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Catholic charities still fighting to keep the right to discriminate against gays

The Charity Tribunal has asked for further evidence to help it decide whether the Charity Commission was wrong to prevent two Catholic charities from being allowed to discriminate against gay people when choosing prospective parents for adoption.

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Evan Harris MP and Lord Avebury win the National Secular Society's annual award for Secularist of the Year

The National Secular Society's annual award for Secularist of the Year has been awarded jointly to Dr Evan Harris MP and Lord Avebury for their success in getting blasphemy laws abolished.

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Islington Christian registrar decision overturned on appeal

Islington Council has won its appeal today against a ruling that it unlawfully discriminated against a Christian registrar who refused to perform same-sex civil partnerships.

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Archbishop's empty talk of disestablishment

Of course the Archbishop of Canterbury doesn't want disestablishment –despite what you read in the papers.

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Our great Darwin offer for members only – hurry if you want to participate

To mark next year's Darwin anniversary we are offering NSS members (only) the chance to own a great drama on DVD about Darwin and how he formulated his world-changing theory.

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Director General of the BBC explains his obsession with religion, and why he privileges it

The Director General of the BBC, Mark Thompson, has revealed in a speech to a Christian group that the BBC has increased the amount of religious programmes it broadcasts and is now broadcasting more religion than it has done for decades.

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Eight Lessons and Carols for Godless People. Bloomsbury Theatre, London.

This show was mentioned last week, but has since sold out. The producers have added another performance on 18 December. <u>More information</u>.

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Pat Condell video reinstated on YouTube

The latest video from comedian Pat Condell, *Welcome to Saudi Britain*, has been re-instated on the YouTube video sharing site following massive protests from defenders of free speech.

The NSS complained to the site last week when it became clear that Pat's latest opus, on the injustices that sharia law brings to women, had been removed following complaints from Muslim activists. In response, other YouTube members started to post the video on their own account on YouTube and soon it was available on hundreds of different accounts on the site.

YouTube eventually relented and the video is now up again and receiving a massive response. If you haven't seen it yet, catch it here.

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Council uncovers Darwin display – and says it was never about creationism

Northampton City Council says that it has removed the paper strips that obscured part of an information board in a museum display about Charles Darwin.

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Museum's Darwin exhibition censored

The National Secular Society has written to the leader of Northampton Borough Council protesting at the censorship of an exhibition in a local museum which covers the work of Charles Darwin.

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Fifteen Year Old Boy is Scientologists' Latest Target

A fifteen year old boy carrying a placard describing Scientology as a "dangerous cult― (a phrase taken from a legal judgement about the organisation) has been issued with a summons at a demonstration organised by a group called "Anonymous―. Demonstrations were held outside

Church of Scientology headquarters in London's Queen Victoria Street and their recruitment centre on Tottenham Court Road on May 10.

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Atheists in America have found the perfect answer to the Catholic sex pests

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From The Web

To remind you of the real horror of Vatican child abuse cover up, and the present Popeâ \in TMs involvement in it, the *Panorama* programme on the subject is up on <u>Youtube</u> (several parts â \in " search for the others).

The Independent Comedy Network has produced a cringe-inducing satire on the pancake-deep Christianity of America. Entitled Jesus People,

Episode 1

Episode 2

Episode 3

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In the shop - The Atheist Debater's Handbook by BC Johnson

Does God exist? Is there Divine intervention in our daily lives? Mr. Johnson contends that theism has not proved its case.

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Book review by Will Podmore

Collected Film Poetry, by Tony Harrison, paperback, 414 pages, ISBN 978-0-571-23409-7, Faber and Faber, 2007, £20.

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Blasphemy horrors continue to proliferate

It is four weeks since Jagdeesh Kumar, a 22-year-old Hindu worker in a garment factory in Karachi, was beaten to death by a mob of his fellow workers for allegedly making blasphemous remarks about Mohammad. No-one has been charged.

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Glasgow University appoints Humanist chaplain

Glasgow University has appointed its first Humanist "chaplain― (a chaplain is usually defined as a clergyman or priest). Mandy Evans Ewing will supplement a huge team of religious chaplains that are already operating in the university and will provide "support and guidance for students―.

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Join the big pro-choice lobby next week

A big lobby and public meeting to defend abortion rights will be taking place on Wednesday 7th May at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. Organised by Abortion Rights

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"Multi-faithism" is bad news for women

By Muriel Fraser

"The increasing emphasis on religion and religious identities has led to the transformation of multiculturalism into multi-faithism'' – and the ones who suffer the most are South Asian women. This is the conclusion of Pragna Patel's important new study, Faith in the state? Asian women's struggles for human rights in the U.K.

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Vicar uneasy about religious admissions to schools

And just to prove it isn't only members of the NSS who are worried about the way religious admissions criteria are applied to schools, the following letter was featured in the Church Times last week....

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Catholic schools closing loopholes to keep themselves "pure"

Catholic schools are refusing admission to children who are baptised "late― – on the presumption that their parents are trying to manipulate the rules to get round the religious entry criteria when they don't really have any commitment to the church.

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Bye Bye Blasphemy: Join us to celebrate the end of an iniquity

The end of the blasphemy law in this country is a major event for the NSS â€" which has been pressing for its abolition for 140 years. So, why not join us for our fabulous "Bye Bye Blasphemy Party―? We're getting together to say goodbye and good riddance to one of the Church's most grotesque privileges.

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Lords Approve Abolition Of Blasphemy

After an acrimonious debate in which the bogeyman of secularism was repeatedly invoked, the House of Lords on Wednesday March 5 2008 accepted the amendment to the Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill that abolishes the common law of blasphemy and blasphemous libel.

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