



CATHOLIC ACTION LEAGUE of Massachusetts
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20 May 2003

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Bishop of Worcester
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

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On behalf of the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts, I respectfully urge that you refrain from attending the commencement ceremonies to be held at the College of the Holy Cross on Friday, May 23rd. On that day, the principal address will be delivered by MSNBC *Hardball* host Chris Matthews, who has publicly and repeatedly stated his support for legal abortion. Matthews will also receive an honorary degree from the college.

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In addition, an honorary degree will be conferred upon Iris Cantor, the founder of both the Iris Cantor Women's Health Center at New York Presbyterian Hospital and the Iris Cantor - UCLA Women's Health Center. Each of these facilities distributes contraceptives. The New York facility also performs abortions and sterilizations, while the Los Angeles facility provides referrals for abortions and sterilizations.

Robert P. Largess
Vice-President

By these choices, Holy Cross is signaling to its students and graduates that wealth, celebrity, and success, especially if it is connected with philanthropy towards the college itself, represent higher values than respect for the sanctity of human life or adherence to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

Robert C. Almond
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In May, 1999, Your Excellency set an example of apostolic integrity and fidelity, and of personal courage and leadership by declining to attend commencement ceremonies at Assumption College when that institution conferred an honorary degree on then Lt. Governor Jane M. Swift, a proponent of legal abortion. We, in the Catholic Action League hope and trust that Your Excellency will maintain the standard which you established, and for which you justly earned the esteem and gratitude of all faithful Catholics.

C. Joseph Doyle
Executive Director

Joseph B. Craven, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Sincerely,

C. J. Doyle
Executive Director



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NEWS RELEASE

TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CATHOLIC ACTION LEAGUE URGES BISHOP REILLY TO BOYCOTT HOLY CROSS COMMENCEMENT

In a letter to the Most Reverend Daniel Patrick Reilly, the Bishop of Worcester, the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts today urged the bishop to refrain from attending Friday's commencement ceremonies at the College of the Holy Cross. On that day, the college will confer honorary degrees on MSNBC's *Hardball* host Chris Matthews and on philanthropist Iris Cantor. Matthews will also deliver the commencement address.

Chris Matthews is a public supporter of legal abortion, while Cantor has founded and financed women's health care centers which perform abortions and sterilizations, and which distribute contraceptives.

The Catholic Action League believes that the bishop's absence "will send a pointed message that the Catholic Faith, not college fundraising, ought to be the guiding principle of Holy Cross." Bishop Reilly declined to attend commencement ceremonies at Assumption College in 1999 when that institution conferred an honorary degree on then Lt. Governor Jane Swift, also a proponent of legal abortion.

Catholic Action League Executive Director C. J. Doyle stated: "Catholic institutions of higher education were founded by Catholics and for Catholics in order to provide an education in which the moral and religious teachings of the Catholic religion would be imparted. When Catholic colleges and universities honor individuals who support abortion, they betray their founders, compromise their identity, and make a mockery of Church teaching on the sanctity and dignity of human life. Society cannot be expected to take seriously Catholic opposition to abortion when Catholic institutions are in open and flagrant dissent."

"Bishop Reilly set an example of apostolic integrity and fidelity, and of personal courage and leadership when he refused to participate in a ceremony honoring Jane Swift. We hope and trust that he will maintain the standard which he established on that occasion."