

CHICAGO CLUB EXPLOITS CATHOLICISM

A new nightclub called Convent is scheduled to open in Chicago on May 9. The thematic element to the club is Catholicism and the treatment that it is accorded is decidedly irreverent. The club is adorned with Catholic imagery and the bartenders and waitresses are dressed in Catholic garb.

As part of its marketing strategy, Convent hosted a preview of the club on May 7. Patrick Cremin, the president of the Chicago chapter of the league, was in attendance and what he saw was disturbing. Accordingly, the national headquarters of the Catholic League is asking the owners of the club, Surita and Shar Mansukakani, to make certain modifications.

Catholic League president William Donohue gave the details today:

“The Chicago nightclub Convent takes liberties with Catholicism that is purely indefensible. To exploit a world religion for the purpose of commercial gain is the kind of thing that no one from any religion would find acceptable. What the league is asking for is a modification of the most egregious examples of this exploitation.

“The Catholic League is asking the owners of the club to alter the dress code of its bartenders and waitresses; apparently some bartenders dress as priests and all of the waitresses dress in Catholic schoolgirl outfits. It is also asking that the mirrored crucifix in the Hell Room be removed and that such drinks as Holy Water and Confessionals be retitled.

“The Catholic League, with the assistance of the late Cardinal Bernardin, recently fought for the modification of an offensive logo sported by the House of Blues. We were pleased with that outcome and we hope that the owners of Convent model

themselves on the House of Blues by making reasonable changes. In the event cooperation is not shown, the league is prepared to make this a case of national significance."