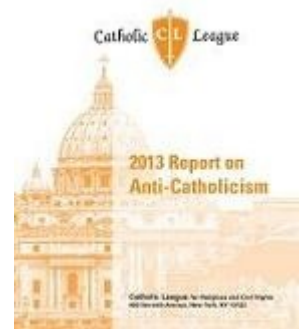


PREFACE

We had another roller-coaster ride in 2013, witnessing many impressive victories, and enduring some recalcitrant anti-Catholic offenders. As usual, we were forced to move quickly, jumping from one fire to another. But that's the fun part of working here: we never have a dull moment; we must constantly keep on our toes.



Many of the veteran staff members were back. Bernadette Brady is still steering the ship, and Alex Mejia, Tom Arkin, Mary Ellen Kiely, and Suzon Loreto are still managing our processing department; all of them make me proud. Don Lauer and Michael O'Halloran were back, helping out in a myriad of ways. We also picked up the youthful and talented services of Katelynn Schmitterer, John Mulvey and Matt Bartlett. Helping us out occasionally was Rick Hinshaw; his keen editing eye has been a blessing. I completed 20 years as president and CEO on July 1.

Most people I meet are surprised that we don't have more staff members. I firmly believe that one of the reasons we succeed is our small size: the Catholic League is not a think tank—it is a media-driven, civil rights, advocacy organization that must be able to move at lightning speed, and juggle many issues at the same time.

Father Philip Eichner, the chairman of the board of the Catholic League, completed his 21st year. He is a very strong proponent of keeping the league lean; he has seen what happens when size becomes sclerotic.

The annual report is not dispositive of all we do, but it does give evidence of why we exist. Anti-Catholicism is sadly tolerated at a time when much progress in curbing bigotry has

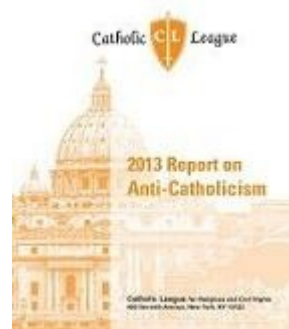
been made by other demographic groups. The reasons for this condition are complex, but they are unacceptable regardless. Our job is to continue the fight: at least we know that our effort is on the side of the angels.

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The biggest Catholic story of 2013 was seeing Pope Benedict XVI pass the baton to Pope Francis. Our new pontiff wasted no time becoming a media superstar, and by the year's end, he was on the cover of *Time* magazine, featured as the "Person of the Year."



The Holy Father's humility, and outreach to every segment of the population, touched people the world over. We moved quickly at the Catholic League to give him the kind of applause he deserved: we published a tribute to him on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*, just a month after his election.

Throughout the course of the year, we chronicled the pope's statements, and the reactions to them. While there was much to cheer about, there were more than a few commentators who sought to manipulate public opinion by offering their own politicized interpretations of what Francis said. In some quarters, the hyperventilation reached absurd levels: many pundits would have had us believe that he was going to turn the Church inside out.

In 2013, I decided to disclose how the IRS came after the Catholic League in 2008. No sooner had Senator Barack Obama become president when the IRS contacted me: we were being subjected to an investigation to see whether we had violated its strictures on political engagement. When it was all over, we were essentially told to be more careful; no penalties were levied.

For prudential reasons, I chose not to publicize the IRS probe until 2013. But when news reports emerged in the spring about the way the IRS was selectively targeting conservative organizations for scrutiny, I decided to tell our story. All I had done to trigger the investigation was to issue news releases that were critical of candidate Obama, most of which had to do with his defense of selective infanticide and abortion-on-demand.

The defense of human life is the first civil right, and it is not one that I will ever shy away from. I also exposed the connection between Catholics United, a George Soros-funded phony Catholic group, and the IRS: it was they who were behind the probe. At the request of an outside lawyer, the IRS was contacted in 2013 asking for backup information regarding this episode, but it did not yield new information.

When government, especially the federal government, threatens civil liberties, it demands a strong pushback. The Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate, issued as an edict by Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, continued to enjoin the Catholic League, and others, in protesting its requirement that Catholic non-profits, as well as businesses owned by objecting parties, pay for abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization, and contraception in its insurance policies. The issue had not been decided by year's end.

Every time the Obama administration offered what it said was an accommodation, or compromise, we learned that it was mostly window dressing. Having a third party pay for what Catholic

non-profits were still required to authorize was not sufficient; all we wanted was the status quo ante.

Having to pay for services deemed immoral was bad enough, but what was most objectionable about the HHS mandate was an abuse of power: the government decided to redefine what a Catholic organization was. For centuries, Catholic-run facilities proudly hired and served people of all faiths, never discriminating on the basis of religion. Now they were being punished for doing so.

To wit: the mandate said that any religious entity that hires and serves mostly people of other religions is disqualified from the traditional religious exemption. The ruling is perverse. That is why we started a petition on our website; we sent tens of thousands of signatures to Secretary Sebelius, gathered over a period of just six weeks, asking her to rescind the mandate.

Violations of religious liberty in the armed forces occurred with regularity in 2013; our men and women in uniform were constantly being barred from exercising their constitutional rights. Accordingly, we supported the Military Religious Freedom Protection Act, a bill sponsored by Rep. Tim Huelskamp that would rectify this problem.

In the fall, we won an impressive victory for an Army soldier in Oklahoma: she had been told that she could not go to Mass on Sunday because she could not find another Catholic to go with her (they have a buddy system on the base at Fort Sill). We recommended that Army officials allow someone to escort her to Mass, and they acceded to our request.

When the federal government was partially shut down, the Obama administration retaliated by denying some Catholic priests from servicing Catholics in the armed forces. Priests who were contracted by the government to say Mass, for instance, were told that there weren't sufficient funds to pay them. So many

volunteered. Diabolically, they were denied.

Friends of the administration, such as the ACLU, also sought to squash the religious liberty rights of Catholics. It sued the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for its pro-life policy. To be specific, in 2010, a Catholic hospital in Michigan tended to a non-Catholic woman who was pregnant, and who was having complications, but did not inform her of her option to abort her baby. So the ACLU decided to sue the USCCB, holding it responsible for the hospital's directives. In essence, the bishops were sued for their pro-life convictions.

One of the biggest issues we dealt with in 2013 was a bill sponsored by a California lawmaker that would lift the statute of limitations for one year on cases of the sexual abuse of minors, but would not apply to public institutions. Few on either side denied the obvious: the legislation was designed to "get the Catholic Church." It was not drafted to stop sexual abuse, for if it were, it would have focused on the public schools.

We started pressing this issue in June, and in October, we won. Had it not been for Governor Jerry Brown's veto—he proved to be courageous in the face of zealots—the Catholic Church in California would have been subjected to endless lawsuits, offering no justice to real victims. Besides, a bill that addressed this had already been passed in 2008, making moot the need for a new one. This was all about politics—the politics of bigotry.

The bishops held tough, especially its leader in this effort, Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez. We pulled out all the stops: I wrote a six-page letter to all the legislators and the governor. We also contacted over 1,000 parishes in California, and every one of our members in the state. We spoke to the media, and got our members nationwide to join the effort.

Any bill on the sexual abuse of minors that gave the public schools a pass could not be taken seriously. We detailed exactly what was going on in the schools, making it impossible for the bill's supporters to claim ignorance. In his statement explaining his veto, Governor Brown cited the tragedy of abuse that had plagued Miramonte Elementary School in Los Angeles; I had written extensively on it in my letter to him and to the lawmakers.

We came to the defense of many priests and bishops who were being unfairly targeted, especially in Philadelphia, Newark, and St. Paul-Minneapolis. Msgr. William Lynn, who had been unjustly imprisoned for 18 months on charges that he sanctioned the sexual abuse of a minor by a priest, had his conviction overturned at the end of the year. Archbishop John Myers of Newark, and Archbishop John Nienstedt of St. Paul and Minneapolis, were both the targets of activists bent on scoring points.

We had a very busy year on the nation's campuses. A faculty member at Florida Atlantic University asked students to write the name "Jesus" on a piece of paper, fold it up and stomp on it. When a student refused and protested to the professor's supervisor, he was suspended from class. I asked the professor why he didn't use "Obama" in place of "Jesus," but he did not reply. However, he was forced to apologize, and was placed on administrative leave for the rest of the semester.

A female student at Carnegie Mellon University was forced to apologize for her obscene and bigoted stunt. She decided it would be fun to dress as the pope at the annual school parade, going naked from the waist down. To top things off, she shaved her pubic hair in the shape of a cross. Pittsburgh Bishop David Zubik was not too happy, and we expressed our outrage as well. Moreover, the president of the university didn't take kindly to her behavior. The student was hit with a misdemeanor by campus police.

A bid to censor the chaplain at the Newman Center at George Washington University failed, but not without a protest. Two gay students sought his ouster because he believes in the teachings of the Catholic Church. To be exact, the priest refused to give his blessings to their homosexual relationship. The attempt to muzzle his free speech, and to punish him for his exercise of religious liberty, did not succeed. The leadership of Washington Archbishop Donald Cardinal Wuerl, and our protest, proved determinative.

When a professor from the University of South Florida abused his academic freedom by insulting Catholics at an off-campus event, we jumped on the issue. In a totally gratuitous, and downright obscene statement, the professor equated priests with feces. We moved with dispatch to contact academic and administrative officials at the university, as well as members of the Florida Board of Governors. We also gave it media publicity. The professor apologized and was reprimanded by his superiors.

To show that we don't overreact, we did not call for sanctions against the president of Ohio State University after it was disclosed that he made untoward comments about Catholics when discussing the University of Notre Dame with his athletic council. The remarks were made in jest. I appeared on "Good Morning America" to explain why not every comment of an arguably anti-Catholic nature is going to set off the alarms at the Catholic League. Political correctness is just as offensive when committed by those who normally object to its prevalence.

Colm Toibin's book, *The Testament of Mary*, became the subject of a Broadway play, opening at the Walter Kerr Theatre. It was not anti-Catholic, so we did not protest it, but we did draw attention to its decidedly biased theme. The Virgin Mary in Toibin's imagination was not the pious, obsequious mother of God. No, she was an independent-minded woman who said the crucifixion was "not worth it." But the public was not amused.

The play was scheduled to run 12 weeks; it closed after two.

Smearing the clergy is nothing new, especially when it comes to those in the creative arts, but Alex Gibney took it to new heights in his documentary, "Mea Maxima Culpa." It debuted on HBO, and it not only portrayed Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) as a miscreant, it labeled him a "criminal" for his role in supposedly failing to discipline molesting priests. Laurie Goodstein, a reporter for the *New York Times*, showed her bias by signing on as a producer of this flick.

The movie says Cardinal Ratzinger covered up the deeds of Father Lawrence Murphy, a Milwaukee priest who molested deaf boys in the 1950s. But no one contacted the authorities about Murphy until the mid-1970s (following a probe, the case was dropped), and it wasn't until 1996 that the Vatican was contacted. Instead of dropping an investigation—the statute of limitations had long expired—a trial was ordered. Ratzinger wasn't even at the trial, and indeed it wasn't until 2001 that he was asked to police these kinds of cases. When he was in command, he moved quickly and fairly to adjudicate these matters. In short, he was libeled.

Another politicized documentary, "How to Survive a Plague," attempted to portray AIDS patients as victims of the Catholic Church. Based on a book by David France, the movie refused to hold those who chose to live a life of sexual recklessness accountable for their behavior. Predictably, it showed the Nazi-like behavior of ACT-UP—gay militants disrupting Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral, spitting the Eucharist on the floor—in a sympathetic way. Michael Moore, a left-wing activist and producer, promoted ACT-UP's fascistic tactics as a legitimate response to oppression.

"Philomena" captured the attention of movie critics everywhere, touting it as the courageous story of a poor woman who had her baby stolen from her by nuns in Ireland in the 1950s; the cruel sisters then allegedly sold her son for a

profit. In fact, the woman was pregnant out-of-wedlock, had no husband, was abandoned by her family, and was taken in by nuns to care for her and her baby. No one stole her child—Philomena put her son up for adoption when she was 22—and the nuns did not charge the American adoptive parents a dime. Moreover, scurrilous events were made up out of whole cloth, and attributed to nuns who could not possibly have been guilty; they were dead.

Critics of the Catholic Church embraced “Philomena” the way they did “The Magdalene Sisters,” another tale of woe that was based more on fiction than fact. I wrote a booklet, *Myths of the Magdalene Laundries*, that was largely based on the McAleese Report, a study by the Irish government. In it, I examined the origins of the many myths that have surfaced about the laundries. Virtually all the horror stories that have been told—nuns cruelly torturing and sexually abusing “fallen women”—are lies. The booklet was widely distributed, and was not challenged by anyone.

Many late-night television hosts took unfair shots at the Catholic Church, continuing to feed the lie that most priests are abusers. We know that most of the abuse that took place—its heyday was the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s—was done by homosexuals, not pedophiles. Yet to simply cite this fact (the data are taken from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice reports on this subject) is to run the risk of being labeled a homophobe. Let me say it again: No, most homosexual priests are not molesters, but most of the molesters have been gay. The data are not debatable.

None of this matters to those who hate the Church, and no one in the entertainment industry hates Catholicism more than Bill Maher. The man is literally off-the-charts in his bigotry. Practically every week on his HBO show he made obscene cracks about the pope, bishops and priests.

Toward the end of the year, I enlisted the help of the bishops

to press Time Warner, HBO's parent company, to speak to Maher and get him to stop his anti-Catholic crusade. If anyone doubts there is anti-Catholicism in the U.S. today, let him name just one entertainer who comes even close to Maher in viciously smearing some other segment of society. It can't be done.

On a more optimistic note, the proverbial "War on Christmas" showed signs of abating. It seems to have peaked in the middle-late part of the first decade of this century, and though it is hardly over, there are signs that Christians are more attentive to fighting these battles in their own communities. At the national level, militant atheist organizations were still trashing Christmas, though some of their tactics made many secularists wince.

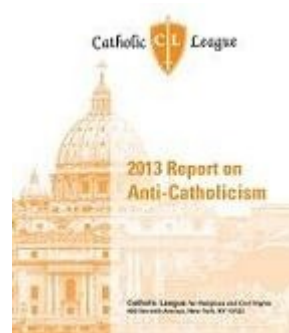
We proudly displayed our life-size nativity scene in Central Park, as we do every year. But in 2013, we did something different: we posted an enormous billboard in Times Square that read, "Send Modern-Day Scrooges a Message. *Celebrate the Prince of Peace*. Merry Christmas. Happy New Year."

To win the culture war is important to us, but to do it without a sense of humor is not the Catholic League way.

ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

January 2 – October 16

Jackson, OH – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) demanded that an Ohio school district remove a depiction of Jesus Christ that hung in the "Hall of Honor" in Jackson Middle School. The picture was a decades-old student initiative dating back to 1947. The



district superintendent refused to remove the image unless ordered otherwise by a judge or the school board.

On February 7, the ACLU of Ohio and FFRF filed a lawsuit seeking a court order requiring the school to remove the picture and forbidding its re-hanging or any similar display in the future, claiming that the portrait was an unconstitutional promotion of religion in a public school. The district's insurance company declined to cover litigation expenses. Faced with the potential costs of a federal lawsuit against the display, the superintendent of Jackson City schools made the decision to remove the portrait. "Obviously, the majority of people in our community wanted it to stay up somewhere in the school district. This all happened so fast, I don't know that anybody has had the time to digest it," said the superintendent.

The painting was moved to an art-room storage area where it was out of sight, but the plaintiffs were not satisfied. They argued that someone could still see the portrait. A settlement was reached in October that not only resulted in the school removing the portrait, but also paying \$95,000 to the ACLU and FFRF for damages and legal fees.

January 4

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the ACLU was opposed to federal funds for damaged or destroyed houses of worship. One ACLU official said "To rebuild houses of worship is a form of compelled support for religion, which is exactly what the First Amendment is designed to protect against." The Catholic League argued against this position. Bill Donohue wrote a letter to House Speaker John Boehner asking him to support the amendment to the Hurricane Sandy recovery appropriations bill that was introduced by outgoing Senator Joseph Lieberman. The bill said that damaged or destroyed houses of worship deserve federal assistance. Donohue also contacted FEMA chief Craig Fugate urging him to adopt a more inclusive FEMA policy that does not discriminate against religious entities.

January 7

Activists mobilized in response to Pope Benedict XVI's annual Christmas address to the College of Cardinals with a petition calling for the Obama administration to designate the Catholic Church as a "hate group." The individual behind the initiative claimed that Pope Benedict XVI's defense of Church teaching on homosexuality and the family in his address implied that homosexuals are "sub-human." The petition cited both the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League in arguing that the Church meets criteria to be called a "hate group." The petition was added to the White House petition website, "We the People," on Christmas Day. The goal was to reach a total of 25,000 signatures by January 24 in order to receive an official review from the Obama administration.

The petition did not reach its goal and was subsequently removed from the White House petition website.

January 18

Conway, AR – The Conway Public School District banned pastors and religious groups from visiting during the lunch hour, after the Freedom From Religion Foundation filed a complaint against the practice, calling it "predatory."

January 22

Buffalo Grove, IL – The U.S. Supreme Court rejected an atheist activist's final appeal in his lawsuit challenging the use of state funds to renovate the Bald Knob Cross, an 11-story cross that stands near Alto Pass on Bald Knob Mountain, southern Illinois' tallest peak.

February 13

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, Americans United issued a press release effectively arguing that houses of worship should be discriminated against. Specifically, it urged the U.S. House of Representatives to vote against HR 592, a measure that would authorize FEMA to issue grants to churches as well as other religious institutions.

February 14

Dixie County, FL – A federal district court dismissed a lawsuit filed by the ACLU against Dixie County. The ACLU sued the county after it allowed a private citizen to erect a six-ton monument of the Ten Commandments at the courthouse.

February 15

Cincinnati, OH – An administrator at Purcell Marian High School was fired for supporting homosexual marriage on his website. A petition in support of the administrator was delivered to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The Archdiocese did not budge.

February 19

The House of Representatives approved legislation allowing use of federal aid to rebuild churches and synagogues damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The ACLU was opposed to this measure. It wanted the government to discriminate against houses of worship, even though the hurricane did not.

February 20 – May 3

Monroe, NC – In February, the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) sent a letter to Union County officials threatening a lawsuit because of the Christian prayers with which commissioners frequently open their public meetings. FFRF demanded that the commissioners stop their prayers. In May, FFRF issued another letter with the same threat. An attorney for FFRF said, "This stays on our radar. If they do not change [in the coming months] we are considering filing a lawsuit."

Local residents were unfazed. Union County board Chair Jerry Simpson said, "I'm not aware of anybody in Wisconsin who voted for me [FFRF is based in Wisconsin]." Commissioner Jonathan Thomas said, "Nobody tells me how to pray."

March 3 – March 31

Austin and Dallas, TX – On March 3, American Atheists launched a billboard campaign which included two anti-Catholic

billboards, one in Spanish and one in English. Both featured a picture of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI alongside the words, "The Church protected priests who abused children – *New York Times* (3/24/2010) / Fed up? So are we." The billboards also advertised the group's 50th anniversary celebration and convention, which ran in Austin from March 29 to 31, from Good Friday through Easter Sunday. American Atheists did not choose to have its conference at the end of Ramadan or Yom Kippur. Its billboard campaign and conference were created and timed to give offense to Catholics in particular.

April 8

Catholics for Choice wrote a letter to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius in which they grossly misrepresented who they are. The group wrote "on behalf of the more than 68 million Catholics in the United States—63 percent of whom support coverage for birth control in private or government-run plans, and more than 80 percent of whom believe that using contraception is a moral choice." This was a blatant attempt to subvert the U.S. Bishops in their defense of religious liberty in opposition to the HHS mandate by claiming a parallel magisterium.

April 11

Oceanside, NY – A contingent of gay and gay-friendly organizations, GLAAD, Dignity and Faithful America, descended upon the Diocese of Rockville Centre's central administrative buildings to hold a press conference requesting that Nicholas Coppola be reinstated to the post he had held at St. Anthony's Parish. The protestors allegedly brought over 18,000 petition signatures with them, which they planned to present to Rockville Centre Bishop William F. Murphy.

Coppola had been dismissed from his voluntary positions at the parish after it was disclosed that he had "married" his boyfriend late in 2012. When the news of this case broke, Bill Donohue stated that internal Church affairs were not public business, and this applied to both outside advocacy groups as

well as government agencies. Among those affairs are employment decisions. "Just as it is the right of a yeshiva to insist that its employees abide by Judaic strictures," Donohue argued, "it is the right of a Catholic school to insist that its employees respect Catholic teachings."

When the "protestors" arrived at the diocesan building, they were met by a security guard who took the boxes and promised to pass them on. It was discovered that two of the boxes were empty; the contents of the third box were so small it could easily have fit into a large envelope.

April 16

In a Huffington Post article titled "Fundamentalist Christian Monsters: Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," Mikey Weinstein, the founder and president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, made the claim that Christians in the military "terrorize their fellow Americans by forcing their weaponized and twisted version of Christianity upon their helpless subordinates in our nation's armed forces." The American Center for Law and Justice catalogued the terms he used to describe Christians in the military. They included the following:

- "monsters"
- "bloody monsters"
- "gangs of fundamentalist Christian monsters"
- "monsters who terrorize"
- "weaponized and twisted version of Christianity"
- "bigots"
- "stuck pigs"
- "senseless and cowardly squalling of human monsters"
- "evil"
- "bandits"
- "stenchful substances"
- "blinding bigotry"
- "hate groups"
- "hatemongers"

- “die-hard enemies of the United States Constitution”
- “putrid theology”
- “reign of theocratic terror”
- “oppression”
- “monstrously savage”

April 19

San Francisco, CA – The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, an anti-Catholic group made up of homosexuals who dress up as nuns, held an event called “Hunky Jesus: The Second Coming.” The advertisement included the following: “Wanna try and win that crown of thorns?” It advised contestants to “please keep your Holy Grail tucked inside that loin cloth.” The event was a clear attack on Catholics and had been originally scheduled for Easter.

April 23

Mikey Weinstein, president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, met with several military leaders at the Pentagon “to express his concerns on religious issues in the military.” On April 16, Weinstein had published a piece in the Huffington Post in which he said he is fighting “incredibly well-funded gangs of fundamentalist Christian monsters” who force “their weaponized and twisted version of Christianity upon their helpless subordinates in our nation’s armed forces.” The meeting and article came at a time of reports claiming that Defense Department policy against “proselytism” would put Christians at risk of facing court martial for sharing their religious beliefs. At issue was uncertainty over what constitutes “proselytism” and what constitutes freedom of religious speech. Activists exploited this issue in their attempt to ban Christianity from the armed services altogether.

May 8

Kountze, TX – A state district court ruled that no law “prohibits cheerleaders from using religious-themed banners at school sporting events.” The Freedom From Religion Foundation

(FFRF) had argued that banners used by cheerleaders at Kountze High School football games were unconstitutional because they contained Bible verses, thus advocating a particular religion. This marked the conclusion of a legal battle initiated by FFRF. This was a victory for religious liberty.

April 19

Jefferson City, MO – Missouri's House of Worship Protection Act went into effect in 2012. It protects worshipers by labeling it a crime if a person "intentionally injures, intimidates, or interferes with any person exercising the right to religious freedom or who is seeking access to a house of worship." In 2012, 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 claiming that the law was unconstitutional. On April 19, a district judge ruled against SNAP's argument, and the House of Worship Protection Act was ruled constitutional. Thus, SNAP's members who violated it could expect punishment. Furthermore, the suit was dismissed with prejudice, thus prohibiting it from being re-filed ever again.

May 31

Elmore County, ID – In the dining hall of Mountain Home Air Force Base hung a painting that included an image of a medieval crusader in the background with a depiction of an Air Force officer in the foreground. The painting featured the word "integrity" and referenced Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God." Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) founder Mikey Weinstein called the Pentagon to demand its removal. He gave officials one hour to comply. The picture was gone less than an hour later. MRFF praised the action in a column called, "The Pentagon Most Certainly Is Listening to Mikey Weinstein." MRFF also stated that the commander of the 366th Fighter Wing "told Weinstein that he will be ordering another inspection to rid his base of anything else like that in the dining hall."

June 3

Cincinnati, OH – A lesbian teacher at a Catholic school was dismissed from her post after becoming pregnant via artificial insemination, thus violating the terms of her contract, which expressly stipulated compliance with Church teaching. She won a federal anti-discrimination lawsuit against the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, effectively punishing the archdiocese for exercising its autonomy.

June 3

Lake Elsinore, CA – The American Humanist Association sued the city of Elsinore for funding a monument depicting a soldier kneeling at a cross. The Pacific Justice Institute represented the city. In July a federal judge ruled in favor of the American Humanist Association and banned the city from constructing the monument.

June 14

The Hague, Netherlands – The International Criminal Court (ICC) decided not to investigate or prosecute Pope Benedict XVI. On September 13, 2011, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) had announced that it asked the ICC to prosecute Pope Benedict XVI, and other high ranking Catholic leaders, for “crimes against humanity.” The next day Bill Donohue wrote a letter to Luis Moreno-Ocampo at The Hague detailing the fraudulent, dishonest, politicized, and anti-Catholic history of SNAP. The Catholic League’s goal was to subvert SNAP’s efforts, and the Catholic League won.

The ICC officially tossed the bogus complaint filed by SNAP and the Center for Constitutional Rights; the latter is a far-left-wing group that specializes in defending Muslim terrorists sitting in Guantanamo Bay. The ICC rejected the bid to even investigate the Holy See.

SNAP leaders Barbara Blaine and David Clohessy, both of whom have been involved in covering up for sexual abusers, claimed they were “neither deterred nor discouraged by this news.”

This was a major defeat for the professional victims' lobby.

June 16

Chicago, IL – A protest organized by the Rainbow Sash Movement and Gay Liberation Network was staged outside of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church on the 25th anniversary of the Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach. They could be heard shouting outside during Mass, with cars honking in support of the activists. Inside, homosexual activist Joe Murray wore a rainbow sash and stood with his back to Cardinal Francis George, Archbishop of Chicago, during parts of the Mass. Cardinal George refused communion to Murray, who walked away displaying his empty hands. In retaliation, a comrade of Murray's, who had already received communion because she sang in the church choir, went up to take another consecrated Host and brought it to Murray, who later had the audacity to claim that he and his comrades were "bullied."

June 18

Rep. John Fleming of Louisiana had introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would protect the right of service members to believe as they wish as well as their right to express those beliefs freely. He said, "I have not gotten reports of attacks against other denominations, other religions. It's only a matter of time, though, before that can happen. So far it seems to be a total attack on Christianity itself." Attacks on Christianity were increasing at an alarming rate within the United States Armed Forces, and it was clear that the assault on religious liberty in the military was being led by activists, which Fleming described as "secular unionism."

June 23

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) ran an ad in the Sunday edition of *The New York Times* attacking the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) for "discrimination" against atheists after BSA had lifted its ban against homosexuals. FFRF was particularly offended by BSA's use of the words, "duty to

God,” as well as the statement on BSA’s membership form: “The Boy Scouts of America maintain that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing his obligation to God.”

June 29

Starke, FL – At the Bradford County Courthouse, American Atheists unveiled a 1,500 pound granite bench with atheist quotes and statements from the Founding Fathers in order to “complement” a monument to the Ten Commandments that was erected in 2012. The militant atheist group vowed to put up 50 more similar monuments around the country on public grounds where the Ten Commandments stand. The director of state and regional operations for American Atheists said, “True equality means all or none. Christianity has had an unfair privilege for at least the last 150 years. We want to level the playing field by stripping them of privilege, and bringing them to equality with all other ideologies.” The president of American Atheists called the bench “an attack on Christian privilege, not an attack on Christians themselves, and not so much an attack on Christianity.”

July 2 – 3

Austin, TX – With the pending passage of restrictive abortion laws and a second special session to address the legislation convened by Gov. Rick Perry, pro-life protesters assembled in the State Capitol and sang “Amazing Grace.” The pro-life protestors were heckled and mocked by abortion supporters who screamed, “Hail Satan.” The phrase also trended on Twitter as news of the incident spread.

July 24

An amendment was proposed to the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act to add atheist “chaplains” to the armed forces. The principal organization pushing this idea was the Military Association of Atheists and Freethinkers. The president of this entity, Jason Thorpy, claimed that it was unfair for Christians et al. to have chaplains, but not

atheists. Torpy said chaplains are needed to serve the 40,000 atheists in the armed forces. His figure was wrong: the Department of Defense said there are 9,400 atheists or agnostics among the 1.4 million active-duty personnel. Given that there were five times as many agnostics as there are atheists, nationally, that means there were less than 2,000 atheists in the military, which means Torpy's figure was 20 times the actual number. Torpy's ploy was a familiar backdoor strategy. If atheists cannot censor the public expression of religion, they settle for contrived competition, thus hoping to neuter its effects. Torpy's organization was on record opposing Christmas concerts on air force bases, Christian war memorials, and nativity scenes on public property (his organization bragged about ending the "stranglehold" that crèches have). His group also supported anti-Christian billboards that compared Christianity to slavery.

July 29

The ACLU, the American Jewish Committee, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Hindu American Foundation, and Interfaith Alliance were signatories to a letter opposing Senate bill S. 1044, which was making its way through Congress at the time.

The bill would "direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the United States on D-Day, June 6, 1944." The letter was addressed to both the chairman and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on National Parks of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The groups claimed that the bill showed a lack of respect for "religious diversity" and endorsed "the false notion that all veterans will be honored by a war memorial that includes a prayer proponents characterize as reflecting our country's 'Judeo-Christian heritage and values.'"

In November the bill passed a Senate committee, but had not been addressed by either house of Congress by year's end.

July 29

Concord, NH – The Freedom From Religion Foundation sent an open records request to Concord High School asking for documentation that allowed a woman to pray on school property. The woman was a concerned mother who prayed and recited Bible verses for fifteen minutes on the steps in front of the high school each morning for two years after two bullets had been found in one of the school's bathrooms. Although the school principal initially permitted the woman to pray, school district officials said there was no document giving permission to the woman to pray in front of the school.

The superintendent declared that the district would no longer permit the woman's prayers in the fall of 2013. However, she continued to arrive at the school each morning and pray silently. She has been joined in her silent prayer by several other people including a state representative.

August 2

Glendora, CA – A homosexual teacher at St. Lucy's Priory High School outside Los Angeles was wed to another man on July 1. When the school found out about it, he was terminated. The school said that what its teachers do in private is not its business, but "public displays of behavior that are directly contrary to church teachings are inconsistent with these values." These rules were not arbitrary: "These values are incorporated into the contractual obligations of each of our instructors and other employees." After being fired for willfully violating the contract, the teacher threatened to sue. Meanwhile, an online petition calling for his reinstatement emerged. These efforts by outsiders were an attack on the autonomy of the Catholic Church.

August 5

Portland, OR – The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed a

federal lawsuit against the Holy See filed by Jeffrey Anderson on April 3, 2002. The suit claimed that the Holy See was responsible for the conduct of a priest who had allegedly molested a young man in Oregon in 1965. Anderson contended that the priest worked for the Vatican and that officials there knew about his sexual exploits. The next day, Bill Donohue issued a news release stating the following: "Anderson's crusade is malicious. He knows he will lose in court." On August 5, Anderson told the Ninth Circuit that he was withdrawing his appeal of a federal district court ruling that said the Holy See did not employ the priest and was not liable for damages.

August 20

Oklahoma City, OK – The ACLU filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of a Ten Commandments monument outside of the State Capitol building. The ACLU claims the monument has created a "divisive and hostile" state for many Oklahomans. The ACLU also says that the lawsuit is meant to "remedy the state monument's impact on Jewish and Christian believers." According to the ACLU the monument has "trivialized the religious meaning" of the Commandments. A Baptist minister was one of the plaintiffs suing for the monument's removal.

September 5

Gresham, OR – A lesbian couple filed a complaint with the state because a bakery would not bake a cake for their wedding. The complaint sparked a massive reaction among gay activists. Ultimately, the Christian couple that ran the bakery had to close their business. They moved their operations to their home. The activists were relentless. They even started a movement on Facebook to stop the family from running the bakery out of their home.

October

St. Paul, MN – The Catholic Coalition for Church Reform, an organization comprised of dissident Catholic groups, sent a letter asking for the resignation of Minneapolis-St. Paul

Archbishop John Nienstedt to the U.S. Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganó. The groups cite Canon law as the basis for their request, but fail to mention that their organizations expressly reject the teachings of the Catholic Church. In fact, the members of some of the organizations have been excommunicated by U.S. bishops.

On October 25, Bill Donohue also wrote to Archbishop Viganó to set the record straight. Archbishop Nienstedt has no offending priests in ministry and he has taken exceptional steps to ensure the integrity of the Archdiocese.

October 24

New York, NY – American Atheists opposed the display of the Ground Zero Cross at the 9/11 museum and memorial. The cross, two intersecting steel beams found in the wreckage of the World Trade Center after 9/11, became a symbol of hope and healing. American Atheists is now appealing a judge's decision to dismiss the initial law suit in March. In dismissing the case, Judge Deborah Batts said "The Museum's purpose is to tell the history surrounding September 11, and the cross ... helps tell part of that history."

October 28

The Air Force Academy has decided to make the phrase "so help me God" optional in its honor code. The honor oath was created in 1984 and is administered to cadets at the conclusion of Basic Cadet Training. The decision to make the reference optional came after the Academy's Honor Review Committee met to consider a complaint filed by the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). MRFF President Mikey Weinstein is a frequent critic of Christianity in the armed forces.

November 5

Pismo Beach, CA – Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) has filed a lawsuit against the City of Pismo Beach over the prayers and invocations delivered by an unpaid city chaplain at the City Council meetings. According to FFRF the

Pentecostal pastor's prayers were sectarian in nature. The city is defending the pastor, saying that his prayers do not promote one particular religion.

November 15

New Concord, OH – The ACLU threatened to file a lawsuit against John Glenn High School and the East Muskingum School District over a “Good Shepherd” painting of Jesus surrounded by lambs that hung in the school office, where it could not be seen by students or visitors to the school. The painting had been donated in honor of a teacher who died in 1971 after serving the school district for more than 50 years. Fearing the costs of a lawsuit, the school board voted to remove the painting and donate it to a nearby Presbyterian church.

December

The ACLU filed a lawsuit against the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops alleging that a woman received negligent care when she visited a Catholic hospital in 2010. The pregnant woman went to the hospital after her water broke. She later claimed that she was never apprised of possible dangers to her health, and the option of choosing an abortion. The ACLU is suing the USCCB because it says the bishops' conference is responsible for the Michigan hospital's decision not to discuss abortion as an option. The baby died shortly after birth.

December 5

Oklahoma City, OK – The Satanic Temple, a New York City based group, has filed an application to erect a “homage” to Satan outside the Oklahoma Capitol Building. The group is looking to counterbalance a monument featuring the Ten Commandments that already exists outside the Capitol. This is the same Ten Commandments monument that the ACLU filed suit on August 20 to have removed. A sketch of what the “homage” would look like included two young children smiling at a goat-headed figure below a pentagram.

December 11

Oklahoma City, OK – A few days after a group of Satanists filed an application to install a homage to Satan outside the Oklahoma State Capitol, the Universal Society of Hinduism announced that it was also seeking permission to erect a statue of Hanuman, the monkey king. The Oklahoma Capitol Building has been the source of activists' scorn since a monument of the Ten Commandments was placed there in 2012. In addition to the Satanists and the Hindu group, the ACLU is in the process of suing for the removal of the Ten Commandments monument.

December 12

San Diego, CA – The Mount Soledad Cross has been a source of litigation and controversy for 24 years. After numerous lawsuits and court hearings, a federal judge ordered the 29 foot tall cross to be removed from the Mt. Soledad Veteran's memorial. The ACLU has been fighting for the removal of the cross from the memorial since 1989. The judge who issued the order was given no choice by previous rulings and "appeared to choke up" while reading the decision. The judge granted time for an appeal to be filed. The ACLU is continuing to push for the cross to be immediately removed.



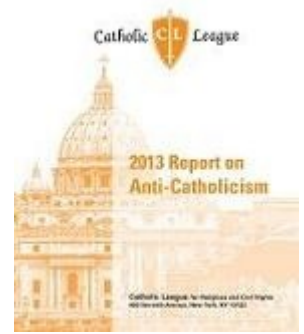
This Steve Sack was published in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* on October 13. The cartoon maligns traditional Catholic symbolism and accuses the Church's hierarchy of covering up abusive priests.

[Back to Top](#)

THE ARTS

January 8

West Hollywood, CA – Artist Bronwyn Lundberg exploited Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper" to promote celebrity lesbians. The depiction showed Ellen DeGeneres as Jesus and included Wanda Sykes and Rosie O'Donnell, among others.



February 3

New York, NY – The off-Broadway musical "Bare The Musical" which opened December 9, 2012 ended its run at New World Stages after just two months. The show was a revival of "Bare: A Pop Opera" which originally premiered in 2004. The show revolves around two homosexual male students at a Catholic boarding school who fall in love with each other. Confession, nuns and the Virgin Mary are mocked.

March 15 – 17

South Hadley, MA – Middle and High School students at the Academy of Music Theatre and Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter performed the anti-Christian play "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told" which replaces classic Bible stories with homosexual propaganda. The head of the charter school defended the performance as a "gay-friendly Biblical spoof" that proved how "intellectually rigorous" his community is. When the play opened in New York in 1998, it featured among other things, full-frontal male nudity, filthy language, discussions of body parts, butch lesbians, and effeminate gay men ranting against nature and damning God for AIDS.

School officials received over 12,000 complaints about the play but insisted on continuing the production with students from 7th through 12th grade. Springfield Bishop Timothy McDonnell said, "I didn't know it was the responsibility of charter schools to teach religious bigotry."

March 15 – 23

Dayton, OH – The University of Dayton theatre program

presented six performances of “Bare The Musical.” According to the script, the story revolves around two senior boys at a Catholic high 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 in one of the character’s dreams and encourages him to tell his mother about his homosexuality. She says St. 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.

March 20

Milwaukee, WI – Artist Niki Johnson’s anti-Catholic work, “Eggs Benedict,” was featured in the “Gay Voices” section of the Huffington Post website. The work was a portrait of the pope emeritus using 17,000 colored condoms. The work reportedly “hopes to take aim at the church’s stance on using condoms, but also promotes sexual diversity and a more open discussion about sexual health.” Johnson started “Eggs Benedict” in response to Pope Benedict XVI’s 2009 statements about condoms not being the answer to the AIDS epidemic. According to The Huffington Post, “the entire project took 270 hours spread over three years to complete, Johnson estimated—145 hours individually opening the condoms, laying them out and planning, and 135 hours threading them through with wire mesh.” The artist said “I see it as an inclusive piece. Yes, it says something about the church’s position on sexuality, but it also embraces diversity with humor and irony.” The artist also said the portrait “promotes diversity in sexuality” and is “quite literally ‘very rainbow.’”

April 22 – May 5

New York, NY – “The Testament of Mary” ran on Broadway. The play was based on the book by Colm Tóibín, a homosexual ex-Catholic who has been a vociferous critic of the Church’s

teachings on sexuality. The play was scheduled to run through June 16. But instead of lasting 12 weeks, it lasted only two. The play was an angry discourse on Catholicism featuring a fanciful Virgin Mary, who rejects the divinity of her son.

July 2 – November 3

Ashland, OR – The Oregon Shakespeare Festival included a play titled “Liquid Plain” by Naomi Wallace. The play was about the international slave trade and takes place in the late 1700s in Rhode Island. A local priest who attended one of the performances alerted the Catholic League that “the play contains a gratuitous assertion that Jesus would want to receive an act of fellatio.”

December 5 – 22

Oklahoma City, OK – “The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told” was performed at the Oklahoma City Civic Center. When it opened in New York in 1998, Bill Donohue said, “it sounds like a routine homosexual play: full-frontal male nudity, filthy language, discussions of body parts, butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, ranting about nature, damning God for AIDS, etc.”

The play is a gay rendition of the Bible, focusing mostly on the Old Testament. It opens with two men in jockstraps in the Garden of Eden, one of whom identifies himself as a Jew. They run into a self-described bull dyke and her lesbian lover. This masterpiece is the work of Paul Rudnick, a homosexual “Jew from New Jersey.” His goal, he said, was to mock religion: he was angry at God for allowing AIDS.

The play was being performed at a city-owned venue, and was being presented by the Oklahoma City Theatre Company. The latter receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Oklahoma Arts Council; the Arts Council refused to fund this play, but contributed \$18,000 to other productions during the 2013-2014 season.

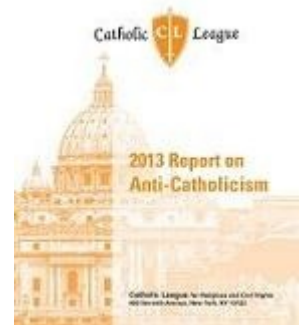


This Rick Stromoski syndicated cartoon was published in the *Lake County Daily Herald* and other papers on December 6. It attacks the Eucharist by comparing it to a popular cracker.

[Back to Top](#)

PAPAL TRANSFER

To see the ad, “LEAD US, HOLY FATHER,” that appeared on the op-ed page of the April 15, 2013 edition of the *New York Times*, click [here](#).



Attacks on the pope are a staple of anti-Catholicism. But in 2013, with the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI and the election of Pope Francis, the pope bashers went into high gear. The following is a chronicle of our response to their attacks followed by a selection of the most egregious comments. Finally, Bill Donohue's analysis of the New York Times' biased coverage of cardinals who were to participate in the papal conclave.

[The Resignation of Pope Benedict XVI](#)

February 5: ANDREW SULLIVAN SHOULD NOT THROW STONES

On February 4, Andrew Sullivan said Pope Benedict XVI “enabled and abetted the rape of children.” On February 5, with regard to the revelations of old cases of priestly sexual abuse in Los Angeles, he asks, “How much did the Pope know? And who did he allow to rape and rape again?”

Sullivan may not know anything about rape, but he sure knows about prostitution and lethal sex acts. In 2001, he was outed for selling his body on the Internet. Hiding under the name RawMuscleGlutes, Sullivan posted his interest in having sex with men *who did not wear condoms*. That’s right, his preference was to practice oral and anal sex with “bare back” men (guys who hate “safe sex”). It was ever so kind of him to disclose that he was HIV-positive.

February 12: POPE NEVER “JOINED” HITLER YOUTH

The following persons and media outlets erroneously said that Pope Benedict XVI “joined” the Hitler Youth, without ever noting that it was compulsory:

U.S.

AP Planner; John Patrick Shanley, *New York Times* blog; Huffington Post; *Philadelphia Daily News*; Regional News Network (it said his “defenders” argue he was drafted, implying that it is a rebuttable presumption); *Sun-Sentinel*; thepeoplesvoice.org; timminspress.com; *Washington Post*.

Canada

The Globe and Mail

England

BBC; *The Guardian*; *The Independent*; *Metro*; politics.co.uk

Ireland

Daily Mirror; *Irish Independent*

Here are the facts. Like all teenage boys in Nazi Germany,

Joseph Ratzinger was forced to join the Hitler Youth. Unlike many others, he did not attend meetings and deserted when he was drafted into the German army. His refusal to attend meetings brought economic hardship to his family—it meant no discounts for school tuition. German left-wing intellectuals like Günter Grass and Jürgen Habermas also were conscripted into the Hitler Youth, yet no one ever accused them of voluntarily joining.

Rabbi David Rosen, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, said it is “rubbish” to suggest that the pope willfully joined the Hitler Youth. Following a complaint by us, even Bill Maher apologized in 2008 for making this pernicious accusation. In short, it is despicable for these journalists to smear the pope as a Nazi sympathizer.

February 12: HITCHENS IS BACK FROM THE DEAD

Slate and Andrew Sullivan republished a hit piece by the late atheist Christopher Hitchens from 2010. It was vintage Hitchens: the man was a great polemicist but a third-class scholar. Facts never mattered to him.

Hitchens said the scandal “has only just begun.” Wrong. It began in the mid-60s and ended in the mid-80s. Current reports are almost all about old cases.

Hitchens said Munich Archbishop Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) transferred an offending cleric to another parish. Wrong. Ratzinger’s deputy placed the priest in a new parish after he received therapy (the tonic loved by those pushing rehabilitation), and even the New York Times admitted there was no evidence that Ratzinger knew about it. By the way, there were 1,717 priests serving under him at the time.

Hitchens said Ratzinger wrote a 2001 letter to the bishops telling them it was a crime to report sexual abuse. Wrong. The letter dealt with desecrating the Eucharist, and the sexual solicitation by a priest in the confessional (the letter cited

a 1962 document detailing harsh sanctions).

Hitchens said Ratzinger was obstructing justice when he crafted new norms on sexual abuse in 2001. Wrong. He actually added new sanctions and extended the statute of limitations for such offenses.

Hitchens said Ratzinger ignored accusations against Father Marcial Maciel. Wrong. It was Benedict who got him removed from ministry (he was too infirm to put on trial) and put his religious order in receivership.

In short, Hitchens' hatred of Catholicism allowed him to swing wildly. That he should be resurrected by Slate and Andrew Sullivan made them all look incompetent, as well as vicious.

February 13: "ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT" SMEARS POPE

Pope bashers came out of the woodwork, making it hard to keep up with all of them. But the vile hit piece on the pope that aired on ET was clearly one of the worst.

"The Pope's Past" began with correspondent Brian Ross complaining that many years ago he was slapped on the wrist by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. The occasion for this "brutality" was Ross' decision to badger the cardinal while the would-be pope was walking to a car. Ross said, "It actually stung." He did not say whether he was rushed to the local ER.

Next up was a promo for the documentary "Mea Maxima Culpa," a classic agit-prop film that is strewn with lies. Viewers learn that Pope Benedict XVI investigated, "but without much effect," the charges levied against Father Marcial Maciel. Another savant asks, "Did Benedict punish him in any way?" To which he exclaims, "No." Really? Then why was Benedict being credited by even his staunchest critics for removing Maciel from ministry and launching a Vatican take-over of his religious order?

The ET segment then said “the film implies that the pope...was at the epicenter” of the scandal. Agreed. That’s all the film did was imply. When there was no evidence to support outrageous claims, mud-slinging is all that is left. Similarly, we learn that documents on priestly wrongdoing “are said to be kept in secret Vatican archives.” More innuendo. Absent evidence, conjecture is the best they can do.

Then they rolled out the paranoid attorney Jeffrey Anderson, who said, “There is an enormous worldwide conspiracy—a cover-up at the highest level in the Catholic Church.” Not mentioned was the fact that *all of his lawsuits to get the Vatican have failed*. Indeed, they have been laughed out of court.

ET owed Catholics an apology for this Mafioso-style propaganda exercise.

February 14: ASSESSING THE POPE’S RECORD

Ex-seminarians and ex-priests offered the following assessments of the pope’s record:

- **Garry Wills [ex-seminarian]:** “What we really need are no priests.”
- **James Carroll [ex-priest]:** The pope “has seen only a solemn obligation to defend the church.” [Italic added.]
- **Richard Sipe [ex-priest]:** “Certainly, he did a lot, but it was *all* reactionary.” [Italic added.]
- **Daniel Maguire [ex-priest]:** The “scandal of the papacy [is] one of the last absolute monarchies in a democratizing world.”

At the time, the Catholic League noted the disparity between the above negative comments and the gratitude expressed by Jews, Muslims, Protestants, and others. The following is a sampling of the sentiments that were expressed:

- **Ronald Lauder, president, World Jewish Congress:** “The papacy of Benedict elevated Catholic-Jewish relations to an unprecedented level.”

- **Abraham Foxman, national director, Anti-Defamation League:** "He [the pope] was good for the Jews."
- **Rabbi Yona Metzger, Israel's chief Ashkenazic rabbi:** Benedict's papacy exhibited "the best relations ever between the church and the chief rabbinate."
- **Imam Hassan Qazwini, Islamic Center of America:** "I have so much admiration for the pope, for being honest and humble."
- **Nihad Awad, national director, Council on American-Islamic Relations:** "We offer the American Muslim community's best wishes to Pope Benedict XVI."
- **Geoff Tunnicliffe, secretary general, World Evangelical Alliance:** "I appreciate his [the pope's] courage of ideas...and his boldness in warning us of the dangers of moral relativism..."
- **Rev. R. Albert Mohler, president, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary:** "Pope Benedict has offered a brave and intelligent defense of truth against a relativist tide."

February 14: LETTERMAN, THE POPE, AND HIS SHRINK

On February 11 and 13, David Letterman got a little too cute for us, which suggested a disturbing pattern.

On February 11, after twice saying the pope has "a chronic neck problem," Letterman let loose with, "He's got a chronic neck problem and apparently the chronic neck problem is for looking the other way so many times." He then said the Vatican "is already holding auditions to see who might be the next pope and we have one of those auditions that's going on." Footage was then shown of acrobats taking off their shirts and then performing for the pope; he looked on while rock music was played.

Letterman said that besides looking for someone who was a biblical scholar and at least 60 years old, the Vatican was looking for "a guy who is good at transferring creepy priests."

February 19: MAHER GETS DIRTY

Speaking of Pope Benedict XVI, Bill Maher said on his HBO show "Real Time" that "Benedict told them he was going to resign because the Church needs a fresh young face. Somewhere other than a priest's lap." He then mocked the Church's teachings, imploring Catholics to quit. He ended his rant by condemning Catholicism for being "hostile towards women," comparing the Church to the Taliban.

February 22, 2013: DAN SAVAGE SAVAGES POPE

Dan Savage savaged the pope on slog.thestranger.com. Unable to mount a rational critique of Pope Benedict XVI, he settled for writing a headline that was almost as long as his "story." It reads, "That Motherf***ing Power-Hungry, Self-Aggrandized Bigot In the Stupid F***ing Hat Announces His Retirement." Savage used the same headline in December 2012, save for substituting "Joins Twitter" for the last three words in his post of February 11.

Savage has a long history of trashing Catholicism, and he not only does it with impunity, he is rewarded for it. To wit: In 2011, he was invited to a White House reception for homosexuals. He said he arrived with his husband.

February 27: ANDREW SULLIVAN SMEARS POPE AGAIN

Andrew Sullivan accused Pope Benedict XVI of being a homosexual. His evidence? The pope's "handsome male companion [Archbishop Georg Ganswein] will continue to live with him, while working for the other Pope during the day." Sullivan asked, "Are we supposed to think that's, well, a normal arrangement?"

The media were all abuzz about Sullivan's latest charge. There's nothing new to any of this. In 2010, he wrote that "it seems pretty obvious to me...that the current Pope is a gay man." What clinched it for him was "the Pope's mental

architecture.” By this he meant the pope’s “frissy fastidiousness, the effeminate voice...the over-the-top clothing accessories,” etc. Nice to know Sullivan indulges in gay stereotypes when it suits him. But if the pope emeritus were truly gay, why doesn’t he have that prototypical gay lisp? Nor has anyone ever accused him of being a narcissist, another trait associated with homosexuals.

In any event, it’s not hard to explain why Sullivan was out to smear Benedict again. Earlier he flatly said, “Evil remains at the heart of the Vatican.” If he believed that, then it was easy to demonize the pope.

March 4: HBO’S PLEPLER NEEDS TO MOVE ON MAHER

Richard Plepler is the CEO of HBO, and the Catholic League’s dealings with him in the past have been cordial and professional. But he has obviously allowed Bill Maher to continue with his anti-Catholic rants with impunity.

Maher said the pope and the cardinals are known to stick together “when you’re molesting kids.”

“I kid the cardinals. They chipped in. They got him a t-shirt that said, ‘I’m not retiring. I’m being put out to stud.’”

The pope, Maher commented, “said there were moments where it seemed like the Lord was sleeping. Wow! Sleeping. Or like the kids at Catholic summer camp—pretending to be asleep perhaps.”

March 8: STEWART GETS INTO THE GUTTER AGAIN

Jon Stewart’s legacy is stained with anti-Catholic bigotry, a tradition he continued to uphold in “The Daily Show.” What started off with jabs against the cardinals and their chances of election began to devolve when a “Vatican Correspondent” called Communion a “cracker and juice ceremony.”

The segment continued its descent into the gutter with a vicious “report” on the Conclave that was full of double

entendre; Stewart's "Senior Vatican Correspondent" Samantha Bee likened the papal election process to the stages of sexual abuse.

Bee called the gathering of cardinals a "grope," who took part in a "molestation," which she claimed was the "liturgical name" of the voting process. That process, Bee said, was not complete until the cardinals reached a "fellatio," (an "oral consensus") culminating in "white smoke rising from the chimney." When Stewart asked Bee if that was called an "ejaculation," she mockingly responded with the word's authentic definition, a short prayer.

Stewart's return to the gutter was of no surprise, but perhaps he should have gotten his facts straight about the homosexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church: it ended almost three decades ago. If he wanted to be current, he would have ripped on the sexual abuse taking place in Brooklyn's ultra-Orthodox Jewish community. But no, he saved his vitriol for Catholics.

Selection of Comments in Response to Resignation of Pope Benedict XVI

The following is a selection of the most egregious comments made in response to the announcement of the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI on February 11.

Adele M. Stan, AlterNet, February 11: "Because of the rigging done to the College of Cardinals by Benedict's predecessor [sic], the next pope will likely be no less authoritarian, no less women-hating, no less gay-bashing, and no more reform-minded."

Andrew Sullivan, The Dish, February 11: "What fascinates me is whether he can now be prosecuted for 'crimes against humanity' for having enabled and concealed the rape of countless children in an institution under his direct authority."

Andrew Sullivan, The Dish, February 11: In a post titled, "The

Fundamentalist Pope,” he said, “Can someone point me to a moment when the Pope reproved the United States for endorsing and practicing torture? He uttered not a squeak when visiting the US. And where has he been on universal healthcare? We know where his bishops were: ignoring one vast moral leap for their usual sexual obsessions.”

Michael Brendan Dougherty, Slate, February 11: “Pope Benedict set out to reform a Catholic Church in tatters—but failed.”

Rabbi Arthur Waskow, The Shalom Center, February 11: “Pope Benedict does not deserve praise from any religious leader who sees women as worthy of full respect, fully capable of making moral decisions on their own and fully deserving of legal and religious support for their own religious freedom. Nor does he deserve praise from any religious leader who believes the protection and sustenance of children is far more important than the protection of criminal priests.”

Dan Savage, slog.thestranger.com, February 11: “That Motherf***ing Power-Hungry, Self-Aggrandized Bigot In the Stupid F***ing Hat Announces His Retirement.”

Garry Wills, “The Colbert Report,” February 11: While promoting Wills’ new book, *Why Priests? A Failed Tradition*, Colbert asked him why, according to him, the priesthood is a failed tradition. Wills responded: “Well, they continue to pretend to turn bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, which didn’t happen.” When Colbert mentioned that the Eucharist is a “mystery,” Wills said, “No, it’s a fake.”

Chez Paziienza, Huffington Post, February 12: “Maybe, if the world is lucky, the next pope won’t be so stubborn in the face of overwhelming evidence of children being sexually abused by priests or even complicit in the cover-up of those priests’ actions. Benedict’s entire career, unfortunately, was tainted by the choices he made with regard to the sickening series of assaults throughout the years.”

Jan Phillips, Huffington Post, February 12: The author wrote a poem called "If I Were Pope," in which he advocated homosexual marriage and the ordination of women as priests, among other things.

Kristen Houghton, Huffington Post, February 12: "The almost-unheard of step of resignation by a reigning pontiff has touched off a feeding frenzy of speculation. What's the real reason behind this act? Certainly the Catholic Church is under investigation, as is the pope himself, concerning the horrible, disreputable crime of pedophilia which has been pretty much swept under the expensive Vatican rugs, so to speak."

Max Read, Gawker, February 12: "Cardinal Peter Turkson is considered a frontrunner for the pontificate. Is he Peter the Roman, after whose reign Rome will be destroyed and come to an end?"

Margaret Carlson, Bloomberg, February 12: "Under his leadership, the church continued to deny its perfidy."

Dominic Holden, Slog, February 12: "Leave it to Seattle's premier faggot-obsessed charlatan, the region's highest-profile crusader against gay rights, the Vatican's general in the war on 'feminist themes'—Seattle Archbishop J. Peter Sartain—to praise the '*fidelity*' of Pope Benedict XVI, a man so full of fidelity he leaves behind a papal smear of victims who say he conspired to cover up the Catholic Church's pedophilia escapades."

Michael Moynihan, The Daily Beast, February 12: "Indeed, if Benedict was the CEO of a powerful international, peddling a product that a significant population of the world couldn't live without, and presided over a continuing slide in that product's market share (for lack of a better phrase), he would have been relieved of his duties years ago...Perhaps there is little that Benedict could have done to reverse these trends,

but his own commitment to deflecting criticism often looked to skeptics like criminal complicity....So let us hope that the next puff of white smoke will introduce Catholics to a more modern representative of God's will, one who believes that collars and vestments shouldn't provide immunity from prosecution, and who understands that obscuring past sins has caused irreparable damage to the Church."

Soledad O'Brien, "Starting Point," February 12: She described the movie "Mea Maxima Culpa," which attacks Pope Benedict XVI, as "riveting, absolutely riveting."

CM Punk, Twitter, February 12: "The pope resigned? I did nazi that coming."

Joy Behar, "Say Anything" (CurrentTV), February 12: She ignored the fact that the pope's participation in the Hitler Youth was not voluntary, even when this was pointed out to her by one of her guests. "I'm not putting him down. I agree with that—there were plenty of kids who had to go into the Hitler Youth, or else probably go to jail. But of all the people, all the people they could have found, they found one that was in the Hitler Youth. Why? There are millions and millions of Catholics—plenty of cardinals could have filled the post. Why him? I'm just curious."

Garry Wills, New York Times, February 13: "The power structure will not be changed by giving it new faces. Monarchies die hard."

Michelangelo Signorile, Huffington Post, February 13: "The Vatican is losing its ugly crusade against homosexuality and other self-described secular 'ills,' and part of the problem (at least helping to accelerate its losses) appears to be Benedict himself."

Ronnie Polaneczky, Philly.com, February 13: "Pope Benedict could've used his nearly eight years of infallibility to open all church records to the light of day, to come clean about

the extent of the cover-up and let the chips fall where they would've."

Michele Somerville, Huffington Post, February 13: "Before Monday, I had thought Ratzinger would leave the papacy horizontally, amid funerary pomp. I sometimes even thought he might leave in handcuffs, and be carted off to the Hague. I don't believe age or infirmity have much to do with this strategic exit. Deaf ears is what I think of when I think of Ratzinger and his departure from the throne. Deaf ears and a Ratzinger scurrying off his sinking ship."

Sr. Louise Akers, "Jansing & Co." (MSNBC), February 14: "I think the Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Church, is probably one of the last bastions of sexism."

Andrew Sullivan, The Dish, February 14: "Evil remains at the heart of the Vatican."

John Gehring, USA Today, February 17: "Instead of silencing theologians and stifling debate, a new pope could let it be known that discernment and discussion are signs of a healthy, flourishing faith."

E.J. Dionne, Washington Post, February 17: "It is time to elect a nun as the next pontiff."

Vin Mannix, The Bradenton Herald, February 17: "Here's the Vatican, its credibility compromised by the inability to effectively resolve its crisis with pedophilic priests, but it can castigate a group of devoted women whose history is truly doing God's work."

Andrew Sullivan, The Dish, February 18: "He knows more about the criminal conspiracy the Church was engaged in for decades than any other human being on earth. He knows the darkness within better than anyone else. Maybe he is withdrawing out of fear, trying to ensure his successor doesn't open up the full files to the world. Or maybe he is doing this radical act to

shake the system he knows by now is rotten to the core.”

Michael D’Antonio, Huffington Post, February 19: “For him [Pope Benedict XVI], seclusion in a Vatican convent provides a way to evade responsibility for his central role in protecting thousands of priests who raped children around the world.”

Juan Madrigal, The Poly Post, February 19: “Perhaps the exposure of these dark secrets could destroy Benedicts [sic] credibility—that is, the little he is still holding with his fingertips.”

Mary Elizabeth Williams, Salon, February 19: “He’s a frail old man whose life is nearing its end. And he will live those last days not as a pontiff, but as just another elderly priest, well protected from any possible punishment by an organization spectacularly well versed in shielding its own—the Catholic Church.”

Matthew Fox, Huffington Post, February 20: In an article titled “The Dark Legacy of Pope Benedict XVI,” he wrote about his “relief that the masks covering the corruption of the papacy have at last been removed.”

Editorial, Commonweal, February 20: “Unfortunately, the courtly secrecy surrounding the deliberations to elect the next pope provides an all-too obvious reminder of the lack of transparency and accountability in the operations of the entire hierarchy.”

Dan Avery, Queerty, February 20: “Now, *should* the Pope be prosecuted for his part in one of the biggest coverups in modern history? Probably. But wishing don’t make it so.”

David Wright, “Good Morning America,” February 25: “...the papal election campaign is getting ugly...The Pope is an absolute monarch.”

Joseph Bottum, Weekly Standard, February 25: “His aging

brought little new; he has been, all in all, a terrible executive of the Vatican. Not in San Celestino's league, of course, but as bad as a pope has been for 200 years."

Loaded (UK), March: The magazine cover of the April issue featured the words "For God's Sake!" and "for men who should know benedict" [sic] together with a photo of a female glamour model scantily covered in a priest's stole stitched with crosses.

Monica Hesse, Washington Post, March 2: An article highlighted "superprogressive" feminists and lesbians playing a board game attacking the papal election process. The headline read: "A papal conclave that thinks pink: Left out of official Catholic ritual, these women play the pope game at home."

David Clohessy, SNAP, March 6: Clohessy released SNAP's "dirty dozen" list of cardinals who may be named a pope, citing those "who pretend the worst is over."

The Election of Pope Francis

March 13, 2013: MEDIA COVERAGE WITH AN AGENDA

As the white smoke billowed out of the Sistine Chapel's chimney announcing the selection of the new pope, CBS' anchor asked reporter Mark Phillips, who was live in St. Peter's Square, "What do you see?" Phillips responded that he saw two women who were wearing pins that read "ordain women." Phillips then proceeded to interview the women about what they were looking for from the new, still unannounced, pope.

CBS and Phillips then provided both women with an opportunity to talk about the healing that the church needed from the abuse and the scandal, and how a reformer pope should be willing to open a dialogue and talk with women, particularly on the matter of women's ordination worldwide.

Phillips continued the conversation by asking the women if

they wanted a church that was more accessible to them. The response from one of the women was that the church needed to be more transparent and accountable when it comes to women's issues, LGBT issues and reproductive health care, and welcome women's voices into those issues.

In reality out of a crowd of tens of thousands of people, CBS and Mark Phillips managed to find two women who disagreed with the Catholic church on marriage, abortion, and women's ordination and then give them substantial time to express their views while the world awaited the announcement of the new pope.

March 15, 2013: CRITICS OF THE POPE EMERGE

Pope Francis has captured the goodwill, indeed the love, of millions around the globe, and the response is hardly confined to Catholic circles. However, his critics were emerging, though none with any luck.

Mary Johnson, a former nun, told the MSNBC audience how "marginalized" gay and lesbian Catholics are. Catholic-bashing lawyer Marci Hamilton chimed in, commenting about the "sex abuse scandal that has scandalized the church over the past decade." Any high school fact checker knows better: the timeline of the homosexual scandal was the mid-60s to the mid-80s.

Washington Post opinion writer Eugene Robinson wanted to know "what did the newly chosen Pope Francis do" about the right-wing dictatorship in Argentina's "Dirty War"? An answer came from Adolfo Perez Esquivel, the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize winner: he said the pope "was no accomplice of the dictatorship." Indeed, he firmly concluded, "He can't be accused of that." Others have written books praising the pope for his yeoman efforts in undermining the junta.

Miguel A. De La Torre, a professor at the School of Theology in Denver, condemned the pope for not changing "the social

structure that creates poverty.”

March 18: SPEAK OUT? OR SHUT UP?

No sooner had Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio been elected Pope Francis when the *Los Angeles Times* started reporting on his alleged “timidity” in fighting Argentina’s dictatorship during the Dirty War, 1976 to 1983. The newspaper also cited the rap that he was “too quiet” during this period. Similarly, the *New York Times* said that the pope is being accused of “knowing about abuses and failing to do enough to stop them.” What was particularly striking about their front-page story on this issue—the pope “faces his own entanglement with the Dirty War”—is that it took four journalists in four different nations to work on it.

Anyone who thinks these newspapers want a more vocal Catholic Church would be wrong: it totally depends on the issue.

For example, when Cardinal Timothy Dolan accepted the invitation to speak at the Republican National Convention (he also closed the Democratic National Convention with a prayer), the *Los Angeles Times* said he should not have accepted because “lending his presence” sent the wrong message; he should have allowed “a local and lower-profile cleric to do the honors.” Right before the 2012 election, the same newspaper ran an editorial calling on the IRS to keep “politics out of the pulpit,” specifically citing as objectionable those bishops who spoke out against the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate. In 2012, the *New York Times* branded the Catholic response to the mandate “a dramatic stunt, full of indignation but built on air.” A month before the election, it accused leaders of the Catholic Church of “making inflammatory allegations” about the HHS edict.

The *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times* wanted the bishops to check in with them so they could decide whether the Catholic Church should speak out or shut up. Fat chance.

Selection of Comments in Response to the Election of Pope Francis

The following is a selection of the most egregious comments made in response to the election of Pope Francis on March 13.

Luke Russert, Twitter, March 13: “Before we slice and dice every political statement this Pope has ever made during his entire life...breathe, take it in.”

Luke Russert, MSNBC blog, March 13: “Instead of a Catholic faith where priests are expected to completely suppress their sexuality, an acknowledgement that many of the Church’s recent problems stem from the unnatural requirement of celibacy.”

Eduardo Penalver, dotCommonweal blog, March 13: In a post titled, “Popes and Dirty Wars,” he wrote, “I’m going to take a break from my Lenten ‘fast’ from blogging to just note that it seems likely to me that picking a man as Pope who held a position of authority in the Church in Buenos Aires during Argentina’s dirty war seems likely to dredge up some bad memories, and perhaps even a few inconvenient truths.”

Herndon Graddick, GLAAD, March 13: “The *National Catholic Reporter* said Pope Francis called adoption by gay and lesbian people a form of discrimination against children. The real discrimination against children is the pedophilia that has run rampant in the Catholic Church with little more than abetting from the Vatican.”

Natasha Lennard, Salon.com, March 13: “There’s a new pope—Francis I—who unsurprisingly has terrible views on gay and reproductive rights.”

Huffington Post, March 13: PAPA DON’T PREACH! “Pope Called Gay Marriage ‘Destructive Attack On God’s Plan’... ‘Staunchly Opposes Abortion, Contraception’... Believes Gay Adoption Is ‘Discrimination Against Children’... Accused Of Conspiring With Murderous Junta In Priest Kidnapping – OR He ‘Saved Their

Lives'”

2011 FLASHBACK:”“What Scandal If The First Pope Ever To Be Elected From The Americas Had Been Revealed As An Accessory To Murder And False Imprisonment'”

Garry Wills and Sally Quinn, *Washington Post On Faith* blog, March 17, 2013:

Quinn: “Do you think that the papacy, well, it certainly is not irrelevant to a lot of people now, but do you think it’s headed in that direction?”

Wills: “Yeah, it is irrelevant to a lot of people and becoming more so, even to people who don’t even recognize it. One of the reasons they don’t recognize it, is that the priests...the bishops have to uphold what Rome says or they’ll get their knuckles rapped, and priests have to agree not to go against what Rome says. But they don’t actually preach what Rome says.”

Garry Wills and Sally Quinn, *Washington Post On Faith* blog, March 19, 2013:

Quinn: “What do you think should be done with the papacy? Do you think it should be abolished?”

Wills: “No, it should just fade into symbolic irrelevance, like Queen Elizabeth, you know. Keep his palace, gorgeous palace, keep his gorgeous costume, and don’t have, have some kind of sentimental ties with the past. And the Vatican is good [sic] museum if you don’t care about the Gospel.”

Cartoonists Attack Papal Transfer

March 2

The *Dayton Daily News* ran a Mike Peters cartoon depicting Pope Benedict XVI making the “V” signs with both hands, in reference to the gesture that President Richard Nixon made famous. The pope is shown saying, “I am not a pope.” “Church cover-ups” is written in red on his cassock.

March 13

The *Delaware County Daily Times* ran a Jerry Holbert cartoon in which one panel, with the caption "Popes of the Past," showed a nameless pope from the back looking over a balcony and holding a papal cross. In the next panel, captioned "Pope of Today," the same figure is shown, with the words "Pope Francis" added. The figure is holding a dustpan in one hand and a broom in the other.

March 17

The *Denver Post* ran a Mike Keefe cartoon depicting a cardinal driving a popemobile splattered with dirt. The words "pedophilia," "scandal," and "abuse" are written in the dirt. One cardinal holds open the door to the popemobile. Another cardinal says, "He took the bus." The cartoon was a blatant attempt to smear the Church.

March 18

The *Denver Post* ran a John Darkow cartoon attacking the Catholic Church. In the first panel, a cardinal is shown saying, "Now might be a good time to chart a future course between our declining traditional strongholds and more toward a modern world, broadening our appeal to women, gays and minorities!" The next panel zooms out to show an elephant labeled "GOP" standing next to the cardinal. "Tell me about it!" is written in a thought bubble coming from the elephant.

March 19

The *Lexington Herald-Leader* ran a Lee Judge cartoon attacking the papal conclave. It showed the black smoke coming from a chimney with the caption, "the Vatican puts out more smoke." The words "everything will be different now" were written on the smoke.

March 20

The *Portland Daily Sun* ran a Stuart Carlson cartoon showing a couple having a conversation at the breakfast table. The husband says, "I'm having a crisis of faith in an institution

that's rife with ideological factions and intrigue, one that seems dysfunctional at times and rocked by scandals and corruption." The wife says, "I give up: Congress or the Vatican?"

March 24

The *Miami Herald* ran a Jim Morin cartoon showing the pope waving in the popemobile that is driving by as two impoverished men holding bowls sit on the sidewalk in a side street. One says to the other, "We may be poor but we can be thankful we don't have to rebuild a bloated, hypocritical and corrupt Vatican bureaucracy."

March 26

The *Miami Herald* ran a Dan Piraro cartoon showing a pope in a motor home with the following words: "AARP / American Assoc. of Retired Popes / 1 member strong".

NY TIMES WAGES WAR ON CATHOLICISM

The following analysis by Bill Donohue was published by Newsmax on February 27.

On February 27, the *New York Times* ran a front-page story raising questions about some cardinals who will soon vote for the new Pope. Some of the cardinals have had accused priests serving under them, while others have been the subject of criticism by the Survivors Network for those Abused by Priests (SNAP).

However, the story by Laurie Goodstein contains factual errors, blatant omissions, and many sources who have damaged credentials.

Goodstein writes that the Pope "put children at risk by failing to report pedophiles or remove them from the priesthood." This is thrice incorrect: (a) many priests have been removed from ministry under Pope Benedict XVI (b) children have not been put at risk and (c) pedophiles have

never been the problem.

Rev. Marcial Maciel is rightly cited as “a pathological abuser and liar,” but for Goodstein to mention his name, while at the same time contending that the Pope never removed a molesting priest from ministry, is positively astonishing. Who does she think dumped Maciel in 2006? Moreover, the Pope not only removed him from ministry, he put the entire order of priests he founded, the Legion of Christ, in receivership.

Goodstein’s claims that children have been put at risk under the Pope, and that pedophilia is the problem, have been undercut by many scholars, including one she cites, psychology professor Thomas G. Plante. In his research on this subject, he found that “80 to 90 percent of all priests who in fact abuse minors have sexually engaged with adolescent boys, not prepubescent children. Thus, the teenager is more at risk than the young altar boy or girls of any age.”

In other words, the scandal – which ended more than a quarter-century ago (most of the abuse took place between the mid-60s and mid-80s) – rarely involved children. This finding is consistent with the work of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice: it found that less than 5 percent of molesting priests have been pedophiles. In almost every case, it has been homosexual priests hitting on teenage boys, the most common offense of which has been “inappropriate touching.”

Unfortunately, for politically correct reasons, even those who honestly collect the data, including Plante and the John Jay professors, are reluctant to discuss the role that homosexual priests have played in molesting minors. In fairness, it is important to keep in mind that while most of the molesting priests have been homosexuals, not pedophiles, most homosexual priests have never been molesters. That said, one of the reasons why this problem is almost non-existent today is because this Pope has made it very difficult for practicing homosexuals to enter the priesthood. The results are in the

numbers: in the last 10 years, the annual average number of credible accusations made against over 40,000 priests has been in the single digits.

This particular part of the story carries added significance when we consider Mark Thompson's baggage. On November 12, Thompson took over as the president of the *New York Times* Company. He did so following a trail of accusations that when he was the BBC chief, he failed to report on child rapist Jimmy Savile, the BBC icon who worked there for decades.

Thompson denies he ever heard about Savile's predatory behavior. Yet last September, Thompson told his lawyers to write a letter on his behalf threatening The *Sunday Times* with a lawsuit if it ran a story implicating him in the Savile scandal. Most astoundingly, he then claimed he knew nothing of the letter's contents! So when it comes to pointing fingers about a sexual cover-up, the *Times* should be the last to do so.

One of the most irresponsible critics of the Catholic Church on this matter is Judge Anne Burke. She is quoted by Goodstein as blaming every single cardinal for this problem. "They all have participated in one way or another in having actual information about criminal conduct, and not doing anything about it." Ideally, she should be sued for libel. But she knows that no cardinal is going to do that. So she continues to throw mud.

In 2006, Burke said priests are not entitled to constitutional rights. She argued that priests should be removed from ministry on the basis of one unsubstantiated accusation.

Anticipating an obvious wave of criticism, the judge said, "We understand that it is a violation of the priest's due process – you're innocent until proven guilty – but we're talking about the most vulnerable people in our society and those are children." But her alleged interest in child welfare did not

allow her to say whether non-priests should be denied their civil liberties when accused of wrongdoing.

Goodstein drops Terry McKiernan's name as a credible source. He is the director of a website that tracks abuse cases. At a SNAP conference in 2011, he said, without a shred of evidence, that New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan was "keeping the lid on 55 names" of predator priests. This is an out-and-out lie: Dolan is not covering for any priest.

If Dolan were guilty, then McKiernan should be willing to disclose the names of these 55 priests. But he refuses to do so. This is typical of him. As with Burke, he has a different standard for accused priests: he said in 2011 that accused priests should be removed from ministry before an accusation is even investigated. Not surprisingly, when the John Jay study was released two years ago, McKiernan condemned it the day before it was issued.

The last critic mentioned by Goodstein is SNAP director David Clohessy. In today's *New York Daily News*, he is quoted saying, "We're trying to keep this issue front and center."

He needs to – he's broke.

On Feb. 23, SNAP sent a desperate e-mail to its donors saying, "We are barely meeting our everyday expenses."

One of the reasons why SNAP is in bad shape is because Clohessy has had to come up with big bucks to pay for his lawyers after being sued for refusing to turn over SNAP records about his allegedly shady operations. While he demands transparency from the Church, Clohessy refuses to disclose his source of funding (we know that much comes from Church-suing lawyers like Jeffrey Anderson).

Clohessy was asked before a Missouri court in 2011, "Has SNAP to your knowledge ever issued a press release that contained false information?" He didn't blink. "Sure."

For decades, Clohessy has been lobbing rhetorical bombs at the Catholic Church, arguing what a crime it is for anyone in the Church not to report a suspected molester. But when it comes to himself, it's a different story. In the 1990s, he knew about the predatory behavior of a molesting priest and never called the cops. That priest was his brother, Kevin. This is not a matter of conjecture – he's admitted it.

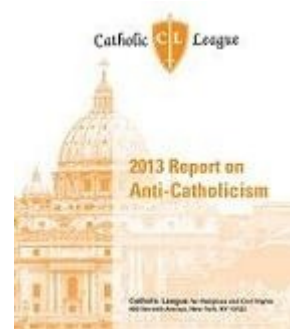
No one with any sense of dignity should ever seek to defend the behavior of a molester. It must also be said that when such a serious issue like this is being discussed, no one with any sense of dignity should be making irresponsible charges or sweeping generalizations. Moreover, no one engaged in this conversation should come to the table unless his own hands are clean. Had these strictures been applied to Goodstein's piece, she wouldn't have had a story.

[Back to Top](#)

EDUCATION

January 22

Troy, AL – A professor at Troy University unveiled his artwork exploiting the Virgin Mary to make a political statement about HB 56, a 2011 anti-illegal immigration law. The Virgin Mary was depicted with the words “cleaning lady” written in Spanish. She was shown carrying a can of bleach labeled “ethnic cleanser” adorned with a swastika. In another work, the artist arranged in a swastika formation the words “Presbyterian indifference,” “Baptist indifference,” “Methodist indifference,” and “Catholic indifference,” with “HB 56” at the center of the



swastika.

January 30

Queens, NY – A “transgender” teacher filed a discrimination lawsuit against St. Francis Preparatory School. The lawsuit said the school broke New York state and city law when he was terminated eight months after he “came out.” This instance of trying to bring the weight of the government to bear on a Catholic school was an attempt to infringe on the autonomy of a Catholic institution.

February 20

Meadville, PA – At Allegheny College, two “sexperts” taught students how to masturbate at an event hosted in a Christian chapel that hosts Catholic Masses. In response, Bill Donohue sent a letter to the president of the college. The letter was also publicized in a Catholic League press release. Donohue asked the president why other possible venues on campus were not chosen for the event and why this event was selected to take place during Lent.

February 22

Providence, RI – In a speech titled, “Beyond Diversity: Challenging Racism in an Age of Backlash,” anti-racist activist Tim Wise claimed that the Catholic Church was partially responsible for the slaughter of American Indians in a speech funded by and hosted at Providence College. Wise charged that the Church “was directly implicated in slaughtering the indigenous people on this continent”; “was directly implicated in the conquest of the Southwest”; and “was directly implicated in sending indigenous children to boarding schools to strip them of their culture, to cut their hair, to kill the Indian and save the man for Jesus.” Wise also argued that the Church should depict Jesus Christ as black for one year.

February 25

Cincinnati, OH – A Catholic school teacher was fired in

December 2011 because her unwed pregnancy violated her contract, which stated that she would comply with Church teachings. In response, she filed a discrimination lawsuit seeking back pay and punitive damages. The lawsuit smacked of bigotry. It was an attack on the autonomy of the Catholic Church because it invited the heavy hand of government to police the employment decisions of religious schools.

March

The Canadian journal, *Studies in Religion*, published an article on Mother Teresa by Serge Larivée et al. in its March issue.

The article was a rehash of a book written by the late atheist, Christopher Hitchens, *The Missionary Position*. Indeed, throughout the article no one is cited more than Hitchens. Not surprisingly, the lead author, Serge Larivée, is a devout atheist, as is at least one of the co-authors.

The authors wrote of Mother Teresa's "rather dubious way of caring for the sick, her questionable political contacts, her suspicious management of enormous sums of money she received, and her overly dogmatic views regarding, in particular, abortion, contraception, and divorce."

The authors also attacked Bill Donohue for lacing Hitchens. In Donohue's review of Hitchens' book, Donohue said that it "is a 98 page essay printed on eight-and-a-half by five-and-a-half inch paper," and that it "contains no footnotes, no citations of any kind." For them to depend so heavily on a book that provides not a scintilla of evidence spoke volumes

The University of Montreal news release promoting the article said the goal was to dispel the "myth of altruism" surrounding Mother Teresa.

Finally, on four occasions the release misspelled her name as "Theresa."

March 7 – 11

Quinnipiac University released the misleading results of its poll suggesting that Catholics are pro-gay marriage. This “finding” was widely publicized in the media. Peter A. Brown, the assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, said “Catholic voters are leading American voters toward support for same-sex marriage.” His conclusion was based on the finding that Catholic voters favor gay marriage, 54-38 percent, while the figures nationally are 47-43 percent. The sample size of Catholics was a mere 497, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.4 percent. Furthermore, Quinnipiac asked Catholic voters 14 questions on issues of interest to them, and on all but one the survey disaggregated the answers on the basis of church attendance. The one exception was on same-sex marriage. This was a glaring omission, given that four in ten of the Catholics sampled did not practice their religion (28 percent go to church “a few times a year” and 11 percent say they “never” attend) and that nominal Catholics would tend to support gay marriage.

Reporters from cnsnews.com later contacted Quinnipiac. The polling outfit then admitted that 55 percent of Catholics who are regular church-goers are opposed to gay marriage, and only 38 percent favor it, contradicting Brown’s claim that “Catholic voters are leading American voters toward support for same-sex marriage.”

Brown defended the omission by saying “we only have so much space, and can only do so many things up front.”

Even after admitting that it misled the public, Quinnipiac still hadn’t corrected the record on its website.

March 22 – May 14

Boca Raton, FL – The administration at Florida Atlantic University issued an apology for an offensive incident involving one of its faculty members. The professor involved, Dr. Deandre Poole in the School of Communications and Media

Studies, was placed on administrative leave for the rest of the semester, after a protest ensued regarding an activity that took place in his classroom.

The incident took place on March 22 in Dr. Poole's Intercultural Communications Class. Students were asked to write the name "Jesus" on a piece of paper, fold it up and stomp on it. One of the students, a junior who identified himself as a Mormon, refused to participate in the exercise on the basis of his religious beliefs. When he protested to Dr. Poole's supervisor, he was told that he was suspended from the class.

Bill Donohue wrote directly to Dr. Poole, asking him why he didn't invite students to write the name "Obama" on a piece of paper, instead of "Jesus." In a press release, Donohue provided Poole's e-mail address so that Catholic League members could relay their concerns. Included in the university administration's apology was a statement that no protesting student would suffer any sanctions. Catholic League members were instrumental in achieving this outcome.

After the professor was placed on administrative leave, the president of the university resigned on May 14. Several media outlets reported that the "Jesus Stomp" was the final straw for a president already facing a number of growing controversies.

March 26

Madison, AL – The principal at Heritage Elementary School informed teachers that no activities related to or centered around any religious holiday would be allowed. As a result, teachers and students were prohibited from using the word "Easter" to describe several traditional and secular activities. Easter bunnies were referred to as rabbits and an educational Easter egg quiz bowl was replaced with "different kinds of shapes besides eggs."

Eventually reason prevailed. The Madison City School Board intervened explaining that the principal was “more cautious than she needed to be.” The students were allowed to have eggs and participate in traditional Easter activities, but the principal still would not allow teachers to use the word “Easter” in lessons.

March 28

NYU Local, a student news blog at New York University, encouraged readers to have sex in the school’s Catholic Center: “We spent a lot of time searching the new addition to Kimmel Center for places to have sex in, mostly because we thought it would be funny to suggest that you to [sic] screw in our brand spanking-new Catholic center,” the blog read.

April 1

NYU Local, a student news blog at New York University, published a blog post entitled, “Are You There, God? It’s Me, Not Touching Myself For Lent.” The post was a transcription of an internet chat between two of the blog’s reporters on Easter Sunday. The entire post was obscene and mocked the Lenten season: “On Palm Sunday, two of our ‘Catholic’ reporters decided to face Lent head on. After deciding that the lack of bagels, drugs or sex would be asking for too much, the faithful duo settled on something else: for the next forty days, they gave up touching themselves in the name of God.”

April 4 – July 4

Washington, DC – On April 4, news reports said that a Catholic priest, Father Greg Shaffer, was under fire by two homosexual students at George Washington University (GWU) for holding to Church teachings on homosexuality and abortion.

On the same day the story broke, Bill Donohue contacted every senior administrative official on the campus warning them of the civil liberties issues involved. He vigorously defended Father Shaffer, the Chaplain of the Newman Center, and pledged to fight for his rights.

In his open letter to GWU officials, Donohue said, "Nothing that has been reported by the media suggests that Father Shaffer has said anything inflammatory about these subjects, and the students themselves do not offer any evidence of abusive speech or behavior."

Donohue made it clear that this issue "transcends Father Shaffer: it is an attack on the freedom of expression of Catholics on campus to discuss their religious beliefs and practices with impunity. In short, this is a civil liberties issue involving both freedom of religion and freedom of speech."

Neither of the students who made the complaint was Catholic. One belonged to some faux Catholic entity, and the other was an agnostic Jew. What angered them most was the refusal of Father Shaffer to give his blessing to their homosexual relationship.

After Catholic League members who receive our news releases contacted GWU, the university was forced to respond. It maintained that, in accordance with its principles, it does everything it can to encourage dialogue of a respectful nature, emphasizing that it is dedicated to freedom of expression, as well as the right of everyone to exercise their religious beliefs, including the rights of those who strongly disagree with them.

Donohue replied saying, "This is classic doublespeak. There is only one party to this controversy that has crossed the line, and it isn't Father Shaffer. The attempt to silence him shows nothing but contempt for diversity and tolerance, the twin towers of academic virtue these days."

On April 9, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Steven R. Lerman wrote a letter to Donohue assuring him "that The George Washington University strives to embody the spirit of mutual respect and reasoned debate that

is essential to our academic mission.” Dr. Lerman wrote that, “We are therefore committed to ensuring that all members of our community are free to express their religious beliefs while honoring the right of others to express theirs.”

Immediately following the Catholic League’s news release on April 12, the provost told the Faculty Senate that GWU defended Father Shaffer’s freedom of speech.

On April 14, Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington visited the university and expressed support for Fr. Shaffer during his homily at a Mass with students. “I want to offer a word of support and encouragement to your chaplain, Father Greg Shaffer...and to stand in solidarity with a good priest,” he said.

On July 4, at the closing Mass for the second annual “Fortnight for Freedom,” at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Cardinal Wuerl cited what happened to Fr. Shaffer at George Washington University as an example of “the new intolerance.”

The Archdiocese of Washington played a key role by issuing stinging statements on the way GWU responded. Also noteworthy was the fact that the Newman Center was slated to receive an increase in funding from the Student Association in fall 2014.

May 2 – June 11

Pittsburgh, PA – A female student at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) dressed as the pope while appearing naked from the waist down at the annual art school parade. Her pubic hair was shaved in the shape of a cross; she passed out condoms to the public. Administrators reviewed this incident to see “if our community standards or laws were violated.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue raised several questions about what happened. For one thing, he noted that the university did not have to ponder what to do regarding a recent earlier incident involving one of its fraternities; it

simply suspended the students, as well as the entire Beta Theta Pi fraternity, for taking sexual pictures and videos inside the frat house and then emailing them to other members. An investigation was underway. But when it came to a female student who walked the streets naked from the waist down while mocking the pope, the administrators were much more relaxed. She was not suspended during a probe of this matter.

Donohue commented: “‘The Freedom of Expression Policy’ at CMU prizes individual expression, but it is not absolute: it explicitly ties rights to responsibilities. Perhaps most important, the ‘Carnegie Mellon Code’ says students ‘are expected to meet the highest standards of personal, ethical and moral conduct possible.’ It would seem axiomatic that the offending student violated these strictures.” Donohue argued that if CMU were to tolerate this incident, invoking no sanctions whatsoever, then it would open a door it may well regret. What, he asked, if instead of shaved pubic hair in the shape of a cross, a student chose to depict a swastika?

CMU’s decision not to suspend this female student, who publicly ridiculed Catholics and violated the local ordinance on public nudity, while invoking sanctions against the frat boys for offensive behavior behind closed doors, was legally problematic and morally indefensible.

Later CMU president Jared Cohon did apologize for the incident. His apology was sincere and much appreciated. At the time, a final resolution of this incident was not made, so it was too early to say whether CMU would treat this “highly offensive” act, as Cohon put it, the way it would resolve the pending case involving fraternity students and sex videos.

Donohue responded: “To treat the female incident in a less severe manner would raise questions about CMU’s sensitivity to anti-Catholicism, and would also put into play the issue of gender discrimination. We look forward to a just resolution to both of these indefensible incidents.”

A week later, on May 10, Cohon released a statement explaining that campus police had filed misdemeanor charges against the offending student, as well as two others. His letter balanced the need for freedom of expression with a commitment to fighting intolerance.

Cohon discredited real artistic merit when he said the student “made an artistic statement that proved to be controversial.” Donohue commented: “There is nothing artistic about this infantile anti-Catholic insult. But we appreciate his willingness not to dodge this issue.”

In June, an agreement was struck by CMU, the district attorney, and two of the offending students. Their misdemeanor charges would be dropped provided they each completed 80 hours of community service.

May 13

Muldrow, OK – The Freedom From Religion Foundation threatened to sue Muldrow Public Schools because the Ten Commandments were displayed in classrooms. Rather than going to court, the school district caved to militant atheists and removed the displays, which the district received as a donation in the 1990s.

May 16

Chula Vista, CA – At Salt Creek Elementary School, a kindergartener was banned from performing in the talent show because the song he wanted to sing, “Our God is Mercy,” had Christian lyrics. School officials reversed course and decided to allow the child to sing the song.

June 20

Howell, MI – A federal judge issued his opinion that a teacher at Howell High school violated a student’s First Amendment rights when the teacher punished the student for expressing his beliefs against homosexuality. The teacher wore a purple t-shirt and promoted the homosexual agenda in the classroom.

In response, the student said that homosexuality was against his Catholic beliefs. This made the teacher angry, and he threw the student out of the classroom. Counsel from the Thomas More Law Center was responsible for this victory supporting the First Amendment rights of the student.

July 2

Rohnert Park, CA – At Sonoma State University, a Catholic student was ordered to remove her cross necklace by her supervisor at her on-campus job. The student said, “I was offended because I believe as a Christian woman it is my prerogative to display my faith any way I like so long as it is not harming anyone else. I was very hurt and felt as if the university’s mission statement—which includes tolerance and inclusivity to all—was violated.” On a second encounter, her supervisor instructed her to hide the cross or remove it. An attorney for the Liberty Institute represented the student. A university spokeswoman apologized to the student on behalf of the university president. In an interview, the spokeswoman admitted that “it’s possible that political correctness got out of hand.”

July 30

Washington, D.C. – Homosexual activism at Georgetown University was profiled in a *New York Times* article. The escalation of homosexual activism was illustrated by such celebrations as “Gender Liberation Week,” “Gay Pride Month,” a “drag ball” called “Genderfunk,” and a “Lavender graduation attended by the university president.” This year at Genderfunk, a male student wore high heels and dressed as Mary. He danced to Madonna’s “Like a Virgin” as a woman dressed as Jesus looked on.

September 11

Millington, TN – A 10 year old student was told that she could not write about God for a school assignment that asked her who she idolized. The young girl, a student at Lucy Elementary School, wrote about God and Jesus but was told by her teacher

that God could not be her idol and that the paper about God could not even remain on school property. When the girl redid the assignment using Michael Jackson as her idol the teacher accepted the project. A school district spokesperson said that while teachers and staff could not promote religious beliefs, there is no rule that prohibits students from expressing their religious beliefs.

September 27 – October 30

Daytona Beach, FL – University of South Florida (USF) professor Dr. Timothy M. Weil insulted Catholics at a public forum off campus. At a conference held at the Hilton Daytona Beach Resort, Dr. Weil gave a paper, “Impact of Rule Governance on Motivation and its Clinical Application”; it was part of the proceedings of the Florida Association for Behavior Analysis. The Catholic League received the following report of Weil’s presentation:

*He put up a picture of an equal sign (=) in the middle of the large screen and then added a picture of a priest holding a crucifix to the left of it, and a picture of a toilet to the right. He then asked the audience to comment on what the picture means. Someone from the audience yelled, “They’re both full of s***.” After the audience settled down, Dr. Weil strolled around the room and gleefully repeated the response; those who were here knew he got the response he sought.*

Bill Donohue then wrote a letter to USF officials about the incident. After nearly 3 weeks elapsed without a response, Donohue went public with an excerpt of the letter. Donohue’s letter was sent to the top administrative and academic officials at USF. He also sent a copy to the 16 members of the Florida Board of Governors, and to John B. Ramil, Chairman of the University of South Florida System.

Donohue was not happy to learn that Professor Weil’s initial reaction was to say that his analogy, equating priests with feces, was misunderstood, and that it was academically valid.

However, Dr. Julianne Serovich, Dean of the College of Behavioral & Community Sciences, told Donohue that she was sorry she had not gotten back to him earlier; she said she was now looking into the matter.

On October 30, Dr. Serovich notified Donohue that Dr. Weil had received a “Letter of Counsel” and that he would be apologizing. Dr. Weil’s letter of apology went directly to Donohue; it was handled professionally. Donohue accepted it, and wished him well with his academic career. He also wrote to Dr. Serovich saying that her response was “judicious.”



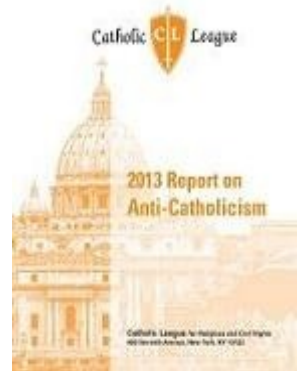
This Mike Peters cartoon was published in the *Dayton Daily News* on March 2. It accuses Pope Benedict XVI of cover-ups and compares his resignation to that of Richard Nixon who resigned amid a scandal.

[Back to Top](#)

GOVERNMENT

January 23 – March 23

Denver, CO – On January 23, Colorado's State Judiciary Committee held a hearing on a civil unions bill. In 2006, the people of Colorado said no to gay marriage. In 2012, lawmakers took up the issue of civil unions for homosexuals, allowing religious adoption agencies an exemption. In 2013, the religious exemption was gutted. This was a clear example of bias and posed a problem for the religious liberty of Catholics. To demand that Catholic adoptive agencies place children in a household of two adults of the same sex is to eviscerate their Catholicity. Catholics rallied on the steps of the State Capitol. The Catholic League urged all local Catholics to attend. Unfortunately, on March 23, Gov. John Hickenlooper signed the bill into law. One of his staffers demonized support for traditional marriage when he tweeted : "From hate state to great state?"



January 24

Forward Operating Base Orgun-E, Afghanistan – When a soldier complained about Christian symbols at a forward operating base in Afghanistan, American Atheists sent a letter to the Pentagon. In response, the U.S. military ordered soldiers to board up cross-shaped windows and to remove a steeple and cross from atop a chapel. An Army spokesman at the Pentagon stated that local command had "taken appropriate action to ensure that it is changed into a neutral facility," effectively cleansing the chapel of its Christian symbols. The Military Religious Freedom Foundation praised the military's decision.

January 26

San Francisco, CA – An official celebration of *Roe v. Wade* took place in accordance with a declaration issued by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. This was the same board of supervisors which the Catholic League sued for its anti-

Catholic statements. The Catholic Church has led the fight against abortion more than any other religion going back to 1973. Thus, it was clear that this “celebration” was a direct attack on the Catholic Church.

January 30

Hawthorne, CA – After the City Attorney recommended a resolution to remove St. Joseph’s Fiesta from its list of city-approved events due to fear of violation of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution, the Mayor returned the resolution to the City Attorney for further evaluation. Bill Donohue wrote a letter to the Mayor expressing his hope that the Mayor and his City Council would agree that the St. Joseph Fiesta should remain on the list of city-approved events, noting that such an event “is in no way a violation of the separation of church and state.” The resolution did not receive further consideration during 2013.

February 14

Springfield, IL – After Illinois State Senator Martin Sandoval, a Catholic, voted in favor of homosexual marriage, he engaged in a rant mocking the Catholic Church.

Speaking sarcastically, Sandoval spoke of the “stellar record of morality and example” set by the Catholic Church. This was followed by, “Quite the contrary my fellow senators, quite the contrary.” He then went on a rant about his days in the seminary. Sandoval said he experienced alcoholism and homosexuality, and “even met men that were pedophiles.” But none were guilty of any wrongdoing, he insisted. Indeed, it was through “no fault of their own” that they descended to such a level. Then he unloaded: the culprit was “the Church and its leaders who did not provide any support to these—to these good men of faith.”

The Catholic League noted: “Senator Sandoval owes Catholics an apology; then this issue can be put to rest. If he wants to disagree with the Church, that is his business. But to let

loose this way is inexcusable.”

March 8

New York, NY – New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey held a rally outside City Hall in Manhattan in an attempt to persuade the public to support her Child Victims Act. Over the past several years, Markey had introduced legislation addressing the sexual abuse of minors. Her bills focused unfairly on private institutions, leaving public institutions virtually untouched. This year’s version of her bill offered no change; it would open up a one-year window for alleged victims who were abused in a private institution regardless of when it took place.

In 2009, after months of protest by the Catholic League, Markey amended her bill to cover both public and private institutions, but it was quickly shot down by public school groups. Early in 2012, the Catholic League contacted Markey’s office about the continuing disparity in treatment, but never heard back.

March 14

Detroit, MI – Judge Lawrence P. Zatkoff of the Eastern District of Michigan granted a motion for a preliminary injunction against enforcement of the HHS mandate to Thomas Monaghan, a member of the advisory board of the Catholic League. Monaghan and his property management company, Domino’s Farms Corporation, was being represented by the Thomas More Law Center. The Obama administration’s lawyers contended that once a business owner chooses to enter into the marketplace, he no longer is entitled to exercise his religious rights. But Judge Zatkoff disagreed, saying, “It is in the best interest of the public that Monaghan not be compelled to act in conflict with his religious beliefs.” The attorney for the Thomas More Law Center commented: “The HHS Mandate forces our clients to provide abortion-causing drugs to their employees when doing so is a direct violation of the teachings of the Catholic Church and our clients’ sincerely held religious

beliefs. The Court's decision today upholds everyone's freedom of religion and rights protected by the Constitution."

April 5

Boston, MA – At the 2013 "Banned in Boston" fundraiser hosted by Urban Improv, an organization that uses "improvisational theater workshops to teach violence prevention, conflict resolution, and decision-making," former Massachusetts Governor Bill Weld and a local television anchorwoman, Heather Unruh, performed a skit mocking the papacy. Weld dressed up as "Cardinal Bonaducci." Unruh was "the new pope from South Boston." Weld said the following during the skit: "We at the Vatican thought that we would try to modernize how we elect a pope, and, thus, make Catholicism more democratic and inclusive. So, we just gave away the papacy to the one millionth customer at the Little Peach on Broadway." Weld also said to Unruh, "Your butt is so small, your Excellency."

April 6

Catholicism was cited as an example of "religious extremism" in U.S. Army Reserve Equal Opportunity training documents. In particular, it was reported that a slide was used by a U.S. Army training instructor to list examples of extremism in a presentation to an Army Reserve unit based in Pennsylvania. The slide included Catholicism, Evangelical Christianity, Al Qaeda, Hamas, Sunni Muslims, and the Ku Klux Klan. An Army spokesman said that the slide was not produced by the Army and did not reflect Army policy. While the offensive slide was removed, it remained an open question to what extent similar training materials were being used elsewhere in the armed forces. Additional documents obtained in August under a Freedom of Information Act request showed that the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) "hate group" list was cited as a "reliable" guide to extremists. Furthermore, the documents also showed that an unknown number of "equal opportunity officers" were trained at Fort Jackson, South Carolina using SPLC propaganda.

April 9

Fort Campbell, Kentucky – An email was written by a lieutenant colonel advising three dozen of his subordinates to watch out for soldiers who might belong to “domestic hate groups.” While the Catholic Church was not identified as a “domestic hate group” explicitly, the “Christian Right” was singled out as being “anti-gay” for its opposition to the homosexual activist movement. The Family Research Council and the American Family Association were mentioned by name. The general categories addressed included the following: “Anti-Gay, Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Muslim, Black Separatist, Christian Identity, Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Confederate, Neo-Nazi, Patriot Movement, Racist Skinhead, Sovereign Citizens Movement, and White Nationalist.”

April 11

Sacramento, CA – California lawmakers weighed a decision to revoke the tax-exempt status of the Boy Scouts of America. At issue was whether the Boy Scouts are a discriminatory organization for upholding Christian teaching on homosexuality. This was a clear instance of anti-Christian bigotry. The Catholic League responded with a letter to Sacramento legislators asking them to determine whether the San Francisco-based group, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, should lose its tax-exempt status. This anti-Catholic homosexual group dresses as nuns and mocks every conceivable Catholic belief and practice.

April 23

Washington, DC – The Pentagon opened its doors to Mikey Weinstein, the president and founder of the anti-Christian group, the Military Religious Freedom Foundation. Weinstein met privately with generals and a military chaplain to call for regulations that would prohibit anyone in uniform from proselytizing, making it an offense subject to court martial. “Someone needs to be punished for this,” Weinstein said in a television interview. “Until the Air Force or Army or Navy or Marine Corps punishes a member of the military for

unconstitutional religious proselytizing and oppression, we will never have the ability to stop this horrible, horrendous, dehumanizing behavior.”

April 23

Fort Wainwright, AK – The U.S. Army ordered the scrubbing of Bible inscriptions etched into the serial numbers of weapons scopes manufactured by Trijicon. John 8:12 and Second Corinthians 4:6 appeared at the end of scope serial numbers as “JN8:12” and “2COR4:6.” Soldiers had to turn in their scopes so the references could be removed. Specific instructions were given for removal. After scraping off the letters and numbers, soldiers were directed to apply black paint to ensure the verses were completely blotted out.

April 24

At an unknown number of military bases, access to the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) website was blocked because it contained “hostile content.” While it was unclear what specifically was deemed to be “hostile” about SBC’s website, it was alarming that a Christian group could be deemed “hostile” to the Department of Defense.

April 30

The Pentagon released a statement confirming that soldiers could be prosecuted for promoting their faith: “Religious proselytization is not permitted within the Department of Defense...Court martials and non-judicial punishments are decided on a case-by-case basis.” However, the difference between freedom of religious speech and proselytization was not adequately defined by the Pentagon. This lack of definition created a chilling effect on the freedom of speech of military and religious personnel.

May 1

Chicago, IL – Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s City Council floor leader, Pat O’Connor, attacked the Catholic Church after Cardinal Francis George joined a coalition of churches and nonprofits,

which rejected the mayor's compromise offer on water fees for nonprofits. Water had previously been free for nonprofits. The phase-out of the water waiver would result in a cost of \$2.5 million a year for Catholic churches, forcing them to close schools and reduce social services.

The alderman's gratuitous tirade suggested a bigoted mindset. O'Connor said, "They're clearly not owning up to the fact that there are people out there damaged by the church and they're talking about free water. Really?" Describing himself as "a Catholic, not a happy one these days," O'Connor said, "The church has so many internal problems, they ought to satisfy their own problems and they ought to address the things that are in the paper every day and stop talking about free water. Quit saying that they handled things right in the past or...or, even worse, saying mistakes were made in the past, but they're not correcting those mistakes." The alderman said at one point, "Stick to praying and stick to saving souls and let us run the city."

May 8

West Springfield, MA – The City's Deputy Director of Operations sent a letter to the owner of a local pizza parlor, ordering him to take down a statue of the Virgin Mary which he had erected on a city-owned traffic island. The letter said: "Unfortunately, in this day and age, religious artifacts are not to be displayed on any city property."

May 15

Atlanta, GA – The Georgia Department of Natural Resources directed staff to remove Bibles from state lodges and cabins across the state after an atheist resident complained. Park officials told the resident that all Bibles would be removed while the state attorney examines the matter. A few days later when the attorney general determined the state was on solid legal ground because it had not paid for the Bibles, Governor Nathan Deal ordered the Bibles back.

May 17

At a House Ways and Means Committee hearing, Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL) questioned outgoing IRS commissioner Steven Miller about two incidents in which the IRS ordered pro-life groups to detail the content of their prayers. A California IRS office demanded that Christian Voices for Life, located in Fort Bend County, Texas, explain its prayers. Similarly, the Coalition for Life of Iowa was told to “detail the content of the members of your organization’s prayers.” Schock wanted to know if this request was appropriate. Miller answered that he was unable to speak to either situation.

May 20

Philadelphia, PA – The Catholic League disseminated an ad that exposed the legal injustice perpetrated against three Catholic priests and one Catholic layman in Philadelphia. To read the ad, please visit the Catholic League’s website.

June 12

Philadelphia, PA – A miscarriage of justice culminated in the sentencing of Father Charles Engelhardt and teacher Bernard Shero. Fr. Engelhardt was sentenced to 6 to 12 years in prison; Shero was sentenced to 8 to 16 years in prison. A “Billy Doe” had alleged that he was raped by three different persons, two of whom were priests. It was a blatant attempt to exploit the prevailing animus against priests. The Catholic League disseminated an ad with a full account of the details in this matter. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* declined to run the Catholic League’s ad exposing this gross injustice.

June 12

Washington, DC – The Obama administration opposed an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act that would protect the religious liberty of men and women in the Armed Forces. The amendment, introduced by Rep. John Fleming of Louisiana, would ensure that the military accommodates religious expression, while also allowing for exceptions based on “military necessity.” In a statement released by the Office of

Management and Budget, it said officers need discretion “to address potentially problematic speech and actions within their units.” It also said Fleming’s amendment “would have a significant adverse effect on good order, discipline, morale and mission accomplishment.” The administration’s reaction neglected the crucial point: if the religious liberty of the Armed Forces were secure, there would be no need for an amendment to safeguard it.

July 9

The U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child attacked the Holy See by demanding that the Vatican turn over every document it has on priestly sexual abuse. The entity also wanted to know what the Catholic Church had done about discrimination between boys and girls; it was concerned about sexual stereotypes in school textbooks. The Catholic League responded with a news release highlighting the audacity of an entity comprised of 18 member nations, at least half of whom have a record of oppressing their own people.

July 25

Trenton and Newark, NJ – In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) did not provide funds for the recovery efforts to religious groups and houses of worship. Both the Archdiocese of Newark and the Diocese of Trenton saw extensive damage as a result of the storm and did not receive any assistance from FEMA. In the Archdiocese of Newark, the damage included several structures that were part of parishes and which served as community centers or meeting places for volunteers following the storm. In the Diocese of Trenton, the damage to structures and properties were expected to total between \$12 million and \$15 million. This was a clear instance of the government discriminating against religious groups in general and Catholic institutions in particular.

August 27

Albuquerque, NM – The New Mexico Supreme Court ruled that a small photography business owned by Christians does not have

the right to decline to photograph a same-sex marriage ceremony. This was another example of the state using anti-discrimination laws to crack down on religious liberty.

September 30

Todd Starnes, host of the radio program Fox News and Commentary, wrote on FoxNews.com about how Evangelical Christian airmen at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas were facing “severe threats and retribution” for their religious beliefs relating to gay marriage. Starnes was told by Steve Branson, pastor of Village Parkway Baptist Church in San Antonio, about a private meeting at the church attended by at least 80 airmen who voiced “their concerns about religious hostilities at the Air Force base.” Among those at the meeting was Senior Master Sgt. Phillip Monk, a 19 year veteran who was facing a court martial after he refused to tell his lesbian commander his position on gay marriage. He had objected to her intention to “severely reprimand a new instructor who had expressed religious objections to homosexuality.” Monk, “who has a spotless record,” was relieved of his duties. When he filed a religious discrimination complaint against the Air Force, he was subsequently accused of giving false statements to Starnes and read his Miranda Rights.

Among other anti-discrimination incidents at the base reported by Starnes:

- “Gay and lesbian airmen can talk about their lifestyle, but the rest have to stay completely quiet about what they believe.”
- “One airman was told that even thinking that homosexuality is a sin is discriminatory.”
- “One member of the military was written up for having his Bible out – while a Muslim was allowed to publicly display a prayer rug.”
- Parents of a 19-year-old airman reported that he was told to disclose his religion, and when he said “Christian,” he had to repeat basic training.

October

In the October issue of *Catalyst*, the Catholic League published "Obama's War on Religion in the Ranks," a recent article by Congressman Tim Huelskamp. In 2012, he introduced the Military Religious Freedom Protection Act, a bill which would address the problems he detailed in his article. Congressman Huelskamp said that, since President Obama took office in 2008, "the persecution of Christians and conservatives has become increasingly brazen and pervasive." In fact, Huelskamp stated that "with the exceptions of free enterprise and traditional marriage, no institution has been more 'radically transformed' by the Obama regime than the Armed Forces." Huelskamp cited thirteen examples of anti-Christian animus on the part of the Pentagon:

- Walter Reed Army Medical Center banned the family members of wounded warriors from "bringing or using bibles" during visits.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs banned Christian prayers at a National Cemetery.
- Even before the Supreme Court struck down DOMA in part, the Department of Defense authorized same-sex "marriages" at military installations.
- At Ft. Leavenworth, evangelical Christians were identified as a national security threat in a war games scenario.
- Evangelist Franklin Graham was uninvited from the Pentagon's National Day of Prayer service.
- A training exercise funded by the Department of Homeland Security portrayed homeschooling families as domestic terrorists.
- An army master sergeant's superiors told him to remove the conservative, Republican, and scripture-quoting bumper stickers from his personal vehicle.
- The Utah Air National Guard cancelled the six-year re-enlistment contract of a tech sergeant because he told a chaplain he thought the West Point chapel should not be used for a homosexual wedding.

- An Air Force officer was required to hide from view the Bible he once kept on his desk.
- An Air Force chaplain's video tribute to sergeants was banned out of fear of offending an "agnostic, atheist, or Muslim." In the video, the chaplain narrated the following words: "On the eighth day, God looked down on His creation and said, 'I need someone who will take care of the Airmen. So God created a First Sergeant.'"
- Army Reserve training materials listed Evangelical Christianity, Catholicism, and Orthodox Judaism as extremist religious groups alongside Al-Qaeda and Hamas.
- Several Generals consulted Military Religious Freedom Foundation head Mikey Weinstein in writing Air Force policies concerning "religious tolerance." Weinstein told the *Washington Post* that the Defense Department expressed willingness to ban proselytizing. He added, "We need half a dozen court-martials real quick." The Pentagon issued a statement days later that announced: "Religious proselytization is not permitted within the Department of Defense."

October 5 – 12

The Obama administration, true to its anti-Catholic colors, took advantage of the partial government shutdown to deny some Catholic priests their right to say Mass.

Because there are not enough priests in the military to service all Catholics, the government contracts with members of the clergy to celebrate Mass, baptize children, and the like. But when the shutdown occurred, non-active duty priests who are hired as government contractors were furloughed. For two weekends, October 5-6 and October 11-12, these priests could not say Mass, denying many Catholic men and women in the armed forces their constitutional right to practice their religion.

While both parties were to blame for the shutdown, it was the Obama administration that decided to war on the civil

liberties of Catholics; it has had plenty of practice.

"It is one thing to deny services that carry no constitutional weight," Bill Donohue was quoted as saying, "quite another to censor the First Amendment."

A resolution was passed in the House on October 5 calling on Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to allow these priests to resume their duties. The Senate did nothing.

We urged Catholics to ask their senators, and Secretary Hagel, to end this disgraceful assault on the constitutional rights of Catholics immediately. We also supplied those who receive our e-mails the contact information at the Department of Defense. No doubt about it, Catholics were exploited by the administration for political purposes.

Threatened with a lawsuit by the Thomas More Law Center, the problem ended after the House and Senate agreed on a bill to resolve the debacle.

October 31

Fort Sill, OK – After learning that a female soldier enrolled in Advanced Individual Training at the base had thrice been denied the opportunity to go to Mass on Sundays, Bill Donohue wrote to Major General Mark McDonald at Fort Sill's U.S. Army Fires Center of Excellence.

Donohue noted that the "battle buddy" system they have requires soldiers to travel in pairs. He conceded that this arrangement surely has its merits, but he hastened to say that "it is not an adequate defense to deny someone her constitutional rights simply because there are no other Catholics in her unit." He added that a cadre escort "would resolve this matter, while not doing anything to undermine the policy of moving about in pairs."

Within hours of registering the formal complaint Donohue received an e-mail indicating that his complaint was being

taken seriously. Donohue then called the base and spoke to the official who had contacted him. The conversation was amicable, and it resulted in assurances that a cadre escort service would be arranged for those soldiers who lacked a fellow Catholic to “buddy” with. More important, reforms were immediately put into place guaranteeing the religious liberty rights of Catholics on the base.

November

St. Paul, MN – There was a concerted effort on the part of anti-Catholic lawyers, city officials, journalists and professional victims’ groups to attack the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, which is headed by Archbishop John Nienstedt. For reasons that remain unexplained, the St. Paul Police Department decided to reopen a case involving a priest from the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis who was accused in 2004 of having child porn on his computer. He was investigated for seven months, and when nothing was found, the case was dropped. Now it has been reopened.

The reopening of this case came on the heels of a public plea by Commander Mary Nash asking anyone who was molested by a priest to come forward. She did not ask if someone had been abused by a rabbi, minister, school teacher, stepfather or police officer—only if it was a priest. This kind of religious profiling is legally suspect and morally unethical.

November 20

New York, NY – New York City Mayor-elect Bill de Blasio announced the appointment of 60 leaders to his transition committee. He instructed them to “identify women and men from every part of our city and walk of life” that wants a better New York. Transition Co-Chair Jennifer Jones Austin said that committee members “come from every slice of civic life—business and labor, science and the arts, *clergy....*” (Italic added.)

In fact, there were two ministers, two rabbis and one imam on

the transition committee. There were no Catholic priests. Catholics make up 52.5 percent of New York City, yet they had no clergy representation.

To make matters worse, de Blasio showed his contempt for Catholics by naming to his transition committee the man who insulted them in 1998 with the "Sensation" exhibit, Arnold L. Lehman, director of the Brooklyn Museum of Art. That exhibit featured a portrait of Our Blessed Mother with elephant dung and pornographic cut outs on it. Another member of the transition team was Darren Walker. Walker is president of the Ford Foundation, the most generous donor to the most anti-Catholic and pro-abortion organization in the nation, Catholics for Choice.

After the Catholic League brought light to this issue, de Blasio named two Catholic leaders to his ceremonial inauguration committee: a monsignor from the Diocese of Brooklyn and a lay official from Catholic Charities. The committee continued to exclude any representation from the Archdiocese of New York, despite it covering more than half of New York City.



The *Denver Post* published this Mike Keefe cartoon on March 17. The cartoon shows several cardinals driving a popemobile that is covered in pedophilia, scandal and abuse. It is implied that the cardinals were allowing these things to happen while previous popes went along for the ride.

IRS TARGETED CATHOLIC LEAGUE

When news stories surfaced on the way the IRS was selectively targeting conservative and religious groups, Bill Donohue decided the time had come to disclose how the IRS targeted the Catholic League in 2008. He described what happened in an article for Newsmax.

Just weeks after Barack Obama was elected president in 2008, Donohue was notified by the IRS that the Catholic League was under investigation for violating the IRS Code on political activities as it relates to 501(c)(3) organizations. What the IRS did not know was that Donohue had proof of who contacted them to launch the investigation: Catholics United, a George Soros-funded Catholic organization.

The IRS was contacted on June 5, 2008 to launch a probe of the Catholic League, and the letter sent to Donohue was dated November 24, 2008. The June 5 letter was sent to the IRS by lawyers from Catholics United; one of the persons to whom it was mailed was Lois G. Lerner, the woman cited in the recent IRS scandal.

The “evidence” was nothing more than news releases and articles that Donohue had written during the presidential campaign on various issues. The lawyers also asked the IRS to question the source of new funding we had received, implying that the Catholic League received illegal contributions. The timing was not coincidental. On October 20, Donohue issued a news release, “George Soros Funds Catholic Left,” and on October 23, he wrote another one, “Catholic Left Scandal Mounts”; both mentioned Catholics United. The same day, October 23, he was asked to go on CNN, and when Catholics United found out, they contacted the station trying to spike the interview.

The person who did this was the head of Catholics United, Chris Korzen. He said Donohue was not “an authentic Catholic commentator and representative of the Catholic Church,” and that they should either drop him altogether or put him on with

Alexia Kelley of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good (Catholics United is listed on the 990 of Catholics in Alliance as a related organization; Soros greases this group, and by extension, Catholics United).

The bid to keep Donohue off TV failed. But here's the key: Korzen was dumb enough to share with CNN the complaint issued by his group to the IRS. The document, which was leaked by someone at CNN, matches nicely with the IRS complaint of November 24.

In the end, the IRS concluded that although the Catholic League had "intervened in a political campaign," it was "unintentional"; thus, the Catholic League's tax-exempt status remained intact.

HHS MANDATE CONTINUES TO TARGET CATHOLICS

The federal government's war on Roman Catholics that began in 2012 plowed full steam ahead in 2013, and so did the Catholic League's efforts to fight back.

While the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare, does not explicitly target Catholics, or any other religious group, it was originally promised that the bill would respect the conscience rights of religious individuals and organizations. This included not mandating abortion coverage, something that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) fought hard for. It turned out not to be true.

In January 2012, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius issued an order that required all employers to provide coverage for abortifacients, contraception and sterilization, including religious non-profit entities. Having to pay for services deemed immoral was bad enough, but what was most objectionable about the HHS mandate was an abuse of power: the government decided to redefine what a Catholic organization was. For centuries, Catholic-run facilities proudly hired and served people of all faiths, never

discriminating on the basis of religion. Now they were being punished for doing so. The mandate said that any religious entity that hires and serves mostly people of other religions is disqualified from the traditional religious exemption.

The Catholic League was hard at work relentlessly defending the constitutional right to religious freedom enjoyed not just by Catholics, but by people of every religion. We exposed the media bias not covering a bill that pushed back against the HHS mandate (a bill that was supported by Cardinal Sean O'Malley and the USCCB). We supported the bishop's criticisms of revisions to the mandate, and pressed for further changes. Finally we collected tens of thousands of signatures asking for the mandate to be withdrawn and sent them to Secretary Sebelius.

We received some encouraging news at the end of 2013, but not enough to relax. Organizations affiliated with the New York Archdiocese and Diocese of Rockville Centre won an injunction against the HHS mandate, as did groups in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Right before midnight on New Year's Eve, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor issued an injunction protecting the Little Sisters of the Poor from the mandate. We expect the legal challenges to continue throughout 2014.

The following is a chronicle of our response in 2013.

March 19: HHS MANDATE GOES UNREPORTED

On March 5, a bill was introduced by Rep. Diane Black that challenged the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate, and the mainstream media did not report on it. The bill, which had the explicit support of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), would provide conscience rights protections in health care. Specifically, the legislation would ensure that the ObamaCare regulation forcing employers to provide coverage for abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization and contraception could not override the conscience rights of

objecting parties.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the head of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, wrote to every member of the House on March 8, asking for their support. He urged them to make this a priority, incorporating it in the upcoming "must-pass" legislation.

When it comes to Catholic issues, the big dailies don't lack for coverage. But on this dispute, which pitted the bishops against the Obama administration, there was a blackout. Among those not reporting on this story were the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Miami Herald*, the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Denver Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Los Angeles Times*. The lone newspaper that covered this subject was the *Washington Times*. Not surprisingly, the failure of these newspapers to report on this story accounted for the lack of coverage by the broadcast news programs, as well as cable TV.

Religious liberty should mean something even to those who are not observant. At stake is whether the federal government can impose a secular agenda on people of faith. Catholics, in particular, have been involved in this fight ever since the HHS mandate was introduced. For the media to ignore this issue was simply irresponsible.

March 20: BISHOPS FIND HHS REVISIONS FLAWED

A March 20 statement by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (made by general counsel Anthony Picarello and associate general counsel Michael F. Moses) on the HHS revisions was the most definitive assessment to date. Though they conceded that "the definition of an exempt 'religious employer' was revised to eliminate some of the intrusive and constitutionally improper government inquiries into religious

teaching and beliefs that were inherent in an earlier definition," the changes were still inadequate. Even the Obama administration admitted that its definition of a "religious employer" excluded many organizations that are widely understood as such.

Individual business owners also would not receive the relief they sought from the mandate. Moreover, the terms of what qualifies as an "accommodation" lacked clarity, thus creating unnecessary confusion. Most important, the HHS mandate as written represented "an unprecedented (and now sustained) violation of religious liberty by the federal government."

In other words, despite some movement on the part of the administration, most Catholic entities were still vulnerable to the HHS edict. The only way to truly resolve this issue was for the administration to withdraw the mandate. Surely it could accommodate women seeking services that the Catholic Church sees as morally objectionable with a tax credit, or by some other means without burdening religious institutions.

June 28: HHS MANDATE FINAL RULES

The HHS mandate forcing Catholic non-profits to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization did not kick in on August 1, as scheduled; an extension was granted to January 1, 2014.

There were some changes in the rules worth noting, but they are not satisfactory. Attempts to distance Catholic non-profits from directly providing insurance coverage for these morally objectionable services are admirable, but we've been there before: five months earlier Catholics were told that more in the way of accommodation was forthcoming, and we applauded that gesture. But now we know that the Obama administration came up short.

The Catholic community, and many others, are not asking for anything new: all we were asking for is to respect the status

quo ante as it applies to this issue. It is not people of faith who sought this confrontation—it was President Obama.

August 29 – September 30: PETITION TO WITHDRAW HHS MANDATE

At the end of the summer, the Catholic League asked its online audience to sign the following petition that was posted on our website:

I am requesting that the Obama administration withdraw the Health and Human Services mandate.

Considering the amount of time and money that has been spent trying to fix the problems that are inherent in this legislation—without a satisfactory resolution—it makes no sense to continue this process any longer. Religious liberty is a First Amendment right that cannot be abridged by any administration or policy initiative. Indeed, it is our most important inalienable right: it is not a bargaining chip that can be traded for some other purpose. That is why I urge the Obama administration to withdraw the Health and Human Services mandate.

Tens of thousands signed the petition, and during the first week of October we mailed all of the names to Kathleen Sebelius, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). We did not get a chance to contact our mailing list, but the point we wanted to make had been served: Catholics want their First Amendment right to religious liberty respected, and that meant dropping the HHS mandate.

We also contacted the Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court about our initiative. They will likely decide the ultimate fate of the HHS mandate, and they need to be aware of the resistance there is in the Catholic community to it. Obviously, one does not have to be Catholic to oppose this draconian edict; many Christians, Jews and others are equally outraged over this violation of religious liberty.

The Catholic community, led by the bishops, has voiced its objections to the HHS mandate on several occasions. The Obama administration has made “accommodations” and other revisions, but the fundamental problem remained: the HHS mandate adopted a definition of what constitutes a “religious employer” that is entirely too narrow; and the religious liberty abridgement entailed in this edict represented an unfair burden on Catholic non-profit organizations, and Catholic-owned private businesses.

The amount of time and money spent trying to reconcile the HHS mandate with legitimate First Amendment concerns was considerable, and without a satisfactory conclusion. Indeed, almost 70 lawsuits have been filed. The only sensible outcome for the administration was to withdraw the mandate altogether.

The problems inherent in ObamaCare are serious. From delaying “out-of-pocket costs” to postponing the employer mandate, it is evident that even those who support this legislation were growing weary. Add to this the more than a thousand waivers that were granted, and the loss of support by labor unions, and the result is alarming. But none of these factors are as important as the constitutional issues that the HHS mandate presents: even if ObamaCare can be salvaged, the problems posed by the mandate remain.

UNJUST CALIFORNIA BILL VETOED

On October 12, California Governor Jerry Brown vetoed a bill that would have allowed adults who were allegedly molested when they were minors to file lawsuits, provided the abuse occurred in a private institution. The bill would have lifted the statute of limitations for one year. Gov. Brown’s veto culminated a successful fight against this discriminatory bill led by Los Angeles Archbishop José Gomez, the California Catholic Conference, and the Catholic League.

What follows is a summary of how the events unfolded.

On May 29, the full California State Senate passed SB 131. The bill would then be considered by the State Assembly.

On June 6, Bill Donohue wrote an open letter to members of the California Assembly showing that SB 131 was "irrational, discriminatory and grossly unjust" toward Catholic schools. Moreover, he cited extensive reports disproving a statement later made by Sen. Jim Beall, the bill's sponsor, that "public schools and teachers have been held to a higher standard of care when it comes to the protection of children and reporting of child sexual abuse, than have the clergy and private youth-serving institutions." In fact, unlike Catholic schools nationwide, there was still no mandatory training program in place for public school teachers and staff to combat the problem of sexual abuse of minors.

The letter was sent to every member of the California legislature. On June 18, the California Assembly Committee on the Judiciary kept the bill alive by voting in support. It was then sent back to the Senate for refinement.

Over the summer, the Catholic League contacted well over 10,000 members in California alerting them to a vote on a bill in the Assembly Appropriations Committee that unfairly targeted the Catholic Church. We also e-mailed over a thousand pastors throughout the state. On August 14, the bill failed 6-4; there were seven abstentions. But on August 21, it passed 12-4, with a mighty push by the Democrats.

The final proof that this bill was driven more by anti-Catholicism than any alleged interest in child welfare came on September 4 when Republicans tried to amend the Beall legislation to include public institutions. It was defeated.

On September 6, the California Senate passed SB 131. The legislation was sent to Governor Jerry Brown to sign.

On September 10, Bill Donohue wrote a letter to Governor Brown outlining his concerns. It was delivered the next day. Donohue

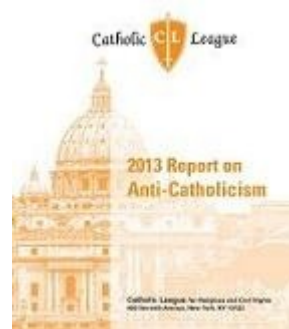
detailed the bill's rank injustice and provided many examples of the sexual abuse of minors in the public schools in California. His letter was sent to every bishop, including the auxiliary bishops, in California.

To view the text of Bill Donohue's letter to Governor Jerry Brown click [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

MEDIA

The following entries are examples of media duplicity or deception.



February 13 – 15

ABC News ran a story about a Catholic official from Purcell Marian High School who was fired for rejecting Catholic teachings on marriage and the family.

In response, a change.org petition campaign was launched attacking the decision. The petition stated, "I would like to respectfully express my disappointment with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati with the decision to fire the Dean of Students at Purcell Marian High School, Mike Moroski, on the grounds that he expressed his belief that gay marriage should be legal." It went on to call the action by the Archdiocese "an act of tyranny." The petition collected 7,500 signatures and was

delivered to the Archdiocese.

We were upset about this issue for two reasons. First, why is it newsworthy to report on a decision reached by a private, religious institution concerning an employee who violated his contract? Second, since when is it the business of non-Catholics to pressure a Catholic school to reinstate a teacher who rejects the teachings of the Catholic Church?

It is particularly galling for the media to make a big deal about a Catholic school that fires a miscreant employee, especially given the fact that there is no shortage of men and women who have been fired by the media for the filmiest of reasons. Here are a few examples:

- In 2010, Juan Williams was fired from National Public Radio (NPR) because his employer objected to comments he made about Muslims on a television station unaffiliated with NPR.
- In 2012, Pat Buchanan was fired from MSNBC because he wrote a book his employer didn't like.
- In 2010, Octavia Nasr was fired from CNN because she praised a radical imam on Twitter.
- In 2012, a reporter for the *Houston Chronicle* was fired for posting on her blog that she was a part-time stripper.
- In 2012, an African American female meteorologist was fired for replying to a racist comment on her Facebook page, even though her comments were inoffensive. The station that fired the black woman for responding to a racist comment was KTBS. It is an ABC affiliate.

July 1

In the week following the murder of a Catholic priest in Syria on June 23, the mainstream media omitted any mention of how Father François Murad was beheaded with a kitchen knife to chants of "Allahu Akbar." Subsequent reports revealed that he may have been shot and not beheaded. This, too, was ignored by the mainstream media.

December

The media bias was shown in full force by a number of different media outlets reporting on a variety of subjects. The one thing they all had in common was a headline meant to deceive the reader into assuming the worst about Catholicism.

The ABC News headline read, "Gay Catholic School Teacher Fired for Wedding Plans." Well, not really: he was fired for breaking a contract he voluntarily signed. Michael Griffin, who taught at a Pennsylvania Catholic school, said his principal didn't care that he was gay, but when he publicly announced his "wedding" plans, he made a conscious decision to flout his contract. So he was canned. Does ABC allow its staff to violate their contracts with impunity?

The *USA Today* headline read, "Catholic Women Ordained Priest and Deacons in Kentucky." Well, not really: the old gals were simply playing the game of pretend—dressing up like priests and pretending they were ordained in the Catholic Church. Some in the asylum think they are the pope. Will *USA Today* do a story on them as well?

The *Dayton Daily News* headline read, "Ex-Dayton Priest Faces Prosecution." Well, not really: turns out that the "priest," Annamalai Annamalai, is a "self-described Hindu high priest." Readers were intentionally invited to believe he was a Catholic priest. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* was more accurate: it called him a guru.

The CNN headline read, "Catholic College Police Officer Kills Student After Off-Campus Traffic Stop." Has anyone ever seen a headline that reads, "Jewish College Police Officer Kills Student After Off-Campus Traffic Stop"? Yet CNN used the same words, "Catholic College Police Officer," in its headline for two different stories. But would CNN ever run a story titled, "Catholic College Police Officer Saves Student Lives"?

Books

April 9

Victor Navasky's book, *The Art of Controversy: Political Cartoons and Their Enduring Power*, was published. In it, he lauded the work of Thomas Nast without mentioning the fact that the 19th-century artist consistently inflamed hatred against the Irish and Catholics alike. This was an example of bigotry by omission.

Internet

March 14

In a blog post titled "Child Rape, Inc." at slog.thestranger.com, Dan Savage addressed news about a lawsuit settlement that involved the release of documents in the Diocese of Joliet. Savage wrote the following:

"Rape a kid making his first confession—holy s**t, that'll f**ck a kid up for life. And you gotta love how certain the writer is that all of this sexual-abuse-of-children-by-Catholic-priests stuff ended in the 1990s. How can we know for sure? How do you prove that particular negative? And here's a detail for all you non-Catholics out there: Catholic children make their first first [sic] confession at age seven—and they're alone with a priest, in dark little box [sic], when they make it. When I was a Catholic kid we went to confession on a weekly basis. So one rapey parish priest could have access to dozens or hundreds of children, completely alone and with no parents present, week-in, week-out, for decades. Access to children alone—that's built right into this particular sacrament."

Savage also took a shot at Pope Francis by prefacing his post with the following: "Hate to spoil the new pope's coming-out party—and it was such a lovely party—but this just in."

August 14

On July 1, the Catholic League filed a complaint with Facebook about a page that showed an edgy picture of the Virgin Mary

with the inscription, "Virgin Mary Should've Aborted." This was the reply: "We reviewed the page you reported for containing hate speech or symbols and found it doesn't violate our community standard on hate speech." When others continued to protest, the page was taken down, but then other pages, similar in content, appeared and remained online. The Catholic League responded in a news release calling attention to Facebook's duplicity in the application of its community standards. In 2012, Facebook censored a French page when a French magazine took liberties with Muhammad.

September 24

Dorothy Samuels, blogging on the *New York Times* website, termed the just-introduced Marriage and Religious Freedom Act "the latest example of political conservatives trying to use religion as an excuse to discriminate."

In fact, as San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone pointed out, this was an *anti-bias* bill, designed to "prevent the federal government from discriminating against religious believers who hold to the principle that marriage is the union of one man and one woman." Baltimore Archbishop William Lori further explained that the bill would protect against the federal government being "able to deny individuals and organizations a grant, contract, or employment because their belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman is informed by their religious faith."

Samuels, however, found it "pernicious" that the government would be prevented from "taking any 'adverse actions' based on 'acts in accordance' with a person's or group's religiously motivated opposition to same sex marriage."

October 4

In 2008 the Catholic League protested the desecration of a Communion Host by P.Z. Myers, an anti-Catholic atheist professor. In early October, Bill Donohue decided not to protest the antics of Kuma's Corner, a Chicago restaurant, for

serving a burger with a Communion wafer. The difference: Myers secured a consecrated Host and drove a nail through it; the sandwich shop played games with an unconsecrated wafer. While Kuma's showed disrespect, what Myers did was despicable.

The New Civil Rights Movement, a homosexual outfit, predicted on their website that Donohue would be "stroking out." They say that what Kuma's Corner did risked the wrath of "every Christian born without a tolerance gene or a sense of humor."

October 6

An extremist pro-abortion website, rhrealitycheck.org, led a rash of attacks from left-wing circles against the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The bishops were exercising their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and freedom of religion to fight for the conscience rights of Catholics against the health care policies of the Obama administration. Specifically, the bishops were seeking to incorporate into a "must-pass" Congressional Continuing Resolution and debt ceiling bill, protection against Catholics being forced by the state to violate their conscience by funding abortion-inducing drugs. Adele Stan led the pack at rhrealitycheck.org with her screed, "At Any Cost: How Catholic Bishops Pushed for a Shutdown—and Even a Default—Over Birth Control." She was supported by colleague Jessica Mason Pieklo, who said, "Catholic Bishops Meddle With Health-Care Benefits." Stan was unrestrained in her anti-Catholicism, saying the bishops want to "block access" to "health care for the masses, food for the hungry, and shelter for the homeless." Also, "they wouldn't mind seeing the global economy brought to its knees," and they continue to discriminate against women. Indeed, "no bishop ever endured the pain, blood, and terror of a life-threatening labor."

October 7

Ian Millhiser titled his thinkprogress.org article, "Catholic Bishops To House: Shut Down the Government Unless We Get Our Way On Birth Control."

October 8

Joining the left wing attacks against the U.S. Bishops' stand for religious freedom, blogger Khier Casino's piece on opposingviews.com, "USCCB Demands Special Rights On Birth Control," charged that "Seven days before House Republicans shut down the government, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) wrote to House members about forcing the government to shut down – even a default – unless they were given authority to control what women do in the privacy of their own homes."

October 8

Dailykos.com, in its story, "Catholic Bishops Demand Congress Abort U.S. Economy," charged that the U.S. Bishops, because of their effort to protect against being forced to fund abortion-inducing drugs, were demanding "that Congress shut down the federal government and trigger a global economic calamity."

December 26

The City of Angels Blog, which describes its purpose as "ongoing coverage of pedophile priest crisis in the Catholic Church," published an entry titled "Pope Mouth on Baby Jesus Thigh Image Turns Pedophile Priest Victims' Stomachs." The post objected to an image of Pope Francis kissing a statue of baby Jesus during Christmas mass in the Vatican. The blogger, Kay Ebeling, described the scene as "the Pope appears to be nibbling on the Baby Jesus's thigh while the child looks up in ecstasy."

Magazines

April

The cover of the April issue of the UK magazine *Loaded* featured the words "For God's Sake!" and "for men who should know benedict [sic]" together with a photo of a female glamour model scantily covered in a priest's stole stitched with crosses.

April 1

The *New Yorker* ran a Liam Walsh cartoon showing communicants receiving the Eucharist. An altar boy is shown with a pepper mill. The caption reads, "Freshly ground pepper?"

Movies

January 7

On the film website, Awards Daily, an interview with director Alex Gibney focused on his new movie, "Mea Maxima Culpa," in which he accused then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of covering up the deeds of Father Lawrence Murphy. Gibney's attacks went unchallenged by the interviewer. For example, Gibney said, "I got interested in this story for two reasons. One, because it was clear that by following the paper trail of the Milwaukee tale, it would take you to a criminal conspiracy that went right to the top. That is, to say, the Vatican. And not only the Vatican, but the current pope." The interview engaged in mudslinging; there was never any evidence that Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI was involved in a scandal.

February 4

HBO aired "Mea Maxima Culpa" by director Alex Gibney. The movie engaged in libel by leveling serious and unfounded charges against the pope.

In an interview posted on The Daily Beast, Gibney called the pope "a criminal." He accused Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of covering up the deeds of Father Lawrence Murphy, a priest who molested deaf boys in Milwaukee in the 1950s. The *New York Times* advertised the HBO show by saying there was a "cover-up from rural America to the Vatican."

The charge that Ratzinger was involved in a cover-up was libelous. The fact of the matter is that no one contacted the civil authorities about Murphy until the mid-1970s (following a probe, the case was dropped), and it wasn't until 1996 that the Vatican was contacted. Instead of dropping an

investigation—the statute of limitations had long expired—the Vatican ordered a trial. Not only was Cardinal Ratzinger not at the trial, his name was never even mentioned. We know this because of the presiding judge’s testimony. Moreover, it wasn’t until 2001 that Pope John Paul II asked Cardinal Ratzinger to police these matters, and when he did, he moved expeditiously and fairly. An honest rendering of these events would conclude that *no one at the Vatican* has ever taken these cases with greater seriousness than Joseph Ratzinger.

Gibney said he was inspired to do the film after reading an article by Laurie Goodstein in the *New York Times*. Gibney referred to Goodstein’s reporting in which she said that “Vatican delegates” were aware of Murphy’s abuse “as early as 1958.” In fact, this false claim did not appear in Goodstein’s reporting and was repeated by the film.

September 27

“Don Jon,” a film that premiered earlier in the year at the Sundance Film Festival, opened in theatres across the United States. The film’s protagonist, portrayed by Joseph Gordon-Levitt who also wrote the screenplay and directed the movie, is a sex addicted man who spends his time looking at pornography on the internet or cruising bars for one night stands.

The film also focuses on the man’s faith and depicts him as a church going Catholic. However, the biggest swipe comes at the movie’s portrayal of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The man goes to Confession weekly and boasts about his sexual exploits. The priest gives him no impetus to change and assigns him little more than a token penance.

The message of overcoming lust to find love could, on its own, present a respectable story, but the anti-Catholic bias is so deeply ingrained that the film is more about making the Church appear hypocritical than anything else.

Movie critic David Edelstein, writing in *New York Magazine*, was delighted that Gordon-Levitt is “brilliantly subversive on Catholicism.” “In *Don Jon*, religion doesn’t simply allow you to function with your eyes and heart closed” (its normal purpose, apparently, in Edelstein’s view). “It benefits from tunnel vision. It’s another form of masturbation.”

November 22

The film “*Philomena*” opened in movie theaters across the United States. This movie tells the story of an Irish woman who gave birth to a son out-of-wedlock a half-century ago, and gave him up for adoption; he was born in an abbey, a venue that allowed the mother to avoid being stigmatized.

There is nothing particularly startling about this, other than the fact that film reviewers were suddenly aghast about the “horrors” these fallen women experienced; many are making reference to the Magdalene Laundries. As Bill Donohue had detailed earlier in the year, it’s bunk. Those who were neither scholars nor principled observers have swallowed this propaganda, so debased is their appetite for anti-Catholic fare.

However, there was one reviewer who was exceptionally fair, Kyle Smith of the *New York Post*. He is worth quoting at length:

“The film doesn’t mention that in 1952 Ireland, both mother and child’s life would have been utterly ruined by an out-of-wedlock birth and that the nuns are actually giving both a chance at a fresh start and that both, indeed, in real life, enjoyed. No, this is a diabolical-Catholic film, straight up.”

Kyle Smith’s closing remark says it all, “A film that is half as harsh on Judaism or Islam, of course, wouldn’t be made in the first place, and would be universally reviled if it were. ‘*Philomena*’ is a sucker punch, or maybe a sugary slice of arsenic cake.”

Music

May 8

David Bowie released the music video for his song, "The Next Day." In the video, one priest bashes a homeless man, while others are busy hitting on women. Self-flagellation is depicted. A dancing woman with bleeding hands makes a stigmata statement. A customer is served eyeballs on a plate. The lyrics refer to the "priest stiff in hate" and "women dressed as men for the pleasure of that priest." The song concludes with, "They can work with Satan while they dress with the saints."

October 18

Kanye West kicked off his "Yeezus" tour in Seattle. On the opening night of his new tour, a tall Jesus character appeared on stage prior to West's "Jesus Walks" number. "White Jesus, is that you?...Oh, s***," West said. Nothing that the Jesus figure said was irresponsible, but West could not stop there. His performance also included a Virgin Mary, incense, a crucifix, etc., all trotted out to make a Catholic statement. That it was not exactly reverential is obvious.

Newspapers

January 9

The *New York Times* website's "Room for Debate" section of its "Opinion Pages" featured the following question: "With Children, When Does Religion Go Too Far?" Commentators were invited to respond.

This was not just an attack on all religions; the *Times'* history of Catholic bashing made it clear that the question was meant for Catholics, in particular. The bias at the *Times* is such that it would never invite commentators to discuss when secularism goes too far.

January 14

In a piece that appeared in the Beirut newspaper, *The Daily*

Star, Ian Buruma began by recounting the brutal rape of a young woman by six men on a New Delhi bus in December of 2012. He then segued to Pope Benedict XVI's speech on gay marriage, which was given a few days before Christmas, in order to say that the pope was responsible for the gang rape. Buruma said that, even though the pope does not advocate violence against homosexuals, "I would argue that his speech [the pope's] actually encourages the kind of sexual aggression that can result in the savagery that took place in New Delhi."

Ian Buruma is a Henry R. Luce Professor of Democracy, Human Rights, and Journalism at Bard College and has won several awards from prestigious institutions in the U.S. and Europe.

January 24

The weekly *Miami Sun Post* published a free-association opinion column on the news of the day which included a paragraph about the Vatican ordering new sets of armor for the Swiss Guard. The following anti-Catholic comment was made: "Who else but a stuffy old church hierarchy, immersed in antiquated dogma and outdated rules, would still have a need for medieval armor? A Vatican woefully out of step with today's world would do better to instead order straitjackets for the pope, the College of Cardinals, and the whole kit-and-caboodle bureaucracy that buttresses these old farts."

February 5

The Hark blog of the *Denver Post* published an article titled "U.S. bishops' attempts to demonize Obama and claim martyrdom worse than ridiculous" by Terence R. Kelly, an author with a history of engaging in anti-Catholic rants. Among other things, he wrote that "the key moral story of the 2012 elections is the Catholic bishops' collective, shameful and toxic immorality." He concluded his article by accusing the U.S. bishops of hate speech.

February 5

Editorials in the Newark *Star-Ledger* and *The Record* (Bergen

County) concerned the appointment by Newark Archbishop John J. Myers of Rev. Michael Fugee as co-director of the Office of Continuing Education and Ongoing Formation of Priests (a post he assumed in October 2012).

In 2001, Father Fugee was charged with groping a teenager while wrestling. He initially said he touched the boy's crotch, but later recanted. He was initially found guilty, but later had the verdict thrown out by an appellate panel of judges. He was subsequently investigated by the archdiocesan review board and was also cleared of wrongdoing. Over the past 12 years, there had been no allegations against him.

The *Star-Ledger* said that Father Fugee's promotions "insult all victims of clergy abuse." Similarly, *The Record* said the priest "should not be in active ministry." This was an attack on the autonomy of the Church by outsiders who took it upon themselves to instruct Archbishop Myers on how to interpret the meaning of a charter drawn up by the bishops to handle these matters. Furthermore, the implication that a priest cleared of any charges of wrongdoing was nevertheless guilty was an attack on the civil liberties of priests.

At the end of 2013 Father Fugee was in the process of petitioning the Vatican for his removal from the priesthood.

February 7

The *New York Times* published an op-ed piece about a homosexual priest who molested someone. He died after being suspended from ministry in the 1990s. The article was accompanied by an illustration depicting a priest resembling a creature from Hell. The article was gratuitous and had no bearing on the current situation; there is almost no abuse being committed by priests in the U.S. today. When reports surface, in almost every instance they are about old cases. The *Times'* fishing for stories that happened decades ago showed a clear agenda.

February 20

The media coverage of priests accused of wrongdoing has long been skewed and there are plenty of examples of the media's relentless coverage of priests with little or no attention paid to clergy of other faiths. The following example shines as bright a light on this problem as one can imagine.

The *New York Times* ran two stories on a Bridgeport, CT priest who was arrested, Msgr. Kevin Wallin, one of the stories was on the cover. Meanwhile, two New York rabbis were arrested, each meriting one story in the *Times*: Rabbi Yoel Malik was arrested on January 31, and Rabbi Nathan David Rabinowich was arrested on February 14.

Msgr. Wallin was arrested for a drug related charge. Rabbi Malik was arrested for sexually abusing three teenage boys. He was charged with 12 counts of sexual abuse, 4 counts of criminal sexual contact, 11 counts of endangering the welfare of a child, and a single charge of forcible touching. Rabbi Rabinowich was charged with four sexual offenses, including the attempted rape of a 14-year-old girl.

The total number of words in the *Times* story on the priest was 3496 (the front-page story merited 2745 words). The total number of words on the two rabbis combined was 828 (the stories appeared on pages 22 and 25, respectively).

It was not just the *Times* that gave rabbis a pass: the *New York Daily News* had two stories on Malik (only mentioning him by name in one!); the *New York Post* ran one story on him; the *Daily News* ran one story on Rabinowich; and the *Post* had none. (Only the print editions were counted.)

Wallin had multiple problems (he was a cross-dressing drug addict and, like Malik, he was a practicing homosexual). But he was not a child rapist. So why the heightened interest in him, and the relative disinterest in the rabbis? The disparity of treatment was an indication of anti-Catholic bias.

Furthermore, Malik's arrest came less than two weeks after

another member of his ultra-Orthodox Jewish group, an unlicensed therapist, was sentenced to 103 years in prison for sexually abusing a young woman from the time she was 12. Additionally, a rabbi who publicly criticized this rapist had a cup of bleach thrown at him, burning his eyes and face. It never made the front page of any newspaper.

February 24

During the Oscars, *The Onion*, a satirical publication, made an obscene comment on its Twitter account about Quvenzhané Wallis. It referred to the 9-year-old girl as a “c***.” After fielding a deluge of complaints, an apology was granted. The writer of the tweet said his remarks were “crude and offensive.” He added, “No person should be subjected to such a senseless, humorless comment masquerading as satire.” Steve Hannah, CEO of *The Onion*, said “we are taking immediate steps to discipline those individuals responsible.” He closed by saying, “Miss Wallis, you are young and talented and deserve better. All of us at *The Onion* are deeply sorry.”

The apology underscored the fact that *The Onion* has no standards regarding “crude and offensive” work when it comes to Catholics. Nor does it discipline those who make vulgar comments about Catholicism.

On December 13, 2012, *The Onion* printed a vile piece about the pope. The article said the pope gave permission to make a porn flick at the Vatican. The film crew had to “install glory holes in the confessional booth” (they are used by homosexuals for fellatio). “This place has some f***ing beautiful art and s***. And it’s only going to look better dripping with hot jizz.”

The movie was said to feature “masturbation, blow jobs, girl-on-girl action, strap-on crucifixes, cum shots, triple-anal penetration, semen swapping, papalingus, bondage, and a gang-bang scene titled, ‘Immaculate Erection,’ which features several archbishops and the Virgin Mary.”

April 28

On April 28, an editorial in the Newark *Star-Ledger* called on Newark Archbishop John J. Myers to resign. The occasion of the editorial was the alleged failure of the Newark Archdiocese to police Father Michael Fugee. In 2001, he was charged with groping a teenager while wrestling. After initially being found guilty, the verdict was overthrown by an appellate panel of judges. Fugee agreed to certain conditions, which the newspaper said had been violated. The *Star-Ledger* wanted Archbishop Myers to resign because he allegedly did not hold Fugee to the terms of the agreement. This accusation was patently false.

The court agreement expressly allowed Father Fugee to have contact with minors, provided he was supervised. Nothing in either the news story or the editorial even suggested that Fugee was at any time unsupervised in his contacts with minors. If the *Star-Ledger* had such evidence, it would have said so.

Accompanying the editorial was a front-page story on Father Fugee. The Sunday article, which ran over 2,000 words, recounted various aspects of this issue. It did not mention, however, that in addition to being cleared by the civil courts, the archdiocesan review board cleared Fugee of any wrongdoing. Nor did it mention that the case was sent to Rome for review; no charges were brought against him. In other words, Fugee's case was thrice thrown out. Also, the newspaper failed to mention that there has not been one allegation made against this priest in the past 12 years.

At bottom, the *Star-Ledger* unfairly maligned Archbishop Myers, and treated Father Fugee like a political football. If Myers strapped a GPS tracking device on Fugee's body, it wouldn't have satisfied the newspaper's craving for punitive action.

The accusations that Father Fugee broke the terms of his court agreement forbidding unsupervised contact with minors were

reviewed by the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office and no charges were filed. In November Father Fugee reached a new agreement with the Archdiocese of Newark and the Prosecutor's Office that he would petition Rome for laicization from the priesthood.

May 9

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops released the 2012 Annual Report on priestly sexual abuse. Not a single secular newspaper in the United States reported on it. This was an example of bias by omission. What was omitted was good news: The fewest allegations and victims were reported since data collection for the annual reports began in 2004.

May 15

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* turned down a statement written by Bill Donohue that called attention to an egregious miscarriage of justice involving three Catholic priests and one Catholic layman. The Catholic League was told that the decision was made by those "at the top."

The editorial was submitted to the newspaper as a two-page ad scheduled to run on May 20. The rejection came after the League pledged to pay the newspaper \$58,000 for the ad, not an insignificant sum for a paper that filed for bankruptcy in 2009.

The *Inquirer's* rejection suggested that those "at the top" would rather forego the money before ever disseminating a defense about the way three Catholic priests, and one Catholic layman, were treated in court. Indeed, one of the reasons why these Catholic men were treated so unjustly is the failure of the Philadelphia media, led by the *Inquirer*, to raise serious questions about what happened.

Although the Catholic League was turned down without explanation, this did not stop the truth from getting disseminated. On May 20, the League sent the statement to over

900 members of the media in Philadelphia and Harrisburg and blanketed the parishes in Philadelphia. The Catholic League also went national with this story.

May 15

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* ran a Rob Rogers cartoon attacking Bishop David Zubik of Pittsburgh for speaking out against the “naked pope” stunt at Carnegie Mellon University. Bishop Zubik is portrayed as intolerant for exercising his First Amendment right to free speech. In addition, he is compared to an imam demanding the institution of Sharia law. The Catholic Church is smeared in its entirety as lax in policing “pedophile scandals.” In the last panel, the Church is portrayed as intolerant.

May 30

The Catholic League released Bill Donohue’s booklet, *Myths of the Magdalene Laundries*. It debunked the conventional wisdom about these Catholic-run facilities in Ireland. Based on the McAleese Report, the Irish government study that was released in February, the booklet examined the origins of the many myths that have surfaced about the laundries.

Virtually all the horror stories that the public was told—nuns cruelly torturing and sexually abusing “fallen” women—were lies. Worse, Irish officials, such as the current prime minister, Enda Kenny, continued to misinform the public, even in the face of indisputable evidence.

Media outlets, the BBC and major newspapers such as the *New York Times*, in particular, refused to discuss the McAleese Report, leaving the impression that the falsehoods told by Peter Mullan in his propaganda film, “The Magdalene Sisters,” offers an accurate picture of what happened. Thus, this was a clear instance of bigotry by omission.

Copies of the booklet were widely distributed to the media, Irish historical societies, Irish fraternal and sororal

groups, the clergy—including all the bishops—and those who made a donation to the Catholic League to cover the costs of publishing and distributing the booklet.

Bill Donohue commented: “Fair criticism of the Magdalene Laundries, or any other Catholic institution, is not only acceptable, it is welcome. That’s the only way progress can be made. But agit-prop films, and agenda-driven activists and writers, must be challenged. The truth is we’ve been lied to about the Magdalene Laundries, and it’s time to set the record straight.”

June 11 – June 17

The U.S. Ambassador to Belgium, Howard Gutman, was accused of soliciting prostitutes and minor children. In particular, Gutman “routinely ditched his protective security detail in order to solicit sexual favors from *both* prostitutes and *minor children*.” (Italics added.) This charge was largely omitted by the major newspapers and highlighted a double standard with respect to the reporting of the sexual abuse of minors: current allegations of child rape by government officials were far less interesting to the media than decades-old stories about priests. While no newspaper was more outraged over minors being molested by priests than the *Boston Globe*, it did not run a single piece on this story. The *New York Times* ran one story; the *Washington Post* ran one story, but unlike the *Times*, it never mentioned “minor children”; the *Los Angeles Times*, like the *Globe*, ignored the story altogether. The scope of the omission was evidence of a veiled anti-Catholic animus.

June 28

The cover of the Summer Guide 2013 issue of the *Santa Fe Reporter* featured a parody of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The Virgin Mary was shown in a bikini and sunglasses sipping on a cocktail. The magazine issued an apology after the Catholic League demanded one to the publication’s Catholic readers in a letter to the editor.

July 2

The Milwaukee *Journal Sentinel* reacted to the public disclosure of Cardinal Timothy Dolan's deposition regarding his tenure as the Milwaukee Archbishop by featuring the pictures of 45 priests who at one time or another had substantiated allegations made against them. Yet this was hardly news since it was Archbishop Dolan who had posted the names of the priests in 2004. Furthermore, many of the bishops in the Catholic Church have made public the names of suspected sexual offenders. By contrast, there is not a single institution, secular or religious, that has done likewise. The *Sentinel* said the following about the bishops' conference 2002 charter that addresses the sexual abuse of minors: "How effective that charter has been is a matter of some debate." In fact, the success of the charter was beyond debate: In the past six years, the average number of credible allegations made against over 40,000 priests was exactly 7. By falsely portraying Cardinal Dolan as someone who created the problem and not someone who fixed it, the *Sentinel* showed its bias against the Catholic Church.

July 9

The Plain Dealer ran a Jeff Darcy cartoon mocking the news that Pope John Paul II was cleared for sainthood. The cartoon was accompanied by an essay in which the cartoonist said, "The miracles I associate with Pope John Paul II, are the miracles of all those children surviving after being abused by priests the Vatican enabled and sheltered. They are the real saints." The cartoon showed one panel in which Pope John Paul II was shown under the words, "Declared Saint." He is shown wearing two medals: one said "Fall of USSR," the other said "Global Outreach." In an adjacent panel a flock of sheep are shown under the words "Undeclared Saints." The sheep are labeled, "Kids molested on his watch."

July 25

A poll was taken on the website of *USA Today* asking

respondents to choose which video they liked best: the one where David Letterman compared all priests to molesters, or the one where Jay Leno said Pope Francis could be mistaken for Lady Gaga. While Leno's jab was inoffensive, Letterman's July 23 monologue was vile. His "altar boy" quip—World Youth Day is called by the Vatican "salute to altar boys"—was a vicious hit on 40,000 innocent priests.

USA Today took Letterman's offensive remarks to a new level. It not only flagged his bigotry, it celebrated it. Many more respondents preferred Letterman's obscene statement to Leno's throw-away line.

August 3

The Newark *Star-Ledger* ran a Drew Sheneman cartoon that mocked Pope Francis for his comments on homosexual priests. Under a caricature of the pope, the caption read, "If someone's gay, who am I to judge? Don't get me wrong, according to divine law you're still going to burn for all eternity, but on a personal level, we're cool."

August 23

The movie, "Paradise: Faith," opened in New York and Los Angeles. The *New York Times* found it "riveting." In the movie, a "devout" Catholic woman masturbates with a crucifix, flagellates herself, walks around the house praying on her knees, goes door-to-door with a statue of the Virgin Mary, and fights off her paraplegic Muslim husband who tries to rape her.

August 30

The weekly Orange County, California news publication *OC Weekly* attacked Bishop Kevin Vann of the Diocese of Orange. The article titled "Orange Diocese Bishop Kevin Vann Doing His Damndest to Stop CA Bill that Would Help Child-Abuse Victims" attacked Bishop Vann for his opposition to SB 131, a deeply flawed bill that would target the Catholic Church with millions of dollars in lawsuits, but provide no relief to

abuse victims of public schools. *OC Weekly* summarized Bishop Vann's opposition in the following way: "Yeah, we let pedo-priests rape children, then covered it up. But NOW you should really, really trust us!" The *OC Weekly* article also attacked Bishop Vann's diocesan newspaper, calling it a "rag" and said that it publishes "gobbledygook."

October 10

The *National Catholic Reporter* gave top billing – the lead story on the home page of its website – to Adele Stan's vicious attack on the U.S. Bishops, blaming them for the government shutdown and accusing them of wanting to "block access" to "health care for the masses, food for the hungry, and shelter for the homeless." In the piece, titled, "At Any Cost: How Catholic Bishops Pushed for a Shutdown – and Even a Default – Over Birth Control," she charged that "they wouldn't mind seeing the global economy brought to its knees," adding that not only do the bishops discriminate against women, "no bishop ever endured the pain, blood, and terror of a life-threatening labor." That Stan's article was first published on a pro-abortion and anti-Catholic website, rhrealitycheck.org, did not deter NCR editor Dennis Coday from prominently headlining it.

Radio

July 8

On "Imus in the Morning," actor Rob Bartlett is a regular on the show who plays a character called "Don Corleone, The Godfather" and imitates Brando. Bartlett did a piece titled "Pope John Paul's Sainthood." Bartlett said the following: "John Paul II, rest in peace, has been beatified, which is the next to the last step before becoming a saint. He has still to make his bones; not the same way as someone would in my business. The Vatican requires he perform two miracles...One of Pope John Paul's miracles was to cure a nun of Parkinson's disease. Personally I would have settled for his being able to (speaks in mock Italian and then translates) get the priests

to keep their paws off the altar boys..."

August 23

When the new film, "Paradise: Faith," opened in New York and Los Angeles, NPR declared the movie "recommended." In the movie, a "devout" Catholic woman masturbates with a crucifix, flagellates herself, walks around the house praying on her knees, goes door-to-door with a statue of the Virgin Mary, and fights off her paraplegic Muslim husband who tries to rape her.

October 31

On "Imus in the Morning" the topic of the National Security Administration spying on the Vatican was brought up. Don Imus repeatedly stated that spying on the Vatican was a good idea because priests are child molesters.

Imus: "Well they got a whole mafia going on at the Vatican, and a bunch of guys glomming onto the kids, not the pope, but they got some icky stuff going on at the Vatican."

Imus: "Not a bad idea considering what's going on there. Them glomming on the kids, that whole mafia deal [...] a bunch of sick dudes there [...] which is why the pope, God bless him, he's over there at the Motel 6 ..."

Imus: "Well we know what's going on at the Vatican, you're not denying that are you, I would hope? The funny business going on at the Vatican which is why the Pope... (co-hosts interject that the pope has cleaned up the Vatican and its "all good") It's not all good, they're still covering up for these priests glomming on to the kids and Cardinals covering up for that. And in some cases the Cardinals glomming onto the kids."

November 20

On the "Dennis & Callahan Morning Show" on WEEI radio in the Boston area and simulcast on the New England Sports Network, sports talk show hosts John Dennis, Gerry Callahan and Kirk Minihane attacked the pope's compassion for a man severely

disfigured by disease. Minihane remarked that Pope Francis was “making out” with the man. Insulting the pope’s mercy was not enough for them. They said that the pope belongs in the mall with Santa, and implied that he molests children.

Callahan: “Have a pope at every mall? ... Have all the little boys sit on his lap?”

Minihane: “Yeah, that might be an issue.”

December 9

WEEI (Boston, MA) sports radio talk show hosts Kirk Minihane and Gerry Callahan compared the Blessed Mother to a pregnant television star on the “Dennis & Callahan Morning Show,” which is simulcast on the New England Sports Network. During a segment about recent headlines, Minihane and Callahan discuss the announcement that Evelyn Lozada is six months pregnant with her second child. Lozada is a star of “Basketball Wives” and is known for having relationships with several professional athletes.

Minihane: “So Evelyn Lozada, she’s pregnant, I know it’s hard to believe much like the Virgin Mary, sometimes there’s a...”

Callahan: “Here I thought she kept her knees together.”

Minihane: “Well, it happened again, only the second coming of the baby Jesus.”

December 11

The “Dennis & Callahan Morning Show” on WEEI radio used the selection of Pope Francis as *Time* magazine’s “Person of the Year” as an opportunity to spread lies and insults about the Holy Father. Discussing the selection of the pope, host Kirk Minihane says that Pope Francis hates religious people. Co-host Gerry Callahan responds “Now that they know he’s pro-choice and he’s pro-gay marriage and he doesn’t go to church, and he doesn’t wear that, like weird funny hat – they love him. This is the mainstream media’s favorite religious figure, like ever.” Minihane responds “he’s bisexual, he’s going to start dating a woman.”

Television

January 10

On his MSNBC show, Lawrence O'Donnell attacked Atlanta Pastor Louie Giglio for accepting Biblical teachings on the sinfulness of homosexuality. In the 1990s, Giglio addressed this subject and cited Christian teachings. Giglio bowed to pressure from homosexual activists by agreeing not to give the benediction at President Obama's inauguration. For O'Donnell, the problem was the Bible itself. He readily admitted that the Bible condemned homosexuality, but falsely claimed that the Bible condemns "gay people." He neglected to draw the distinction between behavior and status. He said the practice of presidents putting their hand on the Bible is "one of our most absurdist [sic] traditions." He said that because Obama embraces the gay agenda, he should not swear on the Bible.

February 11

ABC's "World News" broadcast on the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI demonstrated anti-Catholic bias. The following comments were made:

- In an interview with New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan, reporter Diane Sawyer asked if the "burden of what the Church has been through with the scandals" caused the Pope's resignation—with no basis in fact.
- During the same interview, Sawyer said, "There has to be fundamental change" to the Church's positions on social issues.
- Posing as a papal historian, Jeffrey Kofman declared that the Pope's "papacy will be remembered for its scandals." This supposed authority on the Catholic Church then said that Benedict had "tried to hold back the forces of modernity."
- ABC correspondent Cecilia Vega, according to Sawyer, "spent the day gathering American reaction from all over," but then delivered reaction only from liberal Catholics who pushed ABC's liberal narrative that the Church must "modernize."
- ABC did not name one single accomplishment of Benedict XVI.

February 16

"Saturday Night Live" aired the skit, "Djesus Uncrossed," a take-off of "Django Unchained," a violent film that had caused much controversy. The SNL segment was itself uncharacteristically bloody; there was also a snide remark by the announcer saying the skit was less violent than "The Passion of the Christ."

In early March, both Sears and JCPenney indicated that they had pulled their advertising from "Saturday Night Live" as a result of this incident. Sears removed all its advertising from running during "Saturday Night Live." JCPenney did not advertise during the following episode of "Saturday Night Live," and removed its commercials from online rebroadcasts of that episode. NBC removed the offensive clip from its online video shortly thereafter.

February 26

On the NBC hidden camera show, "Betty White's Off Their Rockers" an older woman impersonating a nun in habit stopped a young man on the street and informed him that she was thinking of getting breast implants. She asks his opinion on whether she should go up one size or two. The "nun" also asks the young man if he is a "boob man" to which he replied "I'm more of an a** guy." The "nun" concludes by telling the man "I have a date with a really hot priest. You know what I mean? He's kind of young. I'm so excited."

March 10

Appearing on MSNBC's "The Chris Matthews Show" guest Andrew Sullivan was asked if a change in opinion among Catholics on the topic of same sex marriage might impact the selection of the new pope. Sullivan responded that "there are many gays electing the next pope." When Matthews asked him to clarify if he meant the Cardinals, Sullivan responded "Yes."

March 26

On the Comedy Central program "Tosh.0" host Daniel Tosh showed

a video of two men blowing cigarette smoke into each other's faces. One man opens his mouth and "eats" the smoke. Tosh responds with a sexual joke, "this means we have a new pope, and he's a swallower." The episode was re-aired on December 17.

March 27

During his opening monologue on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," host Jay Leno claimed Pope Francis said the use of condoms is acceptable in certain circumstances: "We're learning more and more about this new pope, Pope Francis. A very gracious man, unlike many in the Catholic Church leadership, he says the use of condoms is acceptable in certain cases. That's what he said. He said condoms are acceptable in certain cases. But not those glow in the dark condoms. No, those are out, doesn't like those at all, just forget those. Leave that for the next guy."

April 12

Starz featured what one critic described as a "fact-fiction-mash-up" series entitled "Da Vinci's Demons" about Leonardo da Vinci. The series featured gruesome instances of brutality including hangings and beheadings. In one scene, Pope Sixtus IV was shown in a sexual embrace with a boy in a pool while holding a knife against the boy's throat. A count enters the scene to share secret information with the pope, after which the pope kills the boy.

Even before the series premiered, the scene was recognized as anti-Catholic. One reviewer stated that this scene was "bound to be attacked by some within the Catholic Church." Another reviewer said, "The demons, at least in this world, are the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church." Another reviewer wrote that "It's the pope...who is burdened with playing the vicious gay stereotype here, preying like a crocodile on young men who have the misfortune of taking a dip in his vast Vatican hot tub."

April 19

"The 700 Club" featured a segment titled "God and Hitler," in which Gordon Robertson (son of Rev. Pat Robertson), hosted a discussion on the Catholic Church's response to Hitler. The errors were many, serious, and indefensible:

- It was wrong to paint Hitler as a Catholic. Though he was baptized, he excommunicated himself, *latae sententiae*, when he sought, in his words, to "crush [the Catholic Church] like a toad." He made good on his pledge by persecuting 8,000 priests, over 500 of whom were killed in concentration camps. He also sought to assassinate the pope.
- The 1933 Nazi-Vatican Concordat was not a show of solidarity. As Rabbi David Dalin has shown, it was a protective measure designed to protect German Catholics from persecution. In fact, at least 34 letters of protest were sent from the Vatican to the Nazis between 1933 and 1937, culminating in a 1937 encyclical that condemned Nazi violations of the Concordat and Nazi racial ideology. It was smuggled out of Italy and distributed on Palm Sunday to Catholics in Germany. Nothing like this happened in Protestant churches in Germany.
- It was not true that Hitler met resistance from Protestants alone. Former Israeli Diplomat Pinchas Lapidé estimated that the Catholic Church, under the auspices of Pope Pius XII, saved as many as 860,000 Jewish lives. During the war, the *New York Times* twice said the Church was "a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent"; Albert Einstein also singled out the Church during the war. After the war, Golda Meir praised the work of the Church, as did the ADL, the World Jewish Congress, and scores of other Jewish organizations.
- It was factually wrong to say the Vatican archives have "never been seen." Many scholars have had access.

As for Pope Pius XII being "Hitler's Pope," it must be noted that John Cornwell, the ex-seminarian who originated this term, retracted it years ago. Yet, "The 700 Club" continued to

cite it.

May 3

On “The Late Show with Craig Ferguson,” the following exchange occurred between host Craig Ferguson and English comedian Simon Amstell:

Amstell: “The trouble with the pope...you can’t kill him, can you? Because...”

Ferguson: “No, no, you can’t! No! No, no, no, no you can’t! No, not just the pope. Anyone at all! You’re not allowed to kill anyone!”

Amstell: “No. But, even like, with the pope, it is especially pointless with the pope, because he, you know, they just replace him with a new one.”

May 7

On “Conan,” host Conan O’Brien said the following in his opening monologue: “I don’t know if you heard this story. A Catholic bishop from Massachusetts was arrested for drunk driving. Yeah, still it was a relief to find a Catholic official get in trouble for only having a beer on his lap.”

May 22

NBC’s “Law and Order: Special Victims Unit” episode entitled “Her Negotiation” featured a suspect who is arrested for exposing himself and taken to the police station. Once there it is revealed that he said “get down on your knees, open your mouth and take Communion” while attempting to pressure two women to engage him in oral sex.

June 10

On “The Colbert Report,” host Stephen Colbert had Dan Savage on as a guest to promote his new book. After discussing homosexual marriage, they talked about ObamaCare. Savage mentioned the single-payer model of health insurance. The following exchange occurred:

Savage: “You know who has the single-payer model? Vatican

City.”

Colbert: “This is it right here.” [Makes the sign of the cross away from himself in the manner of a priest.]

Savage: “It covers everything but birth control because altar boys can’t get pregnant. When altar boys start getting pregnant, they’ll cover birth control, too.”

Colbert: “We’re going to gloss over that for a moment.”

Savage: “As the Catholic Church has done for decades.”

June 13

On a segment of “The Daily Show” with Jon Stewart called “Gaywatch,” anchor John Oliver focused on Pope Francis’ alleged “gay lobby” remarks.

John Oliver: “Gays are coming under attack in France and Russia, but there is one place apparently where they have found a home.”

Switch to female reporter speaking: “A stunning revelation coming from the head of the Catholic Church. Pope Francis says there is a gay lobby in the Vatican.”

John Oliver: “I don’t know if I would call a Vatican gay lobby a stunning revelation, really. The whole building is basically a Liberace fever dream, unless you don’t mean an architectural lobby.”

Switch to clip of Fr. Edward Beck speaking: “‘Gay lobby’ is kind of a confusing term. I think we use lobby to mean somebody setting forth a certain agenda.”

John Oliver: “I’m sorry, I wasn’t listening to a word that man was saying, because I was lost in his eyes. Look at them, so piercing blue, and his hair, so snowy white. It’s as if Anderson Cooper and a Siberian Husky made love and had a baby priest. I want one of those. I want one of those. I’m sorry, Father McDreamy, you were saying that lobby is not a good word for it.”

Switch to clip of Fr. Edward Beck speaking: “Probably a better word would be ‘gay cabal,’ ‘gay clique.’”

John Oliver: “Right, and other nouns include a gay lunch, air, man pile, a cabin crew, an Oscar party or a Palm Springs traffic jam. If there is a gay lobby, what is it they want? How much damage could they do?”

Switch to female reporter speaking: “So there have been big rumors here that the gay lobby drove Benedict from the Catholic Church.”

John Oliver: “That is just ridiculous. A gay lobby did not drive Pope Benedict from the Church, because if they did it would have looked like this:”

[Switch to clip of a silver bus with silver ribbons streaming, with Pope Benedict’s head imposed on the body of a woman in a silver dress, singing opera.]

John Oliver: “You’ve got to admit, that would have been one hell of an exit. The bottom line to all of this is no matter what country you live in, what religion you belong to, it seems crazy that in this day and age anyone has a problem with which gender you want to, um, what’s the phrase?”

[Switch to clip of Pat Robertson saying the words “want to do sex with each other.”]

June 22

On an episode of E! Entertainment Television’s “Fashion Police”, host Joan Rivers made an offensive comment about Catholic priests. Rivers compared actress Laura Linney’s outfit to a girl’s Catholic school uniform: “She looks like a Catholic school girl. And now I suddenly understand why priests resorted to boys.”

June 24

On NBC’s “Days of Our Lives” a woman drugged and raped a

priest in order to get revenge against the priest's mother. The sexual encounter is videotaped and later shown during a wedding that the priest was presiding at.

July

Showtime's new drama "Ray Donovan" was breaking records by its second episode. The show is about a Boston man, Ray Donovan, who "fixes" problems for the rich and famous. The show includes Donovan's father who is released from jail and then immediately murders a priest, as well as a plotline about Donovan's brother Bunchy, a drug addict, alcoholic and sexual anorexic. Bunchy stands to win millions in a settlement with the Archdiocese of Boston because he was sexually abused by a Catholic priest as a young boy.

July 18

The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences announced the 65th Primetime Emmy Awards nominations. "American Horror Story: Asylum," the anti-Catholic show on the FX Channel, lead the pack with 17 Emmy nominations. The show depicted a Catholic home for the criminally insane run by sadistic and libidinous nuns. The plot was sinister. Characters included a nymphomaniac, a lesbian, a degenerate bully, a serial killer, and a doctor who enjoys torturing patients.

July 23

On "The Late Show with David Letterman," host David Letterman commented on Pope Francis' appearance at World Youth Day and said the following: "And I'm telling you if there's anything the kids can't get enough of, it's a 76-year-old virgin. Come on! World Youth Day. Or as the Vatican calls it, salute to altar boys." It was also noteworthy that this line did not go over well with his audience.

July 29

During the opening monologue of the "Late Show with David Letterman," host David Letterman showed a mock video of the bishops in Brazil reacting enthusiastically to Pope Francis'

remarks concerning gay priests, inferring the bishops are gay. Letterman said the following: "So Pope Francis goes to South America. He's down there in Brazil and he announced that he would not – he says, 'I don't care, I would not judge anyone who is gay.' That's what Pope Francis said. That must have been some trip to Rio. But I've got to tell you, when the pope said he would not judge gay priests, the bishops went absolutely crazy. They loved it. Here, watch." Footage was then shown of the bishops in Brazil waving their arms and singing. The caption read, "BISHOPS REACT TO POPE FRANCIS DECREE ON HOMOSEXUALITY." The video was accompanied by the song, "It's Raining Men," the lyrics of which were, "It's raining men, Hallelujah, It's raining men, I'm gonna go out, I'm gonna let myself, get absolutely soaking wet."

August 1

In the opening monologue of "Conan," host Conan O'Brien made light fun of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Baptism. The monologue included a one-liner subtitle about children being molested by priests: "Kids can opt out of fondling by texting #nothanks to the Vatican." This was a blatant attempt to smear all priests as molesters.

August 6

The new Comedy Central show, "The Jeselnik Offensive" featured a "Worst Best Thing of the Week" with host Anthony Jeselnik, Dave Attell and Joan Rivers. The following exchange occurred:

Jeselnik: "Finally, the Vatican is giving gay priests the same respect they show pedophiles."

Rivers: "The pope, surprise, is the gayest. The man wears a dress, lives with all guys, you know."

Attell: "And the cool thing about it is I'm a Jew and I could really care less about the whole thing. I mean, you know, an Easter egg hunt is an Easter egg. If it ends in an ass, it doesn't matter to me. I don't care."

Rivers: "He's bringing the church into the 21st century, and

let's be happy about that. I mean, ass-less altar boy costumes...We all have to kiss the pope's ring. I love it now because he likes gays, and he says, fine now—lower, lower, lower, and, uh, don't forget the balls."

September 6

On "CBS This Morning," host Mark Phillips discussed Pope Francis' prayers against military action, and in favor of peace in Syria. Phillips says that Francis had "taken sides" with Russian President Vladimir Putin by appealing to world leaders not to use military force on Syria.

Phillips then introduced Michael Walsh with a graphic labeling Walsh a "Vatican Historian." Walsh is a former priest who called Pope Benedict XVI a "dictator." Walsh called the Vatican "obviously incompetent and dysfunctional."

Phillips also labeled Pope Francis' call for mass prayer and fast against violence a "religious street protest."

September 16

On Comedy Central's "The Daily Show," Jon Stewart, after joking inoffensively that according to Pope Francis, "gays are cool, priests can marry, and you don't even have to believe in God to get to Heaven," moved on to the following: "What, exactly, of Catholicism is left? I mean, you take away Jesus and celibacy—Catholic Church is just an ordinary restaurant that only serves wafers." At this point, a woman was shown receiving Communion. This was followed by several obscenities.

October 23

On the E! show "Chelsea Lately," priests and Germans were libeled by two of Chelsea Handler's guests, Kurt Braunohler and Moshe Kasher.

The objectionable part began with a discussion of Bishop Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst, the German bishop who was suspended by Pope Francis for his opulent lifestyle.

Braunohler: "I love that the Catholic Church has like a zero tolerance policy on everything other than child abuse."

Kasher: "It's a German priest, so that's a difficult set of circumstances. You know what I mean, it's like—do I make out with that kid or do I kill that Jew."

The remark by Kasher, which fails to distinguish between Germans and Nazis, suggests he doesn't know the difference between those Germans who resisted Hitler—they were disproportionately Catholic—and those who followed the genocidal policies of the National Socialist Party run by an atheist who hated the Catholic Church. Both of the guests are ignorant, but that is hardly an excuse to smear all priests and Germans.

October 23

Jenny McCarthy went into a tizzy on "The View" about the Catholic Church because her mom was once denied an annulment. Jenny said her mom "cries during Communion because she watches all her friends go up there," while she sits and weeps. Jenny said "I hope the pope gets smart and does something about it."

McCarthy also shared her delusional story about being in the pope's apartment. "I went to the Vatican [and] I actually went into the apartment, into the pope's apartment and I was literally there and I'm going, oh my God, I could take a chunk of this gold cherub and feed a country." This is not the first time she has made these claims. In 2012 on a TV program known as "Access Hollywood," Jenny was more explicit. She credited a few "mafia guys" with sneaking her into the pope's apartment in 1995; she said she even tried on some of his clothes.

November 7

CBS aired a rerun episode of "Comics Unleashed with Byron Allen," which originally aired on February 26, 2007. The episode featured comic Lori Chase who said "I actually did that low carb Atkins thing, and it was really hard, by the third day I wanted bread so badly I became Catholic. And then,

honestly they loved me there, because I would get so excited during communion, I was like yay! Its communion time! Oh yay! God this body of Christ is good (while making the sign of the cross). In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy toast, this is delicious.”

November 8

On the E! show “Chelsea Lately,” speaking of the inclusion of Pope Francis on the Forbes list of the most powerful people in the world, Chelsea Handler said, “So, and the new pope is on the list. That’s interesting since he’s never had penetration. How can he be that powerful?”

November 19

MSNBC’s coverage of a proposed law in Albuquerque, New Mexico that would ban abortions after 20 weeks, included two pro-abortion positions, one of which claimed to represent the Catholic Church. After MSNBC contributor and abortion-rights advocate Irin Carmon expressed her position host Thomas Roberts introduced Sara Hutchinson, a spokesperson for Catholics for Choice. Roberts said, “Okay, so let’s talk to the Church side.”

Bill Donohue wrote to MSNBC saying: “There is nothing “Catholic” about Catholics for Choice, and everyone knows it. Would MSNBC allow someone from Jews for Jesus to speak for Jews?”

November 21

George Lopez was a guest on “The Arsenio Hall Show” and made several jokes about Pope Francis being Latino. After a remark about the pope’s cooking ability, Lopez said “It’s about time we have a pope who can actually make something other than altar boys nervous.”

December 3

E! network’s “Chelsea Lately” was particularly vicious. The pretext to the vulgar comments made by Chelsea Handler, and

guests Dan Levy and Josh Wolf, was the news that Pope Francis was once a bouncer, and rumors that he sneaks out at night to feed the poor.

Handler: "It's a very popey thing to do, to help the homeless; I mean that's kinda what he should be sneaking out and doing. It's not like he can go to a glory hole [a hole in the stall in the men's room in public places used by homosexuals for anonymous oral sex], I mean he could. I'm not making fun of Catholics. I'm thinking that he's so liberal – he's right around the corner from taking confession through a glory hole. That's how advanced he is."

Levy: "Catholics can't win, because the only thing more embarrassing than being a child molester is being a bouncer at a [the familiar homosexual voice inflection is used] club."

Wolf: "I was a doorman for a while which means—and all doormen are the same—which means at some point in time before he was pope this dude got a BJ [oral sex] in a bathroom from a girl wearing a tiara."

December 6

Comedy Central's new show "Adam Devine's House Party" did not wait long to attack Catholics. Comedian Pete Davidson went after priests while talking about his experiences in Catholic school. "Here's something that should never happen at an all boys school, don't get an erection. There's no excuse for that at all, it just shouldn't happen 'cause there's priests there, and priests are like sharks when you get a cut in the water. I got my priest to stop hitting on me though, it was easy, I introduced him to my little brother. I got an A!"

December 7

Comedy Central aired a one-hour special, "Chris D'Elia: White Male: Black Comic," which was part of a two-hour performance recorded in November. The television special coincided with the release of the performance on CD and DVD by Comedy Central Records.

The D'Elia special featured a 13-minute segment that treated viewers to one of the most offensive anti-Christian attacks ever to be shown on TV; it made a deliberate effort to offend Catholics. Here's a sample:

Speaking of Jesus, D'Elia said, "No way—he died for us so that we could all live? Awesome. He hung himself on the cross for that many days...."

Speaking of Catholic churches, D'Elia said, "There's people on the stain glass windows with thorns around their head, they're bleeding from the thorns, crying out of their eyeballs, their clothes are all ripped...."

Speaking of the Eucharist, D'Elia said, "They make you eat a guy's body and you don't even think about it. You're just lining up—'I got to eat a guy's body, yeah I got to eat a guy's body man'....If this isn't creepy enough, there's a guy down there, you can drink his blood...."

December 10

Daniel Tosh of Comedy Central's "Tosh.0" defamed the pope while reviewing headlines from 2013. Tosh said "What can I say about 2013 that hasn't already been retweeted a thousand times ... we have our first gay pope." (A picture is shown of Pope Francis with a rainbow flag on his mitre and rainbow flags on his vestments.)

December 11

The guests on E! Network's "Chelsea Lately" discussed Pope Francis' selection as Time "Person of the Year". Guest Whitney Cummings expresses her disapproval of the pope's position on gay rights and states that popes wear dresses. Another guest, Moshe Kasher, responds "They don't just wear dresses, they also have sex with men."

December 12

ESPN refused to air a Christmas commercial from a Catholic children's hospital because it included references to God and

the birth of Jesus. Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center submitted the advertisement to ESPN which said the hospital "celebrates the birth of Jesus and the season of giving, bringing hope to many children." According to reports, the commercial was denied "due to religious advocacy." Within a few hours of the story coming out in the media ESPN reversed its decision and agreed to run the commercial.

December 13

The "Pete Holmes Show" on TBS opened with a skit about a man trying to get into heaven. The man was met at the entrance by Holmes, who was portraying St. Peter. A very eccentric St. Peter denies the man entrance into heaven saying that "it's a sausage party in there." He continues "the last time I saw Jesus surrounded by 12 dudes was 2,000 years ago." The skit says that heaven has been overhauled and St. Peter says that he can be bribed with drugs.

December 24

Television personality Joan Rivers attacked another star's plastic surgeries. Rivers said "she has been touched up more than a choir boy at the Vatican."

December 27

Just two days after Christmas, CBS re-aired the November 25, 2006 episode of "Comics Unleashed with Byron Allen" in which guest comedian Kyle Cease attacked the Holy Family and the Blessed Mother.

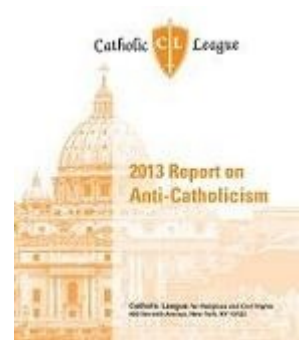
December 27

On the E! show "Fashion Police," host Joan Rivers spoke about Miley Cyrus saying "at her age she has stuck her tongue out more times than the entire Catholic congregation taking communion in this country."

[Back to Top](#)

BILL MAHER'S HATE SPEECH

No one has been more obscene, and more relentless, in attacking the pope, cardinals, bishops, and priests than Bill Maher; *he does so every week on HBO*. Twenty times *this year alone* Maher used his platform to attack Catholics.



After Maher's obscene attack on March 22nd, the Catholic League went to work compiling an exhaustive list of Bill Maher's anti-Catholic remarks dating back to 1998. It was unclear where HBO officials stood with respect to Maher's remarks: either they agreed with what he had to say, or they were afraid of him.

Since HBO had not taken any action in response to Bill Maher's bigotry, the Catholic League contacted the board of directors at Time Warner, the parent company of HBO. After the season finale of "Real Time" which aired November 22nd, the Catholic League sent every member of Time Warner's board of directors a copy of 54 anti-Catholic statements made by Bill Maher on TV. The league called for the show to be canceled once and for all.

Additionally we wrote to the more than 400 active and retired bishops across the United States and urged them to contact Time Warner's CEO. Many bishops responded and echoed our call for Maher to be taken off television.

What bothers us about Maher is his obsession with portraying all bishops and priests—including the pope—as sexual abusers. This is malicious and morally indefensible.

Included here are examples of Maher's hate speech that he spewed in 2013. Our entire report, "Bill Maher's History of Anti-Catholicism," is available on our website under the "Special Reports."

November 22, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HB0], Maher and guest Dan Savage on priests and gay marriage: Maher commented on gay couples who adopt children, alleging that a Hawaiian bishop said these kids had a greater chance of committing suicide. Here is how Savage responded: "That's total bulls***. He's confusing children of gay parents with children who are raped by Catholic priests. Sorry, I am just done being lectured about children and their safety by Catholic-f***ing bishops, priests, cardinals." Shortly thereafter, Savage again remarked about "kiddie-f***ing Catholic priests."

November 19, 2013, "The Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell" [MSNBC], on religion: Maher was a guest on the show. While discussing the government shutdown that occurred in October and the threat of another shutdown, Maher said: "I never understood why people who hate government go into government, that's why I'm not a priest."

November 15, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HB0], Maher attacks the Pope: In Maher's rant, he took after the pope, Sarah Palin, and Palin's daughter, Bristol.

The skit was a series of mock tweets featuring the pope and Palin:

- **Pope:** "Listening to you, I'm reconsidering my stance on birth control."
- **Palin:** "Yeah. How's that sex with teenage boys working out for you?"
- **Pope:** "I don't know. How'd it work out for your daughter?"

November 8, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HB0], Maher mocks Christianity: During a segment titled "Cheap of Faith"

Maher discusses how Christians don't want to help or feed the hungry because it goes against the Bible. He believes that Christians should admit they are selfish because their beliefs do not mirror the actual teachings of Jesus. Maher states that "there is always a good moral Christian reason to tell everyone you meet to f*** off and die."

November 1, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HBO], Maher brands Pope a child rapist: Maher showed a picture of a young boy who approached Pope Francis, and then sat on the pope's chair. Pope Francis welcomed him, but Maher's picture showed the pope's hand on the child's head and Maher said "No, Pope Francis, I thought you were different," implying that the pope is a child rapist.

October 30, 2013, "Piers Morgan Live" [CNN], on religion: Maher was a guest on the show. While discussing the government shutdown, Maher says that "If you hate government, you shouldn't do it. That's why I'm not a priest."

October 25, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HBO], repeatedly insults and attacks Catholics, Christians and Pope Francis: Maher made reference to German Bishop Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst and claimed that Pope Francis "fired the [German] bishop of bling" because he was "getting the altar boys drunk on Cristal."

Later on, Maher's panel of guests consisted of Michael Moore, Al Sharpton, Valerie Plame and Richard Dawkins. According to Maher, liberals are "worried they're going to be called racist if they criticize Muslims."

Sharpton: "There were Christian klansmen that were Christians, KKK members who burned crosses."

Plame: "Yeah, but now there are Christian Dominionists that are just as extreme."

Maher: "This is not just the same. Look, I'm no f**king Catholic or Christian, but one is herpes [Christians] and one

is cancer [Muslims].”

October 9, 2013, “The Arsenio Hall Show” [WPIX], on religion: Maher was a guest on the show. While discussing the government shutdown, Maher said “You should not be in government if you hate government. That is why I am not a priest.”

August 2, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HBO], implies that Pope Francis and all clergy are homosexual: “... In other gay news, did you see the pope got drunk again and, ah, I love this pope, he just says what he thinks. He said gay Catholics shouldn’t be marginalized. He said, ‘Who am I to judge them?’ And I think it’s like anybody else, you know, when you get to know gay people, they don’t, you know, come off as gay, they come off as people. You stop being anti-gay. And who has more gay friends and co-workers than a pope?”

Later in the show Maher announced he would be taking a five week vacation and predicted what the headlines will be while he’s off. He displayed several mock headlines including a mockup of the headline, “Pope Francis Moves to Massachusetts Marries Longtime Companion.” Below the caption was a picture of Pope Francis and an elderly man.

July 19, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HBO], on World Youth Day: “This is World Youth Day for the Catholic Church ... I mean this is a big jamboree – look at that! This is where all the kids in the world get together with priests. What could go wrong?”

July 16, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” blog, on Pope Francis clearing Pope John Paul II for sainthood after a second miracle was confirmed: “I’m sorry, for those believers out there, aren’t these ‘miracle’ tales kind of a tell that this religion is completely full of s**t?”

June 14, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HBO], on Pope Francis and the alleged “gay lobby” in the Vatican: Maher implied that Pope Francis is homosexual when he said the

following: “The other big story, Pope Francis...This week he said there is a gay network inside the Vatican...They go by the code names cardinals and priests...Hey, Padre, I hate to tell you, there’s also a gay network here, it’s called BRAV0. And this fall they’re presenting the real homosexuals of Vatican City. ‘Whatever, Monsignor, I didn’t come here to make friends’ (gay affectation)...and he has vowed to find out where all this gayness was coming from. And then he gathered up his long white dress, he turned on his bright red heels and he flounced right out of the steam room.”

May 31, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HB0], on Pope Francis, the Church, and priests: The following occurred between host Bill Maher and Paul Rudnick, author of the anti-Christian play, “The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told”:

Maher: “I want to ask you and everybody else about something that happened this week that was important to me because I am an atheist...You know when somebody says something obvious, ‘Oh, is the pope Catholic?’ I think he might not be. I think the Pope might be an atheist. There I said it. Like I think Obama is, because, he said this week, Pope Frank said, ‘The Lord has redeemed all of us, not just Catholics, even the atheists.’ And I was like, I am going to book my flight to heaven right now.”

“And then of course, it’s funny, because, you know, it’s just like politics. The hierarchy at the Vatican was like, ‘What the f**k did this guy just...?’ You could almost see them preparing the poison. You know, it’s like, luckily we’ve got a spare pope. This guy, ixnay on the... You know, one of the key things in this religion and most religions is, ‘Oh, monopoly, only through us.’ Even hippie Jesus said that. ‘Only through me.’ So this guy’s saying everybody gets into heaven. So then they had to walk it back...and the Vatican said – I don’t, do you have it?”

Rudnick: “I have it. The Vatican spokesman quickly intervened Father Thomas Rosica said quote, ‘People who truly know the

Catholic Church cannot be saved if they refuse to enter or remain in her.'"

Maher: "Remain in her?" [sexual innuendo]

Rudnick: "Yeah, presumably without using a condom. You wonder if they ever vet any of their statements."

Maher: "It made me think that, you know, I remember when I was making 'Religulous,' and we talked to a lot of priests. And we found out that a lot of priests really aren't believers. They do it because, no, some of them do it for the sex. That's true, but some of them, I mean, no, there's a lot of good ones, and they do it because it's a way to help people and they know they can't tell the masses that it's all a crock. But they themselves don't believe it. I think Pope Frank – what's his real name?...his Argentinian name...it sounds like a very expensive pair of shoes. He's a sophisticated guy from that era, and I think he's, I'm telling you, I think the Pope's an atheist."

May 10, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HB0], on priests:
The following exchange occurred between host Bill Maher and actor Zachary Quinto:

Maher: "They have to get right with the idea that more people who are rapists and violent go into the military. I mean, that's sort of understandable. It's a violent organization. Their job is violence..."

Quinto: "Maybe they should have a roundtable with the Catholic Church and try to come to some understanding of how to navigate this."

Maher: "Well, you know, it's funny you say that, but I think the reason why more rapists go into the military is the same reason why predators go into the Catholic Church: it's a place they know they can get away with it."

Quinto: "And that hierarchical structure prevents them from really being accountable to anybody."

Maher: "Right, and they're protected."

May 3, 2013, "Real Time with Bill Maher" [HB0], on Pope

Emeritus Benedict XVI: During the opening monologue, host Bill Maher referred to the pontifical summer residence at Castel Gandolfo as “Club Ped,” implying that Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI is a pedophile.

April 2, 2013, “Jimmy Kimmel Live” [ABC], on teachings of the Catholic Church: Maher was a guest on the show and he called the Bible “a bunch of Bronze Age malarkey.” He stated that Catholic tradition “was not from Jesus or the Bible,” claiming that “most of this stuff” was “made up hundreds of years later by clowns in the Church.” When Kimmel asked Maher whether the Trinity was in the Bible, Maher responded: “No! Neither is Confession. They just pulled this out of their ass in the 12th century.” Referring to Limbo, Maher said “they just shamelessly invent it as they go along.”

March 22, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HBO], on Pope Francis: After labeling the pope a “virgin bachelor,” Maher opined, “What other business could you be in where your company gets caught running a child sex ring since forever and you still keep your customers?”

March 15, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HBO], on Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: After displaying pictures of notable persons holding signs mocking themselves, Maher showed a picture of the pope emeritus holding a sign saying, “Not actually sick...I just hated that f***ing job.”

February 15, 2013, “Real Time with Bill Maher” [HBO], on the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI: “Now...as you all know, this week, Pope Benedict told Vatican Radio—you know, Vatican Radio, playing the hits from the 8th century, 9th century and today—Benedict told them he was going to resign because the Church needs a fresh, young face, somewhere other than a priest’s lap.”

“It’s okay to let go. No one can fault you for losing faith in an organization that won’t even allow women as priests,

because, the reasoning goes, Jesus didn't have any female apostles. Yeah, you remember the Last Supper: a total sausage party."

"The fact is that any enterprise that excludes women almost always descends into sexual deviancy. At least at my bathhouse."

"Show me any culture that's traditionally hostile to women, and I will show you a culture that is screwed up. Like the Taliban. Like our military with its enormous rape problem. And like the Catholic Church."

February 11, 2013, "Conan" [TBS], smearing priests: Maher was a guest on the show. "We found early this year or last year in the Republican primaries when the Republicans made contraception an issue, 98% of Catholics use birth control and the only ones who don't are the priests. They would if altar boys could get pregnant."

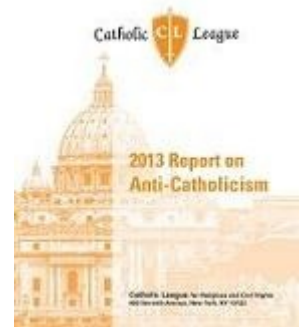


The *Boston Globe* published this Mike Baldwin cartoon on Thanksgiving Day, November 28. The cartoon depicts a priest visiting a man in prison and it implies that the man is afraid of being molested by the priest. This cartoon paints all priests as molesters and disparages the good work done by priests.

[Back to Top](#)

THE WAR ON CHRISTMAS

The following article by Bill Donohue was published by Newsmax on December 18, 2013:



There are signs that the “War on Christmas” is abating. In 1994, a year after I took over as president of the Catholic League, we successfully pressed Barneys, the upscale clothier on Madison Avenue, to remove an obscene manger scene from its storefront window. We erected a nativity scene in Central Park a year later, something we’ve done every year since. In subsequent years, we’ve been actively engaged in scores of skirmishes, winning some and losing some. Now it seems that things are calming down.

An examination of Catholic League activities in the “War on Christmas” is not dispositive, but it is an index of what has been happening in the dominant culture. Our records show that our involvement peaked in the years 2005-2007. Those were the years when we took on Wal-Mart, exacting an apology after we threatened a boycott following revelations that the mega-store was discriminating in its treatment of Christmas. Things got so bad that Jackie Mason and other Jewish leaders joined with us in protesting anti-Christmas attacks. TV shows and movies also featured assaults on Christian sensibilities during those years.

This year we have seen a clear downward tick in attempts to bash Christmas. Indeed, even vandalism is down: the number of nativity scenes being trashed is relatively low. But not all is well.

In 2013, as compared to previous years, the "War on Christmas" is being led more by national organizations, and less by local activists, than ever before. American Atheists, Freedom from Religion Foundation, and various humanist organizations are leading the way. Their weapon of choice is an array of billboards designed to denigrate Christmas. The Catholic League answered by erecting an enormous pro-Christmas billboard in Times Square, and two digital ones in New Jersey.

Militant atheists have also targeted the schools, seeking to deny any religious component to classroom celebrations, and Christmas-themed events. But there is a decided pushback, and it is not being led by the Catholic League or any other national organization: The good news is that Christians are taking things into their own hands, pressuring local authorities to accede to their reasonable demands.

Contrary to those who sell the bogus idea that the "War on Christmas" is not real, Christians who are fighting back are not obsessed with who is saying "Happy Holidays," and who is saying "Merry Christmas." On the contrary, they are engaged in serious efforts to stop those who want to censor Christmas. The evidence is clear that a small minority are hell bent on banning, trashing, and diluting the public expression of Christmas.

Nearly 80 percent of Americans are Christian, and 96 percent celebrate Christmas. Of the remaining four percent, most are indifferent, but are not hostile, to Christmas. That leaves a small, but dogmatically extreme, band of secularists (many of whom are ex-Christians) who are seeking to impose their agenda on the rest of us. It is up to decent Americans of all faiths, and indeed no faith, to see to it that the cultural fascists do not win the day.



This billboard was placed in Times Square on West 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. It was on display from December 9, 2013 through January 5, 2014.

September

Bar Harbor, ME – The City Council voted not to extend a lease that allowed a lighted evergreen tree to remain on town property year round. The tree was installed as a memorial to veterans who gave their lives and was accompanied by a plaque that read in part “The Christmas They Never Had.” The group which had sponsored the tree was ordered to remove it.

October

Wausau, WI – The school board issued a notice to the Music Department of the Wausau West High School that the song list for their Master Singers concert had to be edited to reduce the number of proposed religious songs for their annual holiday shows. A ratio of one religious song for every five secular songs was proposed, as was the suggestion that the concert be postponed or not include any holiday music at all. In response, music director Phil Buch disbanded the Master Singers.

On October 15, the school board reversed its decision, instead deciding to hold off on making any decisions surrounding holiday musical selections. The Master Singers immediately began practicing for the holiday shows.

October 16

Deerfield Beach, FL – The city banned all holiday displays on public property that were not installed by the city itself. As a result of this new ban, a nativity scene that was traditionally placed in front of the local fire station was not displayed this year because it was provided by a private business. The new rule is in response to a protestor, who last year installed a “Festivus” pole made out of beer cans next to the nativity.

October 18

Alton, IL – Vandals caused damage at the town’s Christmas Wonderland display in Rock Spring Park before the volunteer tradesmen known as the “Grandpa Gang” could even finish setting up. The Christmas Wonderland is one of the region’s most popular Christmas attractions and helps raise money for local charities.

November 1

Bordentown, NJ – Constance Bauer, superintendent of the Bordentown Regional School District banned religious songs from their schools’ annual “winter” concerts. “Religious music should not be part of the elementary program(s),” Bauer wrote.

The decision was reached after two families complained and the school district's legal firm recommended removing the songs.

After a public outcry, and the intervention of Alliance Defending Freedom, Bauer changed her mind and lifted the ban on November 5th. Bauer said, "In reviewing additional legal considerations and advice taken on this matter and the expressed sentiments of the community at large, I have reconsidered the decision on the musical selections for the upcoming winter programs."

November 13

The Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) launched a series of gifts and cards to celebrate the winter solstice, but also aimed at mocking Christmas. Cards include designs such as "Keep Saturn in Saturnalia" and "Yes Virginia ...There Is No God." FFRF also offers a "Heathen's Greeting" musical selection.

FFRF's president said "people have been celebrating the winter solstice long before Christmas. We see Christianity as the intruder, trying to steal the natural holiday from all of us humans."

November 14

College Park, GA – Students at the Main Street Academy, a charter school, were given permission slips to begin rehearsing "popular American holiday music." The permission slip also stated "religious songs will not be included." The principal did not respond to numerous attempts by the media to ask him to explain his decision.

November 15

West Columbia, SC – The American Humanist Association threatened to sue the East Point Academy charter school over its annual Christmas toy drive. The American Humanist Association says that the toy drive violated the constitution, "because the purpose and effect of Operation Christmas Child

is to induce impoverished children to convert to Christianity.” The school cancelled the toy drive because it did not have the funds to fight a legal battle.

November 16

Avon Park, FL – Businesses were asked to decorate more than 40 Christmas trees that lined Main Street in advance of the city’s annual Christmas parade. The flier for the event said that trees must be “tastefully decorated” with “no religious decorations.” A standing-room-only crowd turned out for the next City Council meeting and the ban on religious decorations was reversed before anyone needed to speak.

November 21

Highlands Ranch, CO – The American Humanist Association threatened to sue the Skyview Academy charter school over a student organized and student run Christmas toy drive to help needy children. The American Humanist Association says that the toy drive violated the constitution because it was sponsored by an evangelical Christian organization. While the school officially canceled the drive, concerned parents and students continued to collect toys and packaged them on the sidewalk in front of the school.

November 21

Rock Hill, SC – Fearing a lawsuit from the ACLU or other similar groups, the principal at York Preparatory Academy supported a decision made by the band director to ban all religious music from their upcoming concert. The ban even included instrumental versions of “Joy to the World” and “O Come All Ye Faithful.” After being contacted by the Alliance Defending Freedom, which offered to represent the school against any lawsuit free of charge, the school reversed its policy and permitted the inclusion of the religious music in the concert.

November 23 – 24

Seattle, WA – All nine Christmas trees at the Seattle-Tacoma

International Airport were removed after a Rabbi threatened a lawsuit if a menorah was not displayed too. Officials at the airport decided that it would be easier to remove the trees.

November 26

Reno, NV – The city announced it would celebrate the lighting of their “holiday tree.” Reno Creative Services Manager, Sharon Spangler, stated “we really want to be respectful of everyone’s beliefs and their forms of celebration.”

November 29

Louisville, KY – A teacher at Brandeis Elementary School was asked to take down a paper Christmas tree made up of paper hands cut out to represent all the students. Above the tree was a caption that read “Santa’s Helpers.” The school principal ordered the caption to be removed after another teacher, who was Jewish, complained about it. After the teacher removed the entire display, it was pointed out that removing Christmas entirely counteracted the goal of being “multi-cultural.” The teacher was then permitted to repost the display with a new caption that read “Happy Holidays.”

December

“Judith Owen & Harry Shearer’s Holiday Sing Along” kicked off its irreverent five city tour through New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and New Orleans. The show is described as an “antidote to the holiday frenzy” and according to reports includes songs such as “F*** Christmas” “Christmas with the Devil” and “Jesus was a Dreidel Spinner.”

December

Arlington Heights, IL – The Freedom From Religion Foundation installed an anti-religion sign in a public park as a protest against a privately funded nativity that was on display in the park.

December

Claremont, CA – The Claremont United Methodist Church, known

for using the Holy Family to make provocative social commentaries, installed a nativity scene that replaced the baby Jesus with a bleeding Trayvon Martin figure. Martin, the African American teen who was shot in Florida, was depicted sitting hunched over in place of the manger with blood dripping from his chest. This was the sixth year that the church has allowed local artist John Zachary to use the nativity to comment on social policy.

December

Somers, NY – A group of residents petitioned the Town Board against a plan to install a crèche in front of the Town House. The Town House's front lawn has long been the site of a Christmas Tree and a Hanukkah menorah but the petition suggests these are "non-religious" symbols.

December

Tallahassee, FL – A nativity scene in the State Capitol has been the source of protest from several atheists. The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) placed a banner in the capitol building, which is self described as a "light-hearted nativity scene parody." The banner depicts Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and the Statue of Liberty huddled around a manger with the Bill of Rights in it. FFRF calls the display the "Bill of Rights Nativity."

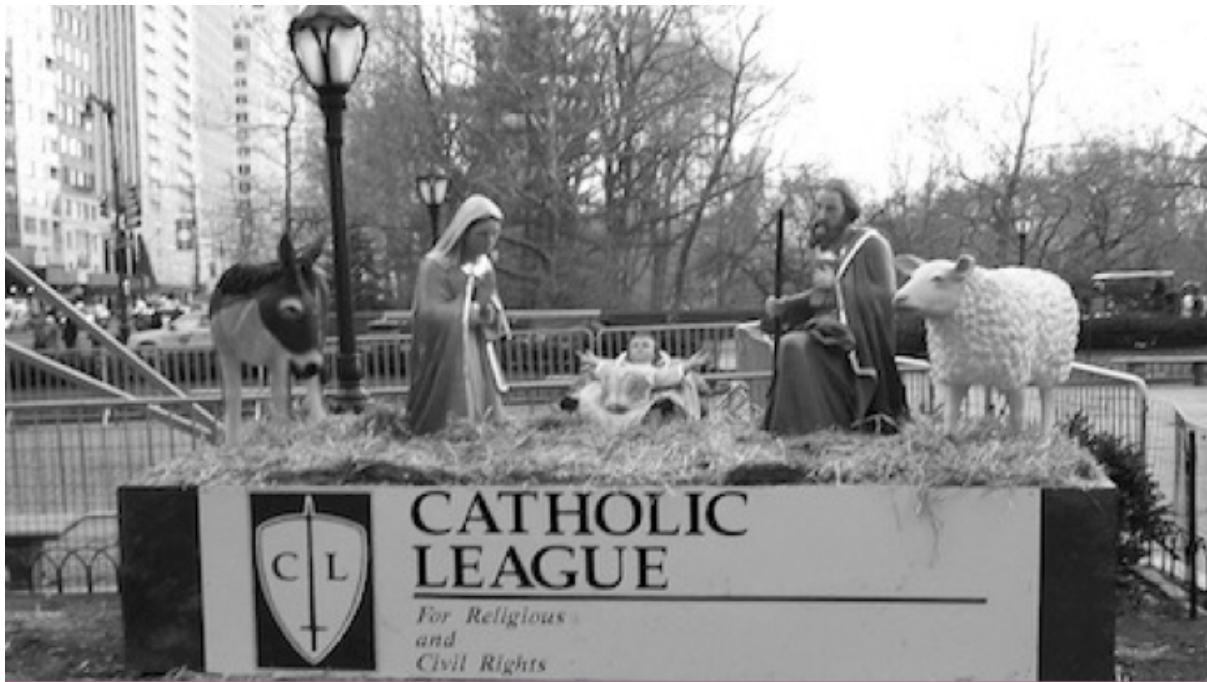
Additionally, Chaz Stevens, an atheist from Deerfield Beach, FL received permission to install a "Festivus" pole in the capitol to celebrate the fictional holiday made up by the television show "Seinfeld." Stevens' pole was 6 feet tall made up of empty beer cans and was displayed next to the nativity. Stevens admits the idea is ridiculous, but installed the display as a protest against the nativity. Stevens had installed a similar pole in his hometown last year, which led to a ban on any holiday display.

The displays in the Statehouse also included a "provHerb" from the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster meant to mock

Christians. A proposed diorama from The Satanic Temple was rejected because it was “grossly offensive.”

December 2

Buffalo, NY – Business owners were ordered to remove Christmas lights that had been placed in trees along the popular Elmwood Village shopping district. According to the city, the lights were illegal unless they had been installed by a licensed contractor and had a \$1 million insurance policy.



The Catholic League's nativity scene in Central Park.

December 3

Brooklet, GA – For as long as anyone can remember, teachers at Brooklet Elementary School have posted Christmas cards in the hallways outside their classrooms – until this year. When students returned from Thanksgiving break, they discovered that their teachers' Christmas cards had been removed – under orders from the Georgia school's administration. The Christmas card censorship took place as the Bulloch County Board of Education began to crack down on religious expression in their schools. Teachers were ordered to remove any religious icons or items from their classrooms – ranging from Bibles to Christian music.

December 3

New York, NY – American Atheists launched a campaign titled “Nobody Needs Christ at Christmas.” The ad campaign includes a series of electronic billboards across midtown Manhattan that cross out the word “Christ” and encourage people to “Celebrate the true meaning of Xmas.” The advertisement then flashes several suggestions for celebrating including “Chinese food,” “Rockettes” and “parties.”

December 3

Providence, RI – After two years of lighting a “holiday tree,” Gov. Lincoln Chafee agreed to refer to the State Capitol’s annual lighting celebration as a “Christmas Tree.” However, Gov. Chafee was not available to attend the actual lighting event and instead delegated the Christmas tree lighting responsibilities to the Secretary of State.

December 5

Chicago, IL – The Freedom from Religion Foundation unveiled a large illuminated “A” for atheists in the city’s Daley Plaza. The plaza has long been home to a privately maintained crèche and menorah. The atheists’ display also included a banner meant to mock Christians by depicting the Founding Fathers standing around a crib that contained the Bill of Rights.

December 5

Frisco, TX – Students who attend Nichols Elementary School’s “Winter Party” have been banned from talking about Christmas or any other religious holiday. Christmas trees have also been banned along with traditional holiday colors – red and green. The principal defended the policy saying that she “didn’t want to offend any families.”

December 5

Nashville, TN – Two shoppers were asked to leave the Opry Mills Mall because they were dressed in Christmas costumes and wishing people a Merry Christmas. Mall security indicated that they were interfering with the mall Santa and asked them to

leave. A mall spokesperson later apologized and invited the shoppers back.

December 5

Quincy, MA – Statues of Jesus, Mary, Joseph and a lamb were stolen from a nativity scene in Quincy Square. The statues of the Holy Family were later recovered but the lamb was still missing.

December 5

St. Joseph, MN – Several figures from the nativity scene outside the Church of St. Joseph were stolen. Originally just a shepherd was missing, but then thieves also stole Mary, Joseph and some of the animals. During the following week, on December 11, Mary, Joseph, the shepherd and some of the missing animals were returned.

December 6

Ellsworth, ME – The Downeast Humanists and Freethinkers sponsored a float in the town's Christmas parade. They claim the purpose of the float was to educate parade goers about the pagan roots of the evergreen tree.

December 9

Mt. Pleasant, PA – The baby Jesus figure was stolen from two nativity scenes.

December 10

Sumter, SC – Shaw Air Force Base removed a nativity scene that was displayed on the base after being contacted by the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). MRFF bragged that it took the Air Force only 2 hours and 15 minutes to remove the nativity after a complaint had been filed. Officials at the base later revealed that they had not received any complaints about the nativity from Airmen stationed at the base, and that the only complaint was from MRFF. The nativity was later reinstalled outside the Base's chapel.

December 10

Valencia, CA – A baby Jesus figurine was stolen from the nativity scene outside the Westfield Valencia Town Center. The statue was returned later in the week.

December 11

Vancouver, WA – Children singing Christmas carols were booted from the front of a WinCo grocery store over fears that they might offend patrons who did not celebrate Christmas. A corporate official later said he “did not see any harm” in the girls singing, and granted them permission to return.

December 12

Kings Park, NY – Officials at the Ralph J. Osgood Intermediate School decided that 5th grade students would perform “Silent Night” during the school’s concert. However all religious references were removed from the song, resulting in the children singing a version of “Silent Night” that omitted lyrics such as “Holy infant,” “Christ the Savior,” and “Jesus Lord at thy birth.” The school district has since apologized.

December 13

West Covina, CA – A 6 year old student brought candy canes with short messages attached that included a reference to Jesus Christ to Merced Elementary School as gifts for his teacher and first grade classmates. The teacher confiscated the candy canes, and after conferring with the principal told the student that “Jesus is not allowed in school.” The messages were ripped off the candy canes and discarded in the trash.



This digital billboard was placed in two locations in New Jersey; one was on Route 18 at the Route 527 Intersection, and the other was on I-95 in South Brunswick, between exits 9 and 8A, heading south.

After a lawyer from Advocates for Faith & Freedom contacted the school on the student's behalf, he was permitted to hand out the candy canes with the messages, but it had to be done off campus and on the last day before the students left for winter break. The school superintendent said the teacher's intention was to "maintain an appropriate degree of religious neutrality in the classroom."

December 17

Fairfield, CT – When students at Fairfield Ludlowe High School suggested using Santa and Christmas trees to decorate the classroom door as part of a school-wide contest, the teacher told them that no reference to Christmas would be permitted. The school's headmaster said the school policy is decorations "should have no direct religious meaning." The headmaster suggested using a wreath, candy canes or holly because they have no direct religious meaning.

December 17

Pitman, NJ – The Freedom from Religion Foundation rented a billboard that reads "Keep Saturn in Saturnalia," a reference to an ancient celebration of the Roman God Saturn. This billboard was erected in protest to a Knights of Columbus banner that read "Keep Christ in Christmas."

December 19

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba – Two nativity scenes were removed from dining halls at the U.S. Naval base following a complaint from the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF). According to MRFF, they received an email signed by 18 active-duty service members protesting the crèches. A spokesperson for the base said there had been no complaints from personnel stationed at the base about the displays. The nativity scenes were moved to a courtyard outside the base chapel.

December 19

Temecula, CA – First grade students at the Temecula Valley Unified School District were given an assignment that required each student to bring in something that represented a family holiday for a one-minute presentation. One young student brought in a star of Bethlehem and began to recite a Bible verse, when her teacher interrupted her and told her to take a seat. The student was reportedly told that “she’s not allowed to talk about the Bible in school.”

December 21

Lincoln, NE – A lighted baby Jesus figure was stolen from the front yard of a private home.

December 24

Augusta, GA – A group of high school students were banned from singing religious Christmas carols at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center. The hospital, which is run by the federal Veterans Administration, said it had a responsibility to “represent people of all faiths.” According to the hospital, the policy on “spiritual care” is set by the Veterans Administration to protect veterans from “unwelcome religious material.” The students who had performed without any problems in 2011 and 2012 were given a list of 12 approved secular Christmas songs that they could sing. The students did not have enough time to rehearse the approved songs and instead decided not to perform at all.

December 24

Dallas, TX – Christmas cards that were made by students for local veterans were not accepted by the VA North Texas Health Care System because the federal Veterans Administration has a policy that limits the distribution of cards containing religious references. The cards were instead donated to other private veterans' facilities.

December 25

Erie, PA – Someone broke into a church after Christmas Eve services and stole the baby Jesus statue from the church's narthex. Nothing else in the church was stolen or damaged.

December 27

Basking Ridge, NJ – A statue of baby Jesus was stolen from a nativity scene on the front lawn of a private home.

[Back to Top](#)