

AmFar PULLS AD AFTER PROTEST

In February, the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFar) unleashed an ad campaign that denigrated the prayerful. The ad that AmFar ran said, "Prayer Won't Cure AIDS. Research Will."

In a letter to the head of AmFar, Jerome Radwin, the league said the ad was both "offensive and disingenuous." We said it was offensive because "it suggests that those who have prayed for patients of AIDS are somehow misguided." We said it was disingenuous because "it implies that research alone will conquer AIDS." In addition, we stressed that behaviorally-induced diseases are especially treatable, providing that restraint is exercised.

The ad campaign, which began in 19 cities, was withdrawn after a spontaneous protest was launched by Americans of all faiths. The Catholic League was glad to be a part of that protest.

Readers may remember that an earlier protest by the Catholic League got AmFar to pull an ad that denigrated the pope.

The league stressed that "prayer, combined with support for both research and restraint, is an even stronger tonic, but under no circumstances is it legitimate to castigate those who offer their prayers for anyone suffering from disease." Even more to the point, we argued that "Behaviorally induced diseases will need more than research if the malady is to be cured: it begins with making healthy lifestyle choices."

This is just one more example of how many of those who profess to be concerned about AIDS not only miss the point, they wind up alienating those who truly want to see an end to the disease.