

WHY NOT A MINISTER OR RABBI?

Reasoning by analogy is something we do at the Catholic League everyday. When we can't convince someone who has offended us that it is wrong to treat Catholics in a particular fashion, we substitute some other group for Catholics to make our point. It usually works. Here are two recent examples.

On July 15 we spotted an article in *USA Today* about two Scotsmen who were introducing a new product to America. Called Purely Cotton, the product is said to be the first bathroom tissue made solely of cotton fiber. The company, Linters, decided on a TV ad campaign that features "a boxer, soccer kids and a priest, confessing: 'I don't us toilet paper.'"

William Donohue called the marketing department of Linters about the ad and was told that the priest was a "non-denominational priest." Donohue asked whether the woman could identify priests from another religion who also hear confession, and she confessed that she could not. But she wouldn't flinch from her position, either. Donohue then asked that the clergyman clearly be identified in the ad as an Episcopal priest, stating that Linters could then explain to Episcopalians why the ad wasn't offensive. The woman said she would investigate the issue further.

When she called back, she told Donohue that he would be relieved to know that the ad doesn't feature a priest after all—it's a monk who is being depicted. When he asked why the average viewer wouldn't conclude that this was a Catholic monk, she couldn't say. He mentioned how her latest strategy wasn't working very well, and at that she promised that someone else would be getting back to him.

The next person who called said that the president of Linters was coming to New York on business and would like to meet with Donohue. He agreed. But the day before the scheduled meeting

was to be held, Donohue was notified that there was no need for the meeting as the ad had been withdrawn. Alleluia.

Then there was the case of Instant Improvement, Inc. When Catholic League member Joe Driscoll of Ohio got some unsolicited mail from the company, he forwarded it to the league. The promotional was an ad for a new "sex food," pills that supposedly make older men, and men with sexual dysfunctions, virile again. On the cover of the envelope, in big, bright red letters, it said, "The Sex Food So Potent PRIESTS WERE FORBIDDEN TO EAT IT!" It was signed, Eugene Schwartz.

When Donohue called the company asking to speak to Mr. Schwartz, he was told that the sex guru had been dead for three years. After explaining the mailing he received, he requested that the word "priest" be changed to "rabbi." He was then told that the word in question really meant "ancient priests." Donohue asked that the term "ancient rabbis" be substituted and then the company could explain to offended Jews why the ad was never meant to offend. She got the point and said it would be brought up at the next meeting of the board.

If this is the only way we can provoke a desired outcome, we will continue to do so. But it only underscores our concern: Catholic bashing is so common that many of those who sponsor it don't feel the slightest bit embarrassed for promoting it.