

# Vatican attacks TV station over decision to cut Pope's Christmas Eve mass

---

From Times Online December 19, 2008

The Vatican has attacked a decision by the French television channel TF1 to broadcast a comedy show and a concert this year instead of the Pope's Christmas Eve mass as 'a sign of superficiality'

Richard Owen in Rome

The Vatican has attacked a decision by the French television channel TF1 to broadcast a comedy show and a concert this year instead of the Pope's Christmas Eve mass as "a sign of superficiality"

Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said the move was "not a positive sign". It showed a lack of sensitivity towards the "the culture and religious traditions of a vast part of France".

Pope Benedict XVI visited France, which has 35 million baptised Catholics, in September, and held talks with President Sarkozy. He said then that "What gave Europe's culture its foundation — the search for God and the readiness to listen to him — remains today the basis of any genuine culture".

He added: "At this moment in history, when cultures continue to cross paths more frequently, I am firmly convinced that a new reflection on the true meaning and importance of secularism is necessary,"

L'Osservatore Romano, the Vatican newspaper, today attacked France, which holds the rotating Eu Presidency until the end of the year, for proposing a UN declaration "de-criminalising" homosexuality.

It said the Vatican accepted that private sexual acts between consenting adults should not be punished by law as crimes. But the real purpose of the UN move was to put homosexual relations on the same level as heterosexual relations and thus open the way to the legitimisation of gay marriage and gay adoption.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/court\\_and\\_social/article5372253.ece?print=yes&randnum=1229865871922](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/court_and_social/article5372253.ece?print=yes&randnum=1229865871922)