to charge co-pays or deductibles. The policy goes into effect in August 2013 for these entities.

Sebelius explained how her directive applies to non-church religious entities such as Catholic hospitals and universities: "Employers wishing to take advantage of the additional year must certify that they qualify for the delayed implementation. This additional year will allow these organizations more time and flexibility to adapt to this new rule." She also said, "I believe this proposal strikes the appropriate balance between religious freedom and increasing access to important preventive services."

That this edict was being announced in an election year indicates both contempt for the First Amendment and plain stupidity.

February 3: GAG RULE ON MILITARY CHAPLAINS

On January 26, Archbishop Timothy Broglio joined with his fellow bishops in issuing a pastoral letter criticizing the Obama administration for violating the conscience rights of

Catholics. The only difference was that Broglio's letter, which was to be read from the pulpit by military chaplains, was initially censored.

The Army's Office of the Chief of Chaplains notified Archbishop Broglio that he was not authorized to have his letter read from the pulpit. Broglio shot back saying he stands "firm in the belief, based on legal precedent" that the Army had no right to issue the gag order. He said the attempt to muzzle his free speech violated his rights and "those same rights of all military chaplains and their congregants."

After Archbishop Broglio met with Secretary of the Army John McHugh, a compromise was reached: the letter would be allowed to be read providing that the last sentence, "We cannot, we will not, comply with this unjust law," was excised; the government argued it could be seen as a call to civil disobedience. Still, the damage was done, and once again the Obama administration unnecessarily picked a fight with Catholics.

February 6: SEBELIUS DISRESPECTS CATHOLICISM

In an article entitled "Our Rule Respects Religion," HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius wrote in *USA Today* that "we specifically carved out from the [healthcare] policy religious organizations that primarily employ people of their own faith."

Secretary Sebelius knows very well that Catholic agencies have a long and distinguished record of hiring and serving non-Catholics, so to say that they can only qualify for an exemption by turning away those who are not Catholic from Catholic schools, hospitals, hospices, orphanages, shelters for battered women, and the like, is a plea for discrimination and an insult to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

February 7: OBAMA PUSHED US TOO FAR

The Obama administration has made three strategic errors: 1) this issue is first and foremost not about contraception—it is about religious liberty 2) by mandating that Catholic entities provide coverage for abortifacients, the Obama administration has made it clear that its ultimate goal is to demand that all healthcare plans provide for abortion coverage, and 3) it seriously underestimated the clout of the bishops.

February 8: OBAMA SPOKESMEN ARE INSINCERE

We issued a statement on how President Obama's spokesmen are defending his healthcare plan mandating that Catholic institutions provide for services they deem immoral:

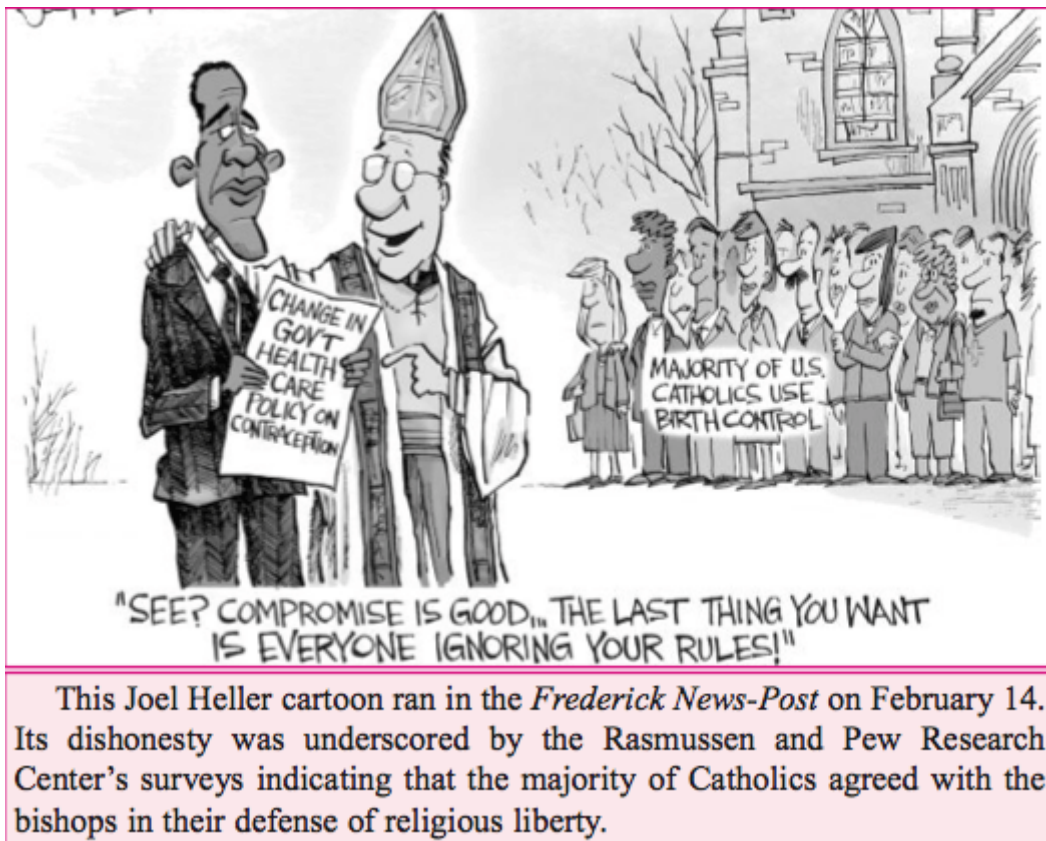
David Axelrod of the Obama campaign said that "We certainly don't want to abridge anyone's religious freedom, so we're going to look for a way to move forward that both provides women with the preventative care that they need and respects the prerogatives of religious institutions." Similarly, White House press secretary Jay Carney said yesterday that "the president is very interested in finding the appropriate balance between religious beliefs and convictions."

Both men are insincere. We know that there was division in the Obama administration when the Obama edict was being contemplated, and that the president sided with extremists like HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius (anyone who raises money for a man dedicated to performing partial-birth abortions is obviously an extremist; she did so for Dr. George Tiller). So they had plenty of time to figure out a way not to punish Catholics, and they still decided to drop the hammer.

White House supporters of Obama's edict are pointing to a poll that shows a slight majority of Catholics supporting Obama's plan. But the poll is flawed. As always, the question affects the outcome. The poll never mentioned that the federal government would place sanctions on Catholic institutions if they did not comply, and that ultimately it could lead to

pulling federal funds to Catholic hospitals, effectively shutting them down. Nor did the poll mention that the Obama plan mandates that Catholic entities provide abortion-inducing drugs. In short, the question was dishonest. Just wait until all Catholics find out what's really at stake.

What Obama is doing is just an opening for mandating abortion coverage in every healthcare plan.



February 10: OBAMA'S PLOY ADDS INSULT TO INJURY

The following was our statement on President Obama's revised healthcare plan as it affects Catholic institutions:

President Obama's latest ploy just adds insult to injury. If the insurance plan of a Catholic institution must cover services it deems immoral, then such a healthcare plan is offensive, plain and simple.

The Catholic League, for example, uses Christian Brothers as its insurance carrier. So if a future employee of ours were to

demand free abortion-inducing drugs, and if she is allowed to request free drugs from Christian Brothers, then the rest of us would, in effect, be subsidizing her abortion. This is outrageous and will not stand judicial scrutiny.

When it comes to the First Amendment, there is no such thing as a half loaf. We want now, and in the future, the same rights we have enjoyed since the beginning of the republic.

The Obama ploy is also cynical: its effect is to peel off liberal Catholic opposition to ObamaCare. In other words, the old divide and conquer strategy is in play. But it won't work as nicely as they think: there are too many practicing Catholics who will only be impelled to revolt.

Obama has decided to turn up the heat. He'll soon see how hot things get when Catholics team with Protestants, Jews, Mormons, and others to recapture their First Amendment rights. Indeed, President Obama will now be remembered as the president who brought the culture war to a boil.

February 16: OBAMA MANDATE NEVER SCRUTINIZED

Following her February 15 testimony before the Senate Finance Committee, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius was asked whether she spoke to the bishops about the controversial mandate she is pushing. She admitted she did not. Then she said, "I know that the president has spoken to the bishops on several occasions."

Sebelius is wrong. Bishop William Lori [now Archbishop of Baltimore], who heads the bishops' *Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty*, said that administration officials should have sat down with the bishops. "That certainly did not happen," he said. Archbishop Timothy Dolan, who heads the bishops' conference, met once with the president, and that was three months ago; the two phone calls he has had since were to inform him that the bishops' religious liberty concerns would not be honored.

Under questioning from Sen. Orrin Hatch, Sebelius further admitted that HHS never subjected the religious liberty issues to a legal analysis, as requested by 27 senators. She also admitted that she never asked the Justice Department to consider this issue.

It gets worse. *The New York Times* reported on February 16 that the administration announced the Obama mandate “before it had figured out how to address one conspicuous point: Like most large employers, many religiously affiliated organizations choose to insure themselves rather than hire an outside company to assume the risk.” As the *Times* points out, this is not a slight issue: 60 percent of all workers with health insurance are covered by a self-funded plan, and the figure jumps to 82 percent for large companies. And no one bothered to address this?

So they refused to consult with the bishops; they refused to weigh the First Amendment religious liberty concerns; and they refused to study how the mandate might impact self-insured companies. In other words, with characteristic arrogance, they just “winged it.” Wait until the Supreme Court hears all of this.

February 17: SEBELIUS SMEARS CATHOLIC INSURERS

On February 15, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said Catholic insurance carriers will not be given an exemption from the mandate requiring insurance companies to provide for contraceptive, abortifacient, and sterilization services. She explained, “Religious insurance companies don’t really design the plans they sell based on their own religious tenets.” This is an outrageous smear.

In January, *Our Sunday Visitor* ran a splendid article on this subject titled, “Investing with a Clear Conscience.” It listed the following companies as following Catholic investment principles: Ave Maria Mutual Funds; Christian Brothers

Investment Services; Epiphany Funds; First Affirmative Financial Network; Investing for Catholics; LKCM Aquinas Funds; Prosperitas Wealth Management; and Trinity Fiduciary Partners.

The article also listed the six investment principles as laid out in the bishops' 1991 statement on socially responsible investing (it was revised in 2003): Protecting Human Life; Promoting Human Dignity; Reducing Arms Production; Pursuing Economic Justice; Protecting the Environment; and Encouraging Corporate Responsibility.

Sebelius, of course, is a champion of partial-birth abortion, so she obviously fails the bishops' test. That is her business. But she has no business misinforming the public about the honorable role played by many Catholic insurance companies.

March 14: RELIGIOUS RIGHTS DEMANDED; BISHOPS REFUSE TO BUDGE

On March 14, the USCCB Administrative Committee released a statement, "United for Religious Freedom," that is the clearest exposition of contemporary Catholic thought on religious liberty in America. It is also the definitive response to attempts by the Obama administration to force Catholic institutions to violate their beliefs.

The statement yielded nothing to Church critics. The product of a two-day meeting in Washington that was attended by over 40 bishops, it speaks directly to the HHS mandate that seeks to force Catholic non-profits to cover services it deems objectionable in its insurance plans. Mincing no words, the document declares the HHS edict to be "unjust and illegal."

The bishops debunked many myths about this issue: it is not about contraception; it is not just about Catholic religious rights; it is not about the Catholic Church trying to impose its will on others—it is about the federal government trying to impose its agenda on us; it is not about opposition to

universal health care (the Church has long championed this right); and it is not about choosing political sides. It is about religious liberty.

Most important, the statement argues that the HHS mandate seeks to create a new class of citizens' rights: those who work for religious institutions that hire and serve mostly people of other religions deserve fewer constitutional protections than those which discriminate against men and women of other faiths. This is perverse. Moreover, employers of secular entities who nonetheless object on religious grounds to funding immoral insurance plans would constitute another class of citizens.

April 4: OBAMA ENLISTS ACLU TO WAR ON CATHOLICS

After the Catholic News Service published a story on an internal memo from the bishops on ObamaCare, we issued the following statement:

The more the bishops study this issue, the more resolved they are in opposing ObamaCare. At the heart of the bishops' objections is the contrived and unjust way the Obama administration defines a religious organization; it grants an exemption only to what it deems is a religious entity. In point of fact, it is the ACLU that is really dictating to Catholics what passes as a religious institution.

In 2000, the California Contraceptive Equity Law was passed. In it there is a provision defining what qualifies as a religious employer, and it was written by the ACLU. Besides noting that the institution must be a non-profit, the exact qualifying language is as follows:

- "The inculcation of religious values is the purpose of the entity"
- "The entity primarily employs persons who share the religious tenets of the entity"
- "The entity serves primarily persons who share the religious

tenets of the entity”

The HHS edict forcing Catholic institutions to provide for abortion-inducing drugs in their insurance coverage also allows an exemption for groups it deems religious. Besides noting the non-profit status, the exact qualifying language is as follows:

- “Has the inculcation of religious values as its purpose”
- “Primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets”
- “Primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets”

May 16: OBAMACARE vs. CATHOLIC CHURCH

Two recent developments offer new evidence that the confrontation between the Catholic Church and the Obama administration is reaching collision course dimensions: on May 15, attorneys for the USCCB made plain their objections to the alleged “accommodations” offered by the Department of HHS; and on May 16 the Franciscan University of Steubenville announced that as a result of the HHS mandate it would drop student health care insurance programs starting in the next academic year.

Writing for the bishops, Anthony R. Picarello, Jr. and Michael F. Moses listed six objections to the HHS mandate that would force Catholic non-profits to pay for morally objectionable services in their insurance plans. One central objection was the “unprecedented” attempt to redefine religious employers as entities that hire and serve mostly people of their own religion; it would effectively nullify the religious exemption traditionally afforded such institutions as Catholic social service agencies, hospitals and colleges.

Another major point, one which speaks directly to the concerns of Franciscan University, is that it mandates such organizations to “either drop out of the health insurance marketplace” or “provide coverage that violates their deeply-held convictions.” Fr. Terence Henry, the courageous president

of the university, will not be bullied.

Both the crabbed redefinition of a religious institution, and the either/or conditions it offers Catholic non-profits, are classic Catch-22 politics. The goal, which is to punish Catholic organizations if they don't bow to the secular edicts of the Obama administration, couldn't be more transparent.

May 21: CATHOLIC REBELLION HAS BEGUN

Forty-three institutions filed lawsuits against the Obama administration challenging the constitutionality of the HHS edict seeking to force Catholic non-profits to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraceptive services and sterilization in their insurance plans. We issued the following statement:

This is a great day for those who believe in religious liberty. Suing the Obama administration for seeking to trash the First Amendment rights of Catholics are 43 Catholic dioceses and institutions from all over the nation.

Among those filing suit are: the Archdiocese of New York; the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.; the Archdiocese of St. Louis; the Diocese of Rockville Centre; the Diocese of Dallas; the Diocese of Fort Worth; the Diocese of Pittsburgh; the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend; the Michigan Catholic Conference (which represents all seven dioceses in the state); Catholic University of America; Franciscan University of Steubenville; and the University of Notre Dame. Entities ranging from retirement homes to publishing houses joined the lawsuits.

There will be more. And depending on how the U.S. Supreme Court rules next month on the constitutionality of ObamaCare, this may just be the beginning.

Catholics are sending an unmistakable sign to President Obama, Kathleen Sebelius, et al. that we will not be obedient. We will not do as we are told. Instead, we will do what is just.

The Catholic rebellion has begun.

June 28: OBAMACARE RULING AND CATHOLIC RIGHTS

The only way Catholic non-profits could have survived the encroachment of the federal government on their right not to buy insurance for services they deem immoral was if the entire ObamaCare legislation had been struck down. That did not happen.

The Supreme Court did not rule today on the constitutionality of the right of the Obama administration to force Catholic non-profits to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization in their insurance plans; this Health and Human Services (HHS) edict was issued after the high court accepted the ObamaCare bill. Eventually, this particular issue will reach the Supreme Court.

It is important to note that in the high court ruling, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg said that enforcing this law must not trespass on the constitutional right to religious liberty. She seemed to signal to the Obama administration that they dare not tread on Catholic rights.

If the Supreme Court decision lacks clarity, the Catholic response will be anything but ambiguous: the battle lines between the bishops and the Obama administration are now brighter than ever. Fortunately, not only do practicing Catholics overwhelmingly support the bishops, tens of millions of non-Catholics also do.

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PRESIDENT OBAMA'S WAR ON RELIGION

Bill Donohue wrote about the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate in his four-part essay on President Obama's war on religion that appeared on Newsmax.com in September. The following is an excerpt from the final

installment:

On Jan. 20, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius rolled out what would come to be known as the HHS mandate: Catholic institutions would be required to pay for contraception, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs in their healthcare plans for employees.

The inclusion of abortion-inducing drugs was striking. The administration could have settled for contraception, but instead it sought to stick the camel's nose in the tent. Its real long-term interest was plain: eventually, as broached by FOCA [the Freedom of Choice Act], Catholic hospitals would be required to perform abortions.

On Jan. 31, Press Secretary Jay Carney stunned even Obama supporters when he said, "I don't believe there are any constitutional rights issues here." No one was buying it, especially not the bishops.

After Catholics pushed back, a new version was introduced three weeks later. But it was a distinction without a difference: It mandated that the insurance carrier of Catholic non-profits must pay for these services.

This was just a shell game. In reality, many Catholic non-profits are self-insured (for example, the Archdiocese of Washington is self-insured). Then there is the issue of Catholic entities that are not self-insured: Why should they have to pay their insurance company for services they deem immoral? Another issue that won't go away is the right of Catholic business owners not to pay for services that violate their conscience.

It is important to acknowledge that Catholics are not asking for special rights—they are simply asking the Obama administration to respect the status quo. The administration won't budge, saying the best it will do is exempt Catholic churches.

So what about Catholic non-profits?

Without doubt, the most contentious, and frankly diabolical, demand of the Obama administration is the proviso that only Catholic institutions that hire and serve mostly people of their own religion are entitled to an exemption. In practice, this means that Mother Teresa's worldwide health and social service programs that serve people of all religions, as well as non-believers, would not qualify for a religious exemption.

Obama officials arrived at this conclusion by following the thinking of the ACLU (as I have recounted in two books on the organization, the ACLU has never been a religion-friendly institution).

In 2000, ACLU lawyers helped devise legislation in California that took a novel view of what constitutes a religious institution. It argued that a truly religious entity had to employ and serve mostly people of its own faith.

By adopting the ACLU rule, the Obama administration essentially sought to punish Catholic universities, hospitals, and social service agencies because they do not discriminate against non-Catholics. In other words, if these institutions were to display signs saying, "No Jews Allowed," they would be just fine.

Catholic bishops, led by New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, have made their objections known loud and clear. So have non-Catholics.

Evangelical Protestants, in particular, have joined with their Catholic brothers in registering their outrage. It is apparent to everyone that Obama's war on religion has reached a new level of opposition.

The determination of Obama officials to push forward led them to attack another First Amendment right: the right to free

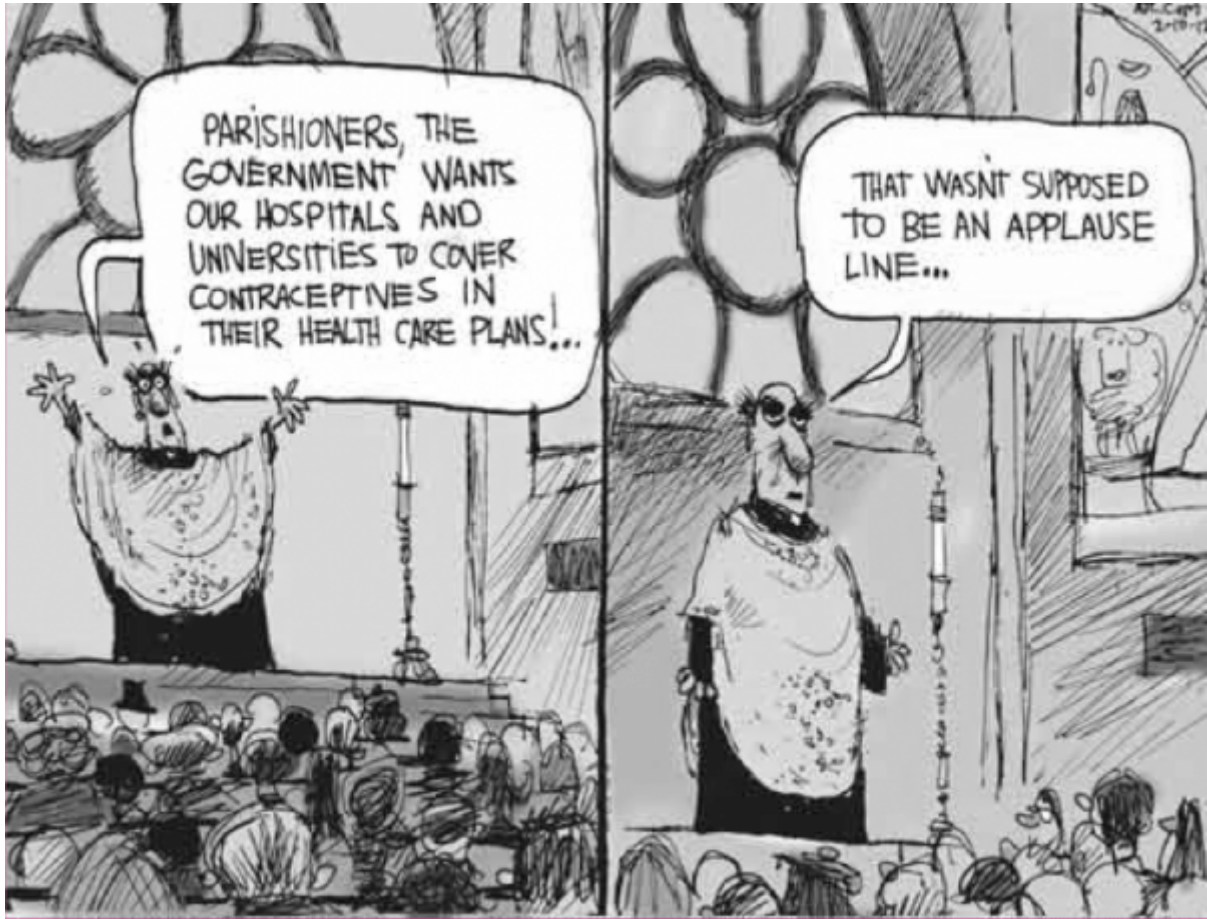
speech. The archbishop of the military services, Thomas Broglio, joined with his fellow bishops in issuing a pastoral letter criticizing the Obama administration for violating the conscience rights of Catholics. He got into trouble with the Army's Office of the Chief of Chaplains when he asked military chaplains to read the letter from the pulpit. The Obama team initially ordered the letter censored, but eventually modified its position after a compromise was met.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled ObamaCare constitutional in June, although it did not rule on the constitutionality of the HHS mandate (it was not promulgated until after the high court agreed to decide the fate of ObamaCare).

It is still hard to get the president and his administration to speak truthfully about this issue. In August, President Obama told a crowd at the University of Denver that "We worked with the Catholic hospitals and universities to find a solution that protects both religious liberty and a woman's health."

Yet as recently as February, Bishop William Lori, who chairs the bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty, said point blank that "no one from this administration has approached the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for discussions on this matter of a possible 'compromise.'" He also made it clear that only after the original HHS mandate was revised did the White House contact Archbishop Dolan.

[/box]



This Mike Luckovich cartoon ran in the *New Haven Register* on February 16. The cartoon was an attack on the parish letters on the threat to religious liberty posed by the Health and Human Services abortifacient mandate. It suggests that Catholic opposition to the mandate is nonexistent.

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THE WAR ON CHRISTMAS

November 20

Alsip, IL – The Freedom From Religion Foundation used the threat of a lawsuit to force the Village of Alsip to cancel the display of a cross on its water tower, which had been a tradition going back decades.



November 27

Madison, WI – The Freedom From Religion Foundation placed its “Natural Nativity Scene” in the Wisconsin State Capitol Rotunda for the second year in a row. It featured Emma Goldman, Darwin, Jefferson, Mark Twain, Einstein, the Statue of Liberty, the goddess Venus and an African American baby girl in the manger. This was done in response to The Wisconsin Family Action’s nativity scene in the Rotunda.

November 29

Little Rock, AR – The Arkansas Society of Freethinkers put up its “Winter Solstice” display on the state capitol grounds for the fourth year in a row to protest the nativity scene, which has been displayed on the grounds for more than fifty years.

November 30

Providence, RI – To avoid any dissent, Governor Lincoln Chafee cancelled the tree-lighting ceremony before re-instating it with only 30-minutes notice. In the run-up to the annual Christmas tree lighting, protestors were expressing their dismay with Gov. Chafee, who persisted in calling it a “holiday tree.” Critics were vocal in their dissent over last year’s “holiday tree” lighting and flooded the governor’s office with thousands of telephone calls in protest, thanks in no small part to the efforts of the Catholic League. Local residents also went to the ceremony to express their outrage.

November 30 – December 19

West Milford, NJ – The Township Council decided to disallow religious holiday displays on public grounds, referring to the “holiday tree” as secular symbol. The mayor said she did not want to “interject faith onto municipal property.” In a ruling at a December 19 council meeting, the Township Attorney declared the displayed tree a “Christmas Tree.”

November 30

Cottondale, FL – At Cottondale Elementary School, a nativity scene was replaced with Frosty the Snowman in compliance with

the Florida Department of Education, which had sent an official to the school to talk about “the legalities of religion in the school systems and the separation of the two.” The decision sparked outrage and controversy. Residents in the community threatened to sue.

November 30

The website, tamponcrafts.com, offered instructions on how to construct nativity scenes out of tampons, including Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the Three Wise Men. The opening line of the website carried these words: “Have a holly, jolly, bloody good Christmas with these tampon crafts.” It advised the reader: “Gather ‘round the manger for the Christmas Miracle. These three kings come bearing gold, frankincense, and...fresh-scented feminine hygiene products.”

December

Century, FL – A short article appeared on NorthEscambia.com in July about the Century Town Council’s plans to budget funds for new Christmas decorations, including a manger scene at town hall. Three days after the article appeared, they received a letter and fax from a Freedom From Religion Foundation attorney claiming a local resident tipped them off about the nativity on public property. The town decided not to put up a scene and instead sold the old nativity scene to the highest bidder.

December 3

Milwaukee, WI – For the second year in a row, the Freedom From Religion Foundation placed their “Winter Solstice” sign in the Milwaukee courthouse to protest what they refer to as an “inappropriate nativity scene.”

December 3

Honolulu, HI – The Hawaii Department of Education caved into the demands of a local atheist activist affiliated with the Freedom From Religion Foundation when it cancelled Moanalua High School’s annual Christmas charity concert. The students

in the award-winning orchestra have raised more than \$200,000 over the past six years for Mercy Ships, a charity which houses doctors on missions in Africa.

December 4

Little Rock, AR – Students at Terry Elementary School were invited to see the play, “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” at a local church. Seeking to avoid controversy, no students were required to attend, and bus service was scheduled for those who wished to go. A controversy ensued when one atheist complained, enlisting the help of the Arkansas Society of Freethinkers. In the aftermath of the controversy, the pastor cancelled its student matinee performances of the play.



The Catholic League's nativity scene in Central Park.

December 5

San Angelo, TX – The Freedom From Religion Foundation sent a letter of complaint on behalf of a local member demanding the removal of the cross which the San Angelo Police Department places on top of its building as part of its annual Christmas display.

December 6 The Atheist Pig website published its official war on Christmas list, advertising “goals of this year’s campaign against the sanctity of Christmas.” There were five goals, the

first two of which were notable. The first goal was to shop for "Holiday presents" and advocated the atheism of Richard Dawkins against the pope's Christmas message. The second goal was "not to give hate groups money," labeling the Salvation Army as a "hate group" for its defense of traditional marriage.

December 10

Anchorage, AK – As part of its anti-Christmas campaign, the Freedom From Religion Foundation ran four signs on ten buses: 1) "Yes, Virginia... There is no God" 2) "Imagine No Religion" 3) "Sleep in on Sundays" 4) "Enjoy Life Now. There is no Afterlife."

December 10

The homosexual lobby waged its own War on Christmas this year by attacking the Salvation Army for its support of traditional marriage. An organized effort to boycott the organization was promoted by the gay website, watermarkonline.com, which asked its readers nationwide not to give to the Salvation Army. Gays in Chicago launched their own campaign to withhold donations. The net result is that more of the needy went without during the Christmas season, due to the efforts of these homosexuals.

December 10

The War on Christmas became particularly vulgar this year when Urban Outfitters issued its seasonal catalog targeting teens. The catalog contained a mug and wrapping paper stating "Merry Christmas bit**s." Several clothing items and gifts displayed the F-word. Among the Christmas gifts was a candle with the F-word on it.

December 10

Niles, IL – The Freedom From Religion Foundation placed a "Winter Solstice" sign in the Village of Niles Plaza to protest the town's life-size nativity scene. It featured the Bill of Rights in a manger surrounded by the Statue of Liberty and three Founding Fathers.

December 11 – January 10

New York, NY – American Atheists attacked Christians with a giant billboard in New York’s Times Square. The message read: “Keep the merry! Dump the myth!” The billboard also depicted Santa as well as Jesus with a Crown of Thorns on the Cross. To see a photograph of the billboard [click [here](#).]

The decision by American Atheists to exploit Jesus crucified as part of its annual attack on Christmas was not hard to explain. In 2010, it ran a billboard on the New Jersey side of the Lincoln Tunnel that said, “You Know It’s a Myth: This Season Celebrate Reason.” The Catholic League answered with a billboard on the New York side of the Lincoln Tunnel which read, “You Know It’s Real: This Season Celebrate Jesus.”

In 2011, the American Atheists billboard outside the Lincoln Tunnel featured a picture of a statue of the Roman god Neptune, a classical portrait of Jesus, a depiction of Santa, and a guy in a devil’s mask. It said they were all myths. Bill Donohue described it as “inane” to the *New York Times*.

In 2012, American Atheists decided to make a big splash. American Atheists and its supporters do not want to be left alone—they want to inflame the passions of those with whom they disagree. Unlike Christians who do not provoke, harass or otherwise mock atheists, American Atheists wants nothing more than to stick it to Christians at Christmastime.

December 12

In 2012, there were instances of denial from many quarters as to the very existence of the War on Christmas. An editorial in the *Duluth News Tribune* questioned, “There’s Still a ‘War on Christmas’?” Atheist Jeff Sorensen flatly declared in the the Huffington Post that “There is no war on Christmas.” *Statesman Journal* columnist Dick Hughes wrote a piece about the “phony and irrelevant War on Christmas.” MSNBC madman Lawrence O’Donnell said the War on Christmas had a “body count” of “zero.” Frank Bruni of the *New York Times* said there could

hardly be a War on Christmas given that “We have God on our dollars, God in our pledge of allegiance, God in our Congress.” The *Boston Globe* editorialized that “Ignoring the ‘war on Christmas’ is the best way to eliminate it altogether.”

December 12

On NBC’s “Today” show, the network’s chief medical editor Nancy Snyderman disparaged the religious aspect of Christmas during a panel discussion. A co-panelist asserted that she focused on the religious meaning of Christmas. Snyderman responded, “I don’t like the religion part. I think religion is what mucks the whole thing up.”

December 13

Missoula, MT – Parents sent an unsigned letter to the superintendent of the Missoula County Public Schools claiming that the songs chosen for the Christmas concert at Chier Carlo Elementary School were not secular. The letter stated: “We have no problem with it being called a Christmas concert, it’s just the fact the material should be secular. Frosty the Snowman, Santa Claus, Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer. These are things that offend no one, but when the children are singing about their lord and savior, Jesus Christ...public school is not the place.”

December 19

New Braunfels, TX – A utility company removed two giant “Keep Christ in Christmas” banners owned by the Knights of Columbus after receiving complaints about the religious nature of the signs. Their removal sparked outrage in the community.

December 21

Cheboygan, MI – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) made a request to the city manager to place their “Winter Solstice” banner in Washington Park to protest the Kiwanis Club’s nativity scene. After the Cheboygan City Council called for a special meeting to give it further consideration, it was

decided to move the nativity off of public property instead of giving equal time to FFRF.

Grassroots Rebellion against the “War on Christmas”

When the “War on Christmas” began in the 1980s, everyone knew our side was on the defensive. In recent years, what began as a battle of advocacy groups has evolved into a true grassroots rebellion. This year, it was all too apparent that we had the militant atheists on the run. The following are stories that indicate this:

September 18

Faribault, MN – Last year, the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) sent a threatening letter to the city on behalf of a local resident and members of FFRF. The letter complained about a nativity that was set up at Buckham Memorial Library each year at city expense. This year, the Faribault City Council voted unanimously to display the nativity on public land. It was an emphatic, grassroots reaffirmation of a local Christmas tradition. One Councilor said, “This really bugs me. I mean, one person complained. There are 17,000 members [of FFRF] in the whole nation. That’s really a minority. We’re the majority here.”

October 26

Athens, TX – Henderson County officially denied the Freedom From Religion Foundation’s (FFRF) request to display an atheist banner at Christmastime on the grounds of the Henderson County Courthouse, where a nativity scene is displayed every year. In 2011, FFRF also tried to display a banner, but it was promptly removed by Henderson County deputies. This was a victory for religious liberty.

November 15

Leesburg, VA – This year the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved “a county-sponsored Christmas display which included a nativity scene and menorah—but banned any

other unattended religious displays on the property.” Rick Wingrove, director of the local chapter of American Atheists, received a permit to have an attended display featuring banners with quotes from famous atheists and readings from Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*.

November 28

Warren, MI – A nativity scene on a public median on Mound Road was removed in 2008 because the Road Commission capitulated to a complaint by the Freedom From Religion Foundation. In what was a victory for religious liberty thanks to the Thomas More Law Center, the nativity returned to its location after a four-year absence. The nativity belongs to a 76-year old citizen, whose family had been setting up the manger scene for over 60 years.

November 28

Crockett, TX – A nativity scene outside a courthouse incited the Freedom From Religion Foundation to send a letter to the Houston County Judge’s Office in protest. A Houston County judge said, “We have a long standing tradition here. We want the nativity scene; we feel it’s within our rights to have it and we’ll keep it for the holiday period.”

November 28

Morganton, NC – When officials at Western Piedmont College replaced “Christmas” with “holiday” in a student club’s announcement of a Christmas tree sale for charity, the Alliance Defending Freedom sent a letter condemning the prohibition of “Christmas” as unconstitutional. In a clear victory for religious liberty, officials at the college changed “holiday” back to “Christmas.”

November 29

Woodcliff Lake, NJ – What was originally advertised as a “Community” or “Holiday” tree lighting was renamed a “Christmas” tree lighting. It was reported in the *Cliffview Pilot* that the New Jersey chapter of the ACLU was contacted.

But, the mayor stood firm: “There’s no controversy. There’s no story. It is a Christmas tree and a Menorah lighting.”

November 29 – January 5

Santa Monica, CA – In 2011, atheists were driven to display their hate-filled message alongside religious symbols in Palisades Park. In order to avoid controversy in 2012, local officials practiced their neutrality by censoring all displays equally. A federal judge agreed with city officials and ruled that displays of any kind would destroy the turf and obstruct the ocean views in Palisades Park, though this apparently never happened for the 60 years that a crèche had been displayed there.

An attorney representing nativity scene advocates said, “The city, on the advice of its city attorney, has abdicated its duty to protect the First Amendment’s guarantees of free speech and the free exercise of religion within a traditional public forum, a city park. The City Council members surrendered to the angry mob and in the process have announced to the world that religious freedom can be sought elsewhere but not in Santa Monica.”

In response to the ban on unattended permanent nativities in public spaces, church organizations exploited a loophole and responded with live displays of people reenacting the Christmas story. In addition, a private business stepped forward and donated space on private land nearby for the permanent nativities.

December 3 – 6

Ellwood City, PA – A First Amendment lawsuit threatened by the Freedom From Religion Foundation resulted in the removal of a nativity scene from the front of the Ellwood City municipal building, ending a fifty-year tradition. Where there had been a nativity at the municipal building, there now stood a snowman and Santa Claus. Grassroots pushback took two forms: A new, larger nativity was put up on private property at a

former church a few blocks away, thanks to the owner, a local attorney. Citizens circumvented the ban when members of Ellwood City Moose Lodge No. 93 took the initiative and put a nativity on a trailer attached to a truck and drove it in front of the municipal building to display it there.

December 6 – 7

Newhall, CA – Residents at a senior citizens' apartment complex were told by the management company, JB Partners Group Inc., to remove their Christmas tree because it is a religious symbol. The residents, including those who were not Christian, wanted the Christmas tree. The Catholic League responded decisively by asking members to e-mail the Human Resources department at JB Partners. The e-mail campaign worked; the Christmas tree was returned.

December 8

Tulsa, OK – For the second year in a row, the Tulsa Christmas Parade took place in opposition to the "Holiday Parade of Lights," a parade which originally had Christmas in its name. A group opposing the "sensitive" name change formed their own parade and restored the word "Christmas." Grassroots resistance yielded crowds showing support for the Christmas parade.

December 14

Chicago, IL – The Arlington Heights Park District approved the display of a nativity scene on public property after intervention by the Thomas More Society when a donated nativity was initially rejected by Park District officials. The display was finally set up apart from the annual seasonal lights display in the same park and the nativity display was marked private.

December 12

Woodbridge, NJ – After the Freedom From Religion Foundation objected to the display of a nativity on town hall property in 2011, the display was late in being set up in 2012. When a

local media outlet noted that the nativity was still missing from town hall on December 10, there was an outpouring of comments on the outlet's Facebook page. The nativity was erected after the city council ruled that the nativity could be put up again so long as it is accompanied with other non-secular decoration.

December 12

Oskaloosa, IA – In a special meeting that overflowed with concerned residents, the Oskaloosa City Council voted to keep a nativity scene in the city's square after the city manager was contacted by a local resident who was offended by the nativity. After the city manager received the letter, the nativity was removed the next day. The city council then voted to add a group of decorations to the city square that would then also include the nativity.

December 28

Pitman, NJ – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) placed a banner saying "Keep Saturn in Saturnalia" in response to the Knights of Columbus banner saying "Keep Christ in Christmas" that was hung between a privately-owned building and a privately-owned utility pole in the heart of the business district. FFRF claimed that they were given the "runaround" by borough officials and were not allowed to display their banner. A militant atheist group known for bullying Christians at Christmastime was now claiming to be victimized.

December 29

McDowell County, NC – More than 50 people rallied in defense of a courthouse nativity scene after Americans United for Separation of Church and State asked that the county remove the crèche or make it part of a larger, more secular display. "We have got to stop being the silent majority," said one local resident.

Christmas Vandalism

During each Christmas season, our desks are loaded with stories on Christmas vandalism. This year was no different. Here is a list of incidents that came to our attention:

November 22

Ulster, NY – Thieves stole 60 Christmas trees from the Boy Scout tree lot. The trees were being sold to raise money for the local Boy Scout camp and amounted to a loss of about \$3,000.

November 23

Nederland, TX – The nativity display of a Wesley United Methodist church was vandalized when it was run over by a car in a drive-by attack.

November 25

Spartanburg, SC – Christmas decorations were stolen from several front yards of homes within a two-mile radius.

November 28

Portland, OR – Vandals damaged and decapitated statues of baby Jesus, Joseph and Mary located at “The Grotto,” the popular name of The National Sanctuary of Our Sorrowful Mother.

November 29

Beloit, WI – Vandals cut the light cords to Christmas decorations on four separate occasions in a six-week assault on the elaborate Christmas decorations of a local resident.

November 30

Huntington, WV – A hand-painted antique baby Jesus figurine was stolen from a nativity scene set up on the porch of a local business office. It was defaced with sexual obscenities, anti-religious statements, anarchy symbols, an upside down cross, and the numbers 666, along with other offensive markings. The figurine’s eyes were blackened. Horns were drawn on each side of the head.

December 3

Shrewsbury, MA – At St. Anne's Parish, thousands of dollars in Christmas presents and gift cards were stolen by a thief who kicked in the storage unit behind the church. The gifts were collected for the Giving Tree, a project that provides gifts for 300 impoverished children.

December 4

Madison, AL – An entire nativity scene was stolen from the front yard of a home. It reappeared in a local high school classroom and was later returned to its rightful owner.

December 5 – December 12

Granger, IN – In a rash of incidents, thieves stole Christmas decorations and presents from homes all over town.

December 7

Warren, MN – Thieves broke into a church and stole a Christmas tree containing ornaments, a gold cross and statues of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

December 10

Forest, VA – Thieves stole and destroyed 12 nativity scene figures from Shiloh United Methodist Church, amounting to an estimated \$2,000-\$2,500 in property damage.

December 11

Angus, MN – A Bible, a Christmas tree, Christmas ornaments, a baby Jesus sculpture, and sculptures of Mary and Joseph were stolen during a burglary at a rural church.

December 12

Brooklyn, NY – A four-foot white porcelain statue of Jesus was stolen from its pedestal outside Saints Peter and Paul Church in Williamsburg.

December 14

Staten Island, NY – A vandal shattered a one-foot-tall statue of Jesus and broke a five-foot statue of the Blessed Mother inside Our Lady of Good Counsel Roman Catholic Church.

December 19

Burlington, OH – Vandals broke lights and stole a Santa Clause figure and a baby Jesus figure at the playground of an apartment complex.

December 22

Huntington Beach, CA – At St. Bonaventure Catholic Church, vandals defaced a nativity scene. The damage included drawings of the numbers 666, a swastika, phallic symbols, “Heil Hitler” and curse words on nativity figures. Vandals also inscribed “Hail [sic] Hitler” on the forehead of a baby Jesus figurine outside a home elsewhere in town and drew a Hitler mustache on its face. A statue of one of the wise men was also defaced with a swastika.

December 23

Federalburg, MD – Two men drove a truck through the Federalburg Historical Society’s Christmas nativity. Five of the thirteen figurines in the illuminated nativity were decimated.

December 24

Tacoma, WA – During Christmas Eve Mass at Holy Cross Catholic Church, six windows were broken. Police were investigating the incident as a possible hate crime.

December 30

Pearl River, NY – The community manger in Braunsdorf Park was vandalized when someone spray-painted the face of the baby Jesus figure brown.

January 2

Clearwater, FL – Just after Christmas, Clearwater Central Catholic High School was vandalized. Anti-Christian symbols were spray-painted on school buildings, vehicles, and a statue of the Virgin Mary. The symbols included pentagrams, upside-down crosses and the number 666.

November-December

Figures of the baby Jesus were stolen from homes, businesses or churches in the following locations: Birmingham, Alabama; Antelope, California; Live Oak, California; Torrington, Connecticut; Frostproof, Florida; South Bend, Indiana; Quincy, Massachusetts; Menominee, Michigan; Mt. Pleasant, Michigan; Dover, New Hampshire; Burlington, Ohio; Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Chambersburg, Pennsylvania; Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania; West Manchester Township, Pennsylvania; Moundsville, West Virginia; and Clintonville, Wisconsin.

This ad appeared on the op-ed page of the December 17, 2012 edition of the *New York Times*:

NEW YORK TIMES SALUTES POPE PIUS XII

On Christmas Day 1942, as the Holocaust was raging, the New York Times published an editorial on the heroics of Pope Pius XII. Here is a selection from that statement that ran 70 years ago:

"No Christmas sermon reaches a larger congregation than the message Pope Pius XII addresses to a war-torn world at this season. This Christmas more than ever he is a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent. The Pulpit whence he speaks is more than ever like the Rock on which the Church was founded, a tiny island lashed and surrounded by a sea of war.

"Pope Pius expresses as passionately as any leader on our side the war aims of the struggle for freedom when he says that those who aim at building a new world must fight for free choice of government and religious order. They must refuse that the state should make of individuals a herd of whom the state disposes as if they were a lifeless thing."

The previous Christmas was also marked by a New York Times editorial:

"The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas.

"In calling for a 'real new order' based on 'liberty, justice, and love,' to be attained only by a 'return to social and international principles capable of creating a barrier against the abuse of liberty and the abuse of power,' the Pope put himself squarely against Hitlerism. Recognizing that there is no road open to agreement between belligerents 'whose reciprocal war aims and programs seem to be irreconcilable,' he left no doubt that the Nazi aims are also irreconcilable with his own conception of a Christian peace."

We feel confident that when the entire Vatican archives are released, there will be even more reason to salute the heroics of Pope Pius XII.



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