

## SELLING RELIGIOUS SOUVENIRS

The Catholic Church reads in the Gospel of John chapter 2 how Jesus went berserk in the Temple. Jesus made a whip and put the sellers all out. He told those who were selling doves to get out for they were making a market place of his father's house. Nothing at all in the episode indicates that these people were doing anything dishonest. Jesus doesn't accuse them of that. He accuses them of making a holy place a marketplace. To me the episode proves that Catholic shrines with their bookstalls and shops full of tacky religious souvenirs and Catholic priests getting a salary out of religion, indeed any kind of paid ministry that calls itself Christian, is actually so enraging and disgusting to Jesus that it would make him resort to violence. The Church makes money out of shrines that are based around religious images such as the Turin Shroud and the Tilma of Guadalupe. If men selling in the Temple enraged Jesus so much, how much more would images enrage him? Jesus when he spoke of the Temple being God's house was referring to a room in which there was absolutely nothing. This room was believed to house the invisible God and its emptiness spoke of the inadequacy and vulgarity of religious images.

