

# ABSOLUT AD EXPLOITS CATHOLIC SACRAMENT

An ad by Absolut, the vodka product of Sweden, met objections from the Catholic League because it exploited the Catholic sacrament of Holy Eucharist. The ad, which appeared on p. 321 of the March issue of *Vogue*, is a story-book tale about a priest on an island. Throughout the ad, reference is made to many Catholic symbols and themes, all but one of which stays within the bounds of light humor. The Catholic League objected, however, to the statement regarding the Eucharist.

The line that the league found offensive refers to "the precious ciborium full of what looked like everybody's least favorite EASTER candy." The ciborium is used to hold the Communion Host.

The Catholic League's position was spelled out for the press:

"Had Absolut left out the line about the ciborium, we would not have objected. But to refer to what Catholics believe to be the Real Presence of Jesus as nothing more than 'everybody's least favorite EASTER candy' is reprehensible. And to do this during Lent is particularly offensive.

"We are letting the vodka stewards know about our objection and look for Absolut to pull the ad immediately."

When Seagrams, which distributes Absolut in the U.S., learned of the league's press release, it had its ad agency call William Donohue. Donohue was quite pleased to learn that once the ad finishes its run in May (the company has already committed itself to some publications), it will not be reprinted unless the artist who composed it agrees to delete the offensive line about the Eucharist. In the event the artist does not agree to this, Absolut has said that it will not run the ad ever again.