

AGENDA OF “NOTHING SACRED” EXPOSED

The Catholic League’s protest of the ABC show, “Nothing Sacred,” has succeeded in exposing the agenda of Disney/ABC/20th Century Fox.

From the beginning, the league has maintained that this show was conceived not as entertainment first, but as propaganda. There is now overwhelming evidence that the league’s contention was right.

The networks subject all shows to the litmus test of ratings: if they’re good, they stay, if not, they go. This is not true of “Nothing Sacred.” Unlike other shows, “Nothing Sacred” does not live or die by ratings, rather it lives despite its awful response with the public. And the reason it lives is because there is a strong ideological investment on the part of its backers, one that is so strong that they are willing to lose money for the sake of keeping their political agenda alive.

Here’s the proof. ABC has canceled “Time Cop” and “Over the Top,” even though these shows posted better ratings than “Nothing Sacred.” It has announced that it will not extend the show, “You Wish,” beyond its initial run of 13 shows, even though the ratings for this show are far better than “Nothing Sacred’s.” It has put “Hiller and Diller” on the shelf for a month, even though its ratings are spectacular compared to those of “Nothing Sacred’s.” The reason is simple: these four shows have no agenda undergirding them.

As if more proof is necessary, consider the following. On October 23, ABC placed full-page ads in every major newspaper in the nation defending “Nothing Sacred.” They spent hundreds of thousands of dollars quoting four priests who have spoken highly of the show. This, of course, is unprecedented: when

has any network spent so much money advertising a show that has done so badly?

Then there were the ads by Kevin Anderson, the actor who plays Father Ray. Sitting in a chair, Anderson pleads with the public to make up their own minds whether the show is “controversial,” “blasphemous” or the “best new drama on TV.” Again, no show with ratings as bad as “Nothing Sacred” has ever received such treatment.

ABC has announced that it is standing by “Nothing Sacred” and has ordered a full-season of 22 shows. Unfazed, the Catholic League remains resolute in its commitment to do what it can to upend the show (see story inside).

PRISONERS’ RIGHTS VICTORY

The Catholic League’s intervention in a prisoners’ rights case ended in victory when a New Jersey correctional center bowed to the league’s demands.

In the fall, the league was contacted by an inmate at the Cape May County Correctional Center in Cape May, New Jersey, alleging that Mass was being denied to those incarcerated in protective custody. The league accepted the case after learning that Protestant inmates in protective custody were not denied religious services. The league asked for equal treatment.

The problem was resolved when the correctional center worked out a schedule with Our Lady of Angels Church in Cape May and the Legion of Mary to provide for weekly Mass. The prisoner first contacted EWTN for advice and then EWTN contacted the Catholic League.

The league respects the rights of correctional facility authorities to maintain order in their prisons. It also understands that there are inmates who invoke religious rights for bogus means, as when escape plans are hatched and/or drugs are exchanged when they meet in private for supposed religious services. But in instances such as this one, there is no excusing the authorities.

What settled the issue for the league was the flagrant discrimination of Catholic inmates: if Protestant inmates (or those who belong to other religions) are accorded rights, and Catholics aren't, then that is reason enough for the Catholic League to enter the fray.

WHEN DIALOGUE IS A DISASTER

William A. Donohue

Dialogue has become more than a buzz word, it's become a mantra. Just invoking the word makes some feel good, if not altogether righteous. Like a kid on dope, we expect that uttering the "D" word will relieve us of pain and sorrow. Until we sober up, of course. Then it starts all over again.

Most things in life that are useful can, if misused, prove to be worse than useless—they can prove to be disastrous. Take knives. In the hands of a trained surgeon, they can save lives. In the hands of a thug, they can end it. The same is true of dialogue. There are times when it is indispensable to progress, other times when it is a barrier to justice.

Responsible parents don't dialogue with their kids over what's right and wrong, they inform them of their decision. To be sure, it may help to explain the reasoning behind the

decision, but ultimately what parents want to avoid is getting into a position where dialogue allows their kids to triumph. If that happens, then parental authority dissolves.

The same is true with the Catholic League's favorite character of all time, the indubitable Father Ray. How not to like a guy who is so genuine, so human, so compassionate, so given to dialogue, so dumb? Trust me, it can be done.

Father Ray is liked by so many because he is willing to engage in dialogue. Most priests advise a woman contemplating abortion of the certain consequences that such a decision entails. They instruct her of the many alternatives that the Church provides and the support that she will receive. But not Father Ray, he wants dialogue. She looks for guidance and he tells her to follow her conscience.

Almost all priests who have commented on this scene (taken from the first episode), including those who have expressed admiration for the show, have balked at the way Father Ray handles the situation. Not too many would agree with a mid-Western Catholic commentator who proclaimed that Father Ray's position was "actually standard Catholic moral theology."

Real "standard Catholic moral theology," as stated in the Catholic Catechism, says that "Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened." As examples of what it terms "erroneous judgment," the Catechism explicitly cites "assertion of a mistaken notion of autonomy of conscience" and "rejection of the Church's authority and her teaching." It does not say that dialogue can be used as a substitute for right reason.

A Catholic journalist has written that Father Ray "has been tape-recorded in the confessional giving advice on abortion *that his superiors dislike*." (My emphasis.) What this suggests is that those who directly contravene Church teachings are on a par with those who disagree with their

pastor over the wisdom of Sunday night bingo. That is why they press for dialogue.

Dialogue is predicated on the theory that all parties to conflict should have an equal opportunity of prevailing. This is what children do when they are deciding what game to play or what movie to see. It is what friends do when they confront a crisis and it is what spouses do everyday. But it is not what doctors do with their patients or what pilots do with their passengers. In those cases, the authority figure decides. Certainly one of the authority figures in the Catholic Church is the Catechism. Ergo, Father Ray is out of line.

There are those who are so willing to give Father Ray the benefit of a doubt that they literally invent reasons for defending him. For example, one Catholic writer wrote of the infamous confessional scene that “perhaps” Father Ray was about to give stronger advice to the woman, “but we don’t see that on the screen.” There’s a reason for that: he wasn’t about to.

One source that isn’t unsure what this scene means is ABC. On its website, the network continues to boast that “In the confessional, Ray ignores Church policy,” making hash of those who argue otherwise.

To the chagrin of his fans, Father Ray sees with clarity what they don’t want to admit. In an interview in the *New York Times*, actor Kevin Anderson says of his character, “As I see him, he’s a person who’s basically trying to get rid of the rituals of the church.” He’s right. And this explains why he doesn’t feel the need to dialogue with anyone about it. It should also explain why we at the Catholic League feel exasperated when we’re urged to dialogue with Disney/ABC/20th Century Fox.

On that note of confidence, let me wish you all a very Merry

Christmas. No need to dialogue about that! As the Nike commercial says, “Just do it.”

RELIGION ON TV DOESN'T HAVE A PRAYER

by Evan Gahr

Whether it's news shows that ignore religion or entertainment programs that regularly depict clergymen as buffoons, hypocrites, or outright perverts, television remains ground zero for the culture of disbelief.

Rabbi Marc Gellman, one of the first clergymen to appear regularly on network television in some 40 years, says that “there's an anti-religious perspective in the media. News has created life without religion. That has created a distorted version of the world.” Adding insult to injury, he contends, are the entertainment programs that offer “demeaning and libelous” portrayals of clergymen. Crazy rabbis betray confidences, priests are pedophiles, others are just plain simpletons. Few men of the cloth receive much sympathy unless they're outright heretics or rabble-rousers.

Television executives wouldn't dare depict representatives of other groups in such a manner, lest they be charged with “insensitivity” and other cardinal liberal sins. But there's a special absolution for such transgressions if you mock religious folks. Despite improvements on both the news and entertainment side, the general picture remains bleak. For all their purported marketing savvy and sophistication, most television executives seem oblivious to many viewers' craving for programs that give religious devotion serious, fair-minded

treatment.

According to *TV Guide*, 61 percent of television viewers polled want “references to God, churchgoing, and other religious observances in prime time.” Although 90 percent of Americans believe in God and more than 50 percent attend church or synagogue regularly, religion is accorded relatively scant attention. Television executives invariably justify the sewage they dump on the cultural landscape—such as Murphy Brown’s ode to Fatherless America—by claiming that these shows merely reflect social realities. Yet television consistently overlooks the centrality of religion in American life. So much for sociological accuracy.

A recent study by the Media Research Center reveals the skewed portrait of religion that television offers. Last year, there were 436 religious depictions—everything from one-liners to thematic treatments—in 1800 prime-time hours on the broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, UPN, and WB). “Religion is a scarce commodity on prime-time TV, appearing about once every four hours. Even though depictions of religion [were] overall positive, prime time has too often presented distorted unfair views of both clergy and laity.”

Television also seems fixated on religious-minded criminals: “Law and Order” featured a whole slew of religious psychos, including a crazed theology student who killed three persons while laboring under the impression that he was a biblical warrior. TV movies such as NBC’s “Justice for Annie”—in which a middle-aged couple kills a young woman for financial gain—offer similar fare. It’s a safe bet that religious people are disproportionately represented among television’s criminals.

Again, other groups would never receive such unflattering treatment. Indeed, “reality-based” television shows sometimes take “creative liberties” to insure that their fictional miscreants aren’t top heavy with minorities. Yet while

religious criminals are over-represented on TV, religious do-gooders are few and far between. James Martin, who writes on television for the liberal Catholic weekly *America*, notes that “ER” presents a wide array of representatives from the “helping professions”—everyone from teachers to Girl Scout leaders. But the only hospital chaplain he recalls is a nun who appeared in full habit, which most sisters haven’t worn for years.

Still, “ER” is par for the course. For example, the recently defunct series “Picket Fences” prominently featured a local parish priest consumed by a foot fetish, as well as a shyster lawyer considered by many an anti-Semitic stereotype. To be fair, “Picket Fences” won kudos for many positive religious portrayals. And executive producer David Kelley has treated criticism with considerable seriousness, rather than hiding behind supposed “sociological accuracy.” But television’s grotesque caricatures aren’t merely “insensitive”; they mock religious folks in a manner that network censors would red-flag if directed at anyone else. Says Rabbi Gellman, “the last acceptable prejudice in America is prejudice against religious people.”

No wonder television news ignores them. In a study released this March, Brent Bozell’s Media Research Center (MRC) determined that only 268 of approximately 1,800 nightly news stories broadcast by ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC, and PBS last year concerned religion. The morning programs were even more dismal. Though the entertainment division showed some improvement since 1993, the figures for news broadcasts are roughly commensurate with past MRC studies. And last year, the MRC noted, reporters overlooked a number of newsworthy religious stories—such as the overseas persecution of Christians.

Meanwhile, normally astute journalists continue to ignore religious angles. When heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield was interviewed live after Mike Tyson lost their June fight on

account of biting, Holyfield repeatedly praised Jesus—and suggested that his faith helped keep him calm when Tyson turned his ear into an appetizer. But the subsequent—and otherwise exhaustive—news coverage virtually ignored Holyfield's religious pronouncements.

Still, not all is bleak. ABC News in particular shows signs of improvement. Peter Jennings overcame the strenuous objections of jittery colleagues to help Peggy Wehmeyer become the first network news religion correspondent in 1994. But other networks have failed to follow suit, even though producers strain to ensure representation of women and racial and ethnic minorities among reporters and on-air guests. "I find it hard to accept," says Wehmeyer, "that the major networks do not consider religion worthy enough to assign more people to this beat."

Wehmeyer, who has covered everything from Christian capitalists to a spiritual revival among Jews, stressed her gratitude to ABC and Peter Jennings for their commitment to religious news coverage—a commitment underscored when ABC signed her for another three-year contract this spring.

Despite her sound instincts and long experience, Wehmeyer is an oddity to some in the news business. Many people "assume I can't be objective because I'm a Christian." No wonder this self-described "moderate evangelical," who didn't learn until college that her mother is Jewish, is reluctant to discuss her own faith. She's not the only one. In a half-hour telephone interview, former NBC correspondent Bob Abernethy, who hosts this fall's PBS-distributed show, "Perspectives: The Newsweekly of Religion and Ethics," gladly talked at length about the program. But he was hesitant to discuss his own religious background as the grandson of a Baptist minister and current member of the United Church of Christ,

Most newsmen and commentators routinely insert details about themselves into their stories. But religion still gives the

powers-that-be the willies. Rabbi Gellman, who along with Monsignor Thomas Hartman constitutes "Good Morning America's" "God Squad," notes that "several people at ABC went way out on a limb" to bring the duo on the air. The resistance is rather bizarre. After all, clergymen have a proven track record. The Emmy award-winning Bishop Fulton J. Sheen proved a smash commercial success in the 1950s with his show, "Life Is Worth Living."

In their two years on the air, Gellman and Hartman have discussed all kinds of news stories, some with obvious religious dimensions, others not. (After Mickey Mantle died, they considered what lessons even imperfect biblical heroes can teach us.) Gellman has appeared in a giant pumpkin head on Halloween to show folks that clergymen aren't ogres. But the God Squad have their work cut out for them.

Just ask Martha Williamson, the born-again Christian who had to fight tooth and nail to get her show "Touched by an Angel" on the air. A well-informed TV producer tells me that CBS's head of programming hated the show and bent over backwards to sink it. Even after its test-marketing proved impressive, he tried to bury the program in an awful time slot. Panned by critics and shunned by CBS, the show nevertheless soon achieved immense popularity. (At that point, the hostile network executive decided to take credit for birthing the show.) With some 20 million viewers weekly, "Touched by an Angel" ranks among television's top three rated programs—and now has the coveted Sunday night time slot. CBS even has a spin-off, "Promised Land," which Williamson also produces.

Other networks, of course, have followed suit, but still seem rather clueless. ABC's fall line-up, for example, includes "Teen Angel" (Thomas Aquinas he ain't) and "Nothing Sacred." The latter, puffs ABC's promotional material, concerns an iconoclastic priest, Father Ray, who among other adventures almost gets "fired for advising a pregnant teenager to follow her own instincts."

There you have it. Priests aren't ready for prime time unless they are "pro-choice"—and counsel teenage girls to just do their own thing. But would television glorify a priest who urged a teenage girl to "follow her own conscience" about whether to smoke cigarettes? Granted, saintly clerics could prove dull. "The Adventures of Mother Teresa" doesn't sound like a cliffhanger. But why are only heretics heroes? And if television is keen on priests uneasy with the Catholic hierarchy, how about portraying priests who dissent from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' loud opposition to welfare reform?

Are the stirrings of renewed Hollywood interest in religion signs of a great awakening—or simply the latest fad to hit Lotus Land? *America's* James Martin suspects that TV's spiritual revival could be short-lived. Not long ago, television was giddy over the success of the sitcom "Friends" and couldn't churn out clones fast enough. But they disappeared faster than a Big Mac on Bill Clinton's plate. Hollywood fads "last one season," Martin says. "Maybe Hollywood will lose interest."

Given television's offerings so far, that could prove a blessing in disguise.

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ATTACKS ON LEAGUE GROW

The success that the Catholic League has had in protesting "Nothing Sacred" has led to a rash of criticism. Much of it is

simply a matter of interpretation, that is, there are those who differ with the league on the way it sees the show. But a growing number of critics have decided to target William Donohue, as if he were the issue, not the show.

Front page stories in the *National Catholic Reporter* and the *New York Observer* have shown a preference for putting a negative spin on Donohue, more than the league itself. The same is true of the lead editorial in *Commonweal*. By contrast, *America* has stuck to an honest debate on the merits of the show.

Occasionally, critics demonstrate that an underlying bias pervades their take on the show. For example, John Levesque in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* describes Kevin Anderson as “an irreverent, non-conformist parish priest trying to do the right thing within the structure of an organization that’s not high on boat-rockers.” Translated this means that priests “do the right thing” when they line up against the oppressive Catholic Church.

There was a particularly snotty article in the November issue of *GQ*. The author, Terrence Rafferty, thinks that it is the “self-deprecating ambivalence about his [Father Ray’s] priestly authority” to which the Catholic League objects. Rafferty misses the point, perhaps willingly: it is the deprecation of the teachings and traditions of the Church that the league finds offensive.

The *New York Times* likes to identify the Catholic League as a “conservative group,” thus red flagging us to their liberal readers. Notice that the *Times* never puts a political tag on such civil rights organizations as the ADL, NAACP, GLADD and NOW. That’s because the *Times* agrees with their positions and disagrees with ours.

Steve Johnson in the *Chicago Tribune* goes one better by calling the Catholic League “a fairly extreme group.” We learn

something about his objectivity when in the same article he describes *Commonweal* as “an independent journal for Catholic intellectuals.”

Syndicated Catholic writer James Breig gave us a close-up look at his thinking when he found objectionable a TV show that depicted a 1970s priest in a stereotypical manner. He was horrified to see the priest wearing jeans, playing a guitar and taking a “Whatever” attitude towards life. But Breig thinks “Nothing Sacred” is just great.

Then we have those who like to make up things about the league so that they can attack us. Like many of our critics, Gannett writer Gary Stern likes to take issue with the Catholic League for labeling “Nothing Sacred” anti-Catholic. The problem is we never did.

Then there is the ever-fulminating Father Andrew Greeley. He writes that “William Donohue’s Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is so busy trying to drive ‘Nothing Sacred’ off the air it seems not to have noticed the horror at Stanford.” It seems Father Greeley hasn’t noticed that it was the league that got Stanford to apologize for bashing Catholics and the Irish at its October 4th football game (see the last *Catalyst*). More important, this was already old news by the time Greeley wrote his piece.

The best the Catholic League can do about these things is fight back by writing letters to the editor, which we do all the time. In the case of Father Greeley, we can do one better: we can put him on our complimentary list.

THESE NUMBERS DON'T LIE

Here's more evidence that ABC holds "Nothing Sacred" to a different standard (actually, none at all) than it does every other show. The network is not ordering any more episodes of its new comedy series, "You Wish," (it merited only a half season), but is committed to a full slate for "Nothing Sacred."

Here's how the two shows compared in terms of ratings (1 point is 980,000 homes) and shares (percentage of TV sets in use) for the first five weeks that they were on together:

	"You Wish"	"Nothing Sacred"
Week of 9/22-28	8.7/16	4.4/7
Week of 9/29-10/5	6.9/13	5.1/8
Week of 10/6-12	7.0/13	4.7/8
Week of 10/13-19	6.8/12	4.4/7
Week of 10/20-26	6.2/11	5.1/8

The league's comment to the press on this matter is printed below:

"The evidence continues to mount that ABC has an agenda with 'Nothing Sacred.' The reason that the show has always been treated differently by ABC is due to its birth: its womb is political. In other words, propaganda dressed as entertainment has been the essence of 'Nothing Sacred' *de novo*.

"Over the five weeks that 'You Wish' and 'Nothing Sacred' were on, 'You Wish' consistently beat 'Nothing Sacred,' and it did so handily. Indeed, on average, 'You Wish' placed 63rd in the rankings while 'Nothing Sacred' was 85th. The proof is in the numbers and what they tell us is this: there are two standards

at the network—one for ‘Nothing Sacred’ and one for every other show.”

NOTHING NEW ABOUT THE LATEST “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."

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."

BOYCOTT AND PETITIONS SOAR

The boycott of the sponsors of "Nothing Sacred," and the number of persons who have signed the petition against the show, continues to mount. There are now 27 companies that have pulled their ads from the show and approximately 1,000,000 persons who have signed the league's petition addressed to Disney chief, Michael Eisner.

The November *Catalyst* listed the following shows that had withdrawn their ads: Isuzu, Weight Watchers, K-Mart, Benckiser, DuPont, Red Lobster, Ocean Spray, Sears, AT&T, Glaxo Wellcome, Ponderosa, Dunkin' Donuts, Scott's Liquid Gold, Chrysler-Plymouth, Honda, Arm & Hammer, Home Depot, Borden, Alberto Culver and Montgomery Ward.

The league erred in listing AT&T and wrote to the company explaining the mistake. AT&T never advertised on the show, rather it was Telecom*USA that did: the league mistook this MCI company as a subsidiary of AT&T. Therefore, the correct number of sponsors who pulled, as of the November *Catalyst*,

was 19, not 20. However, since that time, eight new companies have pulled.

The latest companies that have withdrawn advertising are: Ovaltine, Dairy Queen, Mutual of Omaha, Telecom*USA, Cigna, McCormick, Pier 1 and Nordic Track. This brings the total to 27 companies that have said no to "Nothing Sacred."

Viewers of the show cannot help but recognize the unusually high number of promotional spots that ABC is running on "Nothing Sacred." Add to this ads run by movie studios, non-profit groups and products ordered by (800) numbers, and that leaves relatively few companies left who are directly subject to a consumer boycott. Even here there is good news: Nordic Track, which was selling its equipment via an (800) number, has decided to dump the show.

Because it is getting more difficult to boycott the show, and because there are ads that only appear in certain markets, the league recommends that members contact those companies that have advertised the most on "Nothing Sacred."

We suggest that you concentrate on Block Drug Company, maker of Targon and Sensodyne. Write to them at 257 Cornelison Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey 07302 or call them at (800) 365-6500. Also write to Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., maker of Clairol and Excedrin, at P.O. Box 191, 1 Squibb Drive, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901 or call them at (800) 223-5800. Contact Grand Metropolitan PLC, owner of Burger King and Pillsbury. Write to Burger King at 17777 Old Cutler Road, Miami, Florida, 33102-0783 or call them at (305) 378-7011; Pillsbury may be reached at 2866 Pillsbury Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 or at (800) 775-4777.

There is no question that the boycott is being felt. Obviously, there is nothing the league can do to stop ABC from subsidizing its failed show with money taken from other sources, but it can, and will, make them pay dearly for it.

The league is proud that the Knights of Columbus, with 1.5 million members, has joined the boycott. It is also proud of all those persons who are not of the Catholic faith who have vigorously supported our effort. In this regard, special mention must be made of the Southern Baptists, Coral Ridge Ministries, Focus on the Family and the American Family Association.

Members should know that a counter-boycott is underway. Those who support the show are writing to sponsors who have not quit asking them to stay. This is more reason than ever before to continue our efforts.

MORE PHONY “ART”

Artist Barbara Kruger recently made an attempt to mimic Andres Serrano by creating a sculpture of Jesus Christ and an inebriated Santa Claus leaning against a large sarcophagus. While Jesus clutches a cross, Santa holds a dollar sign and a little girl who looks like JonBenet Ramsey.

The exhibition was put on display on Halloween at the Mary Boone Gallery in New York City. Art critic Hilton Kramer said of Kruger's work, "People no longer have any understanding of what blasphemy means." Alternatively, it could be said that people like Kruger know exactly what blasphemy means, which is why they continue to promote it.

ANOTHER OFFENSIVE CAMPUS CARTOON

In a recent edition of the student newspaper of Binghamton University, *Pipedream*, there was a fictional ad for a "Vatican" malt liquor. It showed what was supposed to be the pope holding a bottle of malt liquor. The adjoining inscription was for the most part typical college humor, but there was a statement we did find offensive. The cartoon has the pope saying, "Jesus Christ! That's good Goddamn liquor."

A letter was sent to the editor-in-chief of *Pipedream* asking that he exercise as much discretion in editing articles and cartoons that offend Catholics as he most certainly does when other segments of society are unfairly depicted.