



# CATHOLIC LEAGUE

*For Religious  
and  
Civil Rights*

January 9, 2019

**Board of Advisors**

Hadley Arkes  
Brent Bozell  
Gerard Bradley  
Linda Chavez  
Robert Destro  
Keith Fournier  
Laura Garcia  
Robert George  
Mary Ann Glendon  
Alan Keyes  
Stephen Krason  
Lawrence Kudlow  
Thomas Monaghan  
Thomas Reeves  
Patrick Riley  
Robert Royal  
Ronald Rychlak  
Russell Shaw  
William Simon, Jr.  
Joseph Varacalli  
Paul Vitz  
George Weigel

**Chairman**

**Board of Directors**  
Walter Knysz, Jr.

**Board of Directors**

Raymond Arroyo  
Alan Cheskey  
Deal Hudson  
Erin Mersino  
Leonard Oswald  
Francis Schroeder  
Joe Thompson  
Theodore Vargas  
Richard Walawender

**Vice President**

Bernadette Brady-Egan

**President**

William Donohue

Mr. Daniel Wilkinson  
President  
The Oxford Union  
Frewin Court  
Oxford, OX1, 3JB, Great Britain

Dear Mr. Wilkinson:

I am appalled that the Oxford Union would invite me to a debate and then, in effect, disinvite me. You have much to explain.

On December 5, two emails were sent to the Catholic League inviting me to a debate: one was written by you and the other was written by your assistant, Beatrice Barr. "I am writing to extend an invitation for you to speak at the Oxford Union in one of our historic debates," you said. "It would be a great privilege were you to accept this invitation, and I sincerely hope you will be able to join us in the debate."

I was given six dates to choose from: three in January and three in February. I was asked to speak to the motion, "This House Believes The Catholic Church Can Never Pay For Its Sins." On the same day, I agreed.

Rick Hinshaw, the Catholic League's director of communications, emailed Ms. Barr, copying you, saying "Dr. Donohue would be most pleased to participate in this debate." He mentioned my preference, February 21, stating, "He will await further word from you as to details."

Barr got back the same day, saying, "Thank you for your rapid response—the Union would be honoured to host Dr Donohue." She provided information about the format of the debate, the dinner prior to it, and a general overview of travel costs and accommodations.

Barr said the date was uncertain, "but it looks likely to be the 21st or 28th February—would the latter equally be convenient to Dr Donohue?" Hinshaw immediately replied that I would be open to the 28th.

On December 10th, Hinshaw emailed Barr asking if the date had been chosen. On December 11th, Barr wrote back, saying it "is almost certain to be February 28th." She added, "Thanks so much to you and Bill for your continued interest."

We awaited notification of more details, but given that the holidays were upon us, and the basics were settled, we did not expect to hear anything more until after the new year. Today, I asked Hinshaw to contact Barr about firming up some of the particulars.

Barr wrote, "Apologies, but as we did not hear back from you we've now filled the debate," saying that perhaps there will be another time.

This is unacceptable, unprofessional, and not believable. In one of her emails on December 5, Barr said, "I will continue to update you on plans for the debate as we develop them." Then why didn't she, or anyone else, reach out to Hinshaw or me saying they were ready to discuss the event in greater detail?

I would like to know the exact reason why I was disinvited. Was it because no one would debate me? If not, you need to be specific.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William A. Donohue".

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President