

VATICAN DIDN'T LURE ANYONE TO CATHOLICISM

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

Several news stories today maintain that the Vatican *lured* and *bid* for Episcopalians to join the Roman Catholic Church. This is nonsense. The opening sentence in yesterday's Vatican post on this subject said, "With the preparation of an Apostolic Constitution, the Catholic Church is responding to the many requests that have been submitted to the Holy See from groups of Anglican clergy and faithful in different parts of the world who wish to enter into full visible communion." Indeed, at least two dozen Anglican bishops, as well as many of the rank-and-file, *petitioned* the Vatican for assistance. Just as bad is the media Groupthink.

It was yesterday's online story in the *New York Times*, "Vatican Bidding to Get Anglicans to Join Its Fold," that started the mantra: the first sentence of this story, repeated in today's newspaper version, says, "In an extraordinary bid to lure traditionalist Anglicans en masse..." Not surprisingly, the *Boston Globe*, which is owned by the *Times*, carried the same story. The *Washington Post* started its story today by saying, "In a remarkable bid to attract disillusioned members of the Anglican Communion..." Today's *Christian Science Monitor* asked if the Vatican would now try to "lure" Africa's Anglican bishops, saying that yesterday Rome "launched its bold bid" for Anglicans to join. AP's first story on this yesterday did not use such language. But after reading the *Times'* gospel, today it ran a headline, "Vatican Seeks to Lure Disaffected Anglicans."

Happily, there were exceptions to this Groupthink, e.g., the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and the *Washington Times*. They did not engage in Catholic baiting and reported the story accurately.

Why the Catholic baiting charge? Because it feeds the stereotype that the conniving Vatican has embarked on another one of its legendary power grabs. Pure bunk, as any independent-minded source would acknowledge. One question: Who was the Vatican in a bidding war with?