

League Ad Praises Holy Father, And Sends Message to Critics

On Sunday, October 16, an ad by the Catholic League praising Pope John Paul II was published in the Opinion-Editorial section of the *New York Times*. The ad congratulated the Holy Father for his 16 years of service, drawing attention to his importance as a world leader ([see Ad](#)). What the Holy Father has accomplished is unparalleled: he is the supreme role model – not just for Catholics, but for everyone.

The ad also sent a message to those who habitually find fault with the Catholic Church. We Catholics are proud of Church teachings, proud of what the Church has done and proud to be a part of it. Those who set themselves against the Church may be in the limelight, but in the end that hardly matters. What matters transcends the politics of the moment and that is why the Catholic Church is never at the risk of being outdated.

We all looked forward to the Pope's trip to New York, but we all understood the reasons why he could not make it. Had the Holy Father been able to make the trip, we would have been able to show the press nearly 20,000 petitions that were signed by Catholic League members calling on the media to act responsibly in its reporting of the events surrounding the Pontiff's visit. Though delivery of the petitions will have to wait until the Pope's visit of November 1995, the decision to go ahead with the *New York Times* ad was unaffected by the surprise cancellation.

We decided to go forward with the ad for several reasons. We had already pledged to do it and did not want to go back on our word. Besides, we wanted to extend a public congratulations to Pope John Paul II and wanted to make a

statement to the public about the Catholic League's thoughts on several matters.

We live in a world that, though more at peace than in times past, nonetheless suffers from cultural turbulence, much of it the product of false and debilitating ideas of freedom. In the midst of this storm lay the Catholic Church, the steadiest anchor to be found anywhere in the world. And at the helm, of course, is Pope John Paul II, a person recognized by non-Catholics, as well as Catholics, as offering the clearest example of what it means to be virtuous and free.

Our ad speaks to the sharp differences that separate the reigning orthodoxy from the teachings of the Holy Father. It also touches on issues that are central to the Catholic League, namely the problem of anti-Catholicism. We will leave it to the next edition of *Catalyst* to report on the public's response to the ad.

NEWSWEEK Reports on League Transit Ads

The September 26th edition of *Newsweek* magazine included coverage of the Catholic League's transit ads. The article featured a photo of the League's first anti-condom ad, "Want to Know a Dirty Little Secret?" It stated that the League was "reborn after years of near bankruptcy" and that it was conducting anti-condom ads in Boston, New York and Washington. The piece also included quotes from League president William Donohue.

There is no question that the League's ads have hit their mark. In New York, both the first ad and the second one, "Back

to School,” ignited a much needed public debate on the wisdom of contemporary sex education measures. It is obvious to everyone that unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases are a problem. What is at issue is what to do about the problem. The fashionable approach is to throw condoms at kids and offer instructional advice.

We think that strategy is worse than a failure – it actually contributes to the problem by sending the wrong message.

Even if condoms “worked,” there is the larger issue of parental rights. Bureaucrats, listening to the recommendations of the sex education industry, have been too quick to eclipse the rights of parents. By initiating programs that leave parents out of the loop of decision-making, school administrators have trespassed on the rights of those parents who, for religious reasons, object to a thoroughly secularized approach to sex education.

There is not likely to be much progress in this area until educators understand that a class on sexuality is not the same as a class in math or geography. Classes that have moral content require a level of parental and community input that classes devoid of morality do not. Acknowledgment of such is long overdue.

In Boston, the League’s second ad was retitled “Values 101,” though it carried the same argument as the one in New York: we tell kids to abstain from smoking, drinking and drugs, but lack the courage to recommend abstinence from sex. Bostonians who travel the Red, Orange and Blue Lines of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority have been treated to 200 copies of this ad. In the first week following placement of the ad, Bostonian Operations Director Joe Doyle was contacted by 24 different media outlets. For the first time in the League’s history, all eight television stations in Boston carried news stories on the Catholic League. Even *Ad Week* magazine did a story on the ad.

The ad in Washington, D.C. is different from the other two. Scheduled to be posted on the sides of 50 buses throughout the month of November, this ad will focus attention on the fact that many condoms are defective. It will close with a call for warning labels on condoms, thus putting them on a par with cigarettes and alcohol. Perhaps we will hear what Dr. Joycelyn Elders, the Surgeon General, has to say about the League's idea. Already a voice for misguided policies, it is time for the nation to take a close-up look at Dr. Elders.

Given the strong reaction that the League has received from its transit ads, it is a sure thing that more public service ads will be forthcoming. But the League will not be tied to the condom debate: future ads will tap some of the church-state controversies that have troubled the nation. There are many venues available, at varying costs, and the League will explore as many as it can afford. This is our way of joining the culture war and making certain that Catholic rights are not trespassed on by those who want to sanitize society from religious influence.

League Draws Venom From Critics

There are several ways I can measure the success of the Catholic League. When I receive kind words from people like Bishop Dudley of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, or from people like Roger McCaffrey of the *Latin Mass Magazine*, I know we're on the right track. When the media keep calling us for interviews, that's a good sign. When we're getting new members by the boat load, that's an important statement. When our members continue to be generous, that's another indication

that thing's are going right. But as important as all of this is, it's just as important to be taken seriously by our adversaries. The good news is that that has been happening as well.

One way to judge whether an advocacy group like the Catholic League is having an effect on society is by considering the response of its critics. On this basis, too, we seem to be doing a pretty good job. Three organizations that have an adversarial relationship with the Catholic League are Catholics for a Free Choice, Gay Men's Health Crisis and Planned Parenthood. All three have paid us rather back-hand tributes as of late.

Just recently, I asked part-time worker Alexa Rodriguez to call Catholics for a Free Choice and obtain the addresses of those other renegade Catholic groups that signed an ad in the *New York Times* taking issue with the Vatican. Initially, Alexa received a warm reception, but then when she was asked to identify what organization she was with – and duly replied – the employee from Catholics for a Free Choice quickly slammed downed the phone. I guess it's safe to say that the League is no stranger to the gentle- persons who work for Frances Kissling. Now if they're tired of us already, only time will tell how they'll greet us down the road.

We got a different response from some other critics. In September, a reporter from the local NBC-TV news station visited my office for an interview. He wanted a comment on the second round of our anti-condom subway ads. After the interview, he said that he had tried to get an interview with a spokesman from Gay Men's Health Crisis, but was told that no one from the group would cooperate. Readers will remember that this was the organization that was responsible for getting the Catholic League involved in the condom fray in the first place. Though previously this group showed no reluctance in issuing statements against the Catholic League, or in sending someone to debate me on TV, the group has now gone mute, an

indication that it does not want to give us more publicity.

But the reporter did find someone from Planned Parenthood to comment on our ad. Having once previously dealt with a representative from Planned Parenthood, I fully expected that a public relations spokesman would make some remarks. But instead, it was Alexander Sanger, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood (he is also the grandson of supreme eugenicist Margaret Sanger) that went before the cameras. He complained, of course, but what he said was not as important as the fact that he felt impelled to make the statement himself.

It appears that Mr. Sanger has been thinking a lot about us lately. His little newsletter, which reaches millions of corporate and government types, suggests that Sanger is quite upset with the Catholic League. The September 6th edition is a case in point. In it, Sanger writes that the League's anti-condom ads "have been plastered in virtually every subway car and billboard throughout the City's five boroughs."

An exaggeration, to be sure, but we'll take it anyway.

Sanger also quoted New York City Health Commissioner Margaret Hamburg, saying that our ads promote a "life-damaging" message. These "dangerous" ads, as Sanger puts it, are coming to the public from the "Radical Right."

This kind of hyperbole demonstrates that the elites are worried. Surely they know in their heart of hearts that those who make the case for restraint, as opposed to condoms, are not sending messages that are "life-threatening" and "dangerous." After all, it is not restraint – but the antithesis of it (it's called license) – that allows young boys and girls to become "sexually-active" before their time.

Think of it this way: we don't tell "physically-active" teenagers to protect themselves from violence by wearing bullet-proof vests, we simply tell them to stop. While it is

true that doing violence to an innocent person is always morally wrong, and having sex can be perfectly legitimate, e.g. as in marriage, it remains true that kids should no more be engaged in sex than they should be engaged in violence. Context matters as much as conduct when assessing the moral order of youth.

It is impossible to read Sanger's newsletter without wondering whether the guy is a bigot. He seems determined to silence debate on important public issues by labeling anyone who disagrees with the wisdom of Planned Parenthood as a member of the "Radical Right." That this term more appropriately refers to terrorist groups like the Klan and Nazis, and not to groups that prefer counsel to condoms, is not unknown to Sanger; it's just that he couldn't resist the temptation to be demagogic. But if the Catholic League, which extols the virtue of restraint, thereby qualifies as a member of the "Radical Right," what term would accurately describe an organization that wants to make abortions available to 12 year-olds behind their parents' back?

If Sanger isn't a bigot, why does he say that "the Radical Right, led by Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition and the Roman Catholic hierarchy" want to "take over the nation's public schools"? Why does he write that the concept of "secondary virginity," a term used to describe the efforts of young people to abstain from sex after they have lost their virginity, has surfaced in New York as a result of "heavy lobbying by the Roman Catholic hierarchy"? Why does he find it necessary to say that the abstinence-based "Sex Respect" program was "written by a Catholic educator"? Why does he say that the New York Catholic Conference "aggressively lobbied" against school-based health clinics?

Unless one is terribly naive, it should be obvious that Sanger is not engaged in a descriptive enterprise: his goal is to red flag the Catholic Church to Planned Parenthood supporters. "Here they come again," is what Sanger is really saying,

“those same people who continually cross church and state lines are at it again trying to impose their sexually regressive views on the rest of us.” That is what Sanger is conveying, and he knows it.

It is as clear as clear can be that Alexander Sanger would like to insulate society from all Catholic influences. Luckily, he can't. The battle for the culture will continue to be joined by the Catholic Church, Planned Parenthood and the others notwithstanding. And standing there to defend its right will be the Catholic League.

ABORTION THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THE POPE

by K. D. Whitehead

American Catholics can only reflect with deep shame on the role their government played in the preparation for and participation in the recent UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. The Cairo conference itself surely represented some kind of moral low point in the modern world's relentless slide into official immorality and decadence; and from the outset the U.S. government played the most active and prominent role in making the Cairo conference what it was.

Would anyone, twenty-five years ago, have thought that there could actually be a UN-sponsored international conference which would attempt to impose through government action a totally materialistic and utilitarian view of human beings upon the whole world?

Or would anyone ever have imagined that those opposed to the ruthless decimation of the next generation by abortion – supposedly required on the pretext that the world is, or will be, “overpopulated”- would be the ones automatically assumed to be the “bad guys” at such an international conference? Or that those who do not perceive any objection to having large numbers of the next generation killed off by abortion before they have a chance to be born would be the ones automatically assumed to be the “good guys?” The well-worn phrase of Nietzsche, “transvaluation of all values,” doesn’t succeed in conveying the truth of what has happened to traditional morality in the world of today. And it was Cairo that made it all happen. The world surely has traveled far and fast in the past quarter century.

As the Cairo conference demonstrated, however, the present administration in Washington proved to be only too willing to enlist all the power and prestige of the United States in order to help drive the world yet farther and faster down the wrong road which it has now chosen. The U.S. Government went into the Cairo conference with a firm and well-documented policy frankly aimed at pro- moting government “population control.”

When publicly challenged, notably by Pope John Paul II, whose unusually pointed criticisms of U.S. population policy were strongly echoed by a letter from the six American cardinals addressed to President Clinton himself, the U.S. Government clumsily tried to deny what its policy was and to deflect the criticisms back upon the pope and the Vatican; and then, when the heat apparently became too great, U.S. Government spokesmen, including both the president and the vice president, openly lied about what the U.S. policy verifiably was.

And as if this official, bare-faced lying was not disgraceful enough for the government of a great nation, the proud media of that same nation tamely tended to accept at absolute face

value the government's own assertions of what its policy was, rather than inquiring into the real truth of the matter. There were times, indeed, when the Clinton Administration was exonerated in the very same news story which was reporting other, damning facts which should have pointed to a conviction rather than to an exoneration. Where the U.S. Government's population policy was concerned, however, especially with regard to its position on abortion, the kind of adversarial, "expose" journalism at the expense of the White House made famous in such affairs as Watergate and Iran-Contra temporarily disappeared from the American media. What was the U.S. Government's international abortion policy going into the Cairo conference? In March 1994, the U.S. State Department sent out a cable outlining this policy to all American diplomatic and consular posts abroad in order to allow them to inform the governments to which they were accredited about the U.S. policy in question. This State Department cable made it absolutely clear that the U.S. intended to exert its influences with the other governments, with the World Bank, and with the International Monetary Fund to "advance U.S. population policy interests." The implication was that if underdeveloped countries failed to go along with the policy the U.S. was promoting for Cairo, they might find aid and development money drying up.

And the policy the U.S. intended to push for in Cairo definitely included what was described as "the need to ensure universal access to family planning and related reproductive health services, including access to safe abortion." In the parlance of the modern family planning industry, the phrase "reproductive health services" virtually always includes abortion, and precisely as a method of "family planning," as Americans will discover in connection with health care reform if they are not careful. But in this particular document, the reference to the inclusion of abortion was made explicit, probably in order to be able to stress the safety angle. When carefully perused, then, the text here does indeed call for

nothing else but “universal...access to safe abortions.” That was the U.S. Government’s international abortion policy going into the Cairo conference.

As the September 5 date for the opening of the Cairo conference approached, the rhetoric intensified, much of it at the expense of the Vatican, and some of it inspired by the U.S. Government’s own efforts in support of population control. This same pattern would carry on in Cairo itself after the convening of the conference. Papal “attacks” and Vatican “obstructionism” were regularly deplored in press accounts. National Public Radio – which employed the virulently anti-papal Frances Kissling of the oxymoronic “non-organization” Catholics for a Free Choice as its expert on the Cairo conference – characterized the papal proposition as “strident.”

The Vatican was out of step and out of date, it was reported – or else out of touch, isolated, with perhaps only a couple of Latin American countries going along with its views, a Liechtenstein, or a Malta. How could the pope even continue to hang on? Surely he was on the ropes.

No: suddenly the Vatican was responsible for stirring up Muslim opposition, for encouraging Islamic fundamentalism: the Holy See was actually seeking support for its positions even from such radical regimes as those in Libya and Iran. *Washington Post* columnist Jim Hoagland described this as a “moral nadir” for the Vatican.

One of the favorite approaches of the pro-population-controls, anti-Vatican media was to feature prominently the vaporous emissions of Catholic malcontents and turncoats prepared to take a public stand with the neo-pagan modern world against the Church they still claimed to belong to (although they were apparently not equally prepared to fulfill some of the requirements of true Church membership).

Or else the media resorted to citing polls indicating how many Catholics today supposedly disagree with the teachings of the Church on such topics as abortion, birth control, sexual morality, and the like – as if such disagreement by individual Catholics somehow invalidated the Church's position or nullified her ancient claim to be the authoritative interpreter of a divine revelation which she has guarded and handed down from the time of the apostles, her ancient claim, that is, to be literally the authoritative voice of Jesus Christ in the world speaking to each generation. For, as everybody really knows, the Catholic Church bases her "policies" neither on the results of public opinion polls nor upon any democratic majority vote, but rather upon what she firmly believes to be the special guidance of the Holy Spirit promised to her by Christ concerning what we must believe and do in order to achieve our sanctification and salvation. Once unleashed, however, the campaign against the pope and the Vatican eventually got out of hand, at least from the point of view of the Clinton Administration. In late August, just before the conference convened, and even while asserting that the U.S. Government did not want the conference to become a "U.S.-Vatican showdown," the State Department's population coordinator, Faith Mitchell, nevertheless said that the Vatican's disagreement with the U.S. had to do, in her view, "with the fact that the conference [was] really calling for a new role for women, calling for girls' education and improving the status of women." (On the evidence of such a statement as this, it surely could not have been a surprise to anyone to learn that this same Faith Mitchell had been a population-control activist in San Francisco before joining the Clinton Administration.)

Among other reactions to this false and bigoted statement, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights was obliged to publish in the *New York Times* an open letter to President Clinton signed by Harvard law professor Mary Ann Glendon and endorsed by a number of other distinguished Catholic women and

women's organizations. The open letter pointed out the irrefutable fact that the Catholic Church had long led the world in providing the education of girls and it called on the president to direct Faith Mitchell to retract her statement.

Eventually this kind of mounting heat on the Clinton Administration was perceived as being too great. After all, Catholics still do vote in the United States. And certain Catholics close to the White House who also possessed a modicum of political savvy, including current White House chief of staff Leon Panetta, and former California Congressman Tony Coelho, who is now with the Democratic National Committee, were suddenly to be found conceding candidly to reporters that yes, indeed, some members of the Clinton Administration had been guilty of anti-papal and "anti-Catholic sentiments requiring White House discipline," according to one press report in the *Washington Times*.

No doubt privately the same or like-minded officials apparently succeeded in convincing their own administration that the continuing ongoing open warfare in the media with the pope and the Catholic Church was hardly likely to be conducive to electoral success with many traditionally Democratic Catholic voters. However that may be, the Clinton Administration's principal "solution" to the public embarrassment it now realized it faced turned out to be even more insulting and mendacious than its creation of the original "problem."

The solution was that on August 25 Vice President Al Gore himself stepped before the cameras and microphones at the National Press Club and, without batting an eye, declared that "the United States has not sought, does not seek, and will not seek an international right to abortion." Anyone who pointed to the obvious fact that the preparatory document for the Cairo conference which had been largely engineered by the United States did attempt to call for precisely that – or that U.S. policy on numerous previous occasions had, again, called

for precisely that – was guilty of an “outrageous allegation,” the vice president unblushingly declared. In other words, the pope himself, who knew and had said what the real U.S. policy was, could only be at the head of the line of the guilty ones.

The U.S. policy certainly *had been* to promote abortion internationally, the vice president’s statement notwithstanding to the contrary. As Bishop James T. McHugh of Camden, New Jersey stated, the American delegation had been “determined and intransigent” in continuing to insist on including abortion as a method of family planning because it was a basic woman’s right.

Now, however, Vice President Gore was apparently signaling that henceforth this was no longer going to be U.S. policy. When he himself limped up to the rostrum in Cairo on crutches as a result of a tennis accident- although the crutches surely constituted a very apt symbol of how the Clinton Administration had been handling the whole thing – the vice president, in what turned out to be an unusually mild speech, repeated his claim that the United States did not seek to impose the legalization of abortion on other countries. Correspondent Morton Blackwell, reporting from Cairo in *Human Events*, wrote that “this was contrary to the frequently expressed position of President Clinton’s U.S. delegates and that of the conference managers, but leftists here quietly accepted Gore’s sop to Roman Catholic opinion in the United States.”

In the event, because of what turned out to be the opposition of more than 30 countries out of the 152 which sent delegations to the Cairo conference, the conference itself was forced to back off from the initially proposed universal-access-to-abortion language in its final document, even though the speakers there who advocated this position were cheered on the floor of the conference itself, while those who agreed with the Vatican’s position were as often as not unceremoniously booed. The headline of one *Washington Post*

story datelined Cairo gave the flavor: "Vatican's Abortion Stance Riles Many At Forum." (It appears that Catholic Christians today will have to get used to the fact that the tenets of their faith no longer enjoy much acceptance or respect in certain rather prominent sectors of today's world.)

In the end, the Cairo conference was evidently forced to retreat from the extreme position most of the delegates there favored because the U.S. Government had been forced to retreat from its extreme position. As one story in the *Washington Times* reported:

"...the informal coalition between the Vatican and Islamic fundamentalists appears to have caught the U.S. administration by surprise. U.S. officials were certain a month ago that the issue of contraception and abortion could be pushed through, if necessary, by a formal vote, since the Vatican at that time was supported by only four other small countries. Now even moderate Arabic nations are backing away from any suggestion that they should permit abortion..."

Concerning all this American Catholics can only muse how God truly does work in mysterious ways...

For the much ballyhooed 1994 UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo finally ended up deciding, contrary to what the American delegation among others had originally pushed for, that "in no case should abortion be permitted as a method of family planning." Similarly, the Holy See and its allies successfully insisted on language to the effect that family reproductive health matters should conform to local laws, cultures, ethics, and religion, and that the conference proposals were not intended to overturn national laws or social customs.

These points represented notable victories for the Vatican and for what by common consent was conceded to be its very competent delegation in Cairo. Morton Blackwell wrote that

“the best speech given here was by the head of the Vatican delegation, Monsignor Renato Martino. In 20 minutes of sensible and eloquent remarks, first he advised the conference to focus more on achievable economic development. Then the assembly quieted noticeably as he urged delegates not to dismiss the moral dimension of irresponsible or immature behavior.”

In his Cairo speech Archbishop Martino took note of the fact that there had “been efforts by some to foster the concept of a ‘right to abortion’ and to establish abortion as an essential component of population policy.” This concept, the archbishop went on to say, correctly, “would be entirely innovative in the international community and would be contrary to the constitutional and legislative positions of many states as well as being alien to the sensitivities of vast numbers of persons, believers and unbelievers alike.”

At least on a few such points, then, the Vatican prevailed against all the odds, proving itself to be the true defender of underdeveloped countries against the arrogance and excesses of the rich, developed countries, including, unfortunately, the United States. And behind all the work of the Vatican delegation at the conference there were the words and example of Pope John Paul II himself – an adversary that President Clinton and Vice President Gore probably never took very seriously in the beginning.

Of course the degree to which the Vatican “victory” in Cairo is going to alter very many things in practice in today’s world should not be exaggerated. The population controllers, after all, did end up getting their official reference to making abortion “safe.” They got some of the other things they wanted as well, so that the Holy See could only endorse the final document in an “incomplete” and “partial” manner.

Not even John Paul II, apparently, could fight and win the whole battle. The victories stigmatizing legalized abortion

and favoring local autonomy were probably the most that could be won in the present climate highly favorable to “population control.” For American Catholics, however, even these small “victories” cannot be anything but very bittersweet ones, considering how vigorously their own government pushed for universal legalized abortion for as long as it perceived it was able to do so; and then, when it was forced to retreat, resorted to a disgraceful series of official lies and obfuscation.

More than that, if “anti-Catholicism” were against the law, and the present U.S. Government were ever put on trial for it under such a law, it is hard to see, on the evidence, how it could ever expect to be acquitted.

K. D. Whitehead is a former career U.S. Foreign Service Officer who served in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. He was an Assistant Secretary of Education in the Reagan Administration, and today works as a writer and translator in Falls Church, Virginia. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic League.

Can There Be Bigotry Without Bigots?

On Sunday, September 25, Catholic League president Dr. William A. Donohue delivered the keynote address at the Red Mass Luncheon. The event, which took place at the New York Hilton, was preceded by the Red Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral; Cardinal O'Connor was the celebrant. The Red Mass is the annual Mass that recognizes the work of Catholic lawyers. Dr. Donohue's talk, "Catholic-Bashing in the Nineties," appears

below in an edited version. The event was sponsored by the Guild of Catholic Lawyers.

In my role as president of the Catholic League, I have many opportunities to discuss anti-Catholicism. Though there are many views on the subject, there are some common denominators, as well. Almost everyone I know admits that there is such a phenomenon as anti-Catholicism. However, not a few ascribe to the idea that many of those who are anti-Catholic don't mean to be anti-Catholic. In other words, the argument goes, there are many people who don't see themselves as bigoted even though they give voice to anti-Catholic statements. This raises an interesting question, "Can there be bigotry without bigots?" It is a question I tried to answer during my remarks to the Guild of Catholic Lawyers following the Red Mass on September 25th.

I confess to being skeptical about the proposition that there can be bigotry without bigots. To be sure, there are people who, out of sheer ignorance, entertain ideas about race, religion and ethnicity that are pure poppycock. But ignorance does not explain the persistence, if not the growth of, anti-Catholicism among the well-educated elites in the media, academia and the publishing world. There is something else at work when the cultural elite target the Catholic Church to vent their anger, and that something else is called bigotry. It follows that those who engage in such practices are bigots. They may be mistaken, confused or misinformed, but they are bigots nonetheless.

Those who demur must explain why it is that one rarely hears about anti-black or anti-Jewish sentiment that isn't the product of bigots. The terms racist and anti-Semite roll off the lips because we have been culturally sensitized to believing that racists and anti-Semites exist. We would find it difficult to understand how there could be bigotry against blacks and Jews without there being regularly identifiable bigots. So how is it that we are prepared to entertain the

fantastic notion that anti-Catholicism is not the work of bigots?

When Mary Ann Glendon, a Harvard Law professor, is chastised by her superiors for mailing pro-life letters to pastors on Harvard letter-head – even though no one at Harvard has ever been criticized for making the most egregiously political appeals on the university's stationery – are we to believe that bigots had nothing to do with this? When college students have to endure tirades against the Catholic Church, in classes that have nothing to do with the subject, are we to accept this as the work of something other than that of bigots? When a reporter interviews me for over an hour and never once asks a question that is anything other than hostile toward the Catholic Church, am I to conclude that he isn't a bigot? If protesters march naked in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral and conduct themselves like animals, is it possible that they aren't bigots?

Many other examples could be cited, but the point is the same. Where bigotry exists, so, too, do bigots. No one, especially not the literati, likes to think of himself as a bigot. Archie Bunker is their idea of a bigot and they're too sophisticated to be like him. But being urbane isn't a disqualifier from the category of bigots. It simply means that some bigots are more polished than others.

It's funny, we have affirmative action programs and sensitivity training workshops to combat just about every form of bigotry, save anti-Catholicism. That this might itself be explained as the result of bigotry seems never to be acknowledged, much less understood. Take the case of the school newspaper at William Paterson College, the New Jersey institution that the Catholic League charged with anti-Catholicism (see the September *Catalyst*).

This past September, the school newspaper ran a story that was highly critical of the Catholic League's protest over the

bigoted remarks made by one of William Paterson's professors. Yet the cover story of the newspaper was a report on students who filed a complaint against a professor for making allegedly homophobic comments in class. The comments of this professor paled in significance to the remarks made against Pope John Paul II, but no matter, the newspaper was totally committed to routing out that type of bigotry, all the while exculpating the anti-Catholic bigot who uttered vulgarities about the pope. That apparently no one on the editorial staff saw the irony in this is quite a commentary.

Bigotry of any type is offensive. Working against it is noble, but having the ability, or should I say the will, to recognize it is even more important. The sad fact is that those who think of the mselves as enlightened, progressive and without a trace of bigotry, are also the most likely to need a workshop or two on the evils of anti-Catholicism. Just as admitting that one is an alcoholic is the first step toward treatment, admitting that one harbors a bias against Catholics and/or the Catholic Church is the first step toward freedom from bigotry. Doing so requires courage, but that, unfortunately, is not a property that the deep thinkers are known to possess in large number.

Congratulations, Holy Father

October 16, 1994, *New York Times*, "[Congratulations, Holy Father](#)"

Administration Kills Brief Filed in Bizarre Minnesota Bankruptcy Case

In a surprising reversal, President Clinton has directed the Justice Department to withdraw a brief it filed in a controversial religious freedom case, the *Wall Street Journal* reported (September 16, 1994). In *Christians, Trustee v. Crystal Evangelical Free Church*, a trustee in bankruptcy court attempted to seize funds donated to the church by a couple in the year preceding their filing for bankruptcy. A federal district court ruled in favor of the trustee, stating that the couple received nothing of value for their donations, and the church appealed that decision to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

One of the most troubling aspects of this case was the Justice Department's decision to support the trustee's attempt to force the church to turn over the couple's contributions, thereby severely undermining the recently passed Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The federal statute, which President Clinton signed last spring, was designed to strengthen the protection for religious freedom which had been severely eroded by a Supreme Court decision in 1990.

The anti-religious position taken by the Justice Department in its brief was met by a storm of protest from a variety of religious groups as well as from conservative Republicans. Orrin Hatch, the Republican Senator from Utah who was co-author of the new law, criticized the Clinton administration's interpretation of the act, saying the Justice Department's action "effectively guts it [the act]."

President Clinton ordered withdrawal of the brief, which was signed by Solicitor General Drew Days, the administration's

chief appellate lawyer, as oral arguments were about to begin before the appeals court. Senator Hatch applauded the president's decision, stating "I am glad to see this administration has, upon careful review, realized the error and corrected its ways."

The Catholic League joined a coalition of religious organizations in filing a friend of the court brief in support of the church.

League Ad Selected By Museum

The Catholic League's first anti-condom subway ad, "Want To Know A Dirty Little Secret?" was selected by the Acquisition Committee of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of New York City to be part of its permanent collection.

Book of the Month

Catholic League president William Donohue's latest book, *Twilight of Liberty: The Legacy of the ACLU*, has been selected as the Feature Selection of the Conservative Book Club. His other two books were also selected as the book of the month by the Conservative Book Club.

League Enters Arizona Harassment Case

In June, 1993, Beverly Rutt quit her job at Specialty Graphics in Phoenix, Arizona. She quit as a result of on-going sexual harassment, much of it aimed at her because she was a Catholic. When she filed for unemployment compensation, she was denied on the basis of her employer's complaint that she harassed fellow workers by displaying a picture of an aborted fetus on her desk.

Though no one in the office complained about the picture when Ms. Rutt was working at Specialty Graphics, it was now being trotted out as a reason to deny her benefits. Upon a request from Ms. Rutt, the Catholic League has filed a complaint of its own, both with the City of Phoenix's Equal Opportunity Department and with the Arizona Appeals Board.

For several months, Ms. Rutt, who was known to all employees as a proud Catholic, was subjected to a steady stream of sexually explicit jokes, some of which were gruesome in detail. Over the loudspeaker system four-letter words were frequently uttered, all in the name of what the offending parties considered to be fun. When Ms. Rutt would complain, the problem would subside for a bit, only to resurface shortly thereafter. All her complaints were sympathetically listened to, but no action was ever taken to stop the sexual harassment from reoccurring. The Catholic League informed the Arizona authorities of its position by stating that "no one needs to endure a pattern of sexually explicit language in the workplace, not especially when some of the language was so pervasive (e.g. it was broadcast over the PA system) that it could not be avoided. In addition, it was well-known to Ms. Rutt's coworkers that she was a Roman Catholic and would not take kindly to such abuse."

The matter is now pending a decision.