

'The Cardinal' Revisited

New York — (CPF) — When director Otto Preminger released his film version of *The Cardinal* in 1963, it received extremely varying reactions from critics.

Here is a roundup of views on the film, featured on the ABC-TV Sunday Night Movie Dec. 27.

The film, based on Henry Morton Robinson's best-selling novel, follows the life of a fictional Stephen Fermoyle (Tom Tryon) from the time of his ordination in 1917 until he is made a cardinal 25 years later. In the meantime he grapples with the issue of abortion, made more personal because his own sister dies because he cannot approve; he is sent to a remote country parish in New England by his bishop so he will learn humility from a dying priest (Burgess Meredith); he takes a year's leave of absence from his post with the Vatican diplomatic corps to teach in Vienna, where he falls in love with a student (Romy Schneider); he returns to Rome and gains the wrath of his superiors by espousing the cause of a Negro priest, on whose behalf he fights the Ku Klux Klan in Georgia; he goes to Austria to persuade Cardinal Innitzer to fight the Nazis before it's too late; his proud family travels to Rome to watch their boy take the red hat.

Richard A. Duprey, in a review in *The Catholic World*: "The film becomes a stringing out of incidents with no real explanation of why Fermoyle feels as he does — why he sets the course he has set. Even more than in the book, the pro-

tagonist seems to lack blood. He just doesn't emerge as real.

"Giving Preminger his due, *The Cardinal* does have one great virtue in regard to theme and treatment of subject and plot material. Perhaps even more than in the original literary work, we see in *The Cardinal* a welcome avoidance of the hard-headed kind of dogmatism so often shown (not always justly) in the characterization of the preacher, the moralist, the clerical man."

Moira Walsh, *America* magazine: "It is a fairly sophisticated and accurate use of the external trappings of the Catholic Church as a framework on which to hang a hilariously implausible and objectively insulting account of a cardinal-in-the-making."

Judith Crist: "No one with a minimal respect for the clergy of any faith can accept the Preminger hierarchy. Nowhere is there a man of the spirit; there is talk of God and faith on a level that makes the *Going My Way* caricatures assume Newmanesque stature in retrospect. . . . Mr. Tryon has the physical fluidity and spiritual grace of a cigar-store Indian."

Bosley Crowther, *New York Times*: "The young priest is no more than a callow stick around which several fictions are draped. He is in the Bing Crosby priest tradition but without Father Bing's ease and charm, and the things he has to do in the picture are, in the most distasteful sense, sheer Hollywood."

Time Magazine: "Otto Preminger catechizes all the hopes,

strains, doubts and pains of Roman Catholicism in one big, bad movie. . . . Visually, the film is often breath-taking, photographed in color on a vast canvas stretching from New England to Rome and Vienna. John Huston, with a ripsnorting vitality, all but steals the show. Huston is superb."

Saturday Review: "A pictorially impressive chronicle of twenty-five years in the life of a Boston priest. But there is a curious wishy-washiness about the way Preminger and his screenwriter, Robert Dozier, portray the figure of the churchman."

National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures: "As a dramatization of the humanity of the Catholic priesthood, presented against a background of richly photographed and handsomely produced liturgical ceremonies, and realized with some sensitive performances, this motion picture makes for absorbing entertainment."

"The theme of the story, however, involving as it does delicate theological-ethical issues and Catholic practices, is sometimes treated in such a manner that questions which would require a fuller explanation for the immature and uninformed may be subject to possible misunderstandings and misinterpretation. While noting this reservation, the film office recognizes that, with proper guidance and instruction, adolescents could also find the film of entertainment interest."

Rating: A-4, unobjectionable for adults, with reservations.

She's More to Be Censored than Pitied

New York — (RNS) — The Catholic Film Newsletter published here charged that the rating system used by the Motion Picture Association suffered a "serious setback" in its credibility.

Based on a change in the MPAA rating accorded the film, "Ryan's Daughter," the twice-monthly journal published by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures (NCOMP) said concessions appear to have been made to the production company, MGM.

The film was originally rated

Dansville Pupils Win Essay Contest

Dansville — Two St. Mary's School pupils won the fire prevention essay contest sponsored by the Livingston County Volunteer Firemen's Association.

Rachel Alverson won among fifth and sixth graders and Julie Leiter, seventh and eighth. William Leathersich, association president, said an award ceremony would be scheduled.

'Me and My Drum'

The littlest churchgoers at Sacred Heart brought their "best toys" to Mass last Sunday, to present in the Offertory procession as gifts for needy children.

This celebration of Christmas was arranged by Helen King and Joan Winter, who have more than 70 children in their pre-school religion program.

Party Given For Bed-ridden

Thirty patients confined to their beds or wheelchairs at Monroe Community Hospital were entertained Dec. 7 by the St. Jude Fraternity, Third Order of St. Francis.

The Christmas party was also a birthday party for Father Bruce F. Ammering, chaplain at the hospital.

COURIER 2

"R" by the MPAA, which means persons under 17 must be accompanied by parent or adult guardian. Dissatisfied with the rating, MGM said it would release the film without any rating.

"Under pressure," the newsletter said, "the MPAA Appeals Board met and reversed the rating in favor of the 'GP' rating sought by MGM." A "GP" rating means that a movie is considered suitable for all ages, with parental guidance suggested.

The newsletter which in its Dec. 15 issue gives "Ryan's Daughter" an A-III rating — morally unobjectionable for adults — said that the movie's adult theme and treatment "clearly called for an 'R' rating."

The newsletter studied the reasons for actions by both the NPAA and MGM but stopped short of attributing full blame to either side for what it termed was a "resultant credibility gap."

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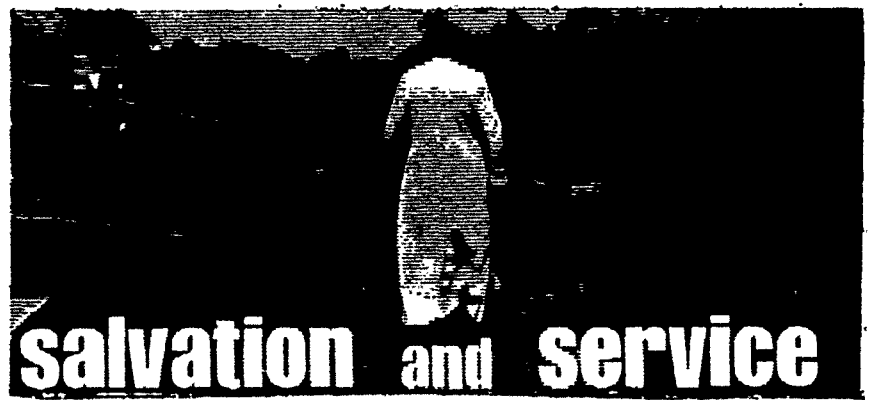
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A NEW YEAR'S KISS

The clock strikes twelve, drinks held high, a chorus of Auld Lange Syne, tears, laughter, a New Year's kiss. That New Year's kiss . . . what a beautiful way to say to others: "May all good things be yours!"

Let's stop for a minute and think about that as we anticipate our New Year's celebration. We wish others to have health, happiness, and peace, not just as a New Year's custom, but in every day encounters with people. Even now at Mass we give this a "sacramental" significance when we give each other the "kiss of peace."

We will soon leave the old year behind us with its joys and sorrows, pleasures and problems, successes and failures. How sad it must be to be alone on New Year's Eve . . . to meet the new year with no one to share our hopes and happiness.

But no one is really alone! For in a much deeper dimension than flesh and blood we are in communion with all people everywhere. We do not encounter them in our ordinary lives, but we do in the mystery of our faith . . . in our brotherhood as God's People . . . and especially in the SIGN of God's Love and Presence — the Eucharist.

Whatever you do to celebrate the beginning of the new year, please welcome in your heart those who are the loneliest of God's People: the poor, the suffering, the hungry, and helpless millions facing another year in the inhuman poverty of the Third World.

Dedicated missionaries, serving right now in every part of the world, depend on your spiritual and financial support today to bring to their people health, happiness, and peace for the new year.

PLEASE make your first New Year's Resolution be an act of love for others by sending a generous sacrifice for the missions today. What a beautiful way for you to begin the new year! And for the world's poor and their missionaries, your gift today is like a "New Year's kiss" — a greeting and a prayer: "The Peace of Christ be with you." Why not do it — right now!

On behalf of all the Church's missionaries: Thank you for your continued love and support of the missions . . . God love you and give you His peace and continued blessings in 1971.

SALVATION AND SERVICE are the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Please cut out this column and send your offering to Reverend Monsignor Edward T. O'Meara, National Director, Dept. C., 366 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10001, or directly to your local Diocesan Director, Rev. Joseph F. Reinhart, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, N. Y. 14604 12/23/70

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