

# BELLS ARE RINGING

Christmas bells started ringing early for the Catholic League this year. Indeed, just three days into November, we heard the call and swung into action. The next day, we scored our first victory.

Initially, there was to be no Christmas Tree on the Capitol lawn in Frankfort, Kentucky. That's because the word "Christmas" was deemed offensive. So to placate the diversity dons, the authorities opted instead for a "Holiday Tree." The official line was that the "Holiday Tree" is inclusive of Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's. We couldn't help saying, however, that no one has ever heard of a "Thanksgiving Tree," "Hanukkah Tree" or "New Year's Tree."

Naturally, we blanketed the media with our objections. The next day, Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, after getting pounded, decided to pivot. He declared that in 2009 the Christmas Tree would actually be called the "Christmas Tree." Chalk up a victory for Santa and sanity.

Though there has been a Christmas parade in Amelia, Ohio, for three decades, there won't be one this year. That's because the village changed the name to the "Holiday Parade," though it did not say what holiday was being celebrated. Nor will there be a nativity scene on a public median in Warren, Michigan, even though there has been one there since World War II. In Olympia, Washington, religious displays have been banned inside municipal buildings. But outside the buildings, it is okay.

The cultural fascists never know when to quit. But neither do we.

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# JESUS DEFILED ON HBO; MOST SUPPORT OUR PROTEST

The October 25 episode of the HBO show, "Curb Your Enthusiasm," drew a sharp response from the Catholic League. The public, we are happy to report, quickly took our side. Not only did surveys reveal widespread support for our criticisms, there was strong support for the league's position from across religious groups.

The show stars Larry David; he plays himself. David is the creator, writer and producer of "Seinfeld," the popular comedy that dominated TV for years. In this particular episode, David urinates on a picture of Jesus. After it aired, Bill Donohue said that this "demonstrates that David's best years are behind him. He ought to quit while he's ahead."

At one point in the show, David goes to the bathroom in a Catholic home and splatters urine on a picture of Jesus; he doesn't clean it off. Then a Catholic woman goes to the bathroom, sees the picture and concludes that Jesus is crying. She then summons her equally stupid mother and the two of them fall to their knees in prayer. When David and Jerry Seinfeld (playing himself) are asked if they ever experienced a miracle, David answers, "every erection is a miracle." That's what passes for creativity these days.

Donohue asked: "Was Larry David always this crude? Would he think it comedic if someone urinated on a picture of his mother? This might be fun to watch, but since HBO only likes to dump on Catholics (it was just a couple of weeks ago that Sarah Silverman insulted Catholics on Bill Maher's HBO show), and David is Jewish, we'll never know."

On “Fox and Friends,” Donohue went after all those who have declared open season on Catholics. He made it clear that this was not humor: “I have been dealing with this stuff for years. I’m just so sick and tired of it. There’s only one group they can bash with impunity.”

When asked by a New York newspaper why he didn’t see the humor in David’s stunt, Donohue replied, “Let him go and pee on the face of the president, and then let him explain to African-Americans that it was all in jest.”

By a margin of better than 2-1, the public said the Catholic League’s criticisms were right, rejecting the idea that the show was simply Larry David’s brand of humor. The largest Jewish and Muslim civil rights groups, the ADL and CAIR, also supported the Catholic League’s position.

Those who would like to complain should write to Bill Nelson, CEO, HBO, 1100 Avenue of Americas, NY, NY, 10036; or e-mail him at [Bill.nelson@hbo.com](mailto:Bill.nelson@hbo.com)

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## CATHOLICS TURN ON ARCHBISHOP DOLAN

New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan spent his first six months getting to know the priests, religious, seminarians and laity of his new archdiocese. He also got acquainted with the many issues facing him, a daunting exercise for anyone, never mind someone from out of town. By all accounts, he was off to a fast start, winning the admiration, and indeed love, of New Yorkers across the board. Then he decided to criticize the *New York Times*.

At the end of October, the New York Archbishop submitted an op-ed (opinion-editorial) article to the *Times* that took the newspaper to task for three recent news stories and one op-ed column it published; the three news stories and the column by Maureen Dowd were also the subject of Catholic League news releases. In any event, the *Times* decided not to run his piece.

The *Times* had every right to reject the article, though there was a time not long ago when it would never say no to the Archbishop of New York. Dolan, of course, had every right to post his submission on his own blog, which he did. It all should have ended there, but it didn't. That's because liberals decided to get him: Dolan offended their sacred organ, the *New York Times*, and now it was payback time. No one was more furious than dissident Catholics, as evidenced by the *National Catholic Reporter*, a weekly newspaper.

Tom Roberts is a senior writer at the *Reporter*. In a piece that reeked with anger, he slammed Dolan for choosing "to play the tired anti-Catholic card so early in his tenure," insisting that "the anti-Catholic narrative is a canard." Indeed, Roberts said, "The cry 'anti-Catholic' has become a cheap and easy accusation." He also blasted Dolan for aligning himself with "such imprudent screamers as William Donohue and his Catholic League." As a matter of fact, I did scream at him once on TV: I indicted him and his newspaper on "Hardball" for rejecting the Church's teachings on sexuality. He never responded, even though the host begged him to do so.

If there ever was any doubt that the *Reporter* has a real problem with the teachings of the Catholic Church on sexuality, as well as with many bishops, the article by Roberts settles the matter once and for all. Here are a few excerpts:

- "First, no organization or institution in the world moralizes as publicly or persistently as the Catholic Church

on matters of sex and sexuality. Its rules and sanctions are severe.”

- “On the matter of homosexuality, the church claims to know the mind and intent of God so intimately and perfectly that its officials confidently pronounce that a whole category of humans who have a homosexual orientation are intrinsically disordered and are forever condemned to a life of sexual abstinence in order to remain within the community.”

- “The church is a severe taskmaster when it comes to human sexuality. Any organization so absolute in its rules and so unforgiving in its sanctions naturally invites scrutiny of its own conduct, particularly that of its ministers and teachers.”

- “Second, no organization on earth—not other denominations or faith groups, not the Boy Scouts or teachers or families—has the equivalent capacity and culture of the Catholic Church for hiding and protecting sexual abusers.”

- “Finally, in dealing with the sexual abuse crisis, the bishops have trampled the church’s fundamental teachings on what is required for seeking forgiveness and reconciliation within the community.”

- “The bishops betrayed the community’s sacramental life, and no amount of pointing the finger at others will heal that breach.”

“Severe,” “condemned,” “taskmaster,” “unforgiving”—this is the way the *National Catholic Reporter* sees Catholicism. Not surprisingly, this newspaper is considered gospel by left-wing Catholic academics. It explains their profound alienation from the Catholic Church.

This article was unusual, if only for its honesty. It was not unusual if measured against the way left-wing Catholic dissidents really think: I spent many years with Catholic professors, and what Roberts said accurately captures their

sentiments.

So why do they stay if they are so unhappy? Are they masochists? Some are. But most stay because they know where the power is. And nothing motivates the left more than control—it's what they live and die for. They could, of course, jump ship and join one of the mainline Protestant denominations. The problem with that option is that the mainliners are in free fall. What's really perverse about all this is that the mainline groups are dying precisely because they adopted all the zany ideas about sexuality that the Catholic dissidents adore.

Archbishop Dolan is not only a great man—he is a gift from God. He has the erudition, commitment and courage that make for success. Moreover, he will not be deterred by the likes of the *New York Times* or the *National Catholic Reporter*. And like all the other bishops, he can count on the strong support of the Catholic League.

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## DONOHUE-HITCHENS FEUD ENDS AMICABLY

On Friday morning, October 30, atheist Christopher Hitchens appeared on Dennis Miller's Internet radio show condemning Mother Teresa, yet again. Here is one of his choice statements: "The woman was a fanatic and a fundamentalist and a fraud, and millions of people are much worse off because of her life, and it's a shame there is no hell for your bitch to go to."

Bill Donohue responded on Monday, November 2, by saying, "I once told Hitchens that one of the real reasons he hates

Mother Teresa has to do with his socialist ideology: he believes the state should care for the poor, not voluntary organizations, and he especially loathes the idea of religious ones servicing the dispossessed. Indeed, he sees in Mother Teresa the very embodiment of altruism, a virtue he cannot—with good reason—fully comprehend.”

“The fact of the matter is that socialism is the greatest generator of poverty known to mankind,” Donohue continued, “and Mother Teresa did more to heal and rescue its victims than anyone in the modern era. This explains why she is adored by the people who knew her best—the men and women of India (she is second only to Gandhi as the nation’s most revered person).”

Donohue ended his news release by commenting that “Hitchens is positively obsessed by Mother Teresa, and that is a very telling commentary on his psyche. She is a constant reminder that reason without faith is a dark hole.”

We published Hitchens’ e-mail address in the news release. Not surprisingly, he was roundly condemned, sometimes maliciously, by angry Catholics (he forwarded some of the e-mails to us). Donohue subsequently e-mailed him, saying, “Seems like you’ve heard from the faithful.”

The Catholic League president also took the opportunity to invite Hitchens for drinks the next time he is in New York. Why? Although they’ve had it out several times in the past—in person and on TV—and although they strongly disagree on Catholicism, Donohue admires his straightforwardness. Indeed, Donohue said, “the man is no phony, and that means a great deal to me. Unlike most of those whom I do battle with, Hitchens is intellectually honest.”

Hitchens wrote back, saying, “The first thing to say is that I felt remorse for employing the word ‘bitch’ as soon as it was out of my mouth.” Donohue immediately said all was forgiven. “As I have always said,” Donohue opined, “when someone

apologizes, Christians have no choice but to accept it. Besides, anyone who fights for a cause, myself included, occasionally lets his emotions get the best of him. The difference is, Christopher admits it.”

A few years back, Hitchens wrote a piece in *Vanity Fair* on abortion that was so fair that it moved Donohue to write a letter in praise of it; it was published. Donohue summed up his position by saying, “In other words, this is not the first time we have broken bread. But who needs the bread? Christopher and I have some serious drinking to do.”

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## **“2012” KILLS CATHOLICS, SPARES MUSLIMS**

The movie “2012” opened in theaters nationwide on November 13. But before it opened we caught wind of an interview by director Roland Emmerich discussing the way Catholics and Muslims are handled in the film.

When we first got word that the movie depicted the Vatican being blown up, along with the famous statue from Rio de Janeiro, Christ the Redeemer, we were unmoved. Why? Because these scenes of massive destruction occurred during the end of the world.

This kind of sensationalism, we reasoned, is standard fare for Emmerich: he is the guru of the “blow ‘em up” genre of movies. But then we learned that while Catholics get theirs, Muslims are spared. Why? Out of fear, of course.

Emmerich is more than a coward—he is a liar who has it out for Catholics. Last year, he was quoted saying, “I would like to



erase all nations and religions.” Not true. He is quite content to live with Islam, even though he readily admits it is a religion of terror.

When asked why he did not show the destruction of Kaaba, the religious structure in the Grand Mosque in Mecca, he said, “I wanted to do that, I have to admit. You can actually let Christian symbols fall apart, but if you would do this with [an] Arab symbol, you would have...a fatwa.”

So why is it that the Sistine Chapel is designated for destruction? “We have to show how this gets destroyed... I am against organized religion.” Emmerich lied again. He is not against Islam.

After bragging that the movie shows St. Peter’s Basilica falling on people’s heads, Emmerich explains the moral of the story: “Never pray in front of a big church. Pray by yourself.” Another lie: Muslims who want to pray in front of a mosque are safe. That’s because, as Emmerich sees it, they’re known to kill those who offend their religion.

Every time we point out that Hollywood hates Christianity, most especially Catholicism, our critics cringe. But they never offer evidence showing that we are wrong.

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## **HYPOCRITES ATTACK ARCHBISHOP DOLAN**

In late October, the New York Archbishop submitted an op-ed article to the *New York Times*, citing recent instances of anti-Catholic bias by the newspaper. The newspaper refused to print it. The archbishop subsequently posted the piece on his

blog. Though that was the extent of Archbishop Dolan's role in this issue, he came under fire anyway.

Andrew Rosenthal, editorial page editor of the newspaper, said, "The idea that when you criticize the bishops, or the hierarchy of the church, that you're attacking the church itself, or, as Dolan implies, the religion itself, is just false." This was a patently false characterization.

Dolan made four complaints: 1) he cited the "selective outrage" by the *Times* regarding clergy sex abuse scandals—a news article featuring abuse by Orthodox Jews was not followed by a call for more investigations, legal probes, etc. 2) a contrived news story about a troubled priest who had a consensual affair with a troubled woman appears on the front page 3) reports of Catholic outreach to Anglicans is treated as exploitation, and 4) Maureen Dowd writes a screed against the Church. In other words, Rosenthal's response was wholly without merit.

*Commonweal*, a Catholic magazine on life support, faulted Dolan for responding in a way that was "not fruitful." Just as unconvincing was a writer for IrishCentral.com who defended Dowd by saying the columnist is "one of the most Catholic people I've ever met." She did not say how many Catholics she had met, nor did she disclose her measuring stick.

WCBS-TV closed its report on Dolan with a snide remark about the Church mistreating women. As we pointed out, the station is an expert about mistreating employees: people are still talking about the 1996 "Massacre"—the mass firing, without prior notice—of seven stalwart employees. The motive? Money.

In other words, Dolan's critics didn't lay a glove on him.

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# WE WIN ON APPEAL

In 2006, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors issued a resolution condemning the Catholic Church for “meddling” in the City’s internal affairs. The infraction? The Church is opposed to gay adoption; San Francisco favors it; ergo, the Church is bigoted.

Simply because Cardinal William Levada, at the time archbishop of San Francisco, spoke out against placing children for adoption in homosexual households, the gay-friendly Board of Supervisors declared his position to be “hateful,” “absolutely unacceptable to the citizenry of San Francisco,” “insulting and callous.” Enter the Catholic League and the Thomas More Law Center of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The Catholic League supplied the plaintiffs and the Thomas More Law Center provided the litigation. We sued by arguing that our constitutional rights had been violated when the government showed expressed hostility to Catholicism: the government, we contended, was supposed to be neutral.

Our side lost last June when a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Board of Supervisors had not acted unconstitutionally.

But on November 5, the full federal appeals court ruled to put that decision aside, holding that the case should be decided by an 11-judge panel for rehearing.

We are hopeful that upon a full hearing, our position will be vindicated. If we win, it will be historic.

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# OBAMA BETRAYS THE BISHOPS

Is President Obama for or against abortion coverage in the health care bill? The guessing game is over.

On September 30, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops sent a letter to the U.S. Senate saying, "So far, the health reform bills considered in committee, including the new Senate Finance Committee bill, have not met President Obama's challenge of barring use of federal dollars for abortion."

We now know that President Obama—who is lobbying to excise the abortion restrictions that the bishops wanted—has betrayed the bishops.

Here is how *New York Times* reporter Robert Pear put it on November 10: "President Obama suggested Monday that he was not comfortable with abortion restrictions inserted into the House version of major health care legislation, and he prodded Congress to revise them." Although Obama spoke out of both sides of his mouth in his ABC News interview, Pear's statement is an accurate reflection of the president's position.

The manly thing for the president to do would be to state the obvious: his love for abortion rights brooks no compromise. But he won't do so, choosing instead to play the same old shell game he's been playing all along. And he is not alone. For months, we have been told that the bill does not cover funds for abortion, yet if that were true, there would have been no need for the Stupak amendment, and no resistance to it.

This has been a great moment for the bishops, and for Catholics generally, but the fight is not over. It's important that those on both sides know exactly who the players are on each team.

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# MAJOR NEWSPAPERS BLAST CATHOLICISM

The end of October proved to be a wild time for the Catholic bashers. Perhaps anticipating Halloween, they unleashed a fury. What was most noticeable was the origins of the attacks: they came from the MSM, or mainstream media. Specifically, they came from some of the most influential newspapers in the nation.

On October 28, in the *Washington Post* blog, "On Faith," English atheist Richard Dawkins took after the Catholic Church by claiming that it was "surely up there among the leaders" as "the greatest force for evil in the world." He labeled the Eucharist a "cannibal feast," adding that "possession of testicles is an essential qualification to perform the rite." These aren't the words of a person who disagrees with the Catholic Church. These are the words of a bigot.

Dawkins also blamed the Church for sending missionaries "out to tell deliberate lies to AIDS-weakened Africans" regarding condoms. The Church's outreach to Anglicans, he said, makes it "a common pimp," noting that those who convert "will be joining an institution where buggering altar boys pervades the culture." It must be difficult for this Brit to see all the Anglicans lining up single file to bolt from his nation's official religion for Catholicism.

The next day, a *Los Angeles Times* editorial said that "church leaders, including popes, have changed their thinking over the years about everything from usury to the culpability of Jews for the Crucifixion..." It concluded, "You don't have to be Catholic (or Anglican) to realize that society as a whole

would be better off if the church's views of women and gays underwent a similar evolution." In other words, the problem with America is that the Catholic Church doesn't take its cues from the deep thinkers in L.A.

The following day, *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd recalled that when she was in grade school, "Nuns were second-class citizens then and—40 years after feminism utterly changed America—they still are." She called Pope Benedict XVI the "uber-conservative pope," a.k.a. "God's Rottweiler," who was once "a conscripted member of the Hitler Youth." She also accused the Church of enabling "rampant pedophilia." Amazing how this talented writer is factually wrong about everything.

James Carroll in the *Boston Globe* completed the fourth consecutive day of attacks by calling the outreach to Anglicans "a cruel assault," "an insult to loyal Catholic liberals" and "a slap at women and homosexuals." He characterized the outreach as a "preemptive exploitation of Anglican distress." Question: Why would an ex-priest care who his former religion was welcoming in? And why are Catholic liberals insulted to learn of new members? Would they be happy if more left? Finally, why would women and gays claim victim status because unhappy Anglicans are looking for a new home?

Bill Donohue did not hold back in his assessment of this onslaught: "These deranged comments—all voiced in America's premier newspapers—demonstrate that anti-Catholicism is the most virulent expression of bigotry in the U.S. It also shows why these newspapers, quite unlike the Catholic Church, are dying. As for the writers, they need to go to church. Either that or check into an asylum."

Dawkins is perhaps the world's most famous atheist. The editorial board of the *Los Angeles Times* is occupied by full-throated secularists. Maureen Dowd is one of those "raised Catholics" whose specialty is whining. And James Carroll is so angry at himself for joining the priesthood that he lives

every moment seeking revenge.

What's also sad, and a telling commentary on contemporary anti-Catholicism, is that these newspapers thought such rubbish was worth publishing.

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## **BIG NIGHT FOR CATHOLIC VALUES**

This year's Election Day results provided faithful Catholics with confidence that their values are shared throughout the nation. Indeed, it was a big night for Catholic values.

The Catholic Church led the fight in Maine against those seeking to reinvent marriage, and won: the vote was 53-47 in favor of repealing the state's gay marriage law. We gave Bishop Richard Malone much deserved credit for fighting against those who sought to restructure this vital institution. Those who favor the right of two men to marry are now 0 for 31 in the states. The people have spoken and the time has come for the homosexuals to pack it in.

Those who champion gay marriage and abortion-on-demand lost in New Jersey and Virginia, which posted a couple more wins for Catholic values. Jon Corzine supports the right of two men to marry and is a radical on the question of abortion and was beaten by pro-life Chris Christie in the New Jersey gubernatorial race. Creigh Deeds of Virginia is worse: he once opposed partial-birth abortion but later switched in favor of it; similarly, he said he was opposed to gay marriage but then campaigned against a state constitutional amendment to ban it. Good thing he was defeated in the state's race for governor by Bob McDonnell. In any event, the defeat of Corzine and Deeds is a victory for marriage and children.

It was a big night for Catholic values. We hope everyone gets the message.