

- [Home](#)
- [World](#)
- [Culture](#)
- [Society](#)
- [Commentary](#)
- [Weblogs](#)
- [Forum](#)
- [Bookstore](#)

- [Contact](#)

World: Global

UPDATE: Boycott of Ebay over

Tom Serafin, founder of the Los Angeles-based International Crusade for Holy Relics, calls off Ebay boycott

Monday, May 02, 2005
by **Spero News**

Tom Serafin, founder of the Los Angeles-based International Crusade for Holy Relics, has called off the boycott of Ebay following a response from the company.

"Recently, Catholics began a boycott of Ebay and its affiliate, Paypal, over Ebay's stated policy of continuing to permit consecrated Communion Hosts to be offered for sale through its auction site. Tens of thousands of Catholics and others closed their accounts, sent letters and emails of protest, and signed petitions. Others called the company to express their dismay," according to a post on [Serafin's website](#).

"Much to its credit, Ebay has reconsidered, and has officially stated that, under its existing policies, sales of the Eucharist, as well as other unspecified holy objects of Catholics and other religious faiths, will not be permitted in the future. In fact, Ebay is asking Catholics to bring any violations of this policy to its attention promptly, so that it can take appropriate action," said Serafin on his website.

The boycott had been called over Ebay's policy to allow the sale of objects sacred to Catholics - most recently an item purported to be the Holy Eucharist. Last week, when the boycott was called, Serafin had said, "Ebay doesn't care about our faith, but they do care about our money. Perhaps this will wake them up to the fact that offending 1.1 billion people comes with a cost."

"There are still some open questions about the other "similar highly sacred items" that Ebay describes in its letter. However, we hope that Ebay will continue to work constructively and sensitively with Catholics and members of other religions to clarify and implement this policy. In particular, as Catholics, we have for many years been attempting to end the sale of relics, especially first class relics, on the site," Serafin said.

Serafin's ICHR has been battling Ebay's policies on religious relics and other items sacred to Catholics for more than 7 years. Countless sacred items are sold each year through the website's online marketplace.

"It's not enough for them to ban the sale of stolen pieces of the Eucharist," Serafin said last week. "Ebay must stop creating a market for the sale of our religious heritage." Serafin said that Ebay should extend the same ban on sales that it affords to objects from National Parks to Catholic treasures that cannot be sold under Church law. "All we are asking is that Ebay stop creating a market for these sacrilegious sales," Serafin said.

Following is a note from Ebay sent to Serafin and others:

Hello [customername],

Thank you for your email regarding the sale of the Holy Eucharist by one of our community members. We respect and appreciate your comments regarding this sensitive matter.

More top stories:

- » [Anglican schism widens](#)
- » [Blockbusters of a different sort](#)
- » [Was it meant to hurt?](#)
- » [A call for expanding the theology of the body](#)
- » [Get the log out!](#)
- » [Later they will say we were five or six](#)
- » [Couple says discovered King Arthur mysteries](#)
- » [California shaken](#)
- » [How a cracker saved a life](#)
- » [Man sets world record for not going outside](#)

Books and Items:



The birth of religious globalism exposed
Founded by Episcopal Bishop William Swingan, the United Religions Initiative promotes the abandonment of traditional religions and the embrace of the religion of Mother Earth to prevent war and terrorism, and usher in a new age of peace, according to a new book by Lee Penn



Never let me go
Amy Welborn reviews Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro, a novel suffused with a sadness that is almost unbearable at times

As you may know, eBay does not sell items itself. Rather, we are a global marketplace for sellers and buyers who transact directly with one another. Each day eBay's sellers list 5 million items on the site, and those sellers decide what items they want to list. eBay did not possess, list or approve the sale of the Eucharist. The buyer and seller completed the Eucharist transaction on April 11th, before eBay even became aware of the listing.

As a marketplace, we strive to respect the diverse perspectives of our sellers. We also work hard to promote an open environment for trade. That said, eBay has policies in place to remove listings for illegal items as well as highly offensive listings that promote hate or intolerance.

We understand that the listing of the Eucharist was highly upsetting to Catholic members of the eBay community and Catholics globally. Once this completed sale was brought to our attention, we consulted with a number of our users, including members of the Catholic Church, concerning what course we should take in the future should a similar listing appear on our site. We also consulted with members of other religions about items that might also be highly sacred and inappropriate for sale. As a result of this dialogue, we have concluded that sales of the Eucharist, and similar highly sacred items, are not appropriate on eBay. We have, therefore, broadened our policies and will remove those types of listings should they appear on the site in the future.

As always, we welcome and appreciate the assistance of the community in upholding the rules of our site. Should you see another Eucharist listed on our site, we encourage you to notify us so we can take appropriate action. Further, we encourage you to directly communicate with the seller. Members are often unaware that a particular item is offensive to others. A respectful e-mail to the seller is often all that is needed for the seller to voluntarily remove the item. We believe this modification strikes the appropriate balance between respect for our community's values and our goal of providing an open marketplace offering practically anything on earth.

Again, we sincerely appreciate your concern and thank you for communicating your views with us. Your input has helped us frame a policy that will enable us to better serve our diverse community of users around the world.

Regards,
Lenore on behalf of Bill Cobb
Community Watch Team
eBay Trust & Safety



Print



Email

More Global top stories:

Anglican schism widens

Anglican Communion moves closer toward schism after key body endorses request by senior bishops

Anglicans, Baptists move forward in cooperation

Account of five years of dialogue to be published this month

Rich countries failing poor in world trade talks

Rich countries will get away with making no reductions to their massive agricultural subsidies and could even increase them if world trade negotiations do not change track

Uniting nations through worship

United Nations of Worship seeks unity through music's diversity

Employment and unemployment reporting

Walter J. "John" Williams writes in the second of a five-part series on government economic reports: Employment and unemployment reporting

World: Global archives:

June, 2005: 13 articles
May, 2005: 10 articles
April, 2005: 5 articles
September, 2004: 1 article