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***RELIGION & ETHICS NEWSWEEKLY* LOOKS BACK AT
NEWSMAKING EVENTS OF 2006 AND AHEAD TO MAJOR STORIES IN 2007**

Washington, D.C. - ***RELIGION & ETHICS NEWSWEEKLY***, the acclaimed PBS newsmagazine program produced by Thirteen/WNET New York, will feature consecutive studio discussions of this year's top stories in the world of religion and ethics and those expected to make headlines in 2007. The studio segments will be included in the December 22 and 29 programs to be distributed at 5 p.m. ET (check local listings) to public television stations nationwide.

Rajiv Chandrasekaran, former Baghdad bureau chief for *The Washington Post* and the author of "Imperial Life in the Emerald City," Laurie Goodstein, *New York Times* national religion reporter and Kim Lawton, ***RELIGION & ETHICS NEWSWEEKLY*** correspondent and managing editor, join host Bob Abernethy for the December 23 discussion and analysis of the top religion news stories of 2006. Topics addressed by the panelists include: sectarian violence in Iraq and the religious challenges confronting America and the Iraq government; the "demonization" of Islam by the West; religion's impact on the 2006 elections; growing political, religious and social differences within the Protestant evangelical community; tensions over issues of homosexuality in the U.S. Episcopal Church and global Anglican Communion; U.S. diplomatic policy in the Middle East; and Hollywood's embrace of faith-based films.

The following week, the program looks at major stories expected to make headlines in the coming year. E.J. Dionne, columnist for *The Washington Post* and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, Jeffrey Goldberg, Washington correspondent for *The New Yorker*, and Rachel Zoll, religion writer for the *Associated Press*, join Abernethy to discuss: possible outcomes in Iraq and the prospects for re-establishing Israeli-Palestinian dialogue; the likely agenda to be set by the new Democratic-controlled Congress; evangelical Christians' broadening focus on social and environmental issues; the threat of schism within the U.S. Episcopal Church; the role of religion in the political process; nuclear proliferation in the Muslim world; and Pope Benedict's efforts to reinvigorate the Catholic Church in Latin America.



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