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BARRABAS, right, played by James Daly, holds the Crown of Thorns while questioning a sentry on Mt. Calvary in "Give Us Barrabas," a TV drama about Barrabas' search for the meaning of Christ's death. It will be shown on Friday, March 29 at 9:30 p.m. over NBC-TV.

Barabbas For Whom Christ Died

New York — For someone who was the first man to be redeemed by Christ's death, Barabbas is a surprisingly little-known man.

So thought Henry Denker, a dramatist who once wrote nearly 400 scripts for the old "Greatest Story Ever Told" radio series. In 1961, he tried to help fill the void with a 90-minute television drama called "Give Us Barabbas."

One of the most critically acclaimed religious dramas ever to appear on television, "Give Us Barabbas" is being brought back Friday, March 29 (9:30 p.m., NBC-TV) — offering today's viewer an unusual second look at a much overlooked Biblical character.

"This is the first man for whom Christ actually died," Denker explains of Barabbas, who would otherwise have died on the cross that Good Friday. "To me, Barabbas is a symbolic figure. Jesus gave his life for all men, but here is the first man for whom he specifically and literally gave his life."

Starting with that premise and letting "my imagination wander along lines that I think would not be inconsistent with what the Bible has set forth," Denker wrote a drama that explores the effect upon Barabbas of his escape from death, his sudden freedom, and the Man who went to Calvary in his place.

A presentation of "The Hallmark Hall of Fame," the original showing of "Give Us Barabbas" led "The New York Times" to call it "a pre-Easter drama of deep reverence and great power... without the shabby sensational devices that sometimes have been introduced to oiliven motion picture treatment of Biblical events."

In a preview for the upcoming showing, written for "Scho lastic Teacher," David Sohn, di-

rector of curriculum research for the National Film Study Project at Fordham University, recommended "Give Us Barabbas" as "a splendid example of how a writer can take a small amount of material and develop it with his imagination. A useful exercise would be to examine how Henry Denker took this information in the four Gospels and expanded it into this play."

In the New Testament, Barabbas is merely identified as "a notorious prisoner" by Matthew, a man "who had committed murder in the insurrection" by Mark; "a man who had been thrown in prison for an insurrection" by Luke; and, simply, as "a robber" by John.

In "Give Us Barabbas," Denker, instead of following Christ after the scene with Pontius Pilate, chooses to follow Barabbas (played by James Daly).

Confused as to why the crowd chose to free him instead of Christ, Barabbas wanders through the streets and quickly learns why: a fellow thief shows him a sack of coins he has earned from the chief priests for joining with other similarly bribed members of the crowd in shouting for Barabbas' release instead of Christ's.

When he rejoins his fellow thieves, they suspect he has really been sent back to them as an informer; they try to lynch him in a "kangaroo court" and send him away — thinking that surely the Romans will kill him.

Completely alone, Barabbas sets out to discover the truth about the Man who died in his place and comes across one irony after another. At Calvary, where he finds the Crown of Thorns, Barabbas cannot understand the paradox: "He couldn't even hate those that killed Him! I hate everyone! Yet I'm alive. Why?"

Barrabas goes next to Pontius Pilate's palace and hears for the first time that Christ had claimed to be the Son of God. He later seeks out Joseph of Arimathea who, mistaking Barabbas for a follower of Christ, speaks of the Sermon on the Mount and Christ's miracles.

At the tomb on Easter Sunday, he cries out in agony that although he has escaped death, he is not free any longer, for unless that point Barabbas had boasted to all, "My religion is me."

Led by Mary to a secret gathering of Christ's disciples, Barabbas expects their wrath. But Peter tells him that when Christ was crucified, "most of us were hiding."

Told by John that he Barabbas, has been chosen by God, Barabbas protests that God could not have chosen a worse man.

"He couldn't have" made a better choice to show us a man can change," John responds.

In the play's final line, Barabbas' girl friend announces: "Barabbas, the thief, is dead. Barabbas, the man, can be anything he wishes to be."

(Catholic Press Features)

Blackfriars Stage
Thurber Sketches
Blackfriars will present "A Thurber Carnival," March 29, 30 and 31 at St. John Fisher College auditorium.
Mr. William White, President of the local group describes the play as "a musical comedy for people who can't sing." The production is composed of many selections of Thurber's writings like, "If Grant Had Been Drinking at Appomattox" and "The MacBeth Murder Mystery," and is representative of Thurber at his best.
Wilford Scott, Richard Mancini, Dave Brown and Richard Kirsch will perform in the male roles, while the distaff side will be represented by Bea Petix, Joan Gira, Julie Babb and Mary Ellen Jewney.
Tickets may be purchased at Midtown Copy Center or at the box office.

Reading Lecture
Set for Arts Center
Noted educator, speaker and television personality Dr. Bill Martin, Jr. will discuss "Humanizing Reading" in a free lecture at the Nazareth College Arts Center March 28 at 7:45 p.m.
The originator and editor of the well-known "Owl Reading Program," Martin is now editor



BILL MARTIN JR.

of elementary classroom materials for Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Co. He has developed a second program called, "Sounds of Language," and was host on the TV program, "The Storyteller" on educational television for many years.

One of the featured speakers during the 1967 Annual Reading Conference sponsored by the New York State Education Department, Dr. Martin's lecture should be of interest to area teachers, parents, librarians and school administrators. This event is sponsored by the International Reading Association.

TV Movie Ratings

Friday, March 15 - Thursday, March 21
Ratings are those given by the former Legion of Decency, now the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures, when films were originally shown. A-1: morally unobjectionable for general patronage; A-2: morally unobjectionable for adults and adolescents; A-3: morally unobjectionable for adults; A-4: morally unobjectionable in part for all; C: condemned; No Rating: film has not been reviewed by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (formerly the Legion of Decency); N.B. Before A-3 classification was established, A-2 indicated morally unobjectionable for adults.
Movie listings supplied through the courtesy of TV Guide Magazine.

Friday, March 15			
Time	Channel	Movie	Rating
4:00 p.m.	8	The Easy Way	No Rating Available
9:00 p.m.	10	Tip on a Dead Jockey	A-2
11:30 p.m.	10	Thieves Highway	B
11:30 p.m.	13	Vote in the Mirror	A-2
Saturday, March 16			
2:00 p.m.	13	One Fatal Hour	No Rating Available
5:30 p.m.	10	Tall Story	B
9:00 p.m.	8	Send Me No Flowers	A-2
11:15 p.m.	8	Strukel	A-2
11:15 p.m.	13	Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?	B
11:30 p.m.	10	Francis Joins the WACS	A-1
Sunday, March 17			
2:00 p.m.	8	Jump into Hell	A-2
5:30 p.m.	10	Washington Story	A-1
9:00 p.m.	13	Guns and Dolls	B
11:15 p.m.	10	The Second Women	No Rating Available
Monday, March 18			
4:00 p.m.	8	Operation Secret	B
7:30 p.m.	13	The Grass is Greener	A-3
12:00 a.m.	13	Zombies of Mora Tau	B
Tuesday, March 19			
4:00 p.m.	8	Daisy's Rangers	A-3
9:00 p.m.	10	Stranger on the Run	No Rating Available
11:30 p.m.	13	Kelly and Me	A-1
Wednesday, March 20			
4:00 p.m.	8	The West Point Story	A-2
9:00 p.m.	13	The Marriage-Go-Round	B
11:30 p.m.	13	Dentist in the Chair	A-1
Thursday, March 21			
4:00 p.m.	8	The Diary of Anne Frank (Part 1)	A-1
9:00 p.m.	10	Cash McCall	A-3
7:00 p.m.	10	A Night to Remember	A-1
11:30 p.m.	13	Ganlight at Dodge City	A-3

Books

New Reading For Our Times

CLERGY
Secular Priest in the New Church—Edited by Father Gerard Sloyan (\$5.95, Herder)
Twenty well-written articles (Greeley, Ellis, Shannon, Powell, Nolan and others) on priestly identity and role-playing today. Scholarly and practical advice on relations with secular institutions, with bishops and pastors. Some radical views oppose fundamental practices but sensible value of ferment is clear. Contains recommendations for individual troubled priests to understand the times and the changing pastoral needs of the Church.

LAITY
Dialogue: The State of the Church Today—(by Haughton and Heenan (\$3.95) — John Cardinal Heenan and Mrs. Rosemary Haughton, an outspoken English lay-woman discuss urgent issues facing the Church today. This lay-clerical dialogue, in easy-to-read but modern and keen language, touches questions you might argue with your own pastor or Bishop. Excellent in style, provocative and prophetic.

YOUTH
Lord Show Us Your Face—by Father Andre Polart (95 cents, Paulist paperback)—Individual reflections for every day of Lenten season. Keeping Lent means "to see God more clearly" and "to take time to listen to God." Shows how Christ through the liturgy brightens one's pathway to service.

RELIGIOUS
The Word of God—by Father Louis Kelly (\$6.50, Herder)—Most captivating spiritual writer since Thomas Merton. Doctrinally sound and not at all senti-

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