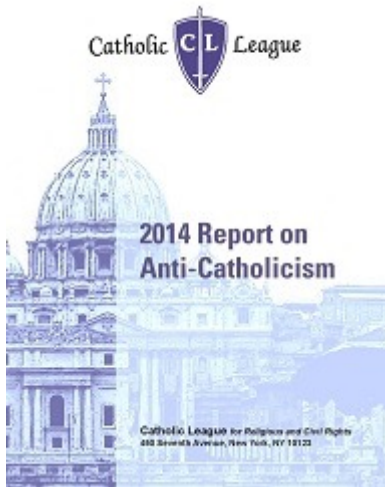


PREFACE



Everyone at the Catholic League plays an important role in the service we provide, although the jobs vary considerably. But the person most responsible for assembling the data and writing the entries is John Mulvey, a young, bright, and hard-working employee. Working with him in the policy department is Donald Lauer and Katelynn Schmitterer; Don handles our website and Kate is in charge of the layout of

Catalyst. They, along with John, do the research. I am very proud of the great work that all of them do.

In the processing department we have four Catholic League veterans: Alex Mejia, our controller, and Tom Arkin, Mary Ellen Kiely, and Suzon Loreto; Matthew Bartlett, our administrative assistant, straddles both departments. Their commitment to the cause—the defense of the Catholic Church—is never doubted, and they also do great work.

The vice president, Bernadette Brady-Egan, joined the league in 1995, two years after I started as president. She is responsible for overseeing both departments: her superb commitment, excellent judgment, and affability make her the perfect person for the job.

Father Philip Eichner is the chairman of the board. But he is much more than that: he is the guiding light of the organization. His prudence and his wisdom make him a very special person. I cannot thank him enough.

It does not exaggerate to say that our board of advisors is among the most distinguished of any Catholic organization in the nation. Our board of directors, the ones who are charged with stewardship responsibilities, is so capable and dedicated

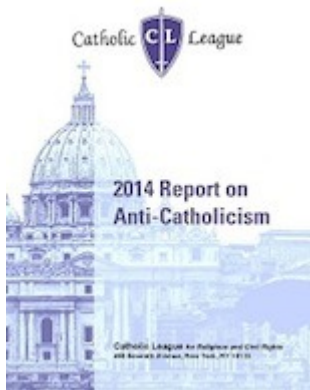
that I seriously doubt they have any peers.

It is exciting to work at the Catholic League. Even our critics will acknowledge that we are on the cutting edge of our culture. Most important, we have fun doing our jobs. We love what we are defending, and we love doing it.

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



It is a sign of great progress that the Catholic League spends relatively little time defending Catholics from defamation or discrimination. It is not a good sign that we are busier than ever combating anti-Catholicism directed at the Church. But whether it is individuals or the institution we are defending, we take every case seriously.

One of the ugliest battles of the year involved a series of relentless assaults on bishops, led by activists and lawyers; some in the media gave cover to these malicious propaganda artists. The mid-west was the hub of most of the action. St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt has been hounded for years, and in 2014 he was exonerated of charges that he “inappropriately touched” a young man in 2009. The charge came literally out of the blue: the man claimed that Nienstedt touched his buttocks while posing for a Confirmation photo. It was an utterly baseless accusation, but it gave pleasure to those opposed to the archbishop.

St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson was the target of Jeffrey Anderson, the most irresponsible attorney in the nation. Anderson claimed that Carlson had maintained that he did not know whether it was against the law for an adult to have sex with a child. Worse, a Catholic magazine, *Commonweal*, took Anderson's side, as did the *National Catholic Reporter*. My analysis of the deposition transcript where Anderson grilled Carlson showed how preposterous the charges were. If anything, Carlson was framed.

The assault on the bishops got so bad that in September I issued a special report, "The Quest to Scalp a Bishop." I detailed the attacks on Nienstedt and Carlson, as well as on Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Cardinal Raymond Burke, Archbishop John Myers, and Bishop Robert Finn. What do they have in common? They are regarded as conservatives. More important, in many cases they took over dioceses that were reeling from the destructive work of left-wing Catholics. The hit jobs against them were clearly in retaliation to their resolve to clean house.

Bishop Frank Dewane, who heads the Florida diocese of Venice, was also ganged up on, only this time the ones leading the charge were disgruntled Catholics. Ten priests took aim at Dewane by making wholly unsupported accusations. Their cowardice was openly on display: they refused to come forward and identify themselves, preferring to sucker-punch the bishop in the media. Not surprisingly, some ex-priests and ex-nuns jumped on board. We gladly rushed to Bishop Dewane's side.

Lafayette Bishop Michael Jarrell refused to publish the names of 15 priests who were accused of abuse prior to 1984. His decision was identical to the one that the leaders of every other institution, public and private, have long honored: it is unethical to make public the names of those who have been accused, but not found guilty, of an offense. Yet for some reason bishops are expected to be held to a different standard. Bishop Jarrell bravely refused to play this game. We

were happy to support him.

Evil is a word that should be reserved for extreme instances of truculent behavior. Satanism qualifies as a classic example. In 2014 it surfaced on several occasions. As the academic year wound down at Harvard, Satanists scheduled a "Black Mass" on campus. The initial response of the administration was unsatisfactory, but after being pounded in the media, campus officials reconsidered their approach. Harvard president Drew Faust issued a statement defending the freedom of speech of the offending students, but she also condemned the obscene nature of the event; she joined a demonstration orchestrated by the protesting students. I commended her for her words and deeds, noting that more could have been done. As it turned out, the "Black Mass" was held off-campus.

Another "Black Mass" was slated to be performed at the Oklahoma City Civic Center in the fall. Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley won our assistance when he objected. The Satanist who planned this event was a registered sex offender: he was determined to desecrate a consecrated Host. In the end, the Host was returned and the sick event was carried out with a faux Host, thus turning the episode into a farce.

At the end of the year, Satanists garnered the assistance from Barry Lynn, the head of Americas United for Separation of Church and State. The Devil worshippers from Florida sought to put a Satanist display next to a nativity scene in the Capitol rotunda. Lynn proved what I have been saying for decades: Americans United, founded as an expressly anti-Catholic group, has no true interest in defending the First Amendment. Its real interest is to exploit the First Amendment, using it as a weapon to limit religious speech. By joining arms with Satanists, Lynn removed all suspicion as to what its real mission is.

One does not have to be a Satanist to traffick in unseemly attacks on Catholicism. Philip Kennicott, the art critic for the *Washington Post*, was aghast to learn that an obscene portrait of Our Blessed Mother was not included in a Washington D.C. exhibit of Catholic art. He blasted the National Museum of Women in the Arts for not displaying Chris Ofili's "The Holy Virgin Mary." This portrait, which is laden with elephant dung and pornographic pictures, was dubbed by Kennicott as "perhaps the most famous image of Mary painted in the last quarter century." I led a demonstration outside the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1999 when it was first exhibited.

Hatred of Catholicism regularly surfaces in the schools, but what happened at a Woodbury, Connecticut high school was unusual. They implemented a firewall blocking access to the Vatican's website, claiming it contained "hate speech." I asked the superintendent to identify examples of "hate speech" listed on the Vatican's website. He wrote back saying there wasn't any and tried to argue that the whole thing was due to a technological error. But he wasn't persuasive: the filtering service provider shot back saying there was no "glitch," maintaining that someone at the school triggered the censorship. We gave this story quite a ride in the media, and in the end the Vatican website was restored.

Sometimes those we seek to assist prefer not to go public with their complaint. Such a decision must be respected: private persons who are not used to the public spotlight often don't think it is worth it to come forward. This happened during the election cycle in New Hampshire. A Catholic woman who worked a voting station frequently greeted voters with "God bless you." No one complained but her intolerant boss fired her nonetheless. We jumped in, but the woman who was terminated said she did not want to make a public fuss of it. She thanked us for our offer. This didn't stop us from registering a complaint against the woman's boss, making sure she wouldn't dare strike a second time. I wrote to William Gardner, the

Secretary of State, and he responded in a professional manner.

One guilty person who paid a price for her anti-Catholicism in 2014 was Rebekah M. Nett. In 2011, we filed a grievance against her for making stridently anti-Catholic remarks against United States Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher, and others. Dreher, who is not Catholic, was called a "Catholic Witch Hunter" and a "dirty Catholic." The Catholic Church was also branded as a "bloody and murderous" organization. The Supreme Court of Wisconsin, acting on our complaint, revoked Nett's license to practice for a year. We don't expect to hear from her again.

"I want more rights, quite frankly. I have never seen an administration which is less religion-friendly than the Obama administration." That is what I told Fox Business host Lou Dobbs in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming the religious conscience rights of some business owners in the *Hobby Lobby* case. The heart of religious liberty is conscience rights, so if that is lost, the core is gutted. This high court ruling was very important, but as I told Dobbs, it was not enough: we are dealing with an administration that is no friend of religious liberty, which is why we need more protections.

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which has a positive ring to it, is actually a very controversial law: it fails to insulate religious institutions from government overreach. In particular, it fails to distinguish between sexual orientation and sexual behavior. This is one reason why the Congress failed to pass this Act for 20 years. President Obama, who continually looks for ways to expand his authority, issued an Executive Order imposing the essence of this Act on the public. He could have signed a version of the Act that allowed for a religious exemption, but he purposely decided not to do so.

The Health and Human Services mandate that requires Catholic

entities to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization, was the subject of new revisions by the Obama administration. But as with previous amendments, it failed to provide the kind of protection that Catholic institutions need. The bishops rejected the revisions, as did the Catholic League.

Anti-Catholicism is a problem wherever it emanates from, but it is most problematic when it stems from government, especially the federal government. We were shocked to learn that over the summer the Library of Congress was slated to host a presentation, "The Book and the Reformation," sponsored by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. We did not object to the content of the presentation, but we did object to the way it was advertised: the flyer for the event showed a drawing of the pope as Satan, with the inscription, "Ego sum Papa," or, "I am the Pope." After we registered a protest, the offensive depiction was deleted.

A Hispanic colonel in the U.S. Air Force published an article in the base newspaper that was a tribute to his mother, and was then accused of destroying the morale, order and discipline of the Air Force. What did he do to merit such a strong reaction? He explained how his mother's trust in Jesus acted as a positive force for him growing up. That was it. The article was immediately taken down—treated as if it were obscene—and the colonel was reprimanded. I wrote to several parties objecting on free speech and religious liberty grounds. I also pointed out how the plain language of the Air Force rules that were cited as justification for punitive action were not violated by the colonel. This incredible act of censorship shows just how far political correctness has penetrated the armed forces.

It was not just the U.S. government that the Catholic League tackled in 2014; we fought the U.N. The U.N. Committee Against Torture, led by Felice Gaer, conducted a show trial against the Holy See. This U.N. body tried to pressure the Holy See to

force four Irish religious orders to provide “restitution, compensation and rehabilitation” for the so-called victims of the Magdalene Laundries. I say “so-called” because according to the McAleese Report on this subject, the most definitive study of its kind, not a single woman was ever tortured or sexually abused in all the decades that these shelters for troubled women operated.

We lodged a formal complaint with the U.N. against Gaer. We specifically charged her with violating two sets of U.N. strictures governing the objectivity of committee members. Gaer, we contended, was not an impartial or independent observer; rather, she was an abortion-rights activist who took her directives from the Center for Reproductive Rights, a notoriously anti-Catholic organization. We were pleased when officials from the Holy See warmly noted the Catholic League response.

International issues took front and center in 2014 with the unspeakable crimes committed by Muslim extremists against Christians in the Middle East. On September 15, we ran an op-ed page statement in the *New York Times*, “Christian Genocide Must End,” that called attention to this outrage. We appealed to the U.N. and to the Obama administration to do more, emphasizing that the fight against Islamists met the Catholic Church’s test for a “just war.” The response this ad engendered was phenomenal, attracting positive comments from people of all faiths.

Ireland was very much in the news in 2014, and so was the reaction of the Catholic League to perceived acts of cruelty generated by the Catholic Church. The movie, “Philomena,” was up for several Oscars. Based on the book by that name, it asserted that Philomena Lee got pregnant when she was 18-years-old and that Irish nuns stole her baby and then sold him “to the highest bidder.” It was a malicious lie. Philomena’s father took her to an abbey asking for assistance. At the age of 22, she voluntarily signed a contract placing her son up

for adoption. He was adopted by a Wisconsin couple who then offered a donation to the abbey. He was not sold to anyone and there was no bidding war.

It was hardly surprising to learn that Bob and Harvey Weinstein, no strangers to anti-Catholicism, spent an enormous amount of money lobbying to win an Oscar. They failed. But this didn't stop Philomena Lee from lying about her quest to find her son in the U.S. In fact, she never stepped foot in the U.S. until it was time for her to hawk her dishonest story. I wrote a lengthy report on this issue, documenting my sources.

More lies were told about Irish nuns when the "mass grave" hoax surfaced. Again, I wrote a report detailing exactly what happened. Media reports exploded in the spring claiming that almost 800 children were buried in a mass grave outside Galway between 1925 and 1961. But there was no mass grave: the skeletons of 15 to 20 children had been found, and the man who found them came forward to debunk the lies. It was not uncommon during that period for children to be buried in unmarked graves. A local historian started the hoax and an ever compliant media joined the fray to spin this anti-Catholic yarn. Once again, it was those cruel Irish nuns who were allegedly responsible, we were told. And once again, after I showed how utterly false the accusations were, the story died a quick death.

The Irish in the U.S. also made news when it was announced that the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade would include a homosexual unit. For two decades, I had said that parade officials were acting fairly in banning all activist groups from marching under their own banner. Gays, I said, were treated no differently than pro-life groups; both could march with other units but not on their own. So when a gay group was allowed to march in 2015, I asked if a pro-life contingent would also be marching. I was told there would be one. As it turned out, this was a lie. That is why I pulled the Catholic

League from marching in the parade. I do not take kindly to being double-crossed, especially by my own people.

The year ended as always: we fought the proverbial Christmas wars. This time we ventured to the west coast posting a billboard along a heavily trafficked strip in Los Angeles. We called attention to Christians being beheaded overseas, and to non-violent hate speech at home. "The Differences Are Profound; So Are the Similarities." It set off a predictable firestorm of approval and disapproval. Overall, we declared the Christmas wars to be a draw: both the pro-Christmas and the anti-Christmas sides won and lost an almost equal series of battles; our side did slightly better.

From time to time, we also fight defamation and discrimination aimed at other segments of the population. In 2014, we joined hands with our Jewish friends in protesting the anti-Semitic opera, "The Death of Klinghoffer." The play, which was performed at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in the fall, was a classic case of moral equivalency: it maintained that an innocent handicapped Jewish senior citizen, Leon Klinghoffer, who was shot in the face and then thrown overboard on the Achilles Laura Italian cruise ship in 1985, was somehow as morally culpable as the PLO barbarians who killed him. I spoke at one of the rallies, and the Catholic League staff joined me in attending a follow-up demonstration.

These are just some of the more prominent struggles we faced in 2014. This volume documents many more, and from a wide range of sources and venues. The fact that in the second decade of the third millennium we are still fighting anti-Catholicism is not a good sign. But matters would be considerably worse if the bigotry did not occasion a strong rejoinder. We are proud to lead the charge against the enemies of the Catholic Church.

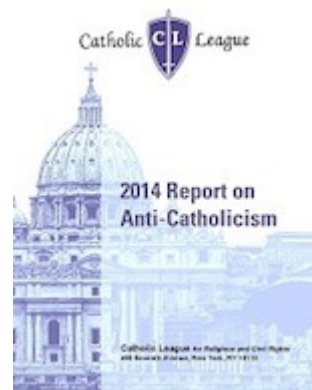
William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS

January 14

Searcy, AR – Police Chief Jeremy Clark refused to remove a small white cross that sits outside his private entrance to the police station, despite being pressured to do so by the Freedom From Religion Foundation. The small cross was placed there with permission from the previous police chief. The crosses were made by volunteers at a local Methodist church and can be seen throughout the town.



January 16

Rhineland, WI – The University of Wisconsin-Extension announced it had complied with demands from the Freedom From Religion Foundation to end the tradition of placing Bibles in guests' rooms at the campus conference center. "We reviewed the concern raised about the placement of Bibles in our guest rooms and decided to remove them. We want to make sure all guests are comfortable in our lodging," said Bill Mann, the University's conference center director.

January 28

Whitefish, MT – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) filed a lawsuit opposing a shrine to Jesus that has existed on Big Mountain since 1953. The U.S. Forest Service, which owns the land, issued a permit to the Knights of Columbus to erect a statue of Jesus overlooking the mountain's ski run. The government has protected the rights of the Knights to maintain the statue, calling it a "historic" monument. A federal district court approved the shrine, a ruling that FFRF's lawsuit seeks to overturn.

January 31

When the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops filed an amicus brief in support of a lawsuit brought by a privately owned business, Hobby Lobby, that challenges the constitutionality of the Health and Human Services mandate, several organizations which have traditionally opposed the bishops lined up with their own brief on the opposing side.

BishopAccountability.org, a media outlet that allegedly monitors priestly sexual abuse, the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, a “victims’ group,” and the Freedom From Religion Foundation, an atheist entity, did not want the owners of Hobby Lobby to win. These are groups whose stated objectives have nothing to do with the issue, but their real goal surely did: they wanted to weaken the moral voice of traditional religious organizations.

Seven “Catholic” organizations joined with others to oppose Hobby Lobby: Catholics for Choice, a pro-abortion, anti-Catholic entity; CORPUS, Women’s Ordination Conference, and Women’s Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual reject the Church’s teachings on ordination; DignityUSA and New Ways Ministry reject the Church’s teachings on homosexuality; and the National Coalition of American Nuns is pro-abortion and pro-gay marriage.

February 7

Levy County, FL – Local officials rejected American Atheists’ application to install a 1500-pound granite bench adorned with secularist quotes on the county’s courthouse lawn. The bench was meant to counter a Ten Commandments monument already at the courthouse. The county board that rejected the atheists’ bench said that it did so because the quotes inscribed on the bench were incomplete, thereby violating the county’s guidelines for monuments. American Atheists planned to take the matter to court.

March

Prior to the first anniversary of Pope Francis' pontificate, the "victims' groups" – Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and BishopAccountability.org – proved to be two of the most hate-filled activist outlets in the nation.

SNAP condemned the pope for doing "nothing—literally nothing—that protects a single child, exposes a single predator or prevents a single cover up." Not a single example, anywhere in the world, was cited of the pope's alleged delinquency.

Terence McKiernan of BishopAccountability.org condemned the pope for his "tired and defensive rhetoric," saying the pope's rigorous, and wholly justified, account of the Catholic Church's reaction to sexual abuse was "breathtaking."

March 1

Ames, IA – Iowa State University's Hotel Memorial Union removed the Bibles from the nightstands in each of its 52 rooms after receiving a complaint from the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF). FFRF sent the Hotel Memorial Union a letter claiming the Bibles were "unwelcome religious propaganda."

March 4

Bladensburg, MD – The American Humanist Association filed a federal lawsuit demanding that a 40 foot tall cross-shaped World War I memorial be removed. The memorial, which was installed in 1925 by the American Legion, commemorates 49 residents who died during World War I. The Humanist group claimed that the cross-shaped memorial violates the First Amendment. The town's administrator defended the cross and said "there are community members that would be disturbed if the cross were removed."

March 12

Colorado Springs, CO – The Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF) filed a complaint after a cadet at the Air

Force Academy placed a biblical verse on a whiteboard outside his room. After receiving the complaint, Air Force officials removed the inscription. In response to the removal of the quote, other cadets staged a “revolt” and began posting their own verses from the Bible and other religious texts on whiteboards outside their rooms. Mikey Weinstein, president of MRFF, demanded that the Air Force take action to remove the new religious inscriptions and punish the offending cadets. Weinstein threatened to take the Air Force to court over the matter, and suggested that punishments could include having a cadet’s pay docked, expulsion, or even jail.

March 19 – 21

On March 19, two days after New York’s St. Patrick’s Day parade, Bill Donohue asked officials at the Heritage of Pride parade, New York’s annual gay march, if he could enter with his own unit, “Straight is Great.”

Donohue’s gambit was a ploy: gays had objected to the house rules of the St. Patrick’s Day parade barring any unit from honoring anything but St. Patrick—they sought to march under their own banner (the parade also bans pro-life Catholics from marching under their own banner)—so Donohue sought to test their house rules.

The ensuing controversy validated Donohue’s point: he objected to their rule requiring him to attend gay “training sessions” as a condition of marching. When he refused, they replied that the rule was “mandatory.”

Donohue was welcome to march in their parade provided that he followed their rules and attended the “training session.” Just as the gay parade has rules, so does the St. Patrick’s Day parade. Gays were welcome to march in the St. Patrick’s Day parade provided that they blended in and did not promote any political cause.

March 24

Madison, WI – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) demanded that Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker remove a Twitter post he made that included “Philippians 4:13.” According to FFRF, that verse, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” was “disturbing” and “seems more like a threat or the utterance of a theocratic dictator than a duly elected civil servant.” Governor Walker refused to remove the tweet and his spokesperson said he was inspired by the verse and chose to share it.

April 14

Madison, WI – A permit was issued for the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) to install a display in the Wisconsin state capitol. The display, installed during Holy Week, read “Nobody died for our ‘sins.’ Jesus Christ is a myth.” FFRF sought permission to install the display after Concerned Women for America installed an Easter display complete with a cross and pro-life materials.

April 21

Monmouth County, NJ – Although the Supreme Court ruled that students could opt out of saying the Pledge of Allegiance in 1943, the American Humanist Association (AHA) filed a lawsuit challenging a New Jersey law that requires the Pledge to be recited in school each day. The AHA objects to children being subjected to *hearing* the words “under God” as part of the Pledge. Their lawsuit sought to prevent the Pledge from being said at all. “Public schools should not engage in an exercise that tells students patriotism is tied to a belief in God,” said an AHA attorney.

In the past, the courts have repeatedly upheld the use of “under God” in the Pledge.

April 21

Pismo Beach, CA – A decision was made to cut out invocations prior to the Pismo Beach City Council meetings. The invocations were mostly delivered by a volunteer chaplain who

was a local Pentecostal minister. The Freedom From Religion Foundation and Atheists United's San Luis Obispo chapter filed complaints alleging that the prayers led by the unpaid pastor violated California's civil rights laws. In addition to ending the invocations and firing the chaplain, the City agreed to pay a symbolic \$1 to each of the plaintiffs and their \$47,500 legal fees.

April 22 – 24

Seattle, WA – Planned Parenthood staged two “Bar Nun Bingo” fundraising events, which mocked nuns, and were led by the demonstrably anti-Catholic gay group, Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. Despite Planned Parenthood receiving more than half a billion in tax dollars each year, this was certainly not the first time that the pro-abortion group demonstrated its anti-Catholic roots.

April 24

Parkersburg, WV – Parkersburg South High School's wrestling team's motto is “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” The motto was displayed in the team locker room, on the team website, and on t-shirts worn by the wrestlers. As a result, a local atheist contacted the Freedom From Religion Foundation who in turn demanded that the school remove any reference to the Scripture verse. The school agreed to paint over the motto in the locker room and remove it from the school website. The school, however, could not stop the wrestlers from wearing the t-shirts with the verse, as the school could not limit students from personally expressing their religious beliefs.

May 12

The Military Association of Atheists and Free Thinkers made a request to the Defense Department for the inclusion of humanist chaplains. The Catholic League would have no objection to counselors for atheists in the military, but the use of the word chaplain reveals that this was a ploy to challenge the rights of religious persons, especially

Christians. The use of the word chaplain refers to members of the clergy, making an atheist chaplain an oxymoron.

The Navy rejected the atheists' application, but did so due to the "highly competitive nature" of the application process, and not the absurdity of having a humanist chaplain. The Navy did not comment on the legitimacy of the application.

May 12

Cambridge, MA – The Harvard Extension Cultural Studies Club invited members of the Satanic Temple to perform a "Black Mass" at an on-campus bar. Although the event was eventually canceled hours before it was scheduled to take place, it was clear that the event's purpose was to mock Catholics and the Mass, as well as trash the Eucharist. (Originally the Satanists said they were going to use a consecrated Host, but they later withdrew that claim and said they would use symbolic bread.) The independent student club that sponsored the event initially tried to present it as an educational activity. After Catholics from across the country expressed their outrage, including two statements by the Catholic League, and intervention from the Archdiocese of Boston, the student club decided to withdraw its sponsorship.

Note: Harvard University's response to the planned "Black Mass" is chronicled in a separate entry in the Education section of this report.

June

Columbia, MO – A monument dedicated to two Boone County men who died while serving in Operation Desert Storm was installed in 1992 outside the county's courthouse. The granite slab included their names and an ichthus symbol carved into the stone. After receiving a complaint from Americans United, county officials feared a lawsuit and decided to remove the religious symbol from the privately funded memorial. Unable to alter the stone monument, a plaque that read "Dedicated 1992" was placed over the ichthus.

June 14

Boston, MA – The anti-Catholic group Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence was chosen as the Grand Marshal of Boston's Gay Pride Parade. The group is made up of homosexual men who dress as nuns. They describe themselves as "a leading-edge order of queer nuns." As Grand Marshal, they were given a prominent place in the parade and were included in honors and other events that occurred before the parade.

June 19

Washington, DC – Among the counter-protestors at the second annual March for Marriage was a member of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The man, dressed as a nun, identified himself as "Sister Missionary Position." He declared that people shouldn't be allowed to believe in traditional marriage and handed out pamphlets that mocked the mysteries of the Rosary. The pamphlet was titled "Rosary of Five Sorrowful Clerical Errors" and included attacks on Pope St. John XXIII and priests.

June 20

Salina, KS – Members of the Westboro Baptist Church, a hate group, sent protestors to picket the funeral of Father Kenneth Walker. Father Walker was murdered while coming to the aid of another priest who was being attacked at their parish in Phoenix. The Westboro Baptist Church has a history of picketing the funerals of soldiers killed at war.

June 26

San Francisco, CA – A "nude activist," Gypsy Taub, planned to march naked through San Francisco to the National Shrine of Saint Francis. She claimed that Saint Francis was a nudist. The purpose of her naked march was to protest a nudity ban and the treatment of other nudists by the police.

July 3

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) took out a full page advertisement in the *New York Times*. In the ad FFRF takes

out its vengeance on Catholics by trotting out the old canard that Catholics are not independent thinkers (unless they disagree with the teachings of the Church). The occasion for the outburst was the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the *Hobby Lobby* case affirming religious liberty. Here is a sample of its invective:

"DOGMA SHOULD NOT TRUMP OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES. ALL-MALE ALL-ROMAN CATHOLIC MAJORITY ON SUPREME COURT PUTS RELIGIOUS WRONGS OVER WOMEN'S RIGHTS."

All the Jewish judges on the high court voted in the minority, but only an anti-Semite would conclude that their Jewishness determined their vote. Similarly, only an anti-Catholic would conclude that those who voted in the majority did so because of their Catholicity.

July 15

Orange County, FL – A judge dismissed a Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) lawsuit against the Orange County School District after the school district agreed to allow FFRF to distribute atheist materials to students. FFRF filed the lawsuit after the school district allowed a Christian group to distribute Bibles to students who wanted them.

July 16

Washington, DC – Protestors from Code Pink gathered outside the Capitol building to express their dismay over the Supreme Court's decision in the *Hobby Lobby* case, and to show their support for the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act which was designed to gut the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The protestors held signs that read "KEEP YOUR ROSARIES OFF MY OVARIES."

July 19

Searcy, AR – Steven Rose, the owner of Bailey's Pizza, posted a 10 percent discount on his restaurant's Facebook page for anyone who brought in a copy of a church bulletin. A week

later he received a letter from the Freedom From Religion Foundation alleging that the discount constituted an “act of discrimination” and a violation of the Civil Rights Act. Rose likened the discount to a marketing tool or coupon and refused to end the promotion.

July 22

Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is ill-named: it is a gay rights group that often disrespects the human rights of those with whom it disagrees. This burst of intolerance occurred when it attacked David Tyree, the New York Giants’ hero in the 2007 Super Bowl. HRC president Chad Griffin blasted the Giants for hiring Tyree as its Director of Player Development.

Tyree’s sin? He believes, as does most of the world, that marriage is the union of a man and a woman. He also believes that homosexuals can change their orientation; he knows men who have. His sentiments are grounded in his religious convictions. Anyone is free to disagree with him, but to condemn a man for espousing such positions shows contempt for his twin First Amendment rights: freedom of speech and freedom of religion. In short, it is un-American.

July 30

Dissident Catholics at the editorial board of the *National Catholic Reporter* attacked the composition of the Catholic Church and the Synod of Bishops for being nothing but a “tiny representation of humanity, celibate and exclusively male.” In the eyes of the editorial board of the *Reporter* “humans are reduced to the level of baboons.”

August 8

Bloomfield, NM – A federal district court judge sided with the ACLU and ruled that a monument of the Ten Commandments had to be removed from the lawn in front of City Hall. The monument was installed in 2011 after a city council vote in 2007 that allowed historical displays on the lawn provided that they were paid for and installed by private individuals.

August 15

The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) filed a complaint with the U.S. Navy's Exchange Command, which is responsible for running base lodges. According to FFRF the Navy's practice of placing a Bible in guest rooms was a violation of the Constitution and amounted to "a government endorsement of that religious text."

The Bibles, which had been donated to the Navy, were removed from the guest rooms. However, after the Bibles were removed several groups and many veterans expressed their outrage with the decision. This led to a reversal of the policy and the Bibles were returned to the rooms while the Navy considered creating a formal policy on the matter.

August 20

Liberty, IN – The Freedom From Religion Foundation sent a letter to Indiana state officials objecting to a statue of a soldier kneeling on one knee by a cross. The monument for veterans and those who had lost their lives in battle was set to be installed in the Whitewater Memorial State Park. The monument was donated and no public funds were used in its creation.

August 20

Brevard County, FL – A member of the Central Florida Freethought Community applied to deliver the prayer or invocation at a meeting of the Brevard County Board of Commissioners, however the commissioners voted not to allow the atheist to do so. The board said the prayer "typically invokes guidance for the County Commission from the highest spiritual authority, a higher authority which a substantial body of Brevard constituents believe to exist." The atheist group did succeed in delivering the invocation at five other meetings throughout Florida.

August 25

Jackson, MS – The American Humanist Association sent a letter

to the Jackson Public School District demanding that all religious activity, including prayers and sermons, be eliminated from within the district. The request came after a faculty member complained that a Christian reverend delivered an invocation at a faculty convocation. The minister was accused of praying and making biblical references in his remarks.

August 28

Midlothian, TX – Two dedication plaques at Mt. Peak Elementary School and Longbranch Elementary School were covered up because they contained references to God. Both plaques read “Dedicated in the Year of Our Lord 1997 to the Education of God’s Children and to their Faithful Teachers In The Name of the Holy Christian Church – Soli Deo Gloria.” The school district’s superintendent decided to cover the plaques after receiving a complaint from the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

August 28 – September 25

Danielsville, GA – Two atheist organizations wrote to the Madison County School District complaining about a new stone monument outside the football stadium at Madison High School. First on August 28, the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) wrote calling the statue “divisive and illegal” because it included two biblical verses.

The American Humanist Association followed up with their own letter on September 25. They were particularly outraged that since the monument had been installed earlier in the year, the student-athletes had developed a tradition of touching it for good luck before their games. They demanded that the monument be removed or that the religious inscriptions be removed, despite the fact that they are etched into the stone. The school district said that it would investigate its options.

September

The Council for a Strong America (CSA) pressured Catholic

educators to adopt Common Core, bashing the Cardinal Newman Society, a respectable Catholic education not-for-profit, for opposing Common Core in the process. CSA received \$1.7 million from the Gates Foundation to promote Common Core, however its Florida office hammered the Cardinal Newman Society for making “strident attacks” on the program. CSA wanted to compromise the independence of Catholic schools in deciding for themselves whether to accept or reject Common Core.

September 2

Creech Air Force Base, NV – An atheist airman refused to take the Air Force’s reenlistment oath because it contained the phrase “so help me God.” The American Humanist Association threatened a lawsuit if the airman was not allowed to reenlist without omitting the phrase or without the opportunity to take a secular oath.

September 3

State College, PA – Following a complaint from the Freedom From Religion Foundation, Penn State removed the Bibles from guest rooms at the Nittany Lion Inn and Penn State Conference Center Hotel.

September 17

Orlando, FL – Kathleen Oropeza is the president of Fund Education Now, a Florida activist group that is anti-school voucher, anti-charter schools, anti-testing, and pro-union. Her outfit filed a lawsuit contending that the state constitution mandates “high quality” public education, and that funds distributed to other schools deprive public schools of the monies they need to succeed. The state circuit judge handling this case was Angela C. Dempsey, a Catholic. Oropeza wanted Dempsey to recuse herself because of her alleged bias.

Oropeza’s claims are not only without merit—they smack of bigotry. Dempsey was accused of supporting Catholic Charities, speaking at Catholic schools, and contributing to Catholic causes. This is a classic case of religious profiling.

Oropeza's gambit is also ethically and legally objectionable.

September 18

Madison, WI – The Supreme Court of Wisconsin responded to the 2011 grievance filed by the Catholic League against attorney Rebekah M. Nett. We asked that she be investigated for making stridently anti-Catholic remarks against United States Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher, and others. As a result of the Catholic League's complaint she lost her license for a year.

The formal complaint we lodged cited the following:

- Nett filed a memo written by her client, Naomi Isaacson, which said, "Across the country the court systems and particularly the Bankruptcy Court in Minnesota are composed of a bunch of ignoramus, bigoted Catholic beasts that carry the sword of the church."
- The memo called U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Nancy Dreher "a Catholic Knight Witch Hunter." [Note: Dreher is not Catholic.]
- The memo called one bankruptcy trustee "a priest's boy," and another a "Jesuitess."
- For her part, Nett called Dreher and other court personnel "dirty Catholics," adding that "Catholic deeds throughout the [sic] history have been bloody and murderous."

September 21

Oklahoma City, OK – There was to be a "Black Mass" performance at the Oklahoma City Civic Center on September 21, using a consecrated Host. But on August 21, after Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley succeeded in getting a judge to issue a restraining order, on the grounds that the Host had been stolen, the attorney for the Satanic group returned the Host to a Catholic priest. The archbishop then dropped his lawsuit.

When we learned of this scheduled performance, we issued a news release on July 2 calling attention to what a "Black

Mass” entails. We quoted directly from the website of the Satanic group: “The consecrated host is corrupted by sexual fluids then it becomes the sacrifice of the mass. The blasphemy remains intact along with corruption of the Catholic Mass.” The person who was to lead this obscene event was Adam Daniels, a registered sex offender.

Daniels’ group, Dakhma of Angra Manyu, still held a satanic event at the civic center, but without the consecrated Host they were unable to stage a real “Black Mass.” Daniels also had to make other modifications to the planned ritual “so that a public viewing can occur without breaking Oklahoma’s laws based on nudity, public urination, and other sex acts.”

Note: The event was held at the Oklahoma City Civic Center, a public venue. See the government section for information about the City’s response to this event.

October

Washington, DC – A wave of crazed Protestant activists attacked Catholic churches in Washington and Maryland. They shouted anti-Catholic slogans with bullhorns, passed out vile literature attacking the teachings of the Catholic Church, harassed parishioners going to Mass—they even stormed churches prior to the beginning of Mass.

Aside from the *Washington Post*, the media expressed no interest in this story. Why is that? Were those on the left unmoved because they greet anti-Catholicism with aplomb? Were those on the right unmoved because they do not want to rupture the Catholic-evangelical relationship? Neither reason is persuasive. Bigotry must be condemned, and this is doubly so when the basic right to attend religious services without intimidation is jeopardized.

It is sad but true that there are still pockets of anti-Catholicism in the Protestant community, especially among those aligned with conservative causes. No alliance in the

culture war is worth looking past this problem and that is why Catholics need to stand fast against attempts to brush instances like this aside.

October 23

Denver, CO – Catholics for Choice, a pro-abortion organization, launched a campaign against a proposed amendment that would include unborn human beings under the definition of a child in the Colorado criminal code. Catholics for Choice misrepresented itself as to imply that they were speaking on behalf of the Catholic Church against the amendment. The Colorado Catholic Conference, comprised of the state's bishops, responded saying that Catholics for Choice "does not speak for the Catholic Church" and they "work to mislead the public." The bishops further state "when it comes to statistics, Catholics for Choice only chooses those findings that agree with their dissent from Church teaching" and "it is our hope that one day Catholics for Choice will take the time to acquaint themselves with basic Catholic teachings."

November 3

The American Humanist Association announced that it joined with 51 other member groups of the Coalition for Liberty and Justice to send a letter to the U.S. Department of Labor urging the federal government to ensure coverage for contraceptives following the Supreme Court's *Hobby Lobby* decision. In issuing their press release about the letter, the American Humanist Association included an image of birth control pills next to a rosary.

November 4

Mt. Vernon, TX – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) filed a formal complaint over a "pervasive religious endorsement" in the Mt. Vernon Independent School District. Among the issues FFRF protested were quotes painted in the hallways at Mt. Vernon High School. One quote from Ronald Reagan read "Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face." Another quote attributed to

Thomas Paine said "Reputation is what men and women think of us, character is what God and angels know of us."

November 20

Grand Haven, MI – The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) wrote to city officials requesting that a 48-foot cross be removed from a piece of public property on Dewey Hill. The city manager responded noting a local policy established in 2013 that made Dewey Hill a 'free speech zone' and therefore welcomed any kind of religious display. The ADL would not reveal who filed the complaint and the City refused to remove the cross.

A new group, "Remove the Grand Haven Cross," was formed specifically for the purpose of protesting the cross. Members of that group revealed that they had contacted the ADL.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State also objected to the cross and requested to install displays on Dewey Hill promoting atheism, pro-choice and gay rights issues.

December 8

Clarksburg, WV – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) objected after the Harrison County Commissioners voted to appropriate \$1000 towards a social function hosted by the Catholic Immaculate Conception Men's Group. The event featured a performance by John Angotti, a Christian musician who provides "inspirational music and faith witness to all ages." The men's group had raised about half of the \$3000 needed for the event when the commissioners voted to help cover the costs. FFRF sent a letter to the commissioners demanding that they rescind the donation and recover the funds from the group.

December 16

Louisville, KY – In September, Fr. Ronald Domhoff was placed on administrative leave after he was accused of sexually molesting a minor. In December he was cleared of all charges

and returned to active ministry. What happened in the interim is the real story.

The accuser said he was molested between 1985 and 1989 at a local Catholic high school. The priest was investigated and subsequently cleared by the Louisville Metro Police Department Crimes Against Children unit. The archdiocese conducted two investigations: one by the Sexual Abuse Review Board and one by a private investigator. Both exonerated the priest.

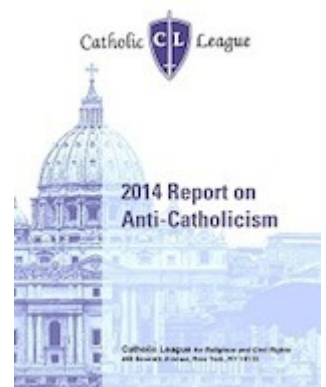
Here is what the Valencia, California law firm of Owen, Patterson and Owen said when Fr. Domhoff was charged: “Our client is willing to share details of his abuse with the press in order to encourage other victims to come forward.” Attorney Gregory Owen added, “These monsters must be found and punished.” The law firm asked other alleged victims to contact them, not the police.

As it turns out, the monsters who should be punished are these lawyers. The Archdiocese of Louisville contacted the accuser asking him to provide the details that his lawyers promised, and neither he nor his attorneys provided a scintilla of evidence.

THE ARTS

May 15

New York, NY – Sotheby’s auctioned the Andres Serrano masterpiece “Piss Christ.” The taxpayers were forced to fund this “art” in 1987 to the tune of \$15,000; it was supported by the National Endowment for the Arts. “Piss Christ” is Serrano’s primary contribution to Western Civilization: he urinated in a jar



with a crucifix in it.

Sotheby's was a perfect place to auction "Piss Christ." In 2005, a print garnered \$42,000. In 2009, it netted \$146,500. Another print went for \$50,000 in 2011. The print that was recently auctioned was sold for \$185,000. Christie's sold one for \$105,000 in 2000, and in 2011 another went for \$314,500.

June 13

Brooklyn, NY – The Palisades art gallery held a one-night exhibition, "The Passion of Kim Kardashian." The collection by artist Hannah Kunkle included 10 photoshopped images of the TV star depicted as various religious figures including Jesus, nuns and the Virgin Mary. In one image Kunkle imposed Kardashian onto a cross with a crown of thorns.

When asked about the exhibition, Kunkle said "religious idols are so beautiful to me, so I wanted to make my own that apply to me. Those images are so powerful it gives power to the idea of worshipping [Kardashian]." A spokesperson for Kardashian denied that the actress had any knowledge of the exhibition.

July 10 – August 23

New York, NY – Bruce LaBruce, a Canadian writer and filmmaker known for his films with gay pornographic themes opened a new art exhibit at The Hole NYC, a private gallery known for its edgy exhibits. The show, titled "Obscenity," consisted of 22 images featuring a black priest and a white nun, many of the images showing them together in sexual positions, in various stages of undress.

The exhibit will also promote LaBruce's limited edition perfume by the same name. The cap of the perfume bottle features a naked nun kneeling on a Communion wafer on a man's tongue. "Putting the body of Christ on the tongue has always had a sexual or sensual connotation" LaBruce said.

August 1 – 31

Los Angeles, CA – The La Luz de Jesus Gallery hosted an

exhibition titled “Profanity Pop” by Jose Rodolfo Loaiza Ontiveros. The exhibit depicts Disney characters mocking traditional Catholic iconography. One image titled “Saint Daisy and her pregnancy” shows Daisy Duck dressed as the Blessed Mother holding a pregnancy test. In another image a character is shown with the Veil of Veronica depicting Mickey Mouse, and a third has Donald Duck prodding the wounds of a pierced Mickey. Other images show Pope Francis presiding over a wedding of two male princes as well as one of Jessica Rabbit receiving Communion.

August 4 – 30

New York, NY – A new play, “Doubtless,” by Albert Innaurato was performed off-Broadway. It would have been easy to ignore—it played at a theatre with 98 seats—if not for Innaurato’s solid credentials as a playwright.

The new play was a rip-off of the John Patrick Shanley play, “Doubt.” That play, which ran between 2004 and 2006, was adapted for the screen, starring Meryl Streep. It featured a controversial priest and a reverent nun (played by Streep). Because there was nothing anti-Catholic about it, we never addressed it. But “Doubtless,” which pointedly attacks “Doubt,” goes out of its way to offend.

The audience was introduced to sexually-romping priests, an Opus Dei orgy, foul-mouthed nuns, sisters who get it on, and a vampire played by Jesus. Though the play was panned by critics, the open-minded folks at the *New York Times* did so because of its artistic weaknesses, not its bigotry. “Her [a nun’s] vulgar language is fine, really. It’s the rant-ing she’d do better to stop,” said Laura Collins-Hughes.

September 9 – January 9, 2015

Berkeley, CA – Artist Alma Lopez, best known for her 1999 work depicting the Virgin of Guadalupe partially nude, opened an exhibition at the Doug Adams Gallery on the campus of the Pacific School of Religion, a theological school known for its

embrace of gay and transgendered persons. In Lopez' new show, "Queer Santas: Holy Violence" she depicts Catholic saints as gay, lesbian and transgendered.

The female saints appear in her works with beards, buzz cuts, their breasts obscured, and wearing tank tops and jeans. Lopez compares the struggle of the early Catholic martyrs to modern gay people. "I think many of us would refuse to submit to something that we do not believe in, especially when it has something to do with identity. In our community, we do endure so much because we believe in certain things and we know ourselves. So I wanted the Queer Santas to stand for that and start a discussion of how much we endure to be who we are and love who we want to love."

Justin Tanis, a teacher at the theological school, took particular note of Lopez' painting of St. Liberata, a 6th century martyr who was crucified for her faith. "All of these saints are women who took their own agency and stepped outside gender norms," said Tanis. "In that sense they were queer and violence was done to them for it."

December 5

Washington, DC – A new exhibit, "Picturing Mary" opened at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. The exhibition offered a reverential treatment of the Blessed Mother, however Washington Post art critic Philip Kennicott was not satisfied.

In his *Washington Post* article, Kennicott blasted the museum for not including Chris Ofili's "The Holy Virgin Mary" in the exhibit. That piece was unfurled at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1999: a portrait of the Virgin Mary was laden with elephant dung. Kennicott calls it "perhaps the most famous image of Mary painted in the last quarter century."

Kennicott slammed the Washington museum for promoting "the dogmatic tradition of Catholicism rather than its rich, exuberant and open intellectual tradition." In essence, art is

enriched when it defiles Catholicism.

This ad appeared on the op-ed page of the March 3, 2014
edition of the *New York Times*.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY HOLY FATHER

On March 13, you will celebrate your first anniversary as the leader of the Catholic Church. On the plus side, you have confounded the usual critics of the Church. On the negative side, some of your new fans are distorting your words, making it appear that you agree with their ideological agenda.



When you were first nominated as *Time's* "Person of the Year," it was due to your alleged "rejection of church dogma." Your interview with an Italian atheist led him to conclude that you had "abolished sin." Both attributions are absurd, but they reveal the politics that are in play.

You are constantly being quoted as saying about gays, "Who am I to judge?" What you actually said is much different: "If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?"

Your comments on poverty and inequality have never been more urgent: more Americans are on food stamps than ever before and inequality is growing. To help the needy, you say, our efforts "must be person to person, in the flesh." Regrettably, current policies are actually punishing the poor.

Your call for Catholics to defend religious liberty is being put to the test by an administration that seeks to crush the Little Sisters of the Poor, forcing them to pay for abortion-inducing drugs. To say they do not qualify for a religious exemption because they serve non-Catholics is perverse: we should celebrate their inclusive approach, not condemn them for it.

We are delighted that you are winning new converts. Hopefully, they will take a serious second look at the Church's teachings, and join with us in the defense of its indispensable moral voice.

Bill Donohue
President



CATHOLIC LEAGUE for Religious and Civil Rights

450 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10123

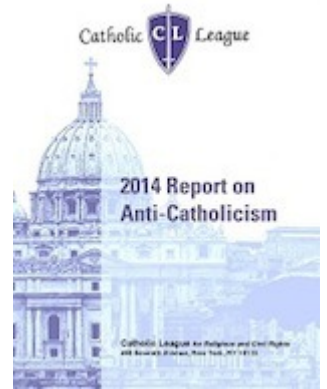
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BUSINESS/WORKPLACE

April 20

Seattle, WA – A local restaurant, Lunch Laboratory, created an advertising campaign that showed Jesus smoking marijuana and eating a cheeseburger. The advertisement read, “Buy One Burger of the Gods & Get the 2nd One Free! On Easter Sunday.” A thought bubble above Jesus’ head read “When I get back, all I want is the Burger of the Gods.” There is a menu item named “Burger of the Gods.”



July 28

Tide released a new commercial for their detergent titled “Dirty Little Habit” featuring a nun in a convent. The nun in full habit says “I’ve had a dirty little habit for years. I didn’t even know it was dirty, it didn’t look dirty, although it did start to smell a little funny.”

The nun is shown standing by herself. Other nuns in full habit walk away from her. The nun says it was not her habit that was dirty, but “the machine, it was filthy.” She says “I was a dirty little washer.” At this point the nun is shown looking towards the sky and a sound effect implies that she receives some kind of divine intervention/inspiration.

The nun then talks about Tide detergent and says she uses it monthly to “smell divine.” Then she is shown playing croquet and interacting with the other nuns.

October 29 – November 3

A few days before Halloween, Walmart, in deference to plus-size women, decided to pull a line of “Fat Girl Costumes.”

That inspired us to see how the store treated Catholics. Here is a list of the Catholic costumes made available by Walmart:

Jesus; Joseph; Mary; Virgin Mary; Monk; Cardinal; Priest; Nun; Saint; Joan of Arc; Pope; Angel; Adult Confessional; Adam and Eve; Catholic School; School Girl (the last two feature "Sexy Miss Prep School Girl" costumes).

Most of these costumes, we determined, were not in bad taste. There were three, however, that crossed the line: "Scary Mary Adult Halloween Costume" came with a mask of Our Blessed Mother showing blood dripping from her eyes; "Adult Evil Religious Nun Scary Men's Halloween Costume" showed a nun in habit wearing a mask with a skeleton's face; and, "Adult Confessional Costume" featured a priest with a mock confessional unit over his head extending to his waist (his face was shown in the middle of the confessional box).

Not wanting to be hypersensitive, we asked Walmart to pull the three offensive costumes, not registering an objection about the others. At first, we got nowhere. But we persisted, making the case that Walmart had no problem pulling the "Fat Girl" wear, or apologizing to women who were offended. We also noted that the few Jewish costumes were inoffensive, and there were no Muslim outfits.

On Halloween, we received notice that Walmart was going to pull the three costumes in question, though by the weekend it had yet to do so. When we returned to work on November 3, they were gone. It is safe to say they will not be reordered for next Halloween.

Here is what Walmart said about the offensive Catholic outfits: "This never should have been on our site. It is unacceptable, and we apologize. We have removed it and ensure this never happens again."

November 17

Orange City, FL – A 70-year old man went to his Planet Fitness

gym wearing a T-shirt that said, "Abortion Kills a Person." Although he has worn the shirt many times before, this time he was told to leave. The next day he showed up wearing a shirt that read, "Pray to End Abortion." He was booted again.

Planet Fitness' mission statement says "We at Planet Fitness are here to provide a unique environment in which anyone—and we mean anyone—can be comfortable." The mission statement also says, "As we evolve and educate ourselves, we will seek to perfect this safe, energetic environment, where everyone feels accepted and respected."

A few weeks before this incident, Chris Rondeau, the CEO of Planet Fitness, was asked about bringing his franchise to Canada. "What's your culture like?" His response was precious: "Very strong. The 'judgment free zone' is really true to everyone's heart. That is the most important in my eyes because once you believe in it, you'll always do the right thing for the customer." Planet Fitness' mission statement and 'judgment free zone' did not apply when it came to the pro-life t-shirts.

December 10

Designer Tom Ford introduced a new piece to his jewelry line. Called "The Penis Necklace," the charm is a penis in the shape of a cross. It was available in three sizes.

POLITICS OF THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

The New York City St. Patrick's Day parade is as Catholic as it is Irish: it begins with a Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Over 200,000 march in the world's largest St. Patrick's Day parade, and they have been doing so every year since 1762. Those who truly believe in diversity and tolerance love the parade for what it is—a celebration of St. Patrick and Irish heritage. That some want to deny Irish Catholics their constitutional rights, when no one is stopping them from having their own parade, is a sad commentary on the state of

our culture.

On June 19, 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 9-0 that Boston's St. Patrick's Day parade was a privately run operation that could write its own rules for participation. Writing for the high court, Justice David Souter noted that gays and lesbians had never been barred from marching in the parade; they were banned from marching under their own banners. The court's unanimous ruling was a victory for the First Amendment right to freedom of assembly.

Once this decision was reached, gay and lesbian groups in many cities, including New York, were angry, and some tried, unsuccessfully, to march without a permit on the same day as the big parade. The protests quickly fizzled: only a very small contingent of gays and lesbians showed up in subsequent years. In 2014 the fight was rekindled, thanks to New York Mayor Bill de Blasio: he did not march in the parade because gays and lesbians couldn't march under their own banner. Other public officials followed suit.

It must be noted that the organizers of the parade, the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, did not allow pro-life Catholics to march under their own banners. Nor were NRA Catholics allowed. But just as gays could march, so could proliferators and NRA members: they simply must blend in like everyone else. No one feels victimized save for homosexuals.

Besides the huge march up Fifth Avenue, there are also many local St. Patrick's Day parades; they are usually held on the weekends prior to the big one. On March 2, Mayor de Blasio marched in the Sunnyside, Queens "St. Pat's for All" parade, organized by gay Catholics. He looked lovely with his arm around Pandora Panti Bliss, an Irish drag queen. In one sense, this was a plus: it showed exactly what the goal of these gay activists is. They do not want to honor St. Patrick—they want to draw attention to themselves.

Mayor de Blasio looked even more foolish when his spokesman said the reason his boss would not march in the St. Patrick's Day parade in the Rockaways, also in Queens, held the day before the Sunnyside one, was because gays were banned from marching in their own unit. This was false—they can. For the same reason, the mayor also didn't march in the parade held on Staten Island, though the ban on a separate gay contingent didn't stop him from marching as a public official before he became mayor.

Adding to de Blasio's confused approach to the St. Patrick's Day parade was his decision to cancel the annual breakfast at Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence. Bill Donohue publicly accused the mayor of not wanting to associate with Irish Catholics; apparently such criticism had an effect because the breakfast was later reinstated.

What was particularly disturbing about this contrived controversy is the reaction of gay activists and public officials. The Stonewall Democrats accused the parade of "breathing hate." The following levied the charge "bigoted" at the parade: City Councilman Daniel Patrick Dromm; Irish Queers; the Irish Independent; and Denis Hamill of the *Daily News*. Moreover, dozens of New York notables signed a statement accusing the parade of discrimination.

People such as Brendan Fay, an Irish gay activist, Niall O'Dowd of Irish Central, and even Father Brian Jordan OFM, proposed various "solutions" and attempts to "mediate" this issue. But there was nothing to solve: they lost. They lost in the U.S. Supreme Court, and in the court of public opinion. Quite frankly, there was nothing to mediate with those who are bent on crashing the parade. If there is any doubt about this, consider that the organizers of the Boston St. Patrick's Day parade approved a bid for what they thought was a gay veterans' group, but had to rescind their invitation after they found out they were lied to: it was not a legitimate veterans group, and the marchers intended to wear gay T-

shirts.

On the evening of March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day, Guinness announced that it was pulling its sponsorship of New York's parade because gays were allegedly banned from marching. Heineken also pulled their sponsorship of New York's St. Patrick's Day parade; the Boston Beer Company, maker of Sam Adams, withdrew its sponsorship of Boston's St. Patrick's Day parade, though the latter two did so further in advance.

This 11th hour decision, which angered pub owners who had already stocked their bars with Guinness, was based on a lie: contrary to what Guinness said, gays had never been banned from the parade; they simply could not march under their own banner. The timing, the reason given, and the punitive response, explains why the Catholic League called for a boycott of Guinness.

In just the first week alone, 82 media outlets reported on our boycott of Guinness. From Australia and England, to Canada and the United States, the boycott story was picked up by TV, radio, newspapers, and the Internet. And that was just the beginning.

We heard from bishops in Peru, cardinals in Rome, pub owners in cities across the nation, chapters of the Knights of Columbus, men and women from many ethnic and religious groups—they had it with the corporate bullies at Guinness.

The Catholic League also launched a petition on our website, and printed a copy of the petition in the *May Catalyst*. The petition read:

Gays have never been barred from marching in any St. Patrick's Day parade—they simply cannot march under their own banner. Neither can pro-life Catholics. The message of the St. Patrick's Day parade is simple: it is to honor St. Patrick. It is not about any other cause. That's why we have parades that celebrate other causes: it's called respect for diversity.

In 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 9-0 to sustain the right of private parade organizers to determine their own rules for participation. If this ruling were otherwise, then groups that seek to veto the message of any parade would be allowed to march, thus undercutting the purpose of the parade. This would effectively kill freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

Guinness is showing its disrespect for diversity, its support for intolerance, and its contempt for the First Amendment rights of everyone associated with the St. Patrick's Day parade. Make no mistake about it, Guinness chose to boycott this parade because of its quintessentially Catholic nature: radicals who hate the moral teachings of the Catholic Church fingered this parade because of its religious significance.

If Guinness reinstates its sponsorship of New York's St. Patrick's Day parade, this campaign will end. Until it does, I support the Catholic League's boycott of Guinness.

Bill Donohue sent a letter to three top officials at Diageo-Guinness in Norwalk, Connecticut, and three others in London, England. In the letter, Donohue outlined how "The decision to withdraw sponsorship of New York's St. Patrick's Day parade is not being welcomed by Catholics, especially Irish Catholics; we are also impressed by the number of non-Catholics who have expressed their support for our boycott." Donohue also placed an emphasis on how there were no new rules implemented this year that made the parade differ from parades that occurred in the past.

The Catholic League contacted over 300 divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, 7000 members of the Knights of Columbus from 1500 councils across all 50 states, over 200 beer distributors, all 14 regional offices of the Holy Name Society, as well as over 100 of its officers. Additionally, we reached out to 175 Catholic War Veterans posts across the country, and over 1800 pub owners from all across the country. Each group was informed about the boycott and asked to join.

After 3 months the Catholic League conducted an online survey of pub owners in several cities and the results were as follows:

- 75 reported a decrease in sales
- 24 reported no difference in sales
- 4 reported an increase in sales

From what we were able to determine, it appeared that the decrease in sales was due to three factors: (a) there is a drop off in sales following St. Patrick's Day (b) the increase in the sales of craft beers is hurting Guinness and (c) the boycott worked. Here is a sample of the responses:

- "April-May 2014: We sold 1,030 pints; April-May 2013: We sold 1,245 pints"
- "I have switched to other stouts"
- "Holding back on buying Guinness"
- "Our sales are down 3-4%"
- "I was gonna pull Guinness but instead I put Murphy's in beside it"
- "I own 12 bars in Manhattan and I will let you know that we are disgusted with Guinness"
- "My Guinness sales have declined by about 40%"
- "I sold my stock in Diageo when I first heard the news"

We notified officials at Diageo, the owner of Guinness, of our results. We also sent them the thousands of names of those who signed our petition.

In September the decision by the organizers of New York City's St. Patrick's Day Parade to allow an NBC gay group to march in the 2015 parade was announced.

Prior to the announcement that a gay group would march under its own banner in the 2015 parade, Donohue was consulted by parade organizers about their plans and told them that he could only support this decision if there were a formal revision in the parade's rules governing marching units, and

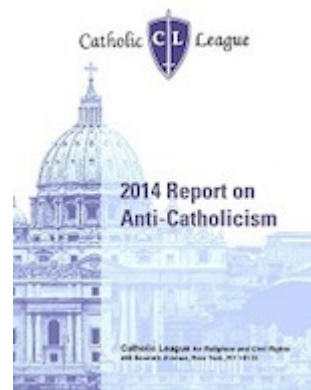
that is exactly what he said in his first public statement about the decision. To be specific, he asked them to pledge that a pro-life Catholic group would also be permitted and was told that a formal change in the rules had been approved and that a pro-life group would march. After the gay group was announced he was told that the list of marching units was set and that no pro-life group would march in the 2015 parade. Accordingly, Donohue decided to withdraw the Catholic League's participation.

The Catholic League, which has marched in New York City's St. Patrick's Day Parade for 20 years, will not do so in 2015.

EDUCATION

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Milwaukee, WI – During an "anti-harassment" training

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Marks responded that Sutherland failed to submit club bylaws, and that the club did not "bear a clear relationship to the regular school curriculum." The Thomas More Society pointed out to Marks that the school had an equestrian club and a lacrosse club, among others, that were not related to the curriculum. At this point Marks again failed to approve the club, saying only that Sutherland needed to "fix things."

November 11

Montgomery, MD – After a Muslim group petitioned to have their holidays included on the calendar of the Montgomery County Public School District, the county's Board of Education voted to remove all religious references from the calendar. Holidays for Christmas, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, and Easter were removed. While the schools remained closed on those days, it was for administrative reasons due to high absentee rates. Even the Muslim group protested this decision as it was not a solution to their request.

December 5

Milwaukee, WI – During an "anti-harassment" training presentation at Marquette University, employees were told that merely voicing objections to gay marriage may be considered discriminatory; they were urged to report such offenses.

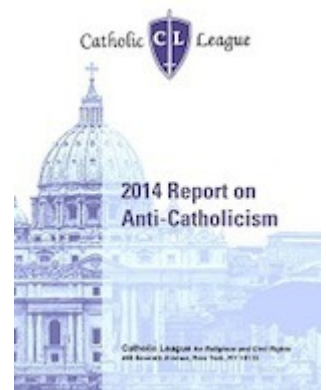
December 15

Phoenix, AZ – A lecturer at Arizona State University mocked Jesus and creationism while teaching a biology course. The teacher, Christofer Bang, showed a slide featuring two illustrations. One showed Charles Darwin and the words “genetics,” “adaption,” and “natural selection” along with ape-like creatures evolving into a man. The second illustration showed a caricature of Jesus creating a man with a lightning bolt and the words “zap” and “magic.”

GOVERNMENT

January 16 – September 26

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child released a report on how the Vatican has responded to the sexual abuse of minors by priests. The 15-page report did not contain a single footnote, endnote, or any other mode of attribution. But it did provide plenty of evidence as to its real agenda.



The United Nations panel used the sexual abuse of minors as a pretext for its true objective: it wanted the Vatican to submit to its authority, and not just in instances involving international law – it wanted the Catholic Church to change Canon Law and to adopt a secular sexual ethics.

On page 3 of the report, the panel said the Holy See should “undertake the necessary steps to withdraw all its reservations and to ensure the [United Nations] Convention’s precedence over internal laws and regulations.” It was quite explicit: “The Committee recommends that the Holy See undertake a comprehensive review of its normative framework,

in particular Canon Law, with a view to ensuring its full compliance with the Convention.”

The panel said it wanted the Catholic Church to change its teachings on abortion and contraception; it also said the Church needed to do more about HIV/AIDS. The panel was so intent on policing the Church that it demanded a Canon Law change in the use of the term “illegitimate children.” It also directed the Vatican to order Catholic schools to change their textbooks, getting rid of alleged “gender stereotypes.” Not only was this another example of its abuse of power, the panel provided not a single piece of evidence to buttress its claim.

Finally, the report said the Church needed to end the practice of “baby boxes.” In many countries, there are drop boxes next to orphanages; they are placed there to entice girls who are pregnant out of wedlock, and who cannot care for their babies, to allow others to raise their child. It is a humane practice, one that is widely practiced in South Korea. What is not humane is to kill babies *in utero*, which is precisely what this U.N. panel recommended.

This report came after a January 16th meeting where the U.N. panel that probed the Holy See was composed of 18 “independent experts,” from as many nations. Many of the “experts” on human rights come from nations that are known for oppression, not liberty. Just days before the hearing, the Pew Research Center released a report on religious oppression worldwide. Nations with “experts” on the U.N. panel that earned a “High” rating were Bahrain, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and Tunisia. Even worse are those nations that merited a “Very High” rating: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Malaysia. Freedom House listed Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Ethiopia as among the most oppressive places on earth. Open Doors listed the same nations as the Pew study (save for Russia) in its top 50 nations known for persecuting Christians.

On September 26, the Holy See took this U.N. committee to task

on three levels in its formal response to the U.N.'s report: the international body does not understand the reach of the Holy See's authority; it unjustly involved itself in Canon Law; and it advanced positions on parental rights and sexuality that are unacceptable.

The U.N. committee does not understand the difference between the Holy See, the Vatican City State and the universal Catholic Church. While the Holy See's "religious and moral mission" is universal, it is a mistake of monumental proportions to conclude that it therefore has universal juridical authority. It is important to recognize that "the Holy See does not ratify a treaty on behalf of every Catholic in the world, and therefore, does not have obligations to 'implement' the Convention within the territories of other States Parties on behalf of Catholics, no matter how they are organized."

The Holy See criticized this U.N. body for the way it "plunged into canon law," improperly equating this juridical system with that of other member States. Importantly, it emphasized that Canon Law is a "complex unity of divine positive law, divine natural law and human law."

On the issue of parental rights, the Holy See took the U.N. committee to task for disregarding the text of the U.N.'s Convention: the text affirms parental rights, yet the committee holds that the U.N. has a right to instruct member states on "sexual and reproductive health" issues. In effect, it is telling the Catholic Church to change its teaching on abortion. And by lecturing the Church to align itself with contemporary "gender" issues, and matters of sexual orientation, it is also showing its contempt for the Church's autonomy.

In short, those who wrote the U.N.'s report on the Holy See haven't a clue how the Catholic Church operates. Moreover, they unjustly injected themselves into the internal affairs of

the Church.

January 17

In a radio interview, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo was speaking about New York Republicans who voted against the SAFE Act, a gun control law. Here is what he said: “Their problem is not me and the Democrats; their problem is themselves. Who are they? Are they these extreme conservatives who are right-to-life, pro-assault weapons, anti-gay? Is that who they are? Because if that’s who they are and they’re the extreme conservatives, they have no place in the state of New York, because that’s not who New Yorkers are.”

After Timothy Cardinal Dolan, the Archbishop of New York, criticized Gov. Cuomo, the governor’s spokesman complained that Gov. Cuomo’s comments had been “repeatedly taken out of context—what he actually said was that the state is a moderate political state with all views welcome.”

The defense offered by Governor Cuomo’s spokesman was stunning. Not only is New York one of the most liberal states in the nation, more important, Cuomo manifestly did not say that the Empire state is a place where “all views [are] welcome.” He expressly said that those who disagree with his policies on abortion, gun control, and marriage, “have no place in the state of New York, because that’s not who New Yorkers are.”

January 23

New York, NY – New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio defended the comments made by Governor Andrew Cuomo that “extreme conservatives ... have no place in the state of New York, because that’s not who New Yorkers are.” De Blasio said he agreed with Cuomo’s comments “100 percent.” He explained, “I interpret his [Cuomo’s] remarks to say that an extremist attitude that continues the reality of violence in our communities or an extremist attitude that denies the rights of women, does not represent the views of the people of New York

State.”

January 24

The U.S. Supreme Court put the brakes on the infamous Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate that would force Catholic non-profits, and objecting private businessmen, to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception, and sterilization.

On January 24, the Supreme Court issued an injunction blocking enforcement of the HHS mandate. It affirmed Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s New Year’s Eve order in the case; she acted on an appeal from the Little Sisters of the Poor to stop enforcement of the edict. The issue was decided on procedural grounds. The high court enjoined the Obama administration from enforcing the mandate on the Sisters while the case is pending before the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

What is significant about this ruling is that it weakened the administration’s argument that it was accommodating Catholic non-profits by allowing the Little Sisters to designate a third-party administrator to provide for these morally objectionable services.

The legal battle continued throughout the year, and at year-end had not yet been decided.

February 4

New York, NY – New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that he was boycotting the city’s St. Patrick’s Day parade over the organizer’s policy prohibiting pro-gay signage. However, the parade does not allow pro-life signs, or any other signs either. Several other elected officials also announced their intention to boycott the parade, and went further by calling on the mayor to ban city workers from marching. The mayor did not accede to that request.

March

Former President Jimmy Carter made the rounds to promote his new book, championing women’s rights and criticizing the

Catholic Church. On March 22 NPR flagged this comment by Carter:

“The fact that the Catholic Church, for instance, prohibits women from serving as priests or even deacons gives a kind of a permission to male people all over the world, that well, if God thinks that women are inferior, I’ll treat them as inferiors. If she is my wife, I can abuse her with impunity, or if I’m an employer, I can pay female employees less salary.”

Carter said practically the same thing on PBS’ “Charlie Rose” and on MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” on March 24.

According to Carter’s logic, the Catholic Church is responsible for women being abused across the globe because it doesn’t ordain women. Carter has his own baggage when it comes to women’s rights. He is therefore not in a position to lecture the Catholic Church about its Scripture-based teaching on ordination.

March 5

Queens, NY – On Ash Wednesday the new Queens Borough President, Melinda Katz, ended a decades-long tradition by kicking out a jail chaplain who distributed ashes to municipal employees. Katz claimed the tradition violated separation of church and state. Bill Donohue responded that this was not a question of constitutionality, and that the controversy was wholly of Katz’s creation.

April 3

Cocoa Beach, FL – The U.S. Air Force removed a symbolic “Missing Man Table” from a dining facility at Patrick Air Force Base. These tables honor soldiers who are missing or who have not returned from combat. It was removed because a Bible was included in the traditional display along with a plate, glass, yellow ribbon and a red rose. According to the base, “the Bible’s presence or absence on the table...ignited

controversy and division.” After receiving complaints about the removal of the display, officials promised to return the “Missing Man Table.” However, it was not disclosed whether or not the Bible would be included in the new display.

April 29 – June 20

Honolulu, HI – The Hawaii State Legislature passed a bill, S.B. 2687, that would suspend the statute of limitations for lawsuits involving the sexual abuse of minors. As a result, lawsuits could be filed against individuals accused of abuse, or the organizations they were affiliated with, decades after the alleged abuse. While the bill on its face was not anti-Catholic, it was clear that those promoting it had an agenda that was heavily focused on the Catholic Church.

Bill Donohue wrote to Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie urging him to veto S.B. 2687. “There are fundamental due process reasons why statutes of limitation exist: memories fade, witnesses die, and determinations of the truth are compromised. The idea that cases can be fairly adjudicated when they extend back decades—even a half-century or more—is ludicrous,” Donohue’s letter said.

Unfortunately, Abercrombie signed the bill on June 20.

May

New York, NY – A new Comedy Central program, “TripTank,” began advertising in the city’s subway system. The advertisements featured a montage of animated images. One of the images depicted the Last Supper. The image itself was not offensive, and for that reason the Catholic League did not register a protest. However, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), which runs the city’s mass transit, had recently done away with its advertising standards. Under the previous rules the Last Supper image may not have been allowed.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo had filed a formal complaint with the MTA over a different advertisement less than a month

earlier. Cuomo was objecting to an ad for breast augmentation which featured an image of a busty woman. While the MTA's lack of advertising standards allowed both ads to be published, Cuomo protested the breast augmentation ad but raised no objection to the one featuring the Last Supper.

May 1

Secretary of State John Kerry congratulated the U.S. Embassy staff in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for promoting "a universal message about the rights of people to be free, about democracy, about the ability of people to be able to choose their government and not be oppressed when they speak out or say something." He should have stopped there. Here is what he said next:

"This is a time here in Africa where there are a number of different cross-currents of modernity that are coming together to make things even more challenging. Some people believe that people ought to be able to only do what they say they ought to do, or to believe what they say they ought to believe, or to live by their interpretation of something that was written down a thousand plus, two thousand years ago. That's not the way I think most people want to live."

The Ten Commandments are the moral edifice upon which Western civilization was built. It makes absolute prohibitions on a range of issues. Was Secretary Kerry aiming his remarks at the Ten Commandments? Or was he taking issue with the teachings of Jesus as found in the New Testament? Or were his remarks targeted at the Koran, the religious text of Islam?

We not only contacted the State Department asking Secretary Kerry to explain himself, we listed the email address of the organization's press secretary so our people could communicate with her. They did—big time. Indeed, the press secretary called our office twice to complain.

Finally, Kerry issued a limp excuse that no one believed. We

told the media we weren't buying it. We are confident, however, that our message was delivered.

May 15 – 23

On May 15, Bill Donohue lodged a formal complaint with Ms. Navanethem Pillay, High Commissioner for the Human Rights Office of the U.N. in Geneva, Switzerland.

Donohue charged that Felice Gaer, Vice–Chairperson of the Committee Against Torture, had compromised her objectivity and thus had no legitimate role to play in policing the policies of U.N. member states, or states that have been awarded a Permanent Observer status.

He specifically charged Gaer with violating two sets of U.N. strictures governing the objectivity of committee members: the “Guidelines On the Independence and Impartiality of Members of the Human Rights Treaty Bodies,” and the “Existing Rules and Regulations on Enhancing and Strengthening the Expertise and Independence of Treaty Body Members.”

Both of these documents demand that U.N. committee members show independence and impartiality. “Any reasonable observer would conclude,” Donohue said, “that Felice Gaer has violated these ‘Guidelines’ and ‘Rules’ by openly taking her directives from the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR), an organization whose animus against the Catholic Church’s teachings on sexuality is palpable. If CRR were just another abortion-rights entity, I would not be lodging a complaint. But its attack on Roman Catholicism is visceral.”

Donohue cited a 2000 CRR report, “The Holy See at the United Nations: An Obstacle to Women’s Reproductive Health,” that seriously crossed the line: it concluded that “the Holy See uses its status at the UN [sic] to obstruct the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women throughout the world.”

Donohue noted that Ms. Gaer’s relationship with CRR has been incestuous and that she has taken more than talking points

from it—she cites its reports verbatim in her official U.N. capacity. He provided several examples. He also focused on her violation of the U.N. Charter. He demonstrated how Gaer abused her authority by challenging the autonomy of the Holy See: She wants to force the Catholic Church to change its teachings on sexuality.

“If it were reversed,” Donohue said, “if the Holy See demanded that U.N. member states align its position on abortion with the teachings of the Catholic Catechism—howls of protest would be heard worldwide. It is just as outrageous when a U.N. committee member instructs the Holy See to get in line with her secular beliefs.”

Donohue also said that the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which issued a report in February, had violated its authority when it told the Holy See that it had to change Canon Law on abortion.

When the Committee Against Torture issued its report on May 23, it made no mention of abortion, Canon Law, or any Church teaching on sexuality, yet these subjects were grist for attacks on Church officials during the hearings. Which raises the question: Why, then, was committee member Felice Gaer allowed to conduct what amounted to, at times, a show trial? If none of her highly politicized remarks were even tangentially addressed by the report, it calls into question her continued service to this committee.

[To read Donohue's letter in its entirety, click here.](#)

June 30

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores* was a smashing victory for religious liberty.

The *Hobby Lobby* ruling has important implications. It recognized, for the first time, that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) applies to “closely held” businesses, or corporations owned by a few people. This law prohibits the

federal government from any action that substantially burdens the exercise of religion, unless that action is the least restrictive way of serving a compelling government interest.

Practically speaking, the ruling's effect is limited on private sector employers. The vast majority of Americans work for companies that already provide for most forms of contraceptive coverage, including abortifacients. Politically speaking however, the ruling's effect was dramatic: it sent an unmistakable message to the Obama administration that it could not continue to run roughshod over the religious liberty rights of Americans.

This decision did not resolve the question of Catholic non-profits. Most of the Catholic non-profits have won in the lower courts, but they have lost some cases, too. The good news is that the *Hobby Lobby* case bodes well: if for-profit family-run businesses cannot be forced to pay for abortifacients, then it is highly unlikely that Catholic schools, hospitals, and social service agencies will be forced to cover them.

July 7

Baton Rouge, LA – The Louisiana State Supreme Court ruled that a priest may be compelled to testify as to whether Confessions took place, and if so, what the contents of any such Confessions were.

At issue was a woman who alleged that in 2008, when she was fourteen-years-old, she told her parish priest that she was being abused by a now-deceased lay member of their parish. The girl alleged the disclosures came during the Sacrament of Confession. As a result her parents are suing the priest, Father Jeff Bayhi, and the Diocese of Baton Rouge, for failing to report the alleged abuse.

Bill Donohue responded to the decision in the following way:

“Confession is one of the most sacred rites in the Church. The

Sacrament is based on a belief that the seal of the confessional is absolute and inviolable. A priest is never permitted to disclose the contents of any Confession, or even allowed to disclose that an individual did seek the Sacrament. A priest who violates that seal suffers automatic excommunication from the Church.

As a result of this ruling Fr. Bayhi may now have to choose between violating his sacred duty as a priest and being excommunicated from the Church, or refusing to testify and risk going to prison. The Diocese said Fr. Bayhi would not testify.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the free exercise of religion. Just as government cannot compel anyone to follow a particular religion, it likewise cannot prevent anyone from exercising the tenets of his faith. By deciding that Fr. Bayhi must choose between his faith and his freedom, the Louisiana Supreme Court has endangered the religious liberty of all Americans."

In September the Diocese of Baton Rouge filed a lawsuit challenging this decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Catholic League joined the amicus curiae brief prepared by Catholic Action for Faith and Family that seeks to protect the seal of Confession.

At issue is whether the courts can determine what is a valid religious practice. Catholics hold that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is contingent on absolute confidentiality and that the seal of Confession cannot be compromised.

What is pernicious about this case is the Louisiana Supreme Court's decision that a priest's mandatory reporting obligation may turn not on what the Catholic Church teaches, but on what a jury may decide. In other words, what is at stake is whether the state, via an empanelled jury, can rule on which religious beliefs and practices qualify for

constitutional protection.

July 16

A vote was taken in the Senate and the Protect Women's Health from Corporate Interference Act failed to achieve the 60 votes necessary to advance. This bill was supported by Senate Democrats in response to the Supreme Court's ruling in the *Hobby Lobby* case. They plotted to gut the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), upon which the *Hobby Lobby* case was based.

RFRA was passed by an almost unanimous decision in 1993, and was signed by President Clinton. The sponsors of this new bill said they were not taking aim at RFRA, but in fact they were: it was a stop-gap measure designed to cripple RFRA. Rep. Diana DeGette, a co-author of the House version of this law, stated that this bill was "an interim solution"; she pledged to then "look at broader issues, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act."

This bill was a deliberate attempt to circumvent the will of the Congress, as expressed in RFRA, and the Supreme Court's *Hobby Lobby* ruling. It was being done in the name of women's rights, but its real impulse was to privatize religious expression, relegating it to the margins of society. Moreover, this bill had nothing to do with contraception, per se: the *Hobby Lobby* decision was driven by the right of some private employers not to pay for abortion procedures. This bill would have forced all employers to pay for abortifacients, and ultimately all abortions.

This bill also sought to ratify the most odious elements of the Health and Human Services mandate: it wanted to redefine what constitutes a Catholic non-profit, effectively punishing Catholic social service agencies for not discriminating against non-Catholics.

July 21

President Obama issued an executive order implementing provisions of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). For 20 years, Congress failed to pass ENDA, suggesting that the legislation must be burdened with more than just a few controversial features.

The president not only issued an Executive Order imposing ENDA, he chose to sign that version of the bill which fails to grant a religious exemption; all he did was to preserve the limited religious exemption that was coined by the Bush administration. He explicitly rejected several proposals that would have insulated religious institutions from state overreach. This was critical because of what is at stake: ENDA applies to "sex, sexual orientation [and] gender identity"; as we have learned, this includes behavior, not simply status.

Earlier versions of this bill said that "This Act shall not apply to a religious organization," but in 2007 this exemption was made conditional. Obama cannot bring himself to exempt religious institutions whenever the issue touches on homosexuality. Which is why the bishops oppose ENDA.

July 31

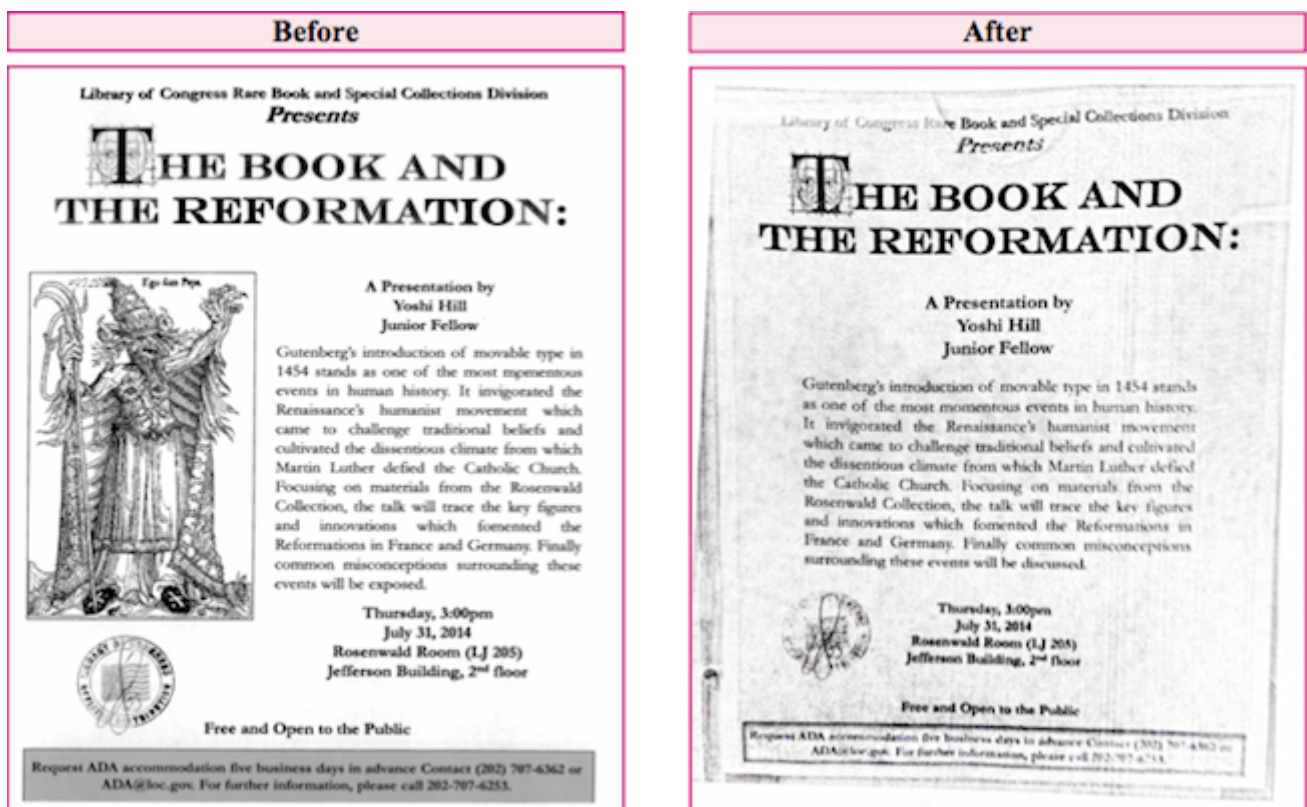
Washington, DC – The Library of Congress announced that it was offering a presentation titled "The Book and the Reformation" to be sponsored by the Rare Book and Special Collections Division.

We did not object to an event on the Reformation, but what caught our eye was the way that the Library of Congress was promoting it. To be specific, the flyer showed a drawing of the pope as Satan; an inscription above reads, "Ego sum Papa," or "I am the Pope."

The Catholic League issued a news release asking those on our email list to contact the communications director at the Library. The first reaction was defensive and sophomoric. We received a phone call from the chief of the Rare Books

Division saying he had been “inundated” with criticism by people who were upset with a “600-year-old image” that he said is not anti-Catholic. He failed to say why a drawing of the pope as Satan might not be seen as offensive.

The second reaction was more mature: the bigoted depiction of the pope as Satan was deleted, and a revised flyer was published. They could have saved themselves a lot of angst had they acted more responsibly in the first place.



After the Catholic League objected to an advertisement showing the pope as Satan, the Library of Congress revised the flyer and removed the image.

August 19

Albany, NY – An administrative law judge found that a Christian couple, Cynthia and Robert Gifford, violated the New York Human Rights Law by refusing to host a gay wedding at their family farm. The judge determined that because the Giffords rent their farm, where they also live, out to other couples for weddings, they could not deny a gay couple from renting the property for a same sex wedding. The Giffords had offered to host the reception for the gay couple but cited

their Christian beliefs in refusing to host the same sex wedding ceremony.

The Giffords were fined \$10,000 and ordered to pay an additional \$1500 each to the gay couple. They paid the fine while appealing the case.

August 22

California Governor Jerry Brown and his administration caved into requests from pro-abortion groups and reversed an earlier decision that allowed Santa Clara and Loyola Marymount universities to exclude coverage for "elective" abortions in their previously approved health insurance plans. Both schools are now being told to include coverage for all abortions.

"Abortion is a basic health care service" said the health department's director, Michelle Rouillard. She said the exemptions violated a 1975 state law that required health plans to cover all services that were "medically necessary." She did not say why electing to kill children *in utero* was "medically necessary."

As part of the exemption both schools had already agreed to cover abortions when they were needed to save the life of the mother, or prevent serious health damage. Loyola Marymount even allowed employees to pay extra if they wished to have "elective" abortions included in their health insurance plans as well. But this was not enough to satisfy abortion-rights zealots.

Both schools said they would comply with the directive while reviewing their legal options.

August 22

The Obama administration announced new revisions to its HHS mandate that requires Catholic institutions to pay for abortion-inducing drugs as part of their health plans. The federal government revealed that it considered these new rules as a "work around" for groups that objected to providing

coverage for sterilization, contraception and abortifacients. The new revisions allowed Catholic non-profits to distance themselves from the objectionable services, but they still fail to satisfy.

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), was likewise unsatisfied by the new rules. The archbishop noted that the new revisions still did not allow those who have “sincerely held religious objections to the mandate” to opt out. Furthermore, he noted that under the new regulations the “religious employer” exemption would not be broadened. The existing “accommodation” would only be modified. The Catholic League continued to support the USCCB’s request for a broad exemption for all religious employers.

The second problem with the updated requirements is even more serious. The federal government wants to reinterpret what constitutes a Catholic entity. The Obama administration continues to enforce the HHS mandate under the premise that a Catholic organization is not a Catholic organization in terms of exemptions if it hires and serves people who are not Catholic. That is the heart of the problem.

September 21

Oklahoma City, OK – A Satanic group rented a theatre space within the Oklahoma City Civic Center in order to stage a “Black Mass.” The Civic Center is funded by the taxpayers, many of whom are Catholic, and they are not obliged to pay for attacks on their religion. Moreover, there are strictures that must be respected. To be specific, performances at the Civic Center are not permitted if they violate “community standards,” including works that are “illegal, indecent, obscene, immoral or in any manner publicly offensive.” One does not have to be Catholic to know that if Catholics believe that a consecrated Host is considered sacrosanct, then public displays of desecration meet the criteria as outlined.

Citing the First Amendment, the Civic Center refused to cancel the event despite requests from Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley. The mayor's office received over 1000 complaints, many from those who receive the Catholic League's email updates. Archbishop Coakley organized a Holy Hour that was attended by over 1600 people. The "Black Mass" had only 48 attendees.

Note: See the activist section of this report for information about the group that sponsored this event.

October 7

Lexington, KY – The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission ruled that a T-shirt company, Hands on Originals, violated a local ordinance by refusing to make T-shirts for a gay pride festival. The owners of the company maintained that they do not make any T-shirts that contain messages that are contrary to their Christian faith.

In deciding the case, which was originally filed in 2012, in favor of the Gay and Lesbian Services Organization of Lexington, Human Rights Commission member Greg Munson determined that refusing to make the shirts "constitutes unlawful discrimination." As a result of the ruling Hands on Originals would not be able to turn down orders for any future gay pride festivals and would have to conduct diversity training for their 30 employees. The company appealed the ruling.

October 22 – November 4

Federal Way, WA – Shari Song, the Democratic candidate who ran for a state senate seat in the state of Washington, illustrated how she reacts to bigotry. The man she ran against, Mark Miloscia, was the victim of rank anti-Catholicism, and she took it in stride.

Mark Miloscia is a former Democratic state legislator in Washington who switched to the Republican party because of his

dismay with the way Democrats treat people of faith.

Some Democratic operatives tried to whip up anti-Catholicism by posting a doctored photo of Miloscia on a website: it showed him dressed as a bishop holding a rosary, including captions that depicted him as a stooge for the Vatican. The inscription alongside the doctored photo read as follows:

“Republican Mark Miloscia came from the Deep South...with plenty of baggage.

“‘Mississippi Mark’ has always worn his church on his sleeve. Rather than represent the people of Federal Way, he has best represented the people of The Vatican.”

Below this statement was a list of six positions attributed to him, including one that said, “*Lobbyist for the Catholic Church.*”

Instead of condemning this bigotry, the best Song could do was to say that the website was “a little bit misguided.” She literally defended those responsible for this anti-Catholic statement saying, “I don’t believe they are anti-Catholic or intended it to be that way.”

The anti-Catholic campaign waged against Miloscia failed; he was elected to the state senate seat in Washington that he was vying for.

October 30

Derry, NH – Ballot clerk Ruth Provencal was fired on October 30 by Renee Routhier, chairman of Derry’s Supervisors of the Checklist. Ms. Provencal was terminated for violating New Hampshire state law, RSA 659:44. The law reads as follows: “No election officer shall electioneer while in performance of his official duties. For the purposes of this section, ‘electioneer’ shall mean to act in any way specifically designed to influence the vote of a voter on any question or office. Any person who violates this provision shall be guilty

of a misdemeanor.”

Ms. Provencal, a practicing Catholic, was fired for saying “God bless you” to voters as they left the polls on primary day, September 9. She had also been known to say “God bless you” when a voter sneezed.

Bill Donohue wrote to New Hampshire Secretary of State William Garner to inquire what part of this law was violated by Ms. Provencal, whether any voter registered a complaint, and how her remark influenced the voter’s decision because Ms. Provencal made her allegedly offensive remark after voters had cast their ballot.

Donohue offered to print Ms. Routhier’s explanation in *Catalyst*. Garner responded that he was not aware of any “allegations regarding electioneering at a polling place at the 2014 state primary nor at the general election.” Garner also wrote “If I overheard an election official saying ‘God Bless You’ to voters as they left the polls, I wouldn’t consider it electioneering.” Ms. Provencal did not want to pursue the matter any further.

November 4

Swanton, OH – Bill Donohue wrote to U.S. Air Force Commander Colonel Craig Baker of the 180th Fighter Wing after an essay written by Col. Florencio Marquez was retracted from an Air National Guard newsletter because it violated military policy; alleged “sensitivities” were cited as triggering the decision.

Col. Marquez allegedly violated Air Force policy by including a tribute to his mother in the essay. As part of that tribute he discussed his mother’s faith and reliance on God, and how it affected his life.

It is simply incomprehensible to maintain that a tribute to one’s mother could in any way destroy the morale, order and discipline of the U.S. Air Force, or somehow manage to enervate the public’s trust and confidence in it. Col.

Marquinez was not using this forum to proselytize or to demean non-believers: he was simply explaining how his mother's trust in Jesus acted as a positive resource for him growing up in troubled times.

Shortly after this incident the Air Force published new rules on the religious rights of Airmen. The most invidious language of the old rules has been stricken, and a much more positive, pro-religious expression, policy was adopted.

November 20

Dahlonega, GA – An Army chaplain was punished for discussing matters of faith and quoting from the Bible during a suicide prevention training session with the 5th Ranger Training Battalion. Chaplain Joseph Lawhorn was issued a Letter of Correction for “using Christian scripture and solutions” during the session.

Lawhorn provided the participants with a two-sided handout that listed Army resources on one side and a religious approach to handling depression on the other. Lawhorn also explained his own struggles with depression and discussed how his faith helped him overcome them.

December 3

The Obama administration issued a new Department of Labor regulation that implements President Obama's Executive Order of July 21 prohibiting government contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. It cited the Catholic Catechism.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a statement responding to the regulation. The Catechism opposes all “unjust discrimination” against homosexuals, allowing for instances when drawing distinctions on the basis of sexual orientation accord with justice. It appears, the bishops indicate, that the Department of Labor regulation does not meet the test of justice.

The USCCB said that its early read on the regulation indicates that it prohibits “far more than that of ‘unjust discrimination.’” Furthermore, the executive order upon which it is based, the bishops said, was “objectionable.”

Referring to the regulations, the bishops said they appear “to prohibit employers’ religious and moral disapproval of same-sex conduct, which creates a serious threat to freedom of conscience and religious liberty, because ‘[u]nder no circumstances’ may Catholics approve of such conduct.”

December 5

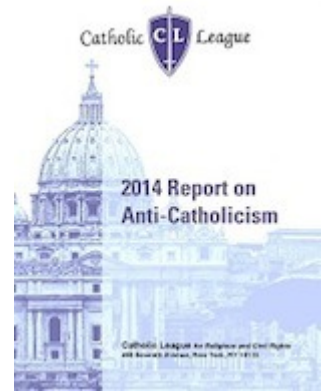
Washington, DC – The City Council voted to pass the D.C. Human Rights Act of 2014 which eliminated an exemption afforded to faith-based institutions protecting the ability to practice their beliefs on matters relating to homosexuals. Under the existing law, passed in the 1980s, faith based groups were protected from “granting of any endorsement, approval, or recognition, to any person or persons that are organized for, or engaged in, promoting, encouraging, or condoning any homosexual act.”

As a result of the new law Catholic schools may be required to hire openly gay teachers or recognize same-sex marriages.

MEDIA

February

The Academy Award nomination for Best Original Song was revoked from the film "Alone Yet Not Alone." The film and the song of the same title had a strong evangelical Christian theme, and the song was sung by a well known evangelical artist. The official reason for revoking the nomination for only the fourth time in the 86 year history of the Oscars was that the song's composer had violated the rules by lobbying committee members. Some of the people associated with the film pointed out that lobbying in favor of one's films is not at all uncommon, and speculated that the nomination was revoked because of its Christian theme.



May 26

After Pope Francis spent three historic days in the Middle East trying to bring Christians, Jews, and Muslims together, he fielded 11 questions on nine issues during the plane ride home. Two dealt with his trip: there was one question on Jewish-Muslim relations, and one on the status of Jerusalem. But there were three on sexual issues: priestly sexual abuse, celibacy, and divorced and remarried Catholics.

The media's coverage of the trip focused on the pope's remarks on the plane. On the "Today Show" the following morning, only two issues were discussed: sexual abuse and celibacy. In Nicole Winfield's AP story the night of the trip, about half the article was on sexual abuse; in the next day's version, this was the only issue covered. Almost all of CNN's coverage was on sexual abuse. John Allen of the *Boston Globe* covered many topics, but most of his reporting was on sexual abuse. The *Boston Herald* showed no interest in anything but sexual abuse.

In England, the *Guardian* only discussed sexual abuse and celibacy. Almost all the coverage by the BBC was on sexual abuse. This subject dominated the coverage in the *Daily Mail*.

There is no mystery here. The big media lean left, and what interests them is pressuring the Catholic Church to change its teachings on sexuality. Their obsession with priestly sexual abuse, which as a problem is mostly a non-starter these days, is a function of their desire to discredit the Church's moral authority.

May 29

The following is an excerpt from an article by Bill Donohue that was originally published by Newsmax. It cites two different stories where an anti-Catholic bias could be seen in how the media reported:

Every demographic group can cite instances of media bias against them, but no group is more unfairly covered, on a consistent basis, than Catholics. Here are some examples drawn from news stories published on May 29.

Whenever a Catholic does something good, such as a police officer or firefighter who risks his life for someone, his religion is never mentioned. Nor should it be. But when he does something bad, we all learn of his religious affiliation.

To wit: Lukas Iorio went on a drunken rampage on the Jersey Shore— he was arrested for carjacking, assault, burglary, driving under the influence, criminal mischief, and resisting arrest. Here is how the media played it:

- *“Former Bergen Catholic Wrestling Star Charged with Assault, Carjacking in Manasquan.” Star-Ledger*
- *“Ex-Bergen Catholic High School Wrestling Star Lukas Iorio Accused of Wild Rampage on Jersey Shore.” The Record*
- *“Former Bergen Catholic Wrestler Charged with Attacking 5 in Jersey Shore Rampage.” Cliffviewpilot.com*
- *“Manasquan Charges ex-Bergen Catholic Wrestler with Beach Carjacking, Wild Behavior.” Myfoxny.com*

All the italics were added. To its credit, CBS reported it

fairly: “New Jersey High School Wrestling Champ Accused in Bizarre Rampage.” It is not biased to mention in a news story that Iorio went to a Catholic school, but to put it in the headline is a different story.

“Female Catholic Priest Celebrates Mass at St. Francis House” was the headline in the *Columbian Missourian*. Of course, this never happened. What happened is that yet another woman – a senior citizen, of course – played make-believe and had herself “ordained.” The Harbor Country News ran a story billed as “Wife, Mother & Now Priest.”

MLive, a blog post, told readers, “Michigan’s First Woman Priest in Dissident Catholic Sect: ‘My Job is to Give Witness.’” At least it mentioned “dissident Catholic Sect.”

The *Columbian Missourian* not only ran the most dishonest headline, it ran a biased story. The caption to her photo began by saying, “Janice Sevre-Duszynska, a female priest, led a mass at St. Francis House.”

The first paragraph of the story said: “In the middle of a living room, a table is set like an altar, with wine and bread prepared for Holy Communion. At the head is a priest dressed in a black shirt, jeans and sandals, hair tied behind the head revealing a gold earring hanging from her ear. She has a purple stole around her neck, which rests on her lap as she sits.”

In the next paragraph we learn that she is “an ordained Roman Catholic priest with one exception: The Roman Catholic Church does not recognize her status as a priest.” Of course, the only thing that counts is the “one exception.” It could also be said that the Roman Catholic Church does not recognize those who dress up as the Pope on Halloween to be the Pope.

The media game, naturally, is to whip up public sentiment against the Catholic Church for its teaching on ordination. It never does the same with regards to the role of women in the

Orthodox Jewish community, or in Islam.

June 10 – 11

The dissident Catholic magazine *Commonweal* put the worst possible face on St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson when it reported on his exchange with attorney Jeffery Anderson, who has a hatred of the Catholic Church. Anderson released video clips of Carlson's deposition where it was made to look like Carlson did not know it was a crime for an adult to engage in sex with a child. Anderson edited out the lead-in to the question, which was about mandated reporting laws.

On June 11, Dennis Coday at the *National Catholic Reporter* essentially offered the account by the St. Louis Archdiocese regarding a controversial exchange between Anderson and Carlson. He should have stopped there. Instead, later in the day he walked back his piece, saying Grant Gallicho at *Commonweal* may have been right when he accepted Anderson's version.

At issue was whether Carlson was responding to a question regarding mandatory reporting laws, or a question about the criminal nature of sex between an adult and a child. Carlson maintained that he was responding to the former question; Anderson claimed he was responding to the latter.

This entire controversy erupted because of something that neither *Commonweal* nor the *Reporter* addressed: Anderson intentionally clipped that part of the video exchange he had with Carlson so as to convince the public that Carlson didn't know it was against the law for an adult to have sex with a child. Instead of blasting Anderson for his unethical distortion, Gallicho not only took Anderson's side, he spoke with derision against Carlson's lawyer (e.g, "defense attorneys aren't too keen on compound questions").

July 1

Following the Supreme Court's decision in the *Hobby Lobby*

case, numerous media attacked the five Catholic justices who voted in the majority.

“Once again an all-Catholic, all-male, all-ultra-conservative majority of five has voted en bloc to eviscerate fundamental rights,” said Annie Laurie Gaylor of the atheist Freedom From Religion Foundation. “Court’s Catholic Justices Attack Women’s Rights” was the headline of Margery Eagan’s *Boston Herald* article. The American Humanist Association issued a statement with a picture of a rosary next to birth control pills.

In the Huffington Post, Ryan Grim noted that “these men [the five judges who voted for religious liberty] are Christians.” He also said, “The Supreme Court ruled Monday that Christian business owners are special.”

Also in the Huffington Post, Ronald A. Lindsay, a militant atheist, asked, “Is it appropriate to have six Catholic justices on the Supreme Court?” “Unfortunately,” he wrote, “a majority of the Supreme Court may now be resurrecting concerns about the compatibility between being a Catholic and being a good citizen...”

Philip F. Cardarella, writing in the *Kansas City Star*, said that when JFK ran, the question was, “How could someone who owed his religious obedience to the Pope in Rome and the doctrines of the Catholic Church truly be trusted?” After the decision, he opined, “Five men on the Supreme Court—all Catholics—may well just have proven him [JFK] wrong.”

September

Hartford, CT – The Archdiocese of Hartford challenged a \$1 million verdict awarded to an individual who claimed he was abused by a priest. The timeline is as follows:

- Jacob Doe claimed he was molested in the early 1980s by a priest, Father Ivan Ferguson, who died in 2002.
- Doe had until 1988 to file a lawsuit, but he never did.
- In 1991, the statute of limitations was amended to 17

years.

- Doe had until 2003 to file a lawsuit, but he never did.
- In 2002 the statute of limitations for civil cases was extended to 30 years; it was made retroactive.
- In 2005, the Archdiocese of Hartford paid \$22 million in a settlement with 43 people who claim they were molested by Fr. Ferguson and other priests dating back to the 1960s. Doe was not one of the parties that sued.
- Doe filed a lawsuit in 2008 after the statute of limitations was changed in 2002.
- In February 2014, a jury awarded Doe \$1 million.

There is something wrong with this picture. It is no wonder that lawyers for the archdiocese argue, among other things, that making the statute of limitations retroactive for sexual abuse cases in 1991 and 2002 violates the civil liberties of their defendant.

It was particularly disturbing to read the editorial in the *New Haven Register* that invoked Pope Francis' humble approach to sexual abuse, and his critical remarks on materialism, as a lever to criticize the archdiocese. According to its logic, the pope would counsel dioceses not to defend their interests, even in the face of palpable injustice. This is absurd. It is also a twisted reading of the pope's thoughts on these issues.

Just as disconcerting was the lack of honesty on the part of the Connecticut media: none mentioned that the amended timeline on the statute of limitations only applies to kids molested in private [read: Catholic] schools—it does not apply to kids raped in public schools.

Internet

January 8 – January 13

We were only one week into the new year when we were treated to one of the most anti-Catholic articles we've seen in many years. Columnist Jamie Stiehm published her onslaught against

Catholics, as well as the Catholic Church, in *U.S. News and World Report*. We choose our words carefully: this was not just an assault on the teachings of the Catholic Church, it was an assault on Catholics.

“The Catholic Supreme Court’s War on Women” was the title of this screed. What set Stiehm off was Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s decision to stay the Health and Human Services mandate from taking effect January 1.

Sotomayor was referred to as “just a good Catholic girl” who “put her religion ahead of her jurisprudence. What a surprise, but that is no small thing.” The Justice’s decision “brings us to confront an uncomfortable reality,” Stiehm writes. “More than WASPS, Methodists, Jews, Quakers or Baptists, Catholics often try to impose their beliefs on you, me, public discourse and institutions.” She then listed, as a happy exception, Nancy Pelosi. Sotomayor, by contrast, “is selling out the sisterhood.”

“Catholics in high places of power have the most trouble, I’ve noticed, practicing the separation of church and state,” Stiehm says. “The pugnacious Catholic Justice, Antonin Scalia, is the most aggressive offender on the Court, but not the only one.” Now it seems that Justice Sotomayor “has joined the ranks of five Republican Catholic men on the John Roberts court in showing a clear religious bias when it comes to women’s rights and liberties. *We can no longer be silent about this*” (Italics added).

Stiehm also indicted “the meddlesome American Roman Catholic Archbishops” who “seek and wield tremendous power and influence in the political sphere.” Moreover, “The rock of Rome refuses to budge on women’s reproductive rights and the Supreme Court is getting good and ready to strike down *Roe v. Wade...*”

Bill Donohue asked Brian Kelly, the Editor and Chief Content

Officer of *U.S. News*, whether he defended the article. To his surprise, Kelly did. Brian Kelly said Jamie Stiehm's attack on Catholics and the Catholic Church was "within the bounds of fair commentary." He compared her vicious statement to "pieces from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Archdiocese of New York and Concerned Women for America."

Here is how Bill Donohue replied: "I have no way of knowing if Kelly is a bigot. I do know he is incompetent. Any man who equates a reasonable defense of Catholicism, written by those in the employ of the Catholic Church, with Jamie Stiehm's anti-Catholic screed, lacks the faculty of discernment, and thus has no legitimate role to play in journalism. He couldn't defend this in public; I challenge him to do so."

January 21

Comedian Sarah Silverman posted a bigoted video on YouTube that featured her talking to a Jesus character about abortion. The language she used was so vulgar—she ended with the "c" word about women—that it cannot be repeated on broadcast television, or republished in any respectable newspaper.

Silverman exploited Christianity by hijacking Jesus in support of killing kids in the womb: he was shown making fun of unborn babies, saying "fertilized eggs aren't people. People are people" and announced that he is, "Jesus F*cking Christ." Silverman said pro-life Christians are un-American and that "using religion to dictate legislation is un-American."

Toward the end of the video, the Jesus character was shown rubbing her while they were sitting on a couch. She said, "Oh, that's my spot." To which he replied, "I know where your spot is...that's a good little Jewish girl."

April 16

A video titled "Easter Bunny's Coming" was posted on the YouTube Channel for Fox Broadcasting's "Animation Domination High-Def" (ADHD) programming block. According to the Parents

Television Council (PTC) the video “contains graphic cartoon images of fornicating rabbits, multiple unbleeped ‘f-words,’ harsh references to male sexual anatomy and vulgar slang for ejaculation.” The video closed with a reference meant to imply that Jesus had been watching it.

The video, which included overt references to Christians and Jews, was debuted during Holy Week and Passover.

After objections were raised by PTC, Target pulled its advertising from the program, and on April 18, Fox announced that the television component of the show would be cancelled in June. Fox did not specify if the ADHD website or the online content would be removed once the show was cancelled.

April 26

A Dario Castillejos cartoon published on cagle.com titled “Saint Pope John Paul II and Pedophile Priests” shows a figure meant to be the former pope blessing a child. At the same time a hand and arm reaching out from under the pope’s cassock is attempting to grab the child. The cartoon, published the same day as his canonization, depicted St. John Paul II as covering for child molesters.

June 14

In response to the film “Philomena” and the “mass grave” hoax, Niall O’Dowd, founder of Irish Central, posted an article on his website where he attacked the nuns who ran the mother and baby homes across Ireland.

O’Dowd’s article accused the nuns of selling children to wealthy American families as part of secret and illegal adoptions. He said that the unmarried mothers whom the nuns cared for were “held in female gulags masquerading as convents.” He went on to say that the children were “snatched” from their mothers for “forced” adoptions.

July 25

On philly.com, a news website affiliated with both The

Philadelphia Inquirer and the *Philadelphia Daily News*, a story was posted about a new group that would help pay off the student loan debt of men and women who pursue the religious life. While the story was positive, an image was used promoting the story of a woman in full habit, wearing heavy makeup and smoking a cigarette. After complaints, the image was quickly removed from the website, but remained posted on some of Philly.com's social media sites.

August 13

In a column for internet news site WorldNetDaily, former rock musician Ted Nugent commented on the sexual abuse crisis, and specifically on the deposition given by St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson.

Nugent incorrectly states that Carlson did not know it was illegal for priests to have sex with children. Nugent says that Carlson looked like "a space cadet zombie" while testifying that he did not remember if he knew that priests having sex with children was illegal. [The questions Carlson did not remember were actually about his knowledge of mandatory reporting laws in the 1980s.]

Nugent goes on to call Carlson a "fraud," "liar," "punk," "black-hearted," "devil in disguise," and an "evil, evil monster." He calls for the archbishop to be "stripped of his pompous title, excommunicated from the Catholic Church, and thrown to the court system for prosecution to the maximum extent of the law."

September 4

An article on Newsmax's website read "Former Catholic Cop Tried to Join ISIS after Conversion to Islam" in reference to the terrorist group ISIS that is murdering Christians in Iraq. The opening sentence of the article read "A Catholic-born former police officer from North Carolina attempted to join the Islamic State (ISIS)." The gratuitous references to the man's former religion would never have been mentioned if he

was being celebrated for having saved a life.

Newspapers

January 23

Chicago, IL – The *Chicago Tribune's* editorial cartoonist Scott Stantis drew an image of a bishop wearing a mitre. Two snakes are emerging out of the mitre, one snake says “forgive us father” the second snake replies “for we got caught.” The cartoon implies that bishops hide crimes such as sex abuse and only apologize once they have been caught. The cartoon was subsequently published on January 26 in the *Dallas Morning News*.

January 24

The *New York Post's* film critic Sara Stewart gave the pro-life themed film “Gimme Shelter” a negative review. However, the review not only criticized the film, but mocked the efforts of a priest and a Catholic charity that tried to help the pregnant teen in the film. The review stated that the film “feels as if it’s underwritten by the Roman Catholic Church.” It went on to say that a priest in the film “imparts vague sentiments that feel as if they’ve had God references edited out of them” and criticized the charity helping the teen for surrounding the girls with “praying hands imagery and [taking] them to church.”

February 22

Hazleton, PA – Syndicated cartoonist Jeff Stahler depicted a priest distributing communion to a woman. The priest says “Body of Christ” and the woman replies “Is it locally made?” The cartoon was published in the *Standard-Speaker* among other newspapers.

March 14 – 16

Stroudsburg, PA – The *Pocono Record* published an article saying that former Scranton Bishop Joseph Martino “allowed” a priest who was credibly accused of abuse to transfer to a

diocese in Paraguay. The article faulted Bishop Martino and his predecessor for failing to suppress the priest in question. The Diocese of Scranton responded by outlining the many steps Bishop Martino took to keep the priest out of ministry, which included warning both the bishop and the papal nuncio in Paraguay. The *Pocono Record* ignored the diocese's response and instead printed a second article about the priest two days later without ever mentioning the bishop's efforts to sound the alarm.

The *Pocono Record* did print the Catholic League's letter to the editor which stated in part, "The faithful of the Diocese of Scranton should be praising Bishop Martino's actions, and those of his successor, to fight abuse, not reading a one sided argument that attempts to fault him for the actions of someone half a world away."

April 9

Danbury, CT – A Drew Sheneman cartoon published in the *News-Times* shows Pope Francis in the left panel saying "our priests should live simply like those we serve." The right panel shows two priests lounging by a pool and preparing to go golfing. One priest asks the other "what did he say?" "I don't know, something about servants" is the reply. This cartoon makes it look like all priests are lazy and live exorbitantly.

April 16

Ireland – The *Irish Times* published a cartoon by Martyn Turner that showed three priests reading a newspaper announcing a new bill that would require mandatory reporting of child abuse. The priests share a speech bubble that reads "I'd do anything for children (But I won't do that)." The cartoon implies that all priests cover for their colleagues by refusing to report those who molest children.

Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin spoke out that "many priests and people feel hurt" by the cartoon.

April 30

Washington, DC – A Tom Toles cartoon in the *Washington Post* shows two characters discussing a large poster that reads “Prevent Child Abuse.” The man asks “What do you call somebody who drags his feet on identifying and punishing abusers?” A woman who is reading a newspaper about John Paul II replies “Saint?” The cartoon was published days after the canonization of St. John Paul II and attacks his record on preventing child abuse.

May 25

Cincinnati, OH – The *Cincinnati Enquirer* published a preview of an upcoming fringe theatre festival with the headline “May the peace of FRINGE be upon you.” The headline included a picture with Elvis Presley’s head superimposed on an image of the Sacred Heart.

June 20 – 23

When news of a “mass grave” found outside a Catholic Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, Ireland broke, the media went wild. As details started to emerge about the lack of truth behind these stories, the media began to back away. [To read Bill Donohue’s analysis of the story click here.](#)

The Associated Press issued its first retraction on June 20 regarding its stories of June 3 and June 8 on Ireland’s “mass grave” story. On June 23, AP reporter Shawn Pogatchnik issued a second, more complete, retraction; his article was titled, “Media Exaggerated Horror Tale at Irish Orphanage.” Here is an excerpt of what he said:

“The reports of unmarked graves shouldn’t have come as a surprise to the Irish public, who for decades have known that some of the 10 defunct ‘mother and baby homes,’ which chiefly housed the children of unwed mothers, held grave sites with forgotten dead. The religious orders’ use of unmarked graves reflected the crippling poverty of the time, the infancy of most of the victims, and the lack of plots in cemeteries

corresponding to the children's fractured families."

"Contrary to the allegation of widespread starvation highlighted in some reports, only 18 children were recorded as suffering from severe malnutrition. While publicly available records are incomplete, sporadic inspection reports indicate that the orphanage's population exceeded 250 throughout the worst years of child mortality, when overcrowding would have encouraged the spread of infection."

AP admits that it was guilty of "repeating incorrect Irish news reports that suggested the babies who died had never been baptized and that Catholic Church teaching guided priests not to baptize the babies of unwed mothers or give to them [sic] Christian burials. The reports of the denial of baptism later were contradicted by the Tuam Archdiocese, which found a registry showing that the home had baptized more than 2,000 babies."

AP had the courage to admit it erred; many other outlets did not.

July 2

Wilmington, DE – An RJ Matson cartoon was carried by several newspapers, including *The Journal-News*, depicting a photograph of the nine justices of the Supreme Court, except that the five justices who voted in the majority of the *Hobby Lobby* case are shown wearing a mitre and cross. The cartoon's caption reads "We didn't lose our religious freedom when we became judges." The cartoon mocks the judges, all of whom are Catholic, for siding with the religious freedom arguments in this case.

July 3

Kansas City, MO – The *Kansas City Star* published a Lee Judge cartoon that shows two priests at an altar atop an Aztec-looking temple. The altar is labeled "Who we're willing to sacrifice to protect the priesthood," and the bottom step of

the temple is labeled “Women and children first.” This cartoon says that priests are willing to sacrifice anything, including the wellbeing of women and children, to protect the priesthood.

The cartoon was subsequently published in New York’s *Watertown Daily Times* on July 13. This occasioned Bishop Terry LaValley of the Diocese of Ogdensburg to write a letter to the editor. Bishop LaValley requested that an apology be printed or that his subscription to the *Daily Times* be canceled. The bishop wrote “I cannot and will not encourage readership of a newspaper that prints such disparaging and offensive portrayals of men who give their lives in service to others.”

July 6

Hudson Valley, NY – In response to the Supreme Court’s ruling in the *Hobby Lobby* case, the *Times Herald-Record* published a Bill Day cartoon which shows a book meant to represent the Bible. The book is labeled “Holy Corporations by The Supremes.” A speech bubble from the book reads “Go forth and multiply.” By using a biblical quote and a book that looks like a Bible, the author is mocking the religious freedom arguments presented by the owners of Hobby Lobby.

July 20

New York, NY – The *New York Post* ran a story about a charitable home run by nuns that was raising the rents for tenants, some of whom had lived in the building for decades. Along with the story, the *Post* printed a stock image of an imposing nun in full habit holding a ruler as if she was going to hit someone. The nun in the image was wearing a large cross around her neck and appears to be in makeup with manicured nails. The article did not identify the photo as a caricature, and made it appear that the nuns were punishing the tenants.

September 3

New York, NY – The *New York Post*’s story about an American man who tried to join the ISIS terror group had the following

headline: “The Catholic ex-cop who tried to join ISIS from US.” The article goes on to mention that the man attempting to join the “murderous band of jihadis” was “Catholic-born.”

September 24

Hartford, CT – The *Hartford Courant* printed a Bob Englehart cartoon titled “Connecticut Supreme Court Considers Reversal of Law that Benefits Sex-Abuse Accusers.” The cartoon depicts a woman labeled “Victims” with a thought bubble that says “Unfair.” Meanwhile the devil and pedophile priests both share a thought bubble that reads “Fair!” The cartoon demeans priests and generalizes that all priests are pedophiles.

October 1 – 2

Harrisburg, PA – The *New York Times* reported that the Diocese of Harrisburg adopted a policy barring boys on high school wrestling teams from competing with girls from other schools; girls in Catholic schools have also been barred from football and rugby teams. The policy is not new: the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference Education Department has explicit rules on this subject. Indeed, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia previously dealt with this issue.

The rationale behind the Pennsylvania policy was clear-headed: there are nature-based differences between the sexes that need to be observed. Ergo, sports that involve “substantial and potentially immodest physical contact” ought to be treated differently. All but the enlightened ones have the cognitive ability to distinguish between wrestling and ping-pong.

We were astonished to read that the *New York Times* ran another story the next day on this topic. This was the second day in a row that the *Times* covered this story, and there was nothing new of any substance in the new piece.

The latter news story on the Pennsylvania Catholic high school wrestling policy merited 978 words. By contrast, the same day’s *New York Times* ran a story on Oslo withdrawing from a

bid to host the 2022 winter Olympics that totaled 406 words. A story on Derek Jeter starting his own web forum was a mere 599 words. Even the Major League Baseball playoff game between the Pirates and Giants didn't outdo the Catholic high school story—it was 897 words. If we add the first story on the wrestling policy to the most recent one (it was 401 words), the total figure is 1,379.

No newspaper in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh reported on this story, and outside of *The Sentinel* (a Carlisle, PA paper), it got almost no coverage; no national wire service or newspaper covered it.

October 16

Minneapolis, MN – The *Star-Tribune* published a commentary by Arthur McCaffrey, a Harvard psychologist and *Boston Globe* contributor. McCaffrey's article, titled "Is the media too deferential towards the church?" cheered the decision of the *Star-Tribune* editorial board to twice call for the resignation of Archbishop John Nienstedt. McCaffrey called these editorials a "brave public service."

McCaffrey went on to criticize those who defend the Church, spewing anti-Catholicism throughout. He claimed that "deference is something that the Catholic Church has profited from throughout its long history" and called for that deference to end. As proof he cited "Supreme Court justices hobnobbing with Catholic bishops at the annual 'Red Mass' dinner" and President Obama's efforts to "yuk it up" with Cardinal Timothy Dolan at an annual fundraising dinner in New York.

McCaffrey called for newspapers, and the media generally, to be more critical of the Church and demand "honesty, transparency and accountability from our most entrenched institutions."

The *Star-Tribune* did not print a letter to the editor from the

Catholic League responding to McCaffrey's article.

October 17

Buffalo, NY – Adam Zyglis' cartoon "Church Synod" shows a sign that reads "Gays" pointing at a confessional outside of a church. Two bishops are shown pointing at the confessional and one says "At least we're starting to welcome them in." Zyglis draws cartoons for the *Buffalo News*. This cartoon was also published in Maine's *Portland Press Herald*. This cartoon refers to an interim report of the synod of bishops.

October 19

Portland, ME – A cartoon by John Cole in the *Maine Sunday Telegram* depicts Pope Francis with the title "Habemus Papam" (We have a pope). Next to the pope is a cardinal labeled "Vatican Conservatives" who is reading a newspaper about the synod interim report's comments on divorce and sexuality. The cardinal's heading reads "Habemus Palpitations" implying that he is having a heart attack.

November 12

Gallup, NM – The *Gallup Independent* published an editorial to mark the one year anniversary of the Diocese of Gallup having filed for bankruptcy. In it the *Independent* published a list of 8 demands that it wanted the judge to institute against the diocese. Among them, "Publicize the list of credibly accused abusers by inserting it for three consecutive weeks in the church bulletins of every parish that was ever a part of the Gallup Diocese" and "Publicly release a list of all real property in Arizona and New Mexico" that the diocese owns. The editorial even opined that "the Diocese of Gallup has no need for such property."

November 21

Providence, RI – Following the arrest of a suspended priest, the *Providence Journal*, like most other news outlets, had a news story reporting the arrest. But unlike other outlets, the Journal also published a timeline of all priestly sex abuse

cases in Rhode Island since 1972. Only two of the entries on the timeline referred to the priest who had just been arrested.

A few weeks earlier a minister was sentenced to five years in prison for sexually abusing a student. The *Providence Journal* did not publish a timeline and simply re-printed a small AP story about the case. That's because the minister committed his crimes while serving as principal of a Baptist school.

Radio

January 27

During the "Imus in the Morning" program simulcast on the Fox Business Network, regular guest Rob Bartlett reprised his "Don Corleone, The Godfather" character. In character Bartlett discussed the alleged homosexual network in the Swiss Guard:

Bartlett: "I am concerned for Pope Francis... he's being guarded by a bunch of finocchios...apparently there is a network of homosexuals within Il Papa's security forces, the Swiss Guard... do not misunderstand me. I have nothing against the gays, if a man wants to [censored] another man, that is none of my business. However if he's going to be more concerned with the velvet drapes in the Sistine chapel than insuring the safety of Il Papa perhaps he should just protect the altar boys instead."

March 7

On "Imus in the Morning," which is simulcast on the Fox Business Network, Don Imus and the co-hosts discussed Pope Francis. Imus found it confusing that Pope Benedict XVI continues to live in the Vatican:

Imus: "It's just, that's ridiculous."

Bernard McGuirk [producer]: "It's their church, let them do whatever they want."

Imus: "Ok, well that's the problem. Them glomming onto the kids."

Later in the segment Imus continued to discuss the fact that he does not like Pope Benedict XVI:

McGuirk: “Your issue is with the previous pope.”

Imus: “Yes, sneaking around [the Vatican], I mean you have that whole gay mafia there, I mean come on what a nightmare.”

July 8

On his nationally syndicated “Savage Nation” radio show, host Michael Savage attacked the pope and the efforts by Catholics to help immigrant children who had arrived at the border illegally. Savage said, “Here’s a breaking report. Catholic churches are providing housing for the storm of illegals crossing the border. You heard me. This is a conspiracy of the government/ Catholic complex. The government/Catholic complex is working together. [...] [T]hose who torment us for our own goodwill torment us without end, for they do so with the approval of their own conscience. There’s your Roman Church, with a Jesuit, communist pope.”

July 28

On his daily radio program, “Imus in the Morning,” host Don Imus was interviewing Fox News contributor Fr. Jonathan Morris about Pope Francis’ off-the-cuff interview style. Fr. Morris said that the pope’s style had a way of touching people. Imus responded with a remark making reference to the abuse crisis.

Fr. Morris: “I’m happy he does it [off-the-cuff interviews]. And he knows, I believe, that its worth risking, you know, bad consequences, for the positive outcome of reaching out to people and touching people where they’re at. I love it, but what he said about this Don was...

Imus: “Careful touching people.” [Fr. Morris stops suddenly.]

Fr. Morris: “What was that?”

Imus: “Nothing. [pause, silence] I said just careful on the touching people.”

December 6

A National Public Radio (NPR) game show, "Wait Wait Don't Tell Me" decided that the Brooklyn Diocese's outreach program to millennial "hipsters" was worth a few jokes. There was a cheap shot taken about transubstantiation, and the Hail Mary was the source of laughter. By far the most offensive statement was made about Jesus. Here is what comedian Peter Sagal said:

"You can take a selfie with Jesus. The Catholic Church preaches that Jesus is always with us, in fact he's right behind you. So this new app—Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn shows a woman sitting by herself. She's holding out her phone to take a selfie like the kids do, but in the picture you see this woman and this bearded beatific man smiling behind her. It's not some (random) creepo who got into the church, it's the Son of God. This raises all sorts of questions for the woman. For starters, why didn't Jesus offer just to take the picture himself? His hands were occupied."

Some suggested the reference was to Jesus' hands being nailed to the cross, while others saw a veiled reference to Jesus with his hands on his genitals. After the Catholic League asked those on our email list to contact NPR, many did. As a result, NPR responded to complaints about the offensive episode. Here's how NPR responded: "Wait Wait is a comedy show that pokes fun at the news. The goal is always to make people laugh. I regret that we did not succeed in this case."

The "news" that NPR decided to deride was neither a major national or international story: it was about an outreach program aimed at young people in the Diocese of Brooklyn. More seriously, NPR was very selective about who it wanted its audience to laugh at. For example, never once did NPR come even close to mocking Muhammad, and no sexual references have ever been made about him, including on "Wait Wait."

Bill Donohue wrote to House Speaker John Boehner asking him to take up the issue of defunding the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the parent company of NPR. Until Catholics are

afforded the same degree of respect for their “deeply held religious beliefs,” they should not have to subsidize attacks on their religion. This is hardly the first time that NPR has ridiculed Catholics, but doing so at Christmastime makes it all the more egregious.

December 8

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) made no attempt to be fair in its coverage of a story involving a priest. A jury acquitted Father Mark Huberty of criminal sexual conduct after a woman claimed he took sexual advantage of her during counseling sessions. Three media outlets in Minnesota had been tracking this story from the beginning: the *Pioneer Press*, the *Star-Tribune*, and MPR. When reports surfaced clearing Father Huberty of wrongdoing, the two newspapers gave the jury verdict complete coverage. But not MPR.

For many years MPR has specialized in issuing lengthy reports on alleged priestly abuse; it ran a long story one week earlier about a former priest. When a priest is found not guilty, however, that is of no interest to MPR. To wit: In 2013, MPR did four lengthy stories on salacious accusations against Father Huberty, but when he was exonerated, the best it could do was to offer a 134-word AP story. It had no motivation to recant its previous reporting, or to present its own story.

Television

January 3

On the E! show “Fashion Police,” host Joan Rivers and her guests discussed Hollywood’s power couples and their combined earnings. Discussing Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, Rivers said “they spent a fortune last year on child care. They spent more money keeping kids quiet than the Catholic Church.”

January 19

Comedy Central aired the one hour premier of “Neal Brennan:

Women and Black Dudes.” Brennan attacked Mary and Joseph, and defamed priests.

Brennan: [On Jesus] “We are going to worship you and your mom, but not your step dad because f*ck him.”

Brennan: “He goes out of town, comes back, Mary’s like ‘I’m pregnant,’ ‘we haven’t had sex in 6 months’ ‘no, it was a ghost’” ... “If I were Joseph and Mary were like ‘do you mind changing Jesus’ diaper?’ ‘No, but maybe the ghost will.”

Brennan: “I went to Catholic school, 12 years. People’s first question when they hear this: Hey Neal, you get molested? It’s a sign of a classy organization isn’t it? And to answer the question, no I didn’t get molested, I f*cked a few priests, but I didn’t get molested. I ain’t no bitch you understand. 8-year-old me f*cking priests. Forgive me father, you know why.”

January 23

The October 2, 2012 episode of “Tosh.0” was re-aired on Comedy Central. Host Daniel Tosh showed a video clip of a priest, a rabbi and an African American sitting next to each other on a plane:

Tosh: “All right, stop me if you have heard this next one. A rabbi, a priest, and a black guy get on a plane. And then a Muslim hijacks it and kills them all. ... Guess which one ordered the 12-year-old boy for his meal?”

January 29

The CW’s Dallas, TX affiliate KDAF reported on the installation of the new Bishop of Fort Worth, Michael Olson, during its evening news program, “Nightcap News.” Talking about Pope Francis the reporter said “this pope may just be the best thing for the Church since sliced Communion wafers” at which point an image was shown of a hand giving out Communion. This was followed by a short clip taken from a movie of a man laughing.

The segment concluded with the reporter saying “Expectations

may be high for the new bishop, he has a tough act to follow with this pope, wait, aren't all bishops *supposed* to follow the pope?" (Emphasis is added on the word "supposed" while Bob Dylan's "Times They Are A Changin'" plays in the background.)

February 5

Comedy Central's game show "@Midnight" asked comedians to respond to a topic in order to earn points. The topic presented, "Jesus, Mary and Toe-Seph," was about a woman who claimed that a bruise on her foot resembled an image of Jesus. Contestants were told to respond to this category "as Satan":

Dana Gould: "I'd believe that before I'd believe that his mom was a virgin. Continued success, Satan."

Arden Myrin: "Figures, Jesus sprays himself all over some stripper's dirty toes and I'm the one with the bad rap. All hail Satan!"

February 14

Joan Rivers and the panel of "Fashion Police" on E! were playing a game where they attempted to identify photographs of Boy George compared to other celebrities, with their faces obscured. When a photo was posted of a person in a long white dress, with a pink robe and purple hair, Rivers guessed, "I'm going to say, Pope Francis when he was about to enter a gay bar." The photo was of George Clinton.

February 21

On E! Network's "Fashion Police" host Joan Rivers and the panel were discussing a dress worn by Oprah Winfrey. Rivers said "I don't know what kind of undergarment she's wearing, but there are no lumps and bumps for a slightly heavier woman. That dress is covering up more secrets than the Catholic Church."

February 25

"Secrets of the Vatican," a 90 minute "Frontline" presentation, marked the 48th time that PBS addressed sexual

abuse in the Catholic Church. Though this problem is practically non-existent in the Catholic community these days, and is rampant in the public schools, as well as in the Orthodox Jewish community, PBS has devoted a combined total of zero episodes to both.

All the contrived melodrama was there: ominous dark images; dramatic music; a deep voice-over; bleak hallways; shadowy figures locking doors as a boy enters the room; the words "Power," "Money," and "Sex" flashing about, etc. The predictable villain: Pope Benedict XVI. Ironically, he did more than anyone to check this problem, but facts don't matter when Jason Berry is involved.

A dissident Catholic, Berry was a co-producer of this show; he was also featured in Alex Gibney's film, "Mea Maxima Culpa." Indeed, the recent hit job was nothing more than a reread of Gibney's propaganda: a New Orleans reporter who previewed it said, "this film reminded me of 'Mea Maxima Culpa.'"

March 7

Joan Rivers, host of "Fashion Police" on the E! network, was critiquing celebrities at the Academy Awards. Discussing Amy Adams' dress and her dancing, Rivers said "Did you see when she tried to dance? Ugh. And I think she's a great actress, but she has less rhythm than an Irish Catholic mother with 18 kids."

March 8

During an episode of "Saturday Night Live," guest host Lena Dunham mocked the story of Genesis during a sketch where she appeared nude playing Eve. Dunham called Adam sexist for suggesting that she was formed from his rib, and lectured God about original sin. She complained to God about health insurance, and refused to cover her naked body, stating, "I'm not going to like conform to society's demands for me." The episode was the second lowest rated "Saturday Night Live" of the year.

March 9

The first episode of the new Fox series "Cosmos" aired. The propagandists involved in this show told viewers that "the Roman Catholic Church maintained a system of courts known as the Inquisition and its sole purpose was to investigate and torment anyone who dared voice views that differed from theirs. And it wasn't long before [Giordano] Bruno fell into the clutches of the thought police."

The ignorance was appalling. "The Catholic Church as an institution had almost nothing to do with [the Inquisition]," wrote Dayton historian Thomas Madden. "One of the most enduring myths of the Inquisition," he said, "is that it was a tool of oppression imposed on unwilling Europeans by a power-hungry Church. Nothing could be more wrong." Because the Inquisition brought order and justice where there was none, it actually "saved uncounted thousands of innocent (and even not-so-innocent) people who would otherwise have been roasted by secular lords or mob rule" (his emphasis).

As for Bruno, he was a renegade monk who dabbled in astronomy; he was not a scientist. There is much dispute about what really happened to him. As sociologist Rodney Strong put it, he got into trouble not for his "scientific" views, but because of his "heretical theology involving the existence of an infinite number of worlds—a work based entirely on imagination and speculation."

March 10

During a segment titled "Infallible Me," Jon Stewart attacked Pope Francis on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart." Stewart discussed a new magazine that had been published about Pope Francis. Stewart said the magazine "will have to go behind the newsstand counter with 'Prayboy' and 'Repenthouse'"

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Stewart then discussed when the pope accidentally used a swear

word, and the pope's confession that he once took a rosary from his dead confessor.

Finally, Stewart showed news clips, including a clip of Fr. Edward Beck, talking about how the pope had opened the door to civil unions. Stewart said "dropping f-bombs, stealing rosaries, not condemning gay unions, that's a lot of rogue popery for this Vatican to deal with." After showing a clip of a Vatican spokesperson clarifying the pope's comments on civil unions, Stewart said "now who's crossed the line? Not a problem that he's running around cursing and grave robbing, but the minute he says something about treating gay people with respect, That's it! Vatican damage control squad leaps into action. What he meant to say was, gay civil unions, f*ck them."

March 18

The guests on E! Network's "Chelsea Lately" attacked Pope Francis during a discussion on a new Russell Crowe movie. Margaret Cho, Liza Treyger and Ross Mathews implied the pope was looking for sex or drugs, maligned Catholic teachings on abortion and insinuated that the pope was gay:

Cho: "The pope is busy though I mean he's everywhere, he's picking up hitchhikers in the popemobile. He's got like bumper stickers 'ass, gas or grass no one rides for free'" [this is a reference to paying for a ride with sex, cash or drugs].

Treyger: "... I feel like I'm a Jew but I would kind of convert to Catholicism. I'll put ash on my forehead, I'll drink a Hail Mary, but if I get pregnant I'll convert back, you know?"

Mathews: "He [the pope] canceled this meeting with Russell Crowe, but he liked "Philomena" so much he invited the real Philomena over. So I don't like Russell Crowe and I love Philomena so the pope and I are kind of, if you think about it, the same person – in a weird way, or at least BFFs [best friends forever]. So as the pope's new BFF I feel like I can say, for the love of God can we start belting that robe? He has kind of a hot little body, and what a shame not to show

that off. I'm just being a friend."

March 25

On the "Late Show with David Letterman" which airs on CBS, Letterman implied that the pope has used cocaine. Letterman then showed a video of Pope Francis speaking, but the pope's words were dubbed over with a rant. In Letterman's video the "pope" said: "People took advantage of me [Jesus], they found out I could do miracles like healing the blind and let lepers f*ck. Now 5000 people show up, with no f*cking clue. They weren't sick, they didn't need healing. They were too f*cking lazy to make a f*cking sandwich. Oh I know, let's let Jesus get it! He's trying to preach, he's trying to share all this information, what, what 5000 of you? Not one of you brought a sandwich? I guess you expect me to get it huh?! I've come to be Jesus the miracle caterer. There's no pressure, I'll just f*cking create food out of the f*cking air."

March 30

Al Jazeera aired a one hour documentary titled "Holy Money." A commercial said there has been "questionable behavior all the way from Rome to your local parish church." The commercial goes on to say "the church is spending heavily on political lobbyists." The documentary claimed to go "into the pockets of the Holy Father to reveal the money issues facing the Catholic Church."

"The Power," "The Money," "The Greed," and "The Scandal" each flashed on the screen as images were shown of expensive looking artwork and long, dark hallways, coupled with ominous sounding music. All of this was meant to make the viewer question the integrity of the Church and imply that donations were being sought to cover up abuse and other scandals.

April 2

On the CW's "The Arsenio Hall Show," Hall had George Lopez as a guest, and they discussed a news story about Pope Francis going to confession in public.

Lopez: "... usually Arsenio, when you hear about priests confessing, he is usually surrounded by the police, and about to be transferred to another parish. [speaking sternly like a police officer]: 'Father this way.' [speaking softer, like a church official]: 'No, Father this way.'"

April 6

"Greatest Mysteries: Vatican" premiered on the Travel Channel. Lies about Catholicism abounded, and the intentional distortion of the truth was commonplace throughout. The program's recklessly inaccurate portrayal of Catholicism seemed straight out of the annals of sci-fi.

Yes, there were rogue popes, none more disgraceful than Rodrigo Borgia, Alexander VI. But if the goal was to promote skepticism of all matters Catholic, then the savants who worked on this program should have stopped there. To say they put their foot in it when they invented a female pope would be a gross understatement.

The Travel Channel program perpetuated a fable that Pope Joan ruled in 855. Among those interviewed for the show was Candida Moss, a Notre Dame professor who is mostly known for discounting the persecution of Christians in the early Church. The fact is that Pope Joan is pure myth: the fairy tale began in the middle of the 13th century, making it inexplicable why no historians in the intervening years managed to write about Ms. Popess. Here is an inconvenient fact: Leo IV died on July 17, 855, and he was immediately followed by Benedict III. There was no pope in between.

April 7

The Science Channel premiered "Unsealed: Alien Files"; the entire half hour episode was dedicated to what knowledge the Vatican has of aliens. The priest who directs the Vatican observatory, Dr. Jose Funes, was interviewed for the program, and he made the rather unexceptional remark that the universe is so huge that "it would be possible that life could evolve

the way we know it on Earth.” This was soon followed by a voiceover that said, “Vatican officials have publicly acknowledged the likelihood of alien life. This dramatic reversal of Vatican policy demands an explanation. What does the Church know, or what have they found that causes them to reverse a 2000-year-old teaching?”

Evidence of alien life, we learn, is available in the “Vatican secret archives.” But thanks to the Science Channel, it is a secret no more. “The Vatican secret archives is approximately 52 miles of shelving we’re told, and over 32,000 archives.” The guy who said this did not disclose who told him this “secret,” but who needs evidence? Then a voiceover gets really melodramatic: “But the secrets hidden within the Vatican can’t stay buried forever. Now new evidence may prove the Vatican is hiding actual aliens from the public.” The program also claimed that skulls with elongated heads and small faces, resembling aliens, were found in 1998 under the Vatican Library, but that access to the site has been denied. A voiceover asked, “Could these skulls be the remnants of aliens who once lived in the Vatican?”

April 8

On NBC’s new late night show, “Late Night with Seth Meyers,” host Meyers did a segment titled “How they reported it.” The segment was a series of mock headlines from a variety of media outlets about a story on global warming:

Meyers: “Maybe we need to turn to religion for a minute, let’s see what Catholic Digest says, ‘Global Warming: It’s Because You Touched Yourself.’ They did warn us, they did warn us a bunch of times.”

An image was shown on the screen of a fake Catholic Digest cover with the aforementioned headline along with a priest holding a chalice and a loaf of bread.

April 16

On April 14, Conan O'Brien made fun of Pope Francis during his late night show on TBS. On April 15, he made an inoffensive joke about Jesus. We said nothing about these two jokes because they were not insulting, and we are not in the business of criticizing comedians when they take light-hearted jabs at our religion. But Conan didn't stop there.

In his April 16 monologue, Conan said the following: "The pope let two 11-year-old boys ride in the popemobile with him. Afterwards the Vatican told the pope 'that's not the kind of publicity we're looking for.'"

By perpetuating the stereotype that priests are child molesters, Conan O'Brien discredits himself and foments hatred of priests. We make critical distinctions at the Catholic League between disagreement and derision, and we expect no less from late-night talk-show hosts and their writers.

April 21

On NBC's new late night show, "Late Night with Seth Meyers," Meyers did a segment, "Venn Diagrams," where he sought to find common ground between two seemingly unrelated things. He compared "The Second Half of the Final Season of 'Mad Men'" [a TV show] with "Catholic Girls." The common thread was, "You Have to Wait Before You Get To See it All."

While we have heard worse, there was a disturbing pattern evolving. His show was only a few months old, and it was already clear that he had a Catholic fixation. On March 6, he made a quip about the pope and Jesus. On April 3, Meyers discussed "Philomena," a movie we exposed for its vicious lies about nuns. One of the movie's stars, Steve Coogan, who predicted that he would garner an Oscar (he came away empty-handed), whined about the criticism leveled at the film. This is in addition to his April 8 mock Catholic Digest headline. There were other shots taken at Catholics as well.

April 29

On the Comedy Central show "Tosh.0" Daniel Tosh hosted a mock game show, "American Christians got hella Talent" which featured the "Holy Trinity of judges." God was represented as an empty chair. Jesus was described as being fond of "fishing for men" [gay innuendo]. And the Holy Ghost was someone with a white sheet over his head. The judges commented on a series of faux performers.

The first act was "Fr. Flanagan and the hairless angels." A man dressed as a priest did a provocative dance with two young boys dressed as altar boys. The dance ended with the priest hugging the boys. Tosh said, "that's a slippery slope Fr. Flanagan." After the performance the judges offered their comments; Jesus refused to judge the man, and God responded "we're here to judge, don't be such a p*ssy."

Another act featured a rabbi who the judges disqualified. Tosh asked the judges "[are] you still upset about that whole crucifixion thing?" As the panel watched other fake contestants, Tosh interjected at one point, "you can cut the tension in this room with a nail through the palm."

The sketch ended with a bizarre sequence about the film "X-Men" and included God defending X-Men's director, Bryan Singer, against accusations that he sexually abused children.

May 16

After being pounded with mail from angry Catholics, including many bishops, Bill Maher laid off portraying priests as molesters for several months on his HBO show "Real Time with Bill Maher." Then he went back to the sewer again:

Maher: "This week Pope Francis said he would baptize aliens if they came to Earth. I love you, Frank, but that is some Mitt Romney-level crazy pope. I'm pretty sure any beings advanced enough to travel hundreds of light years aren't that interested in getting sprinkled with magic water. Besides, given the past history of fondling and groping, the last thing

the Church needs is a 50-foot-priest with six arms.”

May 30

Joan Rivers’ filthy antics made even her panelists recoil in embarrassment on E!’s “Fashion Police.” The occasion for Rivers’ vulgarity was a picture of singer Solange Knowles with her hair sticking up, looking particularly messy. Rivers quipped, “From the looks of Solange’s hair that comb gets used less frequently than the pope’s penis.”

June 4

Chelsea Handler and guest Ryan Stout attacked homosexual priests on the E! network’s “Chelsea Handler.” The occasion was Pope Francis advising young married couples not to see cats and dogs as an adequate substitute for children. Handler responded, “Yeah, that’s the point! And like you would know about having children—you’re a gay priest.” Stout followed up by saying that for these priests, “cats aren’t the same as kids.”

June 20

On E! network’s “Fashion Police” host Joan Rivers was commenting on a mug shot of singer Kid Rock. In the photo Kid Rock has a long beard and long shaggy hair:

Rivers: “...and if you look at this mug shot, this is the way Jesus would have looked if Mary had given birth in a trailer park instead of an inn.”

June 20

Bill Maher took a shot at Catholics during his HBO show “Real Time.” Maher discussed some recent comments that the pope had made about drug use and then he made an unnecessary joke about the center of the Catholic faith. “You know, look I respect, the pope says he never indulges in anything stronger than the Blood of Christ,” said Maher.

June 23

On the “Late Show with David Letterman” (CBS) Letterman

discussed the pope's remarks that members of the mafia were excommunicated. Letterman introduced the topic and made some mafia related jokes. Then Letterman made a joke about abusive priests: "...the pope also said, that members of the mafia, excommunicated, and creepy priests, not a problem. So that's... [laughter and applause] not what he said, but you know."

June 27

Joan Rivers attacked gay priests on her E! show "Fashion Police." Commenting on a short plaid skirt worn by singer Katy Perry, Rivers said "She is so much a Catholic schoolgirl that three priests stopped her to say 'you're cute, do you have a brother?'"

July 11

On HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher," Maher discussed the *Hobby Lobby* case that the U.S. Supreme Court decided. Here is an excerpt:

- "...but the five Catholic men on the Supreme Court agreed with Hobby Lobby that those women who have pleasure sex should be saddled with a baby."
- "And those five Catholic men on the Supreme Court, they know that God loves every tiny spec of human life, every single sperm from the moment it leaves the penis, until it tries to sneak into America. Then you're on your own."
- "...the five Catholic men on the Supreme Court they decided that, I think, that Catholic doctrine trumps federal law."
- "I just think that it's a little suspicious that its five Catholic men, and the Catholics do the thing about ejaculating. They do."

July 15

On CBS' "Late Show with David Letterman," the host talked about celibacy, priests, Pope Francis and Cardinal Timothy Dolan:

Letterman: “The pope is considering repealing celibacy for priests. Priests will no longer have to take a vow of celibacy. They’ll be gettin’ it done. It’s a miracle! And everybody is taking him seriously, earlier today at Communion, Cardinal Dolan, over at St. Patrick’s, sent over some Communion wine over to a sweet looking young thing over in the first pew...” [at this point Letterman used body language to imply that he is hitting on a girl. Nodding, winking, etc.].

July 16

For a second night David Letterman discussed priestly celibacy. He began by saying Pope Francis was thinking about lifting the celibacy requirement for priests. “That’s right, the pope is saying that priests can be in a marriage with a woman and have sex.” [A clip of women are shown cheering.]

The pope was also shown speaking to bishops and cardinals, his words dubbed over. “When two people love each other very much, they become more than just good friends. Eventually they might even get married and have a baby. The mommy and daddy make the baby together, but it grows inside the mommy.”

Letterman continued “So if a priest sees someone out there in the crowd that he likes, he might send over some Communion wine.” [Letterman was shown pointing and winking at someone.] Off camera, band leader Paul Shaffer replied, “That little lady over there.” To which Letterman replied, “Priests having sex, can you believe that?” [The clip of the cheering women is replayed.]

July 17

Kristeen Young was a musical guest on CBS’ “The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson.” Young performed her song “Pearl of a Girl” which attacked religion, the Bible and the Blessed Mother. Song lyrics include:

- “I never knew I was a girl until they stooped to tell me, I never knew I was disturbed until they dropped

three volumes on me. But in the Bible/Torah/Quran there are really no good roles for me except concubine and wash woman. I used to be the sad one, now I just wanna stab them.”

- “They’ve needed to have the law so they can legally bind us. They’ve needed to have the church so they can morally ground us. They’ve needed most of the dough, they must be so scared of us. So their stories are of ghosts; I only wish the Virgin would’ve had an abortion.”

July 18

Joan Rivers called Jesus a pimp on her show “Fashion Police” on E! While looking at a photo of singer Kid Rock wearing a full length fur coat, with sunglasses Rivers said “First of all, let me just say, Kid Rock, when did he audition to play Jesus Christ Super Pimp?”

July 18

On “Real Time with Bill Maher” (HBO) Maher called the pope a pimp during his “New Rules” segment: “New Rule. The pope is a pimp. I’m serious. I find myself wanting to ask this pope a question I never wanted to ask a pope before: Can I party with you?”

July 22

On Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show with Jon Stewart,” the host mocked Fox News for a soft interview with Sen. John McCain. Pretending to be a reporter, Stewart asked of himself, “Is Jon Stewart fair to Republicans?” Although this skit had absolutely nothing to do with Catholicism, Stewart managed to turn it into another one of his vintage Catholic-bashing moments.

Stewart: “Does the pope sh*t [bleeped] in the woods? Because if not, not only am I not fair to Republicans, I think a bear wearing a hat gave me Communion.”

[Next is an image of Stewart kneeling with his hands folded in prayer, and a large bear dressed as the pope holding a Host and ciborium; Stewart is kneeling waist high to the bear.]

Stewart: "I'm not going to make that other joke that I was just about to make—it was about one of us not using our teeth."

July 24

On the E! show "Chelsea Lately," host Chelsea Handler discussed sex abuse in the Catholic Church. She took issue with Pope Francis' statement that there was a zero tolerance policy for clerical abuse. Handler said "Well yeah, what should there be, a 50% tolerance policy? There should have been a zero tolerance policy years and years ago."

July 31

David Letterman made a series of jokes about summer vacations on his CBS late night show. He ended the segment claiming to have video footage of Pope Francis' summer vacation. Letterman showed a clip of an old man running along a beach wearing only a thong. A mitre was superimposed on his head.

August 1

On his HBO show "Real Time with Bill Maher," the host made two comments that caught our eye. Speaking about those that win the lottery but continue to work, Maher said "Oh please, either quit your job or give the money back, you're a waste of good luck, like a nun with a huge rack."

Later Maher said, "Where did we get this idea that drudgery is next to godliness? The Church of course. For hundreds of years the Catholic Church taught that God loved poverty, that's why he made so much of it."

August 4

A new show, "Partners," starring Kelsey Grammer and Martin Lawrence, premiered on FX. The show received negative reviews, but that is not why the Catholic League protested it. The show

revolves around two down-on-their-luck lawyers who team up. Lawrence's character decides to investigate his ex-wife, who has found religion and moved into the rectory of the parish where she is a bookkeeper. The protagonists believe that she is now sleeping with one of the priests. They break into the rectory in the middle of the night hoping to confront the priest, but end up searching his empty room. They find rosary beads that they insinuate are used for sex as well as a box of condoms and other clues that help them conclude that the woman is sleeping with the priest.

After this the sexual jokes abound. For example, "I can't believe my ex-wife was getting broke off by the one straight priest in Chicago"; and, "This is the woman I lived with for 22 years ... and the entire time she's sleeping with Fr. Francis giving him a second coming."

August 6

On an episode of "Late Night with Seth Meyers" which airs on NBC, Meyers said, "A Spanish hotel inspired by *Fifty Shades of Grey* is having its opening delayed because officials are concerned that it's too close to a nearby Catholic Church. 'We don't want to be next to all those creepy perverts,' said the hotel."

August 9

Comedy Central re-aired an episode of "South Park" from July 3, 2002. The episode, titled "Red Hot Catholic Love," was entirely about priestly sex abuse. The cartoon featured priests, bishops and cardinals defending child abuse. It was re-broadcast as part of Comedy Central's "Shart Week" programming. The Catholic League condemned the show when it originally aired.

August 15

A new show, "The Knick," on Cinemax featured a nun who performs an abortion. Sister Harriet, a nurse who runs an orphanage, visits an Irish Catholic woman, Nora, who wants an

abortion. The woman doesn't want her husband to find out.

Sister Harriet: "Your husband will know nothing of it. I promise."

Nora: "Will God forgive me? I don't want to go to hell for killing a baby."

Sister Harriet: "He knows that you suffered. I believe the Lord's compassion will be yours." [The audience is led to believe that the nun performed the abortion.]

September 5

Cinemax's "The Knick" continued its storyline about a nun who performs abortions. An ambulance driver who knows that the nun, Sister Harriet, performs abortions tries to extort money from her in exchange for his silence: "See I know about you. The mothers, the babies, the abortions. I've seen you with all of them. You are who you are. You defy God and you kill his creations and you stand there looking down on dirty old Cleary. A girl could get hanged for killing babies if the Bishop knew what you were doing."

After a girl dies while trying to abort her own baby, the ambulance driver, Tom Cleary, strikes a partnership with Sister Harriet:

Sister Harriet: "Now you know why I do what I do for these girls."

Cleary: "Don't go off defending your baby murdering. I still don't like it but I won't see another girl bleeding to death winding up here. So how about this? I find the girls needing services and you do the job on them. Good and safe?"

October 7

An episode of "The Mindy Project," a Fox show, opened with an implied sex scene involving Dr. Mindy Lahiri (played by Mindy Kaling) and Danny Castellano (played by Chris Messina); it was titled, "I Slipped!" The room is dark and there is moaning. Here is how the script unfurls:

Mindy: "Oh my God, Danny, this is heaven. Wait! Danny, Danny, that doesn't go there!"

Danny: "I slipped!"

After the title sequence, the two characters are shown in an office arguing about the sexual encounter from the night before. Mindy is upset with what Danny did. Danny insists it was a mistake. It is implied that Danny attempted anal sex. They take a shot at the Church's teachings on sodomy, as well as gay priests and the abuse crisis:

Mindy: "Okay, so you're innocent? You had no intent?"

Danny: "Of course no intent. I'm Catholic. Even if I think about that..."

Mindy: "They promote you to Cardinal?"

Danny: "Hey! Hey! That is all over. It's over. Pope Frank is on the case."

Danny: "Can we please just go talk about this in your office, please?"

Mindy: "I don't know, Danny, because my office only has one entrance and I don't know if that's enough for you anymore."

The show's writers may be interested in promoting homosexuality but there is no need to bring Catholics into their twisted storylines.

October 8

On MSNBC's "Morning Joe" the co-hosts discussed the synod of bishops that was going on at the Vatican to discuss challenges facing families. The co-hosts particularly focused on a speech given by a couple who had been married for 55 years. The couple discussed the role of sex in marriage as part of their remarks.

Joe Scarborough initially described the couple's speech as "uncomfortable" and co-host Mika Brzezinski found the situation very funny. Scarborough then made a comment about priestly celibacy.

Scarborough [to Brzezinski]: “You like that?”

Brzezinski [while laughing]: “I think it was probably very enlightening for them.”

Scarborough: “The joy of sex.”

Brzezinski [while laughing]: “Oh stop”

Scarborough: “I don’t know how many of them are celibate”

October 8

On NBC’s “Law and Order: Special Victims Unit” the case centers around a popular but troubled young actress. The starlet, who is in her twenties, performs oral sex on a 15-year-old boy while she is in rehab. As a result, she gets charged with statutory rape. It turns out that she was molested by a producer when she was a teenager. Detectives want to prosecute the producer, but the statute of limitations has run out on the older rapes that he’s responsible for:

Detective Amanda Rollins: “Were you sick the day that they went over the statute of limitations at law school?”

Unnamed Detective: “Yeah, yeah, she’s 24, which in New York is one year too late to charge statutory rape. Anybody want to explain to me why that law still exists?”

Prosecutor Rafael Barba: “You can thank the Church lobbyists for that.”

Barba’s claim is patently false. Planned Parenthood and the ACLU are responsible for these situations. By blaming the Church, NBC is fanning the flames of anti-Catholicism.

October 10

The Tom Selleck show “Blue Bloods” on CBS has treated Catholics fairly in the past before beginning to turn on its audience. Selleck stars as Police Commissioner Frank Reagan.

Reagan, a practicing Catholic, cannot defend the Church’s teachings on homosexuality, so when Catholicism is branded an “anti-gay faith,” he replies, “Well, I do believe the Church is a little behind the times on this.” Indeed, he goes so far

as to say, "I do believe the Church is backwards on this. And of all the stands to hold onto. In the midst of the scandals of the past decade." Viewers also meet a conflicted Cardinal Brennan, and a proud lesbian, Sister Mary.

October 27

After delivering a subtle pro-life message in earlier episodes, the writers for "Jane the Virgin" on the CW Channel got around to exploiting the Blessed Mother in the third installment. The show is based on the premise that Jane became pregnant through artificial insemination and remains a virgin. But in a recent episode Jane decided she was going to have sex with her boyfriend. In church during Mass, Jane's grandmother spoke to her about honesty, making her feel guilty. Hallucinating, Jane pictured the choir singing to her. Here is what followed:

Choir: "Tonight's the night you'll lie in bed. You should tell the truth, but you'll lie instead. Don't have sex, Jane, don't have sex."

Grandmother: "Can you really lie to my face?"

Choir and Congregation: "Can you really lie to her face?"

Statue of Virgin Mary: "Virginity for you and me if you keep your legs closed."

Choir and Congregation: "Keep them closed! Keep them closed! Keep them closed!"

When the scene ended, Jane was still in church. She was shown telling her mother and grandmother she was going to have sex with her boyfriend. Jane's mother said, "Halleluiaah," shocking the grandmother.

October 29

During "Late Night with Seth Meyers" on NBC, the late night host made the following statement in his monologue:

Meyers: "A church in Seattle has filed a lawsuit claiming that the legal marijuana retailer next door is too close to a

church,” Meyers said. “‘It’s causing some problems,’ said the priest, through a giant mouthful of Communion wafers.” [Talking as if his mouth is full, and acting as if he is stuffing more food in his mouth], Meyers continued, “It’s like super close to the church. I mean, sometimes it seems like it’s coming a little closer” [he acts as though he is taking a big drink].

There is a Seattle church that filed a lawsuit protesting the licensing of a legal marijuana retailer next door, but it is not a Catholic church: Mount Calvary Christian Church Center filed the lawsuit. But those who write script for Meyers are not interested in attacking Protestants—it’s much more fun mocking Catholics. That they stooped so low as to trash the Catholic celebration of the Eucharist shows the depth of their disorder.

November 6

On “The Daily Show with Jon Stewart” (Comedy Central) Stewart made a gratuitous joke about Jesus. He was comparing the reaction of Republicans following the 2012 election to the reaction of Democrats following the 2014 election.

Stewart: “...they [the media] said the exact same things about the Republican party when their death warrant was signed, a mere 24 months apparently before it burst forth from its grave like Jesus Christ [imitates the way a preacher might say ‘Jesus Christ’] or a zombie depending on your personal beliefs.”

November 6

On Comedy Central’s game show “@Midnight” comedians respond to questions or topics by making jokes and are awarded points. Host Chris Hardwick introduced the topic “Jesus Christ Superstardust” where the contestants had to guess if the person pictured was a hot priest, or an unemployed actor working at a restaurant. The contestants were told to guess if the person pictured was a “servant of God or a server of

french fries”

Hardwick: “The priests were taken from the 2014 hot priest calendar which features 12 actual Vatican priests sexy enough to be mister January through December. GLORY HOLE-LELUJIAH!” [a “glory hole” is used for anonymous gay sex].

The first round featured a picture of someone who was not a priest. The second round was a priest, “Father July.” In the second round, the show’s performers took a gratuitous shot at Jesus; they also played their anti-Semitic card. Jeff Ross, one of the contestants, said, “I’m not even gay and I want to nail him like Jesus to the cross.” To which Hardwick replies, “Listen, don’t worry, Jeff is a Jew—he did nail Jesus to the cross.”

November 7

For the second night in a row, Comedy Central’s “@Midnight” game show attacked Catholics. Host Chris Hardwick asked the comedians to come up with sensational headlines that could be used by the *New York Post*. Contestant Jim Norton responded “In God we thrust, Vatican sex scandal.” Hardwick awarded points for the joke.

November 9

“Mulaney,” is a Fox TV show starring comedian John Mulaney that offers typical sit-com fare blended with occasional stand-up appearances.

The story line was silly: Mulaney dupes his mom into thinking he’s a practicing Catholic, and even asks a priest to lie to his mom about going to church. He doesn’t succeed in his quest, but not before telling the priest that he is not like other comedians. On his knees in prayer, he says, “I would like to point out that I never did jokes about priest molestation during that whole thing—even though a lot of stand-up comics did and I totally could have.”

While still on his knees, Mulaney’s girlfriend walks in,

asking, "Are you praying?" Mulaney grabs his crotch and says, "No, I'm just masturbating."

November 21

Providence, RI – Following the arrest of a suspended priest, Father Barry Meehan, NBC 10 Rhode Island summoned its I-Team to investigate. The Diocese of Providence learned of the accusations of the priest in question in December 2012 and immediately contacted the police. In January 2013 the priest was suspended, and proceedings were initiated in the Vatican for a permanent removal from ministry. He was arrested and formally indicted in November 2014.

However the NBC 10 I-Team report focused not on Meehan but on letters sent from the diocese to the State Police about a number of different priests. The names were all blacked out so the reporter actually had no idea who the letters referred to. The reporter continually showed the blacked out letters and indictment. There was also an image of hands holding a crucifix. SNAP leader Ann Hagen Webb was interviewed but the reporter did not identify her as part of SNAP.

The documents used for the I-Team investigation were not proof of a cover-up or larger scandal, and in fact provided no new information about Meehan, because the diocese had previously released all its information on him. The letters had no names or dates, and all the letters were the diocese contacting the police. These facts did not stop NBC 10 from airing its one sided coverage and trying to stir up animus against priests.

November 25

During the Christmas episode of "Tosh.0" on Comedy Central, host Daniel Tosh opened a segment, "Beef Baby Jesus," by explaining that in a previous episode viewers were encouraged to tweet using the hashtag #beefbaby. Tosh then showed a clip on how the 'beef baby' was made using meat, human feces, and semen. Tosh then wrapped the "beef baby" in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.

December 9

On the celebrity show “TMZ” a joke was made about gay priests. The story focused on New England Patriots Quarterback Tom Brady’s use of the word “F*ck” on the football field. Some TV cameras have picked him up saying it and aired it on their broadcasts.

Brady answered questions about it during a radio show which TMZ played clips from.

Brady [to radio station]: “Yeah, we’re not choir boys, I know that.”

TMZ Narrator: “And Catholic priests are upset he isn’t.”

An image of a person dressed as a cardinal holding a bible is shown. The face of the person is censored.

December 16

The host of “Late Night with Seth Meyers” on NBC made a joke about a priest embezzling money and implied that all priests are child abusers, “This is unfortunate. Today a Catholic priest was sentenced after being convicted of embezzling money from a charity. Said Catholic officials, ‘embezzlement, oh thank God oh, oh I thought it was going to be so much worse. Oh, thank you. Oh it’s a Christmas miracle. He just stole money.’”

Special Reports

DEBUNKING “PHILOMENA”

January 27

The film “Philomena,” which premiered in the fall of 2013, was nominated for four Academy Awards. What had been peddled as a true story was, in fact, untrue. Worse, it deliberately painted the Catholic Church in a negative way, and was especially cruel to Irish nuns.

“Philomena” is such an outrageous lie that Bill Donohue

exposed it in a lengthy article, "Debunking Philomena." Copies were sent to the bishops, those in the entertainment industry, and to many in the media; scores of reporters in the U.S., England, and Ireland were mailed a copy. It is posted on the Catholic League website; see the "Special Reports" section.

The crux of the matter was this: according to the book (of the same name), upon which the movie is based, Philomena Lee got pregnant out of wedlock in Ireland in 1952 when she was 18-years-old. That part is true. But it was a malicious lie to say that the nuns stole her baby and then sold him to "the highest bidder." It was also a lie to say that Philomena went to the U.S. to find him.

In reality, Philomena's mother died when she was six, leaving her father to care for three boys and three girls. He put the girls in a convent and raised the boys. When Philomena got pregnant, and could not provide for her child, her father contacted the nuns asking for assistance.

In other words, the nuns never "stole" the baby. Moreover, Philomena's baby was not sold to "the highest bidder": no fee of any sort was charged.

The Wisconsin couple who adopted the boy offered a donation, which is customary, but it was entirely voluntary. And Philomena never set foot in the United States until the end of 2013 when she was hawking the movie—no attempt was ever made to find her son. Her son died of AIDS in the mid-1990s.

When the writer, the director, and the actors involved were asked about criticism by the Catholic League, they quickly said that the movie was "inspired" by true events. To show how utterly dishonest they are, consider the last paragraph of the book's Prologue. The author, Martin Sixsmith, said, "Everything that follows is true, *or reconstructed to the best of my ability*" (Italic added).

The word "everything" is an absolute—it allows for no

exceptions. But Sixsmith can't even complete the sentence without contradicting himself: as soon as "or" is added, the claim is no longer absolute. It gets better. "Gaps have been filled," Sixsmith says, "characters extrapolated, and incidents surmised"; this was also how the film starts. The gaps, it turned out, are gargantuan, but he was a master at filling them.

The film's producer, Harvey Weinstein, proved how diabolical he is when he went to Switzerland to meet with Vatican officials: he wanted the pope to see the film in a private screening. He failed. Father Federico Lombardi of the Holy See Press Office said, "The Holy Father does not see films and will not be seeing this one."

There were more lies. Steve Coogan, a co-producer of the movie and the person who adapted the book for the screen, told CNN that Philomena Lee was invited by the Vatican to meet with the pope. In fact, the two of them shook hands with the pope with a wall in between them, as part of the general audience, which is open to the public.

After the film received four Oscar nominations – it did not win a single one – the lies continued to mount. The *New York Times* said it was a contender because one of its "advantages" was "its backing by the Weinstein Company, which even orchestrated an audience with Pope Francis."

Regarding the so-called meeting of Philomena Lee and Pope Francis, she was denied a private audience; all she got was a pass to join the general audience. According to Vatican Radio, in the nine months that he was the pope in 2013, "over 6.6 million people attended events led by Pope Francis at the Vatican." Of that number, 1.5 million attended the pope's weekly general audience. Philomena Lee was one of the 1.5 million people who "met" the pope.

However, two Vatican officials did agree to see it.

Immediately, it was said that Pope Francis' "personal secretary" saw it. Floating this lie was Coogan as well as several media outlets on both sides of the Atlantic. The person they identified as the pope's personal secretary, Msgr. Guillermo Karcher, is actually one of nine papal masters of ceremonies; he is not even the main master. Msgr. Alfred Xuereb was the pope's secretary.

It is true that the Weinstein boys, Harvey and Bob, spent an enormous amount of money lobbying this movie. The non-stop ads in the *New York Times*, multiple each day, and in every section of the paper, were just one index. The lavish parties that Harvey Weinstein threw in Hollywood—everyone wants an invitation—also positioned him to score. While this may have gone down well with those in Tinseltown, it did not sit well in the Vatican.

Father Federico Lombardi, head of the Holy See Press Office, explicitly said that the pope would not see the movie. Furthermore, he took umbrage at those who were exploiting the pope to cash in on the film. According to Lombardi, "It is also important to avoid using the pope as part of a marketing strategy."

The website of *People* magazine quoted the 80-year-old Philomena Lee as saying, "I'm thankful and happy I did find him [her son], and that's all I ever wanted to do."

Similarly, in the entertainment section of *Time*, it was written, "Many other Irish women found themselves in similar situations [pregnant out of wedlock at age 18 in 1952] but, unlike Lee, never managed to find the children who were taken from them."

All of this was a lie because Philomena Lee never found her son: he died in 1995 and was buried on the grounds at the very convent that took her in when she was in need. She was lying about this because it fit with the lie about her looking

frantically for him for 50 years. In the movie, she was depicted as searching for her son in the United States.

In regards to the lie that Philomena went to the United States to look for her son, here is what Suzanne Daley and Douglas Dalby wrote in the *New York Times* on November 29, 2013: "In fact, much of the movie is a fictionalized version of events. Ms. Lee, for instance, never went to the U.S. to look for her son with Mr. Sixsmith, who is played by Steve Coogan, a central part of the film."

Philomena Lee never set foot in the United States until November 2013 when she went to Los Angeles to hawk her movie. Indeed, Philomena never even bothered to tell her daughter, Jane, about the brother she never knew she had until Philomena had too much to drink at a Christmas party in 2004.

Kevin Cullen of the *Boston Globe* added to the lies when he said the nuns "gave him [the son] away to an American family behind Philomena's back."

Steve Coogan, a producer and screenplay writer for the film "Philomena," was quoted in *The Sunday Times* (of London) as saying that the nuns asked Philomena Lee's son, Anthony, "to pay thousands of pounds to be buried" on the grounds of Sean Ross Abbey. "We didn't put that in the film. We were restrained." He also stated that "The film offers an olive branch to the church in showing Philomena's forgiveness. She dignifies her religion."

Furthermore, Steve Coogan concluded his remarks with this gem: "The Catholic League is a conservative wing of the Catholic church. They say no fee was charged for Anthony's adoption, but they [the nuns] did ask for a large donation. Well, call me stupid, but that sounds like a financial transaction."

Coogan was also a guest of Bill Maher on his HBO show, "Real Time with Bill Maher." Maher said there were 60,000 Philomenas in Ireland, women who had children out of wedlock and gave

their children up for adoption. Coogan claimed they were “maltreated and eventually their babies were sold to Americans.”

Bill Maher also said that Philomena Lee “looks like a slave in the movie,” stating she worked long hours in the laundries. Coogan went further by contending that the women “were victims of actual slavery,” and were “incarcerated against their will.”

No woman was ever incarcerated against her will in any of the laundries: *Every last one of the women came to the nuns—the nuns did not fetch the troubled women.*

Moreover, they were not mistreated, never mind enslaved, and no babies were sold. In early 2013, the Irish government released the McAleese Report on the Magdalene Laundries: it debunked these myths, and many more, yet people like Maher and Coogan have continued to promote them.

The Independent.ie (Irish Independent) ran a story by Liz O'Donnell on “Philomena” saying that Philomena Lee’s “child was stolen by the nuns.” This was incorrect: the 18-year-old Lee, pregnant out of wedlock, was taken to the nuns by her widowed father, hoping they would care for the baby. They did. At age 22, Lee voluntarily signed a contract awarding the nuns her son. The nuns then got her a job. That is the undisputed truth.

“Good Morning America” on ABC also interviewed Coogan; In the voice over, the following was said: “Philomena is based on a true story about an Irishwoman played by Judi Dench who travels to the U.S. to track down the son she was forced to give up for adoption when she was a teenager.”

In his remarks, Coogan said that 50 years ago in Ireland, women who were pregnant out of wedlock, and abandoned by their family, would go to homes run by nuns where “your child would be sold to Catholic, often American, wealthy American

couples.”

Chris Buckler, the BBC Ireland Correspondent, wrote Philomena Lee’s child was “taken away from her. When her son Anthony was three-and-a-half years old, the nuns in the convent gave him up for adoption to an American couple. *It all happened behind Philomena’s back*” (Italics added).

In fact, Philomena voluntarily signed adoption papers relinquishing custody of her son when she was 22 years of age. None of this was done by accident. It was as deliberate as it was malicious.

Sister Julie Rose, an official at the convent in question, flatly denied charging a fee. “No children were sold by any mother or the congregation, to any party, nor did the congregation receive any monies in relation to adoption while we were running the mother and baby home.” Even the author of the book upon which “Philomena” is based admitted that it was “customary for the adopting party to make a donation,” but that it was not mandatory.

All of this was a lie. The proof is the oath that Philomena signed. Here is what it said:

“That I am the mother of Anthony Lee who was born to me out of wedlock at Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, Ireland, on 5th July 1952.

“That I hereby relinquish full claim forever to my said child Anthony Lee and surrender said child to Sister Barbara, Superioress of Sean Ross Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, Ireland.

“The purpose of this relinquishment is to enable Sister Barbara to make my child available for adoption to any person she considers fit and proper inside or outside the state.

“That I further undertake never to attempt to see, interfere

with or make any claim to the said child at any future time.”

This oath was signed by Philomena Lee. Below her signature, it says:

“Subscribed and sworn to by the said Philomena Lee as her free act and deed this 27th day of June 1955.” Signed, Desmond A. Houlihan, notary public.

Not only did Philomena Lee voluntarily sign an oath when she was 22 giving her son up for adoption, in the film itself, Dench says, “No one coerced me. I signed of my own free will.”

Regarding the lie about Philomena’s baby being sold, in the book by Martin Sixsmith upon which the film was based, he stated that, “While neither the NCCC [National Conference of Catholic Charities] nor Sean Ross Abbey [the convent where Philomena resided] charge any fees, it is customary for the adopting party to make a donation....”

These lies were aided and abetted by many in the media, for reasons that only underscore the existence of the Catholic League.

The Catholic League has greatly emphasized the fact that Philomena was not a child when she voluntarily put her son up for adoption—she was 22. Anyone who doubts what has been said should read p. 51 in Martin Sixsmith’s book, *Philomena*. While he was a major part of the spin game regarding Philomena, the oath that he reprinted settles the argument: her baby was not “forcibly taken” and nothing happened “behind her back.”

IRELAND’S “MASS GRAVE” HOAX

The following entry was originally published in the July/August Catalyst. It is an excerpt from Bill Donohue’s report, “Ireland’s ‘Mass Grave’ Hysteria.” To read the full account, see the “Special Reports” section of the Catholic League’s website.

June 23

Mass hysteria gripped Ireland, England, and the United States over reports that nearly 800 bodies of children were found in a mass grave outside a former home run by nuns in Tuam, near Galway. The Catholic Church was hammered incessantly, and shrill cries of maltreatment abounded. Fresh off the heels of horror stories about the Magdalene Laundries, and the torment of Philomena Lee (as recorded in the film, "Philomena"), the public was reeling from the latest report of abuse at the hands of cruel nuns.

None of this is true. There is no mass grave. Women were not abused by nuns in the Magdalene Laundries. And Philomena's son was never taken from her and then sold to the highest bidder. The evidence that the public has been hosed is overwhelming. Truths, half-truths, and flat-out lies are driving all three stories. That's a bad stew, the result of which is to whip up anti-Catholic sentiment. This is no accident.

Regarding the latest hoax, many reporters and pundits charged that the "mass grave" story is "Ireland's Holocaust." The Nazi analogy belittles what happened to Jews under Hitler, and dishonors Irish nuns. The nuns never put kids into ovens; they did not starve them to death; and they did not torture anyone. Even if the most glaringly dishonest stories about children who died in Irish homes were true, they would not come close to approaching the monstrous atrocities that Jews endured under the Nazis. To make such a comparison is obscene.

It is true that 796 children died in the Tuam home between 1925 and 1961, and their whereabouts are uncertain. But that hardly merits the fantastic leap that wicked nuns dumped them in a septic tank, treating them as if they were raw sewage. There is not a scintilla of evidence to back up this scurrilous accusation. Yet in May and June, this propaganda was disseminated on both sides of the Atlantic, treated as if it were an accurate account.

What is perhaps most striking about this story is the extent to which much of the mainstream media had to walk back its inflammatory stories. The Associated Press even apologized in June for distorting the record. But the damage has been done: once again, the Catholic Church in Ireland has been unfairly blamed for persecuting innocent women and children.

Anti-Catholicism in Ireland, England, and the United States is fueling the “mass grave” hysteria. It’s a sick appetite, and there is no shortage of irresponsible persons feeding it.

One of the key players in the “mass grave” story about the Tuam home was Catherine Corless, a local historian. Her research “suggested 796 babies were buried in a tank outside the former Tuam Mother and Baby Home, in Co. Galway, once run by the Bon Secours nuns in Galway.” Research that suggests an outcome is hardly unimportant, but it is not dispositive. Furthermore, while it is entirely fair to surmise what happened, it is quite another thing to declare exactly what happened.

What is not in dispute is the fact that between 1925 and 1961, 796 children died at this home in Tuam. An initial investigation concluded that “No one knows the total number of babies in the grave.” On June 5, the *New York Times* said the local police discounted the “mass grave” story as myth. “These are historical burials going back to famine times,” the police said. They added that “there is no confirmation from any source that there are between 750 and 800 bodies present.” Yet that is precisely what many media outlets, and activists, said.

Eamonn Fingleton, writing in *Forbes*, noted that “experts believe that the babies were buried in unmarked graves within the grounds of the orphanage.” This was not uncommon in Ireland in the first half of the 20th century; this is the way church-run orphanages and workhouses buried their dead.

In many ways, the observations of Brendan O'Neill are the most impressive. He is an Irish atheist with no dog in this fight, save for telling the truth. O'Neill is anything but politically correct. He saw through the malarkey about the Magdalene Laundries, and he has been equally courageous in challenging tales of "mass graves."

"On almost every level," O'Neill said in his June 9 article in *Spiked*, "the news reports in respectable media outlets around the world were plain wrong. Most importantly, the constantly repeated line about the bodies of 800 babies having been found was pure mythmaking. The bodies of 800 babies had not been found, in the septic tank or anywhere else." The myth was the product of Corless' "speculation" that the children who died in the home were buried in a mass grave.

O'Neill was adamant in his conviction that "it's actually not possible that all 800 babies are in this tank-cum-crypt, as pretty much every media outlet has claimed." He cited a story in the *Irish Times* that said "the septic tank was still in use up to 1937, 12 years after the home opened, during which time 204 of the 796 deaths occurred—and it seems impossible that more than 200 bodies could have been put in a working sewage tank."

Tim Stanley is another reliable source from the U.K., and he was also convinced that the popular understanding of what happened is false. "It is highly unlikely, if not physically impossible," he wrote on June 7, "that 796 bodies would have been placed into one septic tank." He took note of the fact that "the tank was only in use between 1926 and 1937," thus undercutting wild accusations that the vile nuns treated dead children like raw sewage for decades.

Fingleton drew on his own experience to question the veracity of the conventional wisdom. He did not mince words: "For anyone familiar with Ireland (I was brought up there in the 1950s and 1960s), the story of nuns consciously throwing

babies into a septic tank never made much sense. Although many aforesaid nuns might have been holier-than-thou harridans, they were nothing if not God-fearing and therefore unlikely to treat human remains with the sort of outright blasphemy implied in the septic tank story.”

Adding considerable weight to the observations of O’Neill, Stanley, and Fingleton was Dr. Finbar McCormick. He teaches at the School of Geography, Archaeology and Paleoecology at Queens University in Belfast. He berated the media for using the term “septic tank” to describe the child burials at the home. “The structure as described is much more likely to be a shaft burial vault, a common method of burial used in the recent past and still used today in many parts of Europe.” He specifically said that “Many maternal hospitals in Ireland had a communal burial place for stillborn children or those who died soon after birth. These were sometimes in a nearby graveyard but more often in a special area within the grounds of the hospital.”

So if the public has been duped, how did this story begin? It began innocently enough in 2010, but it took on a strong ideological bent in early 2014. The key players were Corless and Martin Sixsmith.

In 2010, Catherine Corless read an article in the *Tuam Herald* that caught her eye. The piece, “Stolen Childhoods,” recounted the fate of a former resident in the Mother and Baby home in Tuam that was run by the Bon Secours Sisters. She had already done research on this home, so she naturally followed up and contacted the man identified in the article. This provided her with other leads. Two years later, in November 2012, Corless published her findings in a local journal.

What was most striking about Corless is not what she said in 2012, but how she changed her story. In her journal article, there was no professed anger at the nuns, or the Catholic Church. But later she was in rage. While she does not explain

her change in tune, it is evident that her encounter with Sixsmith early in 2014 proved to be a game changer.

Sixsmith is the English atheist who wrote the patently dishonest book about Philomena Lee; the movie about her life was based on his work. Since then, he has taken every opportunity to fan the flames of anti-Catholicism, and even arranged to include the “mass grave” hoax in a documentary about the horrors of Irish nuns. Once he hooked up with Corless, she became increasingly strident in her denunciations of the nuns and the Catholic Church.

Corless was now on a tear. Her previous comments on the possibility of a mass grave, which were tentative, gave way to absolute certainty. “I am certain there are 796 children in the mass grave.” Just as important, she was now convinced of the mendacity of the Catholic Church. “I do blame the Catholic Church,” she said. “I blame the families as well but people were afraid of the parish priest. I think they were brainwashed.” No longer a Catholic, she confesses, “I am very, very angry with the Catholic church.”

The notion that a mass grave existed in the site of the Home is oddly enough credited to the same person who says there never was one. His name is Barry Sweeney. Here’s what happened.

In 1975, when Sweeney was 10, he and a friend, Frannie Hopkins, 12, were playing on the grounds where the home was when they stumbled on a hole with skeletons in it. Corless had heard about some boys who found skeletons there, but did not know their identity until 2014. On St. Patrick’s Day, Sweeney was drinking at Brownes bar, on the Square in Tuam, when he learned of Corless’ research. The two subsequently met.

In her journal article, Corless made mention of a “few local boys” who “came upon a sort of crypt in the ground, and on peering in they saw several small skulls.” So how did she make

the leap in 2014 that she was “certain” there are 796 bodies in a mass grave when just two years ago she wrote about “several small skulls”? The leap, it is clear, was not made on the basis of the evidence.

More important, Corless did not jump to the conclusion that “the bones are still there” because she learned from Sweeney about some new evidence. We know this because he contradicts her fantastic story. He was quoted in the *Irish Times* saying “there was no way there were 800 skeletons down that hole. Nothing like that number.” How many were there? “About 20,” he said.

It is a credit to Douglas Dalby of the *New York Times* that he did not bury this new information the way most other media outlets did. On June 10, he wrote that “some of the assumptions that led Ms. Corless to her conclusion [about the mass grave] have been challenged, not least by the man she cited, Barry Sweeney, now 48, who was questioned by detectives about what he saw when he was 10 years old. ‘People are making out we saw a mass grave,’ he said he had told the detectives. ‘But we can only say what we seen [sic]: maybe 15 to 20 small skeletons.’”

It does not speak well for Corless that she was flatly contradicted by one of the few persons whose credibility no one questions. Any objective researcher would have adjusted his thesis after encountering a central figure such as Sweeney. Even more bizarre, her initial assessment was sober in analysis. But meeting Sweeney was too late to matter: Corless had already met Sixsmith, and she wasn’t about to let the facts get in her way. Ideology, as we have seen repeatedly in history, has a way of trumping the truth.

It was not just writers such as Fingleton who see an anti-Catholic bias at work (he calls the whole story a “hoax”). Dalby quoted a member of the committee that was organized to memorialize the dead children, Anne Collins, as saying she has

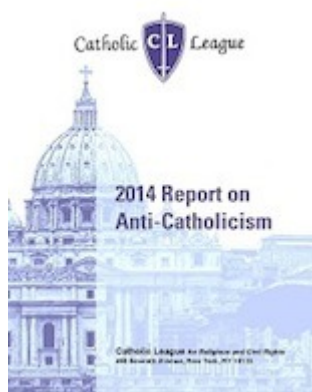
had it with the ideologues: “Ms. Collins said the news media and ‘church bashers’ had hijacked the situation, and she disagreed with the widespread condemnation of the nuns.”

Tim Stanley was right to finger a double standard that is present among elites: “Whenever a Muslim does something cruel or barbaric (such as female genital mutilation), politicians and the media are quick (rightly) to assert that this is a cultural practice rather than a religious one. But whenever a Catholic is guilty of a crime, it is either stated or implied that it is a direct consequence of dogma.”

The Sixsmiths of this world are not at all angry about the mass killings and the mass burnings of unborn babies going on today right before our eyes. No, they are too busy fabricating stories about nuns sexually assaulting young women, stealing their kids, and dumping their bodies in septic tanks. It tells us a great deal about the current state of anti-Catholicism that such nonsense is not only accepted, it is welcomed as affirmation of the venality of the Catholic Church.

WAR ON THE BISHOPS

The following is an excerpt of a Special Report by Bill Donohue, originally published in the September edition of *Catalyst*.



The Catholic Church has many enemies these days, some of whom are ex-Catholics who left the Church a long time ago. They are joined by the disaffected, those who pretend (even convincing themselves) that they are Catholics in good standing. Most of these malcontents are lay men and women, but some are priests, and not a few are nuns. All of them are animated by a strong rejection of the Church's teachings on sexuality. Because they have the support of the secular media, they comprise a formidable group.

What motivates them today is the debased desire to take down a bishop. Not any bishop: They want to drop a bishop who is an outspoken defender of the faith. They really get excited when they learn of a diocese that was riddled with dissidents and is now almost dissident free.

Geopolitics is at work, as well. While they will work overtime to disable a bishop anywhere in the nation, they prefer to scalp a bishop from the mid-west. Why? Because that's where many of them live. It's also because it is easier for activists to dominate the news in mid-sized cities, as opposed to larger ones where it is much more difficult. Their attacks are orchestrated and well-coordinated: lawyers feed the activists and they feed the media.

Cardinal Raymond Burke, formerly the Archbishop of St. Louis and then the prefect of the Vatican's highest court, has drawn the enmity of mid-western dissidents for years. He is despised because of his denunciations of Catholic public figures who reject the Church's teachings that bear on public policy issues. Burke's critics have no problem with the Nancy Pelosi who continually claim their Catholic status while doing everything they can to undermine the Church. They have a problem with him.

New York Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan hails from St. Louis and was the Milwaukee archbishop before coming to the Big Apple. He is hated because he cleaned up after his

disgraced predecessor, Archbishop Rembert Weakland. Though Weakland embarrassed himself and the Church, he is still revered in left-wing Catholic quarters. He is liked because his views are similar to theirs.

They tried to take Dolan down because he moved the perpetual care fund, which was part of the regular archdiocesan accounts, to a cemetery trust fund. It did not matter that he was following the advice of his Financial Council; what mattered was that his enemies could play fast-and-loose with a contrived controversy. When Dolan moved to New York, they stayed on his trail. Terence McKiernan, the founder of BishopAccountability, pledged a few years ago to "stick it" to Dolan, and has accused him of "keeping the lid on 55 priests." Several attempts challenging McKiernan to release the names have failed. It's a lie and he knows it.

When Bishop John Myers of Peoria took over the Newark archdiocese, his enemies followed him. They went wild when it was learned that a priest was not being properly supervised after he had an encounter with a teenager 12 years earlier; he grabbed the boy while wrestling with him (in front of the boy's mother). In fact, what was really bothering his critics were Myers' strong positions on sexuality. The editorial page editor of the Newark *Star-Ledger*, an angry ex-Catholic, specifically took umbrage with Myers for his defense of "marriage and life."

Bishop Robert Finn of Kansas City-St. Joseph inherited a mess made by dissidents and cleaned it up. That made him a target. His enemies seized on the antics of a disturbed priest who took crotch-shot pictures of kids. It is important to note that the review board was contacted, the authorities were notified, and an independent investigation was ordered. But because much more offensive photos were later taken, Finn was found guilty of one misdemeanor for not reporting suspected child abuse. Had he done nothing, no one would have known about the priest because there was no complainant. No matter,

they wanted his head and are still after him.

St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson was recently the victim of a campaign by anti-Catholics who tried to frame him. Their goal was to promote the pernicious idea that he did not know that child abuse was against the law. It failed, but what counts is that they tried. Because Carlson fought back, and because he rejects the libertine ideas of his critics, they sought to bring him down.

No one has endured a more vicious assault on his character than John Nienstedt, Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In order to understand the motivations behind these attacks, we need to disclose who the principal players are in this quest to scalp a bishop.

Attorney Jeffrey Anderson, the Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP), and the *National Catholic Reporter* are leading the charge. Anderson is from St. Paul, SNAP honcho David Clohessy lives in St. Louis, and the *Reporter's* home is Kansas City, Missouri. All of them find a sympathetic ear with the media.

The *Kansas City Star*, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* are their biggest fans. Outside of the mid-west, they have friends at the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, National Public Radio and *Commonweal* magazine; the latter has become increasingly strident.

Examples of some of the attacks on bishops that the Catholic League addressed in 2014 follow.

June 10

Archdiocese of St. Louis – On June 9, attorney Jeff Anderson released video clips from a May 23 deposition transcript of St. Louis Archbishop Robert Carlson. It was vintage Anderson: he misrepresented the truth. The media, led by the editorial board of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, echoed the distortion.

The *Post-Dispatch* editorial said the following: "Mr. Anderson asked the archbishop if at the time [1984], he knew it was a crime for an adult to engage in sex with a child. 'I'm not sure whether I knew it was a crime or not,' Archbishop Carlson replied. 'I understand today it is a crime.'" The editorial then hammered Carlson for his response, comparing him to "lawyered-up mobsters, politicians or Wall Street fraudsters." The editorial board suggested that Archbishop Carlson "should resign and seek treatment for Alzheimer's or some other form of dementia."

However, what actually happened in the deposition was quite different than what the paper reported. The lead question in this exchange was never shown on the video clip. The question was: "Well, mandatory reporting laws went into effect across the nation in 1973, Archbishop." At this point, Carlson's lawyer, Charles Goldberg, interjected, "I'm going to object to the form of that question." Anderson said he wanted to finish the question, and Goldberg agreed. Anderson then said to Carlson, "And you knew at all times, while a priest, having been ordained in 1970, it was a crime for an adult to engage in sex with a kid. You knew that right?" Goldberg jumped in again: "I'm going to object to the form of that question now. You're talking about mandatory reporting." Anderson agreed to rephrase it.

The *Post-Dispatch* editorial picked up at this point, never indicating that the question was predicated on Carlson's knowledge of mandatory reporting laws in the 1980s. In other words, the video clip was rigged by Anderson to make the archbishop look as if he didn't know it was a crime for an adult to have sex with a kid, and the media, led by the *Post-Dispatch*, published Anderson's propaganda as if it were true. It was obvious that the media never independently verified Anderson's selective account, for if they had they would have seen that not only was this exchange about mandatory reporting laws, but that the archbishop indicated several times in the

same deposition that he knew it was a crime for a priest to have sex with a child.

Prior to the controversial exchange, Anderson asked Carlson several questions about Tom Adamson (a homosexual priest who had sex with teenage males). Carlson said, "I remember he was accused of sexual abuse. That's the trial I participated in." Having said as much, it was simply impossible to believe that Carlson did not know it was against the law for an adult to have sex with a minor.

Anderson also asked, "And you also knew when first degree criminal sexual conduct is written and recorded, that is the most serious of the sex crimes against a child. You know that?" To which Carlson said, "Correct." This was further proof that Carlson knew what the law was; this was also said prior to the controversial exchange.

After the exchange in question, Anderson asked Carlson, "But you knew a priest touching the genitals of a kid to be a crime; did you not?" Carlson answered, "Yes." Further exculpatory proof can be found throughout the deposition. On eight different occasions Carlson restated to Anderson that he told relatives of the victims to go to the police. He wouldn't have done so unless he knew a crime may have been committed.

Archbishop Carlson was framed by Jeffrey Anderson and the media perpetuated his tale.

June 10 – 19

Archdiocese of San Francisco – Rep. Nancy Pelosi does not simply reject the Catholic Church's teachings on marriage, abortion, and contraception—she is a rabid foe of the Church's positions. However, she went beyond her usual stance by lecturing her archbishop on the folly of marriage, properly understood.

On June 19, San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone spoke at a Washington rally organized by the National

Organization for Marriage. Pelosi urged him to cancel his plans because the event was not supported by her homosexual friends. Her unmitigated arrogance was on full display when she invoked a remark by Pope Francis. "If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will," the Holy Father said, "then who am I to judge him?"

The pope's comment had absolutely nothing to do with the institution of marriage; he was addressing homosexual individuals. Moreover, he said nothing that any of his predecessors would have found disagreeable.

Archbishop Cordileone responded to Pelosi as well as a motley group of public officials, community activists, religious leaders, and gay advocates who were also upset that he supports marriage, properly understood. It is a striking sociological moment when elites stage a protest of an archbishop in the Roman Catholic Church simply because he believes—as the whole world has believed for thousands of years—that marriage is the union of a man and a woman.

Those who are quick to brand support for traditional marriage hateful need to look in the mirror. As Archbishop Cordileone said in his excellent response to his critics, "for those who support the conjugal understanding of marriage, the attacks have not stopped at rhetoric. Simply for taking a stand for marriage as it has been understood in every human society for millennia, people have lost their jobs, lost their livelihoods, and have suffered other types of retribution, including physical violence."

The archbishop, who is chairman of the bishops' Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, offered to meet with those offended by his participation in the march. He asked "before you judge us, get to know us."

When gays go naked in the streets of San Francisco, and mock Catholicism in patently obscene ways, Pelosi is never

offended. What offends her is her archbishop's public defense of the Church's teachings on marriage.

July 1 – August 1

Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis – An orchestrated crusade was carried out against St. Paul and Minneapolis Archbishop John Nienstedt by activist groups and the media with attorney Jeffrey Anderson, SNAP and the *National Catholic Reporter* leading the charge. They found a sympathetic ear in the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, Minnesota Public Radio, and *Commonweal* magazine. Jennifer Haselberger, a canon lawyer who resigned from the archdiocese earlier in the year provided the fuel for the attacks.

Haselberger is the darling of *Commonweal*, Minnesota Public Radio, and SNAP; she spoke at the latter's conference in August. It is a source of great irony that she was suspended by the archdiocese for failing to deal expeditiously with a complaint, yet her signature complaint against the archdiocese was that it didn't move expeditiously to deal with accused priests.

Over the summer, Haselberger submitted an affidavit to Anderson claiming to have endured "months of harassment, threats, and intimidation"; she pledged to provide examples. In fact, she provided not a single example of being threatened by anyone, and the examples that she offered of being harassed and intimidated are so weak they only work to undermine her credibility. Moreover, even she admits to at least 17 occasions where her version of events differed with that of her co-workers.

A week before Haselberger gave her affidavit, *Commonweal* printed a lengthy article detailing what she told them: the archbishop was under investigation for inappropriate sexual conduct with seminarians and former priests. Nienstedt announced the investigation on the same day, July 1, claiming

innocence. She leaked this information after having learned of it from the law firm that was conducting an investigation, a probe initiated by Nienstedt.

Exactly one week after Haselberger's uncontested affidavit was taken, Minnesota Public Radio aired a documentary that featured all the familiar players, complete with piped-in melodramatic music. For an outlet that prides itself on objectivity, it was nothing but a left-wing hit job. That teed things up for Anderson, who conveniently released Haselberger's statement the next day. The day after that, Laurie Goodstein published her story in the *New York Times*, and two days later her newspaper published a scathing editorial on Nienstedt. On the same day, July 18, two journalists, one from the *National Catholic Reporter*, called for the archbishop to resign. This set the tone for Minnesota newspapers which then called for him to resign.

Nienstedt tried to reach out to the media to tell his side of the story, but what interested them was not his account, it was his sexuality. To be exact, they wanted to know what he did in bed, and with whom: three media outlets questioned him about his sexual behavior. He told the *Star-Tribune*, "No, I'm not gay. And I'm not anti-gay." When asked by the *Pioneer Press* if he had had sex with men since becoming archbishop, he said, "No. Not even before." A homosexual reporter for KMSP, Fox 9 Minneapolis, also asked the archbishop about his sexuality.

Those out to get Nienstedt cannot be shamed, but they can be stopped. Unfortunately, too many Catholic activists and writers who knew he was being railroaded went mute. It was apparent that the attacks were carefully orchestrated and well-coordinated: lawyers fed the activists and they fed the media.

August 20

Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph – The Kansas City Star

issued its sixth call for the resignation of Bishop Robert Finn in three years. The occasion was a judge who agreed with the findings of an arbitrator that Finn had violated a 2008 agreement on policies regarding the reporting of child abuse.

The *Star* has been after Bishop Finn since 2010 when a computer technician found disturbing crotch shot photos of fully clothed girls on the computer of a priest; there was one naked photo of a non-sexual nature. A police officer and an attorney were contacted by the diocese and restrictions were placed on the priest. After the priest violated the restrictions Bishop Finn ordered an investigation *even though there was no complainant*. Porn pictures were discovered and Bishop Finn was convicted of not reporting suspected child abuse.

The *Star's* impotence is a function of its misplaced authority: it has no legitimate perch upon which to tell Catholics who their bishop should be. Furthermore, its relentless attacks on Bishop Finn show a maniacal fixation that speaks more about its own problems than any alleged problems Finn has.

August 24

Diocese of Lafayette – The media, activists and dissident Catholics were up in arms over the decision of Lafayette Bishop Michael Jarrell not to publish the names of 15 priests who were accused of abuse prior to 1984. The list was not new and there were no new accusations of abuse; in fact all of the accused priests were either deceased or long-removed from ministry. Rather, victims' advocates decided to target Bishop Jarrell and waged a media blitz in an attempt to shame the bishop. Bill Donohue was invited by the *Daily Advertiser* to write an op-ed in defense of Bishop Jarrell:

Kudos to Lafayette Bishop Michael Jarrell for not publishing the names of priests accused of a sexual offense. His decision is identical to the one that the leaders of every other institution, public and private, have long come to: it is unethical to do so. Why should the Catholic Church be any

different?

A reporter came to my office a few years ago asking me about this issue. Specifically, she asked how I could defend a bishop for not posting the names of accused priests on his diocesan website. I immediately asked for her boss' name and phone number. She wanted to know why. "Because I am going to report you for sexually harassing me, and then I want to see if your name is going to be posted on the website of your cable news employer." She got the point.

I am the CEO of the Catholic League. If someone called me making an accusation against one of my staff members, I can assure you I would not call the cops. No employer would. I would do the same as everyone else: I would conduct my own internal investigation, and would only go to the authorities if I thought the charge was authentic.

There is a profound difference between an accusation, a credible accusation, a substantiated accusation, and a finding of guilt. The assumption behind all three levels of accusations is that the accused is innocent, yet this seems not to matter much anymore, especially when the accused is a priest.

The leader of a professional victims' group maintains that we need to know the names of the credibly accused priests in Lafayette so that parents can protect their children. Nonsense. Of the 15 priests, seven are dead, five have moved away, and three are retired. None is in ministry. Moreover, all the accusations stem from alleged offenses dating back prior to 1984. In short, it is more than hype to suggest that kids are in danger—it is expressly demagogic, designed to whip up public sentiment against priests.

What is really sickening about this issue is that so many decent and innocent priests have had their reputations ruined by vicious accusers who remain anonymous. No one demands that

we make public the names of the accusers, but somehow we are all supposed to know the identity of the accused. Correction: only when it comes to priests are demands made to publish the names of the accused.

The New York Times has a Business Ethics Policy that reads, "Any employee who becomes aware of any conduct that he or she believes to be prohibited by this Policy or a violation of the law...is expected to promptly report the facts forming the basis of that belief or knowledge to any supervisor of the legal department."

In other words, crimes of a sexual nature need not be reported to the police, just the legal department. If this policy is good for reporters, why isn't it good for bishops? The best part of the Times' policy says that those who make false accusations are subject "to discipline up to and including termination." The bishops should adopt this policy immediately.

I am so proud of Bishop Jarrell for acting fairly and courageously.

September

Diocese of Venice – Dissident lay Catholics in Southwest Florida, along with some priests, declared war on Bishop Frank Dewane. He is the Bishop of Venice and is by all accounts a loyal son of the Church. Which is why they were out to get him.

Dewane drew the ire of Catholic malcontents, and ex-Catholics, because of his orthodoxy. His critics are largely drawn from the ranks of the elderly, and are overrepresented by ex-priests and ex-nuns. They were being aided and abetted by the media. This occasioned a strong response from us: we took on Fox 4 TV, which covers Fort Myers, Cape Coral, and Naples.

The war on Bishop Dewane started in January when ten priests wrote a letter to the Apostolic Nuncio accusing the bishop of

governing by “intimidation, the use of fear, shaming, bullying and other non-Christian behaviors.” The letter was made public in May when it was sent to the media, and unfolded in an unseemly manner this fall.

The accusing priests refused to come forward and let the accused know of their identity. In fact, they never sent Dewane a copy of their letter (he learned of it through the media). To make matters worse, these cowardly priests did not provide a scintilla of evidence: no specific examples of Dewane’s alleged “non-Christian” behavior were offered.

Dewane subsequently released a statement saying that the priests’ letter “lacks all credibility.” Furthermore, he said that the accusations are “sweeping generalities and are simply false or unfounded.” The statement concluded, “With the general nature of the unfounded complaints in the letter that was released, one has to wonder who is being bullied by whom?”

To answer the charges in the letter, Bishop Dewane convened a meeting of all the priests in the diocese. Most priests said that their complaining colleagues should have met with the bishop and handled this matter internally. That’s what real men do.

Not surprisingly, Call to Action and Voice of the Faithful, two wholly discredited groups, piled on. In a state of utter desperation, they reached out to Pope Francis, asking him to enter the fray. Their letter to him was replete with unsubstantiated accusations, and loaded with vitriol.

The Catholic League contacted every parish in the diocese rebutting the charges against Bishop Dewane. Bill Donohue also wrote a detailed letter to Fox 4 TV challenging their professionalism. The station offered a lengthy reply. While it was unconvincing, it was far less partisan than its reporting. We trust they got the message.

CHRISTIAN GENOCIDE MUST END

Children are being beheaded, women are being raped, men are being crucified, and Christians are being forced to "convert or die." This is the essence of radical Islam: the barbarians even kill Muslims, as well as Christians, Jews, and others who are not like them. To make sure the homes they destroy are the right ones—the Christian ones—they mark them with an "N." It means Nazarene. We've seen that kind of branding before in Nazi Germany.

The United Nations General Assembly convenes tomorrow. It needs to act on Resolution 2170, unanimously passed on August 15 by the Security Council. It invokes Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter authorizing a military response. Islamic State terrorists need to be stopped, not contained. If the caliphate is not crushed, the United States risks being bombed again.

Resolution 2170 calls for sanctions to be levied against those who are financing, arming, planning, and recruiting these jihadists. It calls for asset freezes, travel bans, and an arms embargo. The United Nations must now make good on its pledge. More must be done: The United Nations should initiate proceedings in the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.

The Obama administration needs to give the Kurds, the Iraqis, and all those who are willing to fight the terrorists, the arms they need to win. We are not fighting criminals—we are fighting Islamic State savages who have engaged in acts of war. What is at stake is the preservation of Western civilization and the Judeo-Christian ethos upon which it was built.

The Catholic Church rightly eschews a military response to conflict, but there are times when a "just war" is necessary. That time is now. Either the forces of peace and freedom will prevail, or the forces of death and totalitarianism will triumph. The international community, led by the United States, must act now.

Bill Donohue
President



CATHOLIC LEAGUE for Religious and Civil Rights

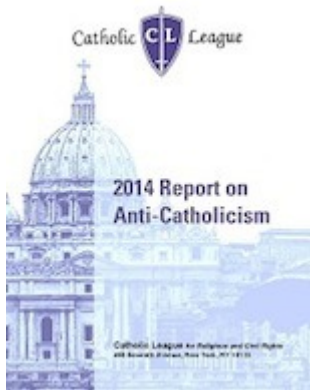
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This ad appeared on the op-ed page of the September 15, 2014 edition of the *New York Times*.

WAR ON CHRISTMAS



The annual "War on Christmas" continued in 2014 with both sides having achieved roughly the same number of wins and losses. This is certainly an improvement over the days when the anti-Christmas side appeared to be winning this battle in the culture war. The good news is that the pro-Christmas side has been pushing back, even reversing previous losses.

The presence of the Catholic League was felt in New York City where a record number of people commented on our nativity scene in Central Park; this year it was displayed right in front of the Plaza Hotel.

When it comes to putting a nativity scene on public property, the pro-Christmas activists claimed several victories, despite the fact that almost all of them were challenged by the anti-Christmas forces. They too had their victories, succeeding in getting some displays removed.

Freedom from Religion Foundation was active in many of the attacks, as were American Atheists, the ACLU, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State; the latter advised Satanists of their rights, thus proving that their real agenda is to attack Christianity. American Atheists erected anti-Christmas billboards in some cities, mocking the holiday.

Most atheists either celebrate Christmas in a secular fashion, or are wholly dismissive of it; few are terrified of it. American Atheist President David Silverman showed his hand when he said "Millions of American children are forced to go to church under the threat of being denied meals, losing household privileges, having their college tuition cut off, or being kicked out of their homes. Many atheists are forced to go to church under threat of divorce or lose custody of their

children." It is this mindset which shows the true goal of these activists, not just to censor Christmas, but to attack those who celebrate it.

The Catholic League made a splash in Los Angeles with its billboard: we called attention to hate speech directed at Christians at home and abroad. From the media response, we know we provoked a discussion.

We also drew attention to the extent that militant secularists are terrified about Christmas. For example, their censorial response reached absurd heights when some sought to ban candy canes. That was the initial response of the University of Maine; it changed its policy once the media exposed its madness. Why did it seek to censor candy canes? Because, they said, the candy canes reminded people of Christmas. Evidently, that is not something that an institution of higher learning should be expected to tolerate.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, we pointed out, wouldn't blink an eye about welcoming terrorists to speak at any venue, but when it came to having Santa appear at a local school winter concert, the open-minded bigots decided to disinvite him.

It never ceases to amaze us that all of those seeking to silence the Christian voice at Christmastime boast of their unwavering commitment to freedom of speech, diversity, and tolerance. Their real political stripes are totalitarian; they are a menace to freedom. But the good news is that they keep running up against people like us.

September 9 – October 14

Marshfield, MA – On September 9 the School Committee of the Marshfield School District voted 3-2 to change the name of the annual December break to "Holiday Break" from its original designation of "Christmas Vacation." The matter was considered because one parent complained to the superintendent that using Christmas was "slightly archaic."

Outraged residents and parents collected over 400 signatures and launched a campaign to convince the School Committee to change the name back. On October 14 the committee considered a motion to restore "Christmas Vacation" to the calendar, but it too was defeated 3-2.

November 24

Rusk, TX – The American Humanist Association sent a letter to Cherokee County officials objecting to the placement of a nativity scene on the lawn outside the county courthouse. Texas State Attorney General Greg Abbott expressed his support for, and legal assistance in defending the display.

November 25

Piedmont, AL – The theme of the city's annual Christmas parade was "Let's Keep Christ in Christmas" until the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) sent officials a letter claiming that the theme "alienates non-Christians." City officials responded to FFRF the following day that the theme had been changed to simply the "City of Piedmont Christmas Parade."

December

Tallahassee, FL – The Florida Department of Management Services approved a number of displays for the State Capitol, some of which are meant to mock Christians and Christmas. A pro-Christmas group would be erecting a nativity; the Satanic Temple, who was being represented by Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, was approved for a falling angel display; American Atheists displayed a placard mocking the true meaning of "X-mas" including friends, fun and Chinese food; local blogger and activist Chaz Stevens displayed a pole made out of beer cans for the fictional holiday Festivus; and the Freedom From Religion Foundation once again displayed its secular Winter Solstice banner in the capitol. The banner included a "bill of rights nativity" scene.

December

American Atheists launched a series of billboards in St.

Louis, Milwaukee and Ft. Smith, Arkansas. The billboards featured an image of a young girl and her letter to Santa. It read, "Dear Santa, All I want for Christmas is to skip Church! I'm too old for fairy tales."

December 2

Madison, WI – The Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) installed a "Natural Nativity Scene" in the Wisconsin state capitol. The display, which is meant to mock Christmas, celebrates the rebirth of the sun and includes Charles Darwin, Thomas Jefferson, Emma Goldman and the Statue of Liberty. Jesus is represented by a female doll and Mary by Venus. FFRF also installed a Winter Solstice sign imploring readers to "Keep State and Church Separate."

December 4

Columbia, TN – Maury County's Commissioners voted not to install a nativity on their courthouse lawn this year. The county attorney and local mayor both warned the commissioners against approving the display citing the likelihood of lawsuits.

December 4

Coral Gables, FL – Vandals sprayed statues of Mary and Joseph with blue and yellow paint and stole the statue of baby Jesus from the nativity scene outside an office building. Police recovered the missing statue on December 6 and returned it to the business owner. The Jesus statue is valued at \$2500.

December 4

Portsmouth, NH – The ACLU objected to the decision made by Sheriff Bill Watson to display Christmas trees, a nativity scene and a menorah inside the city's courthouse. Sheriff Watson spent his own money to buy three trees for display at each entrance to the courthouse, as well as a nativity set and a menorah that were displayed inside the sheriff's office. City policy prohibits religious displays and the ACLU protested the inclusion of the religious symbols. As a result,

the city's chief judge asked Watson to voluntarily remove the religious displays. Watson, who initially rebuked the ACLU, complied with the judge's request in order to avoid a legal directive.

HOLLYWOOD BILLBOARD



The Catholic League's West-Coast Christmas billboard was on display from December 1 through December 28. It was mounted on Pico Blvd, just west of Fairfax Avenue, one of the most heavily traveled East-West arteries in Los Angeles.

The message speaks for itself. No, the Hollywood mogals who disrespect Christians are not the same as radical Muslims who behead us, but both are full of hate.

December 4

Rockaway Township, NJ – The baby Jesus figures were stolen from two nativity scenes on the lawns of private homes. Both figurines were taken after 9 p.m. from the houses that were 3 miles apart. Police were investigating whether the same person was responsible for both thefts. One of the figures was later recovered.

December 5

American Atheists unveiled billboards in Memphis and Nashville, TN that targeted Christians. The atheists admit that their billboard was aimed at "in-the-closet atheists who are pressured to observe religious traditions during the

holidays.”

December 5

Mountain Home, AR – The American Humanist Association complained that a crèche on the lawn of the Baxter County Courthouse violated the First Amendment. The display also included a 10-foot Christmas tree, Santa Claus, and a reindeer. It had been installed for over 30 years. After complaints were made in 2013, the county included a sign with a disclaimer that the display was privately funded.

December 6

Killen, TX – Vandals struck the home of a disabled veteran who displayed dozens of inflatable Christmas decorations as well as over 1900 lights and other decorations. The inflatable decorations were slashed and wires were cut. Over \$800 in damage was inflicted.

December 7

The season finale of “Family Guy” on Fox, was titled “The 2000 Year-Old Virgin,” and featured the characters meeting Jesus in a mall. Jesus discloses that he does not have a good relationship with his father, God. God spends Christmas at a time-share with a girl-friend, which leaves Jesus home alone for his birthday.

The characters learn that Jesus is a virgin and does not know anything about sex. They embark on a mission to find Jesus a girlfriend for his birthday. The remainder of the episode mocks Jesus, Christians and the Christmas story.

December 7

Franklin, IN – A two-foot statue of Jesus was removed from the nativity at the Indiana Masonic Home. The retirement community moved the nativity to a more prominent location this year so that it would be visible to passing traffic. The missing statue was later found elsewhere on the property.

December 9

North Augusta, SC – A nativity display was removed from the Nancy Carson Library. After the library received complaints, including from the County Council, the nativity was returned as part of a display that included other religious and non-religious symbols.

December 11

Jay City, FL – After receiving a letter from the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), the Jay City attorney advised against installing a crèche at city hall. FFRF claimed the display would be illegal and the city feared incurring legal costs defending the crèche. Instead the city gave the crèche to a private organization to display.

December 11

North Ogden, UT – A complaint was filed by a local resident against a nativity that was set up in front of the city's offices. Additionally a Facebook page for the city's mayor became a forum for debate between those residents who wanted the display and those that did not. A spokesperson for the Utah chapter of the ACLU said the city needed to install secular symbols such as reindeer or candy canes next to the nativity. The mayor supported keeping the nativity.

December 12

Cambridge, MA – Santa Claus was disinvited from his traditional appearance at the winter concert at Andrew Peabody School because one parent complained. The annual concert for first through fourth grade students would normally include a visit from Santa. The school describes itself as an "inclusive community" and said Santa would make an appearance at a different event for families at the school. That event was not part of the school day and attendance was optional.

December 12

Grand Haven, MI – Americans United for the Separation of Church and State threatened to sue the city over the installation of a nativity scene on city owned Dewey Hill. The

location is already subject to controversy because of a cross on the property.

Note: See the Activists section for more information about those protesting the cross.

December 12

Utica, NY – The Freedom From Religion Foundation sent a letter to the Utica Fire Department demanding that a “Happy Birthday Jesus – We Love You” sign be removed from outside fire station 4. The handmade sign was installed outside the station by the local chief.

December 13

Dallas, NC – After being threatened with a lawsuit from the Freedom From Religion Foundation, the town decided to remove a nativity from town property. The nativity had been placed outside the courthouse every Christmas for 40 years.

December 15

Lansing, MI – The Satanic Temple was approved for a display outside the state capitol. According to Capitol rules the display had to be removed each night. The display was meant to counter a nativity scene which was installed later in the month.

CENTRAL PARK NATIVITY SCENE



The Catholic League's annual nativity scene in New York City's Central Park was erected in a spot just south of the Park: It was on 5th Avenue, between 58th and 59th Street, in front of the Plaza Hotel.

December 15

Orono, ME – An administrator at the University of Maine, Auxiliary Services Executive Director Daniel Stirrup, emailed other employees advising them not to display any “decoration that could be perceived as religious” including “xmas trees, wreaths, xmas presents, candy canes, etc.” The email continued that “plain trees without presents underneath, decorative lights, but not on trees, snow flakes, etc.” were allowed.

Once students complained and the local media covered the story, the school’s Dean of Students issued a statement revoking the earlier policy and stating “we welcome every faith tradition, and we welcome displays of those faith traditions.”

December 16

Brookville, IN – The ACLU filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation against a nativity scene that was on display outside the Franklin County Courthouse. The display was paid for with private donations.

December 16

Chicago, IL – A series of 11 billboards were installed by the Freedom From Religion Foundation. The advertisements featured members of the group with quotes meant to mock people of faith. That the billboards were installed shortly before Christmas showed they were targeting Christians.

December 18

Lincoln, NE – An application by the Thomas More Society to install a crèche in the Nebraska state capitol was approved, but not without controversy. However a state senator, Ernie Chambers, protested the decision to grant the group permission. "Except for the fact that I am a man who believes in using legal processes to address inappropriate use of state facilities, I would dismantle it and remove it myself" Sen. Chambers said.

December 21

Lockhart, SC – A vandal slashed inflatable Christmas decorations at two homes.

December 22

Louisville, KY – At least 25 homes were vandalized when a group of teenagers went around breaking Christmas decorations, stealing lights and slashing air-filled displays.

December 22

Statesboro, GA – The Freedom From Religion Foundation set up a freethought solstice banner to counter the nativity outside the Bulloch County Courthouse. The banner said there is no God and that religion is a myth.

December 24 – 25

American Atheists' internet based television channel, AtheistTV, promised "original programs proclaiming the truth about Christmas." The scheduled programs included a de-bunking of Christmas, anti-Christmas shows, and a selection titled "Is Christmas a Religious Holiday?"

December 25

Haverhill, MA – When a priest arrived at Sacred Heart Parish to celebrate Christmas Mass he noticed the baby Jesus figure was missing from the church's nativity scene. Upon closer inspection he discovered that the infant was replaced with a severed pig's head.

Police arrested a suspect and charged her with destruction of a place of worship. The same homeless woman also vandalized the nativity on December 31 when she stole a large metal crucifix from the crèche.