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**WTTW PRESENTS U.S. BROADCAST PREMIERE
OF *CATHOLICISM* SERIES**

The story of the Catholic Church to be presented on public television this fall

CHICAGO – May 5, 2011 – WTTW, Chicago’s premier public television station, announced that it will premiere and distribute four episodes of *Catholicism* – a multi-part documentary series for public television – in October 2011 to public television stations nationwide. This epic television production illustrates the history and treasures of a global religion shared by more than one billion people around the world. The series is filmed in stunning high-definition and spans more than 50 locations in 15 countries.

“*Catholicism* is fascinating television. This series will be of great interest to viewers who want a better understanding of the impact and meaning this faith continues to have throughout the world,” said Dan Soles, WTTW’s Senior Vice President and Chief Television Content Officer. “I am pleased and honored that this production has a home with WTTW and that public television stations around the country will have an opportunity to broadcast this important work,” he added.

Father Robert Barron, the *Francis Cardinal George Professor of Faith and Culture* at Mundelein Seminary and a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, is the creator and host of the series. The executive producer is acclaimed filmmaker Mike Leonard, a veteran correspondent for NBC’s *Today* show and producer of the popular public television series *Ride of Our Lives*. Together, Fr. Barron and Leonard spent two years traveling the world with a crew of seasoned network television producers.

“The filming of the *Catholicism* series was one of the most exciting and rewarding periods of my life,” said Fr. Barron. “Our team traveled the globe to capture some of the beauty, truth, and texture of Catholicism. I am thrilled that WTTW in Chicago will be our partner in broadcasting the series, and I hope to engage the imaginations of both Catholics and non-Catholics. I’m so grateful to so many who made this production possible.”

“This series changed the way I think and act. The global settings were stunning, but it was Fr. Barron’s brilliant insights on life’s most challenging issues that shook me to the core,” admitted Mike Leonard. “Whatever your belief or background, there is much to gain from this deep and profound excursion into spirituality, logic and the human experience,” he added.

In this sweeping documentary, Father Barron tells the story of Catholicism around the world – using art, architecture, literature, music and all the riches of the Catholic tradition. The production crew travels to some of the most magnificent and sacred sites in Jerusalem, Rome, Krakow, Warsaw, New York, Istanbul, Ephesus, Lourdes, Mexico City, Athens, Corinth, Mexico City, Uganda, Manila, Sao Paolo, Auschwitz, Kolkata, Philadelphia, Chicago, and beyond.

The team was granted exclusive access to film privately in many locations inaccessible to the general public. Highlights include some of the world's architectural and artistic masterpieces and most sacred places: The Dome of The Rock, the Hagia Sophia, the tomb of Mother Teresa, The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, rare views of the Pantheon, St. Peter's Basilica, the Sistine Chapel and the Pope's private gardens, Chartres, Notre Dame, and Cologne Cathedrals, as well as one of the largest religious celebrations on the planet – the feast of the Ugandan martyrs.

WTTW will distribute and locally air four 60-minute episodes of the series: "Amazed and Afraid: The Revelation of God Become Man," "The Ineffable Mystery of God: That Than Which Nothing Greater Can Be Thought," "Our Tainted Nature's Solitary Boast: Mary, the Mother of God," and "The Indispensable Men: Peter, Paul and the Missionary Adventure."

Viewers can preview the film at wttw.com/catholicism and CatholicismProject.org.

Funding for *Catholicism* was provided by private donors worldwide. This is a production of Word On Fire Catholic Ministries in partnership with Picture Show Films, Mike Leonard's family production company. Leonard's son, Matt, is the director and editor.

About Fr. Robert Barron: An acclaimed author, speaker, and theologian from Western Springs, Illinois, Fr. Robert Barron is also the founder of *Word On Fire*, a global, non-profit media group. He is the *Francis Cardinal George Professor of Faith and Culture* at Mundelein Seminary near Chicago. Ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago in 1986, Fr. Barron has published numerous books, essays, and DVD programs. He is a frequent commentator on faith and culture for *The Chicago Tribune*, *NBC Nightly News*, *FOX News*, *Our Sunday Visitor*, *The Catholic Herald* in London, *The Washington Post*, *CNN* and *The Catholic New World*. He lectures extensively in the United States and abroad, including the Pontifical North American College at the Vatican and the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome. Fr. Barron received a Master's Degree in Philosophy from the Catholic University of America and a doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Institut Catholique de Paris. Cardinal Francis George calls Father Barron "one of the Church's best messengers."

About Word On Fire: *Word On Fire* (www.WordOnFire.org) reaches millions of people through its weekly programs, which have been broadcast on *WGN America*, *Relevant Radio*, *The Eternal Word Television Network*, the popular *Word On Fire* YouTube Channel, and the *Word On Fire* website, which offers daily blogs, articles, commentaries, and over ten years of weekly sermon podcasts.

About WTTW: For more than 50 years, WTTW has introduced a wide array of groundbreaking television programming – reflecting the world's rich and diverse arts and entertainment scene as well as education, politics, public affairs, business, and religion – to a national audience. Its landmark innovative series and original productions include the critically-acclaimed performance showcases *Soundstage* and *Legends of Jazz with Ramsey Lewis*, *Grannies on Safari*, *CEO Exchange*, *David Broza at Masada: The Sunrise Concert*, *MEXICO -- One Plate at a Time with Rick Bayless*, *Retirement Revolution*, the animated children's series *WordWorld*, and *Roger Ebert Presents At the Movies*. More information about WTTW Chicago is available at www.wttw.com/national.