

Gay Parades Bash Catholics

This past June, Gay Pride Parades were held in several cities across the country. Unlike all other parades, these marches have a negative message to them. The target of abuse is the Catholic Church.

In San Francisco, a group called Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence mocked all Catholic clergy and religious, including the Pope. In Boston, a group of pro-life gays were so taunted and jeered at that Philip Arcidi, president of the Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians, said he had “never seen such hate exhibited at a gay or lesbian function.” And in New York, gays indulged in obscene behavior in front of St. Patrick’s Cathedral. It was in New York that the League mounted its greatest protest.

In the last edition of *Catalyst*, a letter from William Donohue to New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani was published calling on the Mayor to move the starting point of the parade to a spot below St. Patrick’s Cathedral. As it turned out, the Mayor did not accede to the League’s demand. But the League’s pressure did lead to some concessions nonetheless.

Mayor Giuliani refused to march in the Gay Pride Parade as it passed in front of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, electing instead to join the march a few blocks south of the Cathedral.

Perhaps most significant, the Mayor announced that the police would crack down on lawlessness, warning gays that a repeat performance of last year’s outrageous displays would not be countenanced. The result was that the conduct of the parade’s participants was clearly better than the previous year, though still unacceptable by any standard.

The kind of pressure that the Catholic League brought to bear included contacting the White House, the New York State Attorney General’s office, the New York Police Commissioner

and the police chief in charge of the parade. The League asked that observers be sent from the U.S. Department of Justice and the New York State Attorney General's office, the purpose of which would be to monitor the parade for federal and state law violations. Word of the League's action spread quickly through the New York community: every media opportunity the League had was used to convey its plan.

The Catholic-bashing element to the Gay Pride Parade was so evident that even the parade's organizers never fully disavowed their intent. For example, when Janice Thorn, the co-chairman of the parade's sponsors, Heritage of Pride, was asked to comment on the League's statement that her group had deliberately targeted St. Patrick's, she responded briskly, "That's an interesting idea."

When the parade began, St. Patrick's was sealed like a war zone. No one could get near it as the police barricaded the Cathedral and the sidewalk across the street. Marching in the parade were drag queens, cross-dressers on Rollerblades, the Butch/Femme Society, the sado-macho brigade in black leather and Men of Discipline. Though the North American Man/Boy Love Association did not march as a separate unit, the presence of the child molesters was noted in the program. Men in jock straps simulating oral sex in front of the Cathedral (while Sunday Mass was going on) were perhaps the most vulgar of them all.

The most flagrant anti-Catholicism came from Catholic Ladies for Choice. In this group, there were gays and lesbians dressed as nuns carrying coat hangers and lesbians dressed as nuns carrying tam-bourines. Most incredible was the gay man who wore a black bra and a black jock strap with a nun's veil on his head and a huge set of rosary beads around his otherwise naked body. There was also someone dressed as the Pope with a banner that read, "The Catholic Church, a history of murder, lies, censorship, oppression and hypocrisy." And, of course, there were the usual taunts while marchers

processed past the Cathedral.

The Catholic League hired a professional photographer to take pictures of the parade as it passed in front of St. Patrick's. It is now making available to many leaders in government, education, business and the media a sample of the pictures.

Peter Powers, the aide closest to Mayor Giuliani, has agreed to meet with Dr. Donohue regarding the parade. The results of that meeting will be announced in a future edition of *Catalyst*.

ABA Offends Christians

The cover story of the summer edition of *Human Rights*, the American Bar Association journal of the Section on Rights and Responsibilities, featured a discussion regarding the implications of hospital mergers between Catholic and secular institutions. But it was not the article that the Catholic League objected to (flawed though it was), rather it was the cover illustration. On the cover was an image of a pregnant woman lying on an operating table in a crucifix-like pose. Ready for an abortion, the woman's child was shown inside her body in a fetal position; her hands and legs were being held down by band-aids.

The Catholic League issued the following comment to the press:

"The cover of the summer edition of *Human Rights* would be considered disturbing had it appeared on the cover of any publication. But when it appears on the cover of a journal of the American Bar Association, it is doubly disturbing. Most offensive is the fact that the journal is published by the ABA's Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities.

Evidently, this ABA group thinks that amongst its rights is the right to abuse the rights of those with whom it disagrees. As such, it is clear that the term individual responsibility has no principled meaning for the ABA Section on Individual Rights and Responsibilities.

“We demand an apology from the ABA And we request that a panel discussion on what the ABA means by rights and responsibilities be held at its next convention.”

The Style of the Catholic League

Last month I addressed the question of the Catholic League's politics, so this month I thought I'd discuss the League's style.

If there is one criticism of the Catholic League that is persistently made it is that the League is entirely too hard-hitting in its style. Interestingly, this criticism comes predominantly from Catholics, though others have been known to make the same charge; some, in both camps, are friendly to the League, while others are not. At bottom, these critics say that the Catholic League's combative approach ill-suits the Catholic image: instead of fighting with our adversaries, these critics implore us to follow a more spiritual approach. Love and compassion, not heated rhetoric and confrontational politics, is the appropriate Catholic answer to adversity, they say.

To the accusation that the Catholic League has a rough edge to it, we plead guilty as charged. There is a reason for this: we are not a charitable organization, a fraternity or sorority, a

social service outfit, a retreat house, a shelter or a wellness center. We are a civil rights organization. And like our analogues-ACLU, NAACP, NOW, ADL-we pursue justice in the public arena. As such, we must compete head-to-head with those who are working against us. That requires a certain toughness, a will to directly confront those who are abusive of individual Catholics and the institutional Church.

Responsibly aggressive. That's the way I like to describe the Catholic League. Love, compassion, and all those other fine humanistic virtues are critical to personal and social well-being. Similarly, prayer groups and retreats are honorable enterprises, worthy of wide acceptance. But in the battle for religious and civil rights, the exclusive reliance on such attributes is not enough. Not, at least, if we are to win. And I don't like losing. None of this is to say that anything goes. Acting responsibly is, in fact, of special importance to any organization concerned with constitutional rights. But it does not follow that every Catholic organization ought to be judged from the window of a sacristy. I'm sorry, folks, one size does not fit all: it is just as wrong to judge pastoral work by the yardstick of a civil rights enterprise as it would be to judge a civil rights organization by the standards used to measure pastoral work.

And whoever said that being a good Catholic meant taking a strictly pietistic approach? The Catholics in my lifetime for whom I have the deepest respect-Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, Mother Teresa, Cardinal John O'Connor and Pope John Paul II-are not exactly shrinking violets. They are men and women who carry out their public duties with a gusto that excites. To be sure, they do so in a manner that is much less incendiary than the Catholic League, but no one at the League ever pretended that we are a match for any of them.

As for the unfriendly critics of the Catholic League, they seek not to instruct us on style, rather they seek to shut us up. When they counsel more dialogue and more tolerance, what

they're saying is knock it off, stop confronting the enemies of Catholicism and get on with the task of building bridges.

Here's what they like to say: Don't you know that there are many out there who have been hurt by the Church? How do you expect to reach them if all you do is challenge them? Notice how the onus is always on us. Not sometimes-always. These critics are not battle fatigued, rather they have actively joined the battle against us. Did it ever occur to those who worship at the altar of dialogue that some of us are just plain fed up with having our religion trashed? We didn't start this culture war against the Catholic Church, we simply want to stop it.

I know what the sages say, "It's better to use honey than vinegar." Maybe so, but it still helps to have the vinegar handy. Personally, I like salsa the best, and I like it hot.

What to Expect At the Beijing Conference

By Dale O'Leary

The following is an excerpt from Dale O'Leary's monograph, "Gender: The Deconstruction of Women." Dale is a frequent commentator on international issues. It is especially timely given the commencement of the Fourth World Conference on Women on September 4; it extends to September 15 and is being held in Beijing, China.

At the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meeting at the UN in March, many of the delegates as well as members of the Non-

Governmental Organizations (NGOs), met to discuss the issues that will be voted on in Beijing. The conference was heavily staffed by "genderfeminists," a term that Professor Christina HoffSummer has coined to describe radical feminists.

Dale O 'Leary's analysis of the role of gender feminists is an invaluable guide to understanding the workings of the Beijing Conference. We are reprinting those portions of her work that are of direct interest to the readership of the Catholic League.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health are the very heart of the Gender Feminist agenda as the following quote from the Council of Europe meeting in preparation for Beijing made clear.

The right to free choice in matters of reproduction and lifestyle was considered [by the participants at the meeting] fundamental for women. The enjoyment of sexual and reproductive rights is a prerequisite for women to have genuine self-determination.

"Free choice in reproduction" is code for abortion on demand; "lifestyle," a code word for homosexuality, lesbianism, and all other forms of non-marital sexuality. The Council of Europe participants want this "self-determination" extended to adolescents, unmarried women, and lesbians.

The voices of young women should be heard since sexual life is not solely attached to married life. This leads to the point of the right to be different whether in terms of lifestyle – the choice to live in a family or to live alone, with or without children – or sexual preferences. The reproductive rights of lesbian women should be recognized.

This recognition of the rights of lesbian women would include the right of lesbian couples to conceive children through artificial insemination and the right of lesbians to legally adopt their partners' children.

In demanding sexual and reproductive rights, the Gender Feminists are demanding legal and social sanction for behaviors which legal codes, religious teachings, and cultural norms throughout history and around the world have condemned. The Gender Feminists insist that the condemnation of these behaviors was the result of men's desire to control women:

It is overwhelmingly men who control the process of interpreting and defining the relevant religious, cultural, or traditional practices, and as a consequence these norms are defined in patriarchal ways which limit women's human rights, especially in asserting control over women's sexuality and in confining women in roles that reinforce and perpetuate their subordination.

Societies condemn sexual relations outside marriage, particularly sexual relations with adolescent girls, because these behaviors result in the conception of children outside of marriage. The social norms are sustained by experience of the social costs of such behaviors and not by men's desire to control women. Indeed, it is the mothers who are often the most concerned about the enforcement of these norms because they want to protect their daughters from sexual exploitation and their potential grandchildren from the tragedy of fatherlessness.

Every child has a biological father and mother. No matter the circumstances of their birth, children feel a need to establish a relationship with their biological parents. The power of blood ties is not an invention but a reality, as the experience of many adopted children verifies. When tragedy prevents a child from growing up in a home where his biological mother and father are present, people can react heroically by providing the child with as near a normal a family life as possible, but there is no denying that a tragedy has occurred. To purposefully or carelessly make a tragedy by conceiving a child outside a stable marriage constitutes the most devastating form of child abuse. Women do

not have the right to abuse children.

Every human being has a right to life which, according to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, article 25, includes "the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family." The Gender Feminists want this right restated as an absolute 'right to health,' and they insist that this be extended to a right to sexual and reproductive health as an amendment to the Beijing document.

Health naturally includes health of all organs including the sex organs and reproductive organs, but the Gender Feminists have manipulated the UN into defining reproductive health to include abortion. Thus, the right to life would include the right to health, which would include abortion and death to unborn human beings.

Gender Feminists attempt further to confuse the issue by linking sexual and reproductive rights with sexual and reproductive health. The term sexual and reproductive rights as used by Gender Feminists refers to the right to engage in various behaviors. Health does not include the right to engage in behaviors some of which are unhealthy, others of which are dangerous to society and particularly to children. Neither women nor men can be said to have absolute sexual and reproductive rights. Human beings do have the right to marry and form a family. On the other hand, government and society have a duty to discourage behaviors which endanger the health and safety of citizens and particularly behaviors which put children at risk. To claim abortion as a reproductive right denies the prior and primary right of the unborn human being to life.

A booklet prepared for a series of workshops held during the Cairo Conference on Population entitled "Sexual and Reproductive Rights And Health as Human Rights: Concepts and Strategies; An Introduction for Activists," by Rhonda Copelan of International Women's Human Rights Law Clinic at

CUNY and Berta Esperanza Hernandez of International Women's Human Rights Project of the Center for Law and Public Policy, St. John's University (NY), spelled out how the Gender Feminists intend to use the concept of human rights to push for abortion and lesbianism.

The strategy outlined in the booklet is very simple: Push the evolution of human rights protected by the UN to include "sexual and reproductive rights and health" and use the mechanism of the UN to enforce these rights worldwide. In effect, they hope to create new "rights" which are based not on natural law and common consensus, but rooted in radical ideologies, and to use these rights to overthrow traditional cultures and religious values, as the following quotes demonstrate:

Women have put the issue of acknowledging reproductive and sexual rights and health as human rights within the framework of economic and social justice and international solidarity...

By insisting that our basic needs in the areas of reproductive and sexual health are human rights...

Having abortion and sexual rights for lesbians and adolescents declared fundamental human rights would give the Gender Feminists a powerful weapon to enforce their agenda, as the authors state:

Human rights constitute limitations on the sovereignty of states; they constitute principles to which states, donors, providers, intergovernmental organizations and ultimately, the private economic sector must be held accountable.

Human rights do not depend on whether a state has acknowledged them, for example, by ratifying a particular treaty. Widely endorsed human rights norms are relevant regardless of whether a state has ratified a particular treaty.

Sexual and reproductive rights are broadly defined in the booklet:

...sexual and reproductive rights means respect for women's bodily integrity and decision-making as well as their right to express their sexuality with pleasure and without fear of abuse, disease or discrimination. It requires access to voluntary, quality reproductive and sexual health information, education and services.

"Bodily integrity and decision-making" are code words for abortion, as is reproductive health services. The authors recognize that there is opposition to their agenda, which they claim is opposition to elemental human rights.

This demand for elemental human rights is being met with opposition by religious fundamentalists of all kinds, with the Vatican playing the leading role in organizing religious opposition to reproductive rights and health including even family planning services.

The Gender Feminists claim that religion, tradition, and cultural practices are being used to oppose women's human rights; in fact it is the Gender Feminists themselves who are weakening support for real human rights by trying to manipulate the concept of human rights to serve their ideological agenda.

Archbishop Renato Martino, delegate of the Holy See to the UN, in a November 1994 statement unequivocally restated the Catholic commitment to inalienable human rights for all persons and expressed concern over the misuse of the concept of human rights:

Currently, there is a tendency to believe that society itself has formulated what is known as human rights. However, human rights are such precisely because they are inherent to the dignity of the human person. A society may acknowledge or violate human rights, but it cannot

manipulate the existence of human rights, since these rights precede even the state.

Gender Feminists have used other strategies besides sexual and reproductive rights and health to push abortion and lesbian rights into the text of UN documents. Pro-life and pro-family activists at the UN have been diligent in informing delegates about the true intentions behind the introduction of terms like “safe motherhood” (which would include the decriminalization of abortion), “diversity” (which would include acceptance of lesbianism) and “other unions” (which would protect homosexual relationships).

Pro-life, pro-family activists maintain constant vigilance since no sooner is one term exposed and discredited than another surfaces.

While the Gender Feminists insist that abortion-on-demand is essential to women’s self-determination, women who have had abortions talk about having no choice or being forced by others. There is nothing pro-woman about abortion. It always represents a failure: a failure of society to provide for the needs of women and their children; a failure of men to accept their responsibilities; or a failure of women to recognize their ability to cope with a crisis. The authentic women’s perspective recognizes human rights are truly inalienable and indivisible and extend to every human being, even those still nestled in their mothers’ wombs.

Freedom of Religion Under Attack

Gender Feminists view religion as a major cause of the oppression of women. Gender Feminists among UN NGOs have demonized “fundamentalists” as the enemy of the aspirations of women. A video, promoting the NGO forum of the Beijing Conference made by independent producer Judith Lasch, attacked Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, stating among other things:

Nothing has done more to constrict women than religious beliefs and teachings.

According to Ms. Lasch, the video was shown at the UN to key people including Gertrude Mongella, chair of the Conference, and "Everybody loves it."

The Women's Global Strategies meeting report contained numerous references to fundamentalists and to the necessity of countering their supposed attacks on women's rights. The NGO lobbying document contained the following recommendation for an addition to paragraph 93:

All forms of fundamentalism, be they political, religious or cultural, exclude women from internationally accepted norms of human rights and make women targets of extreme violence. It is the concern of the international committee that these practices be eliminated.

It was made clear throughout the PrepCom that the term fundamentalists included "Catholic Evangelical, and Orthodox Christians, Orthodox Jews, and Muslims" and referred to any person who refuses to alter the teachings of their religion to conform with the Gender Feminist's agenda. Pro-life Evangelical Christian NGOs were repeatedly accused of being lackeys of the Holy See. Catholics were accused of being fundamentalists.

One of the most publicized and well attended NGO sponsored events during the PrepCom for Beijing was a panel discussion entitled "Counter-Attack: Women Stand Up to Fundamentalism." To no one's surprise, Frances Kissling, the head of Catholics for a Free Choice, attacked the Catholic Church. Rev. Meg Riley, Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Office of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Concerns, whose work involves helping "local groups across the US deconstruct the conservative right's propaganda on civil rights issues," attacked the Religious Right. She accused Dr. James Dobson of

Focus on the Family of wanting to control women. Indira Kajosevic, a woman from the former Yugoslavia, seemed more concerned about the pro-life, pro-family statements made by her country's religious leaders than the mass rape of her country-women.

The report from the Council of Europe meeting to prepare for Beijing, contained numerous attacks on religion, including the following:

The rise of all forms of religious fundamentalism was seen as posing a particular threat to the enjoyment by women of their human rights and to the full participation of women in decision-making at all levels of society.

– women themselves must be empowered and provided with the opportunity to determine what their cultures, religions, and customary backgrounds mean for themselves.

...governments, religious institutions, and all sectors of society should recognize the legitimate claims of women to have a significant role in the definition and interpretation of religious, cultural, and customary norms and should take active steps to encourage women's involvement in these processes.

...the Council of Europe should initiate comparative studies into the influences that different cultures, religions and traditions play in enhancing and impeding the full realization of women's human rights within the member States of the Council of Europe.

In order to understand the threat these statements pose to freedom of religion it is necessary to understand the Gender Feminist view of religion as something people have made up and that the major religions were made up by men to oppress women.

Women should have and do have the right to participate fully

in the religion of their choice. Women trained and believing in their faith can and have made important contributions; however this is not what the Gender Feminists have in mind. Gender Feminist theologians want the right to remake religion so that it conforms to the Gender Feminist agenda. These women “theologians” are not in any real sense “believers” in the religions they demand the right to rewrite nor even in a real God.

For examples, feminist theologian Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza denied the central teaching of the Christian faith – the possibility of revelation:

Biblical texts are not verbally inspired nor doctrinal principles but historical formulations... Similarly, feminist theory insists that all texts are products of an androcentric patriarchal cultural and history.

Gender Feminists want the Christian God “re-imaged” the Christian God as Sophia-female wisdom. Gender Feminist theologian Mary E. Hunt of WATER (Women’s Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual) who is active in the movement to re-image God contributed to the PrepCom for Beijing. Along with Frances Kissling, she sponsored a “Catholic Feminist” report attacking the Catholic church. Mary Hunt’s theology could hardly be considered Christian, let alone Catholic, as this quote from her newsletter demonstrates:

I believe that life, pleasure and justice are to be valued equally, that the God of creation is at the same time the Goddess of pleasure and the spirit of justice.

In the same article she quoted with approval the accusation that Christianity is the cause of child abuse which was made by feminist theologians Joanne Carlson Brown and Carole R. Bohn’s:

Christianity is an abusive theology that glorifies suffering. Is it any wonder that there is much abuse in

modern society when the dominant image of theology of the culture is 'divine child abuse'- God the Father demanding and carrying out the suffering and death of his own son? If Christianity is to be liberating for the oppressed, it must itself be liberated from this theology.

No religion is obliged to grant non-believers the right to define the tenets of its faith. Religious leaders are not supposed to make up religion; their duty is to hand on what they have received.

Gender Feminists accuse "patriarchal" religious leaders of imaging God in male terms to keep women oppressed, control their sexuality, and deny their rights.

Women who are faithful Catholic, Evangelical and Orthodox Christians, Orthodox Jews, and Muslims defend their religious traditions as the best protection of women's rights and dignity. In particular, they support their religions' teachings on marriage, family, sexuality, and respect for human life.

Women believers support freedom of religion as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for all persons including those inaccurately labeled as "fundamentalists:"

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance (Article 18, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.)

The use of the UN by Gender Feminists as a platform from which to lobby against freedom of religion is a violation of the spirit of the UN and should be condemned as such.

Senator Inouye Resigns From Population Institute After League Protest

The feature story in the last *Catalyst* read "Nazi Slur of Vatican Implicates Congressmen." It described the Catholic-bashing letter that The Population Institute sent to its members in May. In it, the Vatican was labeled "the anti-contraceptive gestapo." The Catholic League wrote to all the current Congressmen who serve on the Public Policy Advisory Committee of the organization, asking that they resign in response to the bigoted letter.

Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii complied with the League's request and resigned from his post with The Population Institute. Senator Barbara Boxer of California put The Population Institute on notice, warning that any future examples of "inappropriate" and "offensive" fundraising letters would lead her "to reconsider" her position with the organization. Congressman Robert Torricelli of New Jersey said he did not believe that the fundraising letter was meant to label the Vatican as "the anti-contraceptive gestapo," but added that he warned The Population Institute to be more careful in how it phrases its letters.

For the record, no reply was given by Sen. Paul Simon, Rep. Jim Leach and Rep. Sam Gejdenson. League members in the states where these three Congressmen live may want to contact them directly. Listed below are their addresses, phone and fax numbers. If they still decide to do nothing, it might be a good idea to pass this information along to those who will be running against them in the next election.

Senator Paul Simon

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224-0868

Rep. Jim Leach

2186 RHOB Washington, D.C. 20515 (202) 225-6576 FAX (202)
226-1278

Rep. Samuel G. J. Benson

2416 RHOB Washington, D.C. 20515 (202) 225-2076 FAX (202)
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Religious Equality Amendment Badly Needed

At a press conference on July 10 at New York's Hunter College, the Catholic League joined with various Christian and Jewish organizations in support of the Religious Equality Amendment. The amendment seeks to secure for all Americans their right to religious liberty and freedom of speech, both of which have been jeopardized in recent years by an overly aggressive interpretation of the so-called Establishment Clause.

Hunter College was also host to Congressional hearings on the Religious Equality Amendment. At the hearings, Cardinal John O'Connor made an impressive statement to the Congressmen explaining in detail why religious liberty is presently jeopardized in the U.S. Father Neuhaus also made a powerful statement, focusing mostly on how current interpretations of the First Amendment radically depart from the meanings given to it by the Founders.

Cardinal O'Connor and Father Neuhaus spoke only to issues

involved and did not take a formal position on the amendment itself. But it was clear from their comments that some remedy is needed. The Catholic League endorsed the amendment, offering the following reasons for doing so:

“The Religious Equality Amendment is long overdue. An expansionist and wholly unprincipled interpretation of the so-called Establishment Clause of the First Amendment has relegated religious speech to a second-class status, the effect of which has been to intimidate Americans from fully exercising their right to religious liberty. When students are told that their voluntary statements of worship are impermissible at a school function, and when their football coaches are told that they cannot have a short, non-sectarian prayer in a huddle, there is something terribly wrong with the way the First Amendment is being interpreted.

“It is ironic that the very people who are sounding the alarms over the Religious Equality Amendment are the same ones who made it necessary for such a law to be written in the first place. The Religious Equality Amendment seeks to restore the status quo ante, a condition that was found acceptable by the courts for nearly 200 years, and was embraced with enthusiasm by most Americans. It is high time that those who entertain a phobia about religion not have their prejudices sustained by the courts.”

Hugh Grant's Favorite Cheerleaders

English actor and “Hollywood john” Hugh Grant made a revealing statement after he was nabbed with a woman whose oxymoronic

name is Divine. Grant admitted that "I've always had a crush on cheerleaders. Catholic cheerleaders-my double favorite."

Considering how Grant amuses himself with his crushes we at the Catholic League find little amusement in his confession.

Hollywood Is At It Again

Catholicism was the subject of more Hollywood-type treatment in two movies released over the summer. "Jeffrey" is labeled an "AIDS comedy" by movie reviewer Thelma Adams. Adams, who loved "Priest," gave three stars to "Jeffrey," delighting in its Irreverence.

Adams said the lead actor's performance "flies in the face of convention and will no doubt ruffle feathers as a horny, gay Catholic priest. Father Dan sees shades of the divine in sex and musical comedy. His notion of God is lighter than air: He's the guy at a picnic who taps the balloon aloft just before it hits the ground." Adams took special pleasure in mentioning a sex scene that takes place in one of the bathrooms in New York's Essex House.

Those who want to see what a "mangled Irish-Catholic legacy" is like will evidently not be disappointed by "The Brothers McMullen." As described in *New York* magazine, the movie portrays three Irish Catholic brothers from the suburbs of New York. The review states that "The most honest and amusing moments...are found in smaller scenes, as when they [the brothers] recall their upbringing by their late father-'our favorite wife-beating, child-abusing, good-for-nothing drunk,' and their endless struggles with the strictures of Catholicism."

If all this sounds familiar, it is regrettably so.

Disney Purchase of ABC Spells Trouble

The announcement that Disney is planning to acquire Capital Cities/ABC is not looked upon favorably by the Catholic League. Given the Disney-Miramax movie "Priest," which slammed Catholicism, and given the Miramax-Excalibur movie "Kids," which is so sexually exploitative of adolescents that it was released unrated-after first receiving an NC-17 rating- the news that Disney is purchasing ABC does not bode well.

The Catholic League issued the following statement to the press:

"If Walt Disney were alive and he announced that his company was buying ABC, we would be delighted. Catholics, as well as non-Catholics, could then look forward to the kind of wholesome entertainment that the Disney label once made famous. But unfortunately the Disney of the 1990s bears scant resemblance to the Disney of old.

"If Disney chairman Michael Eisner is content to allow its subsidiary, Miramax, to release a viciously anti-Catholic movie like 'Priest,' and if he is willing to sit back and allow Miramax to create a dummy outfit like Excalibur to release sexually exploitative movies like 'Kids,' then it is apparent that he is prepared to turn his head each time something offensive is about to be distributed under the Disney label. To be exact, it suggests that Michael Eisner is willing to offend *some* Americans in return for a fast buck.

“There is much on television that is already disturbing. With the Disney purchase of ABC, those who care about the quality of our cultural life now have another reason to be concerned.”

KFI Radio (Los Angeles) Insults Catholics

On July 16, 1995, talk show host Bill Press went on a lengthy tirade insulting the Pope and Catholic priests. The topic of conversation, the Catholic Church's requirements for ordination to the priesthood, quickly descended to an obscene level. Admitting that the Pope is “not one of my favorite people,” Press proceeded to make accusation after accusation about Church teachings that showed both his ignorance and his bigotry. Here's a sample of his remarks (some of the comments made during the call-in segment were even worse).

“You don't need a penis to be a priest.”

“Do you need a penis to be a priest? I say no, not even a Catholic priest.”

“I mean, what does it- what does it take to be a priest, right? I mean, what is that job all about? It is not molesting little boys. That's not the essence of being a priest. Okay?”

The Catholic League issued the following statement to the press on this matter:

“The issue here is not simply the vile comments of Bill Press. The issue is the willingness of a respected radio station to keep him on payroll. Incidents like this show that there are some outrages that are so indecent as to make unsatisfactory

the conventional broadcasting response of 'equal time.' The Catholic League does not want 'equal time' to respond to Press, rather it wants him fired.

"Press began his bigoted attack on the Catholic Church by saying that 'I introduce this topic knowing that I am instantly going to be accused of Catholic-bashing.' And well he should be. His comment that it is 'fair game' to criticize anyone who makes public policy is true. But this issue has nothing to do with public policy: it is strictly the doctrinal prerogative of the Catholic Church (and it is one that is shared by other religions as well, though they were not, of course, ever mentioned by Press). And in any case, there is no excuse for insulting Catholics and degrading their religion."