

TV WITH AN AGENDA: “NOTHING SACRED”

Last night’s “Nothing Sacred” was described by William Donohue this way:

“There were aspects of last night’s edition of ‘Nothing Sacred’ that deserve merit, but it remains obvious that this show has an agenda.

“In this third episode, we meet a Father Ray who shows genuine pastoral care when he seeks to bring family members together. Similarly, his attempt to appease Joe, an elderly traditionalist, by having the wake for his wife in the family home, is priestly in the best sense of the word. Nevertheless, the Catholic League’s central objections were not relieved.

“The purpose of this show is political: it is designed to manipulate public opinion against Church loyalists while endearing itself to those who seek to upend the status quo. A positive spin is put on dissident Catholics and a negative spin on traditional Catholics.

“For example, early on in the show Joe is branded a bigot by Father Ray. Curiously, the viewer is never presented with evidence of his bigotry, but the impression that traditionalists are bigots is well-established. Joe, of course, is shown as an angry orthodox man for whom Catholicism is nothing but ritual, Latin music, incense, rote prayer, etc. In short, traditional Catholics make a fetish of external observances but do not put their faith into action; only Catholics like Father Ray do.

“This is precisely why Father Ray can afford to reject Church teachings on sexuality: he’s the real McCoy, or, as was said last night, the kind of priest who has replaced Bing Crosby

and Barry Fitzgerald. It also explains why Father Ray can laugh with Joe's daughters-at the wake of their mother no less-about how they once caught their mother and father having sex and still be a 'good' priest; he can even joke about sex as being 'the big Catholic secret.'

"Those behind 'Nothing Sacred' are less writers and producers than they are social engineers, and that is why the Catholic League will continue its protest."

SCOTT'S LIQUID GOLD DROPS "NOTHING SACRED"

Scott's Liquid Gold has become the thirteenth corporate advertiser to drop sponsorship of the ABC show, "Nothing Sacred." The company advertised Liquid Gold on the first episode and Alpha Hydrox on the second. The first twelve to quit the show were Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, AT&T, Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa and Dunkin' Donuts.

William Donohue was elated:

"Scott's Liquid Gold has demonstrated to Americans that it is a class corporate act. It was one of the few companies to advertise on both of the first two episodes of 'Nothing Sacred' and therefore its decision to pull all of its ads is of major significance.

"The producers and actors of 'Nothing Sacred' are quoted in *USA Today* as saying that they believe the show would fare better in the 10:00 p.m. time slot. This goes to show that they just don't get it: the American people are a lot smarter

than they think, and they will not support a show that uses a world religion as a vehicle to make a political statement.

“Having lost 13 sponsors, the ball is in Michael Eisner’s court. He should know that the Catholic League is prepared to take this game into overtime if that’s what it takes to win.”

DUNKIN’ DONUTS SLAM DUNKS ON “NOTHING SACRED”

Dunkin’ Donuts has become the twelfth corporation to declare that it will no longer advertise on the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred.” A spokeswoman for the company said that advertising spots ran in some parts of the country on September 25, albeit they did not appear nationwide. In the future, however, there will be no ads for Dunkin’ Donuts anywhere in the country.

Those companies that previously pulled sponsorship of “Nothing Sacred” are: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, AT&T, Glaxo Wellcome and Ponderosa.

William Donohue was delighted to hear the news:

“The Catholic League congratulates Dunkin’ Donuts for its exercise of moral responsibility. By doing so, the company maintains its family-friendly reputation, which is more than I can say for Disney.

“Kevin Anderson, who plays Father Ray on the show, has said that ‘I believe that a big, strong audience, I would think [for ‘Nothing Sacred’] are lapsed Catholics, or people who have lost faith’ This is a telling commentary: it

effectively destroys the party line that Disney and ABC officials have adopted, namely that the show is a fair representation of Catholicism. But it also says something else-there simply aren't enough disaffected Catholics, agnostics and atheists to carry the show.

"Disney and ABC seem determined not to quit. Neither does the Catholic League."

PONDEROSA BOLTS ON "NOTHING SACRED"

Ponderosa, the steakhouse chain, has designated the ABC show, "Nothing Sacred," as a "DO NOT BUY" program. The following is an official statement by Ponderosa:

"The television program 'Nothing Sacred' has not been and is not an approved advertising buy for Ponderosa Steakhouse as outlined specifically in our advertising program guidelines earlier this year.

"One of our ads did mistakenly run during this program the week of Sept. 22. Our advertising agency purchased the advertising time months ago for another program, and unfortunately, the advertising time change was not made when the program time was changed.

"We appreciate this mistake being called to our attention so that we can make sure the correction is made."

Ponderosa becomes the eleventh company to pull sponsorship of "Nothing Sacred." It now joins the following companies in sending a message to Disney/ABC: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-

Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, AT&T and Glaxo Wellcome.

William Donohue had this to say about the latest news:

“Ponderosa’s official statement is fantastic. As a result, the Catholic League will urge families throughout the nation to give Ponderosa their business.

“It was reported in yesterday’s New York Times and USA Today that ‘Nothing Sacred’ was the lowest-rated show on the four major networks last week. I hope that all of those media experts who were laughing at how the Catholic League was going to unwittingly give the show a boost have sobered up by now. Fortunately, the public has been far more critical of the show than the critics have.”

GLAXO WELLCOME PULLS AD FROM “NOTHING SACRED”

Glaxo Wellcome, the producer of Zantac 75 and Zyban, has officially withdrawn sponsorship of the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred.” That makes a total of ten companies that have withdrawn sponsorship of the program. The others are Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears and AT&T.

William Donohue commented on the latest company to quit:

“Kudos to Glaxo Wellcome. The North Carolina-based company has made a decision to pull sponsorship of ‘Nothing Sacred’ that will be applauded by millions of Catholics, as well as by millions of people of all faiths.

“What is special about Glaxo Wellcome’s exit is that it was recently rated by the American Family Association as the number-one sponsor of sex, violence and profanity on TV. If its decision to drop ‘Nothing Sacred’ means that it is reconsidering its past practices, then sincere congratulations are in order.

“We’ve now hit double-figures. Ten major U. S. corporations have sent a message to Michael Eisner of Disney that they will not promote any show that offends Catholics. It is our hope that the next move will be taken by Mr. Eisner himself.”

AT&T WILL NOT ADVERTISE ON “NOTHING SACRED”

A spokesman for AT&T has said that the national office of the company will not advertise on the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred.” He said that the AT&T ad that appeared on the September 18 show in some parts of the country was placed by a local affiliate. He admitted that it was not inconceivable that some local affiliates might place an ad on the show, but he was adamant in saying that the national office would never do so.

AT&T now joins Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray and Sears in refusing to advertise on “Nothing Sacred.” William Donohue was pleased with the report:

“Disney/ABC can no longer count on AT&T to support its propaganda statement on Catholicism. This is good news. The spokesman that I talked to convinced me that AT&T would never be associated with such a show.

“Even better news is that ‘Nothing Sacred’ slipped from 54th place in its opening show to 92nd place in its second episode, losing 30 percent of its audience in one week. The fact that it trailed ‘National Geographic’ tells us that the public is more interested in watching lions than in watching an offensive show promoted by the Lion King company. So much for all the hype about how the Catholic League is helping to promote the show by attacking it.”