

## Boxing News: Pope Starts Fight

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The view from the Vatican must be different from the view everywhere else. Seat of a world religion, home of spiritual treasures and fine art, when the Vatican speaks, the faithful listen ... as do we heathens in the fight game.

A leading Jesuit journal, *Civiltà Cattolica* ("Catholic Civilization"), mouthpiece of the Pontiff's inner circle, decreed in its recent issue that boxing is bad. In an article titled "The Immorality of Professional Boxing," the Vatican pulls no punches when it says the sweet science, "From a moral point of view" is "gravely and absolutely negative."

Boxing certainly is "grave" and "absolute" – no argument there – but "gravely and absolutely *ne gative*?"

" And we thought redemption was your thing.

After comparing boxing to the gladiatorial contests in ancient Rome, about which the church knows a thing or two, the author of the article got down to business: "Professional boxing is manipulated by powerful economic groups, which are often ruthless and cruel, and for whom the boxer is not a man but only a machine to make money."

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