

# THE DA VINCI CODE: SOME FACTS

## ***The Da Vinci Code Attacks Jesus Christ Himself:***

- ◆ While the Catholic Church is the main object of scorn and ridicule in *The Da Vinci Code*, the book's primary attack is ultimately 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 (325 A.D.), a claim easily proven fraudulent from Church history.
- ◆ St. John the Evangelist (+ ca. 100), St. Ignatius of Antioch (+ ca. 115), St. Justin Martyr (+ ca. 165), St. Hippolytus of Rome (+236), and Tertullian (+ ca. 240) are among the *many* pre-Nicea witnesses to Christ's divinity whose writings we still have. The word "Trinity" was already being used in both Greek and Latin theology in the second century.
- ◆ The bishops who ran the council of Nicea defended Christ's divinity against a heretic named Arius. They appealed to both *Scripture and Tradition*, against Arius' novelties.
- ◆ Jesus taught "openly" (Jn. 18:20), promised that His Church, which St. Paul called "the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), would endure to the end of time (Mt. 16:18; 28:20), and commanded his Apostles to "teach all nations" (Mt. 28:19). If *The Da Vinci Code* is correct, Jesus either lied or failed.
- ◆ *The Da Vinci Code* reduces Jesus to a mere "mortal prophet, a great and powerful man" who had a girlfriend. But Jesus Christ claimed to be divine; He proved His divinity by 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.

## ***The Da Vinci Code Advances an Absurd Conspiracy Theory:***

- ◆ The conspiracy theory put forth by Dan Brown is so ridiculous it boggles the mind. The greatest thinkers, mystics, and philanthropists of history — e.g., St. Augustine, St. Benedict, St. Gregory the Great, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clare, Dante, Chaucer, Father Gregor Mendel, St. Teresa of Avila, Columbus, and St. Therese — were all either ruthless conspirators or useful idiots who helped advance a murderous, lying cult.
- ◆ Assuming for a moment that the Bible is a fraud: If Jesus' "true message" was buried by a huge conspiracy of the Catholic Church, then the *real* God, whose message the *real* Jesus came to teach was either too weak, too evil, or too stupid to make the truth known to the human race — until the publication of Dan Brown's blockbuster!
- ◆ Unlike Salman Rushdie and others who criticize the *Koran* in the Muslim world, Dan Brown has not been forced into hiding for fear of his life. Rather, he is making lots of money and taking TV interviews. If his claims are real, why hasn't some "Opus Dei monk" killed him?
- ◆ From the early centuries of Christianity to this very day, millions of Catholic martyrs have shed their blood for the Faith Dan Brown ridicules. Oddball religious sects and movements — such as the confused and contradictory gnostic heresies which inspire Brown's book — were notoriously absent such blood witnesses.

## ***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 — in *The Da Vinci Code* that it is difficult to know where to begin. Recall that, even though it is admittedly fiction, Brown makes this claim in his book: "FACT: All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate."
- ◆ Here are some architectural and artistic "accuracies": He describes the "warm woods" of the Gothic Cathedral of Notre Dame (Gothic architecture does not have "warm woods"); he mentions the "first pew" of the Church of St. Sulpice, a church with *no pews*; he describes that same Parisian church, which boasts a famous mural by Delacroix, as having a "lack of decor."

He also betrays an ignorance of the difference between Renaissance and Rococo by describing a “plush Renaissance bedroom with Louis XVI furniture,” a mistake of about two hundred years!

- ◆ 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 claims that Leonardo prospered from “hundreds of lucrative Vatican commissions.” Anyone familiar with Leonardo’s career knows that he was not a prolific artist. There are only some seventeen paintings of his in existence and four are unfinished.
- ◆ *The Da Vinci Code* claims that the person sitting at 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. Every reputable art historian, however, acknowledges that this figure is actually the apostle, St. 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 twelfth 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 hard to square with the Church’s well known veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the unique exaltation she enjoys above all the saints. For this reason, certain Protestants frequently attack the Catholic Church for worshipping Our Lady as a Goddess.

#### **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 traditional Arthurian legend holds, the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper) is taken directly from *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. It is also disputed by scholars of the Arthurian legends.
- ◆ Paul Plantard, whom *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* held out to be the Grand Master of the Priory of Sion, admitted under oath in a French court that the Priory was his own fabrication.
- ◆ 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.

Adapted from public domain material on the [www.DavinciOutreach.com](http://www.DavinciOutreach.com) web site, with additional information from [www.Catholicism.org/davincicode-rebuttal.html](http://www.Catholicism.org/davincicode-rebuttal.html). For more information about the Catholic Faith and its claims, contact:

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