

# Will Catholic Bashing Attend Gay March?

At press time, it was not certain whether the June 25 New York Gay Pride March would be replete with the kind of anti-Catholic exhibitions that marred last year's march. But one thing is certain: gay organizers received a permit to start the march just one block from St. Patrick's Cathedral. Responding to this provocation, Catholic League president William Donohue called on Mayor Rudy Giuliani to intervene before it was too late. The following is the text of the letter that he sent.

June 8, 1995

Hon. Rudolph Giuliani  
Mayor, City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Mayor Giuliani:

I have just learned that this year's Gay Pride Parade is scheduled to proceed down 5th Avenue at noon on June 25. The stepping off point is 52nd Street and 5th Avenue, directly above St. Patrick's Cathedral. That means that those who attend the noon Mass will have to endure the deliberate provocations that typically attend this event. That is why I am asking you to intervene before it is too late.

On June 26 of last year, I witnessed the most blatantly anti-Catholic demonstration of my life. It occurred in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral during the illegal Gay Parade that you and Commissioner Bratton allowed, notwithstanding the fact that a court order had been successfully secured by the City of New York barring the march. What happened in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral was incredible: men and women went naked

in the street pointing their middle fingers at the church screaming "F- you" on command. For more on this, see the enclosed piece that I wrote for *Crisis* magazine.

The Gay Pride Parade typically begins at Columbus Circle and then proceeds down Fifth Avenue. The change to the area of St. Patrick's Cathedral is designed to facilitate the agit-prop agenda of radical gays. Remember, it was the New York gay leadership which broke with the gay organizers of the parade that proceeded up First Avenue on June 26, 1994. The split occurred because the New York contingent wanted to "march" past St. Patrick's so that they could indulge in their bigoted assaults. This is not a matter of opinion, rather it is a matter of record. Have you any doubt why 52nd and 5th was chosen to start this year's march?

As mayor of the City of New York, you have an obligation to denounce all forms of bigotry, and not just those that are politically correct. You also have an obligation not to allow religious bigotry to go unchecked. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that if the Nazis wanted to begin a march in front of a Jewish synagogue, or the Klan wanted to start in front of a Baptist church in Harlem, you would never allow it.

Two things need to be done: a) the start of the parade route must be altered so that those proceeding to and from Mass will not have their sensibilities assaulted and b) there needs to be a statement from you condemning anti-Catholic bigotry, as well as other forms of bigotry. The parade would hardly be burdened if it began at 42nd Street and then proceeded down 5th Avenue to its Christopher Street destination. And it should take no special courage to make a cautionary statement regarding the problems that attended last year's Gay Pride Parade, calling for restraint and civility this year.

It is not my desire to make a public spectacle of this controversy. But I promise you this: if nothing is done to ameliorate this condition, I will not settle, as I did last

year, for seeing Deputy Mayor Fran Reiter after Catholics have been bashed. This year the response of the Catholic League will be public, timely and costly to all those involved.

Friday, June 16 is the latest I can wait for a reply from you before going public with my response.

Sincerely,  
William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President

cc: Deputy Mayor Fran Reiter

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## **Saks Fifth Avenue Removes Offensive “Decoration”**

While it seems as though Saks Fifth Avenue is forever changing its window displays, sometimes change happens more quickly than even it might expect. Such was the case in May when callers complained on the “Ed Koch Show” over the “jewelry” that one of the mannequins was adorned with.

Over Mother’s Day weekend, a window display at Saks Fifth Avenue featured the use of Rosary beads as a necklace on a rather indiscreetly dressed mannequin. On May 15, callers on the “Ed Koch Show” registered their protest over the disrespectful use of a Catholic method of devotional prayer, and subsequently called Saks Fifth Avenue and the Catholic League. But before Dr. Donohue got a chance to view the window display, the Rosary was removed from the display.

While Saks erred in its disrespectful treatment of the Rosary, credit should be given to its President, Ms. Rosemary Bravo,

for her quick action in removing the religious “jewelry.”

It may just be that Ms. Bravo remembered the strong public reaction that greeted Barneys last December and decided that the risk of offending Catholics outweighed the merits of letting the window display stand.

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## **“Everybody’s not doin’ it” in New York State**

In May, 1994, Margaret Hamburg, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health, wrote to the Catholic League asking that the League reconsider its anti-condom subway advertising campaign. “While it may be true, as the Catholic League suggests,” she wrote, “that abstinence is the most effective strategy for preventing the transmission of HIV infection, I am deeply concerned about the misleading nature of the League’s planned anti-condom subway advertising campaign.” Misleading? Promoting restraint over the inconsistent and unreliable use of condoms? Dr. Donohue responded by saying the only thing the League would reconsider would be the expansion of the campaign.

As disappointed as Ms. Hamburg was with the League’s campaign, imagine her reaction when she learned that the New York State Department of Health would be expanding on the message of restraint and abstinence. In March, the Department began a month-long public service campaign on the city’s subways which stressed that “not doin’ it is 100% protection.” The poster included a color photo of a man’s hand on the back pocket of a woman’s jeans along with the following text: “Everybody’s not doin’ it. Sex is risky. It can lead to unwanted pregnancy,

AIDS or other STD's. Condoms help...but not doin' it is 100% protection."

Could it be that with the League having successfully "tested the waters" with its anti-condom ads, the New York State Department of Health felt safe to go public with the same idea-that restraint is the best option physically *and* emotionally, not to mention spiritually?

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## **Attention all Students and Alumni of Catholic Colleges and Universities!**

Have you or someone you know been discriminated against on your college campus due to his Catholicism? Have you ever felt as though you're the only one concerned about maintaining the integrity of Catholic scholarship? If so, you'll be glad to know that a new group, the Cardinal Newman Society, is on the scene to assist those working toward the preservation of Catholic Higher Education.

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights does not get involved in internal Church matters. The Cardinal Newman Society for the Preservation of Catholic Higher Education, however, picks up where the Catholic League leaves off, offering assistance to those pursuing from within the Church the furtherance of authentic Catholic theology.

"We intend to promote the vision of Catholic higher education that was set forth by John Henry Cardinal Newman and further developed by Pope John Paul II, and to assist students, faculty, administrators and alumni in their efforts to find

effective means of restoring and maintaining a Catholic identity,” said Society Executive Director Patrick Reilly.

The Cardinal Newman Society is also looking to establish a presence on all Catholic college and University campuses. For more information on campus chapter formation, contact the headquarters at P.O. Box 75274, Washington, D.C. 20013, or call (703) 329-3054. The Society publishes a newsletter, *The Turnaround*, detailing incidents on Catholic colleges and Universities and the responses offered by the Society or representatives of the Society on those campuses. To receive the newsletter, press clippings and occasional notices about special events, send \$25 or more (\$15 for students) to the address above.

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## How TV Views Religion

No one tracks the media better than Brent Bozell’s Media Research Center. Indeed, if it is true that the media are the Fourth Estate then it must be true that the Media Research Center is the Fifth Estate. Its recent report, “Faith in the Box: Television and Religion,” found several interesting items.

No religion received more coverage on TV in 1994 than Catholicism. Indeed, there were 103 stories done on Catholicism, 24 of which dealt exclusively with the Cairo Conference. According to the report, every Cairo story treated the Church with “disdain.” Here are a few examples.

On September 3, 1994, CBS reporter Martha Teichner stated that a “nasty fight” between President Clinton and the Pope was brewing: “The security in effect for the U.N. Population Conference in Cairo is the kind used to prevent aircraft

hijackings. But so far, the only hijacking taking place is of the agenda.” It was clear from the context of the story that the Vatican was allegedly hijacking the conference.

On September 7, 1994, ABC’s Peter Jennings had this to say: “In Cairo, the Pope’s representatives are causing tempers to flare at the World Population Conference as the Vatican holds to its uncompromising position on abortion.” Reporter Jim Bitterman then added: “Vatican representatives at the population conference were today being cast in the role of spoiler, their stubborn style angering fellow delegates.... And delegates weren’t the only ones frustrated. Thousands of activists who came here to push causes from the environment to women’s rights, have been ignored as the representatives from 182 nations spend their time and energy debating the abortion issue.”

Question: why is it that opponents of abortion are typically portrayed by the media as “uncompromising” and “stubborn” while unyielding abortion rights enthusiasts are seen as principled? Look for more of the same in September when the media go to Beijing for the U.N.’s Fourth World Conference on

Women.

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## **Dr. Donohue Receives Honorary Appointment**

Dr. Donohue has been named to the Honorary Advisory Council of the Jewish Action Alliance. The Jewish Action Alliance and Catholic League have joined together on various issues in the past (such as the protest against Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam) and look forward to continuing a mutually

supportive relationship in the future.

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## **Anti-Catholicism Nation's Worst Prejudice**

In a major survey conducted for the National Conference, it was found that the worst negative stereotype of any group in America was held by non-Catholics against Catholics. The organization, previously known as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, reported that 55% of non-Catholics believe that Catholics “want to impose their own ideas of morality on the larger society.” No other group had a majority of those outside its group harbor a negative stereotype of it. The other groups in the survey were Asian-Americans, Latina-Americans, African-Americans, Jews and Muslims.

The survey also found that 38% of non-Catholics believe that Catholics are “narrow minded because they are too much controlled by their church.” It was not for nothing that the report commented “Certainly the seeds of anti-Catholic sentiment exist in popular thinking and should not be dismissed lightly.”

Interestingly, one of the report's conclusions was that “On the whole, the study found that Americas [sic] ethnic, racial and religious groups express greater respect for each other in the West than they do in the rest of the nation.” It said the least tolerant region was the South. Yet when it comes to measuring anti-Catholicism, the South was the least prejudiced and the West was the most prejudiced.

Though the report did not explain why anti-Catholicism flourishes more in the West than in any other part of the



country, it hardly seems coincidental that the greatest proportion of non-believing Americans is in the West. It would certainly appear that anti-Catholicism rages most with those who are agnostics and atheists. These data call into question the popular mythology which sees Westerners as the most enlightened free thinkers in the nation.

Directors of multicultural programs should be made aware of this study. Together with the Catholic League's *1994 Report on Anti-Catholicism*, it makes a strong case for incorporating a segment on anti-Catholicism into every diversity program in the country. Those who want a copy of the National Conference's report, *Taking America's Pulse*, should contact the organization at 71 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10003, or call the National Conference at 800-352- 6225.

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## **League Calls on Members to Support GOSPA**

Members and friends of the Catholic League are all too familiar with movies that attack and defame the Catholic faith, the most recent being "Priest." What we may not be accustomed to are films that respect the Catholic faith and teaches us a thing or two about our faith. GOSPA is such a film.

The story of Miracles at Medjugorje, GOSPA (which means "Our Lady" in Croatian) was filmed entirely in the former Yugoslavia, using considerable local talent in the acting and production of the film. But don't be misled as GOSPA is not without star power. Martin Sheen stars as Fr. Jozo Zovko OFM, the parish priest tortured by Communists and ultimately put on

trial and convicted for sedition. Michael York is compelling as Milan Vukovic, the lawyer who defends Father Jozo despite threats and opposition. Morgan Fairchild gives a strong and compassionate portrayal as Sister Fabiana Zovko, Fr. Jozo's sister. Native Croatian people perform many of the other roles.

Tim Penland, the man responsible for the successful nationwide and international distribution of "Chariots of Fire," is promoting GOSP A. When "Chariots of Fire" first came out, Penland packed theatres by selling discounted tickets at a bulk rate to church groups and others. He would like to do the same for GOSPA. Catholic League members can help by attending the movie when it opens on September 15, or by calling the Penland Co. at (818) 545-0970 to order advance purchase tickets at 20% off the box-office price.

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## **Jane Pauley Shows Anti-Catholic Bias**

In the June 13 airing of NBC's "Dateline," Jane Pauley interviewed Scott O'Grady, the U.S. pilot who was recently rescued in Bosnia. In the course of the interview, the subject turned to religion. Here is how the exchange went:

Pauley: Do you believe in destiny?

O'Grady: Oh, definitely. I believe in God wholeheartedly. 'Cause if it weren't for Him, I wouldn't be here. If it wasn't for God and, the miracle that...He basically blessed with me with, as far as being...

Pauley [OVERTALK]: God has long been Captain O'Grady's co-

pilot. A devout Roman Catholic, O'Grady made his confirmation at age thirteen, *and unlike many of his peers never left the Church.* [Emphasis added.]

Catholic League president William Donohue issued the following statement concerning Pauley's comment:

"Pauley's remark was a snide, gratuitous, editorial remark that reveals volumes about her approach to Catholicism. She would never say of a young black man that 'unlike many of his peers he's never been arrested,' nor would she say of a young gay man that 'unlike many of his peers he's doesn't have HIV.'

"Jimmy the Greek and Al Campaneris were thrown off the air for making remarks about blacks that many read as racist. For Pauley to survive this incident with impunity would be to sanction a double standard. Anti-Catholicism is no less an invidious form of bigotry than racism, and that is why I have written to Bob Wright, CEO of NBC, asking for disciplinary action against Pauley."