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INTERVIEW/BURKE

## **"Blasphemous acts, to destroy the joy of Christmas"**

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**Riccardo  
Cascioli**



"They call it art but it is an expression of the emptiness of life without God and rebellion against the law that God has placed in the heart of every person. And the silence of priests and bishops in the face of these disgusting attacks on the Lord is a sign that also the situation in the Church is very serious." Cardinal Raymond L. Burke does not mince his words in judging the clamorous blasphemous works masked as artistic expression. In particular, just recently, two cases have conquered the news headlines: the obscene poster of a pedophile Jesus on display outside the Contemporary Art Museum of Rome (Macro) and the film about Jesus in version gay ("The first temptation of Christ"), on the Netflix streaming platform which is provoking a very strong reaction from Christian communities around the world. And so as not to miss the icing on the cake, there is the case of the mega-poster affixed to a Vatican building in Via della Conciliazione in Rome, a stone's throw from San Pietro, advertising the film - also on Netflix - entitled "The Two Popes", a commercial operation of dubious content that has

perplexed and scandalised many faithful passing by.

**Cardinal Burke, there is a crescendo of blasphemous works with the presumption of being artistic. What is happening?**

In the first place it is a phenomenon due in part to nihilism in the Arts, which are no longer an expression of truth, beauty and goodness, but have become an expression of the emptiness of a life without God; they are the expression of rebellion against the law that God has placed in our hearts. This is today's society; but there is also an aspect that concerns the Church: pantheism has entered, syncretism with non-Christian religions and even with secularism. The figure of Jesus has become relativized, He is no-longer the only Saviour, but reduced to being a good man, a symbol, therefore with all the merits and defects of a man. For a Christian this is the most serious thing that could possibly happen, Christ converted into any symbol. Just read what was written in the preparatory documents of the Amazon Synod: Jesus is no longer the One who gives order to everything, but part of the cosmos ... Its unbelievable.

**It could be argued that even if His unique divinity is no longer recognised, it is not clear why there should be such rage against His person, why disfigure His face?**

This is life without God; there is no indifference but an evident and angry reaction to destroy the One who is a sign of contradiction, who reveals the emptiness that exists in life. They cannot tolerate His light.

**With regard to light, a typical Christmas theme. It seems a strange coincidence that these blasphemous attacks take place just as the Church is preparing for Christmas.**

It is not a coincidence, it is a diabolical act. The devil arrives on the scene to destroy the joy of Christmas, he tries to steal the joy of Christians.

**One thing that can't fail to be noticed is the silence of the Church in the face of these blasphemous attacks. Politicians took action against the Macro manifesto, the laity protested against the Netflix film with a large collection of signatures but in both cases there has been no strong signal from the top, from the shepherds.**

You are right, this silence of bishops and priests is a scandal. I have no doubt that there are also good priests who defend their flock, but unfortunately these are isolated cases. Also in the Church a politicised vision of life has taken precedence: it is divided into opposing camps, conservative or progressive, for or against the Pope. All this is absurd. The Church is guided by truth, not by political convenience. Instead, the tendency is to

do what is politically correct, so it happens that even when the Lord is the target of a disgusting attack, there is silence. It is a clear indication that the situation in the Church is very serious.

**But in the face of these attacks, what should a believer do? What should the next step be after the obvious indignation and pain?**

First of all, acts of reparation must be carried out. Prayer intentions offered to repair these terrible offences. Also penances must be served for this purpose. But then we must use all the God-given gifts we have to prevent these obscenities from spreading: writing and any other legitimate action to prevent the recurrence and spread of blasphemous acts. We should ask who the sponsors of certain exhibitions or events are, which theatres or halls host them; and take stock.