

WE WILL NOT MARCH; NYC PARADE DEBACLE GROWS

The Catholic League, which has marched in New York City's St. Patrick's Day Parade for 20 years, will not do so in 2015.

Prior to the announcement that a gay group would march under its own banner in the 2015 parade, Bill Donohue was consulted by parade organizers about their plans. He told them that he could only support this decision if there were a formal revision in the parade's rules governing marching units, and that is exactly what he said in his first public statement.

To be specific, Donohue asked them to pledge that a pro-life Catholic group would also be permitted. He was told that a formal change in the rules had been approved and that a pro-life group would march. But then he was told that the list of marching units was set and that no pro-life group would march in next year's parade. That is why he pulled the Catholic League contingent.

It is important to note that the head of the parade committee, John Dunleavy, is not responsible for this debacle. Donohue said, "John is a great man who has run the parade with distinction for two decades. Unfortunately, he was himself taken advantage of by those who made decisions that should have been his preserve."

For the past two decades Donohue has been the parade's most vocal defender of its rules. Repeatedly, he has said that gays have no more been banned from marching than pro-life Catholics have: members of both groups can march with other units; they simply can't march under their own banner. Why? Because the parade is not about gays or abortion, or anything other than St. Patrick.

Donohue got out in front of attempts to pit him against

Timothy Cardinal Dolan, the Grand Marshal of the 2015 parade. "The suggestion that I am at odds with the New York Archbishop is not only false it is despicable," he said. "Cardinal Dolan has no more rabid supporter than Bill Donohue, and nothing that has transpired recently changes anything."

Donohue's reasons for withdrawing from the parade have nothing to do with Cardinal Dolan or with gays. It has to do with being told one thing while they did another. To top things off, they decided to include a gay group that is neither Catholic nor Irish while stiffing pro-life Catholics. As Donohue told the media, "This is as stunning as it is indefensible."

The goal of some New York Irishmen who are actively involved in this issue is to secularize what is an ethnic-religious event. They want it to be an Irish celebration shorn from its religious heritage.

To read a more complete account, click [here](#).