

“DA VINCI CODE” SHROUDED IN SECRECY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the secretive nature of “The Da Vinci Code”:

“The Associated Press recently observed that Dan Brown ‘has given few interviews,’ something the New York *Daily News* explains by calling him a ‘reclusive author.’ But if Brown is naturally reticent, the same is not true of those working on the film version of Brown’s book: their silence is a calculated and well-coordinated decision.

“In May 2005, *Variety* tried to squeeze some juice from the movie’s director and producers. They didn’t get a squirt. ‘We’ve made a pact...where we have numbered scripts and everything is extremely confidential,’ admitted co-producer Brian Grazer. So what about Father Richard McBrien, the Notre Dame theologian who was given a copy of the screenplay? McBrien said he was under contractual obligations not to talk. By August 2005, the *New York Times* would write that ‘Sony has dropped a scrim of secrecy’ over the film. Indeed, the *Times* reported that ‘The script has been closely controlled. Outsiders have been banned from the set. And those associated with the film have had to sign confidentiality agreements.’

“As we get closer to the film’s premiere, the secrecy continues. *Time* recently noted that critics expected to see the movie in April, but have since learned that they’re being shut out. *Entertainment Weekly* adds that ‘Virtually everything about [the movie]...has been kept double top secret from the public.’ Indeed, even the room where the final editing is taking place is marked ‘DENTAL RECORDS,’ further proof of how mysterious everything is.

“And they say the Catholic Church is secretive? But who could be more secretive than everyone associated with the ‘Da Vinci Code’ enterprise? Not Opus Dei—the latest issue of *People* gets it right when it refers to the lay organization as a ‘once-secret group.’ How ironic it is that the most uptight persons involved in this whole affair are the laid-back types in Hollywood? By contrast, the Catholic Church is an open book.”