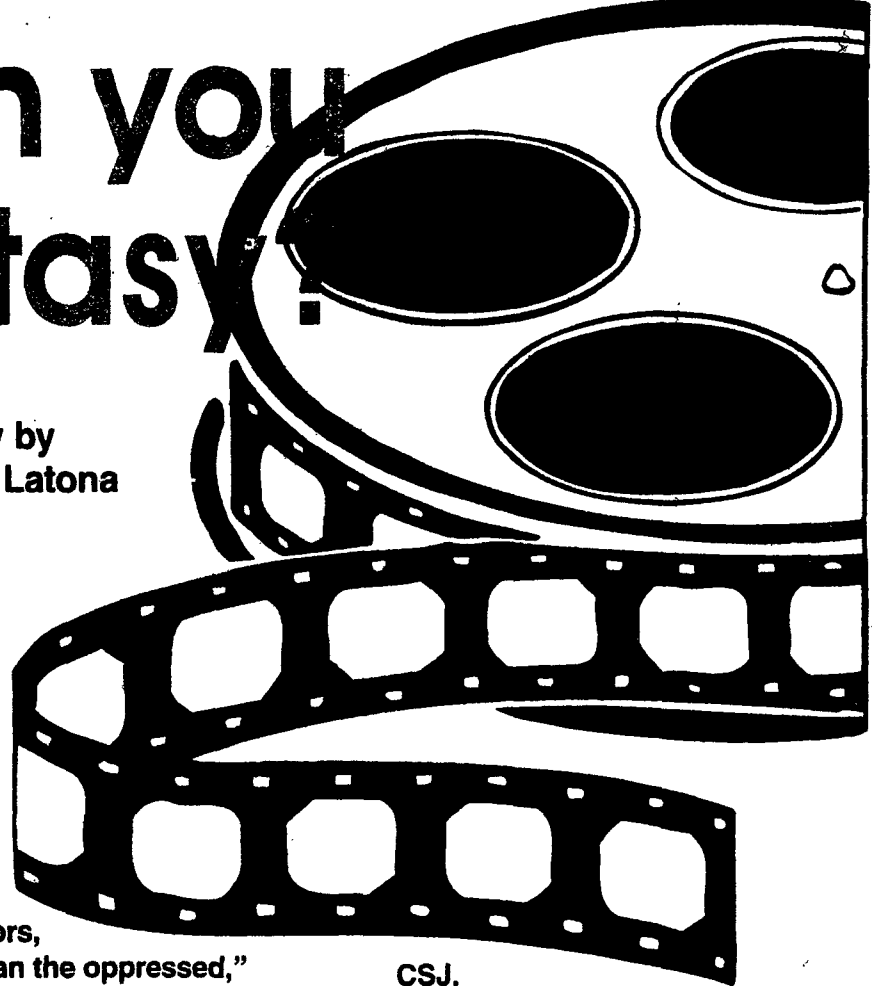


Faith on film: Can you tell fact from fantasy?



Story by
Mike Latona

evoke discussion.

Other movies that have come under fire for their depiction of the Catholic faith include "Monty Python's Life of Brian" (1979), "The Last Temptation of Christ" (1988), and "Priest" (1995).

Mary said she doesn't mind movies that question Catholicism. "It's all a matter of who you are and how you deal with it, because not everybody's the same about it," she said. "No one I know believes every part of the Catholic faith."

"It would be better if (a movie) focused on both sides," agreed Aileen Boe, 17. "Because if it just focused on the positive, you'd wonder about the bad things."

However, according to one national film critic, Hollywood producers mix fact with fiction too freely when the Catholic Church is involved.

"They're not at all caring about presenting it accurately. There's a gloss of validity, and they play around with everything else," said Gerri Pare, who serves as the U.S. Catholic Conference's director of the Office for Film and Broadcasting.

"Certainly, impressionable young people can get very inaccurate ideas about the church. Movies are focused on entertainment and box office," Pare added in a phone interview. "Someone who takes these movies literally is going to develop very negative views of the Catholic Church, and that's sad."

For instance, she said, "Stigmata" presents the story as if it's a plausible story line. The theology is so mixed up." Regarding "Dogma," Pare remarked, "It's all right if a character questions the faith. But that movie just took it to such a mocking extreme, it lost any validity."

Pare's office, which she noted has its own ratings system based on "legitimate artistry and the moral perspective," rates both those movies as "O" — morally offensive.

Pare remarked that in popular movies, Catholics are the leading religious group to be taken to task.

"The Catholic Church is a favorite of Hollywood. We have such a rich history that Hollywood is always going to be attracted to," Pare said. "It's easier to pick on an institution such as the Catholic Church. It's more difficult to find those kind of films that are really positive and earnest in our presentation of the church."

Tabita Torres, 16, said she doesn't like it when Hollywood uses caricatures, saying it only reflects their lack of knowledge of the Catholic faith.

"Since they don't understand it, they'd rather label it than find out what it is," Tabita said.

Nicholas Reeder, 17, wonders if some film makers resent historical abuses of power by the Catholic Church, such as during the Inquisition.

"When you look back through history we've been the

oppressors, rather than the oppressed," Nicholas said.

Edwin Torres, 14, said he can understand why Catholics may be offended by movies that attack their faith. Yet he also ventured that, perhaps, those same people are guilty of labeling other institutions.

"There are a lot of prejudices against the Catholic Church, but also a lot of prejudices that Catholics have," Edwin remarked.

Not all modern-day movies give negative portrayals of the church. For instance, Sister Helen Prejean,

CSJ, said she felt that 1995's "Dead Man Walking" — a real-life account of the nun's ministry to death-row inmates — was very authentic.

However, Sister Prejean said during an Oct. 25 visit to lecture in Rochester that she was initially wary about how Hollywood might tell her story. For that reason, she said, she insisted on having a strong say in the film's development.

"(Otherwise) they would have had me eloping with the guy off death row," she remarked.

BOOKS AND RELIGIOUS ARTICLES

• *A Grief Unveiled* by Gregory Floyd tells a father's story revealing his heart breaking journey through the sorrow of losing a child. This book is a witness to the intimate presence of God in the midst of unbearable sorrow.

\$13.95 + \$3.50 S&H

• *American History You Never Learned* reveals the early pilgrims' devotion to Mary. Did George Washington receive a visit from Mary? This book will surprise you and may give you goosebumps.

\$1.00 + 75¢ S&H

• *Way of the Cross for the Souls in Purgatory* is a best seller! We can empty Purgatory in a year. Praying the Stations isn't only for Lent. We have the power every day to release the souls in Purgatory.

\$2.95 + 75¢ S&H

• *Rosaries blessed by Our Lady* during an apparition in Medjugorje and by a priest. Blue aurora borealis, black wood and natural wood. Offering \$10 or more + \$1.00 S&H each rosary. Children's rosaries also available. Beautiful gift for Christmas, First Communion, etc.

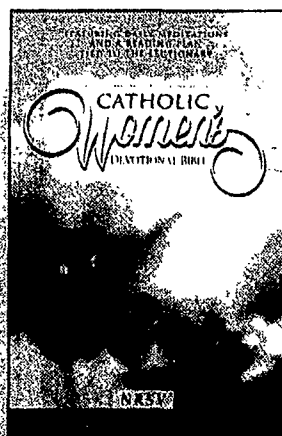
• Also available are books by Fr. Albert J. M. Shamon, including a new book *The Master Works of God* (which will be available soon.)



For a complete listing of books (including Fr. Shamon's books) and religious articles available, write:

QUEEN OF PEACE APOSTOLATE
P.O. Box 6, Canandaigua, New York 14424

NEW FOR TODAY'S CATHOLIC WOMEN



Catholic Women's Devotional Bible

ANN SPANGLER, GENERAL EDITOR, will deepen readers' spiritual walk by nurturing a love for God and his Word. Consisting of the NRSV text with Apocrypha, and brimming with significant meditations, inspiring character sketches, and insightful articles about living the Catholic tradition, this unparalleled bible teaches Catholic women to use Scripture in prayer and daily life.

Hard Copy Price \$24.99

Soft Cover Price \$19.99

from

Zondervan

20% OFF

The Catholic Women's Devotional Bible with this ad expires 12/24/00

LOGOS BOOKSTORE
MUSIC • GIFTS • CARDS
"Meeting the Needs of Today's Catholics"

1520 RIDGE ROAD WEST

In Stone Ridge Plaza • Rochester, NY 14615

(716) 663-5085 • 1-800-755-6467 • FAX: (716) 663-6975

e-mail: info@go2logos.com

Visit us on the web: www.go2logos.com

Introducing Leora

Our 2000 Event Exclusive Figure

Please join us in welcoming Fontanini representative Pat Caruso...
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2000

EASTVIEW MALL STORE 12:30PM-2:00PM
MARKETPLACE MALL STORE 2:30PM-4:00PM

Purchase Leora at \$19.50 and receive this free gift!



A complete selection of Fontanini's fine figurines is available now.

Lock, Stock & Barrel Gifts is a Fontanini Premiere Dealer

Fontanini Celebrating 92 years of providing heirloom novelties

Lock, Stock & Barrel Gifts

Marketplace Mall
(716) 424-6592

Eastview Mall
(716) 223-2720

