

MOTHER TERESA HONOR DENIED; PETITION DRIVE BEGINS

The Catholic League has begun a worldwide campaign protesting a decision by officials from the Empire State Building to deny Mother Teresa the same honor it has extended to virtually every world leader, event or holiday, namely, to shine the colors associated with the honoree from its tower on a designated night.

On August 26, the U.S. Postal Service is honoring the 100th anniversary of the birth of Mother Teresa. On February 2, Bill Donohue submitted an application to the Empire State Building Lighting Partners requesting that the tower lights feature blue and white, the colors of Mother Teresa's congregation, the Missionaries of Charity, on August 26. On May 5, the request was denied without explanation.

Mother Teresa received 124 awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Medal of Freedom. She built hundreds of orphanages, hospitals, hospices, health clinics, homeless shelters, youth shelters and soup kitchens all over the world, and is revered in India for her work. She created the first hospice in Greenwich Village for AIDS patients. Not surprisingly, she was voted the most admired woman in the world three years in a row in the mid-1990s. But she is not good enough to be honored by the Empire State Building.

Last year the Empire State Building shone in red and yellow lights to honor the 60th anniversary of the Chinese Communist revolution. Yet under its founder, Mao Zedong, the Communists killed 77 million people. In other words, the greatest mass murderer in history merited the same tribute being denied to Mother Teresa.

We have launched a worldwide petition drive protesting this indefensible decision. We are petitioning Anthony Malkin, the owner of the Empire State Building, to reverse the decision. Members are urged to write to him at Malkin Properties, One Grand Central Place 60, E. 42nd St., New York, New York 10165.

Every reporter who has contacted Malkin's office has been hung up on. A public relations representative hired from another firm would only say that he has been instructed not to say anything. Furthermore, when reporters from CBS sought access to Malkin on May 14, security guards escorted them out of his building.

We have started a worldwide letter-writing campaign contacting key religious and secular leaders; it will continue over the summer. On August 26, we will hold a street demonstration protesting this obscene decision to stiff Mother Teresa. We urge all members to be there, if they can.

MOCK JESUS SHOW?

Comedy Central is weighing the possibility of offering a new animated show, "JC."

All we know about "JC" is that it will be a half-hour show about Christ seeking to live a normal life in New York outside the reach of his "powerful but apathetic father." But we know much more about who is doing this.

These are the same executives who delight in bashing Christians while continuing to censor any depiction of Muhammad on "South Park." They also deceive. Kent Alterman, a network official, says this about the show: "In general, comedy in its purest form always makes some people

uncomfortable.” Not true. Besides the fact that there is no end to the number of comedians who have made a huge name for themselves without ever offending anyone, what is even more relevant is the fact that Comedy Central has absolutely no interest in making Muslims feel uncomfortable.

We jumped on this issue as soon as we learned of it, and we are happy to say that we joined a coalition of like-minded folks headed by our friend Brent Bozell, president of the Media Research Center (and member of the Catholic League’s board of advisors), to protest the show.

We urge members to write to Comedy Central’s CEO, Doug Herzog, at 2049 Century Park East, Ste. 4000, Los Angeles, California, 90067. Not only is it offensive to ridicule Jesus, it is outrageous that these Hollywood types refuse to treat Catholics the way they treat Muslims—with respect.

CULTURAL TOXINS

There are times when it would be great to be a fly on the wall, listening to how an unseemly discussion unfolds. I felt this way recently when I learned that Mother Teresa was being denied the opportunity of being honored with her colors shining brightly atop the Empire State Building. It would have been quite a moment hearing all the reasons why they decided to stick it to Catholics.

What gave rise to this decision is not something hard to fathom. Quite simply, our culture is polluted with anti-Catholic toxins, fumes so poisonous they disable rational thought. Surely no fair-minded person would ever deny a tribute to this saintly nun. But in the current environment, where Catholic bashing is in vogue, irrationality—if not mean

spiritedness—rules.

Contributing to this sick milieu are many forces, chief among them being the media. And as both this issue of *Catalyst*, and the previous one, amply show, leading the charge is the *New York Times*.

I read the *Times* Monday through Friday, and usually access online articles on weekends. It is extremely well written and the research is also top notch. Its selection of articles meriting coverage, and those meriting none at all, is another matter. Lately, however, another problem has arisen, and that is the tendency to allow editorial commentary to creep into news stories.

It will surprise no one to learn that we have been just as relentless as the *Times* has in writing about the pope and the scandal, albeit from different perspectives. There are occasions, however, when our differences have less to do with a matter of perspective than a matter of journalistic integrity. Here is a perfect example. On May 3, there was a good article on the Shroud of Turin and the attention it is has garnered lately. It was marred, unfortunately, by the way it opened. Elisabetta Povoledo began by saying, “The Roman Catholic Church is weathering another sex scandal, but it is impossible to tell here, where the faint image of a bearded man on a yellowing linen sheet...” She couldn’t even write the story about the Shroud without dragging the scandal into it. That says something. About her, that is.

Columnists and editorial writers critical of the Church have gone out of their way to assure Catholics that they really like them—it’s just the Church they loathe. This was deftly handled by *Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof in an article he wrote explaining the difference between the good Catholic Church (e.g., men and women who do God’s work) and the bad Catholic Church (the bishops). Similarly, the *National Catholic Reporter* chimed in with an editorial on how the scandal is

really a “hierarchy crisis,” one that “is not fundamentally about sex.”

The Left, of course, views everything through the lens of power. Marxists at heart, they discount the effect of cultural norms and values, interpreting behavior in purely structural terms. That is why they are quick to assail the Church hierarchy: it also serves the function of taking blame off of everyone but the bishops. Conveniently, then, there is no need to address the link between homosexuality and molestation, or the role that delinquent psychologists have played in promoting therapy. It’s much easier, and appealing, to blame the bishops.

Then there are those in the media who drop their poison pills under the guise of entertainment. Joy Behar, for instance, cannot let go of ripping the Catholic Church. Sometimes humorous, she is driven by anything but humor. Besides mouthing invectives on “The View,” she now lets loose with inflammatory remarks on her own show. Evidently, her audience can’t get enough.

A newcomer to the Catholic-bashing circuit is the Huffington Post. While the leftist website has never been a fan of Catholicism, only recently has it devoted an entire section to religion. Readers can find there some of the most concentrated, hate-filled essays found anywhere on the web, topping, even, the vitriol found at the “On Faith” blog site of *Newsweek/Washington Post*.

Word has it that Hollywood has entered the fray by considering a new movie about the scandal. Several journalists, including prominent ones from the *Boston Globe* (who broke the 2002 story on the archdiocese there), are slated to cooperate. Why anyone would want to see a movie about a subject this dark is not known, but then again Hollywood is not always motivated by money. Ideology matters greatly.

Comedy Central is thinking about doing an animated series on Jesus, and if it does, Christians know what they're in for. It's not simply the matter that the executives there are cowards—they have a long record of never offending Muslims for fear of being beheaded—it's also because they love to attack Christianity. And they get cover. They get cover from serious media outlets like the *New York Times*: by hammering away at Catholicism, the *Times* plays rabbit for Comedy Central.

So there are many entries in this season's free-for-all against the Church. To be sure, the damage being done to our culture is real. Not only is it creating an environment where even Mother Teresa is being denied her due, it is making it all but impossible for the Catholic voice to be heard. That's a net loss for everyone.

MEDIA FEED BIGOTRY

Bill Donohue

Young people get bits of information from the Internet; urbanites pick up free newspapers stuffed with short stories; others rely on snippets of news from radio or TV; millions depend on wire service stories in their hometown newspapers; and a slim minority are able to access in-depth articles in newspapers and magazines. So when any person or institution is being hammered night after night, a negative impression is bound to stick, independent of whether the "facts" are really facts. Such is the case with the recent wave of media attacks on the pope.

NewsBusters.com keeps a close eye on the media, and the day after Laurie Goodstein of the *New York Times* ran her piece on Fr. Lawrence Murphy, the Wisconsin priest who molested deaf

boys extending back to the 1950s, it disclosed that critics of the Church outnumbered defenders by a margin of 13-1 on ABC, CBS and NBC. A few weeks later, the Media Research Center found that 69 percent of the 26 news stories carried by the three networks featured reports that presumed papal guilt.

Given these two factors—the limited amount of hard news consumed by most people these days, and the clear media bias against the Catholic Church—it is hardly surprising to learn that the pope’s “Poor” ratings on handling the abuse scandal literally doubled between 2008 and 2010. However, a month later, it appeared that a backlash had set in, at least among Catholics.

In a *New York Times* poll taken in late April and early May, the pope’s favorability rating among Catholics had jumped from 27 percent at the end of March (when the abuse stories were just getting started) to 43 percent. The evidence that this was due to a backlash against the media is supported by the finding that 64 percent of Catholics said the media had been harder on the Catholic Church than on other religions; almost half said the abuse stories were blown out of proportion.

The backlash was warranted. Not only that, but much of what was being reported was simply not true, though the misinformation was often passed on as if it were factual. Let’s just take one of the more famous untrue “facts” that have been floated at the expense of the pope, namely, the one that contends that the abuse scandal is widening under the tenure of Pope Benedict XVI. This claim was made by Roland Martin on CNN, as well as by many other commentators.

The real fact of the matter is that, as the John Jay College of Criminal Justice landmark study of 2004 showed, the vast majority of the abuse occurred between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s. Now it is true that we did not hear much about this problem during that time, but it is nonetheless true that by the time the *Boston Globe* exposed the Boston Archdiocese in

2002, most of the worst of the scandal was behind us. Fast forward to 2010 and what we have now is nothing but a media-driven scandal: the cases recently trotted out go back a half century or more.

The impression that the scandal is widening is also contradicted by the latest report on this issue. Between 2008 and 2009, exactly six credible allegations were made against over 40,000 priests. There is no organization in the world—never mind the United States—that could match this record. Just as important, there is no other institution that is having its old dirty laundry hung out for everyone to see.

If the media were to launch an investigation of Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, public school teachers, camp counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists (to say nothing of stepfathers, boyfriends and other “partners”) then, yes, it’s okay to include Catholics. But when *only* one group is targeted, and every other one gets a pass, then those who belong to this entity have every right to scream “Witch-Hunt.” In this case, the more apt term would be Papal Witch-Hunt.

The irony is that Pope Benedict XVI has done infinitely more to correct the abuse problem than Pope John Paul II did. It was Benedict who pressed for investigations of priests who had previously escaped an inquiry. It was he who put into place procedures of a more punitive sort. It was he who spoke of the “filth” within the Church. It was he who reopened the case of Father Marcial Maciel Degollado, and is now about to render another judgment on the order he founded, the Legionaries of Christ. It was he who met with the victims. All considered, this is not so much an irony as it is an injustice: Pope Benedict has done much to improve conditions.

One of the most important reforms ushered in by Pope Benedict was the decision to raise the bar on practicing homosexuals. While homosexual men are not *per se* barred from the seminaries, those who have been gay activists, or are

practicing, are. And because the overwhelming majority of victims have been post-pubescent males, the more difficult it is for homosexuals to enter the priesthood, the more likely it is that sexual abuse will continue to decline.

As for the Fr. Murphy case, the evidence shows that the pope was never personally involved. Yet this didn't stop Philip Pullella of Reuters from writing that "The *New York Times* reported the Vatican and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict, were warned about Murphy but he was not defrocked." However, Laurie Goodstein of the *Times* never said that the pope was personally aware of the Murphy case, and Father Thomas Brundage, the judge in the trial, has said that the pope's name never came up in discussions in Milwaukee, Washington or Rome.

Just as bad is Cal Thomas, the evangelical writer and activist. He wrote a seriously flawed piece, one that asserted that "The trial was never held." One wonders whether anyone fact checks his articles. It must be pointed out that the Vatican could have dropped the case (as the civil authorities did in the 1970s), citing the fact that the statute of limitations had expired. But it didn't.

It was the Murphy case that got the whole media-driven scandal started. And it was not by accident when it happened. On Sunday, March 21, the House passed the health care bill. On Tuesday, March 23, President Obama signed it into law. On Thursday, March 25, the Goodstein piece on Murphy appeared in the *Times*. What am I getting at?

Health care had dominated the news for weeks in the run-up to the House vote. Now no newspaper that is sitting on what it believes is a major story wants to compete with an issue that literally overwhelms the news. So two days after Obama signed the bill into law, it was safe to pull the trigger. And it worked—the Murphy story took the lead, eclipsing all other news stories. As an added bonus, the following week was Holy

Week, guaranteeing massive media coverage of the unfolding scandal.

Those who think this was just a coincidence, think again. On the day the Murphy story broke, protesters from SNAP, the professional victims' group that thrives on scandals, were seen on TV demonstrating in Rome. Was it just a coincidence that they happened to be there? Did they travel to Rome for a pasta special?

So who tipped them off? Jeffrey Anderson. Anderson is the maniacal Catholic-hating attorney who has made an estimated one hundred million dollars suing the Catholic Church (in 2002, he admitted to making \$60 million, but he refuses to say how much more he has made in the last eight years). In any event, it was Anderson who fed Goodstein the information for her story on Murphy. How do I know this? Because on CNN she admitted it. Here is what she said an attorney working on this case told her: "I have some interesting documents I think you might want to look at." Though she does not identify the attorney, this was Anderson's case.

Back to SNAP. How do we know it was Anderson who tipped them off? Because he is their principal benefactor. Several years ago, *Forbes* magazine disclosed that Anderson regularly greases SNAP.

See the connection? Anderson, motivated by hatred and greed, goes after the Catholic Church, and he, in turn, gives critical documents to Goodstein, knowing the *New York Times* would love to nail the Church; and then he gives the heads up to his radical clients, SNAP, who travel to Rome just in time to appear before the TV cameras when the story breaks on March 25.

What is driving Anderson, the *Times* and SNAP? Anderson's daughter was once molested by a psychologist who happened to be a former priest. So why doesn't he sue the American

Psychological Association? Because there's much more money, and fun, to be had sticking it to the Catholic Church. As for the *Times*, as I said in the op-ed ad I wrote on this subject, it hates the Church's teachings on abortion, gay marriage and women's ordination so much that it delights in bashing Catholicism. SNAP is fueled by revenge and money: the activists will go to their grave screaming "it's payback time"; and because they have no other stable job, they thrive on lawsuits and the kick-backs they effectively get from steeple-chasing lawyers.

Another vicious lie is the one that maintains that the Catholic Church handled these abuse cases in a manner that was very different from the way others handled them. Nonsense. Back when the scandal was flourishing, in the 1970s, *everyone* knew what the drill was: whether the accused was a priest, rabbi, minister, public school teacher, counselor—whomever it was—he was immediately put in therapy. Then, upon a clean bill of health, he was returned to his job.

Was this wrong? In many cases it was. Who pushed for this? Ironically, many of those in the same liberal circles who are now pointing fingers. Back then it was chic to have an analyst, and there wasn't any psychological or emotional malady that the therapists couldn't cure. Or so they thought. Indeed, had a bishop sidestepped his advisors—some of whom acted more like therapeutic gurus—and decided to throw the book at the accused, he would have been branded as heartless and un-Christian by the Dr. Feelgood types. So for many of them now to get on their high horse saying there was a cover-up, when in fact what happened was the decision to conform to the prevailing zeitgeist—as understood and promoted by liberals—is sickening.

When the Murphy report on the situation in Dublin was released, one of the major conclusions was that if the bishops had followed canon law, instead of recommending therapy, the scandal may have been avoided. Sadly, this is true.

Yes, big mistakes were made, but the advice and the strategies employed in the Catholic Church were not any different than existed elsewhere. Moreover, all the news about the scandal today is not about new cases, it's about old ones. So why is the Catholic Church being singled out? For the very reason the Catholic League was founded in 1973.

A shorter version of this article was posted on the Knights of Columbus website, Headline Bistro, on May 4.

NEW YORK TIMES MARKS POPE'S ANNIVERSARY

On the 5th anniversary of Pope Benedict XVI's election, the *New York Times* ran an article, which was remarkable even by the *Times'* standards. Readers of the article learned that the sexual abuse scandal is "growing" and is "quickly defining his papacy." Furthermore, the article contends that the pope has "alienated Muslims, Jews, Anglicans and even many Roman Catholics."

In fact, the scandal ended about 25 years ago: the timeline when most of the abuse took place was the mid-60s to the mid-80s. The only thing "growing" is coverage of abuse cases extending back decades, something the *Times* has contributed to mightily. To say his papacy has been defined by old cases may be the narrative that suits the *Times*, but it is not shared by fair-minded observers.

Yes, many Muslims were alienated by the pope's brutal honesty in calling out Islam for its subordination of reason, and indeed many proved his point by resorting to violence.

The heroics of Pope Pius XII in saving as many as 860,000 Jews during the Holocaust is a stunning record, especially as compared to the editorial silence that the *Times* exhibited in addressing the Shoah at the time. It is not correct, as the *Times* says, that the pope attempted “to rehabilitate a Holocaust-denying bishop,” rather he attempted to reconcile a break-away Catholic group which unfortunately had as one of its members a Holocaust-denying bishop.

Anglicans unhappy with the pope’s outreach to the disaffected in their ranks represent an embarrassing chapter for them, not Catholics. And it is hardly surprising that those Catholics who intensely disliked Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger are the same ones who reject Pope Benedict XVI.

The pope could have been justly criticized for missteps in governance and communications, but to paint him as a divider was designed to hurt him, in particular, and the Roman Catholic Church, in general.

EUGENE ROBINSON HAS HIS FACTS WRONG

Eugene Robinson, an editorial page writer for the *Washington Post*, recently wrote that “practically every day, there are new revelations of pedophile priests having been transferred to other parishes rather than being defrocked and reported to authorities.” A statement that was factually wrong.

It would have been more accurate to say that every day there are *old* revelations of molesting priests, most of whom were homosexuals. What Robinson did was to feed the prevailing anti-Catholic frenzy. No wonder there are those like

Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins and Frances Kissling who want the pope arrested—they wallow in dirt about the Catholic Church, and draw on people like Robinson to support their hatred.

Unlike the scandal of 2002, which was based on honest reporting of current cases of abuse, as well as previous ones, this time around it's been a media-driven scandal of old cases being trotted out to embarrass the Catholic Church. The fact that the media have absolutely no interest in uncovering the history of sexual abuse in other religious and secular circles speaks volumes.

NOT ALL GAY SEX IS ABUSIVE

Recently Bill Donohue commented on a story in the April 23 *New York Times* about a case of alleged sexual abuse committed by a Chilean priest:

“If a 17-year old guy has sex with an older guy for twenty years, and continues to have sex with him at the age of 38—while he is married with children—is there anyone who would believe his claim that he was sexually abused? The answer is yes: the *New York Times* would. That's exactly what happened in the case described in today's newspaper involving a homosexual affair between Chilean priest Fr. Fernando Karadima, now 79, and Dr. James Hamilton, now 44.

“Why would the *New York Times* try to sell this so-called abuse story with a straight face? For two reasons: it wallows in stories designed to weaken the moral authority of the Catholic Church, and it is so gay-friendly as to be gay-crazy.

“According to the *Times*, it all started with a kiss. Let me be

very clear about this: if some guy tried to kiss me when I was 17, I would have flattened him. I most certainly would not go on a retreat with the so-called abuser, unless, of course, I liked it. Indeed, Hamilton liked it so much he went back for more—20 years more. Even after he got married, he couldn't resist going back for more."

So what about the priest? He is a disgrace. Throw the book at him for all we care. But let's not be fooled into thinking that Dr. Hamilton is a victim. The real news story here was not another case of homosexual molestation, it's the political motivation of the *New York Times*

NEW YORK TIMES PROTECTS WEAKLAND

Clark Hoyt, the public editor of the *New York Times*, recently ran a piece that sought to defend the paper against Catholics unhappy with recent coverage of the pope. In particular, he defended Laurie Goodstein's story on Fr. Lawrence Murphy.

Hoyt wrote, "In 1996, more than 20 years after Murphy moved away, the archbishop of Milwaukee, Rembert Weakland, wrote to Ratzinger [now the pope], saying he had *just learned* that the priest had solicited sex in the confessional while at the school, a particularly grievous offense, and asked how he should proceed." (Our italics.) Weakland became Milwaukee archbishop in 1977.

Cardinal William Levada recently criticized Goodstein for trying to attribute blame to the pope for the Murphy case, "instead of to diocesan decisions at the time." He was right to do so. Moreover, we cited Weakland's record: he not only

sought to punish whistle-blowers—he ripped off the archdiocese to settle a sexual assault lawsuit brought by his 53-year old male lover. We added that because Weakland was a champion of liberal causes, the media were giving him a pass for his delinquency in not contacting the Vatican about Murphy for two decades. Hoyt joined the chorus.

In a letter from the Coadjutor Bishop of Superior, Wisconsin, Raphael M. Fliss, to the Vicar for Personnel of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Fr. Joseph A. Janicki, he said, “In a recent conversation with Archbishop Weakland, I was left with the impression that it would not be advisable at this time to invite Father Murphy to return to Milwaukee to work among the deaf.” The letter was dated July 9, 1980. The source: the “Document Trail” that accompanied the Goodstein article online.

Perhaps Hoyt should have read his newspaper more carefully.

NEW YORK TIMES PRINTS BOGUS OP-ED

In a recent op-ed article in the *New York Times*, Harvard law professor Lawrence Lessig said the Catholic Church failed to protect children “for hundreds of years,” yet offered no evidence to support his outrageous claim. Most of the abuse, which involved post-pubescent males, occurred between the mid-60s and the mid-80s. Moreover, for him to say that the problem is “worsening” because the Church is allegedly taking a leading role preventing victims from compensation is complete and utter nonsense: all the data show that in recent years the Church has done a better job addressing this problem

than any other institution.

Lessig had the gall to say that the Church is standing in the way of repealing sovereign immunity: anyone who is even vaguely familiar with this subject knows it is the public school establishment—not the Church—that benefits from, and resists changes to, this discriminatory state doctrine. He really fell on his face when he hailed New York Assemblywoman Margaret Markey: she was the one seeking to insulate the public schools from being treated the same way in law that private [read: Catholic] schools are with regards to the statute of limitations. In other words, Lessig was siding with those who want to *keep* sovereign immunity. He's in good company: last March, the *Times* decided not to back the bill by Assemblyman Vito Lopez that would have treated private and public institutions equally. Instead, it backed the Markey bill that shielded the public schools.

Bill Donohue spoke to this issue saying, "When I submit letters or op-ed page ads to the *Times*, they typically request that I offer proof of my assertions. I have no problem with that. But I do have a problem when op-ed page submissions strewn with factual errors are accepted without emendation."

NEW YORK TIMES FINDS MORE GAY ABUSERS

The *New York Times* loves to dig up old stories to make the Catholic Church look bad, but sometimes it unwittingly provides useful information. Consider the Austrian case it recently detailed.

In 1995, a journalist broke a story about alleged sexual abuse

by Cardinal Hans Hermann Groër of Vienna. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, who was not formally in charge of these cases at that time, nonetheless pressed for an investigation. At first, he was turned down, but soon thereafter Pope John Paul II approved an investigation.

Because there isn't a whole lot more to this story, it just underscores our accusation that the point is to cast doubt on the pope's commitment to ending abuse. In other words, this is pure politics. Nonetheless, the story contains some unintended chestnuts. How so? It shows, without ever saying so, that homosexuality was once again the problem.

The article says that Cardinal Groër was suspected of "abusing minors and young men." Not children. As has been true in most cases, the abuse did not involve pedophilia, but homosexuality. Also, the story mentions how a Fr. Udo Fischer was molested by Groër "in the early 1970s." Since Fischer was born in 1952 (we check out everything), that means the *Times* has unwittingly found yet another homosexual "victim."

Which makes us wonder: just how many of the other "abuse" cases involved consensual homosexual sex.