

“CRUCIFIX MASTURBATION” FILM WINS



The Venice Film Festival awarded a special jury prize Saturday to “Paradise: Faith.” The film is part of a trilogy; Strand Releasing has acquired the U.S. rights and plans to release it early next year. Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments

as follows:

One of the hallmarks of cultural charlatans is the propensity to insult Christians, especially Catholics, and then declare their offense creative. If anyone wants to know why a special jury prize was given to “Paradise: Faith,” let me spare you the need to read about it: it won because it shows a devout Catholic woman masturbating with a crucifix.

The movie begins with the woman, Anna Maria, played by Maria Hofstaetter, whipping herself topless before a crucifix. A strange gal, she is shown walking around the house on her knees praying. She also likes to go door to door carrying a two-foot high statue of the Virgin Mary; this is her way of getting new converts. She earns our empathy when we learn she is stuck in a lousy marriage with a Muslim in a wheelchair (he has no legs).

Hofstaetter, like the director, Ulrich Seidl, was raised Catholic. True to form, she admits that “as a youngster I rebelled against the authority of the Catholic Church” (authority problems are not uncommon with her ilk). Yet she says she has “profoundly Christian values,” the kind which, evidently, allow her to masturbate with a crucifix.

“Over the centuries,” Seidl says, “Catholicism has suppressed sexuality, and of course, this triggered a counter-movement.” This explains why he can say that “it is right to show her masturbating using a cross, as she is making love to Jesus. Just because it might be a taboo doesn’t mean that I won’t show it.” But how much courage does it take to insult Catholics?

In any event, Seidl is a liar. In his home country, Austria, they arrest those who disparage the Holocaust. Not that we would approve, but a real taboo-buster would take on that subject. However, don’t expect Seidl to do so—cultural charlatans don’t have the stomach for breaking unsafe taboos.