

TURNING THE TABLES ON NEWSDAY

The April 28 edition of the Long Island daily, *Newsday*, ran an article about critics of Monsignor John Alesandro, pastor of St. Dominic's in Oyster Bay. Some parishioners have lost confidence in his ability to lead the parish, while others have rallied to his side. It wasn't the story about the parish that bothered us, it was *Newsday's* decision to run a poll on its website asking the public whether Msgr. Alesandro should be removed as pastor. We decided to give the newspaper some of its own medicine.

We asked the public to go to our website at catholicleague.org and cast a vote on the question, "Is *Newsday* anti-Catholic?" Our poll, like *Newsday's*, was open to everyone. We figured that since *Newsday* had broken ranks with virtually every newspaper in the United States by inviting non-Catholics to stick their noses into the internal affairs of the Catholic Church, we thought it only proper to ask people from Maine to California what they thought of *Newsday's* foray into journalistic voyeurism.

When users clicked on our website, they were drawn to our special report on *Newsday's* anti-Catholic columnists. It is a useful guide that details the nature and extent of the newspaper's hostility to Catholicism.

Outside of Long Island, it is not widely known that *Newsday* continues to write about alleged instances of priestly abuse that occurred many decades ago. In a statement to the press, we decided that two can play the same game. "For instance," we said, "how many people know that *Newsday* continues to employ a columnist, Jimmy Breslin, who made obscene and racist remarks to a Korean-American woman reporter in 1990 in front of other staffers; she was guilty of criticizing him for one of his columns. Breslin, according to a friend, called the woman a 'yellow cur, slant-eyed and a

female body part.'"

And for this Breslin was suspended for two weeks! "In short," we said, "because *Newsday* doesn't have the courage to police the obscene bigots in its own newsroom, it has no moral standing to invite the public to question the internal affairs of the Catholic Church."

In our latest annual report, we dubbed *Newsday* the most anti-Catholic newspaper in the nation. This is just one more example of how sick this newspaper is.

Catholic League members will be happy to know that we got hold of a media reference guide and obtained the e-mail addresses of the entire *Newsday* staff. We then bombarded the entire company with our news release. Everyone from sports writers to food critics got our statement. And it looks like it worked. By early afternoon the poll was taken off its home page and moved to the Long Island section, and by mid-afternoon it was removed altogether. The newspaper never did print the final tally.

We let our poll stay up for a few days. The final result? To the question, "Is *Newsday* anti-Catholic?", 95 percent said "yes"; 4 percent said "no"; and 1 percent were unsure. There were 1158 votes cast, and 1101 of them got it right.

