

ABC'S "THAT'S LIFE" – THE MOST BIGOTED SHOW OF ALL

The phones at the Catholic League rang off the hook in response to the April 7 episode of the ABC show, "That's Life." Here is how league president William Donohue described the show to the press:

"No show that I have ever seen was as viciously anti-Catholic as last night's episode of 'That's Life.' It was relentless in its bigotry, mocking Christ's crucifixion, the Host, transubstantiation, Holy Water, Catholic prayers, Midnight Mass, salvation, Catholic rituals, the Vatican, the New Testament, the Stations of the Cross, Confession, nuns, priests and, of course, those stupid laypersons who swallow all this moonshine. Reference was made in the show to Easter, offering further evidence that malice was at work; as the producers know, this is Holy Week."

The league was so outraged over this show that it made 1200 copies of the program, sending a tape to the major media outlets and to every bishop and congressman in the nation. The early response was encouraging: dozens of persons had seen the show and, with one lone exception, everyone agreed it was positively shameful. Cardinal O'Connor, without mentioning the show by name, labeled it "insulting" during a talk on Good Friday at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

On April 16, the night of the league's 25th Anniversary Dinner at The Plaza, Donohue held a press conference setting out the league's objections to the show and to ABC, in general. He mentioned how a pattern had emerged at the network. Specific reference was made to an episode of "The Practice," an edition of "Night Line," Christopher Hitchens' attack on Mother Teresa at her funeral, a movie called "Devil's Child," and the propaganda program, "Nothing Sacred."

The *New York Times* ran a story on the press conference quoting Donohue as saying of ABC, "They wouldn't do it to Jews; they wouldn't do it to African-Americans; they wouldn't do it to gays. But somehow they think they can have open season on Catholics." Donohue was also quoted as saying, "There may be some people at ABC who are not happy with the Catholic League after we created war with them over the show, 'Nothing Sacred.'" He added, "Was this their last goodbye? I don't know."

The league expects that those who review a tape of the show will let ABC know how they feel.