

GERMAN FILM FESTIVAL LOVES ANTI-CATHOLIC MOVIE

On February 13, director Constantin Costa-Gavras won the prestigious Berlinale Kamera award at the Berlin International Film Festival. The Greek-born French director won the prize for his latest movie, "Amen." The film is about a German SS officer who allegedly tells a priest what was happening to the Jews during the Holocaust and the subsequent refusal of Pope Pius XII to do anything about it.

William Donohue immediately issued the following news release:

"There is no difference between Catholicism and Nazism. That is the message of 'Amen.' Lest anyone doubt this to be true, consider the movie's poster, as designed by Oliviero Toscani: it shows a Catholic cross blended with a red swastika on a black background. With good reason did the French bishops blast the poster for its irresponsibility.

"Everything connected with the movie is pure propaganda. First, while there was a real-life SS officer by the name of Kurt Gerstein, the Jesuit priest whom he allegedly spoke to is pure fiction: he never existed (this is not contested by anyone). Secondly, the movie is based on the book, *The Deputy*, by Rolf Hochhuth. His book, which was the basis for his play, started the fiction that Pius did nothing to save the Jews. Thirdly, as anyone who has tracked Toscani's work for Benetton knows, the man is a notorious anti-Catholic. Fourthly, Costa-Gavras, who is one of Europe's most politically-inspired directors, is guilty of propaganda when he says, 'no one historian said he [Pius XII] saved so many people or saved anyone.' I guess he never heard of John Toland and Sir Martin Gilbert, two of Europe's top historians: Toland says no one saved more lives than Pius and Gilbert's latest book thanks the pope for what he did.

“To associate Catholicism with Nazism is worse than bad history. It’s dangerous because it suggests nothing has been learned. Which means history could repeat itself.”