

NBC SHOW PROTESTED; VICTORY SCORED

Following the February 22 episode of the NBC-TV sitcom, "Committed," we were hit with an avalanche of complaints. We investigated the matter and immediately demanded that this particular episode be permanently retired, never to air again. NBC agreed.

The episode featured two non-Catholics who are mistakenly given Holy Communion at a Catholic funeral Mass. Nate, who is Jewish, and Bowie, a Protestant, don't know what to do with the Eucharist, so they make several failed attempts to get rid of it. For example, they try slipping it into the pocket of a priest, dropping it on a tray of cheese and crackers, etc.

At one point, the priest, who is portrayed as not knowing the difference between the Host and a cracker, goes to grab the "cracker" from a tray of appetizers; he initially balks when he discovers that it is the last one. Then he changes his mind, saying, "Oh, what the hell." By far the most offensive scene occurs when Nate and Bowie accidentally flush what they think is the Host down the toilet.

In our news release, we said, "The complaints have come from bishops, college chaplains, pastors and the laity, and they have come from all over the country. With good reason: NBC has made a direct frontal assault on Roman Catholicism, choosing to mock, trivialize and ridicule the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ."

We also pointed out that what happened was no accident: "What happened was deliberate. According to a January 2 story in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the writers for the series, Eileen Heisler and DeAnn Heline, have been encouraged by NBC executives 'to push the limits of comedy.' For obvious

reasons, the writers...chose not to push the buttons of homosexuals (or some other protected group), so they decided to play it safe and stay in good standing with their bosses by bashing Catholics."

We then sought a promise not to rerun this episode again.

It speaks well for NBC that its top officer in charge of such matters immediately called William Donohue. After he saw the episode, he agreed it should never air again. Donohue then issued another statement saying that NBC's response was "fair and decisive."