

When Humor Isn't Funny

Ken Briggs | Sep. 21, 2012 NCR Today

The big news in religious entertainment is the smash hit at Fordham by Cardinal Dolan, Stephen Colbert, moderated by Jim Martin.

They had those kids rolling in the aisles, according to "unauthorized" reports leaking out.

Why do I find myself not laughing, envisioning instead a show-biz version of Nero fiddling astride a flaming Rome?

Here are a couple of reasons.

- 1) while laughter is good medicine, it doesn't work when the disease is denied;
- 2) the starchy "regular guy" approach is inevitably self-aggrandizing.

Though I wasn't there, the reports depict a kind of stagey "fun" that perpetuated the image of the old days in the seminary when a pinch of humor was meant to banish bad news and suggest that all was well because the guys in charge were really made of whimsy.

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