

Challenging films depict tragic romance, heroism

By Henry Herz
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — A middle-aged romance that finds its center in the quest for God is the engrossing subject of *Shadowlands* (Savoy).

Adapted by William Nicolson from his stage play, the story is based on events in the life of Christian apologist and Oxford don C.S. Lewis (Anthony Hopkins).

It begins in 1952, when Lewis was at the height of his public fame, not only as the prolific author of such books as "The Screwtape Letters" and "The Chronicles of Narnia," but also for his BBC talks on religion that made him a sort of an Anglican Bishop Sheen.

Known to his friends as Jack — he disliked his given name of Clive — Lewis was a confirmed bachelor who devoted his life to teaching and writing, keeping to a well-ordered routine, much of it spent in scholarly seclusion.

Attracted by letters from a married American reader, Joy Gresham (Debra Winger), Lewis agrees to a meeting when she visits England, despite the warnings of his bachelor brother, Warnie (Edward Hardwicke).

The meeting proves to be the first of many as Joy soon afterwards gets a divorce from her alcoholic husband and moves with her young son to London.

With every meeting, the bond of friendship between the two seems to grow stronger, perhaps due to the mutual attraction of opposites.

Jack is a very proper English gentle-



Savoy Pictures

Joseph Mazzeo and Debra Winger star in *Shadowlands*.

man, coolly reserved in speech and manner, with the affected air of an absent-minded professor.

Joy is a no-nonsense egalitarian, given to speaking her mind and showing her emotions.

Both take God seriously but in different ways. Joy describes herself as a Jewish communist Christian American who was "brought up to be a good atheist."

Jack lectures on such subjects as why a just God allows the innocent to suffer.

He tells his listeners that pain is God's "megaphone" calling us to perfection.

Though Jack enjoys their theological discussions, he values their friendship more for it teaches him about his underdeveloped emotional side.

But his feelings for Joy are not romantic love, yet. Jack marries Joy in a civil ceremony only so she can remain in England. He tells her, "It will be as if it never happened."

He only realizes how deeply he loves Joy when some time later she collapses in pain from cancer. Knowing that her condition is terminal, Jack weds her in a Christian ceremony in the hospital.

During a period of remission, they honeymoon in an idyllic countryside overshadowed by the knowledge that she will soon die.

Joy warns him that "the pain then is part of the happiness now."

But, of course, her death plunges Jack into human despair and in his dark night of the soul, he finds no consolation in his lifelong belief in God's goodness.

The depth of his pain is very real here but is soon dissipated in a somewhat soggy ending about the significance of life and the hope of the hereafter.

Hopkins is marvelously appealing as the scholar who comes late to experiencing love, though Winger's flat-toned American doesn't quite measure up to what might be called an object of desire.

Director Richard Attenborough gives the picture a golden look suggesting the magic of love as well as that of Lewis' fabled Narnia.

This is a movie for all romantics, es-

pecially older ones.

Because of the romance's tragic ending raises challenging questions about the meaning of life, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG — parental guidance suggested. (HH).

'Schindler's List'

The tortured, troubling — yet in the end, uplifting — story of a German risking his life to save some Polish Jews from Nazi death camps is recounted in *Schindler's List* (Universal).

Adapted by Stephen Zaillian from Thomas Keneally's fact-based novel, the movie's unlikely hero, Oskar Schindler (Liam Neeson), is a German businessman who follows the German blitzkrieg into 1939 Poland.

Settling in Krakow, this amoral opportunist sets out to make as much money as he can from the misfortunes of Poland's persecuted Jews by taking over a confiscated non-Aryan business and exploiting unpaid Jewish workers.

To do so, he recruits the services of Itzhak Stern (Ben Kingsley), a Jewish accountant who comes to appreciate Schindler's greed as totally impersonal rather than motivated by anti-Semitic fanaticism.

With Stern running Schindler's booming utensils firm, Schindler devotes himself to getting contracts by manipulating the German authorities, unbothered by the increasing barbarity of Nazi measures against the Jews in Krakow's overcrowded ghetto.

His moral insensitivity, however, is finally cracked by witnessing the gross inhumanity in the ghetto's liquidation and his revulsion at the sadistic actions of the local forced-labor camp commandant (Ralph Fiennes).

Schindler thereafter engages in the dangerous game of seeming to go along with the genocidal Nazi program while endeavoring to protect his Jewish workers by subverting it.

He succeeds amazingly well in spite of growing Nazi paranoia as the tide of war turns in favor of the Allies. Just before war's end, Schindler evacuates more than 1,100 workers to a new factory in Czechoslovakia, where they are safely liberated as their employer fades into obscurity.

The movie's account of Schindler's heroism avoids grappling with what motivated him to do what few others in similar situations dared doing. It is content to show the humanitarian results of his actions without probing why he did them or, indeed, when he decided he could no longer abide what was happening around him.

The question of Schindler's motivation has wider ramifications in trying to understand what happened to the German people under Nazi rule and what they knew about Hitler's decision to exterminate Europe's Jewry.

Director Steven Spielberg painstakingly restages the appalling history of the Holocaust on an epic scale that gives horrifying dimension to one man's attempt to save some innocent lives.

It is a powerful story enhanced by a sobering treatment that will leave few viewers unmoved.

The Nazi's callous brutality and wanton killing is depicted in graphic images that convey some measure of the shocking reality of the Nazi madness known to history as the Holocaust.

Because of its realistically graphic treatment of an infamous historical period and its crimes against humanity, a few discreet sexual scenes and occasional rough language, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is R — restricted.

Dining Around the Diocese

AVON INN
55 East Main Street
Avon, NY 14414
(minutes off 390, exit 10)
716-226-8181

The Avon Inn welcomes all to experience the timeless elegance of this 170 year old Country Inn. Enjoy an overnight stay, delightful dinners and cocktails in an atmosphere reminiscent of days gone by.

Serving lunches Tuesday-Friday and dinner Tuesday-Sunday, the Inn is the perfect place for business gatherings, entertaining, and romantic escapes. Fifteen comfortable guest-rooms, all with private baths await overnight visitors. Many guests choose to stay in our bridal suite with its whirlpool bathtub and king size bed. Guest-room rates range from \$55-75 per night and include a continental breakfast. Our winter getaway package includes a room for two, \$25 dinner certificate, a bottle of champagne in your room and continental breakfast, all for \$75/couple.

We are now serving a Sunday Breakfast Buffet from 9am-1pm. \$5.95 for adults, children under 10 are 1/2 price. Beverages are additional.

The Avon Inn is the perfect place for WEDDING RECEPTIONS, Showers, Rehearsal Dinners, and business meetings for groups up to 200.

Make plans to visit the historic Avon Inn today.

BOSDYK'S
Restaurant & Lounge
430 Spencerport Rd.
(corner of Long Pond)
716-247-7690

Open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner, we offer a relaxing, comfortable atmosphere and reasonable prices. Whether you choose from our complete menu, or from one of our daily lunch or dinner specials, we're sure to please your palate. Serving Fish Frys 7 days-a-week. Our party room is available for gatherings of up to 60 people. We hope to see you here!

CINELLI'S
Country House Restaurant
6007 Lake Rd. (Rt. 18)
Sodus, New York 14551
(315) 483-9154

One of Wayne County's finest restaurants and Party Houses, Cinelli's Country House Restaurant is a really special place! Fine service, great view, wonderful food, and a marvelous menu are just the beginning.

A big, beautiful dining room with real wood arches and glass commands an unparalleled panorama of orchards, farms, old woods, and Lake Ontario.

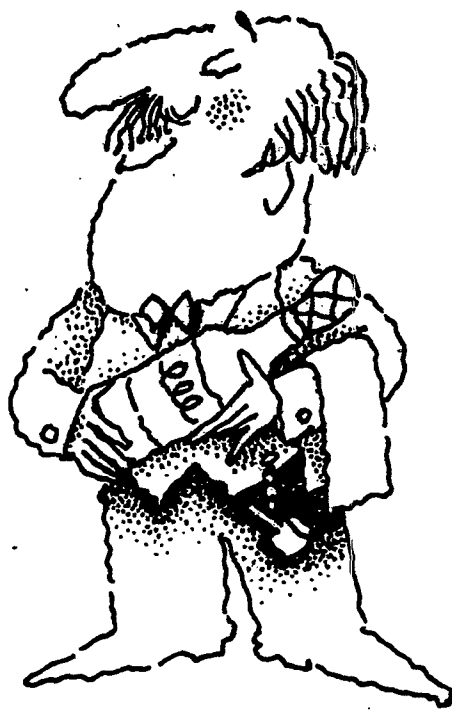
In addition to our extensive lunch and dinner menus, you may also choose from between 10 and 12 daily specials. Sunday Specials from our country oven include: Roast Leg of Montana Lamb and Fresh Roast Pork served with country dressing and pan gravies.

For your reception, banquet or dinner for two to be truly special, choose a really special place. There's no better choice than Cinelli's!

Winter Hours: Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 12:30-7:30p.m. Reservations are recommended. "A big city menu at country prices."

MR. DOMINIC'S ON THE LAKE
4699 Lake Avenue
(716) 865-4630

If you're planning lunch or dinner out, take a drive to Mr. Dominic's at the Lake. Noted for their fine Italian cuisine, they offer delicious appetizers, wonderful soups, 11 veal dishes, vegetarian, chicken and fish specialties, and homemade pasta. Early bird dinner specials are served Sunday-Friday. Also offered is a 10% senior discount. Delivery is available for your luncheon group of ten or more. Lunch hours from 11a.m.-2p.m., Tuesday-Friday. Dinner hours Monday-Friday 4-9:30p.m., Sat. 5-10p.m., Sun. 3-9p.m.



PETALS
at the Marriott Thruway Hotel
5257 W. Henrietta Road
359-1800

Petals offers a rich wood and brass decor, serving traditional American cuisine. Popular for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Lunch, Mon. - Sat., 11:30a.m. - 2p.m. Dinner, Mon. - Sat., 5 - 11p.m. Sunday Breakfast Feast served 11:30a.m. - 2:30p.m.

RICK'S PRIME RIB HOUSE
788 Howard Road
(716) 235-2900

Cut into the best prime rib in town tonight at Rick's Prime Rib House. Slow cooked to perfection everyday; so tender, so succulent, always fresh, it's a cut above the rest. We have a full menu of other items to choose from including King Crab, Lobster Tail, and fresh fish and chicken dishes. Early Dinner Specials served each evening before 6pm. For large gatherings, we have banquet facilities for up to 150. Open 7 days a week, reservations are appreciated.