

# CHRISTMAS CONTROVERSIES

Every December the Catholic League goes on high alert over the ever-predictable Christmas controversies. The controversies started early this year when it was revealed in October that there will be no religious displays allowed during the holiday season at Saluda Shoals Park in Irmo, North Carolina.

Last year the league was busy restoring the right of employees in King County, Washington, to say "Merry Christmas." It got so absurd last year that icicle lights were banned from display by government officials in Northdale, Florida. Red poinsettias were banned in Ramsey County, Minnesota, and Christmas cards were banned in Frederick County, Maryland schools.

The Catholic League does not engage in lead-counsel lawsuits. Our strategy is to put the public spotlight on those who have decided to neuter our public square by censoring Christmas-related speech. It works well and costs little.

There is nothing in the First Amendment that demands censoring freedom of religious expression, even on public grounds. But over the years some courts have become increasingly hostile to this speech. If you want to know what's allowed and what's not, write us a note saying you want a copy of our timely publication, *Religious Expression at Christmastime*; include \$3 to cover postage and handling.

By the time you read this article we will already be in full swing. It never fails to amaze us that those who boast the loudest about freedom and diversity are usually its greatest enemies. We wish they'd just lighten up.

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# BISHOPS ADOPT PRINCIPLED POLICY

On November 13, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) passed a policy on priestly sexual abuse that the Catholic League hailed as “principled” and “a model of fairness.” The policy reflected the work of the mixed U.S.-Vatican commission that was done a week earlier.

Francis Cardinal George, who was one of four panel members from the U.S. who drafted the revisions, said the new norms are “fairer overall.” That was the league’s conclusion as well. William Donohue commented that “Cardinal George, Archbishop William Levada, Bishop Thomas Doran and Bishop William Lori, along with the Vatican contingent, did a magnificent job.” He added that “Bishop Wilton Gregory, who heads the USCCB, also deserves great praise.”

In many respects, the new norms are stronger than the Dallas ones. First of all, they apply to all priests: the Dallas charter applied only to diocesan priests, leaving religious order priests—fully a third of the clergy—exempt from coverage. Second, the new norms explicitly say that when “even a single act of sexual abuse” is either admitted or established, the “priest or deacon will be removed permanently from ecclesiastical ministry, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state, if the case warrants.”

This is a no-nonsense approach. So is the new emphasis on putting an end to the practice of transferring a guilty priest to another parish for ministerial assignment: it is specifically prohibited.

The central message of the new approach is this: There will be no more tolerance for intolerable behavior. The kids come first. At the same time, however, the bishops made it clear that this will not be done at the expense of tossing overboard

the rights of the accused.

Every chance we had on TV we emphasized that this policy applies only to the two-thirds of one percent of priests who have been accused of sexual abuse. The other 99.3 percent are wholly unaffected.

We also released a statement urging the bishops to “ignore rogue Catholics.” To be specific, we mentioned the 22 reform groups who comprise Catholic Organizations for Renewal. “As anyone who has tracked these disaffected Catholics knows,” said Donohue, “their goal is to reconstruct the Church from top to bottom.”

In short, there can be no dialogue with those who reject the Church’s teachings on sexuality. Dialogue is predicated on listening and all this crowd wants to do is dictate.

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## CONSPIRATORIAL MADNESS

**William A. Donohue**

We live in stressful times but that doesn’t give anyone the right to espouse madness. Yet crazy ideas abound these days and they typically emanate from the keyboards of intellectuals. Just consider the conspiratorial madness of Andrew Greeley, Bill Moyers and Daniel Goldhagen. They are, respectively, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish. How’s that for diversity?

On October 26, Greeley wrote a column for the *Albany Times Union* charging that the cardinals who reviewed the Dallas charter on priestly sexual abuse are “convinced that the sex-abuse crisis was created by Jewish-controlled media to punish

the church for its support for a Palestinian state.”

My response, printed in a letter to the editor, was as follows: “This is perhaps the most irresponsible statement that has yet been made by any public person on this issue. There is not one iota of evidence to support such a reckless charge and Greeley knows it. I would expect an accusation like this from someone in the asylum. That it was made by a priest is proof positive that the problems facing the Roman Catholic Church extend way beyond the sexual abuse scandal.”

Those who want to write off Greeley’s remark as just the musings of an irate Irishman need to explain why Greeley so strongly supports the right of two men to marry. From his sex novels to his columns bashing the Vatican, Greeley has made it clear that he doesn’t want to be considered a typical priest. He has nothing to worry about—the vote is unanimous.

Bill Moyers is one of the most liberal political pundits of our day. The pounding that the Democrats took at the polls last month sent him right over the edge. He sounded the alarms by saying “the entire federal government—the Congress, the Executive, the Judiciary—is united behind a right-wing agenda for which George W. Bush believes he now has a mandate.” This is his way of saying Bush staged a coup d’etat on election day.

Want to know what’s really eating at him? “That mandate includes the power of the state to force pregnant women to give up control over their own lives.” In other words, if the Supreme Court rolls back *Roe v. Wade* and the states are then given the power to decide on abortion, we will become a totalitarian nation. Funny thing is that when it comes to China—where the state has literally been known to track a woman’s menstrual cycle and then force her to have an abortion—we never hear a peep out of Mr. Liberal.

Moyers may be a minister, but at the end of the day he’s

scared to death of religion. "And if you like God in government, get ready for the Rapture." What Moyers is predicting is surely a first in history: we are about to become the first theocratic-totalitarian state elected by the people.

There is another book out about Pope Pius XII being a bad guy. Daniel Goldhagen's *A Moral Reckoning* is so incredibly flawed it is a wonder he found a publisher (the disgrace goes to Knopf). Ron Rychlak tore the book apart in a splendid edition of *First Things*, where he slammed Goldhagen's thesis as being based upon "selective sources, doctored quotations, sloppy inaccuracies, half-truths, and outright falsehoods."

But it is not Goldhagen's sloppiness that has caused many fair-minded Jews to take up the cudgels against him. They know he harbors an animus against Catholicism and he is therefore in a position to poison Catholic-Jewish relations. In short, it's not because Goldhagen is anti-Pius, it's because he's anti-Catholic that Jews (as well as Catholics) are outraged.

Goldhagen is demanding that the Church renounce its teachings on papal infallibility and salvation. He insists that the Vatican nation-state dissolve and that we rewrite the Catholic Catechism. In short, he wants the Catholic Church to get rid of Catholicism.

It is too easy to brand Goldhagen a bigot. The fact is his knowledge of Catholicism is at the level of an illiterate. For example, he correctly cites a comment I made several months ago that it was not anti-Catholic for non-Catholics to raise questions about the sexual abuse scandal in the Church. When it comes to issues of a political nature (e.g. those that have a public impact), I said it was fair game for everyone to opine. But I hastened to add that when it comes to "house rules" like celibacy, that's nobody's business but Catholics'.

So far, so good. Goldhagen accurately states what I said. But

then, in what is truly a remarkable admission, he uses what I said as justification for non-Catholics to criticize the Church's "doctrine, theology, liturgy [and] practices." This proves his illiteracy. He doesn't know the difference between school vouchers and the Offertory.

Merry Christmas to all—including those whose delirious ideas bring a smile to my face.

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## **CATHOLICS CAN BE PROUD OF THE WARTIME RECORD OF POPE PIUS XII**

*By Kenneth D. Whitehead*

When a scholarly journal, *The Political Science Reviewer*, asked me to do an in-depth review-article on the major books that have recently come out about the Pope Pius XII controversy, I was at first not too eager to get involved. The Pius XII controversy seems to go on and on, with no resolution in sight. The anti-Pius authors, in particular, seem to pay little attention to the facts that have been brought forward concerning the true role of the wartime pontiff; they keep going back to the same old accusations against the pope, regardless of whether they have been answered or not: Pope Pius XII did not do enough to help the Jews during the Holocaust, they say, even though Adolf Hitler had made it clear that he intended to exterminate the Jews (along with some other victims, it needs to be added!). In particular, according to them, Pius XII failed to "speak out" forcefully to denounce the evil and criminal plans of Hitler and the Nazis (as if merely "speaking out" could have deterred

Hitler!).

Of course, able people have not failed to come forward to defend the reputation of the wartime pope, often citing the abundant testimony of wartime Jewish leaders which demonstrate that Pius XII was one of the best friends the European Jews had. This is hardly the view of the average person today, however, owing to the incessant negative publicity about the wartime pope. And the defenders of Pius XII have never quite been able to make their case effectively or attract as much attention as his accusers. The latter enjoy the prestige of having their books published by mainstream New York publishing houses and by university presses—which then promptly get major attention from such publications as *Time* or *Newsweek* or the *New York Times Book Review*—while the latter, the pro-Pius authors, have to turn to small religious publishing houses if they expect their books to see the light of day at all. Nor are the pro-Pius books found on the shelves of public libraries or in bookstores as readily as the anti-Pius books are. The odds have thus regularly been against the defenders of Pius XII ever getting a full and fair hearing to make their case.

Thinking about this, I decided that I should take a serious look at both the recent anti-Pius and pro-Pius books, and try to reach some conclusions about which of them make the stronger case. The academic and professional political scientists who read *The Political Science Reviewer* were surely not committed to any particular viewpoint on the issue, I thought, and were probably honestly interested in what the true facts of the case might be. The whole thing was worth a try. So I decided to plow through the ten major Pius XII books, pro and con, published over the past four years, and to try to provide a serious, scholarly account of just what the continuing Pius XII controversy was all about; what was being said about it on both sides; why the controversy keeps going on and on; and how, in my opinion, the whole question should

ultimately be judged.

The results of my efforts became a long review-article of more than 100 pages bearing the title, "The Pope Pius XII Controversy." It was published in the 2002 issue (Volume XXXI) of *The Political Science Reviewer*, and will now also be available [on the website of the Catholic League](#) for those interested in going into this subject in more detail.

The ten books I read included: *Pius XII and the Second World War* by Fr. Pierre Blet, S.J.; *Hitler's Pope* by John Cornwell; *The Popes Against the Jews* by David Kertzer; *Pope Pius XII: Architect for Peace* by Sr. Margherita Marchione; *The Defamation of Pius XII* by Ralph McInerny; *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930-1965* by Michael Phayer; *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* by Ronald J. Rychlak; *Pius XII and the Holocaust* by José M. Sánchez; *Papal Sin* by Garry Wills; and *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust* by Susan Zucotti.

Regardless of how they try to bill themselves as more or less scholarly works, five of these books are nevertheless frankly anti-Pius (Cornwell, Kertzer, Phayer, Wills, and Zucotti); four of them are just as frankly pro-Pius (Blet, Marchione, McInerny, and Rychlak); and only one of them attempts—not, however, with completely satisfactory results—to be neutral and above the fray (Sánchez). It was a chore to read through all of them, but now that I have done so, I can speak pretty confidently about what we are dealing with in this particular controversy. We are dealing with what one of the authors, Ralph McInerny, in his title, calls the defamation of Pius XII. Those who so doggedly continue to go after a Roman pontiff more than forty years after his death—and long after all of the essential facts of the case have been put on the record, and do not prove the case against him—are driven by an ideology that really has little to do with the real wartime record of Pius XII, and a great deal to do with discrediting both the man and the Catholic Church he led. Some of the pro-



Pius authors understand this. Obviously, I cannot prove it completely here in this short summary, though; readers are referred to the complete review-article on the Catholic League's website; but what I can say is that the anti-Catholic bias in the anti-Pius books approaches the pathological.

Some of the anti-Pius books, such as those of Michael Phayer and Susan Zucotti, appear to be very serious and scholarly; they are heavily footnoted and they carefully cite various sources; in this respect, they do not immediately seem to resemble the books of disaffected Catholics such as John Cornwell and Garry Wills, which are little better than vulgar polemics. In the end, though, I was obliged to conclude that all of the anti-Pius books are defective in one especially serious, if not fatal, respect: namely, they all rest upon an indefensible view of how the writing of history should be done. Before they get down to any historical facts at all, they start out with the firm premise or presupposition that Pope Pius XII simply should have "spoken out" against Hitler. Even in the wartime conditions that prevailed, they think he should have loudly denounced the Holocaust that was taking place in Nazi-occupied Europe. They rarely credit or even mention all that the Vatican did do to help wartime victims; nor do they recognize any special conditions or constraints that Pius XII might have been under—for example, that the Vatican was surrounded throughout the greater part of the war by hostile Fascist and Nazi regimes able to occupy the pope's tiny enclave in a matter of hours, as they more than once threatened to do.

If the pope by "speaking out" had called upon Catholics in Nazi-occupied Europe to try to oppose Hitler's juggernaut, anyone responding to such a call would have incurred instant arrest, deportation to a concentration camp, and probable swift execution in the conditions that prevailed under the Nazis. While the Church does canonize martyrs, she does not call upon Catholics to court certain martyrdom. None of this

registers with the anti-Pius writers, however; they still write simply on the basis of what they think the pope should have done. But to write history on this basis is not to write history in the true sense at all. History is the record of what did happen, not what somebody thinks should have happened. Good history hopefully includes the historian's educated judgment of how and why things happened as they did. Still the historian has to stick to what did happen, not what he thinks should have happened.

All of the anti-Pius books fail this simple test; and hence not one of them is history in the true sense but rather is special pleading for a pre-established point of view.

The pro-Pius books, on the other hand, do all try to establish and honestly explain what did happen. My conclusion is that you can rely on the accounts that the various defenders of Pius XII provide. The true fact is that Catholics can be proud of the wartime record of Pope Pius XII. In particular, as I remark in my long review-article, in the light of the case made in detail by Ronald J. Rychlak in his *Hitler, the War, and the Pope*, "the case against Pius XII set forth by the anti-Pius writers is simply untenable."

In view of the importance of the subject—and of the fact that the Pius XII controversy does just seem to go on and on—I am pleased that the Catholic League is willing to reproduce my complete review-article on its website. Go to [www.catholicleague.org](http://www.catholicleague.org) to get the complete story about how the various pro-Pius and anti-Pius authors have treated the Pius XII controversy. Then go to the books themselves. It is vital to be properly informed about this continuing controversy in which the Catholic Church herself is being attacked in the person of her great wartime pontiff.

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*Church (Ignatius Press, 2000). He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.*

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## **CATHOLIC LEAGUE TO DNC: WE'LL BE YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE IN 2004**

The Catholic League's campaign pressuring the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to drop its affiliation with Catholics for a Free Choice (CFFC) continues to escalate.

On Monday, October 28, we thought the DNC had finally come to its senses. When we tapped into its website that morning, we discovered that CFFC had been deleted from all categories. We immediately hailed this as a victory only to learn a few hours later that CFFC had been reinstated in the "links" section.

This suggests to us a couple of things. First, there is a power struggle going on within the DNC over what to do about this issue. Not only was CFFC excised altogether, the categories had been rearranged over the weekend. Gone was the "Catholic" category and installed was a "Religious Affiliated" one. CFFC did not appear in that category or in any other. When it was put back in, it was added to the "Religious Affiliated" as well as other categories.

Someone who has authority over the website decided to redo the "links" section with an eye toward dumping CFFC. But when Frances Kissling or one of her lackeys complained, someone at the DNC complied with her wishes and overrode the decision to

dump her.

Playing games with the Catholic League is not a smart thing to do. This only emboldened us further, motivating us to develop a new strategy. We announced our new plan in a news release, an excerpt of which is printed below:

*"There is little doubt that in close elections, neither party can afford to alienate its base. Catholics, as everyone knows, hold the key to the White House and they are roughly evenly split between the Republicans and the Democrats. The Catholic League is attached to neither party and has indeed fought both of them on several issues, ranging from the tricks the Republicans played in the House Chaplain issue to the tricks the DNC is currently playing with Kissling. A prudent DNC chairman would have dumped Kissling by now but Terry McAwwful [a.k.a. McAuliffe] has chosen not to do so. So he loses and, by extension, so does his party.*

*"Here is the Catholic League's new strategy: over the next two years, our goal is to inform every Catholic in the United States about the support the DNC shows for anti-Catholicism. Our job is to fight anti-Catholicism and that is why we are adamantly opposed to the anti-Catholic efforts of Frances Kissling. If the DNC continues to list CFFC anywhere on its webpage, it does so at its own peril: the Catholic League will be the DNC's greatest nightmare in 2004. We're in this for the long haul and only a fool would doubt us."*

We have also embarked on a campaign enlisting our many friends in various activist organizations to join our protest of the DNC-CFFC link.

Joining with us in our protest are such organizations as Father Frank Pavone's Priests for Life; Deal Hudson of *Crisis* magazine; Rev. Thomas Euteneuer and Human Life International; Ave Maria School of Law, headed by Bernard Dobranski; Ken Connor's Family Research Council; Merlyn

Scroggins and the Catholic Defense League of Minnesota; the Mary Foundation, led by Bud McFarland; Rev. Louis Sheldon and Traditional Family Values Coalition; and many others.

We have made it very clear that our goal is not simply to have the DNC dissociate itself from Kissling; our long-term interest is in disabling her anti-Catholic organization. The only way to do that is to weaken her influence to such an extent that those foundations that fund her stop giving.

To show we mean business, we've already checkmated Kissling's efforts to persuade the U.N. to institute sanctions against the Vatican for allegedly violating a U.N. treaty protecting children. Kissling lobbied the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. And so did we.

William Donohue wrote the following letter to all members of the U.N. committee:

*As president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, it is my job to combat anti-Catholicism. The reason I am writing to you is because you have been lobbied by an anti-Catholic organization to take action against the Vatican for its alleged responsibility in failing to protect children from molesting priests. To act on a request issued by an organization dedicated to bashing any race, religion or ethnic group is not in keeping with the spirit of the United Nations. That is why I respectfully request that you ignore the pleas of Catholics for a Free Choice.*

*Catholics for a Free Choice is not a legitimate Catholic organization. If it were it would be listed in the Official Catholic Directory. It is not. Moreover, this organization is the only group in the United States with the name "Catholic" in it that has been condemned as a fraud by the bishops of the United States. Not once, but twice: in 1993 and again in 2000, U.S. bishops blasted the group for misrepresenting itself as an authentic Catholic entity. Indeed, as the bishops and*

others have pointed out, this organization works tirelessly to discredit the Vatican. Its president, Frances Kissling, has openly admitted that her goal is to "overthrow" the Catholic Church. Enclosed is more information on her well-funded letterhead of an "organization."

This kind of protest will continue whenever and wherever Kissling tries to upend the Church. On this score, we are delighted to report that word about Kissling's antics is growing and is clearly hurting her. Take, for example, what recently happened at Holy Cross College.

Women's studies professors invited Kissling to speak on November 7. But when the president, Rev. Michael C. McFarland, objected, they revoked the invitation.

Father McFarland said of Kissling that "Her criticism [of the Church] has been strident, personal, manipulative and unfair. Her presence will be deeply offensive to many people here, including me, and will be an embarrassment to the institution."

Kissling went nuts: "I'm a Catholic. I'm tired of speaking off-campus and in Unitarian churches about issues that are important in my church."

We hope she gets used to being booted. We won't rest until her organization collapses.

# CANDIDATES CAMPAIGN IN

# CHURCHES

Throughout the fall, but particularly over the weekend before election day, Republicans and Democrats running for office campaigned in churches.

For example, on the Sunday preceding election day, candidates for public office campaigned in churches in many states, including Maryland, Virginia, Florida, New York, Georgia, North Carolina, Michigan, Texas, California, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Tennessee. Most of the churches were African American.

In some cases, candidates were literally endorsed from the pulpit. For example, the *Washington Post* said that Maryland Bishop Harry R. Jackson of Hope Christian Church “gave the challenger [Christopher Van Hollen] an enthusiastic plug, and the mostly black congregation bathed him in applause.” And the *Dallas Morning News* reported that Rev. Joe Samuel Ratliff of Brentwood Baptist Church actually instructed the congregation to “vote for Ron Kirk,” a Democratic candidate for office.

Not all those who stumped in the churches were candidates: Bill Clinton and Al Gore campaigned for Democratic candidates in several churches. And Donna Brazile of the Democratic National Committee went so far as to admit that “we have our literature for our churches.”

This prompted William Donohue to say: “This kind of rank electioneering in black churches would never be tolerated in Catholic churches. That the zealots who worship at the altar of separation of church and state have gone mute only proves how utterly unprincipled they are. But let a Catholic priest mention to the faithful that the life issues should be weighed carefully before voting and all hell breaks loose. Finally, ministers

disgrace themselves when they allow their churches to become the venue for a political rally.”

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## **SANTA FE CHURCHES DID NOT VIOLATE IRS RULES**

Americans United for Separation of Church and State has asked the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to investigate the Catholic Archdiocese of Santa Fe for violating IRS rules governing electioneering by churches.

Americans United charges that Archbishop Michael Sheehan violated the tax-exempt status of the Church when he directed Catholic parishes to send a flier detailing how candidates in the New Mexico gubernatorial race voted on abortion. The flier, prepared by the Right to Life Committee of New Mexico, listed Republican candidate John Sanchez as pro-life and Democratic challenger Bill Richardson as pro-abortion.

In one of the parishes, Holy Child in Tijeras, a secretary typed in an additional few sentences saying that Richardson’s voting record “shows a lack of respect for human life,” thus indicating that “he would not serve the people of New Mexico on the life issues any better than he did as a congressman.” Americans United is pressing the case as being analogous to the Pierce Creek case in 1995 which resulted in a forfeiture of the church’s tax exempt status.

However, it’s worth noting that the reason the Church of Pierce Creek in upstate New York lost in 1995 was because a) it was the voice of the institution and b) it flagrantly violated the law by running newspaper ads against presidential candidate Bill Clinton in 1992. In the Santa Fe case, Rev.



Bennett J. Voorhies, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, issued a flier on September 27 providing voting information on the candidates. Not only was it totally legal, he specifically warned pastors against endorsing any candidate for public office. The fact that a secretary in one of the 92 parishes added two unauthorized lines hardly makes this case analogous to Pierce Creek.

We find it interesting that candidate Bill Richardson, who claimed victim status, literally campaigned in Mesa Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque on October 3. Not surprisingly, Americans United had absolutely nothing to say about this blatant abuse of the tax laws.

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## **CBS WEBSITE FOR “CSI: MIAMI” INVITES NON-CATHOLICS TO JUDGE CATHOLICISM**

The October 21 episode of the CBS show “CSI: Miami” revolved around a priest who learns that a boy has been abused by his father (at first the priest was suspected as the abuser). The priest tries to convince the boy to go to the police, but the boy refuses. The boy’s mother subsequently kills the priest, blaming him for not protecting her son.

The following day, on the CBS.com website, there was a survey question on the home page of “CSI: Miami.” It asked, “Do you think Catholic priests should be obligated to inform the authorities when one of their parishioners confesses to a crime?”

What this episode of “CSI: Miami” demonstrated was Hollywood’s

addiction to giving sermons on Catholicism. “Who would want to kill a priest?” was perhaps the most revealing question of the evening. Asked by a detective, it was answered by one of his colleagues, “Nowadays, anyone.” Worse than the show, however, was the invidious way in which CBS.com sought to manipulate public opinion against Catholicism.

The survey question was deceitful. Though the episode did not show the boy confessing to the priest in the confessional, the use of the word “confesses” in the poll was designed to conjure up images of the confessional. William Donohue called this “Catholic baiting.” He said “There are practices in virtually every world religion that non-adherents might find unintelligible—or even unwise—but no one at CBS is going to invite them to register their sentiments in an online survey. The purpose of the survey question is clear: to rally public opinion against the First Amendment shield that guarantees confidentiality between priest and penitent.”

Donohue concluded his remarks to the press saying, “Why not a survey question on the merits of protecting the confidential relationship between a journalist and his source? That, of course, would be hitting too close to home for the home-grown psephologists at CBS. Better to hit on Catholics. Remember, ‘nowadays anyone’ might want to kill a priest. Or at least impugn his religion.”

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## **CBS     DRAMAS     EXPLOIT     THE CATHOLIC   CHURCH**

The October 26 edition of the CBS show “The District” was an hour-long drama based on the current scandal in the Catholic

Church. Viewers were introduced to molesting priests, diocesan cover-ups and the like. It came on the heels of another CBS show that dealt with the same subject, the October 21 edition of "CSI: Miami."

"It is one thing to use current issues as the basis of a TV script," said William Donohue, "quite another to have actors turn directly into the camera to deliver a caustic statement on a world religion." That is exactly what happened on this episode of 'The District.' When detective Temple looked right into the camera and pronounced on the virtue of putting faith in the Lord—but not in an institution—he was offering propaganda designed to denigrate the Catholic Church.

Similarly, there was a scene where detective Debrino was pictured alone, peering into the camera, commenting on celibacy. He opined that the discipline of celibacy is not God-given, but is rather a rule from the Middle Ages mandated by the Vatican to protect its economic assets. He says it is "man who banned sex, not God."

Donohue commented on this in a news release: "There is a lot of dirt in the news these days about many racial, religious and ethnic groups. But we will not see these current events made the object of a CBS script. Catholic priests are another story. It needs to be said that two-thirds of one percent of Catholic priests have stepped aside this year pending accusations against them. No one knows how many perverts work at CBS, but even if it were determined that the figure exceeded one percent, it is a sure bet it would never morph into a script."

In short, Donohue's point is that it's a lie to say that what CBS is doing is allowing art to imitate life. As a matter of fact, the makers of "CSI: Miami" recently said that they will postpone an episode on a sniper after what happened in the Beltway area. This proves how duplicitous these guys really are.

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# ANOTHER SURVEY OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS

On October 21, the *Los Angeles Times* released the results of a survey of Catholic priests. The most salient finding was that young priests are more traditional than their older counterparts. For example, priests under age 41 “expressed more allegiance to the clerical hierarchy, less dissent against traditional church teachings, and more certainty about the sinfulness of homosexuality, abortion, artificial birth control and other moral issues than did their elders.”

We have no reason to doubt the survey’s findings but we were distraught by some aspects of it. On June 26 the *Los Angeles Times*, along with the Allentown, Pennsylvania daily *The Morning Call*, mailed the survey to Catholic priests nationwide “with the goal of better understanding the issues and challenges facing the church in America today.” Because the response rate was so low, another mailing was sent on July 25. Many priests complained to the Catholic League about some of the questions and the way they were phrased.

No wonder so many priests have contacted the Catholic League about this survey. For example, question 26 reads, “When you need counsel and guidance, how comfortable do you feel about going to your bishop or to the superiors of your order?” One of the priests who contacted us rightly labeled the question “ridiculous,” saying, “It is just not a reality that priests go to their bishop for counsel since they have personal spiritual directors and it is not practical especially in large dioceses.” Moreover, whatever might be said could then be twisted: “But if most priests answer that they never go to their bishop, then it could look like the priests don’t trust

their bishop.”

Several priests objected to questions 45 and 47. After first asking priests whether they favored women’s ordination (#44) and the ordination of married priests (#46), they were then asked, “Regardless of whether you favor or oppose [it]...which of the following statements do you think is the most compelling reason for doing so?” This is a textbook example of an ideologically loaded trap that is ripe for misinterpretation.

This prompted us to comment: “The reason the two newspapers sent the survey out in June was to satisfy their voyeuristic appetite. The reason they sent it out again in July is because they got stiffed. All of which reveals more to us about the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Morning Call* than Catholic priests.”