

OREGON D.A. YIELDS AFTER BUGGING PRIEST IN CONFESSIONAL

The Catholic League scored perhaps its biggest victory yet in pressuring the District Attorney from Lane County, Oregon into apologizing for authorizing the bugging of a priest in the confessional. District Attorney Doug Harclerod issued his apology and a pledge never to do this again on May 22.

The case began on April 22 when Father Tim Mockaitis of Eugene, Oregon administered the Sacrament of Reconciliation to Conan Wayne Hale in the Lane County Jail. Father Mockaitis had previously administered the sacraments to inmates of the jail on many occasions, and therefore thought that there was nothing extraordinary about the request. What he didn't know was that D.A. Harclerod had secured a court order to tape the conversation in the confessional. Father Mockaitis didn't learn that he was bugged until a reporter from the Eugene Register-Guard discovered from court records what had happened and then informed the priest of his discovery. This occurred on May 3 and on May 7 representatives of the Archdiocese of Portland met with the Lane County District Attorney to review the incident.

On May 9, the Catholic League issued a news release announcing that it was taking its case to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, stating that it would join any lawsuit against the D.A. that might be brought. The American Civil Liberties Union and the Rutherford Institute soon issued statements of protest as well.

The league's official response to the media was as follows: "The pursuit of justice in a democracy is never an absolute, rather it is a conditional pursuit. Other noble ends, such as

respect for the rights of the accused and respect for religious freedom, often limit the reach of the state. In this regard, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, an integral exercise of religious freedom in Roman Catholicism, cannot be sacrificed to satisfy the ambitions of overly-zealous prosecutors.”

Then the league addressed the perennial church-state issue, only this time calling attention to violations committed by the state: “We hear ad nauseam about violations of church and state from those bent on privatizing religion. But little is heard when the state violates church-state boundaries, as surely was done in this instance. “But even those who are not Catholic will want to support the Catholic League in this effort: what is at stake is more than just freedom of religion, it is the lust for power that emanates from the state. What happened in Eugene is the kind of thing that Storm Troopers delighted in doing not too long ago, and as history has shown, militants like that respect no limits in anything they do.”

Media interest in the case led to a round of interviews with Catholic League staffers and thus helped to feed the pressure on Harclerod. But he wouldn’t budge and even refused to talk to reporters. On May 13, league president William Donohue was quoted in the New York Times as saying that bugging a priest in the confessional was “unprecedented in American history” and described the taping as “a Nazi tactic.” He added, “They know damned well that the relationship between a priest and penitent is sacred and cannot be violated.”

On May 14, the Catholic League picked up the pace by calling for a Congressional investigation. The league contacted Congressman Charles Canady of Florida to conduct the inquiry; Canady is Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the House Judiciary Committee. There was immediate interest in this case from Congressman Canady’s office.

In its press release calling for the Congressional inquiry, the league said the following: "For over 200 years this sacrament [Reconciliation] has been afforded a confidential status by the state and has been enshrined in law by several U.S. Supreme Court decisions. In 1973, in Doe v. Bolton, the high court stated that 'The right to privacy has no more conspicuous place than in the physician-patient relationship, unless it be in the priest-penitent relationship.'" When the D.A. capitulated on May 22, he did so in a manner that still left many issues unresolved. Although he said that "I was wrong to authorize taping that confession," he added that what he did was "legal and ethical but simply not right." The league was not entirely satisfied with this response and was concerned that other D.A.'s throughout the nation might think that bugging a priest in the confessional might be legal, however unpopular the practice might be. That is why the league called upon Congressman Peter T. King of New York to introduce legislation that would settle the matter once and for all.

Congressman King has already introduced a bill that will protect all privileged religious communications. Entitled the "Religious Communications Sanctity Act," the bill was formally introduced to the public on June 10 at a press conference organized by the Catholic League. Congressman King, Dr. Donohue and Joseph Zwillling, the spokesman for the New York Archdiocese, spoke at the event. The press conference was supported by dozens of religious organizations from several denominations.

LEAGUE BACKS SCHOOL BILL THAT AIDS THE POOR

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is urging passage of a new bill sponsored by Congressman Jim Talent that would award scholarships to the parents of indigent children. The bill would allow parents to choose from a wide variety of schools, including private religious schools. Known as the Community Renewal Project Act of 1996, the bill is aimed at many aspects of "moral renewal," ranging from economic empowerment to family solidarity. The Catholic League issued the following statement to the press regarding the bill:

"The Community Renewal Project is badly needed. Congressman Talent's bill would grant scholarships to the parents of poor children that would enable them to choose the school of their choice. By doing so, the bill would go a long way toward breaking the gridlock of poverty and despair that many inner city children suffer.

"There is overwhelming evidence that Catholic schools do a superior job of educating children. Nowhere is this success more recognizable than in urban minority communities. Catholic schools offer moral, as well as academic, excellence, and have done more to provide upward mobility to indigent youngsters than any other source. It is high time government put its money where it can have the greatest growth potential.

"By granting scholarships to localities that would then grant them to parents, this bill bypasses the legal problems associated with other bills. Those who champion the interests of the poor and are supportive of religious freedom will want to see this bill passed."

THE TAMING OF AN OREGON D.A.

I have been told by those who know him that Lane County District Attorney Doug Harclerod is actually a nice person. Maybe he is. Maybe he's not even anti-Catholic. But he sure isn't too bright.

How any District Attorney could think that he could get away with bugging a priest in the confessional is beyond me. The guy he was interested in taping, Conan Wayne Hale, hadn't even been charged with the triple homicide he was suspected of committing when the bug was placed. Evidently, D.A. Harclerod thought that he would be a crowd pleaser by nailing Hale and wouldn't have to worry about the negative publicity that Catholics might generate. It was a gamble he lived to regret.

How did the Catholic League jump on this story so quickly? Readers will remember that we led a fight against Eugene, Oregon Mayor Ruth Bascom last fall when she refused to condemn the awarding of city money to a group of anti-Catholic bigots called "The Rickies." Eighteen men and women had dressed as nuns and priests and did a mock dance on the steps of a Roman Catholic Church during the Eugene Celebration Parade. And for this they were awarded second prize and a few hundred dollars. We took out an ad in the local paper protesting this action, so when the bugging took place, the reporters knew exactly whom to turn to for a response.

This was a story that generated an enormous amount of publicity, both at home and abroad. We got calls from Italy, England and Canada, wanting to know our reaction. We got calls from 60 Minutes and Dateline, as well as from National Public Radio, *Time* and the *New York Times*. The *Washington Post* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote editorials that were

unabashedly on our side. Radio talk show hosts were, with one exception (a few wise guys from Los Angeles whom I enjoyed parrying with), uniformly supportive of our efforts.

Reporters aren't dumb—they know what's at stake once the state is able to break the seal of the confessional: journalists and their sources, psychiatrists and their patients, lawyers and clients, the clergy and the faithful—all would be vulnerable to governmental intrusion. That's why the momentum kept building our way and that's why we won.

We also won because of people like Patrick Foye. Pat is our General Counsel, a crackerjack lawyer who works at the prestigious New York law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom. It was Pat who obtained for me important Supreme Court decisions that acknowledged the confidential status of the priest-penitent relationship. Indeed, he is the only person in the fields of law and journalism who was able to locate this valuable information. District Attorney Harclerod tried to argue that the taping was okay because there was a sign in the jail where the confession was heard that said that no conversations were confidential. But Father Mockaitis wasn't called in to chat with Mr. Hale, rather he was asked to administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. And that makes all the difference in the world.

What is perhaps most galling about D.A. Harclerod is the way he tried to save face. Anyone who says that what he did was "legal and ethical but simply not right," obviously doesn't know what the term ethical means. He should have plainly said that he was wrong, and just left it at that.

The Vatican is right in asking that the tape be destroyed. At this juncture, it is the counsel for Mr. Hale who seeks to safeguard the tape: she knows that the D.A. may lose the case if the tape isn't destroyed. If I am grateful to Harclerod about anything, it is that he unwittingly provided Catholics with a great teaching moment. There is great fascination about

confession among those who are not Catholic and this case afforded many opportunities to separate fact from myth. In almost every instance, the media were sincerely interested in giving us a fair break in explaining the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

I am also grateful to Robert George of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission for his interest in pursuing this case. Congressman Charles Canady is also to be congratulated for his help in looking into this matter. And to Congressman Peter King, the Catholic League is especially indebted: he wasted no time in drafting legislation that will stop this abuse once and for all.

So there are good people out there. We all know lawyers, reporters and politicians whom we don't like, but judging from what we experienced in the Oregon case, it is also true that there are lawyers like Pat Foye, reporters like Bill Bishop of the Eugene Register Guard (he broke the story) and politicians like Pete King who deserve nothing but our thanks and emulation.

WEEKLY COLUMN – CATHOLIC STAR HERALD CLINTON, ABORTION, AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

I thought I had said as much as necessary about President Clinton's veto of the partial birth abortion ban, but the president's latest temper tantrum brings me back once again. It's not that I expected Mr. Clinton to change his mind, but the graphic picture of his clenched fist, his angry outburst and his loss of self-control is scary. It is the picture of an

arrogant dictator, not the president of the United States. His statements are simply outrageous, and they make it painfully clear that he will distort any fact, confuse any truth and resort to the worst type of insult to justify himself.

It's not simply his intemperance that troubles me. It's the blatant insult to the Catholic Church and to every individual Catholic. I am outraged that Mr. Clinton, president of the United States, has singled out the religious identity of 2 of 5 women – the two who he claims are Catholic. What is the meaning of this? No one else's religion is mentioned. Does this mean that Catholic teaching is to be dismissed or ridiculed because Mr. Clinton says that some Catholic women have had some type of late-term abortion? If they did, and this is very unclear from the emotion-laden press conference Mr. Clinton held, does that make Catholic teaching (or the moral convictions of millions of non-Catholics) incorrect and/or irrelevant? Who appointed President Clinton the sole judge of what is moral or immoral, or worse, the final judge on the moral validity of Catholic teaching on abortion? Granted that Mr. Clinton used the power of the presidency to decide the legal issue, where does he get the authority to establish his viewpoint on a moral issue as conclusive by dragging the religious identity of anyone into a public debate?

Mr. Clinton is not a journalist, an academic or a talk-show host. He is the president of the United States—at every moment of his life until he finishes his term of office. As president, he cannot establish himself as the compelling authority on the acceptability or validity of issues of religious teaching. But that is precisely what Mr. Clinton is doing, and our constitutional protection of religious freedom is endangered

Bill Clinton has not only proclaimed again his absolute subservience to the pro-abortion forces, but he has set himself up as the paramount authority on the moral validity of

a women's absolute freedom to have an abortion at any stage of pregnancy, by any method, without any qualification and, paid for by government funds. Mr. Clinton has made himself the protector of every pro-abortion group in the United States. And he has made it abundantly clear that he will give no consideration to, recognize no claims for the life of the unborn child even in the latest stages of pregnancy when the child's viability is beyond question. Mr. Clinton's faulty reasoning leads to justification of infanticide.

But Mr. Clinton goes on and instructs us on his perception of the unique role of the president. "The president is the only place in this system of ours where there's only one person who can stand up for people with no voice, no power, who are going to be eviscerated." Again, Mr. Clinton has it all wrong. It's the millions of unborn aborted children—victims of "a woman's choice"—who have no voice and no power. If his veto stands, it's the 500 or 1000 late term infants, most of whom the doctors say are perfectly healthy but unwanted, that will be eviscerated with the full approval of the president of the United States and his promise to those who destroy them that he, President William Clinton, will defend them. Is Mr. Clinton living in some type of dreamland? He is telling us that he has weighed the decision of five women—not all of whom clearly underwent the partial-birth abortion procedure—against the lives and safety of all unborn children. He has said that his presidential obligation is to ensure easy abortion at every stage of pregnancy for any woman who wants it, even at the cost of devaluing the life of all unborn children — healthy and viable, sick or at risk. What kind of compassion, what kind of ethical sensitivity, what kind of presidential integrity is this?

But the president is also wrong about his unique power. In our system of government the president is not the only place to go for protection of human life or human rights. Congress has the power to protect—as it did in this case—until overridden by

the president. And as the history of slavery reminds us, the judiciary also has the power—considerably stronger than the president’s—to stand up for those with no voice, no power...

Up until now I have had many questions about President Clinton. But after this episode and having seen the irrational emotional outburst, I am truly frightened, not only for unborn children, but for the religious freedom the Constitution promises all of us.

Most Reverend James T. McHugh
Bishop of Camden
May 31, 1996

WHO IS PETER KING?

Congressman Peter T. King is the person who responded to the Catholic League’s request to initiate federal legislation forever barring the taping of a priest in the confessional. He recently spoke at the Long Island Chapter’s annual communion breakfast at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York.

Congressman King, a Republican, is currently serving a second consecutive term in the U.S. House of Representatives. He represents the 3rd District of New York, an area that comprises much of Nassau County, Long Island.

Pete King has rapidly risen through the ranks to hold important leadership positions. In 1993 and 1994, he was unanimously elected Vice President of the Republican Class of New Members of Congress. In 1995, Rep. King was unanimously chosen to serve as the Majority Whip of the New York State Republican Delegation.

The league recently worked with Rep. King in calling for a federal investigation of the work of Louis Farrakhan, head of the Nation of Islam. Farrakhan, it is believed, has acted as an unauthorized foreign agent of the nation of Libya. Catholic League president William Donohue called Rep. King “a brave and extraordinarily bright and selfless person, the kind we see too little of these days in government at any level.”

NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY PULLS OFFENSIVE ART EXHIBIT

After a protest that included local Catholics, legislators and the Catholic League, Northern Kentucky University withdrew its plans to present an offensive art exhibit entitled, “Immaculate Misconceptions.”

The furor began last winter when the Art Department at the state school announced that it would go forward with the exhibit. Immediately, Sisters of the St. Joseph the Worker at St. William Convent in Walton, Kentucky took their case to university officials. So did some influential state legislators, including State Senator Richard L. “Dick” Roeding, chairman of the Northern Kentucky Legislative Caucus.

State legislators threatened to withhold money from the university’s proposed \$35 million natural sciences center unless the title was dropped. The university agreed to do this in March, but in April the Art Department openly defied the school’s administration and said it would go ahead with the exhibit without changing the title.

Barbara Houghton, chairman of the Art Department, said that the featured artists had all been raised as Roman Catholics

and simply wanted to display work inspired by the misconceptions they had while learning the faith. Ellen Zahorec, the art professor who was coordinating the event, admitted that she did not plan to screen the exhibit for anti-Catholic material.

The proposal for the art exhibit left little doubt, however, that what was to be presented was clearly defamatory. Here is a sample, taken from the proposal, of what was to be on display.

"The coordinator will create a larger body of work called 'Reliquaries, Stations, and Reconciliations' which will deal with the issues of recovering and re-emerging Catholics, sacred versus secular themes that challenge her personal belief system. Works will serve as an exorcism of sort in an effort to free the artist from misguided fears created by stringent dogmatic concepts that were learned and misconceived. Traditional religious imagery will be used in forms not usually found within a church context.

"The pieces will integrate mundane objects of everyday life into devotional pieces similar in manner to folk art traditions of worship. The fifteen stations will commemorate significant personal and universal events of 'The Good Little Catholic Girl' and will focus more on Catholicism from a female view. The support for the stations will be antique ironing boards and each station will include a specific ritual for the viewer to meditate upon as they move through the transitions."

On April 17, Catholic League president William Donohue sent a letter to the president of the university demanding that both the title and the exhibit be withdrawn. (See box below.)

On April 29, less than two weeks after receiving Dr. Donohue's letter, the school decided to drop the entire exhibit, title and all.

April 17, 1996

Dr. Leon Boothe
President
Northern Kentucky University
Nunn Drive
Highland Heights, Kentucky 41099-8002

Dear President Boothe:

I am writing with regard to the art exhibit, "Immaculate Misconception." My concerns are not simply with the title, but with the exhibition itself.

I have spent most of my adult life as an academic (indeed I still sit on the board of directors of the National Association of Scholars), and as such I have deep respect for academic freedom. But I also cherish academic responsibility. As president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization, I have other interests as well: the Catholic League defends individual Catholics and the institutional Church from defamation and discrimination.

In the interest of respect for diversity and tolerance for all segments of our society, I implore you to dissuade the Art Department from going forward with this exhibition. It is one thing to engage in reasoned dialogue expressing criticisms of the Catholic religion, quite another to feature the art work of those who have an animus against Catholicism. I can't believe for a minute that blasphemous exhibitions would be tolerated against a religion of Native Americans. We expect the same treatment.

I have enclosed copies of our monthly publication, Catalyst, which reaches over 200,000 of our members, including every Congressman and Bishop in the nation. Also enclosed is a copy of our Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism.

I await a response from you before going any further.

Sincerely,
William A. Donohue
President

cc: Hon. Richard L. "Dick" Roeding, Chair, Northern Kentucky
Legislative Caucus Hon. Royce W. Adams, Co-Chair, Northern
Kentucky Legislative Caucus Steve Balch, president, National
Association of Scholars Patrick Foye, General Counsel,
Catholic League.

ANTI-CATHOLIC BIAS SHOWN BY UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

For the past few months, the Catholic League has been involved in a dispute with the University of Virginia over an incident of religious bias. It all began last January when a student from Chaminade High School—the flagship Catholic school on Long Island—was interviewed by the Long Island Selection Committee for the Jefferson Scholars Program at the University of Virginia.

On January 15, Peter M. Folan was notified that he would be interviewed by the scholarship committee on January 28. He was told that the interview would “make your application come to life.” It should be noted that on Folan’s application, he listed his position as president of Chaminade’s Catholic League chapter. It should also be noted that in 1995, the Catholic League successfully sued the University of Virginia in the Rosenberger decision, a Supreme Court ruling that secured the right to school funding for Christian

publications.

The panel of three women and one man began their questioning of Folan by asking, "What is your relationship with God?" This was an odd, if not totally inappropriate, way for a state school to begin an interview. It got worse: the only topic of discussion for the first fifteen to twenty minutes of the half-hour interview was Catholicism.

Folan was asked the following questions: "Do you believe in the infallibility of the Pope?"; "What if the Pope said something completely ridiculous, would you follow him anyway?"; "What are your feelings on women priests?"; "Is there any issue that you disagree with in terms of the Roman Catholic Church?" And so on. This was followed by the obviously dishonest statement, "Don't worry, your answer doesn't matter to me either way."

The next part of the discussion revolved around Folan's role as president of the Catholic League chapter. Folan mentioned the protest that the chapter launched against the anti-Catholic movie, *Priest*, and this, in turn, led the panel to grill him over his involvement.

On February 26, Folan sent a letter of protest to James H. Wright, director of the Jefferson Scholars Program, explaining the reasons for his outrage. Wright's response was to defend the interview committee by stating that it "was not biased against you or any other candidate for reasons of religion, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, or opinions held." He also offered the predictable line that we "are truly sorry for any misunderstanding that may have occurred as a part of the selection process." But, of course, there was no misunderstanding: all parties to the interview knew exactly what was going on.

On March 6, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote a letter to Mr. Wright asking him to more fully explain the

selection committee's behavior. Wright again defended the university, claiming that "The Committee is comprised of dedicated, conscientious individuals who approach their responsibility with care and diligence."

Not satisfied, Donohue took his complaint to a) the United States Department of Education b) Virginia Governor George Allen and c) the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (the accrediting body for the University of Virginia). In his letter, Donohue explained what had occurred and then registered the league's objections, which included the following statements.

"I am convinced that Peter Folan has told the truth and that the University of Virginia officials implicated in this matter are being intentionally uncooperative. The University of Virginia is a state-supported school. As such it is obligated not to transverse church and state boundaries. Not only has this happened, but religious harassment and an invasion of privacy has also occurred."

The U.S. Department of Education responded by saying that this matter should be taken up with the Department of Justice, and therefore forwarded the case to them. Governor Allen asked John Casteen, the president of the University of Virginia, to review the matter and respond directly to Dr. Donohue. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools submitted a complaint form to be filed by Mr. Folan, but also took the occasion to question Dr. Donohue about pursuing this case.

G. Jack Allen, associate executive director of the association, raised the following questions, stating that he "was curious about the nature of your complaint." "Are you saying that the kinds of questions asked Mr. Folan were a violation of his civil rights? Are you also saying that asking these kinds of questions revealed bias on the part of the questioners? Is it your position that these kinds of questions should not be asked in the give and take of academic debate or

of determining the reasoning ability of applicants for scholarships?"

Dr. Donohue was not impressed with the tone of Mr. Allen's questions and responded accordingly. "Never have I heard of a prospective student being grilled by the authorities from a state school about his or her religious beliefs. The type of questions that Mr. Folan was asked were clearly designed to draw him out, to have him reveal his perspective on the Roman Catholic Church. What earthly bearing could this possibly have in assessing his suitability for a scholarship? Is this common practice? Are Jews asked such questions? What about non-believers, are they asked why they believe in nothing?"

Donohue concluded with the following: "Questions that speak to private matters have no legitimate role to play in assessing people for a scholarship in a state school. That is why homosexuals are not asked to explain what they do in bed and with whom. Neither should Catholics be asked to explain the basis of their beliefs."

This case is not over, but readers of Catalyst need to know what has been happening. We will keep you posted as events unfold.

HBO PROTEST WORKS

The Catholic League protest against HBO left a message that won't be lost. Between the formal protest registered by Catholic bishops, the thousands of postcards and letters that league members sent, and the meeting that Dr. Donohue had with HBO officials, there is little doubt that HBO won't be doing a sequel to Priestly Sins.

On May 7, league president William Donohue met with three senior officials from HBO. He began by admitting that the Catholic Church—like all other institutions and segments of our society—has dirty laundry, but curiously HBO has shown no interest in projecting the dirty laundry of any other group. So he offered a few suggestions.

Donohue asked HBO officials why they don't do a show on why Native Americans have such a high rate of alcoholism. He said that a show that explained why Methodist ministers have a divorce rate that is double the national average would be a good one. He suggested a show on African American men and the concept of fatherhood.

Another recommendation was to do a show on the gay contribution to the AIDS disease. Finally, he advised them to do a show on why Jews are so over-represented in Hollywood.

The HBO officials picked up on Donohue's facetiousness by remaining mute. His point was that none of the shows he "recommended," nor *Priestly Sins*, is responsible television fare. They then settled into a lengthy discussion about *Priestly Sins*.

In essence, the argument that Donohue made was that it is always wrong to treat social issues out of social context, and that when no comparative data are presented, it gives the viewer a false picture. He also objected to the way statistics were bandied about as if they were authoritative when, in fact, they are not.

As a corrective to the show, HBO officials entertained the idea of broadcasting a symposium on the film, whereby Donohue could participate with eight or nine others in a discussion of *Priestly Sins*. Donohue rejected the idea and instead suggested that HBO televise a debate between him and any three experts in the country that HBO chose. But they wouldn't bite. The talk ended on a cordial though disagreeable note.

As a result of all the protests, HBO decided to put a disclaimer at the end of Priestly Sins, the effect of which was to say that the figures cited in the program represent only the opinions of the speakers and are not necessarily correct.

This was a small admission, but an important one. Coupled with the heat generated by the league, it is clear that HBO will not forget the strength and depth of the Catholic voice.

May 8, 1996

Times Picayune

Letters Editor

3800 Howard Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70140

Dear Editor:Mark

Lorando ("Catholic Crisis," May 6) seems to like the HBO program, "The Priestly Sins." Here's a few things for him to think about.

The film is classic propaganda, moving from anecdote to generalization. The accompanying music and flashes of cathedrals, church doors and statues are used to create a mystical background, against which horror stories unfold. Now no one doubts that some priests have failed miserably in their duties and that innocent persons have been cruelly hurt. But sentiments of sorry and anger should not be used to mask the demands of honest reporting.

Honest reporting would require that when Richard Sipe (an ex-priest) arrives at a figure of 3,000 sexual abusers among 50,000 priests (6 percent) he is actually referring to sexual tendencies, not actual behavior (see the book by Philip Jenkins, *Pedophiles and Priests*). Honest reporting would mandate that the figure of clergy sexual abuse in the Catholic priesthood is less than the figure among the non-celibate Protestant clergy (between .2 to 1.7 percent for priests and

between 2-3 percent for ministers). Honest reporting would disclose that Father John McNeill, who offers what he `thinks' the incidence of abuse might be, is actually the co-founder of Dignity, a homosexual group that openly rejects Catholic teaching and has no standing in the Church.

No comparative data with other segments of society are presented. Moreover, we hear nothing about false accusations, tarnished careers, greedy lawyers or obsequious therapists. And there is nothing about anti-Catholic bigotry.

HBO is not the first to float the idea that a 'code of secrecy' keeps the Church from revealing the truth about clergy sexual abuse: that honor extends to the Nazis and others. It is for all these reasons that the Catholic League will call on all Catholics to boycott HBO and will provide its members with preprinted postcards that can be sent to the company. Having just met with HBO officials, I am convinced that the boycott must go forward.

Sincerely,
William A. Donohue
President

CBS' "A SEASON IN PURGATORY" BAITS CATHOLICS

On May 5 and 7, CBS aired the mini-series, A Season in Purgatory, based on the novel by Dominick Dunne. It was vintage Catholic baiting as the following selections from the show indicate. The transcript was made available thanks to the Media Research Center, headed by Brent Bozell.

"A Season in Purgatory is the story of the wealthy, influential Bradley family. The father uses his wealth to get everything he wants, including covering up his son's crime of murder. Harry and Constant grew up in a Catholic school. One night Constant murders a young girl next door, and Harry helps him bury the body. Mr. Bradley pays off Harry in order to keep the secret. Even the mother, who is a devout Catholic, lies to the police and says that Constant wasn't involved, when she knows that he did it. Mr. Bradley pretends to be a devout Catholic, but is only interested in his own good."

TOPIC: CATHOLIC Kit tells Harrison that she and her friends talk about sex all of the time at Sacred Heart, the Catholic school she attends. She then says, "God, if the nuns only knew. Poor nunny bunnies."

TOPIC: CATHOLIC Mr. Bradley has the Cardinal talk with the Director of Constant's parochial school. The Cardinal convinces the director to let Constant back in after he was expelled for having porno pictures. Shows the Cardinal to be easily persuaded when an important wealthy businessman asks him for a favor.

TOPIC: VIOLENCE Constant rapes and then kills the girl next door.

TOPIC: CATHOLIC The mother is a devout Catholic, however she covers up for Constant by telling the girl's mother that Constant was in bed asleep during the time of the girl's death.

TOPIC: CATHOLIC Constant's lawyer asks the family to look very "holy," in order to portray wholesomeness in public.

TOPIC: CATHOLIC Constant and his mother go on a national television show and talk about how Constant has always gone to Mass and that no one who is so dedicated could commit such a crime.

TOPIC: CATHOLIC The head of the Catholic school that Harry and Constant attended confesses that he withheld information when the police asked him about the murder 13 years ago. He did so because the foundation for the new Bradley building at the school had just been put down and he felt he owed it to the family.

The Catholic League registered its concerns to CBS in the following letter sent by Dr. Donohue to CBS CEO Michael Jordan. "Enclosed you will find a partial transcript of your May 5 showing of A Season in Purgatory. It is one more example of the preoccupation that some in the media have with Catholics and the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, given the way CBS likes to portray Catholicism, it is a preoccupation that raises serious questions about the intentions of your writers and producers. It just won't do for us to get another 'If you were offended, we're sorry' letter: did you think Catholics wouldn't be offended? And it is a sad statement on CBS's part that no one was offended when the script was presented."

CBS-TV
51 West 52nd Street
New York, NY 10019
212-975-4321

YOKO ONO MISFIRES

On May 16, Yoko Ono, John Lennon's widow, tore pages from a Bible and passed them into a crowd in downtown New York. After vice president Bernadette Brady and others complained to the press, Ono issued an apology, pledging that she "will not be repeating this in future performances."