

THE DA VINCI DECEPTION

HOMILY HELPS

Bullet Points

There are so many erroneous, absurd, and blasphemous assertions made in *The Da Vinci Code* about Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the Catholic Church, Leonardo da Vinci, and others, that the homilist can be easily overwhelmed. Where should one begin? Which of the many errors should one focus on? We have compiled the following bullet points, arranged in several macro categories. Many of these points could form the basis of a particular homily.

(For a fuller treatment of *The Da Vinci Code*'s fraudulent claims and invented history, please consult *The Da Vinci Deception*, available at www.DavinciOutreach.com or by calling 1-800-376-0520.)

1. *The Da Vinci Code* Attacks Jesus Christ Himself:

- While the Catholic Church (and various affiliated organizations, e.g., Opus Dei, the Knights Templar) could be seen as the main object of scorn and ridicule in *The Da Vinci Code*, the book's primary attack is ultimately not on the Church but on the person of Jesus Christ.
- The book claims that Jesus was not the divine Son of God; that He was married to Mary Magdalene and had children with her; and that, by order of the Roman emperor Constantine, the Church "made" him divine at the Council of Nicea.
- In effect, *The Da Vinci Code* reduces Jesus to a mere "mortal prophet, a great and powerful man" (as the book puts it) who had a girlfriend. Of course, one cannot deny Christ's divinity and still end up with Christianity. The very person of Jesus—who He *is*—forms the very foundation of the Christian faith.
- Jesus Christ claimed to be divine; He proved His divinity through His miracles, especially by His resurrection from the dead; He must be divine in order to redeem mankind. If, as *The Da Vinci Code* asserts, he was just a first-century bachelor with a girlfriend, the Christian faith is a sham.

2. *The Da Vinci Code* is Filled with Egregious Historical Errors:

- There are so many basic "desktop reference" inaccuracies—i.e., facts that can easily be checked in an encyclopedia or on the Internet—in *The Da Vinci Code* that it is difficult to know where to begin.
- For example, Dan Brown consistently refers to Leonardo da Vinci as "Da Vinci" throughout the novel. Historians and art scholars refer to him as "Leonardo." "Da Vinci" simply refers to Leonardo's home town. This would be akin to referring to Jesus as "of Nazareth," St. Francis as "of Assisi," or Mother Teresa as "of Calcutta."

- He claims that title of Leonardo's famous painting the *Mona Lisa* is an anagram for the gods Amon and Isis, but Leonardo da Vinci never called the painting by this name. He called it *La Gioconda*, a reference to its subject, the wife of wealthy Florentine businessman, Francesco da Giocondo. The painting only came to be known as the *Mona Lisa* hundreds of years after Leonardo's death. (*Mona* is a common Italian contraction for *madonna*; Lisa was the name of Francesco da Giocondo's wife).
- Dan Brown refers to Silas, the book's assassin, as an Opus Dei monk, but Opus Dei is not a monastic order. It has no monks.
- He laughably refers to the Dead Sea Scrolls as some of the earliest Christian documents. They are, in fact, Jewish documents that make no reference to Jesus or Christianity whatsoever.
- *The Da Vinci Code* claims that the person sitting next to Jesus' right in Leonardo's painting *The Last Supper* is Mary Magdalene. This is the "code" behind the book's assertions, supposedly proof that Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene, among other absurd claims. Every reputable art historian, however, acknowledges that this figure is actually the apostle John.
- Throughout the work, Brown refers to "the Vatican" as the location of corrupt Church power. For example, according to Brown, it was "the Vatican" who ordered the suppression of women and the "sacred feminine" in the early centuries of the Church. This would be difficult to accomplish given that "the Vatican" (i.e., the Vatican hill in Rome, the site of present-day Vatican City) would not become the seat of Church power until the 12th century. In the early centuries of the Church, it simply did not exist.
- Brown claims that the early Church suppressed women and replaced worship of the "sacred feminine" with a "male God." This suppression of women is, of course, hard to square with the Church's obvious veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the unique exaltation she enjoys above all the saints.

3. Dan Brown Utilizes Seriously Flawed Sources:

- None of the most controversial claims made in *The Da Vinci Code* have any historical evidence to back them up. In fact, Dan Brown's primary sources have been highly criticized by historians for their wholly unsubstantiated (i.e., made up) claims regarding the history of Christianity.
- The authors of one of Brown's primary sources, the book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, have sued him for plagiarism.
- The absurd claim that the Holy Grail is actually Mary Magdalene (rather than, as the tradition Arthurian legend holds, the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper) is taken directly from *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*.
- Dan Brown has no advanced training in history, art, or theology. He is a former prep school English teacher who is a self-described New Ager, with an apparent dislike for traditional Christianity in general and the Catholic Church in particular.