

WHITEHEAD REPRESENTS LEAGUE

Ken Whitehead, a member of the board of directors of the Catholic League, represented the league at a Washington meeting of the Pontifical Council on the Family. According to the organizer of the event, Father Pavone, "Never before has a Vatican delegation had the opportunity to meet personally with such a broad representation of United States pro-life leaders." Whitehead discussed the work of the league.

FBI INCLUDES LEAGUE IN GUIDE

At the league's request, the FBI now lists the Catholic League as one of the nation's leading organizations that fights bias. The FBI publication, Training Guide for Hate Crime Data Collection, lists "Organizations Offering Information Concerning Anti-Bias Education." The list includes many of the most distinguished civil rights organizations in the country; we are pleased that the Catholic League is now in that select group.

CATHOLIC LEAGUE ANNOUNCES WEBSITE

In June, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights proudly announced the launching of its website

(www.catholicleague.org).

Eileen Sepp, the league's Director of Media Technology, has constructed a website that has an extensive list of Catholic League resources. Browsers can find selections from the current issue of *Catalyst*, the league's journal, as well as the complete text of previous issues for 1997. The league's *Annual Report on Anti-Catholicism* (1994-1996) is also available. Current news includes a copy of all recent news releases issued by the league.

There is an opportunity for new members to join the league and there is a list of books and videos that may be purchased. Also available is a feedback section which allows interested parties to report incidents of anti-Catholicism.

The Catholic League is providing a website that will be continually updated, thus giving users a reason to return to it over and over again. It is our hope that reporters and researchers will find the league's website to be a valuable source of information on the nature and prevalence of anti-Catholicism.

<http://catholicleague.org>

JUST COINCIDENTAL?

"It was just coincidental." That's what we were told when we questioned photographer James Hamilton of the *New York Observer* about a curious photo he took of a man and his two women. The photo shows Barbara Foster sitting on the lap of her husband, Michael Foster, with Mr. Foster's girl-friend, Letha Hadady, standing next to them. In the background, prominently displayed, is a large picture of the Madonna.

What bothered the league about this is that the story, which also ran in the New York*Daily News*, described the lifestyle of this sexual threesome, none of whom is Catholic. Indeed, the Foster's were married in a Philadelphia synagogue; Ms. Hadady is also Jewish. Hamilton said that the picture of the Madonna was attached to the back of a door in the Foster's apartment. It just happened to be in the photo, or so we are supposed to believe.

LEAGUE ENDORSES BILL TO END RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

On May 20, a bill was introduced by Senator Arlen Specter and Congressman Frank Wolf that is aimed at combating religious persecution abroad. Entitled the "Freedom From Religious Persecution Act of 1997," the bill is principally targeted at seeking relief for Christians who are being persecuted in China, Vietnam, Sudan, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, North Korea, Indonesia, Egypt and Laos.

The bill, which received broad bipartisan support, would create an Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring, one that would submit an annual report to the president on the status of religious persecution abroad. Among the sanctions that could be invoked against offending nations are limits on exports, foreign assistance and multilateral loans. It would be the job of the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor to improve reporting on religious persecution that arises from governmental and nongovernmental sources.

The Catholic League endorsed the bill and the following

statement on it:

“The Catholic League welcomes any congressional initiative that could help end Christian persecution abroad. In particular, the league is concerned about the long-standing persecution of Catholic bishops, priests, nuns, religious and laypersons in China.

“Unfortunately, there seems to be more interest in this issue in newsrooms than in the halls of Congress, but that may now change. Senator Specter and Congressman Wolf have each put forward splendid bills on this subject and their latest joint effort is the best yet. It is our hope that this bill will pass without delay.”

JUSTIFYING TRASH

Dr. Paul B. Hurley, the president of Harrisburg Area Community College, believes that an artistic exhibition on his campus that features an image of the Immaculate Heart of Mary superimposed on a nude female body is representative of the “inclusive environment” that exists on his campus. That’s what he told us when we protested. Why not let him know your thoughts on inclusiveness by writing to this genius at One HAAC Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110. Oh yes, be sure to address him as “Acting President”; if we’re lucky, he won’t get the job.

LAST SUPPER MOCKED NO MORE

In the June *Catalyst*, we reported that a catalog called the Lighter Side was selling a T-shirt that displayed the Last Supper in a way we found offensive. The good news is that it will no longer be sold.

The league complained about the T-shirt because it featured Christ standing with his arms stretched looking at the apostles saying, "Separate checks, please." We admitted that it was not vulgar, but we still objected to the depiction because it made light of a serious event. Our complaint did not go unheeded.

In a letter to the Catholic League, the vice president of the Johnson Smith Company (producer of the catalog) had this to say: "Upon its first appearance in our catalog several months ago, we received many letters from our customers requesting its removal. We quickly acted to honor their and your request and removed it from the next catalog even though the T-shirt was an excellent seller."

Vice President Ralph W. Hoenle also said that "it has never been the intent of our company to offend anyone or disparage any religious denomination." He closed his letter saying that "we rely on our customers to tell us when we have made a bad choice."

Once again, it is a tribute to the members of the Catholic League that they followed through on their complaint and let the company know how they felt. We are happy about the outcome.