

# "PISS CHRIST" AUCTIONED BY SOTHEBY'S



Bill Donohue comments on Thursday's auction of "Piss Christ":

On May 15, Sotheby's will auction the Andres Serrano masterpiece, "Piss Christ," at 9:30 a.m. 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.

Serrano claims that Christians who complain about "Piss Christ" do not understand that he never intended to insult them. Perhaps it was meant as a "love letter." No matter, there is no record of him defecating in a jar with a statue of Muhammad. Or a picture of his mother. Perhaps he loves them less.

Sotheby's is a perfect place to auction "Piss Christ." In 2005, a print garnered \$42,000. In 2009, it netted \$146,500. In 2011, it went for \$50,000. The one on May 15 is expected to go for \$100,000 to \$150,000. Christie's sold one for \$105,000 in 2000, and in 2011 another went for \$314,500.

The Catholic League will not make a bid. But we are interested in interviewing the sucker who buys it. If you know who the lout is, please have him give us a call.

Contact Sotheby's Press Officer Dan Abernethy:  
[dan.abernethy@sothebys.com](mailto:dan.abernethy@sothebys.com)

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# HARVARD PRESIDENT ADDRESSES “BLACK MASS”



Bill Donohue comments on the response of the Harvard president to the Satanic staging of a “Black Mass” on campus tonight:

After allowing a week to pass without a responsible rejoinder to the “Black Mass” on the Harvard campus, President Drew Faust issued a morally defensible letter today. She stated that students have freedom of speech, but she also spoke against the obscene content of this speech.

President Faust branded the mocking of the Catholic Mass “abhorrent.” She said it was “a fundamental affront to the values of inclusion, belonging and mutual respect that must define our community.” Moreover, she said it was “deeply regrettable that the organizers of this event [a student group affiliated with the Harvard Extension School], well aware of the offense they are causing so many others, have chosen to proceed with a form of expression that is so flagrantly disrespectful and inflammatory.”

President Faust said she plans to attend a Eucharistic Holy Hour and Benediction at St. Paul’s Church on campus this evening. She is doing this “in order to join others in reaffirming our respect for the Catholic faith at Harvard and to demonstrate that the most powerful response to offensive speech is not censorship, but reasoned discourse and robust dissent.”

The words and deeds of President Faust are commendable. But she could have done more. A university is not a theater, an arena, or a public park: such venues embody no normative significance. Hence, almost all expressions of speech can and should be tolerated.

A university, however, is first and foremost a community; it is a place where reasoned discourse is valued as a means toward the pursuit of truth. That means that speech which is wholly designed to insult, or to intentionally misrepresent the truth, has no legitimate role to play on campus. Which is why the Satanists could have been banned without doing violence to Harvard's mission.

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## THE POLITICS OF "JESUS' WIFE"



Bill Donohue comments on the politics of "Jesus' wife":

In 2007, the media were agog over the claim by "Titanic" director James Cameron and TV-director Simcha Jacobovici that the Jesus family tomb had been found. Cameron declared that it had been determined "beyond any reasonable doubt" that the tomb of Jesus and his family had been found. It didn't take long before it was revealed to be a hoax.

In 2012, the media were hyperventilating over the claim by Harvard Divinity School professor Karen King that Jesus may have had a wife. Speaking of the papyrus fragment that is the basis of her claim, King said at the time, "If it's a forgery,

it's a career breaker." Now that it has been revealed to be a hoax, neither King nor Harvard are speaking.

Why are the media so easily seduced by such tales? To be sure, such extraordinary claims from apparently credible sources cannot be ignored. But there is something else going on as well.

Quite frankly, there is an ideological need to discredit the history of Christianity. If anyone doubts this to be true, all that needs to be done is to examine what happens almost every Easter season: TV, Internet, newspaper, and magazine stories abound with questions over the "real" Jesus. Was he divine? Or was he just a happy carpenter? Sowing the seeds of doubt is the name of the game, making understandable why claims about Jesus' family tomb and/or his wife are irresistible. But don't look for similar stories on the "real" Muhammad.

On September 29, 2012, an editorial in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, called the papyrus fragment an "inept forgery." Last month, three Coptic experts, Christian Askeland, Mark Goodacre, and Alin Suciu, independently concluded that the fragment was a fake. So have several Egyptologists from the U.S. and Europe.

It's just a matter of time before someone else claims that Jesus had a wife, or the Resurrection never happened. The politics involved are weighty, and the fanaticism of the players is palpable.

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## POPE TIES LIFE ISSUES TO

# JUSTICE



Bill Donohue comments on today's remarks by Pope Francis to U.N. officials, led by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon:

The media are already gushing over the pope's call for a redistribution of wealth, but they are downplaying his remarks on abortion and euthanasia. And what he said about the economic responsibilities of wealthy nations is, quite frankly, old stuff. Indeed, he cites his two predecessors as saying the same thing. To be specific, the pope did not call for economic equality: He twice called for economic *equity*. Equity means fairness; it does not mean sameness.

More important, the pope linked the rights of the unborn, and those who are ill, to the cause for justice. "Today, in concrete terms," he said, "an awareness of the dignity of each of our brothers and sisters whose life is sacred and inviolable from conception to natural death must lead us to share with complete freedom the goods which God's providence has placed in our hands, material goods but also intellectual and spiritual ones, and to give back generously and lavishly whatever we may have earlier unjustly refused to others."

The pope also denounced our "throwaway culture" and the "culture of death." He has used those terms before (the latter was coined by Saint John Paul II), so there is no ambiguity: He is clearly speaking about the disposal of unborn babies and the plight of the terminally ill.

Kudos to the pope for speaking to these issues with such force. We hope that the U.N. executives heed his advice.

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# HAWAII GOV. WEIGHS SEX ABUSE BILL



Bill Donohue wrote to Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie today urging him to veto S.B. 2687, a bill that would suspend the statute of limitations for cases involving the sexual abuse of

minors. To read it, click [here](#).

*Please contact the governor's office: click [here](#)*

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# LONG ISLAND, ALBANY AND NEW JERSEY PUBS CONTACTED



Bill Donohue comments on the latest developments in the Catholic League's boycott of Guinness:

We are contacting over 250 more Irish pubs across Long Island, New Jersey and in Albany to ask them to join our boycott of Guinness.

In the upcoming weeks, we will continue to announce additional cities where the pub owners will be asked to join our boycott.

To sign our Boycott Guinness Petition click [here](#).

Contact *Alix Dunn* at *Diageo*, parent company of Guinness: [Alix.Dunn@diageo.com](mailto:Alix.Dunn@diageo.com)

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## HARVARD'S OFFENSE BY OMISSION



Bill Donohue comments on Harvard's response to the antics of a student club:

When it was brought to our attention that the Harvard University Extension Cultural Studies Club was planning a campus event featuring a performance by the Satanic Temple, we sought to establish the connection that this student group has with the university. We were unable to find any. However, we have now learned that it is an independent organization. More important, we know that Harvard's handling of this matter is outrageous.

The Satanic Temple will perform a "Black Mass" at the Queen's Head Pub in Memorial Hall on May 12. The purpose of this exhibition is to denigrate the Mass by inviting students to participate in Satanic worship. Other events are also scheduled.

Today, the Harvard University Public Affairs and Communications Office issued a statement emphasizing the independent status of this student group. Admitting that the group plans to host "a controversial student event," it cited, "a Shinto tea ceremony, a Shaker exhibition, and a Buddhist presentation on meditation."



The statement did not say what was “controversial” about these three events. Of greater interest to the Catholic League is the glaring omission: it never mentioned the Satanic Temple’s “Black Mass.” Yet if Shinto, Shaker and Buddhist presentations are so controversial that they demand an explanation, why wasn’t this deliberate assault on Catholic sensibilities mentioned? This was not an oversight.

We urge everyone to contact Harvard and let your thoughts known.

Contact Jeff Neal, who released this statement:  
[jeff\\_neal@harvard.edu](mailto:jeff_neal@harvard.edu)

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## PASADENA’S PR PROBLEM



Bill Donohue comments on some disturbing events in Pasadena, California:

I visited Pasadena in the 1990s and found it to be a great city. Unfortunately, its reputation has been tarnished by a series of blunders, all made by public institutions.

Filmmaker Dustin Lance Black contends he was invited to give this year’s commencement address at Pasadena City College (PCC), and was then disinvited because a video of him having sex with his boyfriend surfaced. PCC officials say a student leader was to blame for inviting him. PCC then invited Dr. Eric Walsh, head of the Pasadena Public Health Department, to take his place. Then it was learned that he has made bigoted



comments about gays, Muslims, and Catholics. So he stepped aside. Now Black has been formally invited to speak, and he has accepted.

Dr. Walsh has accused Catholics of idolatry for “worshipping” the Virgin Mary. Similarly, statues of the Virgin of Guadalupe, he says, are “a lie of Satan.” He has also slammed, and distorted, the Church’s teachings on evolution. Moreover, he contends the devil established Catholicism, and the pope is the “anti-Christ.”

I am accurately quoted in the *Pasadena Star-News* saying, “Dr. Walsh is not fit to be the head of the Pasadena Public Health Department. It is not worth attempting to rebut the man’s bigotry, so outlandish is it. Anyone whose judgment is that impaired has no legitimate role to play in public life.”

Regarding the decision to invite, or reinvoke, Black, it smacks of cultural politics to say that “details of Mr. Black’s personal life have no place in public discussion.” But if the Internet videos of Dr. Walsh’s comments are sufficient to disqualify him, why are not the Internet videos of Black?

PCC and the Public Health Department are funded by the taxpayers. Regrettably, the city now has a major PR problem.

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## **U.N., ABORTION AND TORTURE**



Bill Donohue released the following remarks today:

Yesterday in Geneva, the Catholic Church's opposition to abortion was branded "psychological torture" by a member of the U.N. Committee Against Torture. It would be instructive to know why this committee contends that those who are against abortion are guilty of promoting "psychological torture," but not those who like it.

Emily Letts, 25, does not like abortion—she loves it. That's why she had one. More than that, she had it videoed; to read her *Cosmopolitan* story, click [here](#).

Letts admits that not too long ago, she "felt fairly depressed most of the time." Why? "I disliked my body. I felt competitive toward women." That changed once she became an abortion counselor—now she was in a groove. Then she got pregnant. She confesses that "I hadn't been using any kind of birth control, which is crazy, I know. I'm a sex educator, and I love talking about birth control."

When she found she was pregnant, "I knew immediately I was going to have an abortion. I knew I wasn't ready to take care of a child." But she wanted to do more than have an abortion—she wanted you to see it. "I could have taken the pill, but I wanted to do the one that women were most afraid of. I wanted to show it wasn't scary—and that there is such a thing as a positive abortion story. It's my story."

Letts said her abortion was "as birth-like as it could be. It will always be a special memory for me. I still have my sonogram, and if my apartment were to catch fire, it would be the first thing I'd grab." She adds that "every time I watch

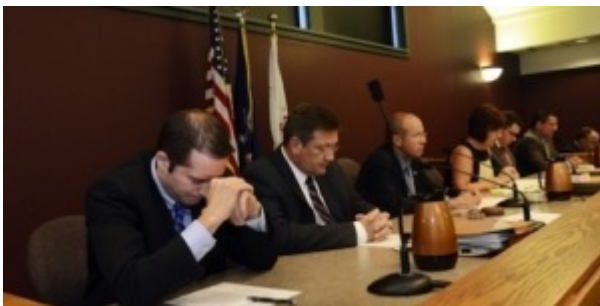
the video, I love it.”

Members of the U.N. Committee on Torture should ask Letts for a copy of the unedited video, watch it, and then explain why abortion is not torture.

*Ask the U.N. Committee Against Torture to watch the video and then issue a statement: [cat@ohchr.org](mailto:cat@ohchr.org)*

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## PRAYER AT COUNCIL MEETINGS AFFIRMED



Bill Donohue comments on the U.S. Supreme Court decision affirming the right of town council meetings to open their session with a prayer:

The U.S. Supreme Court’s 5-4 ruling quite properly considered, and rejected, a challenge to the customary prayers that are said at town council meetings across the nation. These prayers are ceremonial in nature, and, as former Chief Justice Warren Burger said, they are “deeply embedded in the history and tradition of the country.” Indeed, the high court opens its own session with the invocation, “God save the United States and this Honorable Court.”

Just because the prayers are Christian in nature is not sufficient to ban them. As the majority opinion said, there are many historical examples where sectarian prayers have been invoked, and they “must not be dismissed as the relic of a time when our Nation was less pluralistic than it is today.”

Moreover, in the case before the justices, “The town made reasonable efforts to identify all of the congregations located within its borders and represented that it would welcome a prayer by any minister or layman who wished to give one.” If the prayers were being abused by those bent on a proselytizing campaign, that would be different.

The high court also made a distinction between taking offense at something and making claims of coercion; they are not identical. Similarly, Justice Samuel Alito was right to brush aside the long list of horrors that opponents of such prayers trotted out: anyone can dream up a list of hypothetical situations about any case.

Perhaps the most cogent statement came from Justice Anthony Kennedy. He cautioned against judges being in the business of evaluating the content of prayer: it could lead to legislatures requiring “chaplains to redact the religious content from their message in order to make it acceptable for the public square.”

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court did not eviscerate spurious claims of religious diversity. The fact is that in 2014, 95 percent of Americans who claim a religious affiliation are Christian.