

CATHOLICISM TARRED BY CHRISTIAN FILM

On December 7, Gener8Xion Entertainment, a prominent Protestant film company, will release "Noëlle." Catholic League president Bill Donohue disputes the claim that the movie is merely "a parable of forgiveness and grace":

"We've seen the movie and it's a gem. In the synopsis provided by Gener8Xion, it accurately describes Jonathan Keene as 'a young Catholic priest seemingly devoid of genuine human emotion'; his job is 'to do what he does best: shut down a failing parish.' Then there is 'the child-like Fr. Simeon Joyce, a faithful but disillusioned priest who blatantly disregards church regulations, uses church monies to pay an old fisherman's medical bills and spends most of his time drinking at the local pub.' Both priests are portrayed as losers.

"Viewers learn that the only reason Fr. Keene became a priest is because he felt guilty about getting a girl pregnant when he was in college; to top things off, he pressured her to have an abortion. Fr. Joyce, the alcoholic, has serious reservations about celibacy and his idea of heaven is a jolly good Christmas party. Fr. Joyce tells Fr. Keene he wants to marry a woman named Marjorie so he can help raise her illegitimate kid, saying he 'made a vow to God not to the Church.' But Fr. Keene, a first-class klutz, is also in love with the same woman: he is shown bolting in the middle of Midnight Mass to be with her, knocking over a filled chalice and ripping off his vestments.

"Throughout the film, confession is trivialized, celibacy is ridiculed, the Virgin Mary is disrespected, nuns are belittled, last rites are mocked, and priestly vocations are caricatured. In short, that which is uniquely Catholic is

trashed. However, the plot and the acting are so deliriously absurd that it is impossible for us to get too worked up about this flick.

“It means nothing that the movie has a pro-life message. Stereotypes about Protestant ministers abound, raising the question, Why didn’t Gener8Xion choose to mock one of their own clergy? Similarly, given that the film’s writer, David Hall, has said that his primary interest was in ‘dealing with hypocrisy,’ why didn’t he consult with Sen. Charles Grassley about all those ‘prosperity church’ pastors being investigated for ripping off their flock? We know why, and that’s why the Catholic League exists.”