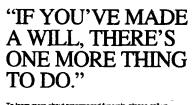
FEATURE

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Critic recommends 10 family videos

NEW YORK (CNS) – Henry Herx, director of the U.S. Catholic Conference Office for Film and Broadcasting, has come up with a list of 10 surefire video treats for family viewing this Christmas or anytime.

The list was released Dec. 14 by a Baltimore public relations firm working for the Catholic Communication Campaign, a major funder of the USCC film and broadcast division in New York.

"Almost all these recommendations are classics that portray universal values and themes," Herx said. "These films have stood the test of time and are likely to be popular with both adults and their children."

The 10 videos have all been classified A-I – $\sqrt{2}$ general patronage – by the USCC. They are presented in alphabetical order, with year of release and the video distribution firm.

• "Around the World in 80 Days" (1956, Warner) is an adventure film that doesn't rely on special effects to move the plot along. It teaches the necessity of being steadfast in order to reach one's goal — even if it's an impossible goal.

• "Chariots of Fire" (1981, Warner), with its depiction of athletes vying in the 1924 Olympics, is an excellent drama, Herx said. It depicts the conviction of two men of faith – one Christian and one Jew – striving for victory.

• "A Christmas Carol" (1951, VCI) is a holiday favorite with Alastair Sims' performance as Ebenezer Scrooge. It shows how the spirit of good will at Christmas transforms a cold-hearted soul.

• "The Court Jester" (1955, Paramount) is a comedy spoofing medieval-costume movies with clever nonsense. Beyond the film's humor is the gallantry of the buffoon who puts his life on the line to save a child.

• "Lassie Come Home" (1943, MGM/UA), like many other animal films, is sure to be a hit with youngsters. Lassie's courage and determination are an inspiration to viewers.

> • "The Music Man" (1962, Warner) is a fine family musical about small-town life in fictitious River City. It tells the story of how a con man is transformed by falling in love.

• "Sister Thea, Her Own Story: A Video Autobiography" (1991, Oblate Media) showcases the life of the late Sister Thea Bowman, an African-American woman religious, teacher, evangelist and gospel singer. She brings together a divided community through her exceptional ability to show diverse people their commonality. If not available in video stores, it can be ordered by calling the USCC at (800) 235-8722.

• "Sounder" (1972, Paramount), tells the story of a rural African-American family facing oppression. The message here, Herx said, is that family ties can bring people through the most trying of times.

• "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (1937, Disney), is an animation standout. For generations it has opened up for children the world of imagination.

• "The Wizard of Oz" (1939, MGM/UA) is not only available at video stores but is an annual TV staple. Its time-honored value, Herx said, is that "there's no place like home."

"Families increasingly are seeking guidance in selecting appropriate TV shows and movies to view in the home," said CCC director Ramon Rodriguez.

"Parents now realize that when they select a movie, it's another way of selecting values conveyed to their children."

Christmas reading by the baker's dozen

By Richard Philbrick Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON – Here is a list of books of particular interest to Catholic readers this Christmas.

"Mother Teresa: A Woman in Love," by Jesuit Father Edward Le Joly (Ave Maria Press, \$7.95, 190 pp.). An American paperback edition of a book published two years ago in India. It is an account of Mother Teresa's life between 1985 and 1992, written by a priest well ther William F. Maestri (St. Paul Books, \$1.50, 87 pp.). Using skills developed as a philosophy professor, the author has written a brief, easily readable guide for the study of *Veritatis Splendor* ("The Splendor of Truth"), the most recent encyclical of Pope John Paul II.

"Memoirs," by Jesuit Father Frederick C. Copleston (Sheed & Ward, \$14.95, 228 pp.). A philosopher known best in his native England tells of his schooling, his adventures in Germany before and after World War II, and his reaction to changes in the shurth since Vatison H nonracial democracy are described by a black, native South African journalist.

"Las Casas," by Father Gustavo Gutierrez (Orbis, no price given, 682 pp.). Subtitled "In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ," this book is a detailed study of the life, thought and contemporary meaning of Bartolome de Las Casas, 16th-century Dominican priest, prophet and defender of the Indians in the New World.

"Promised Land: Death and Life in El Salvador," by Scott Wright (Orbis,

