

“GOLDEN COMPASS” PROTEST IGNITES

On October 5, the Catholic League kicked off its campaign against “The Golden Compass.” The first interview that Bill Donohue granted was to Raymond Arroyo, EWTN’s host of “The World Over.” He then did two Fox News Channel shows back-to-back: “The Big Story” with John Gibson and “Fox and Friends.”

Approximately 500 media sources were sent a copy of the league’s booklet on the film. In addition, copies are flying off the shelf as orders from our members and interested parties are coming in at a rapid pace. In other words, we are getting the word out fast: the movie is “bait for the books,” i.e., it is designed to lure parents into thinking that Philip Pullman’s trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, would make a great Christmas gift. Not if we can help it!

Our introductory statement to the media read as follows:

“New Line Cinema and Scholastic Entertainment have paired to produce ‘The Golden Compass,’ a children’s fantasy that is based on the first book of a trilogy by militant English atheist Philip Pullman. The trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, was written to promote atheism and denigrate Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism. The target audience is children and adolescents. Each book becomes progressively more aggressive in its denigration of Christianity and promotion of atheism: *The Subtle Knife* is more provocative than *The Golden Compass* and *The Amber Spyglass* is the most in-your-face assault on Christian sensibilities of the three volumes.

“Atheism for kids. That is what Philip Pullman sells. It is his hope that ‘The Golden Compass,’ which stars Nicole Kidman and opens December 7, will entice parents to buy his trilogy as a Christmas gift. It is our hope that the film fails to

meet box office expectations and that his books attract few buyers. We are doing much more than hoping—we are conducting a nationwide two-month protest of Pullman's work and the film. To that end, we have prepared a booklet, '*The Golden Compass: Agenda Unmasked*,' that tears the mask off the movie.

"It is not our position that the movie will strike Christian parents as troubling. Then why the protest? Even though the film is based on the least offensive of the three books, and even though it is clear that the producers are watering down the most despicable elements—so as to make money and not anger Christians—the fact remains that the movie is bait for the books. To be specific, if unsuspecting Christian parents take their children to see the movie, they may very well find it engaging and then buy Pullman's books for Christmas. That's the problem.

"We are fighting a deceitful stealth campaign on the part of the film's producers. Our goal is to educate Christians so that they know exactly what the film's pernicious agenda really is."