South Park' Scientology battle continues to rage

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THE ASSOCIATED PRESS NEW YORK — "South Park" has declared war on Scientology. Matt Stone and Trey Park-er; creators of the animated satire, are digging in against the celebrity-endorsed religion after controversial gion after a controversial episode mocking outspoken Scientologist Tom Cruise was yanked abruptly from the schedule Wechesday—with an Internet report saying it was covert warfare by Cruise that led to its departure. "So, Scientology, you may

Continued from page 6B country services will feature the same sermon. The two church bodies will meet together in small groups throughout the week at wor-shippers' homes. The church staff will trans-port a trailer of equipment including a sound system and lights to the theater every

have won THIS battle, but the million-year war for earth has just begun!" the "South Park" creators said in a state-ment Friday in Daily Variety. "Temporarily anozinizing our episode will NOT stop us from keeping Thetans forever trapped in your pitful man-bodies... You have obstructed us for now, but your feeble bid to save humanity will fail!" The Internet blogger holly woodinterrupted.com said Thursday that Cruise threat-end to not promote "Mission Impossible 3," a surefire sum-

Church and a show at theatre

Sunday and take it down at the end of services, so regular movies can be shown at the theater in the afternoon. "Velocity is totally different from anything anybody has seen here," said Glen Allen resident Pam Dumke, who is on the launch team for the new church "I see so many people who aren't affiliated

with a church and they don't have that bond with a church family that is so important for my husband and I." Velocity is the 13th house of worship created in the state since 1990 by Virginia Vision, a group started by the Fel-lowship of Independent Christian Churches to start churches around the state.

mer blockbuster, if the offend-ing episode ran. Comedy Cen-tral is owned by Viacom, as is Paramount, which is putting out the film. But Cruise's representative, Arnold Robinson, told The Associated Press Friday that

the mega-star made no such demands. "Not true," Robinson said. "I can tell you that he never said

that

A call by The Associated Press to a Paramount repre-sentative was not returned. The episode in question,

"Trapped in the Closet," which first aired last Novem-ber, shows Scientology lead-ers hailing Stan, one of the show's four devilish fourth-graders, as a savior A cartoon Cruise locks himself in a clos-et and work come out. An ani-mated John Travolta, another famous Scientologist, enters the closet to try to get him out. The battle began in earnest earlier this week when Isaac Hayes, another celebrity Sci-

Hayes, another celebrity Sci-entologist and longtime show

member—voicing the ladies' man Chef—quit the show, saying he could no longer tol-erate its religious "intolerance and bigoty" Stone and Parker didn't buy that sither

Stone and Farner out that either On Monday, Stone told The Associated Press, "This is 100 percent having to do with his faith in Scientology. He has no problem—and he's cashed plenty of checks—with our show making fun of Chris-tians."

A Comedy Central spokesman said the network pulled the controversial episode to make room for two shows featuring Hayes. " "In light of the events of ear-lier this week, we wanted to give Chef an appropriate trib-ute by airing two episodes he is most known for," the spokesman said spokesman said On the Net:

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Non-Catholics also observe Lent CIATED PRESS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS INDÍANAPOLIS – What did you give up for Lent? It's not just a question for Catholics anymore. In a sign that the Lenten spirit of fasting and repen-tance is becoming more ecu-menical—and less just a "Catholic thing"—non-Catholic t

remember him." Solida is giving up soft drinks for Lent, which means abstaining from two of his favorites: Coca-Cola and Mountain Dew His father, David Solida, used to give up his favorite beverage, iced tea. So far, Cary Solida says he is doing pretty well. "I haven't broken yet,

although it's hard," he said. "It's the first time I've been this committed to doing something, but I think I will (succeed) just because of the significance of what I am doing."

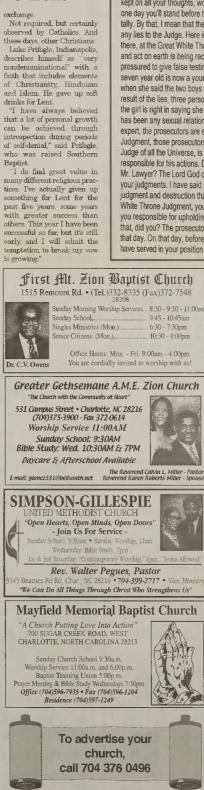
significance of what I am doing." The practice of giving up a favorite food, drink or activity is a time-honored tradition for Catholics, who have observed a 40-day period of fasting, abstinence and alma-giving during Lent since the fourth century. The Rev John Echert, a Catholic expert who teaches at St. Paul Seminary in Min-nesota and answers ques-tions on Catholic television network EWIN's Web site (www.eWIN's Web site (www.etm.com), says the

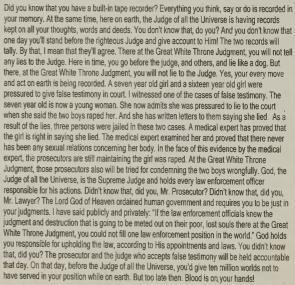
network EWIN's Web site (www.ewtn.com), says the only real obligations for Catholics is to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and to abstain from meat on each Friday during Lent. "Beyond this, it is encour-aged to take on additional penance but not required," Echert said in an online



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