

WARNER BROS. MAY BE IN FOR IT

The Catholic League is grateful that one of its members, John Raczak from California, has alerted us to a movie that may offend Catholics.

Warner Books recently spent \$1 million for the rights to a book by Glenn Kleier called *The Last Day*. The reason for the high figure is due to the interest that Warner Bros. has in making a movie based on the book. So why is the Catholic League concerned? Because the novel is being touted as a book that "invalidates all religions and takes on the Vatican."

William Donohue wrote to Warner Bros. president Bob Daley stating that if the movie is anything like the book's description, it "is bound to trigger a response from the Catholic League." Donohue asked Daley to verify whether Warner Bros. was planning on going ahead with the film.

Members can write to Daley at:

Warner Bros. Inc., 1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019.

LETTERS OVERLOAD

We are getting deluged with letters again, but keep on sending them. While not everything is acted upon, every letter is read and action is taken on many of the issues brought to our attention. Indeed, our members alert us to instances of Catholic-bashing that we could never track all by ourselves. But please be patient if you don't hear from us right away. And please send us as much information (name, date,

publication or TV/radio show) that you can. It just makes our job that much easier. We try to answer as many questions as we can, but given staff limitations, we can't keep up with every request. Try to focus your questions on issues that are central to the Catholic League and not on matters that deal with some aspect of Church history, etc. Thanks very much.??

HBO ADMITS MISTAKE

In February, Home Box Office (HBO) repeated a show that the league had earlier criticized as being unfair and spiteful *Priestly Sins*, a program that deals with alleged sexual misconduct in the clergy, was the reason that the league called for a boycott of HBO one year ago. After William Donohue met with HBO officials, he felt that they finally understood his concerns and left him with the impression that the show would never air again. That is why he was shocked to see it rerun.

Donohue quickly wrote to HBO asking for an explanation. We are glad to say that upon receiving his letter, a senior official from HBO called Donohue to say that he had *Priestly Sins* yanked immediately. the official said that the scheduling department made the mistake. He apologized profusely and convinced Donohue that this was the kind of thing that embarrassed HBO greatly. The league is very pleased with this response and considers the matter closed.

ESSAY ON ABORTION SAYS IT ALL

On January 19, William Donohue gave an address before the Pro-Life Committee members of St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, Long Island (the address followed a Mass celebrated by Bishop McGann in honor of the unborn). At the meeting, an award was given to 7th grader, Allison Hayes, for the best essay in the "Respect Life Contest." Donohue was so taken by her remarks that he decided to publish it in Catalyst so that all Catholic League members could read it.

Does Abortion Make SENSE?

by Allison M. Hayes

(age 12)

Dear Mom and Dad, I am writing to you from Heaven's baby nursery. It has been one week since I was aborted, but I have been doing a lot of thinking.

I realize that you had a difficult choice to make. Oh, how I wish you had chosen life—my life. I know that I would have cherished all that life has to offer. Heaven is wonderful, but I would have enjoyed sharing my life with you on earth.

I will never SEE a beautiful sunrise.
You'll never wipe the tears from my eyes.

I will never SMELL the lovely spring flowers.
You'll never spend time with me, not minutes,
not hours.

I will never FEEL the touch of your hand.
You'll never play with me in the ocean or
sand.

I will never TASTE chocolate cake.
Why was it my life you chose to take?

I will never HEAR the sound of your voice.
You will have to live with your choice.

Mom and Dad, I am happy with Jesus in Heaven. I am sad when I think of the things I will never be able to see, smell, feel, taste, and hear with you. Abortion does not make sense.

Love,

God's Little Angel

BEING BASHED IN A DOG RAG

Anti-Catholicism shows up virtually everywhere, but we never thought we'd see the Church attacked in a dog magazine. But that's exactly what happened when *The American Cocker Magazine* decided to publish a piece by J. Michael Asbill called, "The Article They Didn't Want Published!"

For some unexplained reason, Asbill went into orbit over the Church's teachings on contraception, arguing that contraception is banned because it limits "The creation of more Catholics." Naturally, the article repeats the old canards about the Church being filthy rich, etc.

Even more interesting than Asbill's contribution to enlightenment was the reaction of the editor to a complaint registered by a Catholic League member. A woman named Michael Allen responded by saying that the article was "intelligently written, well thought out and factual," which only goes to show what passes as intelligence in a dog rag.

Allen not only denies that the article was anti-Catholic, she professes to believe that she has "never at any time had any anti-Catholic views expressed to me or in my hearing." But

guess what prejudice she has heard before? “If there is any anti-sentiment alive in America today,” the cocker editor explained, “it seems that the Jewish community bears the brunt of it.” Thanks for the tip, Mike.

Allen not only is unaware of anti-Catholicism, she admitted in a letter sent to the league that “I was surprised and amazed to read your letterhead and discover that the Catholic faith is in need of a league to defend it’s rights, especially one that requires the services of so many people.” She just doesn’t get it.

It’s enough to make a Catholic want to bark for help. ??

WHAT’S WRONG WITH LATE NITE CATECHISM

Quite a few members have written to us complaining that the play, *Late Nite Catechism*, is popular with a number of Catholics. We stick by our guns: while it is far from the worst play on Catholics (that award goes to *Sister Mary Ignatius*), it nonetheless caricatures Catholic customs and traditions as they existed in the pre-Vatican II era, the result being a trivialization of Catholicism.

The fact that a Lutheran church in the Broadway vicinity decided to host the play was another reason why the league protested.

For the league, it makes no difference whether it is the Church before or after Vatican II that is being held up to public ridicule. However, we sadly recognize that this is a view that is obviously not shared by all Catholics, including

some nuns and priests. To those who disagree with the league's assessment, perhaps they can explain to us why the New York Times has chosen to characterize the play as follows: "Like the best standup comics...Ms. [Maripat] Donovan, who plays the overwhelming and vastly appealing character... is willing to push her act right over the edge."

Now if the Times can figure out what's going on, why can't some Catholics?

ANOTHER BRITISH GEM

Sinead O'Connor, the Irish singer who once tore up a picture of the pope on Saturday Night Live, is back in the news, meaning that she is being noticed once again for what she does best—bash Catholics.

O'Connor is casting in Ireland as the Virgin Mary in Neil Jordan's "The Butcher Boy" film. In her movie debut, O'Connor appears to the troubled title character as an apparition uttering vile language; it is not certain whether the language will remain. One thing's for sure: if her acting is on a par with her singing, it's a sure bet that she'll have to find yet another medium to express her anti-Catholicism (get the canvas ready).

Meanwhile, the mighty Brits seem to be quite busy these days acting in a very ungentlemanly fashion. Between "Father Ted" and Sinead's latest tirade, one wonders what possesses these people to act so lovingly towards Catholics?

ANN (S) LANDERS AT IT AGAIN

For some reason, the gossip guru, Ann Landers, has a thing about Catholics. One might have thought that after being slapped for a previous column impugning Catholicism, the chatterbox would back off. But, no, she's at it again, this time cloaking her sentiments by publishing letters that disparage Catholicism.

We let her column of September 8, 1996 go (she published three letters, all of which were hypercritical of Catholicism), but we are not going to let her column of January 24, 1997 go. In that piece, Landers published a letter from someone in Chicago, the subject of which was, "Biblical Answers Hilarious."

The letter listed 14 "hilarious" remarks about Christianity. Most of the entries were harmless enough, but some were not. In particular, the league took offense at this one: "Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption."

Landers obviously gets a ton of mail and most of it never sees the light of day. For her to pick letters like the three last September and again this winter shows an underlying antipathy to Catholicism. It simply won't do for her to say that nothing that she said was hostile to Catholicism: she chose these letters because she wanted to convey a message. She succeeded—we got the message. Now give her one by writing to her.

Ann Landers
c/o Creators Syndicate5
777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90045

CNN TILTS AWAY FROM CATHOLICS

A Catholic League member who recently retired from working as a supervising producer at CNN for more than twelve years, had a chance to publish some of his thoughts about CNN in a letter to Vanity Fair. What he had to say is of particular interest to Catholics.

Evidently, CNN expects that its top producers should “march in step with the Democratic Party line if they wish to be accepted by management.” With regards to Catholics and Jews, it is said that “A rabbi could get the ear of Ted Turner quicker than could the Pope.” Moreover, producers cannot expect to see their careers enhanced unless they “treat Arab views with disdain while supporting Israel as if it were the 51st state.”

What bothered the league most was the statement that “coverage of the annual Easter sunrise service at the Vatican was discontinued by CNN because Jews had no equally spectacular religious observance.”

From what we have been able to determine, CNN does not disavow canceling the Easter sunrise service, but it maintains that this was done because CNN does not afford any other religion such elaborate coverage of one of their sacred days. But even if this account is true, it raises a question about CNN’s judgment and ultimately provides an unsatisfactory response.

TRASHING CATHOLIC CEMETERIES A NON-ISSUE

The New York media have shown precious little interest in reporting on a pattern of vandalism that has struck Calvary Cemetery in Queens, New York. On Christmas Eve, 300 gravestones were knocked over by vandals. On January 12, more than 100 other gravestones were desecrated and the cemetery's tool shed was set on fire. Then on January 20 the vandals struck again, this time knocking over 20 headstones and smashing a mausoleum window with a sledgehammer.

Only one of the four newspapers in New York, Newsday, found the latest incident worthy of coverage; TV and radio news shows also showed little interest in reporting on the vandalism.

When Jewish cemeteries are desecrated, the media in New York are quick to give such stories extended coverage. Why they treat the desecration of Catholic cemeteries as a non-issue says much about the way the media treat Catholics, in general.