

# VICTORY IN GEORGIA

Recently the Catholic League won a major victory against the University of Georgia. As part of its Sexual Responsibility program, the university placed a poster in the dormitories that misappropriated Christian iconography to promote condom distribution. Within hours of our press release addressing this situation, we received an apology from a university administrator.

The controversy revolved around a poster of the famous Michelangelo painting on the Sistine Chapel ceiling that features the hand of God giving life to Adam; the university's poster hijacked this treasured piece of art to show God handing Adam a condom. The poster was used as part of the University of Georgia's Sexual Responsibility Week, but surely if condom distribution was to be part of that program, it could have been done without needlessly offending the religious sensibilities of Catholics and Protestants alike.

In his letter to Dr. Rodney D. Bennett, Vice President for Student Affairs, Bill Donohue said, "I hasten to add that the University of Georgia would never choose a depiction of Muhammed to hawk condoms. Indeed, only a few years ago an inoffensive depiction of this Islamic figure in a Danish cartoon led to murder and churches being burned to the ground. One can only imagine what would have happened had he been portrayed pushing condoms to youth."

A few hours later, after receiving a copy of Donohue's letter via e-mail, Bennett called Donohue to apologize for the offensive poster. During the course of their conversation, Bennett told Donohue that he had received numerous e-mails from Catholic League members addressing their outrage over the poster. Dr. Bennett told Donohue that he was not aware of the poster until we contacted him, but when he saw it, he acted swiftly and responsibly: his apology was as sincere as it was

thorough. He pledged to take “corrective action,” doing what he can to make sure that something like this does not happen again on the University of Georgia campus. Not only did he convey his “deepest apology” over the phone, he also put it in writing.

Donohue also wrote a letter to the president of the University of Georgia, Dr. Michael F. Adams, commending him for choosing Dr. Bennett as his Vice President for Student Affairs. In our press release ending our dispute with the university, we said that it is “too bad other officials, in and out of education, aren’t as honest and diligent as Dr. Bennett.”

But it didn’t take long for the enemies of Catholicism to show their heads. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* ran a piece on its website on our victory, and in the comments following the article there were numerous posts of anti-Catholicism (click [here](#) for a sample).

Regardless of the ignorant commentary following the *Journal-Constitution* piece, this was a major victory for the Catholic League.