



Written by [James Heiser](#) on September 30, 2009

The Sad Antics of Blasphemy Day

Do you have a hard time keeping track of religious holidays? One may take for granted that few people would know that September 30 is the feast day of St. Jerome, Priest and Doctor, without consulting a liturgical calendar. But now, the Center for Inquiry wants to claim September 30 for a day of its own: Blasphemy Day. The Center for Inquiry claims that its mission "is to foster a secular society based on science, reason, freedom of inquiry, and humanist values." Apparently it intends to establish that secular society through asinine behavior.



For the sake of discussion, consider the Center's recommended [activities](#) for Blasphemy Day:

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Free Speech demonstration in a public area of campus. Some ideas:

90-Second Megaphone: Anyone can come up and use the megaphone for 90 seconds to say anything, no matter how blasphemous or offensive. (You could also use a soapbox-style small platform for the speakers.)

Post-It Board display: Anyone can come up throughout the day to write on a Post-It note that is then stuck to a display board for the day.

Blasphemous Art Display: Partner with the college Art Department, or with art students, and have a blasphemous art show or demonstration in a public area on campus.

Blasphemy Game Night: Host a social game night with the games "Blasphemy: The Race to the Cross" and "Playing Gods: The Board Game of Divine Domination"; or, you can create your own Blasphemy Pictionary and Blasphemy Charades.

Deity Drawing Contest: This is well-suited to tabling in a public area. Provide basic drawing supplies (crayons, pencils, paper) for a contest where the best drawing of a deity wins a prize! Drawings can, of course, be of deities like the Flying Spaghetti Monster, Zeus, or Cthulu. Make sure to collect names and contact information for each submission so that the winner can be contacted.

Soul Exchange: Invite people to trade their souls for some delicious home-baked cookies.

Pascal's Wager Wheel: Create a spinner labeled with different gods. Then, invite passers-by to spin the wheel to find out which deity Pascal's wager applies to for that person.

If the goal of the Center for Inquiry was to generate as much anger as possible while not convincing anyone, then Blasphemy Day is right on target. However, since the Center for Inquiry has decided to camp its sophomoric piffle right on top of a saint's day, consider, for a moment, the following [observances](#) which CatholicCulture.org proposes for the feast of St. Jerome:

Things to Do:

Jerome had a violent temper and was very strong-willed. He made a lot of enemies because of his temperament. To overcome these faults, he prayed and did penance. His canonization shows us



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that canonized saints aren't perfect, but have faults just like us. They just worked on them and cooperated with grace more fully to overcome them. What faults do we have that we need to work more diligently on overcoming?

St. Jerome was a wonderful spiritual director, especially for women. It is important to have a spiritual director to grow in the spiritual life. Find out what a director can do for you, and make some arrangements for one.

The Bible was of utmost importance in Jerome's life and should be in ours. Make a point to read the Bible daily. Jerome was known to say that ignorance of Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.

So, weigh the respective list of observances, and ask yourself which one is more elevating of the human spirit. But wait: Presumably, given their secular humanist commitments, the folks at the Center for Inquiry are mechanistic materialists and would think that human beings are only robots made out of meat whose actions are determined according to the irresistible impulses of biochemistry. Therefore, they wouldn't be interested in elevating the nonexistent spirit, would they? And since "virtue," according to such a worldview, must ultimately have no higher origin than man's changable opinions, and man is only a meat-robot, what values is a "humanist" society built on, anyway? And how does a chemically predestined meat-robot have "freedom of inquiry"?

Jerome, struggling with his faults and seeking guidance from a wisdom nobler than any which resided within himself, sounds like a more fitting guide any day of the year than the sad antics prescribed for Blasphemy day.



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