

# Vatican paper: 'Angels & Demons' film is harmless

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May 7 2009

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Reviewers at the Vatican's newspaper have passed judgment on "Angels & Demons," finding the religious thriller commercial and inaccurate, but concluding it is "harmless" entertainment and not a danger to the church.

L'Osservatore Romano ran a review and an editorial in Wednesday's edition, critiquing the movie based on the Dan Brown best-selling novel of the same name.

"Angels & Demons" had its world premiere Monday in Rome, after director Ron Howard charged that the Vatican interfered with getting film permits to shoot scenes in the city — a contention the Vatican said was a publicity stunt.

The newspaper wrote that the movie was "a gigantic and smart commercial operation" filled with "stereotyped characters." The paper suggested moviegoers could make a game out of finding the many historical inaccuracies in the plot.

However, L'Osservatore praised Howard's "dynamic direction" and the "magnificent" reconstruction of locations like St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel. Much of the film was shot on sets that painstakingly recreated church landmarks.

The film offers "more than two hours of harmless entertainment, which hardly affects the genius and mystery of Christianity," L'Osservatore's reviewer wrote. It's "a videogame that first of all sparks curiosity and is also, maybe, a bit of fun."

"Angels & Demons" features Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon of "The Da Vinci Code" fame, played by Tom Hanks. In the film, the Vatican turns to Langdon after an ancient secret brotherhood called the Illuminati kidnap four cardinals considered front-runners to be the next pope, and threaten to kill one an hour and then explode a bomb at the Vatican.

On Sunday, Howard said the Vatican had interfered with his efforts to get permits to shoot some scenes. A Vatican spokesman said the statement was designed purely to drum up publicity for the film.

Top church officials strongly objected to "The Da Vinci Code" because it was based on the idea that Jesus married and fathered children and depicted the conservative Catholic movement, Opus Dei, as a murderous cult.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gGioeawsmkSbJfG7T2EMOuVYTpBgD980U95O1>