

# CATHOLICISM THRASHED IN CINEMAX MOVIE

This Friday evening, May 26, Cinemax TV will show a movie starring Woody Allen, "Picking Up the Pieces," that thrashes Catholicism from beginning to end. The plot revolves around a butcher (Allen) who slices up his wife and buries her in the desert. One of the hands is found (giving the finger) by a blind woman who brings it to a priest. The woman, now cured of her blindness, insists that the hand belongs to the Virgin Mary. The priest, who is having sex with a prostitute, advertises the hand to the faithful as a cure for all types of maladies; one of the "miracles" results in enlarged breasts for a woman and an enlarged penis for a dwarf.

Cinemax made a copy of the movie available to us. Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the film:

"When Woody Allen said, 'I'm Jewish, but I'm not religious in any significant way; I don't have any respect for any of the major religions,' he was only partly telling the truth. He would have been more honest if he had said that he has particular disrespect for Catholicism, for that is what this movie demonstrates beyond a reasonable doubt.

"Our Blessed Mother is ridiculed; references to bishops as pedophiles are inferred; priests are money-grubbing hypocrites; comments like 'I'm not saying Jesus was a pimp, but he had a 'ho-Mary Magdalene' are made; Mother Teresa is said to have had 'sex slaves'; a priest has sex in the confessional; the Church is compared to a whore; miracles are treated with disdain, etc. It does not surprise, then, to learn that the producer, Alfonso Arau, has made despicable comments about his former religion.

"We will ask our members to cancel their subscription to

Cinemax and to write to Woody Allen and Alfonso Arau asking them to explain the source of their bigotry (see contact information below). The only saving grace is that the film is such a bomb that it is not likely to make it to the big screen. One more thought: that Woody Allen doesn't mind being associated with a straight-to-cable movie suggests that he's slipped. Unless he gets his act together, the Spice channel might be the only outlet left for him."

- To cancel Cinemax call your local cable provider.
- To contact Cinemax directly: Cinemax, 1100 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036. (212) 512-1000
- To contact Woody Allen and Alfonzo Arau: c/o William Morris Agency, 151 El Camino Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212

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## **"TONIGHT SHOW" MOCKS CATHOLICISM**

After receiving literally scores of complaints—via phone calls and e-mail—a copy of the Friday night edition of the "Tonight Show" with Jay Leno was obtained. What angered so many people about the May 19 show was a rendition of the Catholic-baiting song, "The Vatican Rag," performed by actor Dennis Franz and five other actors. Four of the characters were dressed as bishops, twirling huge rosary beads, and one played Pope John Paul II. The lyrics of the song contains verses such as "Try playin' it safer, drink the wine and chew the wafer," and "Two, four, six, eight, time to transubstantiate."

Catholic League president William Donohue commented on the show as follows:

“Jay Leno called a few years ago to apologize for a skit we charged was over the line. He told me that each year he does some 11,000 jokes and that sometimes he makes mistakes. Fair enough. But as I explained to Jay, we make distinctions between ‘Sister Act’ type humor and that which deals with the Eucharist and other aspects of Catholicism that are central to our religion. Apparently, he still doesn’t get it.

“If it were just a bunch of actors parodying popes and bishops, that would be one thing. But when the heart and soul of Catholicism is held up to ridicule, that is another thing. We hope that Mr. Leno does not give us reason to explain our position to him one more time. As for Dennis Franz, he’s lucky God gave him some talents to work a drama series, for it’s obvious that his comedic skills are wanting.”

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## **BISHOP EDWARD M. EGAN**

Catholic League president William Donohue spoke to the news that Bishop Edward M. Egan has been appointed the new Archbishop of New York:

“Bishop Egan is the right person for the right job in the right city. His resume is a knockout of achievements and his persona is a perfect fit for New York.

“In the 1960s, he earned a doctorate in Canon Law *Summa Cum Laude* from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. In the 1970s, he was professor of Canon Law at his alma mater, and in the 1980s he was one of six canon law specialists chosen by His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, to revise the Code of Canon

Law.

“While in Chicago in the 1960s, Bishop Egan served as secretary of the Archdiocesan Commissions on Ecumenism and Human Relations and was a member of several interfaith and ecumenical boards. This experience will serve him well in New York.

“Bishop Egan’s commitment to quality parochial education was evident in his role as Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar for Education of the Archdiocese of New York between 1985 and 1988. He also challenged those who sought to upend the teaching of traditional moral values in the sex education curriculum in the public schools.

“His dedication to the interests of the needy needs no defense: while Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, Bishop Egan established the Inner-City Foundation for Charity and Education, providing food, housing, medicine and education to the poor. His outreach to the Hispanic and Haitian communities during his tenure in Bridgeport resulted in the founding of apostolates to serve their interests. He also founded a seminary, Saint John Fisher.

“Perhaps most of all, Bishop Egan is an affable person who is not afraid to engage the culture. He will be great for New York and the Catholic Church.”

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## **JOHN CARDINAL O’CONNOR**

The Catholic League is deeply saddened by the death of John Cardinal O’Connor. A towering figure by any standard, John Cardinal O’Connor will be remembered for many accomplishments, but most of all he will be remembered by the Catholic League

as our most devoted supporter.

John Cardinal O'Connor did more than oppose abortion; he provided alternatives to any woman who sought to place her child for adoption.

He did more than pray for the sick; he personally tended to their needs. He did more than advocate quality parochial schools; he provided the resources that were necessary to do the job. He did more than promote the welfare of priests and nuns; he helped to found orders of distinction. He did more than support workers' rights; he was one of the best friends of unions in New York. He did more than encourage good relations with Jews; he went out of his way to secure them.

John Cardinal O'Connor will be missed by all those whom he touched. A scholar and a humanitarian, he was, above all, a priest. And he was a priest who will serve as a model for all others for a very long time.

William A. Donohue, President