

PILOT FOR “NOTHING SACRED” WORSE THAN EXPECTED

On July 10, the Catholic League protested the ABC show “Nothing Sacred.” Our protest was largely based on the incendiary promotional material that ABC released. Now that the staff has reviewed the pilot, we are in a position to comment more authoritatively on the show.

William Donohue explained the league’s position as follows:

“There are two major objections to ‘Nothing Sacred’: a) the show promotes the most positive stereotype of Catholics who dissent from Church teachings while fostering the most negative stereotype of those who remain loyal to the Church and b) the show deliberately denigrates the official teachings of the Church by unfavorably contrasting them to the trendy positions of dissenting Catholics.

“The leading priest, Father Ray, comes from a dysfunctional family, thinks of his vocation as merely a job, admits that he isn’t sure of the existence of God, violates his duty as a confessor and rejects the Church’s teachings on sexuality. But he loves the homeless, ponders a love affair with an old flame and tells his adversaries to ‘go fax yourself.’ Quite naturally, those Catholics who accept the teachings of the Magisterium are portrayed as cold-hearted, selfish and tyrannical persons.

“It is amazing to hear Father Ray tell his parishioners that it’s time to ‘call a moratorium on the sins of the flesh’; he then says that the Church’s teachings on homosexuality, promiscuity, abortion and contraception can be ignored because the Bible says little or nothing about them. He boasts that he will no longer be a ‘sexual traffic cop’ and advises those who want such a priest to go elsewhere.

"This Disney/ABC show is nothing more than a political statement against the Catholic Church. The goal is to put a positive spin on Catholic priests who prefer Hollywood's libertine vision of sexuality to the moral teachings of the Church. This propaganda is fodder for dissenting Catholics and anti-Catholic bigots alike. We hope that others will join with us in what is only the beginning of our protest.

"Disney/ABC would never put a positive spin on a priest who rejected the Church's teachings on welfare reform, nuclear war, immigration and the death penalty, for to do so would be to undermine their own politics. On the other hand, if they really believe that Father Ray is not offensive, then why not make him a black minister or a Jewish rabbi?"