

# **CBS MOVIE, “NIGHT SINS,” SINS AGAINST CATHOLICS**

On February 23 and 25, CBS aired a two-part movie, “Night Sins,” starring Valerie Bertinelli. Based on a novel by Tami Hoag, the second part of the series portrayed a priest who passionately kisses a woman in church and a crazed deacon who assaults the priest and then commits suicide; we also learn that the deacon harbored the body of his wife and misled many altar boys. The persistent use church music and Catholic symbols made a perfect backdrop to the message that CBS wanted to send.

Catholic League president William Donohue saw the movie and issued the following comment today:

“Having just gotten back from California after meeting with many in the Hollywood industry, I was struck by the most recent attack on Catholicism. In ‘Nightly Sins,’ the viewer meets two Catholics—one a wayward priest and the other a mad deacon. As always, Catholics who are shown as loyal to the church are portrayed as suffering from some malady. Indeed, it is precisely because the deacon is depicted as ‘obsessed’ with Catholicism that he is portrayed as an evil disciplinarian.

“It was not for nothing that Valerie Bertinelli commented after the suicide of the deacon that it ‘seems like they all have a secret life, hiding their sins.’ The point, of course, is that all priests and deacons resemble the two characters depicted in the movie. Thus, Hollywood once again shows its penchant for attacking Catholicism by presenting Catholics whom no one would admire and then suggesting that most Catholics are as deviant as CBS would have us believe.

“CBS is by no means the only offender in Hollywood, but between this movie and its recent showing of a despicable

episode of 'Cybil' (it mocked the Sacrament of Reconciliation), one wonders what motivates the creative-types at Black Rock to bash Catholicism. The league will register a formal complaint with CBS."

---

## **CATHOLIC LEAGUE BLASTS ASH WEDNESDAY INCIDENT AT SILVERGATE RETIREMENT RESIDENCE, FALLBROOK, CALIFORNIA**

On Ash Wednesday, February 12, a supervisor at the Silvergate Retirement Residence in Fallbrook, California, told a subordinate, a practicing Catholic, to wipe the ashes from her forehead. She refused on the grounds of her religious beliefs. He then wiped the ashes from her face with a dirty dish cloth, allegedly having first seized her forearm.

William A. Donohue, president of the Catholic League, had this response:

"The Catholic League is appalled by the incident last Ash Wednesday in which a supervisor at the Silvergate Retirement Residence forcibly wiped the blessed ashes from the forehead of a Catholic subordinate. Press reports indicate that Silvergate's management acknowledges that the incident took place but has expressed the belief that the incident has been blown out of proportion.

"No, it hasn't. On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent,

blessed ashes are placed on the foreheads of the faithful. The ashes remind Catholics of their own mortality and of the necessity for contrition and penance during the Lenten season.

“The supervisor’s insensitive actions and the casual response of Silvergate’s management betray anti-Catholic prejudice. It is as unacceptable for someone to wipe the ashes from the forehead of a Catholic as it would be for him to yank the yarmulke from the head of a Jew.

“The Catholic League insists that Silvergate discipline the supervisor. He should be required to attend a sensitivity training workshop on prejudice, especially as it bears on Catholics. Bigotry has no place on the job. Silvergate should also issue a formal, written apology to the employee, with assurances that the incident will not recur and that she will suffer no retribution for practicing her Faith.”

*Those on the West Coast can contact the San Diego Chapter of the Catholic League at (619) 585-7320.*

---

## **FERRER, MESSINGER & SHARPTON SIDE WITH ILGO**

On February 12, three mayoral hopefuls, Fernando Ferrer, Ruth Messinger and Rev. Al Sharpton, met with representatives of the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization (ILGO) to declare their unwillingness to march in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade unless ILGO is allowed to march; ILGO has been denied the right to march in the parade by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the parade’s sponsor, and has lost in court in attempts to force their way into the march.

William Donohue of the Catholic League commented on this incident:

“The Catholic League is delighted that Mr. Ferrer, Ms. Messinger and Rev. Sharpton will not be marching in the St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Anyone who sides with those who would defame the parade’s heritage should not participate. We are equally delighted that Mayor Giuliani has decided to ignore ILGO’s bait and will march in the parade.

“Catholic voters comprise 43 percent of the New York City electorate. The Catholic League will do its best to inform them of the decision by Ferrer, Messinger and Sharpton to identify with those who have long sought to disrupt this important day for Irish Catholics. Those who associate themselves with ILGO necessarily express their contempt for Catholics by honoring the politics of exclusion: it is simply not possible to honor St. Patrick if those who would besmirch his honor were allowed to prevail.

“The only good news about ILGO is their increasing political irrelevancy, and the only good news about Ferrer, Messinger and Sharpton is that they have now contributed to their own political irrelevancy by siding with ILGO.

---

## **STATE CONTEST IN SOUTH DAKOTA FEATURES ANTI-CATHOLIC PLAY**

The most notoriously anti-Catholic play ever written, Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You, has been nominated for an award in a South Dakota contest. The play will be performed on February 7 at the Johnson Fine Arts Center on the campus of Northern State University. The play is being performed by

students from Douglas High School in Box Elder, South Dakota, and was selected by the school for entry into the contest. Lemmon High School is in charge of the Region V One-Act Play Festival and originally made arrangements for its performance at the School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City. School officials from Douglas High School have defended the play, arguing that it is not anti-Catholic.

Catholic League president William Donohue commented on this today:

"It is astonishing that a play which has been labeled as anti-Catholic by such organizations as the Anti-Defamation League, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the American Jewish Committee—to say nothing of the scores of Catholic groups that have protested it—is now being considered for an award by the government of South Dakota.

"This is a textbook example of what is wrong with current interpretations of church-state violations: no play that glorified Catholicism would be allowed to compete in a state contest, yet it is acceptable for the state to sponsor Catholic-bashing plays.

"The officials at Douglas High School are delinquent in their responsibilities. They would not dare promote the Merchant of Venice, but they have no problem promoting Sister Mary Ignatius. Their defense of the play flies in the face of the protests that have been lodged against it by multiple religious organizations, as well as by reviewers like Clive Barnes and Frank Rich.

"The Catholic League will ask Governor William Janklow to investigate this matter with an eye towards remedial measures. There is no place for state-sponsored bigotry in America."