

# **“CONDOM CHRISTMAS TREE” FAILS; CHRISTMAS BASHING CONTINUES**

Levi Strauss, the San Francisco-based apparel company, wanted to put up a giant Christmas tree in New York’s Central Park, adorned with thousands of condoms. But it ran into opposition from the Catholic League and lost.

The denim manufacturer thought that its “condom Christmas tree” would be a fitting tribute to World AIDS Day on December 1, and sought to erect its tree near Wollman Skating Rink in Central Park. When the league learned of this, it immediately contacted the Makkos Organization, the private owners who operate the rink, and asked them to nix the plan; the league also contacted the media. With support from Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Makkos said no to Levi Strauss.

Meanwhile, as Fidel Castro was making Christmas an official holiday in Cuba, atheists in Cincinnati were seeking to challenge the constitutionality of a federal statute that declares Christmas to be a federal holiday. The difference seems to be that the pope hasn’t visited Cincinnati.

From coast to coast, there was a concerted effort to ban the public expression of religion. Led by the ACLU, American Atheists and Americans United for Separation of Church and State, attempts were made to bar crèches on public property and to alter Christmas concerts and festivities. Those efforts yielded mixed results.

The Catholic League received no opposition from anyone in erecting its crèches in Central Park and in Philadelphia’s Independence Park, and it was successful in its effort to have a crèche installed alongside a menorah in the Cortland Manor (NY) Community Center, but the outcome was different

elsewhere.

What the league found most objectionable was the privileging of Judaism that occurred in places like St. Ann (MO), Las Vegas (NV), Little Rock (AK) and Somerset (MA). In all four towns, those who challenged crèches on public property said they found no problem with menorah displays, thus exposing their agenda to engage in Christmas bashing (in Somerset, a crèche finally did appear).

Victories were recorded, however, in Port St. Lucie (FL), Marshfield (WI), Concord, (NH) and Pittsfield and Worcester (both of MA); Jersey City (NJ) continued its fight with the ACLU, and another battle waged in Eddy County (NM). The Supreme Court needs to end this madness by offering detailed guidance on the distinction between government accommodation of religion, which is legitimate, and government sponsorship, which is not.

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## **A QUIET VICTORY**

In mid-November, a Catholic League member contacted us about something unusual. A nationwide store, Wet Seals, Inc., with headquarters in Foothill Ranch, California, was selling women's panties with the face of Mary and baby Jesus on the front and back of the underwear. We secured a pair and then contacted the president of the company, Kathy Bronstein.

We are delighted to report that Ms. Bronstein was disturbed to learn of this item and ordered the panties removed from the shelves of her store just before Thanksgiving. When we learned that they were still being sold in one of her other stores, Contempo Casuals, we contacted her again. She cooperated further and had the disputed item removed once and for all.

It is a credit to Kathy Bronstein that she acted with dispatch to rectify this situation. It also goes to demonstrate that, contrary to what our critics say, the Catholic League does not always seek to go public every time it is offended.

We are not sure who was initially responsible for conceptualizing and making the panties. But we cannot believe that whoever did so didn't know exactly what he was doing. It is one thing to make a fashion statement wearing a cross, quite another to make panties with Madonna and Child emblazoned on them. We're glad we put this one to rest before the holidays, and we hope we won't see anything like this ever again.

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## THE CATHOLIC MIND

**William A. Donohue**

It is always risky to speak of the mind-set of collectivities, whether it be that of a race, ethnic or religious group, but sociologically such a concept is definable. Just as every individual possesses a conscience, every group possesses a cast-of-mind, or vision of the world; it is one that reflects its collective experience. That is why students of Eastern civilization can speak with authority of the Japanese mind and how it differs from its Asian cousins and Western counterparts. The same is true of religious groups.

Catholics are no more monolithic than any other group, but they nonetheless carry with them a psychology that is culturally derived. Mind-sets are not permanent fixtures, rather they are set in motion by history, thereby reflecting, as well as accounting for, change. Consider the Catholic mind and how it has changed, especially with regards to the

experience of anti-Catholicism.

Until the latter part of the nineteenth century, the most predominant ethnic stock of Catholic derivation was the Irish. Enslaved by the English, more Irish died proportionately on board the slave ships than the Africans; this was due to the fact that there was no provision for Irish slavery in the New World, thus the lives of Irishmen were more expendable. Once they reached the shores of North America, the Irish were once again treated as outcasts.

It was not just the ethnicity of the Irish that the English despised, it was the religion that marked these stubborn people. Catholicism was the religion of papists, those utterly undemocratic worshippers who did not fit into the modern world. They had to be culturally tamed or, failing that, socially dumped. They were dumped.

It is easy to understand why the Irish embraced a defensive mind-set: for a very long time, they had only one leg in this country, the other being left on the boat. Their experience at the hands of bigots was later shared by Italians, Poles and other Catholics. Unavoidably, this resulted in a psychologically marginalized population, one that made most Catholics feel as if they were visitors in someone else's land. But they nonetheless persisted in fighting back, establishing their own schools, hospitals and voluntary associations. Thus the failure to integrate was not accompanied by a failure to participate—it is just that Catholics erected a parallel culture.

By the time the twentieth century was half over, the struggle for status and acceptability had mostly been won. No longer barred from Ivy League schools and senior business opportunities, Catholics had made it. Their religion was no longer a handicap to assimilation, and in 1960 one of their own had been elected President of the United States.

Unfortunately, the decline in anti-Catholicism that most Catholics experienced was not something that the Church itself experienced. The cultural upheaval of the 1960s took direct aim at any institution that taught the virtue of restraint, and that certainly meant the Catholic Church. Now that the counter-revolution of the 1960s has become the dominant culture of the 1990s, the war against the Church continues, without abatement. Only this time the troops—meaning the faithful—have gotten fat and lazy.

The quest for assimilation costs. That is one lesson most Catholics have not learned. Preoccupied with Sunday-morning soccer games and the need to be liked, Catholics have found that as long as they are doing well, it is not their problem if the Church—or the Office of the Presidency, for that matter—comes under attack. They would rather go-along so they can get-along. Hence their contemptible tolerance for anti-Catholicism.

Today's Catholic mind is everywhere in evidence. To begin with, anti-Catholicism actually has to be pointed out to most Catholics these days, something that previous generations never encountered (they didn't need instructors). Once introduced to the bigotry, we are typically told to lighten up. Worse, we are told not to rock the boat, or that the best strategy is simply to wait it out. Keep ducking, they advise.

These Catholics are psychologically disabled. Embarrassed by the hard-line approach of the Catholic League, they would rather succumb to the culture than challenge it, even if it means that their Church gets trashed mercilessly in public. They may not like the cultural bullies of our day but they like less the thought of confronting them, and this explains their preference for dialogue. We'd rather defeat them.

One of the residual effects of the Catholic League is to embolden Catholics by providing leadership. The good news is that we are witnessing an evolution in the Catholic mind-set:

there is growing evidence that Catholics are waking from their slumber. And with that reawakening comes a new posture, one that seeks to change the culture, and not melt into it. Our day is coming, that's for sure.

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## DOES “PRO-CHOICE” ALSO MEAN “ANTI-CATHOLIC”?

By Kenneth D. Whitehead

A well-known contemporary American playwright publicly claimed that Pope John Paul II “endorses murder” and accused him and other religious leaders of being “homicidal liars” after the brutal murder of an admitted gay man in Wyoming. Merely by continuing to champion the Catholic Church’s teachings, apparently, the pontiff can get branded as himself virtually a murderer, and most people apparently find little or nothing amiss about the use of such language; at any rate, few are found to protest when it is gratuitously applied to the pope.

A pro-abortion activist in New York similarly declared that New York archbishop Cardinal John O’Connor was responsible (along with Protestant minister James Dobson) for the murder of an abortion doctor in upstate New York, who was shot with a high-powered rifle by an unknown assailant. “Without these [religious] leaders spewing hate,” the pro-abortion activist said, “there would be no anti-abortion movement...Cardinal O’Connor is accountable for those religious followers who do pull the trigger.”

A *Washington Post* cartoonist saw nothing untoward in depicting an armed killer standing behind an anti-abortion protester holding an “abortion is murder” sign; the whole scene was

captioned “What, me, an accomplice?” The assumption, again, was that protesting legalized abortion makes one an accomplice in the murder of abortion doctors.

Just before the recent November elections, the *New York Times* featured a story quoting the president of Planned Parenthood calmly taxing Cardinal O’Connor with attempting to send “an electoral message” merely because he wondered aloud in a sermon at St. Patrick’s Cathedral whether the accusation of murder that had been leveled against him was really aimed at him personally, or had reference to pro-life political candidates generally.

How is it that accusations labeling innocent people “murderers” are apparently considered acceptable in our public discourse when they are aimed at religious leaders opposing homosexual acts or abortion, but are suddenly found to be unacceptably “extremist” if spontaneously applied by average people reacting to the undeniable fact that every abortion performed actually does involve the killing of a baby? How can the violence and, yes, sadly, killing, always involved in an abortion ever be brought out if it can never be mentioned?

A question that may be more frequently asked as our current “culture wars” intensify is this: are Catholics even going to be allowed any longer by public opinion to express their opinions as Catholics on such public policy questions as legalized abortion? According to a widespread contemporary viewpoint which gets strong emphasis (and often virtual endorsement) in much of today’s media, Catholics should not be allowed to oppose legalized abortion precisely because their opposition to it is presumably based on the Church’s moral teachings, and hence must be considered an inadmissible “Church” interference in “state” affairs!

In view of the enormity of the evil of legalized abortion in America today—it claims more victims every year than have been killed in all the wars of American history (1.3 to 1.5 million

abortions per year over the past quarter of a century, compared to 1.2 million total American deaths in all of our wars)—it is a tribute to the Church that the pro-life movement in the United States was begun primarily by Catholics. Since then, thanks be to God, many Protestants and Evangelicals, Jews, Muslims, and others have joined the pro-life ranks.

Nevertheless, it remains true that no other political position except a pro-life position is even logically possible for a Catholic who properly understands and practices his faith. Moreover, the pro-life position is regularly articulated and re-enforced by such outstanding Catholic Church leaders as Pope John Paul II and Cardinal John O'Connor—rightly. No doubt this is exactly what the pro-abortionists find so galling and intolerable; these religious leaders thus become fair game to be branded as themselves “murderers.” “Pro-choice” does apparently also mean “anti-Catholic.”

The present writer has been proudly involved in the pro-life movement since around 1970, when I was one of the founders of the Maryland Human Life Committee, formed at that time to fight liberalized abortion in the Maryland General Assembly. In recent years, especially since my retirement from the federal government, I have been actively involved in the political campaigns of a number of pro-life political candidates.

In addition, since 1993, I have been regularly writing and publishing articles and commentary on the political aspects of legalized abortion and on the progress of the pro-life movement; these writings have been based in part on my knowledge of the Washington scene and of how Washington works—knowledge which came from many years as a federal official engaged in public policy questions, in testifying before congressional committees, and in monitoring and promoting legislation.

In October, 1998, New Hope Publications brought out as a



quality paperback book a collection of my articles published between 1993 and 1998 dealing with the political aspects of legalized abortion and related topics. Entitled *Political Orphan? The Pro-life Movement after 25 Years of Roe v. Wade*, this book contains chapters dealing with the abortion holocaust, Title X and other government-subsidized family planning and population control programs, U.S. government machinations against the pope and the Church in the international arena, the pope's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, the president's choices for surgeon general, partial-birth abortion, non-violence, and other topics—including especially the continuing efforts of the pro-life movement to deal with the enormous problem of legalized abortion in a climate in which even many declared “pro-life” politicians too often continue to try to run away from the issue.

The book also deals more seriously than almost any other current book with the volatile issue of the now well-established “linkage” between the abortion issue and the issue of government subsidized birth control. Anyone who has followed this knows how hard the pundits in the media have attempted to turn this into a purely “Catholic” issue, simply because of the Church's well-known teaching on the subject.

In general, *Political Orphan?* chronicles the fortunes of the pro-life movement during the Clinton years and lays out clearly where the pro-life movement needs to be going from here. In particular, the book makes a case—and a plea—for greater organized Catholic participation in the pro-life movement, this in spite of the opposition of bigots who would apparently deny Catholics any political voice on the most important political and moral questions of the day precisely because we are Catholics.

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You can obtain *Political Orphan? The Pro-life Movement after 25 Years of Roe v. Wade* for \$14.95 (+ \$3.00 s/h) from New Hope Publications, New Hope, 40052; or, telephone 1-800-764-8444.

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## **PHOTO MOUNTS VILE ATTACK ON JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

The November edition of the French publication, *Photo*, which was the issue that was being sold in the United States in December, had a picture on the cover of a bare-breasted woman hanging on a cross with a crown of thorns around her head. The cover story was entitled "The Life of Jesus in Photos."

The fourteen page-story had a picture of a totally naked pregnant woman (she was supposed to be Mary, carrying Jesus) kneeling in prayer; at her side was Joseph who was holding another child, thus suggesting that Mary and Joseph had children of their own. There was a Nativity scene in a garage that again showed Mary and Joseph each holding a child. The picture of the Miraculous Blood of the Virgin showed blood coming from Mary's bare breast accompanied by the statement, "Blood flowing from the breast of Mary is similar to that which on the cross flowed from the side of Christ."

Other pictures included a pornographic Mary Magdalene, a naked woman standing over a bloody decapitated man, etc. In a section called "Incarnation of the Word," it said that hatred of the human body has been "animating proponents of Christianity for 2,000 years."

The Catholic League sounded the alarms on this one with the following news release:

“This feature in the November *Photo* is taken from the novel, *INRI*, and was the result of two years of work by photographer Bettina Rheims and artist Serge Bramly. Why it took two years to complete this savagery suggests that French Satanists work much more slowly than American ones.

“It is disturbing to know that artistic standards in France have fallen so low that the Ministry of Culture actually contributed to this masterpiece. The good news is that Cardinal Lustiger of France, along with the nation’s chief rabbi and the country’s preeminent newspaper, *Figaro*, have all condemned this outrage unequivocally. So, too, does the Catholic League. One final note: we thank Msgr. Michael Wrenn for translating this hate speech.”

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## RAW BIGOTRY

The hatred of the Catholic Church is so deep in some people that they literally can’t stop from bashing the Church any chance they get. For example, there is a travel book called *Rome*, published by Cadogan, a British publisher, and in it are some surprises.

In this volume by Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls, there is a discussion of Vatican City. But instead of introducing the reader to the history and glory of this nation-state, we get a guided tour of all that is corrupt with the Catholic Church. This not only smacks of bigotry and unprofessionalism, it offers evidence that anti-Catholicism is not at all like any other prejudice: Catholic bashing is something that can surface at any time and in any place.

We wrote to the publisher’s American outlet, Globe Pequot Press, telling them that “If someone had published a book

about Israel and made positively disparaging remarks about the nation's founding and its political history, he would be labeled anti-Semitic." We hope they got the point.

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## HUNTER COLLEGE NEWSPAPER SPORTS "CONDOM JESUS"

The November 24 edition of the Hunter College newspaper, *Envoy*, carried two pictures of a man putting a condom on his penis; below was a graphic representation of Jesus crucified to the cross, wearing a condom on his erect penis. This segment of the newspaper was entitled, "Culture Shock: Envoy Arts and Culture." Hunter is part of the City University of New York (CUNY).

Above the first two graphics it said, "Condom Use Made Easy: Let Jesus Show You How." It then said, "Begin Copulation With a Fresh Latex Virgin Mary Immaculate Conception Condom." The inscriptions on the Jesus graphic read "Jesus" at the top and "The King of Kings" at the bottom.

When the Catholic League learned of this, it immediately went public with its denunciations. William Donohue got the attention of New Yorkers when he blasted the newspaper on WABC talk-radio with host, Lionel.

The student who was responsible for this, Jeremy Stein, apologized after the controversy surfaced. So, too, did Trina Bardusco, the student-editor of *Envoy*. Their apologies were printed in the newspaper. But the work was defended by student Jed Brandt, the production manager. *Envoy* has no faculty advisor and receives funds from student fees, but not from Hunter's operating budget.

The president of Hunter, Dr. David Caputo, was disturbed to learn of the "Condom Jesus" fiasco and called Donohue at home to speak to him. When they finally did catch up with each other, Caputo appeared genuinely concerned about the matter and answered to Donohue's satisfaction several questions about what was going to be done. Caputo issued his own press release on the subject, which appears below:

**STATEMENT BY HUNTER COLLEGE PRESIDENT DAVID  
CAPUTO**

In the November 24, 1998 issue of *The Envoy*, an independent student newspaper published by Hunter students, a piece appeared in the arts and culture section entitled "Condom Use Made Easy, Let Jesus Show You How." The headline was followed by three graphic illustrations, one of which depicted the Christ figure.

There has been widespread concern and dismay in the Hunter community regarding this incident. Personally, I can think of fewer things more objectionable or morally reprehensible than what was presented in this piece. I find it highly offensive and join with the Hunter community to condemn such insensitive expression. This is clearly an example of a student publication deciding that shock value is more important than common decency and respect for religious beliefs. The individual who created this piece could have made the point regarding condom use without denigrating and openly defiling a belief system important to so many of us. I am confident that this repugnant action does not represent the attitude of the 20,000 students enrolled here. Furthermore, it is my understanding that *The*

*Envoy* will be publishing an apology in the next issue. I want to note that *The Envoy* receives its funds from student-paid activity fees. The students themselves vote on how these funds are allocated to various student clubs and media, including this particular publication. I encourage all who are concerned to express their objections through *The Envoy's* Letters to the Editor. Ultimately, the students have the right to petition that the publication's funds be rescinded.

David A. Caputo

President

December 4, 1998

William Donohue took the time to send the following letter to the school newspaper:

December 7, 1998

The Envoy

Letters Editor

695 Park Avenue, Room 211

New York, New York 10021

Dear Editor:

The November 24 edition of *Envoy* depicted Christ on the cross wearing a condom. I understand that those responsible for this vulgarity will apologize. That, however, does not resolve the issue.

I have been told that *Envoy* has a policy of not printing anything that is "racist, denigrating to women or homosexuals." Why it doesn't have a policy that covers religion is quite revealing, but surely the time has come. I would hope that the politically-correct police on campus would not be in a position to continue *Envoy's* hypocritical policy of selectively protecting some groups from bigoted attacks while allowing others to go unchecked.

A few years ago there was a racist incident on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. While it was bad, it was nothing compared to what happened at Hunter. The response of the administration was to close the school and have faculty offer workshops on racism.

It is a credit to Dr. Caputo, your president, that he has not followed the politicized course of Penn. It is better to resolve these matters with the offending students instead of dragging the entire school through phony exercises in mind control. But it is interesting to note that there has been no major outcry from the Hunter faculty about this incident.

Perhaps if instead of Christ, the figure on the cross was Martin Luther King, the faculty's ire would surface. Would they idly sit back if, in February—Black History Month—there was a depiction of King with an erection on a cross wearing a condom? Or just think what their reaction would be if *Envoy* were to promote a "Matthew Shepard" doll for Christmas: you can hang him, shoot him or stab him,

and all he does is whine.

It is a sorry state of affairs when I receive an unsigned letter from Catholic students at Hunter alerting me to what happened (I had already acted on it when I received the letter); they were afraid to sign it because of the expected consequences. The fascist left, just like the fascist right, will always use intimidation (at a minimum) to get their way. That they are succeeding at Hunter is dismaying, and that these fascists continue to object to tyranny on the right shows just how vacuous they are.

Finally, students should know that a paid employee of the newspaper has defended this hate speech. He also told a reporter that "we're all Jews and atheists." Funny thing is that the one scholar who has had the greatest intellectual effect on me, Sidney Hook, was a Jewish atheist. So is my publisher and friend at Transaction, Irving Louis Horowitz. Thus I do not believe this slander, but I do note it: it shows how perverse the bigots in our midst really are.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President

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## **GAY PLAYS CONTINUE TO RIP CATHOLICISM**

Just before Thanksgiving, a gay play that attacks Catholicism began in New York, while another that is scheduled to begin in Washington, D.C. this spring was announced; a third opened in New York the week before Christmas.

The first to open was "Burning Habits," an eight-part play at

Here in SoHo, a New York Off-Off Broadway theater; it runs until March 13. From April 1-May 2, "Clean" will be done at the Chamber Theatre in Washington, D.C., a Studio Theatre Secondstage production. And opening on December 14 at New York Theater Workshop was "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told."

"Burning Habits," written by Blair Fell—no stranger to Catholic bashing—is a play that ran in London and New York in the mid-1990s. The play features an "evil Catholic witch" and three lesbian nuns. Future episodes will show, in Fell's words, that "the overriding evil is the Church, and the force of good are queers."

"Clean" was also performed a few years ago. What will delight the crowds this time is what worked last time: a script that calls for "the conversion of a drag queen and sins of a priest." The play ends with an unambiguous attack on the Church's teaching on homosexuality.

The Catholic League's take on these two plays was as follows:

"The Catholic Church does not find sodomy acceptable behavior. And for this it is pilloried as anti-homosexual. Such is the thinking among many of those who consider themselves highly educated, tolerant and respectful of diversity. Why they haven't labeled the Church anti-heterosexual for its opposition to adultery is anyone's guess.

"The hatred of the Catholic Church that is popular with much of the theater crowd is not seen as bigotry: it is seen as morally justified. To take one example, never, never, never have we seen an anti-Catholic play branded by theater reviewers for the *New York Times* as anti-Catholic; today's review of 'Burning Habits' is the latest evidence. There is a reason for this, and it is the very same reason why the Catholic League exists."

Finally, there is "The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told" by Paul Rudnick. We commented on this in the last issue



of *Catalyst* explaining how we refused to be drawn into a controversy over a really stupid production. But readers should know how the play was received on opening night by theater critics.

The play is supposed to be a rebuttal to the story of Adam and Eve; this version is about Adam and Steve. Early on in the play, the homosexuals meet two lesbians. According to Donald Lyons of the *New York Post*, there is a "tough, unsentimental, bulldog Jane," and her "preachy airhead" lover, Mabel. "As history progresses," writes Lyons, "Adam invents hair conditioner and hors d'oeuvres and Mabel turns to religion—which in this play is a bad thing, like heterosexuality."

In the second half of this play, Jane gets artificially inseminated. Pregnant, she takes Mabel as her spouse; the wedding is officiated by a lesbian rabbi in a wheelchair, thus completing the politically-correct script. Poor Steve, the bodybuilder, is H.I.V. positive, but he can't figure out why. Not surprisingly, God is damned for causing AIDS. Thus, the play bears an eerie resemblance to life as it exists in the East Village, home of the theater.

When the play opened, we watched for the reviews. They proved to be were so enlightening we thought we'd issue a news release commenting on the commentators. Here is part of what we said:

"It sounds like a routine homosexual play: full-frontal male nudity, filthy language, discussion of body parts, butch lesbians, effeminate gay men, ranting against nature, damning God for AIDS, etc. Interestingly, the reviewers seem torn by Rudnick's creation.

"The blasphemous elements either go unnoticed or are dismissed cavalierly. Ben Brantley of the *New York Times* finds 'reverence in Mr. Rudnick's irreverence,' a remark that

reveals a great deal more about Mr. Brantley than Mr. Rudnick. After this review, his job at the *Times* will surely be secure.

“It has been reported that Rudnick’s play is a ‘rebuttal to the religious right’s’ vision of the Bible. Yet *USA Today* reviewer David Patrick Stearns said ‘this play makes gay people look far worse than the religious right could dream of doing.’ Too bad Mr. Stearns’ sensitivity doesn’t extend to Christians. But the question remains: does the play advance a negative gay stereotype or is it an accurate reflection of reality?”

As for Rudnick himself, he says that “I wanted the Garden of Eden and Central Park, and the possibility of Mary as a lesbian mother, which would certainly help me comprehend immaculate conception.” We’re not sure what it would take for us to fully comprehend him, but were we to try, it’s a sure bet that the section in a bookstore called “Recovery and Addiction” would be a good place to start.

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## **SWEEPS WINNER**

Anthony Hacker of Milwaukee, Wisconsin was the winner of the 1998 Catholic League Christmas Sweepstakes. The beautiful Lenox Nativity set was sent to him in time for Christmas. Congratulations, Tony, and thanks to all who participated.

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# LOUISIANA JUDGE DICTATES TO CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The scenario is almost surreal, but it did happen. Two football players from Archbishop Shaw High School in Marrero, Louisiana get arrested and are charged with one count of attempted simple rape of a 15-year-old girl. The two students, Doug King and Jared King, are immediately suspended by Shaw principal Father Richard Rosin. But the suspension gets overturned just as quickly by Judge Robert A. Pitre, Jr. of the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court Division G of Jefferson Parish.

Judge Pitre compounds the problem by issuing a temporary restraining order (TRO) against the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Archbishop Shaw High School and Father Rosin. The order, which was filed by an attorney for the players (they are cousins), restrained the New Orleans suburban school not only from suspending the students, but from barring them from playing football.

When this bizarre case unfolded in November, the Catholic League opined that "If separation of church and state means anything, it means that the government has no business dictating the internal procedures of religious institutions. This is not a difficult issue, and indeed the case law provides no constitutional basis for issuing a TRO against a parochial school for implementing its disciplinary policies."

We concluded our statement by saying, "The Catholic League advises the attorneys for Archbishop Shaw to brook no compromise: we will offer our resources, if it is necessary." As it turned out, the two boys transferred to another school, leaving the case moot. We regret that a more senior judge didn't get the chance to review Judge Pitre's decision; it would have been an instructive exercise for all the parties involved.