



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on May 12, 2014

Protest, Outrage Over Planned “Black Mass” at Harvard

The announced Satanic “black mass” at Harvard University will go on Monday evening, despite widespread condemnation from religious and educational leaders, FoxNews.com [reported](#).

The event, to take place in a pub on campus, has been organized by the Harvard Extension Cultural Studies Club and the New York-based Satanic Temple to “explore the religious facets” that influence contemporary culture, the club contends. It has drawn protests from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, as well as university administrators and hundreds of students and alumni. A Black Mass has historically been regarded as a defilement of the Catholic Mass and the sacramental bread that becomes, when consecrated, the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to Catholic doctrine. The hosts, called the Eucharist, a Greek word meaning gift, are received by the faithful in the sacrament called Holy Communion.



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“For the good of the Catholic faithful and all people, the church provides clear teaching concerning satanic worship,” said a statement released by the archdiocese in Boston. “This activity separates people from God and the human community, it is contrary to charity and goodness, and it places the participants dangerously close to destructive works of evil.”

The organizers have said they will not be using a consecrated host in their ceremony, but C. J. Doyle, executive director of the Catholic Action League of Massachusetts does not believe it.

“As the entire purpose of a Black Mass is to debase the Blessed Sacrament, assertions by the organizers that unconsecrated bread will be used ought not to be taken at face value,” Doyle said in a press release. “Black Masses invariably entail the theft of consecrated hosts, a crime made easier in recent years by the lamentable practice of communion in the hand.” Doyle denounced the planned ceremony as “an appalling sacrilege, a deliberate provocation, and a barefaced exercise in unconcealed hate speech.”

“I would say that the event is an attack on the Eucharist, regardless of what the organizers state,” archdiocese spokesman Terry Donilon wrote in an e-mail to FoxNews.com: “The event is offensive to Catholics and people of good will.”

Organizers of the event say its purpose is not to denigrate any religion, but to “learn and experience”



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different cultural practices. The protests, they said, in a statement to the university's student newspaper, is based on the "flawed assumption" that "because Satan is the representation of evil incarnate for some faiths, that Satanist[s] are part of a hate group and their practice devoted toward denigrating Catholicism.... The point of this event is to challenge the stigmatization of marginalized groups."

Robert Neugeboren, dean of students and alumni affairs at Harvard Extension School, issued a statement calling the event "deeply disturbing." A petition said to be signed by nearly 400 Harvard students and 100 alumni describes the signers as "offended and outraged" over the event.

"This form of satanic worship not only ridicules the central practice of Catholicism, the Mass, but it also mocks and offends all who have faith in Christ," the petition says. "We are Catholics, other Christians, and supporters of genuine tolerance and civility, and we are offended and outraged this event has been permitted to take place at Harvard." But Harvard President Drew Faust, while calling the event "deeply regrettable," issued a statement calling the decision to allow the event "consistent with the university's commitment to free expression, including expression that may deeply offend us.... At the same time, we will vigorously protect the right of others to respond — and to address offensive expression with expression of their own."

Archdiocese officials plan to do just that, FoxNews.com reported, with a Eucharistic procession in Cambridge. Doyle said the Catholic Action League will join other Catholic organizations in a peaceful picket and a praying of the rosary outside Memorial Hall prior to the event. The event has also drawn protest from outside Massachusetts, as Thomas More College in Merrimack, New Hampshire, announced three days of "heightened penance and prayer" in response to the Black Mass. William Fahey, president of the Catholic liberal arts college, wrote an open letter to Harvard President Proust, expressing astonishment that "the leadership of one of America's most well-respected academic establishments appears unwilling to intervene and stop this public attack against the very source and summit of Catholic life: the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass."

"No one can pretend that a Satanic sacrifice is, in any way, an exploration of history or an educational introduction to the religious heritage of mankind," Dr. Fahey wrote. "Bigotry is not a form of academic freedom."



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