

# Myth Clarifies Fundamentals

The likely successor to "Parable" — the controversial film that has been viewed and discussed by people of all faiths since it was first screened at the Protestant and Orthodox Center during the New York World's Fair — is a film that uses ants to tell the story of the Incarnation.

Titled "The Antkeeper," the 27-minute film is being syndicated to local television stations for their use beginning in mid-November.

Written and directed by Rolf Forsberg, who wrote and co-directed "Parable," the new film tells the story of a gardener who decides to raise ants so that they might add to the beauty of his gardens. Instead, the ants fight among one another, they succumb to the temptations of another's garden and otherwise cause the gardener grief. He then decides to send his own son to live among the ants, becoming one of them, teaching them what they are expected to do and how they should live, and then being killed by them.

"The Antkeeper" is being described as "a new adult film for television" by the film's producers, the Lutheran Church in America, which has been widely distributed on TV series for children, "Davey and Goliath."

"I think 'The Antkeeper' is a little more esoteric and cerebral than 'Parable,'" said Forsberg, who earlier has been used widely in Catholic retreats and at other Catholic-sponsored events.

### The Fundamentals

"In an age which is motivated by humanistic ideals rather than religious ideals, there is a consequential attempt to make a humanist of Christ—to deny the significance of the Incarnation," Forsberg said in explaining how "The Antkeeper" evolved.

The film's fundamental aspects—the Creation, the Fall, the Incarnation and Redemption—and reduced them to a myth form that we thought would help clarify it."

Narrated by Fred Gwynne (the tall, lanky star of TV's "Munsters" and "Car 54 Where Art You?"), "The Antkeeper" is set in Mexico, where the gardener (Victor Flores, a full-blooded Aztec Indian) watches over his Eden-like garden from a mountain top with "El Hijo" ("The Son," played by Eleazar Velazquez).

The gardener and the son raise a colony of winged ants, which they hope will improve the garden. Instead, the ants eat the plant bulbs, destroy each other and are induced to leave their garden for the garden of Bruja (played by India's leading actress, Madhur Jaffrey), who once worked as a maid in the garden of El Hijo and his father.

"The garden is a case in point of how theology had to be wedded to drama and cinematic graphic need in the making of 'The Antkeeper,'" said Richard Suteiff, producer for the Lutheran Church in America. "The garden had to look very enticing, as appealing from a distance as the gardener's garden. But as the camera moves in on it, the viewer becomes aware that it is illusory and somehow sick."

"To help make both the logical and dramatic point everything in the garden and all the materials used to construct it are dead. Silver foil, wax paper, dead butterflies from an entomologist in Mexico City, dead grass, egg shells filled with ashes. Even the earth is dead—volcanic ash and lava."



### Succumbs at 101

Jerseyville, Ill. — (RNS) — Father John J. Clancy is shown preaching from the pulpit of St. Francis Xavier church in Jerseyville, Ill., which he served for 52 years until his death on Nov. 16 at the age of 101—probably the oldest active Catholic priest in the country. A legendary priest with 75 years of loyal service to the Church, Father Clancy was widely known in his community among non-Catholics.



The gardener and his son in "The Antkeeper," an unusual allegory of the Incarnation, to be seen on television.

## Catholic Schools Can't Match Youth Increase

By WILLIAM RYAN

Washington — (NC) — An urban sociologist speaking here described "two contrasting aspects" of the U.S. Catholic school system—its rapid growth and its inability to keep pace with the even more rapid growth in the number of Catholic youths seeking education.

In a discussion which followed Dr. Havighurst's talk, Auxiliary Bishop William McManus of Chicago, superintendent of schools in the archdiocese, said the Catholic schools there average 25,000 transfers of pupils each year. Bishop McManus asserted, however, that a study of the situation has found no evidence of a wholesale trend among white Catholics to flee to the suburbs.

"Parochial schools are anchoring people in the city... giving us at least an outside hope of achieving an integrated school system and an integrated city," Bishop McManus stated. Father Pierre Du Maine, assistant superintendent of schools in San Francisco, said elementary school enrollment is not declining in that archdiocese, and there is no significant shift of white pupils to suburbs.

The NCEA is a 63-year-old professional association which provides for an exchange of ideas and services among Catholic educators.

Dr. Havighurst said for the past 10 years Catholic elementary schools have managed to enroll a constant 52 per cent of Catholic youngsters of elementary school age, but that Catholic high school enrollment has decreased to the present figure of 35 per cent of the Catholic high school population, and Catholic colleges have declined in the past decade from current about 29 per cent to only 24 per cent of Catholic college students.

This has come about, he said, in spite of a rapid increase in absolute numbers of students.

Dr. Havighurst also asserted the greatest growth of Catholic elementary and secondary schools is now taking place in the suburbs and the outer fringes of the central cities, while enrollments in the inner city schools are either stationary or decreasing. He said Catholic parents with higher social status and higher incomes are tending to support the new and outlying schools, while the capacity of inner city parishes

and parents to support schools is decreasing.

Anchors in the City

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Dr. Havighurst stated that some educators believe Catholic schools could do more than they are to help achieve racial and socio-economic integration.

He said that Msgr. James C. Donahue, director of the education department, United States Catholic Conference, in a keynote speech to the annual NCEA convention in Atlantic City last March, advocated several innovative approaches for Catholic education including city-suburban exchanges of pupils from Catholic schools, making Catholic classrooms available to public schools in "educational parks" and supplementary centers, and extending the influence of the schools into the home, especially at the preschool level.

Dr. Havighurst said before such programs could be put into effect, Catholic school authorities will have to find solutions to problems such as finances, the acute shortage of teachers

## Blue Army Crusader: Man of Prayer, But, When Needed, Man of Action, Too

Columbus, Ohio — The Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, offering called the "army that marches on its knees" doesn't do too badly in action, either. This was demonstrated at a recent nationwide celebration here to welcome the Bishop of Fatima and his Round-the-World Peace Pilgrimage of 108 Blue Army Crusaders.

One lone "hippie" — considerably huskier than his bearded comrades but apparently with no surplus of courage—attempted to cash in on press publicity for the Rosary procession by appearing at the sidelines with an anti-Fatima slogan chained to his chest.

Without mincing words, a slight but singularly resolute Blue Army crusader stepped from the march, divested the "hippie" of his armor by yanking the sign off so quickly that he broke the chain, and sent the offender scuttling toward obscurity. When last seen, he was mumbling in his beard that his "rights" were not being recognized.

"We, too, have our rights," said Alfred Williams of Kenosha, Wis., "and one of them is the right to honor the Mother of our Lord without insults from the more stupid elements of our society. Another is the right to welcome to America a distinguished visitor — the Bishop of Fatima, Portugal, where Our Lady gave God's requirements for peace — without hate-calls and slanderous epithets."

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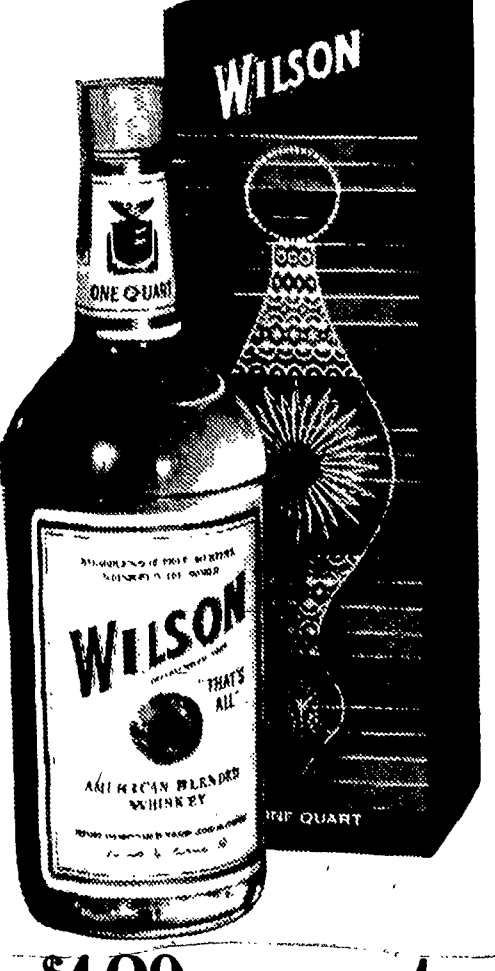
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London — (RNS) and counter-charged from all sides. Following publication of Charles Davis's book, he left the Roman Church.

The book, "A Quince Science," appeared its fundamental principles. Mr. Davis, who is 11 months old, the Church because he believed in it.

Simultaneously, a 16-page by a noted Dominican and lecturer, Father Ernest is friars, Oxford, who had been lipping the pamphlet Herbert McCabe, recently removed a Dominican journal, after the Roman Church was "wily corrupt." Father Ernest is in his book, the theologian, Church.

Observers describe the situation of the Franciscan Ordination.

(Continued from page 1)

Also, the Rev. Joseph O.F.M., the Rev. O.F.M. and the Rev. Stark, O.F.M.

The Scottsville school in Wheaton, Ill., was until 1980 when studies. The was graduated and Paul's school from Notre Dame in 1957. Father ated cum laude venture in 1961, Journalism. He is in-chief of The the campus news

Both attend Seraphic Semir (N.Y.) the Fr seminary, then Franciscan spent a year of Franciscan life Novitiate, Lafay professing simple, they stu at St. Francis Beach, N.H.

Theological s Friars began in Franciscan Holy Washington, I Solemn vows at Seminary, St. B

In Washington associated with theological man, Father John J. lation manager and was typog director.

Father John didate for the logy from the city of Ameri Father Bernar for the M.S. Siena College,

Father Bern nephew of Siste S.S.J. of St. vent, Rochester of Sister St. J Good Samaritan Ala., and Sister S.S.J., of St. vent, Elmira.

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