

DON'T CALL IT CHRISTMAS

Catholic League president William Donohue addressed the growing aversion to the use of the word Christmas:

"The residents of Fontana, California celebrated their annual Festival of Winter last weekend. Santa Claus, who is not associated with anything other than Christmas, was inexplicably present in the parade through Miller Park. Just as curious, there was a tree lighting ceremony, though no one said why trees are lighted in December and why they always look like Christmas trees. In Glendale, Ohio, village officials had a Holiday Walk on the Village Square last Saturday, though no one explained what holiday was being celebrated. And in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, the town sponsored 'a series of holiday events' that included a 'Holiday Parade' and 'a Community Sing and Tree Lighting.' Again, there was no mention of exactly what holiday these people were so happy about.

"In Michigan's historic Village of Franklin, they used to have a Holly Day Festival this time of year. But now they have progressed to calling it the Franklin Winter Festival. Why? Because as Les Gorbach said (he is a prominent store owner who pushed for the name change), 'Holly Day had the connotation it was strictly a Christmas holiday festival.' Gorbach said, 'we wanted to try to make it more inclusive, so we changed the name.' Why he didn't simply move to cancel Christmas, he did not say.

"Those who think that the censoring of Christmas is a blue-state phenomenon need to consider what happened today in the *Wichita Eagle*. The Kansas newspaper ran the following clarification: 'A story in Monday's paper referred to a tree that was lighted at Tuesday's Winterfest celebration as a 'Christmas tree.' In an effort to be inclusive, the city is actually referring to this tree as the 'Community Tree.'

“It’s time practicing Christians demanded to know from these speech code fascists precisely who it is they think they are protecting from dropping the dreaded ‘C-word.’ The assumption is, of course, that Jews and Muslims are bigots. It’s time we heard from them as well.”

CHRISTMAS IS THE NEW “C-WORD”

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the latest attempts to ban Christmas:

“Parents in Maine’s Scarborough School District say that efforts to ban Christmas have become so extreme that they now refer to Christmas as the new ‘C-word.’ In nearby New Hampshire, things aren’t any better. For example, the principal of Epping Elementary School boasts that his school raises money for the needy, ‘but we don’t call it a Christmas gift drive,’ and that’s because ‘it’s a time for giving and that’s pretty much universal.’ But if that’s the case, why choose December as the gift-giving month? Similarly, why is December ‘a time for giving’? His counterpart at Newfields Elementary is so wound up about Christmas that he actually said, ‘we’ve tried to distance ourselves from religion and world events.’ No doubt he’s been a smashing success.

“North Carolinians are no strangers to the ‘C-word,’ either. At a recent Charlotte-Mecklenberg school meeting of parents, Rose Hamid, who heads a group called Muslim Women of the Carolinas, expressed her enthusiasm for censoring ‘Silent Night’ in the schools. She won. ‘Joy to the World’ was similarly banned, though apparently the parents were stumped on what to do about ‘Jingle Bells’: some said it was okay, but others were smart enough to say that the song is still linked

to Christmas.

“The schools in Maplewood, New Jersey have prohibited the singing of all religious songs, leading some at Columbia High School to question whether ‘Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer’ was also verboten. City officials in Denver will allow ‘Merry Christmas’ lights this year—for one last time—but will go with ‘Happy Holidays’ starting next year.

“This is only the beginning of the Christmas season and already the anti-Christmas crusade is in high gear. In the name of ‘separation of church and state,’ they distort it. In the name of diversity, they crush it. In the name of tolerance, they obliterate it. Which is why we need to call them for what they are—cultural fascists.”