

“SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE” IS NO “SEINFELD”

For the past few months, the Catholic League has complained about certain segments of *Saturday Night Live*. The April 5 show offended Catholics again. To demonstrate that the league is not hypersensitive about all comedy that pokes some fun at Catholics, it is worth contrasting *Saturday Night Live* with *Seinfeld*.

The April 24 edition of *Seinfeld* showed Seinfeld trying to find a particular priest who could help him with some needed information. When he learned that the priest was hearing confession, Seinfeld went into the confessional box to consult with the priest. Nothing that was said was in any way derogatory of Catholics, but obviously some liberties were taken.

In the same show, blacks, Jews, dwarfs and dentists were all the butt of some humor. It is in this Mel Brooks-type context (fun being poked at nearly everyone) that judgments about crossing the line must be made. It is our take that this showing of *Seinfeld* did not cross the line.

However, the April 5 edition of *Saturday Night Live* was offensive. During a satirical news broadcast, the news anchor discussed a piece of student artwork deemed inappropriate by school officials. The art was described as “a picture of a rat sucking the breast of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” What followed was a short disagreement about why the art was withdrawn.

This kind of humor is not in the same category as the comedy shown on *Seinfeld* and deserves to be criticized as such. We are bringing this to the attention of executives at NBC (it airs both shows) so that some good may come of our complaint.