

VILE OPERA SPARKS REVOLT; PRESS CONFERENCE HELD

"Jerry Springer: The Opera" is the most obscene anti-Christian play ever performed; it is particularly targeted at Catholicism. It is coming to off-Broadway on January 23rd.

That is also the day that Bill Donohue and others will hold a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. For a description of this vile musical, see pp. 8-9.

When it was performed in London, a critic for the *Sunday Mercury* in Birmingham, England called it "the filthiest thing I have ever seen on stage." The Associated Press picked up on "arias about transvestitism, pole-dancing and diaper fetishism." A senior radio producer for the BBC said, "The blasphemy was far, far worse than even the most detailed news reports had led me to believe."

As bad as the content of this play is, what is worse is the fact that it is being funded largely by the public.

The New Group is the site of the play, a small theater near the Port Authority bus terminal in New York. It receives *most* of its money from the government, not private sponsors. New York City and New York State both contribute to this theater, but the largest donation comes from the federal government by way of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The purpose of the press conference is to request that President Donald Trump appoint a chairman of the NEA who will not violate the public trust: any theater or gallery that hosts plays or exhibitions that maliciously disparage Christianity, or any other world religion, should not receive funding. He is poised to make a selection soon; the current chairman's tenure ends in April.

The Catholic League has long called for an end to public funding for the arts, largely because of NEA-sponsored events that attack Catholicism. President Trump sought to cut such funding but was overridden by the House and the Senate.

Catholic League members will recall that an appeal for donations made in October cited the need to underwrite a response to a new assault on our religion that was forthcoming from the arts. Now you know what it is.

We are told all the time that the government cannot fund religion. Why, then, is it acceptable for the government to bash religion?

The opera's most demonic message is stated at the end: "Nothing is wrong and nothing is right." That is a prescription for moral nihilism, the precise cultural condition that Hitler seized on in the 1930s.

In the next issue of *Catalyst*, we will report on the proceedings of the press conference.