

# BAD HAIR DAY FOR FATHER RAY AS MITCHELL DROPS ADS

John Paul Mitchell Systems, maker of Paul Mitchell hair care products, has announced that they are no longer a sponsor of "Nothing Sacred."

John Paul Mitchell Systems becomes the 28th company to drop the show. The others are: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa, Dunkin' Donuts, Scott's Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Ann and Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver, Montgomery Ward, Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha, Telecom\*USA, Cigna, McCormick, Pier 1 and NordicTrack.

"We certainly had no intention of insulting or offending Roman Catholics by running our commercial on the program," said a spokeswoman for John Paul Mitchell Systems. While insisting that her announcement "does not constitute a withdrawal of support for the show in response to your boycott," she asked the Catholic League "to be sure that you take our name off your list of Nothing Sacred sponsors."

William Donohue commented today on # 28:

"While John Paul Mitchell Systems does not want to be viewed as responding to our boycott, their desire to no longer be listed as a sponsor of 'Nothing Sacred' speaks for itself. The strong public objections to this show are being felt in the marketplace, and advertisers are responding-whether out of concern for the religious sensibilities of Catholic people, or out of economic necessity.

"Whatever the reason, the bottom line remains the same: Disney/ABC are having as tough a time finding sponsors for 'Nothing Sacred' as they have had trying to find an audience

for this abysmally-rated show. We are clearly being heard, and we will continue to give voice to the more than one million people who have signed our petition to Disney chief Michael Eisner protesting 'Nothing Sacred's' agenda."

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## **PETITION DRIVE AGAINST DISNEY HITS MILLION MARK**

Three months ago, the Catholic League embarked on a petition drive requesting that Disney chief, Michael Eisner, do the right thing and remove the ABC show, "Nothing Sacred," from the air. To date, Eisner has been sent approximately 750,000 names, and now we are prepared to send him an additional 250,000, bringing the grand total to 1,000,000 persons who have signed our petition.

William Donohue released the following statement about the latest news:

"The Catholic League is delighted with the results of its petition drive. As we have been saying over the past few months, the league objects to 'Nothing Sacred' because of its political tendentiousness: its message is to convince viewers that those Catholics who challenge the Church's teachings on women and sexuality are more compassionate, and therefore better, Catholics than those who uphold Church teachings as they exist. The agenda is to make the culture more accepting of dissident Catholics, thus making those who support the magisterium appear as if it were they who were the ones who were out of step. That no other religion is targeted in such a manner explains the principal concern of the Catholic League.

“Those who follow Catholic activists know that for over a year the so-called We Are Church people have been trying to secure the names of one million Catholics-from all over the world-who support the very changes in the Church that ‘Nothing Sacred’ promotes. So what’s the tally? They’ve got a whopping 37,000 names. By contrast, the Catholic League reached in three months what We Are Church set out to do. And we did it by never leaving the U.S.

“Those who continually question who the Catholic League speaks for should stew over this for a while before they sit down at their keyboard again.”

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## **NordicTrack JUMPS SHIP ON “NOTHING SACRED”**

NordicTrack, Inc., which advertised on the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred,” on November 13, has pledged never to do so again. Like many of the other companies that have advertised on the show, NordicTrack purchased a block of time on ABC and did not know that one of its ads would be shown on “Nothing Sacred.” Citing the “controversial nature of the program and the impact on some viewers,” a spokesman for the company said that “this was a one time occurrence and we have taken steps to ensure this does not occur again.”

NordicTrack becomes the 27th company to drop “Nothing Sacred.” The others are: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa, Dunkin’ Donuts, Scott’s Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Arm & Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver, Montgomery Ward, Ovaltine, Dairy Queen,

Mutual of Omaha, Telecom\*USA, Cigna, McCormick and Pier 1.

William Donohue commented on #27 today:

“The Catholic League is delighted that NordicTrack has joined so many distinguished companies by rejecting ‘Nothing Sacred.’ We hope that their holiday sales go well.

“Just last week I noted how difficult it was to conduct a consumer boycott of products sold via (800) numbers. I was wrong: NordicTrack, which used an (800) number to sell its equipment, proved that it can be done.

“Our members and supporters all over the country are demonstrating that Catholics have had it with Hollywood and that is why they have taken this boycott so seriously. This is a great day for lay Catholics. Especially pleased should be those Catholics who have long been clamoring for more lay participation. But somehow we think many of them aren’t so happy, because all along their idea of lay participation never included guys like us.”

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## **PIER 1 THROWS “NOTHING SACRED” OVERBOARD**

Pier 1 imports has announced that it regrets having advertised on the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred,” on November 6. “As you might imagine,” said a spokeswoman for the company, “we received numerous phone calls and e-mails from Pier 1 customers who were not pleased with us being associated with this program.” That is why, the statement continues, “we pulled all future advertising from this show due to the sensitive and controversial subject matter that it portrays.”

Pier 1 is the 26th company to stop advertising on “Nothing Sacred.” Those who have already pulled are: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa, Dunkin’ Donuts, Scott’s Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Arm & Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver, Montgomery Ward, Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha, Telecom\*USA, Cigna and McCormick.

William Donohue had these thoughts on the latest company to drop the show:

“Pier 1 is liked by millions of Americans for its unique line of merchandise. After this much appreciated statement, consumers have more reason than ever to patronize this popular chain of stores.

“The Catholic League’s boycott of the sponsors of ‘Nothing Sacred’ has paid off handsomely. As evidence of our success, no show on prime time TV depends on more (800) numbers to keep it afloat than this one. In addition, no show leans so heavily on promotional spots from the network as does this one.

“So who cares that ABC is committed to a full-season of 22 episodes? We’ve stood our ground all along and have no intention of changing course. By the time we’re finished with them, they’ll be bringing on the (900) numbers.”

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**POLITICS AS USUAL MARKS**

# LATEST “NOTHING SACRED”

William Donohue offered the following comments on the November 13 episode of the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred”:

“Though new messengers are evident on ‘Nothing Sacred,’ it’s the same old message. Instead of having Fr. Ray buck the Church, we now have Sister Mo. The exchanges she had with Rachel, the brazenly unrepentant young woman who continues to work at the church after having her abortion, were the high point of the show.

“Rachel is welcome by Fr. Ray and Sister Mo precisely because they themselves are incapable of defending the Church’s teachings on sexuality. Moreover, it was striking to hear how upset Mo was when Rachel broached the subject of excommunication. She would prefer her not to dwell on such ‘oppressive’ Church teachings and simply get on with her life.

“As always, this show depicts those who oppose the Church’s teachings as victims. Poor Rachel admits that though she never had any interest in going to Communion before she had her abortion, now that she wants to go, she can’t. She can’t because she won’t go to Confession: to do that, she would have to admit that what she did was wrong, and that is not something she is prepared to do. No matter, the scene portrays the Church as the ogre, thus affording Rachel victim status.

“It was touching to hear Rachel ask Mo if she would hear her confession. Given her earlier experience with Fr. Ray, it’s hard to blame her for shopping around, even if Mo has no more authority to attend to the sacraments than does the resident atheist, Sidney. In fairness, Rachel was on to something when she suggested to Mo that they start their own church. This seems to us just right. One suggestion-they should take the dysfunctional, depressed and doubting priests with them.”

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# RATINGS SAY: PUT “NOTHING SACRED” IN THE TANK

The November 6 episode of the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred,” was an abysmal failure. With a 4.9 rating/8 share, only three shows on the four major networks did worse: “Nothing Sacred” placed 92th in the rankings.

William Donohue shared these remarks on the latest news:

“Disney/ABC/20th Century Fox are not getting much bang for their bucks with ‘Nothing Sacred.’ Considering that full-page ads have been placed in major newspapers flagging the show, and that promotional spots on ABC featuring Kevin Anderson continue to run, the dismal results that last week’s episode garnered are not reassuring. But then again, this show doesn’t live or die by ratings, it lives or dies by Michael Eisner’s pride.

“Those responsible for this show are stuck between a rock and a hard place. If they turn up the heat and make the show more provocative, they run the risk of alienating even more people than they have already. If they tame the show, and there is evidence that this is happening, then they risk losing the little audience they have. After all, those who like ‘Nothing Sacred’ like it because it makes them feel good, and what they feel good about is a priest who shows compassion for the poor while thumbing his nose at Church teachings on sexuality.

“The public has made up its mind-it wants ‘Nothing Sacred’ in the tank. It’s high time Disney/ABC/20th Century gave power to the people and ratified their voice.”

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# NO MORE McCORMICK ADS ON “NOTHING SACRED”

McCormick & Company has decided not to advertise on the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred,” ever again. A spokeswoman for the spice company conceded that occasionally advertising spots appear on questionable programs and at other times spots appear in shows that were not purchased. Most important, she said that “advertising spots do sometimes run in programs that we also feel are inappropriate, as with the case of ‘Nothing Sacred.’” She punctuated her remarks by saying that “McCormick & Company has instructed our advertising agency not to allow any of our advertising spots to appear on the ‘Nothing Sacred’ program under any circumstances in the future.”

McCormick has now become the 25th company to pull its advertising from “Nothing Sacred.” It joins the following: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, Glaxo Wellcome; Ponderosa, Dunkin’ Donuts, Scott’s Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Arm & Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver, Montgomery Ward, Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha, Telecom\*USA and Cigna.

William Donohue commented on #25 this way:

“The Catholic League is delighted with the news from McCormick. It shows once again that social responsibility is taken seriously by many in the business community. We hope all Catholics continue to purchase the long line of products that McCormick offers.

“Judging from last week’s edition of ‘Nothing Sacred,’ it



appears that our boycott is a smashing success. The most common sponsors now include promotional spots by ABC, ads placed by movie companies, short spots by non-profit groups and (800) numbers for vacuum cleaners and CD's. In short, there is little left to boycott. But there is still much to protest which is why we're not going away."

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## **PASSING THE TORCH ON "NOTHING SACRED"**

William Donohue offered the following comments on the Nov. 6 episode of the ABC show, "Nothing Sacred":

"Most of the Catholic League's criticisms of 'Nothing Sacred' have focused on the lead character, Fr. Ray. Our central complaint has been the positive spin that has been put on this dissenting priest and the negative spin that has been put on Catholics loyal to Church teachings. Now it appears that Fr. Ray is being rehabilitated. What hasn't changed, however, is the bottom line of the show: Fr. Ray is simply passing his political torch to others.

"The interaction between Fr. Eric and a young seminarian, Nathan, demonstrates what's happening. Fr. Eric, the show's 'traditionalist,' is busy preaching tolerance to a young seminarian, Nathan. Labeled as 'rigid,' Nathan proves his rigidity by defending the teachings of the Catholic Church. To the rescue is Fr. Eric, the enlightened priest who brandishes his enlightenment by questioning the wisdom of Church teachings. Anyone with an I.Q. over 10 gets the message.

"Though Fr. Eric rightly refuses Holy Communion to a

protesting non-Catholic, he cannot do so without expressing second thoughts. 'If following a rule means shutting someone out,' he says, 'then maybe it's time to rethink the rule.' This triumph of popularity over principal, stated in the language of compassion and inclusion, is what drives the show. It sets in motion the show's theses: the Church must accept the will of dissidents or pay the price of irrelevancy. Though social science data uniformly prove the opposite, i.e., the more trendy the religion the less adherents it has, none of this seems to matter.

"When Fr. Eric speaks of the disillusionment that priests encounter, and the need to 'minister in the present,' he shows the influence of Fr. Ray. No wonder he defends his unorthodox mentor by saying that 'his heart is in the right place.' It's a shame his head isn't."

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## **CIGNA BECOMES #24 TO EXIT "NOTHING SACRED"**

Cigna, the health care corporation, has stated that it has withdrawn sponsorship from the ABC show, "Nothing Sacred." Cigna has now become the 24th advertiser to pull sponsorship from the show. The others are: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa, Dunkin' Donuts, Scott's Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Arm & Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver, Montgomery Ward, Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha and Telecom\*USA. This list does not include local advertisers who have also withdrawn sponsorship from the show.

William Donohue had this to say about #24:

“Cigna is to be congratulated for its courageous and morally responsible decision to drop sponsorship of ‘Nothing Sacred.’ By contrast, it speaks volumes about the degree of courage and moral responsibility of those advertisers who remain.

“More games are being played by Disney/ABC. They have just announced that ‘Hiller and Diller’ is being shelved until December and ‘Over the Top’ has been axed. In the six weeks that ‘Hiller and Diller’ aired, it averaged 26th place in the rankings, compared to 85th place for ‘Nothing Sacred.’ ‘Over the Top’ only aired for two weeks and in both instances it posted better ratings and shares than ‘Nothing Sacred’ ever achieved (comparisons in terms of rankings cannot be made because ‘Nothing Sacred’ did not air last week).

“None of this can be understood in conventional terms. ABC previously cut ‘Time Cop’ and has pledged to let ‘You Wish’ die a natural death after the 13th episode. But, like ‘Hiller and Diller’ and ‘Over the Top,’ these shows have no agenda behind them. They live and die by the ratings. ‘Nothing Sacred,’ however, lives on-despite its rotten ratings-precisely because Disney/ABC has a politically-vested interest in keeping the show on the air.”

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## **FOUR MORE SPONSORS DROP “NOTHING SACRED”**

Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha and Telecom\*USA have announced that they will no longer advertise on the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred.” There are now 23 companies that have pulled sponsorship of the program. The league previously

identified AT&T as being among the sponsors that have withdrawn their ads, but erred in doing so: AT&T never sponsored a show on "Nothing Sacred" and has no intention of doing so.

The other 19 companies that have decided not to advertise on "Nothing Sacred" again are as follows: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears , Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa, Dunkin' Donuts, Scott's Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Arm & Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver and Montgomery Ward .

William Donohue voiced his happiness with the latest news today:

"It is popular in some quarters for cynics to claim that business ethics is an oxymoron. But what will they say in light of the corporate responsibility that has been exercised in responding to the complaints of many Catholics over 'Nothing Sacred'?

"Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha and Telecom\*USA all have a good image to maintain. By saying sayonara to 'Nothing Sacred' they are securing their reputation. We only hope that Michael Eisner finally gets the message and says sayonara to everyone connected with the show."