



Abraham (George C. Scott) tells his aged but radiant wife, Sarah (Ava Gardner), that their son will be named Isaac. The scene is from "The Bible," a 20th Century-Fox production.

NCOMP Looks at 'Bible' Interprets It Favorably

New York — In a lengthy review of "The Bible," the national Catholic film office has praised it highly — a reaction opposite the one offered recently by an Episcopal clergyman.

"When one considers the many pitfalls involved in filming the opening chapters of Genesis," said the film office in its newsletter, "it is difficult to carp about individual details of production that might have been done differently. Considered as a total production, 'The Bible' is a movie of artistic distinction, spectacular but not extravagant, reverent but not pietistic, and — most important — enjoyable as motion picture entertainment."

Earlier, in a much-publicized review printed in "Christian Century," the Rev. Malcolm Boyd objected that the film follows too closely the Biblical account of Man's history from Creation through Abraham and Isaac, and that the church was at fault for not leaving "such creative gentlemen" as these filmmakers to interpret the meaning of the mighty acts depicted in their film. He also cited what he called "Hollywood's inevitable sex orgy" — referring to the Sodom and Gomorrah sequence — and the "DeMille spectacular" nature of the film.

Although the film office's review was written before the Rev. Boyd's views became public, it came to an opposite conclusion on several of the film's sequences cited by the Episcopal priest.

"The film was made with a great deal of taste," said the film office, "in that Huston (director John Huston) avoided the vulgarity and the exhibitionism usually associated with this type of spectacular. One of the best examples of this care is the manner in which the sordid proceedings in Sodom and Gomorrah are portrayed. This scene is done in a stylized way with shadows, painted faces, and obscure movements that suggest evil much more impressively than a documentary approach would have."

It was also observed by the film office that the producers of "The Bible" ruled out an "interpretive" version of the first 22 chapters of Genesis on which

the film is based, preferring to make a film that follows closely the letter of the Old Testament. The film office not only considered this an acceptable approach but compared "The Bible" to a current film on the life of Christ, "The Gospel According to St. Matthew."

"Modern scriptural scholarship and archeological research has shown how necessary is the need of careful exegetical interpretation in understanding the language of Genesis. The approach taken by Christopher Fry's script, however, is to follow faithfully the literal description and poetic imagery of the original without attempting to penetrate to the spiritual meaning beneath its surface."

"In this respect, 'The Bible' treats its Old Testament narrative as 'The Gospel According to St. Matthew' presented its New Testament one. Both films portrayed their events in the literal manner in which they are described in the Bible with only an editorial comment. For example, in 'The Gospel' an angel appears several times. 'The Bible' there appear three angels. Neither film indicates whether the scriptural account means to imply that angelic appearances actually took place or whether this is a poetic way of describing a divine revelation or inspiration to man."

"This literal approach to Genesis leaves the interpretation up to the viewer, who may decide simply to enjoy the film for its storytelling ability rather than see it as a religious experience. The film's six main episodes — the Creation, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, the Tower of Babel, and Abraham — are the most satisfying in all Western literature. Although only the narration seems to mold these disparate episodes into a cohesive whole, one might consider that they are all tied together by the theme of obedience to God. The final part when Abraham and Isaac on their way to sacrifice stumble upon a skull from which issues a snake (in the ruins of Sodom), clearly refers back to the beginning, recalling man's first disobedience."

The film office several months ago classified the picture as morally unobjectionable for general patronage (A-1), when



Mrs. Donald Lo Presti — Miss Susan Cocuzzi, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chris Cocuzzi, Ellenwood Dr., and Donald Lo Presti, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Lo Presti, Miller St., were married Nov. 26 in St. Francis Xavier Church, Rochester.

Mrs. Roger LaForce — Miss Donna Marie Richardson, daughter of Mrs. Robert James Richardson and the late Mr. Richardson, Corbett's Glen, and Roger William LaForce, son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin LaForce Jr., Langford Road, were married Nov. 19 in St. Thomas More Church, Rochester.

Mrs. Milton Irizarry — Miss Carmen Della Rivera, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Anastacio Rivera, North Clinton Ave., and Milton Irizarry, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jose Irizarry, Maricao, Puerto Rico, were married Dec. 3 in St. Bridget Church, Rochester.

Mrs. George Klueber Jr. — Miss Colleen Regina Flaherty, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen J. Flaherty, Harwick Rd., and George Francis Klueber Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Klueber Sr., Thorn-ton Rd., were married Dec. 3 in St. Ambrose Church, Rochester.

Family Rosary Radio Leaders

Friday, Dec. 23 — H. Daniel Halloran of St. Helen's parish.

Saturday, Dec. 24 — (Mass will be celebrated) — Clarence Wiest, St. Monica's.

Sunday, Dec. 25 — Charles Rinere, representing the altar boys of St. Francis of Assisi parish.

Monday, Dec. 26 — Michael Macaluso, St. Augustine's.

Tuesday, Dec. 27 — Mark Nothnagle, Holy Rosary.

Wednesday, Dec. 28 — Joseph Entress, Holy Ghost.

Thursday, Dec. 29 — Carl Trott, St. Andrew's, accompanied by members of the Holy Name Society.

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What's New in the Parishes

ASSUMPTION, Fairport. School of Religion presented its Advent Pageant on Sunday, Dec. 18. More than 50 youngsters participated. Jan. Cornelius and Margaret Lawless featured.

NATIVITY, Brockport, C.D.A. No. 931 annual Christmas party was held for the Sisters on Dec. 8. Treen supper, games, Gifts presented to Sisters. Business meeting.

HOLY FAMILY, Rochester. Eucharistic League Christmas party for members and Sisters Thursday, Dec. 29 at 8 p.m. in the Pine Room. Dinner, \$3. Reservations by Dec. 26: M. Pickering, 235-3022; L. Heimrich, 436-7952. Dollar exchange gift; 50 cent game prize.

ST. MARY, Dansville. Rosary and Altar Christmas party was held Wednesday, Dec. 14 in the auditorium. Guests, priests and Sisters. Speaker, Father Thomas Stitt. Gifts for guests, cards, games.

ST. MARY, Waterloo. Rosary Altar Christmas meeting was held Wednesday, Dec. 14. Mrs. Richard Finnerty and Mrs. Shirley Crum, chairmen. Items for cheer baskets and presents for children.

HOLY FAMILY, Auburn. Rosary and Sacred Heart Society Christmas party was held Dec. 14 in the school auditorium. Entertainment by harpist, Miss Miriam Stapleton. Christmas songs by Holy Family Glee Club under direction of Sister Cephas. Gift exchange. Smorgasbord supper.

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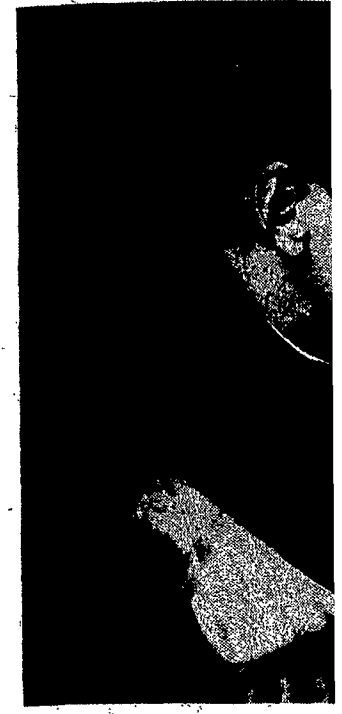
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Father W.

Cole Porter T

The Rochester Broadway Theatre League, a non-profit community organization, sends Ben Bagley's production "The Decline and Fall of the Eyes of Cole Porter, visited." This New Year's production will be shown two performances, one at 8 and the other at 11 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31.

"Cole Porter saw the world with an impudent and sophisticated flair. He was to turn this faculty of the world through wondrous eyes into a musical language uniquely his own.

"It is a feast of melody memory with clever contemporary and colorful collages. Some of the most versatile and young performers present thirty of what is the greatest array of the famous (and I know) songs of Cole Porter brought to the stage at ever.

Edward Earle who starred "The Roar of the Greasey — the Smell of the Crowd"

COURIER-JOURNAL Friday, Dec. 23, 1966

FILMS ABOUT

A MENTION OF MOTIC MORE THAN ROUT

Any Wednesday — "An improvement on the original Broadway comedy. With Fonda as the girl, Jason Ards as the tycoon who tucked her away in his party's executive offices. Murphy as the tycoon's and Dean Jones as the rescuer. The clever screen is by Julius J. Epstein." — Yorker Mag.

"The Endless Summer" — documentary that captures appeal of a dangerous and zing sport, two skillful surfers search for the pe wave on a round-the-world tour." — Time

"The Bible . . . in the beginning. Even with its unassuming subtitle, this is one of the ambitious projects ever undertaken by a movie producer. Encompassing the twenty-two chapters of the Genesis, this film is only gigantic in sheer physical scope but, even more dazzling, it deals with elements vital to the faith and culture of Western civilization. After five years and eighteen million dollars, 'The Bible' appears as another biblical spectacle (although it certainly is more than as an artist's visualization in religious terms of the of man." — Catholic Film Letter

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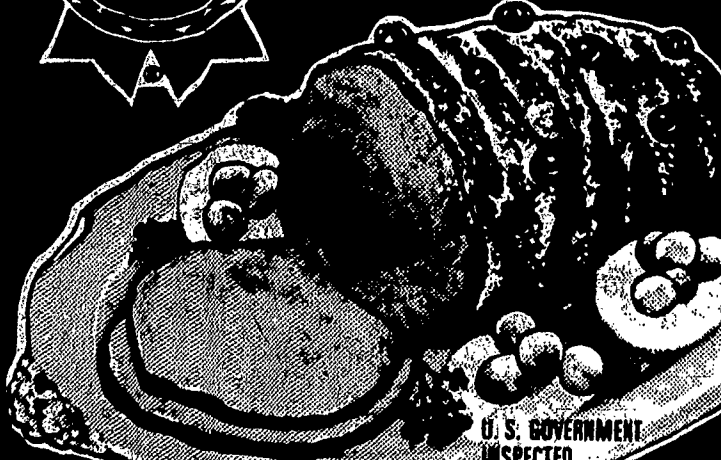
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