

SHOWTIME OFFERS DOUBLE WHAMMY

In December, the cable station, Showtime, aired two programs that were clearly targeted at Catholics, and in a most offensive way. On December 9, it showed *Critical Choices*, and on December 8 and 13, it aired *Sherman Oaks*.

Critical Choices is a movie that takes place over Easter Weekend, beginning with Holy Thursday; it opens with a shot of the Pope on his hands and knees washing the feet of the bishops. A character played by Pamela Reed is portrayed as an anti-abortion extremists. Not surprisingly, she is a homely, dowdy person who contrasts sharply with a liberal pro-abortion advocate, played by Diana Scarwid; she is an attractive career woman.

There are shots taken in a church and a priest is introduced as a revenge-seeking militant. The priest provokes the anti-abortion woman's husband to place a bomb in an abortion clinic. The woman is seen reciting The Memorare and a gay man is sympathetically portrayed as a victim of anti-abortion zealots.

Sherman Oaks was worse. A seductive blond finds it hard to believe that a man she has met at a health club is a priest. "A priest, my ass," she comments. This is followed with the quip, "You're going to tell me the bulge between your legs is a chalice, right?" The woman appears topless in the show, has an affair with the priest and generally makes derogatory comments about priests.

Both shows triggered a letter to Showtime president Aaron Donaldson. *Catalyst* readers can write to him at 1633 Broadway, New York, New York 10019.