

TOWNIES SHOWS ITS AGENDA

In the last edition of *Catalyst*, the league warned about the ABC show *Townies* which was supposed to introduce a character named Father Boyle. Based on information in *TV Guide*, the league worried about a disrespectful treatment of Catholicism. Our fears were only too well founded.

Carrie and her friend Kurt are fallen away Catholics, whom Father Boyle would like to see return to the Church. However, on the October 23 episode he was more interested in fundraising to replace a statue. He wanted funds from a rich older woman who left the Church when her cat died. Carrie said sometimes people blame God. The priest responded, "Actually she blamed me. I backed over the damned thing on bingo night." As for the Our Lady of Grace statue with rusted arms, the priest said to her that she would not want children having to be hospitalized with tetanus "because they cut themselves on Our Lady's jagged rusty stumps."

Carrie was confused about what to do and saw an image of Jesus in mashed potatoes. Kurt said to her, "This isn't religion. It's voodoo. It's not even voodoo; it's insanity." He put a knife in the potatoes and said that it was Frosty the Snowman. "We're not slaves to some mindless superstition," Kurt said. When his change from his bill at the restaurant was \$6.66, he agreed to go with Carrie to visit the rich old lady.

Carrie talked to the woman about the statue. The woman said, "That cat murdering priest has been hounding me for weeks." The woman gave her money, thinking she was another girl, Flora. Carrie pretended to take money but felt guilty and left it with the old lady. She went to the church to tell Fr. Boyle. He was in the confessional and she was standing outside. He tried to coax her into the confessional by saying it was comfortable and that he could not hear her as well outside. She explained what she did about the money, asserting

it was what God wanted. She said that she hoped she had not disappointed the priest. Fr. Boyle responded, "I have oreos," as if he did not care about what she said.

As usual, Hollywood is pushing the message that one can believe in God and be a good person without being a churchgoer. Carrie was shown as a good person while the priest was preoccupied with money and guilt.

If *Townies* proceeds like this, we will be in for another battle. We'll keep you posted.