

HOUSE OF BLUES PULLS LOGO AFTER CATHOLIC PROTEST

The famous nightclub chain, House of Blues, bowed to Catholic pressure by announcing that it will remove its logo and replace it with a new one. The logo had been the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a symbol that is deeply meaningful to Roman Catholics. But now, after a protest lodged by the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Chicago chapter of the Catholic League, the crown of thorns and drops of blood from the heart have all been removed. The new symbol is a heart with a rose.

House of Blues first opened in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1992. In 1994, the nightclub opened in New Orleans and West Hollywood. In 1996, the chain expanded to Atlanta during the Olympics and recently opened another club in Chicago. The chain is owned by Isaac Tigrett, co-founder of the Hard Rock Cafe. It should be known that the Hard Rock in Las Vegas withdrew a Catholic altar from its lounge after the Catholic League mobilized public pressure against the club.

When House of Blues sought a patent for its symbol from the U.S. Patent Office, it was refused registration. It was determined that the use of the Sacred Heart of Jesus "may disparage or bring into contempt or disrepute persons of the Roman Catholic faith."

The Atlanta chapter of the Catholic League, led by chapter president Richard Perry, worked with the Archdiocese of Atlanta in challenging the logo and supplied the Archdiocese of Chicago with the results of its work. The credit in Chicago goes to league chapter president Patrick Cremin: Cremin met with officials from the Archdiocese and was the subject of a front-page story in the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

The Catholic League was prepared to go to the press

immediately with a statement regarding this victory, but decided to postpone its news release upon learning of the death of Cardinal Bernardin, a strong supporter of the Catholic League's. Here is what the league's statement said once it was released:

"Cardinal Bernardin deserves tremendous credit for pursuing this issue. It was his leadership that brought Isaac Tigrett to his senses. The Catholic League was delighted to assist the Archdiocese of Chicago in this matter and is especially grateful to the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the Chicago Board of Rabbis for registering their outrage over this misuse of a Catholic symbol. Thanks must also be given to Archbishop Donoghue of Atlanta for the invaluable work that his attorneys did on this subject.

"The misuse of religious symbols for crass commercial purposes is an abuse of power. While the motive behind such decisions is not always ascertainable, the effect of the harm done certainly is. Let the House of Blues become a profitable enterprise, but let it do so without disparaging the icons of the Catholic Church, or those of any other religion.

"It is a further tribute to His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Bernardin that during his final days he took on this battle and won."