

Notre Dame and Jenkins Not Keeping Faith with Moreau's Promise By Entertaining Vulgarly, Patrick Mangan, ND '80, 3-28-08

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy". This is certainly a time of controversy in our community.

Many voices are questioning Notre Dame President, Fr. Jenkins on the vulgar Vagina Monologues' return to the ND Campus. Among those voices published by the Tribune, the Bishop called the presentation "Pornographic & Spiritually Harmful" . . . ND Grad and Valparaiso Professor Susan Shearer called the performance "vulgar, obscene and base". Another ND Grad, Marc Brammer characterized the "Monologues" as "the production of graphic descriptions of homosexual, extra-marital and auto-erotic experiences".

Dr. Susan Shearer was right when she characterized Notre Dame's reasoning as "absurd" with respect to the suggestion that there is 'academic merit' to the content of the production. It is reminiscent of pornographers publishing a Bible with obscene photos in it so they could claim that there was literary value in it. The courts, of course rejected the attempt, as would the application of common sense in both the pornographer's case and in Notre Dame's latest controversy.

How sad that academic leaders think so little of the University named after the Mother of Jesus. They should remember that the University of Notre Dame should stand for sexual purity not sexual promiscuity and adventurism. The Notre Dame Administration's failure to comprehend this profoundly simple truth is embarrassing.

The younger members of the Notre Dame Family do not need to be protected as much from sexual activists like Ensler and the GLBT movement, as they need to be protected from educators who think that entertaining vulgarity and embracing sexual activism is a sign of sophistication rather than capitulation to the base culture of modern society.

Of course a Christian university should not entertain Ensler's pornographic presentation. It would be more appropriately relegated to a porn theatre, where protections for minors are proscribed by law. Namely they are not allowed in.

When the Citizens for Community Values (CCV) of Indiana NoSpecialRights.net (NSR) Task Force, made up mostly of ND Grads, joined many other respected voices and challenged Fr. Jenkins' decision to allow the Vagina Monologues and the Notre Dame Queer Film Festival on campus in 2006, most Alumni and Parents still didn't know how grave the matter at Notre Dame was becoming. There were serious expressions of

discontent during the Alumni Senate Meetings and Reunion Weekends on campus in both 2005 and in 2006. There was even discussion of a boycott of ND's fund development by Alumni. The University has already lost donors over their provocative behavior.

There were also unofficial reports of consternation on the part of the Vatican over Fr. Jenkins controversial Holy Week announcement on the subject in 2006 after being received at the Vatican just weeks earlier.

After Bishop D'Arcy, Fr. Miscamble (the former director of the Seminary), ND Theology Department Chairman Cavadini, The Sycamore Group, ND Law Professor Emeritus Charles Rice and many other Catholic Leaders called on Fr Jenkins to reverse his decision, to no avail, the CCV NSR Task Force publicly asked for Fr. Jenkins' resignation or removal from the Presidency of Notre Dame by the Trustees.

While there were no other high profile public requests for Jenkins' removal from the other dissenting voices at that time, the stand-off seemed to turn into a stalemate, until the following school year when no academic department would sponsor the vulgar play on Campus. *I say 'vulgar' because during the performance of the play, the entire audience is invited to chant the "c" word, and because the play depicts among other things, the seduction and sexual abuse of a girl by an adult who is acting out her same sex attraction as a practicing lesbian.*

The propaganda put out by the production's supporters is so misleading that one can only conclude that the whole exercise is an attempt to desensitize young men and women to the harmful effects of sexual impurity and sexual adventurism in order to compromise any sense of sexual purity or modesty that has survived our sex soaked culture.

With the production no longer enjoying the University's official support in 2007 and finally off the campus where its ability to harm and confuse students, many of Jenkins' critics quieted. But the whole affair had so impacted the leadership of the University that the Board felt the need to give Jenkins a "vote of confidence". Then, as if Jenkins had been emboldened, the trouble escalated in 2008 with another Holy Week announcement that the Monologues were coming back. This time 30 other Bishops in addition to Notre Dame's Bishop D'Arcy, who were scheduled to meet at the University, declined to meet there based on the provocative return of the Vagina Monologues with Jenkins' approval. Among those Church leaders was also one of the most influential leaders in the Vatican. Cardinal William Leveda, the former Archbishop of San Francisco and the current Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (which is the same position that the Pope held before he became the Pope). Cardinal Leveda has had extensive experience dealing with the unreasonable demands of the homosexual movement in San Francisco. Cardinal Leveda has also received hundreds of pages of information documenting controversial practices at Notre Dame from another concerned graduate who is also an attorney.

With the ouster of William & Mary President for similar controversies as with Jenkins as a backdrop, there are new voices in addition to the CCV NSR Task Force calling for change at Notre Dame. Fr. Thomas J. Euteneuer, STL the President of Human Life International, a Catholic Priest and a 1984 ND Grad is calling for the firing of Jenkins. "Father Jenkins has been given several chances to take a truly Catholic position on this heinous piece of ideological propaganda and has consistently voted against the pleas and well-reasoned arguments of students, faculty and alumni alike. He needs to step down from his position or the ND Board of Directors needs to dismiss him."

Perhaps the President's role is not the only one that should be scrutinized. Now, serious questions are being raised about the judgment of the Dean of the College of Arts & Letters, as well as regarding the thought process of the Chairmen of the Anthropology and Sociology Departments.

What a profound contrast between these modern 'educators' and early Notre Dame educator and Congregation of the Holy Cross Founder Fr. Basil Moreau.

"Education is the art of helping young people to completeness; For the Christian this means that education is helping a young person to be more like Christ, the model of all Christians."-Moreau, Christian Education 10

"We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart. While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for Heaven."-Moreau, Circular Letter 36

We agree with Moreau. At Citizens for Community Values of Indiana, it is our intention to continue to address the toughest issues of our time to protect young people from the harms of sexual confusion and abuse, no matter how controversial the issue. Some things are too important to compromise. The sexual health and wholeness of our children is one of those uncompromisable issues.

Notre Dame should live up to the wholehearted pledge of Moreau. The Bishops understand this and that is why they are being "instructive" to Notre Dame's entire family with their principled actions. The question we must all ask is "If Notre Dame is not a good place for Bishops to gather, how can we send our children there? "

For more information on this regrettable moment in Notre Dame's history visit www.nospecialrights.net and click on the " Special Rights at Notre Dame" Page.

Patrick Mangan is a 1980 Graduate of the University of Notre Dame and is the parent of an ND Grad as well. He serves as the Executive Director of Citizens for Community Values of Indiana, (www.ccvindiana.com) a profamily organization dedicated to reducing the harmful impact of sexual confusion, pornography addiction and sexual abuse on women and children. He lives in Mishawaka.