

Movies consider variety of 'romanticized' visions

NEW YORK (CNS) — The following are capsule reviews of movies recently reviewed by the U.S. Catholic Conference Office for Film and Broadcasting.

'Ed Wood'

(Touchstone) Romanticized story of the untalented but enterprising Wood (Johnny Depp), considered Hollywood's all-time worst director, in which he befriends aging has-been actor Bela Lugosi (Martin Landau) to star in his pathetic, shoestring-budget sci-fi fantasies. Director Tim Burton casts a comic and madly affectionate eye on transvestite Wood, but it is Landau's canny portrayal of the 1930s horror great reduced to an impoverished morphine addict that gives the movie some heart in an otherwise campy black-and-white restaging of Wood's schlock 1950s moviemaking. An implied live-in relationship, some crude remarks and occasional rough language. The USCC classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.

'I Don't Want to Talk About It'

(Sony Classics) Fable set in 1930s South America where a widowed mother (Luisina Brando) worries over her adolescent dwarf daughter (Alejandra Podesta) when a much older man (Marcello Mastroianni) comes to deeply love the girl and asks to marry her. Director Maria Luisa Bemberg manages to treat each character with respect for their frailties in a lyrical and very human story about the mystery and unpredictability of love. Subtitled. Some sexual innuendo and fleeting violence. The USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is PG-13 — parents are strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

'Only You'

(TriStar) Contrived romantic comedy in which a Pittsburgh bride-to-be (Marisa Tomei) impulsively takes off for Italy in



Buena Vista Pictures

Johnny Depp stars as cult-legend filmmaker Edward D. Wood Jr., the eccentric creator of such B-movie classics as 'Plan 9 from Outer Space.' 'Ed Wood' is the story of the director's tenacious and futile struggle to be recognized as a legitimate Hollywood director.

determined pursuit of a stranger whom she believes is destined to marry her but, along the way, meets a lovestruck shoe salesman (Robert Downey Jr.) who insists he's the man for her. Director Norman Jewison's frothy confection is shot through with fairy dust of appeal

to diehard romantics but which others may dismiss as sheer sentimentality in an implausible love story. Mild sexual innuendo. The USCC classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The MPAA rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

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'The Happy Theologian' heads list of recent books

By Richard Philbrick
Catholic News Service

Here is a list of books of particular interest to Catholic readers.

"I Am A Happy Theologian," by Father Edward Schillebeeckx Crossroad, \$11.95., 103 pp. With enthusiasm and humor the noted theologian tells stories of his life, his adventures, and of the joy he finds in his work. The 80-year-old scholar also comments on church issues.

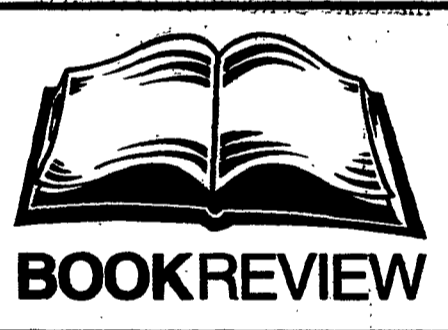
"The Catechism: Highlights and Commentary," by Brennan Hill and William Madges, Twenty-Third Publications, \$9.95, 142 pp. Two theologians at Xavier University in Cincinnati offer their analysis of the chief teachings of the new "Catechism of the Catholic Church," its important points, and a commentary on each of its sections, providing historical and theological context.

"Latin American Journey," by Robert W. Pazmino, United Church Press, \$13.95, 170 pp. Drawing upon his experiences in South America and Costa Rica, the author makes fresh suggestions for Christian education in North America.

"Life on the Line," by John F. Kilner, Eerdmans, \$18.95, 349 pp. An ethicist on the staff of the Park Ridge Center for the Study of Health, Faith, and Ethics offers a basic ethical approach to dealing with difficult end-of-life situations and the allocation of limited medical resources.

"Heavenly Helpers: St. Anthony and St. Jude," by Mitch Finley, Crossroad, \$16.95, 145 pp. Accounts of saintly intervention in times of crisis by St. Anthony, patron saint of lost things, and St. Jude, patron saint of hopeless causes.

"What Are They Saying About the Ministerial Priesthood?" by Daniel L. Donovan, Paulist Press, \$7.95, 149 pp. Reviews teachings of the Second Vatican Council and traces the responses of the 1971 World Synod of Bishops and of Pope John Paul II to post-conciliar developments. Issues and trends within the North American church are also exam-



ined.

"Vatican II: We've Only Just Begun," by Trappist Father M. Basil Pennington, Crossroad, \$13.95, 167 pp. The veteran retreat master and lecturer who was a theological consultant at Vatican II reviews the council's activities, summarizes and analyzes its key documents, and gives his evaluation of their importance today.

"Responses to 101 Questions on the Dead Sea Scrolls," by Jesuit Father Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Paulist Press, \$8.95, 201 pp. A distinguished Scripture scholar and a member of the team established to study and publish the scrolls' contents uses the question-and-answer format to describe the history and importance of the ancient manuscripts.

"God and Violence," by Georg Baudler, Templegate, \$19.95, 366 pp. Translated from the German. Going back to the dawn of history, the author uses myths and world religions in portraying the unique nature of the Christian God.

"The Secret Identity of the Beloved Disciple," by Joseph A. Grassi, Paulist Press, \$7.95, 135 pp. Though it reads much like a detective story this is a scholarly effort to build a character sketch of the brilliant creative mind behind the fourth Gospel.

"My Song Is of Mercy," by Trappist Brother Matthew Kelly, Sheed & Ward, \$15.95, 260 pp. Sermons and other essays of a monk of the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky. Several of his earlier writings have won wide praise.

Philbrick is book review coordinator for Catholic News Service.