

A Cairde,

I sent out an email last week asking all our members to take some time out of their busy schedules and write a letter to HBO, to voice their concern about the vitriolic anti- Catholic statements of comic Bill Maher on his show. It is sad to see someone, who was born to an Irish father, and raised Catholic, have such a hatred for the sanctity of our faith.

If you are not aware of his statement..... he compared our faith to the alleged polygamous religious sect in Texas. He said that if you are the leader of a pedophilic group of a few hundred people, you are called a cult leader .... if you have a billion members, you are called the Pope.

He also called Pope Benedict a NAZI..... in reference to his time in Germany as a young boy when he was forced to join 'Hitler's Youth'.

Let's not trivialize it by saying it was just a joke by a comedic social agitator, or that he simply exercised his first amendment right of free speech. With that freedom comes accountability.

Thank you to all the members who did write to HBO.

Because of people like you, Maher was forced to issue an apology.

We as Hibernians cannot be complacent about attacks on our faith. We are bound by our oath to defend the Catholic Church.

As early as 1836, County Tyrone native, Bishop 'Dagger John' Hughes organized parishioners to gather and defend the Cathedral from 'Know Nothing' anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant violence. Bishop Hughes armed the newly founded AOH and stationed them on the walls surrounding the Cathedral. Hibernian Hall was located across the street from the Cathedral, and the AOH continued to defend the church and the clergy during anarchic times.

We Hibernians need to be just as resolute today. Thankfully it is no longer necessary to take up arms in defense of our faith. There may not be a physical assault on the Catholic Church but there is a continuous diatribe in the media and elsewhere.

Also, when we see our politicians straying from the high ethical standard we expect from our elected representatives, we should let them know. Conversely, when we are made aware of good works they are doing we need to encourage them. We should, in my opinion, let our State Assembly representatives, especially Annie Rabbitt and Nancy Calhoun, know we appreciate all their work in defense of the unborn. They were both opposed to Governor Spitzer's abortion bill, euphemistically titled the 'Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act '.

Hopefully that bill will not pass, now that the Governor has been replaced.

You can email the Assemblywomen at: [rabbitta@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:rabbitta@assembly.state.ny.us) and [Calhoun@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:Calhoun@assembly.state.ny.us)

Go mbeannaí Diá thú,

Brendan O'Dowd Uachtarán