

BLOCKBUSTER PROMOTES PRIEST FUELING ANTI-CATHOLICISM

The nation's largest video rental chain, Blockbuster, has recently made the Disney-Miramax movie *Priest* available for distribution. Due to its anti-Catholic nature, the movie was the source of strong criticism from the Catholic League last year and was roundly scored by many others as well.

On May 25, 1995, Catholic League president William Donohue wrote a letter to Steve Berrard, the CEO of Blockbuster Entertainment, expressing his concern that "it would be disheartening to learn that Blockbuster decided to put *Priest* on its shelves." He also asked "what kind of policy you have in making these determinations [of deciding which videos to select]." No reply was given to this letter.

William Donohue made the following statement about this development today:

"Blockbuster does not distribute every movie made, nor does it randomly select which videos to promote. We know this because Blockbuster refused to carry the anti-Christian movie, *The Last Temptation of Christ*. But apparently Blockbuster thinks there is a difference between an anti-Christian movie and one that is merely anti-Catholic. It would be most instructive if Blockbuster explained its reasoning.

"Tolerance for bigotry is intolerance and that is why Blockbuster errs in its decision to stock *Priest*. By fanning the flames of anti-Catholicism, Blockbuster calls into question its reputation as a family-friendly outlet and contributes to an already poisoned environment. It gleefully accepted the plaudits of many when it refused circulation of *The Last Temptation of Christ*. It will be interesting to see how Blockbuster reacts once the public discovers its new

double standard. We will be sure to inform the Catholic community of its duplicity.”

The Catholic League is the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization. It defends individual Catholics and the institutional Church from defamation and discrimination.