

From Newsletter to Journal

For the past twenty years, the Catholic League published a newsletter describing the organization's events. As we begin our third decade, the Catholic League will change from publishing a newsletter to publishing a *journal*. Why the change? A newsletter is primarily a house organ, a publication that details internal matters. But *Catalyst* has a broader focus: we seek not only to disseminate news of League activity, we seek to impact on the world of ideas, and hence feel it more appropriate to be recognized as a journal.

League decries loss of parental rights in name of AIDS 'education'

At federal, state and local levels...

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is gravely concerned about the nature of recent government anti-AIDS programs.

In a statement released January 16, Dr. William A. Donohue, president of the Catholic League, presented the organization's position:

"The central problem with many recent government anti-AIDS programs is that they undermine the right of Catholic parents to socialize their children according to the teachings of their Church and according to the precepts of their convictions. Catholic parents who are faithful to Church

teachings, as well as non-Catholics who happen to agree with the conclusions of Catholic doctrine, have every right to decide what, when and how their children learn about sexuality. Tragically, there is evidence that at every level of government, parental rights are being eviscerated by public policy makers.

“For example, we now have the spectacle of the federal government sponsoring the sale of condoms – complete with explicit appeals to moral neutrality – in radio and television spots across the nation. It will not do to say that the ads, some of which are downright vulgar and sensationalistic, are designed to appeal to the 18-25 year-old set. There is no way the feds can monitor who hears and sees the ads and that is why Catholic parents have every right to complain about government usurpation of their authority.

“In the states, there is the example of the Department of Public Health in Massachusetts aligning itself with Planned Parenthood to devise a comprehensive sex education program. Not only do the curricula proposals obviate the will of Catholic parents, the conference proceedings that led to these proposals were laced with anti-Catholic and anti-Christian references.

“And at the local level, New York City has now embarked on an aggressive subway poster campaign, extending to Gay Men’s Health Crisis the right to display its ads without paying for anything but an installation fee. Catholic parents, obviously, can no more stop their children from seeing these ads – all of which are characteristically provocative – than they can any others. As any New Yorker will testify, those who ride subways constitute a captive audience and cannot easily choose which ads to read.

“The problem, in short, is the diminution of rights exercised by Catholic parents. An important exercise of religious freedom is the right of parents to inculcate their religious

values into their children. While no right is absolute, the degree to which government anti-AIDS programs have trespassed on these rights is alarming.

“So as not to be misunderstood, the Catholic League fully supports anti-AIDS efforts. But it also believes that Catholic parental rights should not be jettisoned in the process.”

Others agree

As we went to press negative response to the government sponsored ads was growing. Many seriously questioned the expenditure of \$60-million tax dollars by self-crowned condom queen, Donna Shalala and the Center for Disease Control (Center for Condom Distribution?) in Atlanta.

Syndicated columnist John Leo made no bones about it. “Pushing sex as a consumer item is not the solution. It’s the problem.” He goes on to add:

“People who act recklessly in their sexual lives, straight and gay, aren’t doing so because they lack information about condoms or because they need a nudge from the Advertising Council. They are doing so for the obvious reason that sex is tied up with problems of intimacy, identity, fear, reproduction and drives that are not going to change because of chirpy little messages about the wonders of latex.”

Catholic League denounces Nation of Islam Hatred

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights joined with the Jewish Action Alliance and other civil rights

organizations in condemning the hatred of spokesmen for the Nation of Islam. The following remarks were delivered at a press conference on January 25th in New York City.

Dr. William A. Donohue, president of the Catholic League, listed the League's concerns:

"The Catholic League is delighted to join with the Jewish Action Alliance and other civil rights organizations in denouncing the hatred and bigotry of spokesmen for the Nation of Islam. Louis Farrakhan has had plenty of time to respond to the Nazi-like speech that Khalid Abdul Muhammad delivered at Kean College on November 29th, but has thus far refused to do so.

"Mr. Muhammad's speech was indistinguishable from the rantings of Nazis and Klansmen over the years. Blaming Jews for every conceivable social ill, and casting Jews as one big cabal working to undermine liberty, is something right out of the Third Reich. The statements made about Catholics, and especially Pope John Paul II (e.g. 'somebody need [sic] to raise that dress up and see what's really under there'), were vile and disgusting. Similarly, the comments made about whites and homosexuals were equally irresponsible.

"Unless Mr. Farrakhan quickly moves to silence Mr. Muhammad, the public will have no other choice than to assume complicity on the part of the Nation of Islam itself.

"The Catholic League is proud to join with the Jewish Action Alliance in bringing down the wrath of public opinion on Mr. Muhammad. If amicable relationships are to be maintained among the multiplicity of racial, ethnic and religious groups that constitute the United States, the men and women of good will must register their outrage at those who would sow the seeds of racial and religious hatred ."

The “New York Times” shows its bias once again

Media bias is something everyone seems to be complaining about these days, so it is hardly noteworthy to learn that Catholics feel mistreated as well. But just how much media bias is there against Catholics? Is it more or less than the bias that is directed at Others? According to Hilton Kramer, the bias that the media have against Catholics has no rival anywhere in the population. And he should know: Kramer has spent his life in the media, formerly as a reporter for the *New York Times*, and now as a writer for the *New York Post*. Indeed, Kramer now charts the ideological corruption of his former employer in his weekly “*Times Watch*” column.

Kramer offered his comment in a discussion I had with him on a New York radio talk show. He did not get a chance to elaborate but I suspect that Kramer would probably agree that much of the bias is subtle these days. I offered an example and it is one that he readily acknowledged as media bias against Catholics. Here’s what happened.

On January 4th, the *New York Post* editorialized against the anti-Semitism that marked a Kean College speech by Khalid Abdul Muhammad, spokesman for the Nation of Islam [for our response, see front page in this issue]. That was great except that the editorial never mentioned that Mr. Muhammad also attacked Catholics in his speech.

A phone call to the *Post* found that the newspaper based its editorial on a December 23rd news story in the *New York Times*. We checked the *Times* and discovered that the *Post* did not intentionally omit criticism of the anti-Catholic slurs that

were made: no criticism was offered because the *Times* never cited Catholics as one of the groups that was targeted by the speaker. Interestingly, the *Times* did mention the attack on Jews, whites and homosexuals, and in fact even quoted passages to substantiate the story; it is likely, therefore, that the reporter had a copy of the transcript of the speech when he wrote his piece.

To be certain that Catholics were mentioned in the speech, Karen Krugh, my assistant, went to Kean College and listened to a tape of the more than three-hour speech. What she found was appalling. Here's a small sampler: "Go to the Vatican in Rome when the old no-good Pope – you know that cracker, somebody need to raise that dress up and see what's really under there – when the old Pope was shot, he didn't pray in front of no white Mary."

Why didn't the *New York Times*, the so-called "newspaper of record," make mention of the attack on the Pope? It wasn't due to the brevity of the remarks: Mr. Muhammad spent more time blasting Catholics than he did blasting homosexuals. No, as Kramer agreed, the reason why Catholics didn't merit the attention of the *Times* had less to do with oversight than it did the politics of the newspaper.

The problem with the Catholic Church, as the cultural elite would have it, is that it is too obstructionist, too ready to stand in the way of the social engineers. And because the Church won't bend to the progressive agenda, it gets dumped on. Or, as in this case, when it does get dumped on, it goes unreported. None of this has anything to do with callous indifference to Catholic-bashing. What's at work is more invidious. Put plainly, if the politically correct police have assigned a victimizer status to the Catholic Church, then the Church cannot readily be transformed into a victim. That would muddy the message and confuse the reader, and that is not something the *New York Times* would ever want to do.

AGENT OF INFLUENCE

By C. Joseph Doyle

*C. Joseph Doyle is the Massachusetts-based Operations Director of the Catholic League. This article, reprinted here with permission, appeared in the January 1994 issue of The **Catholic World Report**.*

Frances Kissling and her Catholics for Free Choice have been in the news again, though not for the usual reasons. Kissling's specialty is deceptive advertising.

Frances Kissling markets her organization as a legitimate voice of Catholic dissent, a theologically respectable and authentically Catholic alternative to the teachings of the pope and the American hierarchy on issues of public morality.

In the media she has been elevated to the status of counter-magisterium, hailed by the *Washington Post* as the "Cardinal of Choice;" she has become one of the most frequently quoted news sources on the Catholic Church and abortion. During Pope John Paul II's August 1993 pilgrimage to the World Youth Day Congress in Denver, Colorado (where 400,000 enthusiastic young Catholics gathered to hear the pope), Kissling dutifully performed the role assigned to her in the media's production of "Days of Dissent."

"This is not a Church, this is not a pope we should be treating with reverence," she intoned to the *Boston Globe*, adding that the pope was "fixated on genital issues." In another interview, she referred to the Holy Father as being "lost in the pelvic zone."

ON THE DEFENSIVE

After more than a decade of attacking the leadership of the Church, Kissling has lately been engaged in a new and unfamiliar exercise, defending her own credibility and that of her organization. The experience has not been profitable for her.

It began last August 21st on the "Jeanine Graf Show" on WRKO Radio in Boston. In a debate with this author, Kissling – pressed about how many members her organization has – revealed that "Catholics for Free Choice" was a misnomer, blurting out: "We're not a membership organization. We have no membership." The voice of dissent, it turned out, was not a mass movement, but a spokesperson with a fax machine. Kissling also admitted a fact exposed some years ago, that her organization's contributors included Hugh Hefner's Playboy Foundation. The attention these admissions received in the Catholic press was magnified on September 18th, when the president of the Massachusetts State Senate, William M. Bulger, delivered a speech on anti-Catholicism to the Catholic Lawyers Guild in Boston, and cited Kissling as one of the prime offenders. Referring to Catholics for Free Choice as a "fraudulent front," Bulger discussed both Kissling's funding and her lack of membership in a speech that gained attention in both the Catholic and secular media.

In yet another blow to Kissling's Catholic pretensions, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement on November 4, 1993, denying that CFFC was Catholic. "Many people," the statement read, "may be led to believe that it is an authentic Catholic organization. It is not. It has no affiliation, formal or otherwise, with the Catholic Church."

The bishops went on to point out that CFFC is associated with the pro-abortion lobby in Washington and shares an address and funding sources with the National Abortion Federation, the trade association of the abortion industry. Citing CFFC's support for "the violent destruction of innocent unborn human beings....for all nine months of pregnancy and for any reason,"

the bishops insisted that CFFC "has rejected unity with the Church," and holds positions that "deliberately contradict essential teachings of the Catholic Faith." They concluded that "Catholics for Free Choice merits no recognition or support as a Catholic organization."

COUNTER-ATTACK THROUGH THE MEDIA

The bishops' forthright rebuke of Kissling produced inevitable media retaliation in the form of an op-ed piece by inveterate Catholic-basher Anna Quindlen, in the *New York Times*. More revealing, however, is the response of Kissling herself to both Senate President Bulger and the bishops.

In an October 17, 1993, op-ed column in the *Boston Globe*, Kissling reiterated that CFFC was not a membership organization, but went on to divulge that it has an annual budget of \$1.5 million, mostly from foundation sources, and boasts offices in Washington, Mexico City, and Uruguay, a 12-member Board of Directors (including dissident theologian Daniel Maguire), 64 spokesmen in 39 states, and a staff of 20.

Using the tactics of a defense lawyer, Kissling sought to evade Bulger's charge that CFFC had received funding from the contraception industry by asserting that she never accepted donations from contraceptive companies. What Kissling omitted mentioning, however, was the extensive financial support CFFC had received over the years from the Sonnen Foundation. Established on the profits of Erko contraceptive foam, the Sonnen Foundation has contributed over \$800,000 to CFFC in the last decade and is described by feminist author Marian Faux, in her book *Crusaders*, as one of the two major sources of funding for Kissling.

Sonnen was founded by population-control ideologue Joseph Sonnen. It helped pay for the litigation that led to *Roe v. Wade* and partially funded a 1979 newspaper ad that blamed the Church's teaching on contraception for the problems of world

hunger. After its denunciation by the Catholic League, a Sonnen director responded by calling the teachings of the Church "detrimental to the world," and warning that the state may force the Church to abandon its teachings, just as Mormons were forced to abandon polygamy. Sonnen has also supported litigation aimed at denying tax-exempt status to the Catholic church.

Kissling also denied receiving financing from Planned Parenthood, again omitting mention of a long relationship of support and cooperation from that organization. CFFC's first office was in Planned Parenthood's headquarters in New York City. Kissling's first major media exposure, her October 1984 *New York Times* ad supporting Catholic dissent on abortion, was designed by and placed through Planned Parenthood's ad agency, free of charge. According to Norman Goluskind, president of the agency Smith/ Greenland, the ad "was a favor to Planned Parenthood."

A FAILED MEMBERSHIP

Even Kissling's assertions that her organization does not have a membership betray signs of inconsistency. The paucity of membership for Catholics for Free Choice appears to be more a matter of result than intention. CFFC has distributed membership forms with a \$15.00 check-off for "annual dues." In the early 1980's, Kissling claimed CFFC had 5,000 members nationwide. In 1983, however, it was reported that only 3 percent of CFFC's annual income of \$221,900 came from membership dues. At \$15.00 per person, this would have given CFFC not 5,000 but less than 450 members nationwide, or .00076 percent of America's 59 million Roman Catholics, or about 1 per 100,000.

A series of grants were made to CFFC by the Gund Foundation in the period 1983-1985 to help build "a national membership organization dedicated to preserving reproductive freedom and upholding separation of church and state." Claiming "we're not

a membership organization," has become Kissling's way of evading embarrassing questions about her organization's failure to attract more than token support in the Catholic community.

In response to her repudiation by the American bishops, Kissling issued a statement asserting that CFFC's board, staff, volunteers, and individual donors are Catholic – a theme she emphasizes continually but unconvincingly. In 1990, she maintained that her constituency "is Roman Catholic and it is growing as more and more Catholics learn of our existence." Besides the glaring inaccuracy in her boast about growing numbers, everything about Kissling's organization – its origins and history, its positions and rhetoric, its alliances and sources of funding, and even the religious status of its leader – point not only to the absence of Catholic belief and loyalty, but to an aggressive agenda of virulent and bigoted anti-Catholicism, conducted on behalf of the enemies of the Church in the abortion industry.

WHO PAYS THE BILLS?

CFFC, despite its failure to attract grass-roots Catholic support, has witnessed a ten-fold increase in its funding in the last decade. It derives most of its financing from foundation grants. Its roster of supporters comprises a virtual index of major financial sources for the population control movement. Besides the Sunnen Foundation, six-figure contributors to CFFC have included such pro-abortion and pro-contraception philanthropies as the Brush Foundation (established by a eugenics enthusiast and friend of Margaret Sanger), the Gund Foundation, the Packard Foundation, the General Service Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, the Public Welfare Foundation, the John Merck Fund, the Scherman Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation, which just donated \$375,000 to CFFC to finance its pro-abortion activities in Latin America. The largest single contributor has been the Ford Foundation, which has funnelled over one

million dollars into CFFC's coffers to support such euphemistically described activities as "family planning in developing countries," "reproductive rights in Latin America," and "public education on issues of reproductive choice."

For an organization that pretends to be Catholic, CFFC accepts funding for purposes that are not only at variance with the teaching of the Church, but are quite overtly anti-Catholic. One 1988 grant from the General Service Foundation for \$28,000 was provided to "counter efforts by the Roman Catholic Church to limit legal access to reproductive health care." Another 1988 grant to CFFC, this one from the Coshocton Foundation for \$50,000, was donated for the straightforward purpose of "advocacy of abortion rights. A \$25,000 grant in 1987 from the Gund Foundation was for "advocacy efforts supporting Catholic dissent on the Issue of abortion."

MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES - 1982-1992

The Ford Foundation	\$1,105,000
The Sunnen Foundation	867,000
The MacArthur Foundation	375,000
The Packard Foundation.....	375,000
The Educational Foundation of America	362,000
The George Gund Foundation	278,000
The General Service Foundation	232,000
The John Merck Fund	133,000
The Public Welfare Foundation.....	130,000
The Scherman Foundation	125,000
The North Shore Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program	105,000
Leland Fikes Foundation.....	80,000
Prospect Hill Foundation	77,500
Wallace Foundation	75,000
Robert Sterling Clark Foundation.....	72,000
Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation	60,000
Coshocton Foundation	50,000
Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation	40,000
Nathan Cummings Foundation	39,500
Ruth Mott Fund	24,600
The Playboy Foundation	20,000
The CS Fund.....	10,000
TOTAL:	\$4,635,600

Sources: Foundation Grants Index, National Catholic Register

Partial listing.

In 1985, CFFC received a \$25,000 grant from the Clark Foundation for a program to "educate American Catholics about the wide diversity of opinion that exists within the

Church on the issue of reproductive freedom, and to provide Catholic citizens with a rational alternative to Church doctrine." A 1991 grant for \$47,000 from the same foundation was for the "research, production, and dissemination of material on the role of the Catholic Church in shaping public policy on family planning services and the availability of contraception."

Much of the funding to CFFC is directed towards fostering defection from Catholic teaching in the last frontier (besides Ireland) of the population controllers: Latin America. U.S. Hispanics are also targeted for penetration. In the last eight years, grants totaling over one million dollars have been given to CFFC for Hispanic and Latin American activities. The salaries of Frances Kissling and her cohorts are paid by institutions at enmity with the Church, whose interest – political, ideological, and economic – would be served by the defeat of Catholicism.

A CHECKERED HISTORY

Of Polish ancestry, Frances Kissling, 51, grew up in Flushing, New York, where her mother moved following her divorce from Kissling's father, Thomas Romanski, and her second marriage to a wealthy Protestant, Charles Kissling. After two years at St. John's University, Frances Kissling entered a convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph as a postulant. Six months later she departed, from both the convent and the faith. According to Marian Faux: "She never returned to the Sunday Mass, and never fully returned to the Church."

Kissling describes herself during this period as a "typical person of the sixties. I was single....I protested the war, and I was sexually active." She added, "I saw and see nothing wrong with sexual activity outside of marriage....I don't see it as a profoundly sacred event that requires vows of eternal commitment." Kissling entered in to a nine-year cohabitation with one Carl Chanin, described as a "Jewish hippie

accountant.” A practitioner of contraception from the time she first became sexually active, Kissling later underwent sterilization.

In 1970, Kissling became one of the first abortion clinic operators in the country, managing two clinics, one in Pelham, New York, the other in Manhattan. According to Kissling, the Pelham clinic averaged 250 abortions per week.

Through a referral from Planned Parenthood, Kissling received funding in 1973 to promote abortion overseas. She established and operated illegal abortion clinics in two Catholic Countries where abortion was still outlawed Mexico and Italy. In Mexico, she arranged for the training of abortionists and illegally smuggled suction equipment, used in abortion, into that country. In Italy, she offered money and assistance to a group of leftist and Communist women to set up an abortion clinic, proclaiming, “I have no problem helping women get illegal abortions.” She went on to establish the first legal abortion clinic in Catholic Austria.

In 1976, Kissling founded and became the first President of the National Abortion Federation, a trade association established to advance the financial and professional interests of abortionists. In 1979, Kissling joined Catholics for Free Choice, and became its executive director in 1982.

IS KISSLING A CATHOLIC?

Except when she is touting Catholic credentials for public relations purposes, Kissling’s views and rhetoric demonstrate a venomous hostility towards the authority of the Church, a radical rejection of the doctrines of the faith, and a conscious refusal to participate in the sacramental life of a Catholic. Moreover, her alleged Catholic identity appears to be a matter of tactical convenience to advance a revolutionary purpose.

When she joined CFFC, she told her colleagues, “I no longer

considered myself a Catholic," She later claimed: "...if I wanted to be Catholic, if I willed it to be, I could be a Catholic."

In *The Inside Stories*, edited by feminist Annie Lally Milhaven, Kissling is quoted as saying "When I say I came back to the Church, I never came back on the old terms....I came back to the Church as a social change agent; I came back to woman-church." Continuing, Kissling asserts, "I am not talking about coming back to Sunday Mass, confession, and all these things, that are memories of my childhood."

Kissling openly proclaims the need for revolution in the Church, in which women's ordination will be the key. Her attitude towards the hierarchy is one of unconcealed contempt. "They don't deserve our respect....I would like to see women reach the point where they understood that every bishop in this country should be so embarrassed that he is afraid to show his face in public."

Kissling believes that the hierarchy of the Church is not divinely ordained, is corrupt, and should be treated "without dignity." According to Kissling, "Jesus Christ didn't come here and say, 'You gotta have a pope, you gotta have cardinals, you gotta have bishops, you gotta have priests.' ...This system is man-made, and really modeled upon a European feudal system."

She approvingly notes in a 1986 *Washington Post* interview that the secular media "no longer treats 300 men in dresses as representatives of the Catholic Church." The representatives of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, the curial congregation responsible for the disciplining of the dissident nuns who signed Kissling's 1984 pro-abortion ad in the *New York Times*, should not "be allowed to show their faces in the United States of America."

Beneath the rhetoric of pluralism and choice, Kissling's views

on abortion are clear. She supports “unimpeded access to abortion at all stages of pregnancy.” As for her own spirituality, Kissling tells Marian Faux, “I still don’t pray. I don’t say the rosary, there are no crucifixes in my house.”

Kissling’s self-proclaimed status as a Catholic does not bear scrutiny. Canon 1398 of the Code of Canon Law states that “A person who procures a successful abortion incurs an automatic (*latae sententiae*) excommunication.” As the founder and operator of multiple (and illegal) abortion clinics, Kissling procured possibly thousands of abortions. Canon 1364 proclaims the same penalty for apostates, schismatics, and heretics. Canon 751 defines apostacy as “the total repudiation of the Christian faith;” defines schism as “refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or communion with the members of the Church subject to him;” and defines heresy as the “obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith.”

Kissling’s abandonment of her faith made her an apostate years before her procuring of abortions made her an excommunicate. Her refusal of submission and community with the pope and the bishops places her in schism, while her rejection of the divine institution of the papacy, the episcopate, and the priesthood – even apart from her denial of objective moral norms – places her in heresy. In purely political terms, Frances Kissling is an anti-Catholic revolutionary paid by the enemies of the Church, to attack it from within.

A FRONT, NOT AN ORGANIZATION

Frances Kissling describes Catholics for Free Choice as “one of the most viable threats to the Catholic Church today.” CFFC was founded in 1970 and became an affiliate in 1973 of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. Much of its early funding came from the Unitarian Church. Its first president was Father Joseph O’Rourke, a priest expelled from the Society of Jesus in 1974 and since married. During Pope John Paul II’s

first visit to the US in 1979, CFFC sponsored an ad in the *Washington Post* contending that the passage of the Human Life Amendment would “establish as the law of the land the religious views of a minority of Americans.”

This was followed by a 1981 press conference in the US Senate protesting the opposition of the American hierarchy to legal abortion. In 1982, CFFC was among the signers of an amicus brief in the *City of Akron v. Akron Center for Reproductive Health* case, then before the Supreme Court. The brief argued that any restriction of abortion was based on “an opposing theological position” and therefore violated the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion.

That same year CFFC began holding briefings for members of Congress. They were initially sponsored by then-Congressman and later vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, who later wrote the introduction to CFFC’s booklet, *The Abortion Issue in the Political Process*.

According to Marian Faux, the briefings would not only include a discussion of abortion by dissident theologian Daniel Maguire, a ex-priest, but practical advice from a media consultant and a pollster, the latter predictably reassuring legislators that a majority of Catholics were pro-choice. In another Senate press conference in 1983, CFFC argued that Catholic social justice principles required Catholic legislators to support public funding of Medicaid abortions. In a second publication, *Abortion: A Guide to making Ethical Choices*, written in 1983 by Marjorie Reiley Maguire and Daniel Maguire, CFFC asserted that the morality of abortion was subjective.

CFFC gained national attention during the 1984 presidential election, which was marked by the controversy between Cardinal John O’Connor and candidate Ferraro. On October 7, 1984, CFFC sponsored, under the title of *The Catholic Committee on Pluralism and Abortion*,” a full-page ad in the *New York Times*,

signed by 97 persons, including a number of feminist nuns and dissident theologian. The ad proclaimed that a diversity of opinion existed among Catholics on abortion; that few Catholics reject abortion in all circumstances; that abortion could be "a moral choice;" and that restricting abortion would both curtail religious freedom and discriminate against poor women. This was followed in 1985 by a second ad entitled a "Declaration of Solidarity" which claimed that the 97 signers of the first ad were being persecuted by the Church.

In 1987, CFFC worked with Planned Parenthood and the National Organization of Women to protest the Pope's visit to the US, calling the Vatican "a major violator of women's rights in the world." In 1990, CFFC began distributing "action kits" urging supporters to wear CFFC stickers to Mass, protest "anti-choice" homilies through financial boycotts, and counter-demonstrate on Pro-Life Sunday. It also asked supporters to report any parish activity that might violate IRS regulations on political action by churches.

Among the more grotesque publications circulated by CFFC is its 1992 "Liturgy of Affirmation," a New Age ritual for a woman having an abortion. Prayers are recited to "Mother and Father God," while the aborting woman is anointed with oil, blessed, embraced, affirmed, and encouraged to sprinkle flower petals.

THE MEDIA DARLINGS

Perhaps the best example of CFFC's relationship with the media came in August 1992, with the decision of the Knights of Columbus to erect monuments to the unborn slaughtered in abortion. Frances Kissling responded by charging the Knights with polarizing and politicizing the abortion debate and "turning women into pawns." To the media, a tiny, extremist fringe group of a few hundred disaffected ex-Catholics with a radical agenda, was posited as the equal of the Knights of Columbus, America's largest Catholic organization with 1.5

million members.

CFFC has not been without its critics. Richard Doerflinger of the Pro-Life Secretariat of the US Catholic Conference has described Kissling's ideology as "a mixture of lies, innuendo, and misinformation." In 1985, he wrote a groundbreaking article exposing Kissling in *America* magazine, that was subsequently republished by the Catholic League.

Responding to CFFC incursions into Latin America, the Peruvian Episcopal Commission on the Family has called their use of the name Catholic "a deceitful strategy" by those who "reject and even mock" the teaching of the Church. Catholic League President William Donohue recently characterized CFFC as "an explicitly anti-Catholic force with a not-so-hidden agenda," when CFFC, ostensibly an abortion-rights organization, took to the New York airwaves trumpeting sex-abuse charges against Cardinal Bernardin.

Catholics for Free Choice repudiates fundamental Catholic beliefs, receives virtually all of its funding from non-Catholic sources opposed to the Church; enjoys only marginal support in the Catholic community; and is headed not by a Catholic, but by an ex-Catholic, perpetrating a fraud, for an anti-Catholic objective. CFFC is an anti-Catholic front group financed or supported by such adversaries of the Catholic Church as the contraception industry, the Ford Foundation, the Unitarian Church, Planned Parenthood, and Playboy. Its sole purpose is to attack the Church and discredit and misrepresent Church teachings. A well-funded letterhead, CFFC exploits the name Catholic to sow dissension and confusion among Catholics on behalf of their enemies.

*****Statement regarding Catholics for Free Choice issued by the
National Conference of Catholic Bishops*****

During Pope John Paul II's recent visit to this country, programs about dissent in the Catholic Church often included a

spokesperson for a group calling itself “Catholics for Free Choice” (CFFC). Both before and since World Youth Day, because of CFFC’s presuming to speak for American Catholics, and because of the attention the media have paid to the group, many people, including Catholics, may be led to believe that it is an authentic Catholic organization. It is not. It has no affiliation, formal or otherwise, with the Catholic Church.

In fact, Catholics for Free Choice is associated with the pro-abortion lobby in Washington, DC. It attracts public attention by its denunciations of basic principles of Catholic morality and teaching – denunciations given enhanced visibility by media outlets that portray CFFC as a reputable voice of Catholic dissent.

CFFC can in no way speak for the Catholic Church and its 59 million members in the United States. Most of CFFC’s funding is from secular foundations supporting legal abortion in this country and abroad. It shares an address and funding sources with the National Abortion Federation, a trade association which seeks to advance the financial and professional interests of abortionists.

Therefore, it is important to educate the public, especially Catholics, about CFFC’s insistence on claiming a Catholic label. This group has rejected unity with the Church on important issues of longstanding and unchanging Church teaching. In fact there is no room for dissent by a Catholic from the Church’s moral teaching that direct abortion is a grave wrong.

Our Catholic position embraces the truth regarding the sacredness of every human life, before as well as after birth. CFFC endorses the violent destruction of innocent unborn human beings and regularly issues legal briefs and other publications endorsing legalized abortion for all nine months of pregnancy and for any reason. Most Americans do not support its extreme agenda.

Because of its opposition to the human rights of some of the most defenseless members of the human race, and because its purposes and activities deliberately contradict essential teachings of the Catholic faith, we state once again that Catholics for Free Choice merits no recognition or support as a Catholic organization.

The Write Stuff

The recent Vatican-Israel diplomatic accord generated countless editorials, articles and letters commenting on the accord and the history of Catholic-Jewish relations. Many of these served as springboards to unwarranted and unfounded commentaries on the Church, Pius XII and the Holocaust. This letter from Catholic League president William A. Donohue, while responding to one such published letter, in fact countered much of what was printed as fact in recent weeks. It appeared in the *The Jewish Press* on January 21, 1994 headlined, "CATHOLIC LEAGUE RESPONDS TO CRITICISM."

The letter by Henry Gerber (January 7th) deserves a response. Mr. Gerber repeats the by now almost accepted wisdom that the Roman Catholic Church did nothing and remained silent throughout the Holocaust. While it is true that the Catholic Church did not, for eminently reasonable tactical purposes, lead a vociferous campaign against Hitler, it is a rank distortion of history to maintain that it sat on the sidelines.

Much of what the Catholic Church did to assist Jews was done surreptitiously. It had to. Lacking an army, and besieged by Nazi terror against Catholic priests, the Vatican had to proceed with caution. But it did act. Indeed, Pope Pius XII

was praised by everyone from the New York Times to Golda Meir for what he did. Leading rabbis the world over extended their congratulations to the Pope, and Jewish survivors extended their heartfelt thanks to all those Catholics – lay and clergy alike – who helped them escape Nazi persecution.

Mr. Gerber also focuses on many other sins of the Catholic Church. In some cases, like in the Crusades, he is remiss in not mentioning that the killing of Jews was openly condemned at the time by the popes. By way of analogy, it should be noted that Pope John Paul II has repeatedly condemned abortion, yet some Catholics disobey. Is it fair, therefore, to say that the Church sanctions abortion because some Catholics practice it? If that is the case, then it must be true that the Church sanctions sin of every kind because it is surely true that all Catholics, including the Pope, are sinners.

But there is no need to be defensive. Yes, the Catholic Church has sinned and it surely has not earned a clean slate for its dealings with Jews. But the Vatican accord with Israel does hold forth great promise for Catholics and Jews alike. In the end, a spirit of cooperation will serve both communities well.

*William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President, Catholic League*

**Statement Before the
Transportation Committee of**

the City of New York

January 27, 1994

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization, is grateful to be given the opportunity to testify on the controversy over MTA ads.

Last fall the Catholic League protested the offensive VH-1 ad that pictured pop-singer Madonna alongside of our Blessed Lady and infant Jesus; the inscription between the two photos read, "The Difference Between You and Your Parents." We were delighted that immediately following our protest, the ad was pulled. We also appreciate the apology that VH-1 issued at the time.

We hasten to add, however, that unless a change in policy is forthcoming from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, ads like the Madonna poster will continue to be accepted. Everyone here has seen ads from Hot 97, the Gay Men's Health Crisis and Calvin Klein that are vulgar, offensive and downright degrading. That there are always some who claim not to be offended is without significance. Morality is a social construct, and as such, it is not reducible to individual preferences.

Make no mistake about it, we at the Catholic League fully support the First Amendment rights of all Americans. But support for the First Amendment is not inconsistent with the need for government to balance free speech rights with its proprietary interest in upholding the moral order. There is absolutely nothing in case law, and certainly nothing in the original intent of the First Amendment, that demands impotence on the part of the MTA. It is not political speech that is the gravamen of our concerns, it is commercial speech.

The courts have made clear that commercial speech does not

enjoy the same level of protection afforded political speech. Indeed the MTA's decision not to run tobacco ads provides evidence that this is hardly news to MTA officials. Now if the MTA has shown that it has both the right and the willingness to reject tobacco ads, surely it can craft criteria that address the concerns of the Catholic League.

The MTA's hand is also strengthened because of the "captive audience" nature of the ads . As every New Yorker will concede, riding buses and subways leaves little opportunity to avoid seeing MTA ads. Children, to name one obvious segment of the population, cannot easily choose not to be offended by indecent and arguably obscene ads. It is not a persuasive democratic remedy to say that people can "avert their eyes," not when the ads are so ubiquitous. Furthermore, if subways are considered a captive audience for the purpose of evaluating the context in which begging takes place, then surely the MTA can invoke the captive audience rationale when it makes determinations on ad selection.

No one, including the court in its 1984 *Penthouse* decision, ever put a straightjacket on the MTA. Serving the common good is something all public officials should be expected to perform. It is not easy to understand how this verity can be actualized when the MTA displays more concern for the contrived rights of individuals than it does the real interests of the public weal.

The Catholic League is willing to work with members of this committee in developing criteria that would balance First Amendment rights with the legitimate governmental interest in protecting the moral order.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Statement prepared by: William A. Donohue, Ph.D, President,
Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.*

CHANGING THE WORLD

A common complaint among Americans is that they feel powerless to change society. Things are so out of control, goes the refrain, that there is nothing any one individual can do to make matters better. Let's examine this popularly held conviction.

If things are bad now, how did they get that way? May I suggest the obvious? They got that way because some people made them that way. That's right, no one from another planet imposed present conditions on us, individuals living in America created the conditions in which we live. How did they do it? Mostly by reading, writing and talking. Sure, those who are organized have more clout than those who aren't, but in the end a culture is created by those who participate in crafting it.

Cultures do not change quickly, though it would be a mistake to think that it takes an eternity to turn things around. Everyone who is old enough to read this column knows that women have more rights, and smokers have less rights, than was true just ten and twenty years ago. Those changes happened because enough individuals were determined to change things. It stands to reason that if you're bothered by anti-Catholicism, you possess the resources to do something about it. Catholics, after all, are not denied the right to change society.

So what can you do? Read, write and talk about Catholic-bashing. We do it all the time. Now let me share with you one recent example of how we made things right. It's not a front-page item – nor should it be – but then again no change takes place in one gush. Change is more often incremental than it is

cataclysmic.

Just before Christmas, I was contacted by Bishop Joseph Delaney of Fort Worth Texas about an ad he found objectionable. He had forwarded to me an ad for a laser press copying service that advertised a picture of Pope John Paul II with the inscription, “Even the *Pope* supports our reproduction methods.”

It most certainly wasn't the worst ad I've seen, but it was unduly offensive. I wrote a letter to the offending company and as a result the ad was instantly destroyed.

Did the Catholic League change the world? No, but it changed a part of it. And that's the way it's done. Little by little. So don't expect change to be grand in scale – it almost never is. But that's all the more reason why you should get involved now.

The next time you see or hear of something that bothers you, read about the causes, write to the offending parties and talk about your concerns. Tell everyone you know. And you know what? Things will change. Just keep your attention focused and never give up.

—William A. Donohue

The City of Angels

The mayor of Los Angeles, Catholic League member Richard Riordan, has received high marks for his outstanding leadership in the wake of the devastating earthquake which struck that region in January. We pray for him and for all our members and friends – indeed for all the people of the Los

Angeles area – as they rebuild their homes and their lives. We urge our members to join their prayers with ours and to support agencies helping to bring relief to that area.

League joins NY school district case

Lemon test challenged

The Catholic League has joined the American Center for Law and Justice in filing a friend of the court brief in the Supreme Court supporting the creation of a special school district to serve the needs of handicapped children in the village of Kiryas Joel, New York.

In *Board of Education v. Grumet*, (seep. 14 of Jan.-Feb. 1994 *Catalyst* for background information) the Court will decide whether creation of the special district is a permissible accommodation of religion or whether such action violates the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

This case will also provide the Court with another opportunity to review the controversial *Lemon* test (see box) which the Court has used since 1971 to analyze establishment clause questions.

In *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971) the Supreme Court enunciated a three part test (the *Lemon* test) for determining whether government action violates the Establishment Clause of the Constitution. Under *Lemon*, a governmental action does not offend the Establishment Clause if: (1) it has a secular purpose: (2) its principal effect neither advances nor inhibits religion; and (3) it does not foster excessive entanglement of government with religion.

New York's highest court ruled that Chapter 748, the state law creating the district, violated the second prong of the *Lemon* test because by giving in to "the demands of a religious community whose separatist tenets create a tension between the needs of its handicapped children and the need to adhere to certain religious practices" it had the "primary effect" of advancing religion.

The League's brief argues that even under the *Lemon* test, the New York law in question is constitutional. Chapter 748 has the secular purpose of resolving a controversy over providing suitable special educational services for the children residing in Kiryas Joel; the effect of the law, granting the citizens of a validly incorporated municipality the authority to operate a secular public school system for the benefit of their children, neither advances nor inhibits religion; and, finally, the law does not foster excessive entanglement of government and religion.

The League's brief then calls on the Court to abandon the second prong of the *Lemon* test because its results are inconsistent with the principles of free exercise and accommodation. In its place, the brief urges adoption of the coercion test and direct benefits test for deciding establishment clause cases.

The coercion test bars use of governmental compulsion or force to cause people to adopt religious beliefs or to participate in religious rituals.

Under the direct benefits test there would be no violation of the establishment clause if the government benefit flows to individuals or secular recipients who make a free choice to pass the benefit to a religious institution, or the funding comes from a governmental program with a secular governmental purpose, and the religious organizations which enjoy the benefit are not the sole recipients of governmental money.

Using this analysis, the creation of a special education district whose boundaries are contiguous with a pre-existing government municipality does not violate the establishment clause. Chapter 748 involves no government coercion and provides no direct aid or subsidy to any religious institution. Chapter 748 represents a permissible accommodation which provides a means whereby Satmerer children can receive the educational services to which they are entitled without being forced to sacrifice their religious traditions.

Oral arguments in this case are scheduled in March and a decision is expected in late spring.