



**For more information, contact:**

Mike Aabram

Edelman

312-297-7021 or 312-804-5738

[Mike.Aabram@edelman.com](mailto:Mike.Aabram@edelman.com)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Chicago Priest turns Film Producer with 10-part, Hi-Def Epic on Catholicism**

CHICAGO, October 2, 2008 – Publishing books, podcasting his sermons and posting movie reviews on his YouTube channel were just warm-ups for Chicago priest and popular theologian Fr. Robert Barron. Next month, he heads to Rome to shoot the second episode of his biggest production yet—a \$10 million, 10-part TV documentary on Catholicism.

With filming for the first part completed in Israel in June, the next nine episodes will bring Fr. Barron and his production crew to Rome, Krakow, Warsaw, New York, St. Petersburg, Istanbul, Sinai, Nazareth, Ephesus, Lourdes, Guadalupe, Athens, Corinth, Mexico City, Lagos, Rio de Janeiro, Assisi, Auschwitz, Calcutta, Philadelphia—30 locations in 15 countries in all. Viewers can preview the sweeping production online and participate in viral pilgrimages at [www.WordOnFire.org](http://www.WordOnFire.org).

Through his journeys, Fr. Barron will explain what Catholics believe and why – using art, architecture, literature, music and all the riches of the Catholic tradition to tell a visually arresting and inspiring story. It may be one of the most ambitious productions ever to promote the Catholic faith to the world.

“‘Catholicism’ could well become one of the most significant efforts ever to advance what Pope John Paul II called ‘The New Evangelization,’” said George Weigel, biographer of Pope John Paul II and Distinguished Senior Fellow of Washington’s Ethics and Public Policy Center. “Truth, goodness, beauty -- they’re all here, in a stimulating and compelling exploration of the spiritual, moral, and intellectual riches of the Catholic world. This is the Catholic story told from inside, with knowledge, sympathy, and passion, rooted in friendship with Jesus Christ.”

“In looking at the modern challenges and opportunities facing the Church, I felt an urgency to come up with a creative and constructive response to remind people of the richness and good news that Catholic tradition brings people,” said Fr. Barron. “What I didn’t realize at first is how far our travels would take us. We’ll log more miles than St. Paul on his apostolic mission, I hope without the shipwreck.”

A portion of the first episode is available online at [www.WordOnFire.org](http://www.WordOnFire.org). Titled “Amazed and Afraid – The Revelation of God Become Man,” it follows Fr. Barron through Israel. From the lush region of ancient Caesarea Phillipi, to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, to the holy city of Jerusalem and to the eternal city of Rome, Fr. Barron illuminates and explains the Catholic Faith’s conviction that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah and the revelation of God become man.

While the project will take more than a year to complete, its supporters can follow its making online. The Word on Fire Web site will feature a community forum and behind-the-scenes interviews, photos, and information to create an immersive experience that allows followers to become a part of the story."

Fr. Barron is an award-winning author of nine books on Catholicism and creator of five DVDs, 25 YouTube reviews of American culture and hundreds of podcasted sermons. With such new-media savvy, it’s no surprise he was adamant about using the latest in high-definition technology for the documentary. To further ensure the highest production values, Fr. Barron tapped as executive producer Mike Leonard, a 30-year veteran correspondent for NBC’s *Today* show.

The documentary is being funded entirely by private donations, with the goal of raising \$10 million for the production, promotion, distribution and study guides for the film.

### **About Fr. Robert Barron and Word on Fire Ministries**

Fr. Robert Barron is from Western Springs, Illinois, and is a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He received his Master's Degree in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America (1982) and his doctorate in theology from the Institut Catholique de Paris (1992). He currently holds the Francis Cardinal George Chair of Faith and Culture at the University of St. Mary of the Lake/ Mundelein Seminary. A prominent author, his many books include "And Now I See: A Theology of

Transformation,” “Thomas Aquinas: Spiritual Master,” “Heaven in Stone and Glass,” “The Strangest Way: Walking the Christian Path” and most recently, “Eucharist” and a compilation of his life - changing sermons entitled "Word on Fire." His numerous articles on theology and culture have appeared in a variety of journals, newspapers and magazines. Father Barron's popular DVDs include “Untold Blessing,” “Conversion” and “Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues.” In addition to his academic work, writing, and media outreach, Father Barron is the director of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries. He is considered by many to be one of the leading Catholic evangelists of our time.

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