

# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

The Catholic League's 2024 Year in Review is now available. It contains an overview of some of our most important battles and victories over the last year. To read it, click [here](#).

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## TRUMP WOULD NOT HAVE WON WITHOUT HIM

**[Bill Donohue](#)**

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's decision in March of 2021 to launch Operation Lone Star—bussing migrants from Texas to cities across the nation—turned out to be one of the most consequential issues affecting the 2024 presidential election. Trump would not have won without him. What he did was to turn a regional issue into a national one. That was a stroke of sociological genius.

Washington D.C. and New York City were targeted in the first wave, with bus after bus arriving in Union Station and Port Authority, respectively. Chicago and points west were next up.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis also played a vital role. His decision to fly migrants to Martha's Vineyard—home to wealthy supporters of President Biden's open border policy—hit a chord: The illegal aliens were moved out of the liberal paradise with dispatch.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey got into the act, bussing migrants to the nation's Capitol. All participants signed a waiver that their free trip was voluntary.

If these governors had not acted, there would have been little sympathy in most parts of the country for their plight. After all, the citizens in most states were never threatened by those who crashed our borders, so they had no reason to take this issue as seriously as those who were impacted.

Gov. Abbott did what he had to do—he had to shock the conscience of the nation. He sent a message to his critics: everyone needs to have some skin in the game.

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## CHRISTMAS PRESENT—DISNEY IS WISING UP

[Bill Donohue](#)

We'll take a slow learner over one who never learns, which is why we are happy to report that Disney continues to move away from its offensive fare. Are they family-friendly again? Not quite. But they are moving in the right direction.

“Win or Lose” is a forthcoming Pixar animated miniseries set to premiere on Disney+ in February of next year. Disney has reworked a story arc featuring a “transgender” youth that plays on a co-ed softball team. Initially the miniseries was set to explore this character’s backstory and perspective, like it does with several other characters. However, Disney ultimately decided that this controversial topic should be omitted from the show.

A spokesperson for Disney said, “When it comes to animated content for a younger audience, we recognize that many parents would prefer to discuss certain subjects with their children on their own terms and timeline.” Considering that Disney

became the epitome of woke corporate politics by leading the charge against Florida's "Parental Bill of Rights" in 2022, this is a massive reversal of the entertainment giant's position.

This pivot reflects the thinking coming from the top.

During a Q&A with Disney shareholders in April of 2024, Disney CEO Bob Iger stated he believed it was Disney's job to "entertain, first and foremost." He went on to say, "I've always believed that we have a responsibility to do good in the world, but we know our job is not to advance any kind of agenda." This builds on previous comments Iger made since retaking the helm of Disney in 2023.

The change in direction is evident in other Disney fare.

"Inside Out 2" premiered in theaters in June and quickly became the top-grossing animated film of all time, raking in a total of \$1.7 billion globally. A huge part of this success stemmed from efforts undertaken by Disney executives to ensure that the Pixar film had no LGBT content. Throughout its production, executives went to great lengths to portray the characters as normal. Many scenes were reworked to remove any suggestions that any characters were LGBT.

In August, Disney announced "The Acolyte" would be cancelled after streaming for a single season on Disney+. Even with the media loudly cheering on the series and bashing anyone complaining about its weak characters or poor writing, it was largely panned by fans for sacrificing quality storytelling in favor of promoting woke content. The series leaned heavily into LGBT themes and also saw the debut of Disney's first openly "transgender" actor Abigail Thorn (a man pretending to be a woman) in a supporting role.

"Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur" is an animated series that airs on Disney+.

One episode revolved around Brooklyn, the captain of the girls volleyball team. He is a male who falsely claims to be a female. When a rival coach finds out that Brooklyn played on the boys soccer team, the coach moves to have Brooklyn disqualified. The showrunners present this coach as motivated by bigotry and partially interested in giving the opposing team an unfair advantage.

As the title “Gatekeeper” suggests, it is strongly implied that anyone opposed to letting boys compete in girls sports is a bigot and concerns over fairness and safety are just a ruse by weaker teams trying to eliminate better athletes from competition.

Disney pulled the episode “Gatekeeper” featuring a transgender storyline. “Moon Girl and Devil Dinosaur” was cancelled in October; ten more episodes are slated to air in 2025.

This turn about would not have happened without considerable pressure being applied to Disney executives.

We take pride in helping to mount that pressure. In January of 2023, we released “Walt’s Disenchanted Kingdom,” a documentary with an all-star cast that detailed Disney’s departure from a family-friendly company. Our documentary won nine awards and has been seen by millions of people around the world. It is streaming on Amazon and the DVD is available from the Catholic League.

Christmas is a time for reflection, as well as joy. It is our hope that Disney continues to reflect on the damage it has done and moves with dispatch to bring about the joy that made it so famous in the first place.

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# THE POLITICS OF COMEDY

Bill Donohue

*This first appeared in the [American Spectator](#) on Oct. 22*

They got to Jerry Seinfeld. He received enough blowback from the Left that he caved: he no longer blames humorless left-wing pundits and activists for the war on comedy. Indeed, he now says he “[regrets](#)” saying that comedy on TV has basically disappeared as “the result of the extreme left and P.C. crap, and people worrying so much about offending other people.”

Will Chris Rock and Jennifer Aniston be next? [Rock](#) complained in 2019 that he can’t say anything “offensive and funny right now,” and [Aniston](#) said last year that “it’s a little tricky” telling jokes these days “because you have to be very careful.”

The humorless ones, who are heavily concentrated in education, non-profit advocacy groups, and the media, have certainly had an effect. In 2008, comedy as a share of the U.S. box office was [21 percent](#). Now it is in the single digits.

Seinfeld got it right the first time, but he understated it even then.

Political correctness, or woke politics, is a form of mind control. What animates the Left is power, and nothing is more important than getting inside the heads of the masses. Once the people surrender their conscience, they can be mobilized to do whatever the ruling class wants. Make no mistake, controlling what we are allowed to laugh at is part and parcel of their agenda.

The two most protected demographics in the nation are LGBTQ people and blacks. But there is a big difference between the two: blacks are much less incensed about jokes that come at

their expense than gays and transgender persons are. The latter, represented most conspicuously by GLAAD, are the biggest promoters of censorship in the nation. And they are very good about punishing the “offenders,” squeezing apologies from them.

- [Tracy Morgan](#) has apologized to the gay and lesbian community for a joke he told in 2011.
- In 2019, [Eddie Murphy](#) apologized to the same people for a joke he told in 1996.
- [Kevin Hart](#) apologized in 2019 for a joke that “hurt members of the LGBTQ community.”
- In September this year, [Will Ferrell](#) said he regretted dressing as a woman some years earlier while telling a joke. “That’s something I wouldn’t choose to do now.”
- Comedy writer [Harper Steele](#) said he regrets penning a drag queen joke that he wrote years ago. He now says, “It’s absolutely not funny.”
- [Amy Schumer](#) apologized in 2015 for making a joke about Hispanics, saying, “I hope I haven’t hurt anyone.”
- [Jay Leno](#) often made fun of Asians but now he says he regrets it.
- [Trevor Noah](#) had lots of fun at the expense of Indians and Pakistanis, but now he is apologizing for the “hurt” he caused.
- [Jimmy Fallon](#) has apologized for wearing blackface in a 2000 SNL skit.
- [Jimmy Kimmel](#) apologized in 2020 for wearing blackface in the 1990s.
- [Tina Fey](#) has apologized for wearing blackface in her sitcom.
- [Sarah Silverman](#) now says she is “horrificed” about wearing blackface in one of her 2007 episodes.
- [Nikki Glaser](#) has apologized for making fun of “skinny” women.
- In 2018, [“Weird Al” Yankovic](#) apologized for featuring the word “midget” in one of his songs from the 1980s.

- [Patton Oswalt](#) now regrets joking about “retards.”

No one ever apologizes for telling patently obscene jokes about Jesus, Our Blessed Mother, nuns, priests or the sacraments. This includes many of those who are now apologizing profusely about insulting others. Sarah Silverman and Trevor Noah, for instance, are two of the biggest anti-Catholic comedians in the nation, but they will never apologize for slandering priests.

If proof is needed to show how political all of this is, consider that [Dave Chappelle](#) (who won't apologize for LGBTQ jokes) apologized for simply saying in 2016, “I'm wishing Donald Trump luck.” Similarly, [John Mulaney](#) now says he “deserved backlash” for joking about Trump and Biden without making it clear that he very much favored Biden.

Best of all is [Stephen Colbert](#). In 2017, he made an obscene joke that offended Trump supporters and gays at the same time. He only apologized to gays.

Jay Leno called me years ago after I blasted him for telling anti-Catholic jokes. He said he tells 11,000 jokes a year and wanted my advice on which kinds of jokes about Catholics are okay and which are not (reporters and TV talk-show hosts have asked me the same thing).

I told him that jokes about Catholic school kids are fine. “Sister Act” type fare is also okay. But when you get to the heart of our religion—as Gretchen Whitmer did by mocking the Eucharist—that crosses the line.

The comedians of an earlier era—Bob Hope, Jerry Lewis, Sid Caesar, Rodney Dangerfield, Dean Martin, Don Rickles—made their audiences laugh without getting vulgar. Mel Brooks managed to lampoon everyone without getting nasty. So it can be done. All it takes is creativity, prudence and a sense of decency. When that happens, there is no need to protect or demonize anyone.

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# INSIDE THE MIND OF LEFT-WING HATERS

Michael P. McDonald  
Director of Communications

*Most Americans were shocked to learn that an innocent man, Brian Thompson, was murdered simply because he was an insurance man; he was the United Healthcare CEO. They were also shocked to learn that a former Marine, Daniel Penny, was being tried for manslaughter: he put his life at risk trying to subdue a crazed man on a New York subway who threatened to kill passengers; it ended with the death of the offender.*

*But in the mind of left-wing haters, Thompson deserved to be killed and Penny was probably guilty.*

The author Joyce Carol Oates took to social media to claim that the outpouring of negative sentiments toward slain United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson “is better described as cries from the heart of a deeply wounded & betrayed country; hundreds of thousands of Americans shamelessly exploited by health-care insurers reacting to a single act of violence against just one of their multimillionaire executives.”

Oates, however, took a different approach to Daniel Penny. She questioned if the decision to dismiss the manslaughter charge was “based on law.” Oates accused Penny of homicide and wondered if there were “mitigating circumstances” that would have led to the dismissal.

Beau Forte, a former Green Party candidate for Congress in New Jersey, said, “Currently, over 1,000 people go bankrupt daily, solely due to personal medical bills. Anyone who can make

millions of dollars overseeing a system like this, and sleep well at night doesn't deserve my sympathy." Forte additionally opined on social media "that the world is a better place because of" Thompson's murder.

Forte posted on social media that he did not know enough about the Daniel Penny case to make an informed statement if Penny "was guilty or not." Forte, however, went on to push the racist lie "that If [sic] you swapped the races in this case, the jury would not be deadlocked."

Anthony Zenkus, a senior lecturer at Columbia, is more of an activist than an academic. According to his profile on Columbia's website, he is involved with racial justice, income inequality, and climate justice. He has served as an organizer for Occupy Wall Street, the fight for a \$15 minimum wage, Al Gore's climate initiative, and supports Black Lives Matter.

Zenkus posted online, "Today, we mourn the death of United Healthcare CEO Brian Thompson, gunned down...wait, I'm sorry—today we mourn the deaths of the 68,000 Americans who needlessly die each year so that insurance company execs like Brian Thompson can become multimillionaires." His X account is littered with sympathy for the shooter and scornful of anyone showing remorse for Thompson.

Zenkus did not make any statements on the Daniel Penny verdict, but when the incident first happened he posted on social media, "Daniel Penny was trained. Daniel Penny knew exactly what he was doing to Jordan Neely. Daniel Penny murdered Jordan Neely. Arrest Daniel Penny."

The ladies on ABC's "The View" were quick to defend Jordan Neely and cast aspersions on Daniel Penny. Whoopi Goldberg sympathized with Neely stating that "he was an ill man" and argued that the death of his mother "set him off on his mental path." Co-host Sunny Hostin referred to Neely as "a former Michael Jackson impersonator" and suggested he was "hungry and

thirsty” and less of a threat. Both Goldberg and Hostin asked several times “where is our compassion as a society” for Neely.

As for the murder of Thompson, co-hosts of “The View” took a different tone. Sara Haines took point accusing health insurance companies of acting “like a criminal racket.” Meanwhile, Hostin referred to the gunman as “young” and “promising.”

Senator Elizabeth Warren (MA-D) commented on the murder of Thompson noting, “Violence is never the answer, but people can only be pushed so far.” She went on to say, “This is a warning that if you push people hard enough, they...start to take matters into their own hands in ways that will ultimately be a threat to everyone.”

Senator Bernie Sanders (VT-I) commented on the Thompson murder by arguing that the “anger at healthcare industry tells us...you cannot have people in the insurance industry rejecting needed healthcare for people while they make billions of dollars in profit.”

Yolanda Wilson, Ph.D., an associate professor of health care ethics at St. Louis University, wrote on social media “While I’m not rejoicing about UHC CEO being shot dead in the street, I’m not sad about it, either. People deserve better than the US health insurance industry, and chickens come home to roost.”

Following Penny’s acquittal, Hawk Newsome, a cofounder of Black Lives Matter, stated, “We need some black vigilantes.” It is worth restating the George Floyd riots that Black Lives Matter participated in contributed to the death or injuries of dozens of people and caused between \$1 and \$2 billion dollars worth of damage.

*What happened to Thompson was inexcusable. What Penny did was honorable. Unfortunately, 41 percent of those under the age of*

*30 found Thompson's killing acceptable. This tells us more about what they are learning in school and from social media than anything else.*

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# MENORAH PULLED FROM COOP LOBBY

**Bill Donohue**

On December 12, we were contacted by a Catholic League member who sought to have a nativity scene displayed in the lobby of his cooperative building in Larchmont, New York, a town in Westchester.

The lobby has a Christmas tree and a menorah. His request was denied. When he was told that the nativity scene was a religious symbol and could not be displayed, he pointed out that the menorah was also a religious symbol. He was told they didn't see it that way.

That same day, I wrote a letter to the Property Manager, sending a copy to the president of the board of directors and a Catholic League attorney. The letter was sent priority mail, UPS, and was delivered by 10:00 a.m. on December 13. To read it click [here](#).

They were given until December 17 to answer, and we heard from their lawyers today. The board of directors of the Coop decided to pull the Christmas tree and the menorah from the lobby, thus making the charge of religious discrimination moot.

There are three ways they could have ruled on this issue:

allow the nativity scene; pull the menorah; or keep the menorah and prohibit the nativity scene. The first two options are declarations of neutrality, treating the Christian and the Jewish symbols equally. The latter would have triggered a lawsuit.

I hasten to add that the two neutral decisions are not morally equal. To allow both religious symbols would be an expression of tolerance. To deny both is an expression of intolerance. They chose the intolerant route.

They would rather deny Jews their rights before extending equal rights to Christians. Telling.

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## OUR CHRISTMAS BILLBOARD DEBUTS TODAY

[Bill Donohue](#)

Every year the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), a group of Christian-hating atheists, likes to erect a silly Winter Solstice exhibit at the Capitol in Madison, Wisconsin. This year they are in for a surprise.

We have decided to send these activists a lesson, reminding them that the Christmas season is *our* season. We rule. They lose.

Starting today we will have a billboard displayed in the vicinity of Madison, Wisconsin. It will be on the beltway, south of Mineral Point Road. The panel size is 12 x 50. It will be up until December 29. Here is what it says.

ATHEISTS STRIKE OUT AT CHRISTMAS

Celebrating Winter Solstice is a Child's Game.  
*This Is Our Season—Not Theirs*  
Celebrate the Birth of Christ  
*Merry Christmas*

We chose Madison because it is home to FFRF and we wanted them to see it. Call it our Christmas gift to them.

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## U.S. TRAILS U.K. ON PUBERTY BLOCKERS

[Bill Donohue](#)

It's time the medical profession in the U.S. caught up with the U.K., and most European nations, by pulling back its support for gender ideology. It's madness and every sane person knows this to be true.

The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Federation of Pediatric Organizations, the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association are still promoting transgenderism, the insane idea that the sexes are interchangeable. They are not—nature is not a social construct.

The Brits have figured it out. They decided on December 11 to make permanent an earlier decision by the country's National Health Service to ban the use of puberty blockers for young people suffering from gender dysphoria.

Wes Streeting, the health secretary, said, "We need to act with caution and care when it comes to this vulnerable group of young people, and follow the expert advice." One of the

experts he listened to was Hilary Cass. She noted that puberty blockers “are powerful drugs with unproven benefits and significant risks.”

Why is the U.S. on the wrong side of history on this issue? As I pointed out in [\*Cultural Meltdown: The Secular Roots of Our Moral Crisis\*](#), what’s driving transgenderism is money and ideology. That’s a wicked stew.

The transgender industry is a multibillion dollar enterprise. Lots of medical professionals are making a quick buck exploiting sexually confused young people. They are prescribing puberty blockers and performing sex-reassignment surgery—including chemical castration and genital mutilation—on troubled youth.

Then there is the role of ideology. Transgenderism is based on the unscientific notion that the sexes are interchangeable. It holds that all it takes for a male to become a female, and vice versa, is to make public declarations of this sort. But we cannot change what nature has ordained. Nature is not like a piece of putty that can be twisted and reconfigured. God made sure of that.

Dr. Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard is a Nobel Prize-winning biologist. She calls the transgender movement’s claims “unscientific” and “nonsense,” and says that allowing teenagers to determine their own sex is “madness.” Furthermore, she says, “All mammals have two sexes, and man is a mammal. There’s the one sex that produces the eggs, has two X chromosomes. That’s called female. And there’s the other one that makes the sperm, has an X and a Y chromosome. That’s called male.”

This is Biology 101. But it needs to be relearned, and no segment of the population needs to relearn it more than the medical profession. They need to put the money and ideology aside and start acting responsibly again.

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# SIR ELTON WARNS OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

[Bill Donohue](#)

Elton John used to be a crackhead, and now he regrets it. What got him started, he says, was marijuana. “I maintain that it’s addictive. It leads to other drugs.”

Of course, many people never take the next step. That doesn’t mean the Rocket Man is wrong: some people, for all kinds of reasons, find that it is an easy slide from weed to cocaine. That should concern all of us, not just drug users. It should also concern us that today’s marijuana is so much more potent than in years past, leading to a spike in ER visits.

“And when you’re stoned—and I’ve been stoned—you don’t think normally.” The scientific literature on this subject, which is voluminous, backs him up 100 percent. So why are Americans so high on legalizing marijuana? That’s what all the polls say.

Beware of polls. A better index of public opinion is the ballot box. Last month, marijuana legalization was on the ballot in three states: Florida, North Dakota and South Dakota. It failed in all three. Meanwhile, Nebraska voters chose to legalize medical marijuana.

Voters in the uber-liberal state of Massachusetts rejected a proposal to legalize natural psychedelics. Oregon voters, who effectively legalized all drugs in 2020, realized what was happening to their quality of life and voted to reinstate penalties on marijuana and other drugs.

Conservatives have common sense; liberals not so much. That’s

why liberals had to learn from a crisis what conservatives intuitively knew all along—they didn't need to witness crazed people walking around cities, lying face down in the street, to know that drugs kill psychologically and physically.

If anyone thinks this is an exaggeration, just walk the streets of New York City. The stench of pot is everywhere and the zombie-like posture of people walking the streets and sidewalks is commonplace. Moreover, ask the cops who give a summons to dangerous drivers if they can be sure it is alcohol abuse that is in play. Unlike booze, there is no test for drivers high on weed.

“Legalizing marijuana in America and Canada is one of the greatest mistakes of all time.” Take it from Sir Elton—he's been there, done that. And he is telling the truth.

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## **MINORITIES ILL-SERVED BY THEIR LEADERS**

**Bill Donohue**

The populist surge needs to go further: the elites who claim to represent minorities are too often working against their needs. Take the issues of school choice and affirmative action. African Americans, Asians and Hispanics favor the former but oppose application of the latter; in general, their leaders oppose the former and favor the latter.

The National Urban League, the NAACP and the National Action Network are all opposed to school choice and charter schools. Marc Morial, president of the Urban League, says school vouchers “would be devastating to black kids.” The NAACP

called for a moratorium on new charter schools in 2016. And the Rev. Al Sharpton, founder and president of the National Action Network, claims charter schools have a racist history.

The black elite badly misrepresent their people. No demographic group is more gung-ho for school choice than African Americans. Fully 73 percent want the right to send their child to the school of their choice. They are also demanding that their public officials provide more money for charter schools.

These same three black civil rights organizations are also pro-affirmative action. When asked a generic question about affirmative action—"Is it a good thing?"—61 percent of blacks agree that it is, but when it is applied to a specific subject, the results are different. For example, 71 percent of blacks say colleges should not consider race or ethnicity when deciding which students to accept.

The National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA) is a coalition of 38 national organizations. It has plenty to say about education, but it is noticeably silent on school choice and charter schools, owing, no doubt, to the fact that Asians favor both. Indeed, 70 percent of Asians want school choice, and in big metropolitan areas, they are in the forefront of the pro-charter school movement. NCAPA strongly supports affirmative action, and while 53 percent of Asians say that it is a good thing in general, 76 percent say it should not be a deciding factor in school admissions criteria.

There are two Hispanic civil rights organizations that claim to speak for their people, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and UnidosUS (formerly National Center of La Raza).

Not too long ago they wanted to drop the terms Latino and Latina in referring to Hispanic men and women, respectively, favoring instead the sex-neutral term, Latinx. But due to the

backlash from their own people, LULAC dropped the term from its communications in 2021 and UnidosUS only sparingly invokes its, such as when referring to LGBTQ Latinx.

There is a reason for this: only 2 percent of Hispanics like Latinx—they are quite comfortable being identified as a man or a woman.

LULAC is opposed to school choice but favors charter schools. UnidosUS is agnostic on school choice but is also supportive of charter schools. By contrast, 71 percent of Hispanics want school choice (they also favor charter schools). LULAC and UnidosUS support affirmative action, but only 36 percent of Hispanics say it is a good thing in general; 81 percent are opposed to it being a factor in deciding which students to admit.

It is striking how much influence the big donor class has on these civil rights groups. Black, Asian and Hispanic organizations had better bow to their left-wing demands or they will be cut off lickety split. So even if it means selling out their own people, the leading spokesmen are prepared to do so.

It is not white supremacists who are working against the educational interests of minorities—it is the leaders in their own community. They are a national disgrace.