



Members of Aquinas-Nazareth Film Club shoot a scene for their "six-and-one-half-minute-epic," entitled "Double Cross." Photographed on 8 mm. film,

the finished product cost the group about \$25. Students are Mara Baldo, Paul Chechak, Angela Mieli, Nick Fici.



Film Club members discuss a camera mechanism: C.S.B., Gerry Tracy and Dick St. Pierre. Alice Korczyk, Nick Fici, Father Frederick Wajda.



McQuaid students hold a follow-up discussion after the showing of a feature film in St. Agnes auditorium.

## Film Study in Our Schools

By SISTER THADDEUS, S.S.J.

Would you believe 15,000 That's the number of hours the average teenager has spent before a television set by the time he graduates from high school. 15,000 equals one year and nine months of twenty-four-hour-a-day television. The count for the number of full-length films he has absorbed reaches at least 500.

By the same stage in his career, the teenager has spent 10,800 hours in a formal classroom. Thus, television emerges as an easy second to nothing but sleeping.

The statistics are from Rev. John M. Culkin, Jesuit director of Fordham University's Center for Communications. Father Culkin has inaugurated an unprecedented concern for teenage film study on the part of educators. Fordham's NDEA Institute in the summer of 1965 awakened other educational institutions to the need for such study, and stimulated further application to the high school classroom of those communication arts already being learned in other leading universities.

When teenagers are given the opportunity to watch an "in-depth movie" without commercials, interesting things happen. They are quiet. They are totally absorbed. The sequence of flickering images and sound effects encompasses them. And when the lights go on and the cinematic experience appears to be over, it isn't.

The young audience talks about the film to each other, almost unconsciously probing for theme. Gone with the days when film was a "moving stage show" are the days of concentration on plot alone. Today's young viewers are oblivious neither to technique nor to the dominant message of a movie.

When, as a high-schooler my-

self, I "went to the show" (remember Saturday afternoons?) I want to be entertained. Two weeks ago, after a screening of "On the Waterfront," two high school sophomores approached me. Both of them had one comment and it spilled over the brim of their excitement: "This was just like The Parable!" Excited myself at their intuitive correlation of films, I pretended coolness: "Why?"

"Because he went around doing so much good, but in the end he was beaten and rejected."

There are difficulties in beginning film study in the high school, and sometimes those difficulties whisper in your ear that it would be well to expend your efforts elsewhere. But that day I knew better. Response to the one art form which belongs exclusively to their century was shown to be well-rooted in fifteen-year-olds who had been serious students of the film for less than a year.

Despite the 15,000 hours of television, film interpretation is not so simple as might be supposed. It is difficult even for the adult who has watched film develop from its birth. As Northwestern's Professor Jack Ellis has noted, "The sound motion picture is the most complex and sophisticated means of communication available to us." This is especially true at the present moment, for the film arts are "fast producing" some specimens meaningful only to a cinematic elite.

The teenager, less aware of art, less mature in the human condition, is impeded in interpretive analysis by his very youth. Furthermore, he has been deafened both by overexposure and by the constant intervention of commercials which destroy the unity of the film's movement, a movement

which is intended to be unimpaired. It is easy to forget that, of the 500 full-length movies the high school graduate has seen, very few of them have been viewed without such interruption.

Add to all this the fact that, even for the communications expert, the way in which the new media communicates remains relatively unexplored, and to a great extent even undiscovered. Translation of its messages awaits the discovery of that language through which film speaks.

But it cannot wait long. The world which the adolescent is about to inherit will be dominated by the visual-aural mass media to an extent as yet unknown. Marshall McLuhan, in his matter-of-fact manner, compares that day when video tape will become "available to the ordinary household" to the era which saw the popularization of the small-sized printed book.

Dr. McLuhan, director of the Center for Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto, and professor at St. Michael's College, has been named to the Albert Schweitzer Chair in Humanities at Fordham, where he will continue his association with Father John Culkin. Perhaps the most important aspect of McLuhan's famed theory, "The medium is the message," expounded in last week's Courier (1/13), is what Father Culkin phrases in this way: "We shape our images, and thereafter they shape us."

Because today's teenagers have been shaped by a set of images different from that which formed their parents and teachers, the communication gulf between them is a broad one.

According to McLuhan, Gutenberg worked a radical change on man when images had for untold centuries been vivid and integral. The printed word brought the advent of the sequential image and, with it, a logical, segmented, linear thought. The imagery of today's adults is a product of Gutenberg's revolution.

Now, however, man often communicates through mass media's visual and/or aural images. Thus, man's images once again are becoming vivid and integral, invoking in him a response more sensory and emotional than intellectual. His thought is more closely aligned to his action; social involvement is on the increase. The imagery of today's teenagers is a product of this revolution.

Contemporary man has become aware of film as an art worthy to be classified with the traditional humanities, as a liberating art. But the awareness is yet young. Look hard at the next TV "night at the movies." Even ten years ago such

## Funeral Held For Fr. Bolger

The hand of death struck at the ranks of the diocesan clergy a second time within two weeks of the new year 1967.

Father W. Darcy Bolger, 54, died Saturday, Jan. 14, five days after he was injured in a two-car crash near Savona in Steuben County.

His death came ten days after that of Monsignor William Byrne of Rhaca.

FUNERAL RITES for Father Bolger were held at St. Peter and Paul's Church, Elmira, Tuesday, and at St. Margaret Mary's Church, Irondequoit, Wednesday morning.

Bishop Sheen offered the Requiem Mass at the Elmira Church and Monsignor Joseph J. Sullivan, a life-long friend of Father Bolger, offered the Mass at St. Margaret Mary's Church.

Father Bolger served seven parishes of the Diocese during his 31 years in the priesthood besides four years service as a U.S. Army chaplain during World War II.

As a chaplain he attained the rank of captain and was assigned to the Pacific area of the war. During that time he made a weekend trip to the island of Molokai to say Mass for the patients of the leper settlement



FATHER BOLGER

founded by the famed Father Damien. "I haven't the words to describe the pitiful scenes presented by some of the patients," he wrote, "but in no one did I find a spirit of discontent."

FATHER BOLGER was a man easily accessible to all and was widely respected for his willingness to listen patiently to the troubles people presented to him. A host of friends testify to his joviality as well as to his unaffected piety.

On a trip to Rome to attend the Vatican Council in 1965 he recognized the aged and near-blind Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani in St. Peter's basilica at the end of one of the Council's morning sessions. He introduced himself and asked the Cardinal's prayers — speaking in a somewhat rusty Latin. The prelate assured him he would include him in his prayers and then requested a similar favor in return. Father Bolger recently remarked he had kept his pledge made that day at the heart of Catholicism.

Father Bolger was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. John Edward Bolger of Rochester. He attended St. Augustine's school, St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries. He was ordained June 6, 1936, at old St. Patrick's Cathedral, Rochester. He was a curate at St. Margaret Mary's Church, Irondequoit, for six years, then joined the chaplains corps of the U.S. Army in 1942. Following the war, Father Bolger was a curate at Holy Apostles Church, St. James

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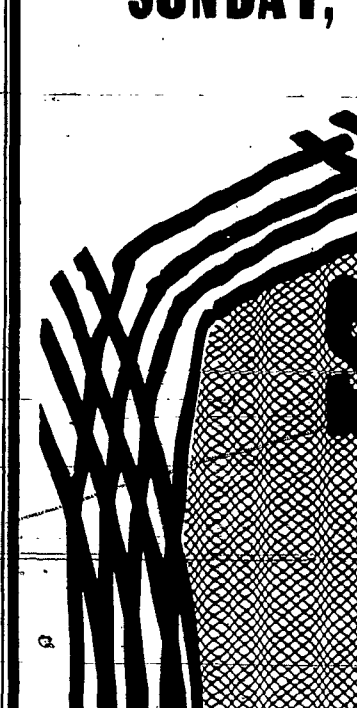
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Linda Taylor (center) makes a point during a St. Agnes High School Film Club discussion. Other participants are Beverly Celmer, Anne Radell, Betty Lou Cooman, Janet Irving and Eileen Shirley.

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