From Time to Time

There has been much discussion and promotion in the media about the upcoming release of the motion picture, The Da Vinci Code. The Dan Brown novel, which I read as entertaining fiction, has jumped from the entertainment pages to the front pages of many news publications, and the electronic media have given it similar treatment.

In fact, in recent weeks I have received many media requests for interviews about the movie. In the interviews in which I participated I found myself coming back to one common theme: this is a movie – a work of fiction, springing from the imagination of the writers.

The interviewers all asked the same questions: Do you plan to see the movie? I don't know. Do you think others should see it? I think people should understand that this movie is a work of fiction and that they should not plan on leaving the movie with a greater understanding of the real life of Jesus and the true history of Christianity.

There are plenty of examples of inaccuracies in The Da Vinci Code, including the notion that Jesus is not divine (The Da Vinci Code suggests that Jesus was not divine and that it was Emperor Constantine who created the teaching for political reasons. Historical evidence clearly indicates that early Church teachings and the New Testament cited Christians' belief in the divinity of Jesus). Other examples can be found on the U.S. Bishops' website, www.jesusdecoded.com. This link, as well as a list of local parish discussions about The Da Vinci Code can be found on the Archdiocese of Baltimore's website, www.archbalt.org.

Like many other movies, The Da Vinci Code is based on a work of fiction and will likely provide viewers with a couple hours of entertainment before they return to the responsibilities and challenges that await them. It is my hope that the interest

generated by this movie will inspire people to read the Bible more closely and more frequently and to seek a closer and more personal connection with Jesus through prayer and spiritual renewal.