

Activists disrupt cardinal's Mass

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Dozens of people protesting Cardinal John J. O'Connor's views on homosexuality and abortion tried to shout him down during his Sunday morning Mass at New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral Dec. 10, while a thousand or more activists protested outside.

A smaller number, also outside, demonstrated in support of the cardinal and against "militant anti-Catholic bigotry and suppression." Police kept the two groups separated.

Los Angeles churches vandalized

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Protesters vandalized four Los Angeles churches with paint and posters accusing Los Angeles Archbishop Roger M. Mahony of being a "murderer" for his opposition to condom use, a position the protesters said helps spread AIDS.

In a Dec. 4 statement, Archbishop Mahony said it was "both sad and ironic that those who will not accept God's revelation as taught faithfully by the Catholic Church with respect to human sexuality would attack God's houses."

He said neither he nor the archdiocese "will be intimidated by threats or attacks against proclaiming the truth as God has taught us" and that the church will "pray for a change of heart among all peoples."

Protesters splattered red paint on the steps and doorways and hung posters with pictures of the archbishop on the properties of St. Basil, Immaculate Conception, St.

As police entered the cathedral to arrest and remove demonstrators standing and shouting or lying down in the aisles, Cardinal O'Connor stopped his homily and had the congregation stand to join in the Lord's Prayer and recitation of the rosary.

He then proceeded with the Eucharist, despite more protesters rising to shout as the first batch was removed.

A police spokesman later reported that a total of 43 arrests were made in the cathedral. In addition, he said, 68 people who sought to block the street were arrested. According to the spokesman, the demonstrators were charged with disorderly conduct, trespassing and resisting arrest.

The demonstration was sponsored by the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, a group "united in anger and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis," and the Women's Health Action Mobilization, which is devoted to "demanding, securing and defending absolute reproductive freedom and quality health care for all women."

Both groups are well known to police for past disruptive actions that have led to arrests. The AIDS group temporarily disrupted a lecture in January 1988 by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Plans for the action at St. Patrick's Cathedral had been widely publicized for several weeks, enabling the cathedral and the police to plan.

With Police Commissioner Richard J. Condon on hand, uniformed police surrounded the cathedral, and dozens of ushers and plainclothes officers watched inside. More clergy than usual were in the sanctuary, and some of the front pews were filled with archdiocesan staff and others who might be needed to guard the altar area from intruders.

Reception of Communion proceeded with only minor variations from standard procedure, although Cardinal O'Connor did not come down as usual to participate in distribution.

There was a report of at least one desecration of a host. According to an observer who was nearby, a young man received the Eucharist from a priest at the head of the center aisle, broke it, threw it on the floor and stepped on it. Another priest was then summoned, and came and picked up the pieces and took them away. The young



VICTORY — Banned from Communion by San Diego's bishop for her pro-choice views, Lucy Killea celebrates her Dec. 6 victory in a state senate race.

man walked away without further incident. Mayor Edward Koch, who has had legal as well as philosophical battles with Cardinal O'Connor over homosexual rights, sat in a front pew during the Mass in a show of support for the cardinal and joined him afterward in talking with reporters.

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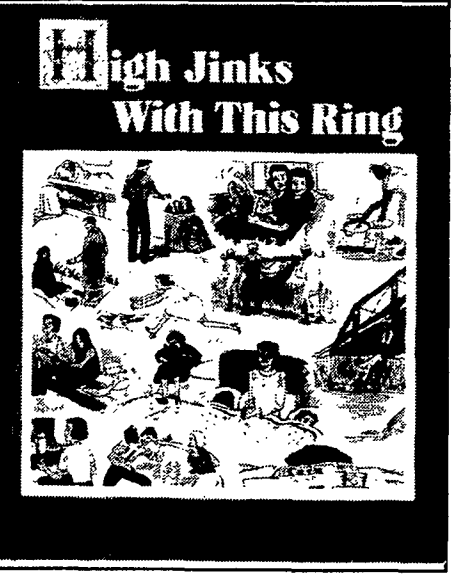


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A movie script of the book is being considered as a Charlton Heston vehicle, as requested by his personal assistant.

The author, Eileen Loewke (former Gannett "Shop With Jean" columnist, '68-81) invites you to take advantage of this unique opportunity. Don't miss it! "High Jinks With This Ring" is carried at Logo's Bookstore. Or call or write the publishing house at 90 Holmes Rd. in Rochester, 225-9518 or 227-9326, to have the book personally autographed for your recipient and mailed direct at no cost. VISA and MasterCard accepted.

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