

NO MORE SEARS ADS ON “NOTHING SACRED”

Sears has officially pledged not to run any more ads on the ABC Show, "Nothing Sacred." A spokeswoman for the department store said "Sears actually has never 'sponsored' Nothing Sacred in that we have not run national advertising during the show. Ads appeared in a few local markets due to inadvertent placements made by our advertising agency that places local media." The next statement was definitive: "We have instructed our local market ad agency to ensure that no Sears ads appear on the show." Finally, the spokeswoman said, "we intend not to run ads during this program in the future."

Sears becomes the eighth company to decide not to advertise on "Nothing Sacred" again. It joins Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster and Ocean Spray.

William Donohue greeted the announcement with joy:

“Sears is more than a department store, it is vintage Americana. That is why I am so pleased by its decision not to promote ‘Nothing Sacred.’ In doing so, Sears has demonstrated that it is worthy of the patronage of all Americans who are concerned with fairness in the media. Too bad Disney/ABC doesn’t hold to the same ethical standards as Sears.”

"NOTHING SACRED" LOSES

SPONSORSHIP OF OCEAN SPRAY

Ocean Spray has decided to drop sponsorship of the ABC show, "Nothing Sacred." In doing so, the company joins six other advertisers who have cancelled sponsorship of the show: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont and Red Lobster previously quit.

William Donohue was delighted with the news:

"Ocean Spray did what any responsible corporate enterprise would do—take steps not to alienate a large segment of the population. Corporate officials of Ocean Spray are to be congratulated for their decision.

"Michael Eisner of Disney never counted on this type of reaction. Neither did we. The difference is that we're loving it. I can't wait till the next one drops."

MTA RULES DESERVE PUBLIC SUPPORT

Tomorrow, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) will vote on advertising standards that are designed to service the public interest. The standards would bar advertisement on public transportation that a) are considered violent b) are frightening to children c) demean groups of people d) contain images of minors in a sexual pose e) promote escort or dating services and f) are patently offensive.

The MTA standards are a response to two protests launched by the Catholic League. In 1993, the Catholic League protested a

VH-1 ad on buses that contrasted Mary, the Mother of Jesus, with the pop star, Madonna. In 1995, the MTA allowed the placement of Calvin Klein “kiddie porn” jean ads. Both ads were pulled after the league mounted a public protest.

William Donohue outlined the league’s position:

“It is currently impossible to advertise tobacco on New York City buses, but not kiddie porn. All that these new MTA standards do is reflect the will of the public to prohibit government agencies from trafficking in smut and defamatory images of whole segments of the population. What the MTA is doing is entirely within the law: commercial speech does not enjoy the same protection that political discourse does. And that is why places like Washington, D.C. have been able to live with rules that are much tighter than we have in New York.

“The First Amendment is not absolute: it is conditioned on time, place and manner. While the government should not restrain the display of Nazi symbols or vulgar pictures in art galleries, it is under no obligation to allow them on the sides of buses where motorists, stuck in traffic, have no choice but to view them.

“Those who say that the MTA rules are too vague are unpersuasive. The laws on sexual harassment couldn’t be more vague, yet the very persons who criticize the MTA rules find no problem with these laws. It is time for the MTA to ratify the public will and adopt new standards.”

WHOOPI GOLDBERG ATTACKS THE POPE

On tonight's edition of "20/20," actress Whoopi Goldberg makes several very harsh and unfair statements about Pope John Paul II. Interviewed by Barbara Walters about her new book, Goldberg says that this pope "infuriates" her; she indicts him for rejecting gays and young people.

Last night on the NBC show, "Extra," Catholic League president William Donohue replied to Goldberg's attack. Today he offers some more comments:

"Whoopi Goldberg is known for two things: her acting and her political extremism. Unfortunately, her fondness for the politics of radicalism allows her to rail against the pope. But even so, she should learn to get some things right. Pope John Paul II welcomes gays as well as straights into the church. He no more rejects homosexuals because he disapproves of sodomy than he rejects heterosexuals because he disapproves of fornication and adultery. As for young people, the millions of young men and women who attended World Youth Day in Paris this past summer, and in Denver in 1993, removes all doubt that he is loved by youth.

"The Catholic League cannot overlook that it is the Disney-owned station, ABC, that is featuring Goldberg's tirade. It was Disney that gave us the movie, 'Priest'; it was ABC's Peter Jennings that allowed abusive comments to be made about Mother Teresa during her funeral; and it is ABC that is currently treating us to 'Nothing Sacred.' It's enough to make Catholics wonder whether there isn't something devilishly wrong with these folks."

RED LOBSTER QUILTS SPONSORING “NOTHING SACRED”

Red Lobster has become the sixth company to officially withdraw sponsorship of the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred.” The statement by the parent company, Darden Restaurants, stated that “we determined the series may offend a significant share of viewers, which violates our advertising policy. As a result, we have no future plans to advertise on ‘Nothing Sacred.’”

William Donohue commented on this news today:

“We are delighted that Darden Restaurants has sent a message to Disney and ABC. The company now joins Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser and DuPont in walking away from the offensive show, ‘Nothing Sacred.’ It is our hope that Catholics will patronize Red Lobster now more than ever.

“It was not lost on the Catholic League that most of the sponsors of last night’s insulting episode of ‘Nothing Sacred’ were new. They will now get the same treatment that the others have received. We’re in this for the long haul and we will settle for nothing less than the removal of this show from TV.”

“NOTHING SACRED” OFFENDS AGAIN

After watching last night's edition of “Nothing Sacred,” William Donohue had this to say about the show:

“The second segment of ‘Nothing Sacred’ lived up to its name once again. It began and ended with gratuitous sex and in between it managed to portray a church that in the real world wouldn't pass muster with the board of health. Just as it did last week, this week's program depicted a church populated by three types of persons: dysfunctional adults, cold-hearted traditionalists and, of course, the good guys—Father Ray and his New Age sidekick, Sister ‘Mo.’

“The fundamental problem with Father Ray is that he hates being a priest. A priest who has a vocation doesn't react with utter disgust at the thought of saying Mass. But Father Ray does and that is why he says things like, ‘I hate Sunday's—day of rest, what a crock!’ and ‘What kind of job is this—everyone else has weekend's off?’ Quite naturally, Father Ray is not only unprepared to give a homily, he views such preparation as a nuisance. In the same vein, when Sister ‘Mo’ and Father Leo snicker at Father Eric for giving a traditional homily, what they are saying is that this kind of priestly function is for nerds: real priests, according to them, tend to the needs of the drug addicts who are shooting up in the men's room and the transvestites who are gathered in the ladies' room.

“The only thing priestly about Father Ray is his occasional wearing of vestments, and that is why he comments, ‘I'm going upstairs now and put on some nice clean clothes and become a priest’ (my emphasis). When Sister ‘Mo’ invokes Buddha during a prayer and Father Leo instructs Father Ray that there is no such thing as ‘doing the right thing,’ the writers are seeking to relativize Catholicism. Father Ray's comment, ‘Who knows

less about marriage than a priest?’ and his quip that the sacramental basis of matrimony ‘depends on how much you believe in the Bible as erotica’ reveals that there is an unmistakable agenda to this show. “The Catholic League will continue its protest of Disney/ABC and will continue to boycott the sponsors of the show.”

K-MART AND BENCKISER SAY NO TO “NOTHING SACRED”

K-Mart and Benckiser have just announced that they will no longer allow ABC to advertise their store and products on “Nothing Sacred.”

A spokeswoman for K-Mart said that when the nationwide discount store initially bought ad space for September 18, it had no way of knowing that the debut of “Nothing Sacred” would be moved from September 25 to September 18. But now, knowing that its ads did run on “Nothing Sacred,” K-Mart has officially stated that it will no longer allow ABC to use its ad spots on the show again.

A spokesman for Benckiser, the maker of Electrosol Tabs, admitted that the company’s first reservations about advertising on the show occurred when they spotted the Catholic League’s ad in *Advertising Age* (September 8); the ad warned prospective sponsors of the show of a boycott. The final straw came when public protest against the sponsors grew to significant proportions.

William Donohue had this to say about the latest news:

“Congratulations to K-Mart and Benckiser. Both companies are a model of corporate and social responsibility.

“The Catholic League is proud of its members and the millions of Americans who are supporting us in this effort. Having lost K-Mart and Benckiser, as well as American Isuzu Motors, Inc. And Weight Watchers, the producers of ‘Nothing Sacred’ are obviously worried. They should be: our adrenaline is pumping overtime and this means that we will work harder than ever to kill the show by boycotting those sponsors who are defiant enough to persist in advertising on “Nothing Sacred.”

DUPONT PULLS SPONSORSHIP OF “NOTHING SACRED”

E.I. du Pont Nemours, the company that advertised Corian on the opening segment of “Nothing Sacred,” has just joined the growing list of companies that are walking away from sponsoring the ABC show. Previously, Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart and Benckiser notified ABC that they will no longer allow their ads on “Nothing Sacred.”

William Donohue expressed the league’s satisfaction with the news:

“The corporate officials at DuPont have said that they do not want to offend any segment of society and that is why they have withdrawn sponsorship of “Nothing Sacred.” Their sincerity and good-will are much appreciated by the Catholic League and will no doubt be received with enthusiasm by the millions of Americans who have been offended by the show.

“The Catholic League is anxious to know which sponsor will be

next to quit promoting “Nothing Sacred.” We are delighted by the response and will keep the pressure on the sponsors until we get what we want, namely, the removal of the show from television.”

ISUZU WITHDRAWS SPONSORSHIP OF “NOTHING SACRED”

American Isuzu Motors, Inc. Has just announced that it is withdrawing sponsorship of the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred.” It is the first sponsor to do so.

William Donohue commented on this today:

“American Isuzu Motors, Inc. Acted responsibly by pulling its name from the list of sponsors for “Nothing Sacred.” Consequently, the Catholic League will ask the twenty-seven Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim organizations that have joined us in boycotting the sponsors to stop targeting Isuzu. We will also notify EWTN of the good news: last night and again today Mother Angelica discussed this issue and encouraged viewers to join the boycott. As a result, the phones at the Catholic League have not stopped all day.

“The Catholic League will continue to lead the charge against the other sponsors of “Nothing Sacred.” It is our hope that they will follow the example that has been set by Isuzu.”

WEIGHT WATCHERS NIXES “NOTHING SACRED”

Weight Watchers has told ABC that it cannot allow its ads to support the show, “Nothing Sacred.” A spokeswoman for Weight Watchers said that the company initially bought time on ABC to advertise its services but it was the network that made the decision to place some of its ads on the controversial show.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented on this as follows:

“We are delighted that Weight Watchers has informed ABC of its decision not to be associated with the promotion of “Nothing Sacred.” The exploitative show has now lost two sponsors of a week ago, namely, American Isuzu Motors and Weight Watchers. We hope there will be more.

“Meanwhile, two more organizations have been added to the list of groups committed to the boycott of the show’s sponsors: Christian Action Network and the National Association of Black Catholics are now on board, bringing to twenty-nine the number of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim groups involved. We hope Disney chairman Michael Eisner is watching this development unfold right before his eyes. The Catholic League certainly is.”