

JUST INSERT YOUR “APOLOGY”

Blue Q Corporation sells refrigerator magnets. Unlike the ones sold in most stores, these ones tend to be one-of-a-kind magnets that make a humorous statement. For the most part, they are done in good taste. But we do have a problem with one magnet collection that features the Virgin Mary.

There is a “Mix’ n Match” set that depicts a figure of Mary with her hands in a prayer-like pose surrounded by a magnet of Jesus in a stroller, a Catholic school girl outfit, etc. The catalog description reads as follows:

“Bless Your Customers with the most DELUXE DRESS-UP magnet set yet! MIX’ n MATCH VIRGIN MARY. Reverently rendered by acclaimed illustrator David Bowers, this great gift includes everything from a Catholic school girl uniform to Baby Jesus in a stroller.” In a box below this description, it says, “If you are not completely satisfied with the tone of this product please accept our humble apologies. Thank you.”

We wrote to Mr. Seth Nash and Mr. Mitchell Nash, Blue Q Corporation, 103 Hawthorne Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01201 and asked them to consider the selling the following magnet set:

“Bless Your Customers with the most DELUXE DRESS-UP magnet set yet! The Reverend Jesse Jackson MIX’ n MATCH!!! Reverently rendered by acclaimed illustrator William Donohue, this great gift includes everything from a Nazi school boy uniform to Baby Sambo in a stroller.” We then added, “Of course you can place your typical ‘apology’ somewhere on the ad.”

We concluded by saying, “If you think that the above may be too offensive to people, then why do you continue offending Catholics and their beliefs with your magnet set?”

On September 13, Seth Nash called Donohue to say he wasn’t going make any changes. Donohue asked Nash if he would

consider adopting the example offered about Jesse Jackson. Nash said, no, because that would be "crossing the line." Donohue replied that it seemed Nash doesn't mind offending Catholics, but it is wrong to offend blacks. Nash said that putting Jackson in a Nazi outfit was not comparable to what Blue Q was doing with the Virgin Mary. Donohue said that what they were doing "trivialized" Our Blessed Mother; Nash retorted that others will decide that.

At this point, Donohue said that among those who will decide whether their depiction of Mary is offensive are Catholic League members. He said he would put this in *Catalyst* and let everyone know about it. Nash said that would be fine with him as he could use the advertisement. Donohue then informed Nash that the last laugh would be on him.

So you know what to do. Write to Seth Nash and let him know what you think.