WHERE'S THE MEDIA OUTCRY?

If a Jew gets mugged by anti-Semites, we all hear about it. If a black gets roughed up by the cops, it's front-page news. If a gay gets clobbered by gay bashers, it's all over TV. But if a Hispanic Catholic stands up for his faith and is nearly killed by African American bigots, hardly a word is said.

On September 7, John Santiago of Lindenwood, New Jersey, was on the corner of 34th Street and 7th Avenue with his fiancé and her family when he spotted a painting of Jesus with horns. He got into an argument with its sponsors—eight gang members of the "Black Israelites"—and they responded by savagely beating him and stomping on his head. He was taken to a hospital with severe head trauma, lacerations and contusions where he nearly died. He was released several days later.

Only the *New York Post* ran an article on this story. It was summarily ignored by the rest of the media.

We mention this for two reasons. Number one, Catholic League staff members are well aware of the "Black Israelites"—they have been assembling right next to our building for years and we have all seen them in action. Full of hate, they shout bigoted remarks at blacks, whites, Catholics, Jews—anyone and everyone. Number two, the insouciance of the media towards this crime speaks volumes: it is not particularly newsworthy when a Catholic is pummeled for defending his religion.

It is not clear to us whether those in the media really understand the bias that is at work here. We know from tracking the *New York Times* that if a New York college professor is mugged, it not only gets reported, it merits front-page coverage. When gays are victimized by gay bashers, it gets noticed, too. But somehow when Catholics are physically beaten for defending their faith, the media shrug it off.

The police arrested all the men and charged them with gang assault and rioting. We hope they get sent away for good.