

THREE WORTHLESS FILMS

Hollywood's fascination with Catholicism is evident this spring with the release of "Buddy Boy," "The Virgin Suicides" and "Keeping the Faith."

"Buddy Boy" was subject to limited release, opening on March 24 in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Independent Pictures, which made the film, previously gave us the twisted movie, "Julien Donkey-Boy," so it comes as no surprise that it would take cheap shots at Catholicism in its latest film.

The movie revolves around the theme of a repressed Catholic who lives with his alcoholic mother; she makes her son feel bad about himself. The son has an affair with a neighbor and develops an obsession with her. According to one account, the movie "opens with grainy video footage of crucifixes and elaborate church altars, then transits to an image of our protagonist Francis...masturbating to a centerfold of two giant breasts."

Paramount Classics is responsible for "The Virgin Suicides," a film based on a novel of the same name. Written and directed by Sofia Coppola and produced by Francis Ford Coppola, the score centers on a family in the 1970s with five beautiful girls who are the envy of the neighborhood. The old stereotype of the overprotective, rigid Catholic mother is trotted out, the result of which is that all the girls commit suicide in the end.

"Keeping the Faith" comes by way of the Disney affiliate, Touchstone Pictures," a film about a priest and a rabbi. Best of friends, the two fall in love with the same woman, a mutual friend from their childhood. The rabbi and woman have an affair and conceal it from the priest throughout most of the film. The priest manages to keep his vow of celibacy though in a dream sequence he imagines himself making love to the woman.

Though the movie is not offensive, it does trivialize religion. The opening scene shows the inebriated priest telling the whole story to a bartender. With a towel wrapped around the priest's neck, the scene is a parody of confession. In a later scene, the priest accidentally sets his robes on fire and hops into the baptismal font to put it out. Meanwhile, the rabbi faints during his first circumcision ceremony.

What these movies demonstrate is an inability for those in Hollywood to take religion seriously, and this is particularly true of Catholicism. That this reflects the values of those who make these movies is a given, suggesting that nothing less than a cultural renewal will change things for the better.