

# **“THE VIEW” IGNITES PROTEST; BARBARA WALTERS CITED**

The Catholic League’s patience with “The View” ran out on May 31. That was the day the ABC show attacked Catholicism for the 15th time since September; it was the second hit to occur within a two-week period. Our response was to finger the show’s co-owner, Barbara Walters, as the guilty party in a *New York Times* op-ed page ad on June 12.

On the May 31 show, Walters, along with Joy Behar, Elisabeth Hasselbeck and guest co-host Whoopi Goldberg, criticized the actions of a Catholic priest in Wisconsin. Having learned that his organist/choir director was selling sex toys, the pastor advised the woman that the products she peddled were incompatible with Catholic teaching. When she refused to quit her sales job, the priest removed her from her position.

During the discussion, Behar said, “She is selling [the sex toys] to married couples, which the Catholic Church wants you to procreate. How do they think we have been doing it all these years? With sex toys, that’s how.” Goldberg asserted that the woman now “can’t get a spiritual advisor” because she has “a different way of doing things.” Walters reinforced Goldberg’s notion by asking, “Why can’t someone who is a hooker at night...on Sunday go to whatever church or temple and try to get spiritual?” Hasselbeck questioned the merit of “probing into your private life in terms of how well you can do your job or keep your job.”

The panelists’ disregard for the truth was bad enough—for instance, there is no report of the woman being denied spiritual advice, or even the sacraments, because of the nature of her job—but what was especially appalling was the co-hosts’ intrusion into the internal matters of the Church. Clergy of all religions make judgments about the moral

propriety of their employees every day, without attracting any attention. Yet when a Catholic priest does it, the ladies of “The View” launch into a sophomoric rant questioning his right to run his parish as he sees fit.

Two weeks earlier, on May 18, Behar took a cheap, gratuitous shot at priests, labeling them pedophiles. Both Behar and Rosie O'Donnell are embittered ex-Catholics—who are often the worst of all anti-Catholic bigots.

On the day our ad ran, Walters replied to us indirectly, saying on air, “I want to remind all of you that I am not responsible for anybody else’s views, except mine.” This is nonsense. She co-owns the show—they work for her! The good news is the ad triggered national TV and radio interviews for Bill Donohue. Thus did we get the word out about Walters.

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## **JUDICIAL MISCONDUCT**

We have an update on the anti-Catholic resolution that was passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors last year: we filed a complaint of judicial misconduct against Judge Marilyn Hall Patel, and it has been accepted as worthy of investigation.

Readers of Catalyst will recall that the Catholic League objected when the resolution in question was adopted on March 21, 2006 condemning the Catholic Church for its teachings on homosexuals and adoptions. The public officials branded the Vatican a “foreign country” that had meddled in the affairs of San Francisco simply for holding a contrary belief! The Church’s teachings were labeled “hateful,” “insulting and callous,” etc. The Thomas More Law Center, representing the Catholic League, sued the board on First Amendment grounds.

Judge Patel ruled against us, but it was not her conclusion that led us to file a complaint of judicial misconduct. Rather, it was her sneering response and her amazing statement that “The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith provoked the debate, indeed may have invited entanglement by its [doctrinal] statement.”

We are pleased to report that on June 6 we received a letter from the clerk’s office of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit saying that a docket number has been assigned to this matter and that a copy of the complaint has been forwarded to judges for review.

In our estimation, Judge Patel is not fit to rule on issues affecting the Catholic Church.

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# ATHEISM: OPIATE OF THE INTELLECTUALS

**William A. Donohue**

It was Marx who said that religion was the “opiate of the masses,” and it was the late French sociologist Raymond Aron who once said that Marxism was the “opiate of the intellectuals.” With slight emendation, it can be proffered that atheism is today’s “opiate of the intellectuals.”

Christopher Hitchens is not just an atheist, he is an angry atheist. I have debated him many times, in person and on television, and at various times have come to like him, then not like him, and so forth. He’s an interesting guy. On the life issues, he’s opposed to abortion yet welcomes euthanasia. He’s a left-wing critic of American foreign policy, though he

vigorously defends our involvement in Iraq. But he's also a socialist who has made a comfortable living in capitalist America (the English transplant recently became a citizen). The one subject where he does not vacillate is religion: he is a hater, through and through.

Hitchens would have us believe that religion, not atheism, is responsible for most mass killings in history. For example, he contends that the murderous acts committed by the totalitarian regimes of communism and fascism—both full-throated atheistic states—must be understood not as the consequence of radical secularism, but religion. But even if Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot and Hitler were messianic thugs, they were at bottom atheist thugs, men who took their ideological cues from secular visions of the society. And remember, Saddam Hussein was not a believing Muslim.

According to Hitchens, the Jacobins who slaughtered Catholics during the French Revolution, and the Bolsheviks who triggered the violence that became the hallmark of the Soviet Union, were really “alternative religions.” He argues that “Communist absolutists did not so much negate religion...as seek to replace it.” He even blames Confucianism for the murderous regime in North Korea.

The attempt by Hitchens to rationalize the violence inherent in secular regimes is matched only by his forced dismissal of the heroic work of the Catholic Church during the Holocaust. Take, for example, the way he addresses Einstein's great praise of Pope Pius XII. *Time* magazine once ran an historic quote by Einstein that showed how incredibly disappointed he was with the universities and newspapers for saying nothing about Hitler.

“Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth,” the non-believing Jewish scientist said. “I never had any special interest in the Church before, but now I feel a great affection and admiration

because the Church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced thus to confess that what I once despised I now praise unreservedly."

Hitchens, relying on the work of William Waterhouse, doubts whether Einstein ever made these comments. He says that *Time* did not give any source for these remarks, the "rhetoric is too florid," there was no mention of "the persecution of the Jews," and that it is "silly" to think Einstein would claim to have "despised" something in which he "never had any special interest." Waterhouse also argues that if Einstein was praising Pius XII, his words must have been written after 1938. "But the text certainly sounds as though it refers to a time shortly after the Nazis came to power," he says.

This is all nonsense. It is common practice today, and it was more so back then, for magazines to carry stories without a byline. Do Hitchens and Waterhouse think *Time* just decided to make this up out of whole cloth? Do they think that Einstein would have allowed them to put words in his mouth? After all, the quote in question appeared in the December 23, 1940 edition of *Time*; Einstein didn't die until 1955. This quote was often cited and Einstein had plenty of time to object, but he never did.

"How strange is the lot of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he sometimes thinks he senses it." This is the kind of florid style we might expect of a poet—not a scientist—but in fact those are the opening words of Einstein's essay, "The World As I See It."

It is so obvious that Einstein was talking about "the persecution of the Jews" that only those living in denial would claim otherwise. Moreover, it is not all uncommon for someone to express disaffection—not merely disinterest—when he

says he has no special interest in something. I have never had any special interest in becoming a Marxist, and indeed I despise Marxism; there's nothing silly about such usage. Finally, since it wasn't until "Kristallnacht" in November 1938 that the Nazis really began their pogroms, it is quite likely that Einstein's remarks were made after that time; Pius XII began his papacy in 1939.

The truth of the matter is Einstein did praise the pope, and no amount of spin from the opiate class can change history.

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# CATHOLICS AND DEMOCRATS: THE UNRAVELING OF A RELATIONSHIP

By David R. Carlin

Once upon a time—let's say from the time of Franklin Roosevelt till the time of Lyndon Johnson—the Democratic Party was the clear party of choice for American Catholics. The party had a special concern for the urban working classes and for the children and grandchildren of immigrants; its social justice ideas were often very similar to the social justice ideas outlined in papal encyclicals such as *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*; it was emphatically patriotic and, like the Vatican, emphatically anti-Communist; it was strong on military defense; and it did almost nothing to defy or to undermine Catholic moral values. It was a party that Catholics, at least Catholics of the kind that flourished in those long-ago days, could feel very comfortable with.

I myself was one of those Catholic Democrats. Born in 1938, the second year of FDR's second term, I first voted for president in 1960, the year that represented the summit of

Catholic satisfaction with the Democratic Party, since that was the year John Kennedy was elected president. I was elected as a Democrat to the Rhode Island Senate in 1980; in 1989-90 I was the Democratic Majority Leader of the Senate; and in 1992 I was the Democratic candidate (alas, a losing candidate) for the United States House of Representatives.

During my political career, despite my prominent position in the party, I was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the new direction the national party had taken. Today I am worse than uncomfortable; I am downright distressed and disillusioned.

The Catholics of the United States have changed greatly since those far-off days of FDR and LBJ. They used to be, religiously speaking, a relatively homogeneous group, but they are now divided between what may be called "real Catholics" and "nominal Catholics." By "real Catholics" I mean those who go to church every weekend, who actually believe the doctrines of the Church, and who make a serious effort (while not always succeeding) to let their lives be guided by the moral rules and moral values endorsed by the Church.

By "nominal Catholics" I mean those who are quite opposite. They rarely or never attend Mass, and they have a "pick and choose" attitude when it comes to faith and morals. They are Catholic in the sense that they were baptized Catholic and have not yet sent in a letter of resignation. And of course there are shades of gray between these two extremes: Catholics who may be called semi-real or semi-nominal.

If Catholics have changed over the last three or four decades, so has the Democratic Party "changed utterly" (to use the words of Yeats). From being a party that Catholics could feel very comfortable with, it has become a party that Catholics—at least "real Catholics"—feel profoundly uncomfortable with. Not to put too fine a point on it, the national Democratic Party has become an anti-Christian party.

At about this point some Catholic Democrat will tell me that my assertion is preposterous. I'll be told that Catholic politicians who play a leading role in the Democratic Party—for instance, U.S. senators and representatives—are for the most part Sunday churchgoers of good moral character. No doubt this is true, but the Democrats who sit in Congress are only the tip of the party iceberg: nearly 90% of the typical iceberg is under water. That is to say, the relatively invisible people who mainly determine the policies of the party are the political contributors and activists, not to mention those who spread pro-Democratic propaganda from the “command posts” of American culture—by which I mean the press, the entertainment industry, and our leading colleges and universities (including law schools).

Julius Caesar once said that money is the “sinews of war,” and it is most definitely the sinews of modern American politics. The old local Democratic political “machines” used to deliver the vote for Democratic governors and senators and representatives, but these machines largely vanished decades ago. And so now the vote has to be delivered (or perhaps a better word would be “incited”) by TV advertising, and it is a notorious fact that TV advertising is colossally expensive. Politicians running for higher office, then, need great amounts of money, and they therefore have to cater to those who contribute. (“He who pays the piper calls the tune.”)

The demographic base of the old machines consisted of working-class and lower-middle-class voters; and so, with the waning of the machines, there has been a corresponding waning of influence in the Democratic Party of these voters. An influence vacuum was created, which was soon filled by upper-middle class professionals with enough disposable income to be able to throw cash at politicians who hold views pleasing to these contributors. Not only that, but these relatively well-to-do Democratic contributors usually hold an ideology; that is, they are secularists (or semi-secularists) and moral



liberals.

Now what do I mean by a “secularist”? I mean a person with three striking traits: (1) In his personal life he has no use for religion; he is normally an atheist or agnostic (and if an agnostic, his agnosticism is barely distinguishable from atheism). (2) He considers religion to be not just useless, but positively harmful; and therefore he is anti-religious, especially anti-Christian. He doesn’t mind “liberal” Christians all that much, since their Christianity is a kind of semi-secularism; but he detests and fears Christians of a more orthodox kind, whom he suspects of wishing to impose a “theocratic” regime on the United States. (3) He believes in and promotes a new morality that is intended to replace traditional Christian morality, e.g., the morality of the Ten Commandments. This is a morality of moral liberalism, whose two fundamental principles are: the Personal Liberty Principle (you are free to do whatever you like provided you don’t harm non-consenting others in a tangible way), and the Tolerance Principle (you must tolerate the conduct of anyone who is not harming others in a tangible way).

The Personal Liberty Principle and the Tolerance Principle have most notably been invoked to justify a new personal morality whose characteristic note is sexual freedom. In other words, they have been used to justify the sexual revolution: premarital sex, unmarried cohabitation, easy divorce, cheap and readily available contraception, a somewhat lax attitude toward adultery (remember the tolerance moral liberals exhibited toward Bill Clinton’s relationship with Monica Lewinsky), abortion, pornography, and homosexuality, including in recent years same-sex marriage. “How do any of these things hurt innocent bystanders?” asks the moral liberal. “And if they don’t hurt, then they are morally permissible.” (It’s a bit puzzling that moral liberalism feels that abortion is justified, since abortion obviously causes harm to another. Moral liberals get around this

difficulty by the clever device of not thinking about it.)

Another way of putting all this is to say that there is a “culture war” going on in the United States between moral liberals and moral conservatives; or more exactly, between secularists and Christians. The secularists, who hold Christianity in disdain, would like to drive Christianity out of the public arena and into a corner, where those nitwits who like to practice it would still be free to do so, to the infinite amusement of the more “enlightened” people. Christians of the old-fashioned kind, both Catholic and Protestant, would like to preserve their religion, not just as a private hobby, but as an important factor in the public culture of the United States. As for the third party in this culture war, the liberal Christians: they have a nostalgic and sentimental attachment to Christianity, but in most of the actual battles between moral liberals and moral conservatives—e.g., battles about abortion and homosexuality—they come down on the side of moral liberalism, although they do so (let it be noted to their credit) with something of a long face.

This culture war has long since spilled over into politics. And in politics the Democratic Party has allied itself with the secularists/moral liberals, while the Republican Party has decided to ally itself with the Christians/moral conservatives. I don't mean to say that the Republican Party has become the Christian party. For one thing, while the party is anti-secularist, it has many features that are not especially Christian. For another, as history teaches, it would be very dangerous for Christians to identify their religion with a political party.

But although I won't say that the Republican Party has become the Christian party, I will say that the Democratic Party has become the anti-Christian party; for to take sides with the secularists/moral liberals in the culture war, as the Democrats have done, is to take sides against Christianity.

And so, the Democratic Party has gone from being a Catholic-friendly working and lower-middle class party to being a secularist and upper-middle class party. Can a Catholic be a Democrat today? It is virtually impossible, assuming that the Catholic in question is a “real Catholic,” is acquainted with policies of the party such as its support for abortion and homosexuality, and is capable of reasoning logically. And this is what is actually happening: Increasingly, “real Catholics” are leaving the Democratic Party, although “nominal Catholics” (who are really semi-secularists) remain. Since there are millions of “real Catholics” in America, their exodus from the party should cause alarm among party leaders. But apparently it does not, at least not much, they are so in thrall to their secularist/moral liberal supporters.

Nonetheless I confess (with some embarrassment and perhaps even shame) that I remain a registered Democrat, even though this doesn't mean that I can be counted on actually to vote for Democrats. But I feel that my protest against the anti-Christian course the party has taken will be more effective if I remain officially a Democrat. After all, it was my party before it became the party of the secularists. Why should I allow them to drive me out?

***David R. Carlin is the author of Can a Catholic Be a Democrat?: How the Party I Loved Became the Enemy of My Religion, published by Sophia Institute Press.***

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## **“THE VIEW”: SERIAL CATHOLIC-BASHING**

As soon as Rosie O'Donnell joined the panel of co-hosts on

ABC's "The View" last year, we knew that the program would provide a forum for the comedienne to spew her anti-Catholicism. What we saw between September 2006 and May 2007, however, exceeded our expectations. On 15 separate occasions, the Catholic Church was attacked on the program—and not just by O'Donnell. What follows is a brief description of the incidents.

The Eucharist was ridiculed twice. On September 28, 2006, O'Donnell mimicked receiving communion and not letting it touch her tongue by contorting her face into various strained positions. In February, O'Donnell was at it again, making grotesque facial expressions and laughing about the Host.

All of the co-hosts had a good laugh at the Christian practice of Baptism in April of this year. After they proved themselves thoroughly ill informed on Limbo and actual Catholic doctrine (though they purported to speak authoritatively on the subject), Elisabeth Hasselbeck mocked the idea of her own child's baptism, and Joy Behar referred to it as "a nice little sponge bath."

Showing she can't pass up any chance, no matter how much of a stretch, to make a lame attempt at comedy at the expense of Christianity, Behar referred to Hasselbeck putting herself in a "Christ-like position" when Hasselbeck stretched out her arms to demonstrate a rule of hunting.

In February of 2007, Behar donned her psychologist's hat and advised people to "follow their heart" when it comes to celibacy. The sage then intoned, "That is why a lot of the priesthood is so screwed up right now." Jumping on the bigoted bandwagon, O'Donnell chimed in: "Celibacy is not part of the human condition. It is not normal, right, everyone is a sexual being."

According to these two ex-Catholics, Catholics in general don't read the Bible. In March Behar offered this excuse as

to her own ignorance: "I never read the Bible as a child because I was Catholic." O'Donnell concurred, saying, "I didn't know anything about it. Again, Catholic, you just read the Missalette." The following month, Behar suggested that the Catholic Church fosters superstition, saying, "When I was a kid I used to be [superstitious] because the Catholic Church has a lot of that sort of thing in it, but then I sort of grew out of it."

The Holy Father has been slandered more than once. Despite the fact that then-Cardinal Ratzinger was put in charge of investigating cases of abuses *after the sex abuse scandal broke in 2002*, O'Donnell claimed in October that "the person who was in charge of investigating all the allegations of pedophiles in the Catholic Church from the eighties until just recently was guess who. The current pope." Later that month, O'Donnell again misstated the facts, alleging, "The current pope was the person who was supposed to investigate these charges of sex abuse in the Church in the last 20 years."

These supreme wits have trotted out the bigoted cliché that all priests are pedophiles. During a discussion in May about male nannies, Behar jokingly asked Walters if she would have hired "a priest perhaps" to watch her daughter.

O'Donnell took the occasion of the Supreme Court upholding the partial-birth abortion ban to question the right of Catholics to participate in public life. She fumed, "You know what concerns me? How many of the Supreme Court judges are Catholic, Barbara?" Walters then responded, "Five." O'Donnell said in reply, "Five. Five are Catholic. Separation of church and state, America."

The panelists have frequently cast the Church as repressive. In September, O'Donnell astonishingly claimed that "Radical Christianity is just as threatening as radical Islam in a country like America where we have separation of church and state." In October, Behar made a crack about "the Sisters of

Mary Magdalene” grabbing up porn stars and putting them in convents.

In a discussion about a pastor who asked the parish organist to quit her post when he learned she also sold sex toys, the ladies felt very free to involve themselves in a private matter between a priest and a church employee. Behar moaned, “She is selling [the sex toys] to married couples, which the Catholic Church wants you to procreate. How do they think we have been doing it all these years? With sex toys, that’s how.” Guest host Whoopi Goldberg falsely asserted that the woman now “can’t get a spiritual advisor” because she has “a different way of doing things.” Walters backed up Goldberg’s twisting of the truth by saying, “Why can’t someone who is a hooker at night...on Sunday go to whatever church or temple and try to get spiritual?” Hasselbeck complained about “probing into your private life in terms of how well you can do your job or keep your job.”

On October 12, in a very telling moment about the show’s attitude toward Catholics, Behar actually defended anti-Catholicism. When Walters read a letter from a viewer pointing out that it’s considered okay to say bad things about Christians, but not about Jews, Behar replied, “You can arouse people’s anti-Semitic feelings very easily and it is not like just a joke. It becomes ‘Let’s round them up and kill them.’” In other words, certain groups are protected, but the Catholics are fair game.

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**ABC      NEWS      REPORTS      WOMEN**

# **“PRIESTS”**

A report on the June 19 “World News Tonight” led viewers to think that eight women are about to be ordained as Catholic priests in the U.S.

The story covered the election of the first female presiding bishop in the Episcopal Church. Then came the following: “Most evangelical denominations and the Catholic Church steadfastly refuse to ordain women. However, that is changing. In late July, Joan Clark Hauk [sic], a grandmother from Pennsylvania, will be ordained as a Catholic priest, along with seven other women. It will be the first ceremony of its kind in this country, but one the Vatican will not condone.”

Bill Donohue immediately issued a news release and wrote a letter of protest to David Westin, president of ABC News. Below is an excerpt from our release:

“Some at ABC News are obviously hyperventilating over the election of the first female presiding bishop in the Episcopal Church, and that no doubt led them to package this story with a bogus account about women being ordained as Catholic priests. Joan Clark Houk, and seven other women, will hold an ‘ordination’ ceremony on a boat in Pittsburgh on July 31, but no one save mad feminists will give it any credence. Indeed, this happens every day in the asylum: some actually think they’re the pope.

“ABC News also errs in thinking that this make-believe game has never been played before. In 1981, AP picked up on a story by the National Catholic Reporter which said a woman ‘has been ordained and has been performing the duties of a priest for the past year.’ In 1996, Catholic World Report ran a story on a meeting of the Women’s Ordination Conference (which supports next month’s game) wherein four women dressed as Catholic bishops and then ‘solemnly blessed the audience as they made

their way to a stage that was filled with dancing women.' And just last month, Victoria Rue, wearing a white robe, appeared before a crowd in San Jose and declared, 'I am a Roman Catholic woman priest.'"

On June 21, Donohue received a letter from Greg Macek, associate director of news practices at ABC News. His letter, while respectful, was not satisfactory: he disputed our account, saying he didn't think the story was skewed. While Donohue was not persuaded by Macek's reasoning, he believes that if ABC News covers this story on July 31 when the "ordinations" take place, they won't make the same mistake.

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## **JUSTICE IN DELAWARE AND MICHIGAN: TEACHERS AND MUSLIMS ARE A PROTECTED CLASS**

In Delaware, House lawmakers approved a bill on June 19 that eliminates the two-year statute of limitations in cases involving the sexual molestation of minors.

But this bill only applies to private institutions, such as the Catholic Church. It does not apply equally to the public sector; under a legal concept known as sovereign immunity, public schools and other government entities can claim exemption from the elimination of statutes of limitations in sex-abuse lawsuits. In other words, it would be much harder to sue a public school district for sex abuse that occurred years ago, than it would be to sue the Church.

The degree of corruption in the Delaware legislature is matched only by the selective indignation its lawmakers have



for child rape. The legislators are owned—lock, stock and barrel—by the teachers unions. Teachers can grope all they want. They can rape little kids. And under this bill, they will be protected by making it harder to go after them. Yet the most reliable data on this subject, presented by Dr. Charol Shakeshaft of Hofstra University, show that public school employees have the highest rate of child sexual abuse in the nation.

This sick game was played last year in Colorado. Three bills were introduced trying to stick it to private institutions while giving public ones a pass; thanks to public pressure, they did not succeed. When a bill was introduced that would blanket all institutions equally, one of the lawmakers owned by the teachers unions called the Catholic Church's bluff and said the bishops wouldn't support it. He was wrong. And so why did the bills fail? Not because of resistance from the Catholic Church, but because of the teachers unions.

Sen. Karen Peterson, the principal sponsor of the Delaware bill, took umbrage at our charge that unequal justice was at work. Yet on June 21 she was quoted as saying that the bill allows victims to sue the state if they can meet the high standard of "gross negligence." How sweet. She further admitted that the state has the right to claim sovereign immunity, and that it is up to the courts to decide whether it should apply. Thus did she verify our charge that there are two standards in play.

On June 20, Rep. Greg Lavelle, who sponsored a separate bill mandating an equal playing field, called our office requesting data on public school teachers who abuse kids. The next day, he was quoted as saying our response "offended" him. Indeed, he even commended his colleagues for taking "all necessary steps to be sure that all children in Delaware are protected regardless of where they go to school..." Really? That being the case, Lavelle should have withdrawn his bill. To top it off, a lobbyist for the Diocese of Wilmington chimed in by

criticizing the Catholic League. Lavelle's bill passed the House but faces an uncertain future in the Senate. If it dies, it remains to be seen how the diocese will react when lawsuits start coming in and public school teachers get to walk. Must be a tight-knit club in Delaware.

Meanwhile, Michigan taxpayers are being forced to pay \$25,000 for footbaths at the University of Michigan-Dearborn so that Muslim students can wash their feet. On June 5, Bill Donohue sent this letter to all Michigan state lawmakers:

*I was surprised to learn that the University of Michigan-Dearborn plans to spend \$25,000 for footbaths so that Muslim students can practice their religion without difficulty. What surprised me was the novelty: the trend in recent years has been for American campuses to neuter Christmas parties, ban the display of nativity scenes and essentially censor the public expression of Christianity. But not at the University of Michigan-Dearborn—they're going the other way. Or are they?*

*Here's what I'd like to know. Do you regard this as accommodating religion or offering special privileges? If your answer is the former, would you be open to suggestions on how to accommodate the needs of Christian students on campus? I hope so because I have lots of ideas. If your answer is the latter, what are you going to do about it?*

*I look forward to hearing from you about this important issue.*

Of the Michigan lawmakers who responded to us, only one—State Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs—defended the footbath arrangement. Interestingly, Jacobs was only one of two senators to vote against a bill in 2004 allowing religious and divinity students to win publicly funded scholarships. Jacobs said she was opposed to the “funding of seminaries.”

In her letter to us, Jacobs said that she hopes “religious intolerance” is not motivating critics of the footbath scheme. We hope her defense of religious discrimination is based on

ignorance and not malice. And we urge Catholics to take note of her duplicity.

Not only did the ACLU defend the footbath plan in Michigan, so did Fox News regular Geraldo Rivera. On “Hannity and Colmes” on June 20, Rivera conceded that there are church-state problems, but then waxed sentimental over the allegedly besieged Muslims. Geraldo could not bring himself to criticize the privileged position afforded Muslims vis-à-vis others.

The elites have shown their real colors and it’s not a pretty sight. Dishonesty, cowardice and bigotry make for a really sick stew.

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# **FIGHT FOR EQUAL TREATMENT IN BIG APPLE**

*NYC Council Member Calls on City*

*to End Religious Bias in Public Schools*

At a June 24 press conference outside New York City Hall, City Council Member Tony Avella announced plans to introduce a resolution calling on the New York City Department of Education to allow a nativity scene or crèche in public schools during the Christmas season.

Current Department of Education policy allows a Jewish menorah and an Islamic star and crescent (both of which are religious symbols) to be displayed during the winter holidays along with a Christmas tree, a secular symbol.

Last year the Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that while the city doesn’t have to display nativity scenes in public

schools, it isn't barred from doing so. The court also ruled that the menorah and the star and crescent (contrary to the city's claims) are religious symbols, not secular ones.

It's high time for New York City schools to stop banning Christian religious symbols while rolling out the welcome mat for those of other faiths.

**In support of nativity scene inclusion:**

*"The Second Circuit Court of Appeals never said that a nativity scene could not be displayed alongside a menorah and a crescent star. Therefore, it is up to the New York City authorities to either practice inclusion and allow crèches to be displayed or practice discrimination and deny them."*

– **Bill Donohue**, Catholic League president

*"My resolution is purely about inclusion. The menorah and star and crescent are religious symbols. By adding a nativity scene/crèche to the holiday display, Christianity will receive equal representation with other religious faiths during the holiday season."*

– **Tony Avella**, New York City Council

*"It is obvious and appropriate for the people of New York City to have a policy that represents them and they should decide what symbol represents Christianity best during Christmas. A bureaucrat in the city Department of Education should not be the final arbiter as to what symbol is best suited for display."*

– **Brian Rooney**, Thomas More Law Center

*"We want the New York City Board of Education to explain to the people of this city why ... the board continues its refusal to display the nativity scene in the same manner it displays other religious symbols. The board's refusal appears to show blatant discrimination against the nativity scene."*

– **Bridget Kearney**, Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, Queens County Chapter

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## **LOOK WHO'S SUPPORTING OBAMA**

On June 3, Senator Barack Obama became the first contender for the U.S. presidency to launch a religious outreach website, [faith.barackobama.com](http://faith.barackobama.com). On this website, Obama lists the testimonials of three controversial clergymen: Rev. Jeremiah A. Wright Jr., senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago; Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr., senior pastor of Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, California; and Rev. Michael Pfleger, a Roman Catholic Chicago priest.

On February 10, Rev. Wright was scheduled to give the invocation at the forum of Obama's presidential announcement, but the night before the event Obama rescinded the bid: the Illinois senator knew that his spiritual advisor was so divisive that he would cloud the ceremonies. The black liberation theologian has a record of giving racially inflammatory sermons and has even said that Zionism has an element of "white racism." He also blamed the attacks of 9/11 on American foreign policy.

Rev. Smith was honored by the notoriously violent Black Panther Party of Oakland in 1975, and in 1990 was given a community award by the Nation of Islam, an anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic and anti-gay group.

Rev. Pfleger has allowed Nation of Islam chief Louis Farrakhan to preach in his church; he has been arrested for defacing billboards; he has paid prostitutes to worship at his church; and in late May he staged an anti-gun rally in front of a gun

store where he exhorted the crowd to hunt down the owner “like a rat” and “snuff” him.

While Obama is not responsible for the records of these three clergymen, he is responsible for giving them the opportunity to prominently display their testimonials on his religious outreach website. If Wright, Smith, and Pfleger are the kinds of clergymen Obama admires, perhaps it's best he shut down his faith outreach website and start all over again. It will take more than “God talk” to get Obama out of this jam.

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## **CONSTANTINE'S SWORD CINEMATIC DEBUT**

On June 24, “Constantine's Sword,” a documentary based on the book by John Carroll, premiered at the Los Angeles Film Festival. It is sure to warm the hearts of all anti-Catholic bigots.

Carroll is an embittered ex-priest who has spent his adult life railing against the Catholic Church. The film, like the book, treats the public to some of the most polished propaganda ever to hit the big screen.

In 2001, here's what Robert Lockwood (then the Catholic League's director of research) had to say about Carroll's book:

“Carroll's thesis is that the anti-Semitism which resulted in the Holocaust is central to Catholic theology and derived from the earliest Christians' expressions of belief.

“Carroll believes that the New Testament is clearly anti-

Semitic and, therefore, caused anti-Jewish sentiment that, in turn, eventually evolved into the philosophies that created the Holocaust. Rather than arguing that bad Scriptural interpretation in the past was used by some to declare that all Jews shared the blame in the death of Jesus, Carroll would rather agree that this is the proper meaning of Scripture.

“It is not the belief of the Church, the New Testament, the Church centered in Jesus, the understanding that Christ died for the sins of mankind, that created the horror of the Holocaust. It was the rejection of those, and the attempt to substitute for Judeo-Christian civilization a secularist pseudo-scientism of race, class and nationalism that generated Nazism and the Holocaust.”

On June 22 the *Los Angeles Times* said that the movie “tries to link the errors of the past with the religious movements of today, moving fluidly from stories of the Crusades and clips of Hitler Youth rallies to scenes of Catholic youth cheering Pope Benedict XVI and ecstatic kids at evangelical Christian revivals.”

Carroll’s hatred of all things Catholic shines through from beginning to end. Which is exactly what we would have expected.