

A&E'S DEMONS MERIT EXORCISM

A&E television network broadcast a documentary in May replete with lies about the Catholic Church.

The documentary was based on the book *Illuminating Angels and Demons: The Unauthorized Guide to the Facts Behind the Fiction* by Simon Cox. The book discusses the "facts" on which Dan Brown's novel *Angels and Demons* is based.

Bill Donohue responded by pointing out some of the errors contained in the documentary. One of the "experts" interviewed falsely stated that the Church teaches that Peter was the first person to see Jesus when Christ rose from the dead, and that's why he's the first Pope. That is not, in fact, what the Church teaches.

Some other claims made in the documentary: the Vatican existed in the fourth century (it didn't exist until 1,000 years later); there are 'hidden gospels' buried in the Vatican that could be used to destroy the Church (the innocuous books can be found online); Jesus was a follower of John the Baptist (he's got it backwards); the Church is anti-science (no institution has contributed more to science than the Catholic Church); the Church 'would still kill Galileo today' (no one—not even an albino monk—killed him); and so on.

They are just some of what is contained in the documentary. The people interviewed are identified as "experts." They clearly display not even a rudimentary knowledge about the Catholic Church. At no point are there any refutations to the statements they make. The documentary uses the work of these "experts" to slander the Catholic Church.

The author on whose book the documentary is based raises suspicions. Simon Cox is the Editor in Chief of a magazine that covers "alternative history and ancient mysteries." The BBC has described him as a "historian of the obscure."

Catholic League President Bill Donohue responded, "Had A&E accessed serious scholars, these embarrassing errors would have been avoided. Instead they relied on amateurs and charlatans. While we can't be exactly sure what's possessing A&E these days, the signs are ominous. Better call on the services of an exorcist, just to be sure."