

CHRISTMAS PANIC AT FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIV.

Here is what we told the press about the panic over Christmas that hit Florida Atlantic University (FAU):

“On most campuses, the night before finals is when students cram until they’re exhausted, but not at FAU this term: last Thursday, many attended an ‘EMERGENCY’ meeting about the controversy surrounding the school’s ‘Finals Week’ tree. For the past six years, the ‘Finals Week’ tree—adorned with lollipops, Fritos, etc. (courtesy of the faculty)—has been on display at the end of each semester. This year, Mark Tunick, a professor and interim dean, made the mistake of e-mailing 57 employees encouraging them to support ‘the traditional finals week Christmas tree with snack.’ That was too much to bear for Professor Martin J. Sweet: he said religious symbols don’t belong on campus, and it was his panic that triggered the ‘EMERGENCY’ meeting. Student government officials and faculty said they would hold ‘multiple meetings’ next semester to deal with this issue.

“FAU has a strange way of handling religious events. To begin with, the Christmas tree is not a sacred symbol; ergo, the protest is based on ignorance. Moreover, FAU held religious services on Yom Kippur in the main auditorium last October, all without protest. And there will be a Holiday Fundraiser at FAU’s Live Oaks Pavilion on December 17 where a group will ‘perform a medley of Jewish, Hanukkah and Christmas classics, with a particular emphasis on Yiddish music.’ No protests are likely. The state school also has an *officially endorsed* black Gospel Choir.

“FAU is not without values: this past summer, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, students were given a real necessity—condoms were promiscuously distributed. This is the

same school that caught our attention in 2001 when it hosted the anti-Catholic play, 'Corpus Christi.'

"Some students say the 'Finals Tree,' which is an evergreen, should be replaced with a Palm Tree, a hammock or a basket. We suggest that all lollipops be deposited in a baby carriage."

GAYS IN THE PRIESTHOOD: VATICAN RESPONSE WARRANTED

Bill Donohue did a great deal of TV and radio interviews discussing the Vatican document that was released on the subject of homosexuals in the priesthood. Here is what he told the press on November 23:

"According to news reports, the Vatican document says that while homosexuals must be respected, the Catholic Church 'cannot admit to seminaries and to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, who present deeply rooted homosexual tendencies or who support the so-called gay culture.'

"There is little doubt that most practicing Catholics will welcome this decision. The Vatican is prudent not to have an absolute ban on admission of homosexuals to the priesthood: there are too many good men with homosexual tendencies who have served the Church with distinction. But there is a monumental difference between someone who is incidentally homosexual and someone for whom the gay subculture is central to his identity. Only those blinded by sexual politics will fail to make this distinction.

"As I have said many times before, most homosexual priests are not molesters, but most of the molesters are gay. The John Jay

Report made this clear: 81 percent of the victims are male and almost as many are postpubescent. This is not called pedophilia—it is called homosexuality.

“The Catholic laity are justifiably angry with molesting priests and their enabling bishops, few in number though they have been. What this document does is to send a signal—those who cannot seriously commit to a celibate lifestyle have no legitimate role to play in the priesthood. This stricture should apply equally to heterosexuals.”

SOUNDBITES

Bill Donohue on CNN’s “Paula Zahn Now!”: “We do not have a pedophilia crisis in the Catholic Church. It’s been a homosexual crisis. Look at the National Review Board, what they have said. Look at the John Jay Report. Eighty-one percent of the victims are male. Most of them are postpubescent. Now, most gay priests are not molesters. But most of the molesters have been gay.”

THERE NEVER WAS A “PEDOPHILIA” CRISIS

No sooner was the document on gays in the priesthood released than the critics went mad. What we could no longer tolerate was the perpetuation of the myth that there has been a “pedophilia” crisis in the Catholic Church, and that is why we

issued the following news release:

"For 2000 years, the Catholic Church has been the subject of countless lies, especially on issues that touch on sexuality. Today, the biggest lie is that the Church suffers from a 'pedophilia' problem. And now that the Vatican has released its document on homosexuals in the priesthood, look for the lie to grow like a cancer.

"The findings of the National Review Board, appointed by the bishops to gather data on the problem of priestly sexual molestation, and the John Jay Report on this subject, conclusively said that most of the victims (81 percent) were male, and most of them were postpubescent. The National Review Board didn't mince words: 'we must call attention to the homosexual behavior that characterized the vast majority of cases of abuse observed in recent decades.'

"Yet in the past week, Voice of the Faithful and Call to Action (both Catholic dissident groups) have used terms like 'pedophilia' and 'child abuse' to describe the problem, respectively. This lie has deep roots: a Lexis-Nexis search linking 'pedophilia scandal' and 'pedophile scandal' with 'Catholic Church' (for all available dates in the U.S.) yields a total of 733 stories; linking 'homosexual scandal' and 'gay scandal' with 'Catholic Church' yields a grand total of 12 hits.

"Here's another lie. On the website beliefnet.com, there is an article by an anonymous priest that accuses the Vatican document of saying that 'gay men per se are incapable of relating to men and women.' The priest concludes that this is 'one of the most offensive things I have ever read in any church document about homosexuals.' But it's not true. The document clearly refers to 'those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture,' and not to gays per se as having this difficulty.

“Progress cannot be made unless we deal squarely with the facts. And the fact is that we’ve had a homosexual crisis in the priesthood all along.”