

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2022

The

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ANGELUS

THE VOICE OF TRADITIONAL CATHOLICISM



THE ART OF FILM

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear Reader,



Fr. John Fullerton

District Superior of the
United States of America

As we enter the Year of Our Lord 2022, I wish you all a Happy Holy New Year. After nearly two years of anxiety, uncertainty, and hardship brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, I pray that the fallout from all its consequences will soon be behind us. The work of the Society of Saint Pius X, including publishing *The Angelus* magazine, continues despite the obstacles that have been placed in our path. Our excellent team of writers, designers, and editors are dedicated to bringing you what we think is the best traditional Catholic magazine available today. Moreover, while supply chain slowdowns have caused some delays, I am happy to report that this magazine and all of Angelus Press's publications will continue to be available in due course.

In this issue, we look at the medium of cinema from a Catholic perspective. As many of you are no doubt aware, the history of film and, by extension, television and online streaming has been fraught with abuse. Although envisioned as another means to bring human artistry to a wider audience, it did not take long for unscrupulous persons to exploit this forum to spread vice. Therefore, Catholics, particularly Catholic parents, must remain on guard against the corrupting force film too often proves to be. At the same time, however, film has been a vehicle to deliver profoundly edifying messages and create a permanent telling of some of the greatest stories ever told, from the works of Shakespeare to tales from the Bible.

While each of us must search our conscience to decide which, if any, films they wish to see, it is a topic well worth considering. Just as we should not be too hasty to condemn the entire cinematic enterprise, we should always be on guard against any artistic expression that may normalize sin. Recommendations must always be taken with a grain of salt. As we are told, we must prove all things and hold fast to that which is good.

Fr. John Fullerton
Publisher

ON OUR COVER: Iconic image of the Man in the Moon. A frame from the only surviving hand-colored print of Georges Méliès's 1902 film, *Le voyage dans la lune*. Inspired by a wide variety of sources, the film follows a group of astronomers who travel to the moon in a cannon-propelled capsule, explore the moon's surface, escape from an underground group of Selenites (lunar inhabitants), and return to Earth with a captive Selenite. *A Trip to the Moon* was an internationally popular success on its release, and was extensively pirated by other studios, especially in the United States. Its unusual length, lavish production values, innovative special effects, and emphasis on storytelling were markedly influential on other film-makers and ultimately on the development of narrative film as a whole.



Dr. William Fahey's
Movie
Recommendations

An Excerpt from *Catholic Answers* and the Troubadours

Dr. William Fahey

From *Catholic Answers*:

What's the technical know-how that might help a viewer evaluate and discuss movies? There are libraries filled with books on the subject and film studies programs of varying quality. But for our purpose, I suggest focusing attention in two areas to develop our capacity to perceive and not merely watch.

Watching is passive. Perception is engaged reflection. It is the leaven of conversation and a necessary ingredient in evaluation.

So, what big ideas can you hold in your mind while watching—or better, if it's good, rewatching—a movie? I call them *composition* and *linking*.

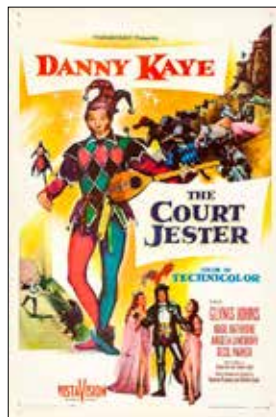
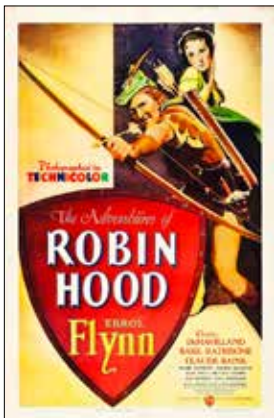
Big Idea One: Composition

Composition starts with the camera itself. While you're watching a movie, ask, "Where did the director put the camera and why? What's the position of the camera, the angle, or the focus of lens? What has he put *into* each

shot? Are there recurring angles, images, *etc.*?" Each segment of action in the boxed image you see on the screen—all that is the composition. The fancy French phrase for film composition is *mis-en-scene*, which means something like "setting the scene."

Director Frank Capra was a master of composition. Consider any scene from his movie *It's a Wonderful Life* involving a domestic moment or crowd: George Bailey having his last dinner with his father, all the scenes in Gower's pharmacy or Mr. Potter's bank, and, most famously, the last five minutes of the movie. Composition requires the careful selection of lenses and camera angles, the detailed blocking out of the movement of each actor, *etc.* The foresight and precision needed aren't obvious, and that naturalness is a sign of art's triumph.

Similarly, close-up scenes are like portraits, where lighting and subtle movement are part of the director's palette, often combined with relative silence to create dramatic effect. Con-



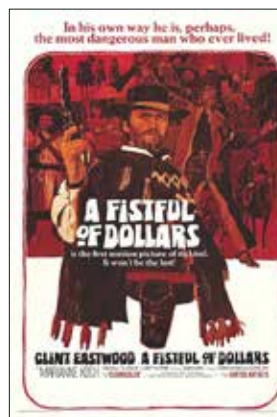
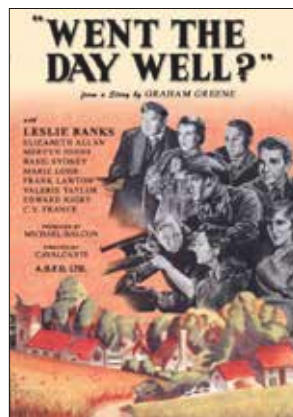
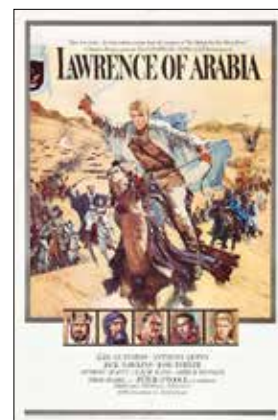
Blade Runner is a 1982 science fiction film directed by Ridley Scott. Starring Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Sean Young, and Edward James Olmos, it is an adaptation of Philip K. Dick's 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* The film is set in a dystopian future Los Angeles of 2019, in which synthetic humans known as replicants are bio-engineered by the powerful Tyrell Corporation to work on space colonies. When a fugitive group of advanced replicants led by Roy Batty (Hauer) escapes back to Earth, burnt-out cop Rick Deckard (Ford) reluctantly agrees to hunt them down.

Blade Runner initially underperformed in North American theaters and polarized critics. It later became an acclaimed cult film regarded as one of the all-time best science fiction films.

It's a Wonderful Life is a 1946 film produced and directed by Frank Capra, based on the short story *The Greatest Gift*, which Philip Van Doren Stern self-published in 1943 and is in turn loosely based on the 1843 Charles Dickens novella, *A Christmas Carol*. The film stars James Stewart as George Bailey, a man who has given up his personal dreams in order to help others in his community, and whose thoughts of suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his guardian angel, who shows George how he has touched the lives of others and how different life would be for his wife, Mary, and his community of Bedford Falls if he had not been born.

Although *It's a Wonderful Life* initially received mixed reviews and was unsuccessful at the box office, it became a classic Christmas film after it was put into the public domain, which allowed it to be broadcast without licensing or royalty fees.

It's a Wonderful Life is considered one of the greatest films of all time. It was nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Picture, and has been recognized by the American Film Institute as one of the 100 best American films ever made. It was No. 11 on the American Film Institute's 1998 greatest movie list, No. 20 on its 2007 greatest movie list, and No. 1 on its list of the most inspirational American films of all time. Capra revealed that it was his favorite among the films he directed and that he screened it for his family every Christmas season. It was one of Stewart's favorite films. In 1990, the film was designated as "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant" and added to the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress.





Place, Loyalty, and Humanity in Denis Villeneuve's *Dune*

Gabriel S. Sanchez, J.D.

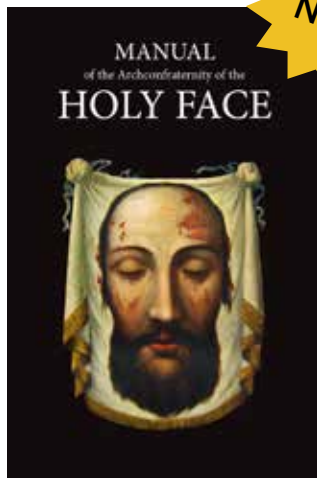
“My planet Arrakis is so beautiful when the sun is low. . .”

These words, spoken by Chani (Zendaya), open Denis Villeneuve’s cinematic interpretation of Frank Herbert’s groundbreaking 1965 novel *Dune*. Chani, a member of the Fremen people who inhabit the desert planet of Arrakis, is given few lines, but her first may be the most important. For whatever *Dune* is as a piece of world-building science fiction which, in the hands of its original author and his progeny, would spawn numerous sequels expanding upon, and perhaps in some instances distorting, the original tale of betrayal, hope, and destiny, it is also a story about place. In the eyes of the Imperium which rules the “known galaxy,” Arrakis is a land to be exploited for spice, the substance that makes interstellar travel possible; it is not a destination to visit, let alone inhabit. For the Fremen, whose culture is glimpsed upon throughout the

film, it is home, one which they will fight and die to maintain in the face of a brutish colonial mindset.

To speak of *Dune*, either as film or a series, is to invite controversy. For decades, the original novel was deemed “unfilmable” due to its scope, much in the way many thought J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* could never be brought to the big screen. Without commenting on the quality of Peter Jackson’s adaptation of the latter, its ambition and execution no doubt contributed to a belief that even Herbert’s work could be reproduced cinematically. An earlier 1984 attempt helmed by writer/director David Lynch has been universally panned and a TV series based on the novel, though received more favorably, never captured the public imagination. Villeneuve, who has a demonstrated eye for epic storytelling with movies such as *Arrival* and *Blade Runner 2049*, has been vested with bringing Herbert’s story to life, albeit over the course of two installments. Those coming into

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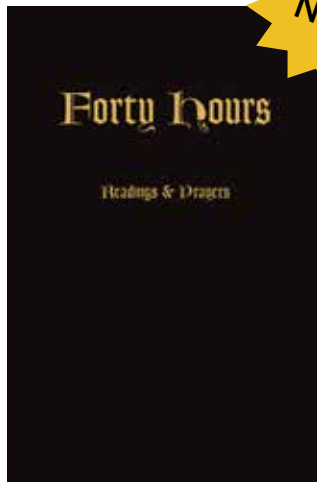
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A Snapshot of the History of Film

Helena Davis

Film has an ability to enthrall and enchant like no other medium. It can capture the imagination in a way entirely different from books and painting. Even now that going to the movie theatre has become a dying pastime, film still captivates us. Movies and books are written about the “silver screen,” the golden age of Hollywood, the lives of past film stars and film makers. “Film Studies” has become a popular college major (and a breeding ground for pretention). Even as the quality of our films continues to rapidly decline, the mystique and enchantment of film remain.

And yet, despite our continued cultural fascination with film, there is a tendency to think of film purely as entertainment, something not to be taken seriously. This is something that the medium has struggled with since its beginning. But when we increasingly turn to film—arguably more than any other medium—to process questions of our national identity, we can see its extraordinary myth-making potential.

“An Invention Without a Future” —The Early Era of Film

Film did not always have the stature it enjoys today. When the pioneering Lumiere brothers gave a screening of one of their short films in the 1890s, one of the brothers remarked that film was “an invention without a future,” simply an amusing invention, but that was all.

Even as the film industry began to grow rapidly, it wasn’t taken very seriously. Most considered film a cheap form of entertainment, a fad whose moment would pass quickly. Actors and actresses who pursued roles in film rather than the stage were said to be throwing their careers away. Early feminists even viewed theatre houses as places of vice and danger, some going so far as to propose that a policeman needed to be posted outside in case of undesirable characters causing trouble.

One of the early breakthroughs in film came at the hands of director David Wark Griffith. His 1915 film, *Birth of a Nation*, enthralled audi-



Don't Judge a Book by Its Movie:

Film Icons vs. Literary Symbols

Jonathan Wanner

Many bibliophiles would rather take a punch in the gut than watch a film that is an unfaithful adaptation of a book. After all, who can forget the totally random romance plot appended to *The Hobbit* movies, the nonsensical love affairs between heroes and villains in recent adaptations of *Beowulf* (1999 and 2007), or the overwrought brattiness of *Emma* (2020)? No longer do we judge a book by its cover: we judge it by its movie. Yet, even if a film director were to swear an oath of absolute loyalty to the source text, motion pictures would remain fundamentally different from novels, both in form and material. We ought not expect the same experience, the same result, or even the same purpose when each medium has its own natural advantages and limitations. Before we can understand what these two poles are, however, we must define each medium and consider the degree to which they intersect.

The primary difference between a movie and a book is the mode of expression: films, by and large, depict a series of *icons*, whereas books present a series of *symbols*. By “icons” I don’t mean the egg tempera images that deck sacred halls. The term, in this case, is semiological. An icon is a sign that visually resembles what it represents. A symbol does not.¹ Take an oak tree. In a movie, an oak is an icon because, despite being a mere bundle of pixels, it resembles a real tree; in a book, however, you do not literally see bark or foliage when you peer at the word “tree.” The lines and swerves of the letters are meaningful only because, taken together, they represent a sound—“tree”—and that sound, in turn, conjures a mental image that resembles an actual tree.² Of course, a mental image is an icon as well. A tree in your mind is not actually made of wood and plant matter, even though its form resembles an oak. Rather, the tree is made of you—or, at least, your mind, which, although it is immaterial, has the miraculous

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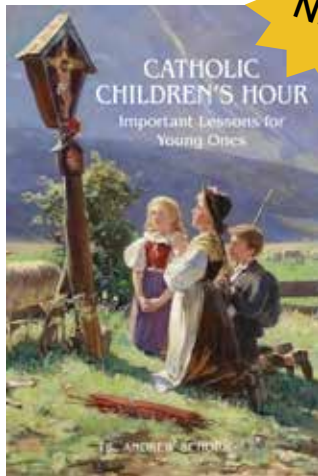
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A Spanish Mystic of Paint

Francisco de Zurbarán and the Spanish Counter-Reformation

Andrew P. Latham

In 1634, Francisco made his way tentatively through the heavily Moorish-influenced courtyard of the *Palacio Real de Madrid*—the Royal Palace of the King of Spain—summoned there to lend paint to the walls. There was much that was unlikely about this moment. He was born a peasant, into a family of destitute day-laborers in rural Northern Andalusia. Moreover, the opulence of his surroundings was foreign to him—almost distasteful. He was an ascetic at heart, a man who would be influenced by the mystics: Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, and yes, even Miguel de Molinos. And while the latter would be condemned as a heretic and imprisoned in Rome for his unorthodox understanding of the influence of the Holy Ghost on the soul, Francisco was steadfastly a student of these and of the Quietist and mystical movements sweeping through Spain. No, there was nothing mystical about the *Palacio*, and certainly nothing mystical about being named the Painter to the King. But the peas-

ant-turned-master refused to bathe in the praise he earned. Instead, Francisco de Zurbarán focused inwards like the mystics he admired, and has gifted us with artwork incomparable in the history of Catholic art.

There has seldom been a collection of Catholic heroes as was seen in Spain immediately following the Protestant Reformation. Through Providence and grace, the Iberian peninsula was spared the ravages of the revolution sweeping through the north. One could describe the Church in Spain as turning inwards, both holding fast to doctrine and developing it further through the saints that would help define Catholic theology for the next few centuries.

This renewed emphasis on theology impacted not only the clergy and churches, but artists as well. The combination of literary and artistic output during this time earned it the title the “Golden Age” of Spain. And while artists like Murillo and Velazquez are more well known, the contributions made by Francisco de Zur-

he shows us his trademark: light, dark, shadow, fabric, folds, wrinkles, all competing in the space, yet harmonious in their elegance. The tension of the ropes nearly hidden in the blackness is jarring when compared to the limp, heavy weight of the martyr's head and hands, the masterful fabric seeming to hold Saint Serapion aloft as his soul passes to Heaven.

He is in his own fashion one of the most uncompromisingly Catholic and serious painters the world has seen. He is certainly the one who understood the Mysticism and piety of the saints who came before him, and of all Spanish Baroque painters of the seventeenth century, perhaps the *most* Spanish.

Works depicted in this article: *Crucifixion* (1627), *St. Francis in Meditation*, *St. Hugo in the Refectory* (1650/1660), *The Lamb of God* (1635-40), *The Martyrdom of St. Serapion* (1628), *The Apotheosis of St. Thomas Aquinas*, *The Madonna and Child with the Infant St. John the Baptist*.





The Catholic Films Still Begging to Be Produced:

A Troubling Meditation on the “Drama of Truth”

John Rao, D.Phil., Oxon.

Most people with some knowledge of the history of film probably think of the role of the Catholic Church solely with reference to her moral critique, with the American-born Legion of Decency (1934), and Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter, *Vigilanti cura* (1936) strongly promoting its program for monitoring the cinema as talking points. Nevertheless, the true story of her involvement with the cinema is more complex than that.

For one thing, the moral critique went deeper than mere objection to risqué screen shots, as can be seen in discussions during the 1930s of the disquieting psychological impact on an audience enamored of a given actor noted for

playing both villainous as well as self-sacrificing, heroic roles. What conclusion would it draw therefrom?

Moving on to more positive ground, such psychological reflections translated into public statements of appreciation and prizes for what were appreciated as spiritually insightful productions, Federico Fellini’s (1920-1993) *La Strada* (1954) being a prime example. Moreover, no one questions that—whatever his personal piety may or may not have been—Catholic themes inspired Robert Bresson (1901-1999), one of the most innovative cinematic geniuses of mid-century. Here was a man who put works like Georges Bernanos’ (1888-1948) penetrating, though terribly disturbing, *Diary of a Country*



Films of Freedom

Bridget Bryan

“If you have a rich interior life . . . there probably isn’t that much difference between the inside and outside of a [prison] camp.”

—Etty Hillesum, *An Interrupted Life: The Diaries and Letters of Etty Hillesum 1941-3.*¹

The three films *The Ninth Day*, *Sophie Scholl*, and *A Hidden Life*, each depict real-life heroes who chose, against great odds, to stand for truth. Though the first two movies were made over 15 years ago, they insisted on being included here. The setting of each is WWII Germany and Austria, under Nazi control. What follows is a brief review of each film with a nugget or two that will encourage exploring these films, all wrapped up by a string that binds them all together.

***The Ninth Day*, 2004 Directed by Volker Schlöndorff**

The Ninth Day is a German film (available with English subtitles). It’s loosely based on the

true story taken from Fr. Jean Bernard’s Nazi-era prison diary, now published as *Priestblock 25487: A Memoir of Dachau*.² *Dachau* is one of the more infamous concentration camps produced by Nazi Germany. The movie plot comes from one line in the priest’s diary, whereas all the details of the movies are pulled from the other details in the diary and other historical accounts of the time.

The priest is renamed Henry Kremer in the movie. He’s imprisoned with thousands of other priests in Dachau. In the midst of their unspeakable suffering and while staying faithful to their vocation, he is unexpectedly freed for a period of 9 days and goes home. During that time he is pressured by an SS Untersturmführer (played convincingly well by August Diehl), to



Cinema and Sanctity

Pauper Peregrinus

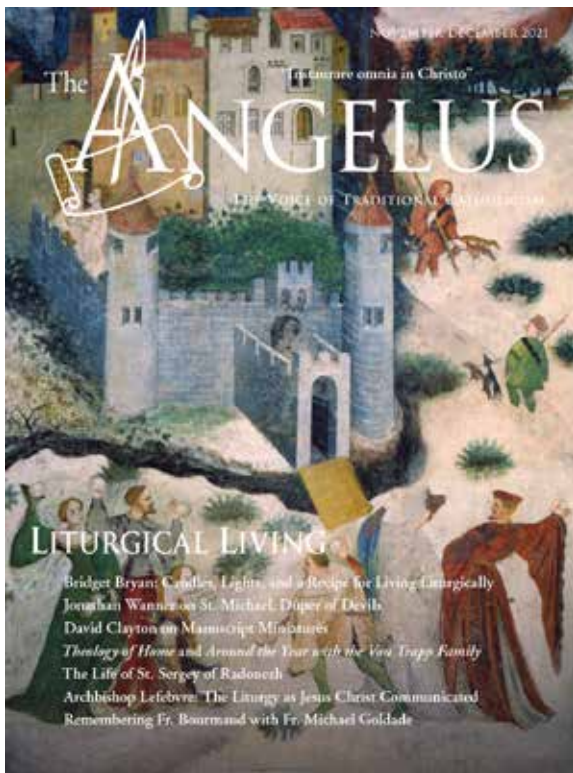
The French philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) had a powerful but mixed influence on the life of the Church. After his conversion at a young age to the Catholic faith, he became an enthusiastic and able proponent of the “Thomistic revival” set in motion by Pope Leo XIII. He and his wife Raïssa made of their home in Meudon a center of prayer and philosophy, and a seed-bed of many vocations. Yet he would also go on to develop a political philosophy called “integral humanism,” which seemed to many an ill-fated marriage of the gospel and the Enlightenment, but which deeply influenced the future Pope Paul VI. Nevertheless, Maritain was always a profound thinker, and in a book published in his old age, he reflected on those who “think that the kingdom of God comes in noise and din,” and who imagine that mass media will henceforth be the Church’s main tools for evangelization. Such people, Maritain comments, do not realize that these media “tend by nature to

serve the illusory more than the true.” What did he have in mind? He was evoking a distinction that goes all the way back to Plato, between the appearance of a thing and its nature. I know, for example, that there are such things as dogs. I have often seen them, and heard them bark. There must be some “canine nature” that they all share, or else they would not all be dogs. But have I ever seen or heard or touched this nature? Not exactly: all that has ever directly struck my senses has been this or that color or shape or texture or sound. What’s more, all the dogs I have ever met or ever will meet have been getting older; that is, tending to become something other than dogs. Whenever my senses put me in contact with something, that thing is tending to become something else, and to that extent, it is not fully itself. “All things flow,” said an ancient philosopher.

What has all this to do with the art of cinematography? Human life is a balancing act between the intelligence (which can know the

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The Canon

Part Five

Fr. Christopher Danel

In this article we examine the portion of the Canon immediately following the Consecration, presenting the work of Msgr. Nicholas Gihl in his fundamental liturgical commentary *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: Dogmatically, Liturgically, and Ascetically Explained*. Msgr. Gihl was a priest of Freiburg in Breisgau whose work of liturgical research took place during the time frame spanning the pontificates of Popes Pius IX to Pius XI, including that of Pope Saint Pius X. The early years of his work were contemporaneous with the last years in the work of Dom Prosper Guéranger. (The English translation of his study appeared in 1902; the original is: Gihl, Nikolaus. *Messopfer dogmatisch, liturgisch und aszetisch erklärt*. Herder: Freiburg im Breisgau, 1877.)

The Eucharistic Sacrifice is accomplished essentially by the Consecration. But as the sacrificial action, as simple as it is sublime, was appropriately introduced and prepared by manifold rites, it must also liturgically be properly developed and worthily concluded. Hence the Church now encircles the head of the Victim reposing on the altar with a mystical wreath of holy prayers and ceremonies. At the moment of the Eucharistic Consecration there was thrown open to us on the altar an immense treasury of graces; these the Church would now gather up, and there follows an oblation prayer in three parts.

Unde et memores: Wherefore, O Lord, we Thy servants, and likewise Thy holy people, calling to mind the blessed Passion of the same Christ Thy Son, our Lord, together with His Resurrection from the grave, and also His glorious Ascension into heaven, offer unto Thy excellent Majesty, of Thy gifts and presents, a pure Victim, a holy Victim, an immaculate Victim: the holy bread of eternal life, and the chalice of everlasting salvation.

Supra quae: Upon which do Thou vouchsafe to look with favorable and gracious countenance, and accept them, as Thou didst vouchsafe to accept the gifts of Thy just servant Abel, and the sacrifice of our Patriarch Abraham, and that which Thy High Priest

them in the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, Penitent, July 22.

We note too the touching prayer of the sisters—for a prayer it is—“Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.” It is a prayer merely of presenting one’s need, as His Mother’s “They have no wine” (2:3). A prayer of trust in His love and faith in His power to aid, by miracle, if needs be. The faith of Martha and Mary, though, has not the perfection of Our Lady’s, being more like that, gently rebuked, of the ruler of Capharnaum, in that he thought Our Lord would have to be in the presence of his servant to heal him (4:47-49). After their brother’s death, each of his sisters complains: “Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.”

Jesus, though, delayed His coming back to Judea that Lazarus’ death be the more certain, it being the fourth day after that that the Lord comes, and so that the miracle be the more convincing. Jesus will use this occasion to reaffirm what has already been repeatedly stated: “I am the resurrection and the life.”⁴ This we must believe, as had to by now the witnesses to Our Lord’s teachings and miracles. “Believeth thou this?” he asks of Martha. The Apostles too are to believe; many among the Jews of the crowd do also believe—but not all. The time has definitely come to decide for or against Jesus Christ. Even those who decide against Him cannot deny His miracles now. They are hard-hearted, they sin against the light and blind themselves. “They loved the glory of men more than the glory of God” (12:43), St. John will later explain. What was their reaction after the glorious raising to life of Lazarus? To assemble the Sanhedrin—the full assembly of the priests, doctors of the law and elders⁵—where the Chief Priest counsels having Jesus put to death, a motion adopted by the Council and acted upon in seeking His arrest. This Caiphas “who had given the counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people” (18:14) will himself be Jesus’ judge and prosecutor.⁶ Caiphas’ words, to get the Council to call for Jesus’ death, “It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not” (11:50), have quite another, more sublime meaning, wanted by the Holy Ghost. “He prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; and not only for the nation, but to

gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed” (11:51f). God uses this sinner, a High Priest of the Old Law, to prophesy, we might say, as He can still sanctify through an unworthy priest of the New Law.

This great sign of Jesus’ was “for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified by it” (11:4). “Did not I say to thee, that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?” (11:40). So this sign will be very public, despite the fact that His death had already been sought (11:8); and for the sake of those standing about, that they may believe (11:42), He prays His Father out loud: “Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always. . .” (11:41f). Then, with a command reaching the Limbo of the Fathers, authoritatively He says: “Lazarus, come forth” (11:43), which he does.

And yet we see in this chapter Our Lord being very human too. It begins with Him “hiding” Himself from His enemies, being “beyond the Jordan” (10:40), and closes with Him again withdrawing Himself, this time “into a country near the desert, unto a city that is called Ephrem” (11:54). He loves with a human heart (11:5 & 36); the sight of Martha and Mary weeping causes Him to shed tears too (11:35); He groans in spirit and troubles Himself (11:33). His passions were as real for Him as ours are for us: but He had complete dominion over His. Son of man He was, but Son of God always (11:4). May Martha’s profession of faith be wholeheartedly ours: “Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art the Christ the Son of the living God, who art come into this world” (11:27).

Pater Inutilis is a priest of the Society of Saint Pius X.

Endnotes:

¹ Magdalen, *i.e.*, “of Magdala,” a town in Galilee on Lake Genesareth.

² Lk. XV. Our Lord took a Publican to be an Apostle (Mt. 10:3), a thief to be with Him in paradise (Lk. 23:43), *etc.*

³ Other explanations: she had been actually possessed; she had suffered much (20th century exegetes).

⁴ 5:21, 25; 6:39, 40, 44, 55; 10:10, 28.

⁵ Cf. “The ancients of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together; and they brought him into their council” (Lk. 22:66).

⁶ Cf. Mk. 14:53-64.

Our Lady of Laus

Refuge of Sinners

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France 1664-1718

Nestled in the southern French Alps lies the small farming village of St. Saint-Etienne d'Avançon. On September 16, 1647, Benoite [Benedicta] Rencurel was born—the second of three girls—to very poor parents. When Benoite was only seven years old, her father passed away leaving her family in even deeper poverty with debtors seeking payments. Their family was in such poverty that some days they only had stale bread and water to eat. In order to maintain the family, all the children had to work outside the home. Even so, while there was no time for her to be educated at school, Benoite's mother was conscientious of teaching her to pray the rosary and to pray at all times. Although high spirited, she was a contemplative soul and enjoyed praying for long periods of time. Her family was faithful in going to Mass and so she was taught through the Sunday homilies and learned about Mary, Mother of God. This par-

ticular dogma fascinated the young girl and she spent long periods of time contemplating this mystery while tending the sheep in the fields during the day. This contemplation led to a desire to see Our Lady.

During these years of economic crisis, young Benoite began to work as a shepherdess for a neighbor. There is a story that during these years there were men of bad reputation who were heading towards the house, one of whom tried to approach her offering her money for her purity. She fought him off and fled to warn her mother of the approach of the men. When Benoite was 12 years old, her family's financial situation grew even more desperate so she took another job shepherding a second neighbor's flock of sheep.

When Benoite was 17 years old, she was shepherding the flocks in the field when she saw an old man dressed in the vestments of a bishop of the early Church before her. He asked her: —“My daughter, what are you doing here?”

Her guardian angel also tried to comfort Benoite when she was so distraught at witnessing the sufferings of Our Lord during the visions she received. He said to her, “Do not be troubled, my Sister. Although our Divine Master has appeared to you in this condition, He is not suffering anything; it is solely to show you what He suffered out of love for the human race.” Yet she was still horrified that he had suffered so much on account of our sins.

The Oil of Laus, Source of Graces

In the basilica, near the altar of the Chapel of Bon-Rencontre where Our Lady appeared to Benoite, a lamp burns continuously, fueled by oil, to indicate the real presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

“The good Mother said to Benoite, at the beginning of the devotion, that the oil of the chapel, if we take it and apply it, if we have recourse to her intercession and if we have faith, that we will be healed” (Pierre Gaillard, Vicar

General of the diocese of Gap, contemporary of Benoite).

Our Lady requests that we make an act of faith and trust in God with the help of this ordinary oil which burned before the Eucharistic presence of Jesus. Through this gesture of prayer, we express our requests to the Lord, via the Virgin Mary. The anointing helps us to open our heart to the action of the Holy Spirit to receive, in response to our prayer, the visible or hidden graces of spiritual or physical healing that the Lord wants to grant us in His love.

The sanctuary receives numerous testimonies from people affirming that they have been relieved in their pain, sometimes cured of their physical, moral and spiritual miseries, after having prayed and used oil from the lamp of the sanctuary.

Laus Oil can be obtained on request from the shrine’s website:

www.sanctuaire-notredamedulaus.com/recevoir-lhuile-du-laus



Statue of the Virgin Mary and Benoite Rencurel on the promontory of Pindreau, in cast iron manufactured by the artistic union of Vaucouleurs in 1926.



THE LAST WORD

Fr. David Sherry
District Superior of Canada

Dear Reader,

Once a quarter, the “Restored Church of God” out of Wadsworth, Ohio sends me a copy of their magisterial magazine *The Real Truth*. The mailing label informs me that I am the second of eight subscribers in Quebec; it doesn’t tell me how I ended up on the distribution list. The glossy paper, the beautiful pictures and the layout would rival—were such a thing possible—even that of the *Angelus*. Inside, however, it turns out that the “real truth” is simply the world vision of Pastor General David C. Pack as guided by his personal interpretation of the Bible. Does hell exist? No. Are the coronavirus vaccines the mark of the beast? No. Is there only one true Church? Yes! (It is the *Restored Church of God*, which was known as the *Radio Church of God* until 1968.)

Which is a parable for movies, and entertainment of all sorts. The actors are impossibly beautiful, the cinematography is unparalleled, and the special effects are out of this world. But on the inside? Is it the truth, or is it simply the worldview of charlatans? Just as the Catholic applies the test of the Faith to the contentions of Protestants, so he must apply it to works of art.

There are three types of movies that all Christians should eschew: if they glorify sin, are an occasion of sin, or if they are graphically violent. Glorifying sin means that the message of the movie is that sin is good, or at least desir-

able and beneficial. This is the lie of Satan: sin is good for you! These movies corrupt the mind and the will. Being an occasion of sin, means that the movie is actually apt to lead the person into actual sin. This is the case with immodesty and impurity. Graphic violence makes a movie bad in a different way. It makes our imagination used to what it should not be used to. Our imagination does not know the difference between right and wrong nor between truth and falsehood. If you doubt that, consider horror movies. People, knowing they are not true, watch them because they have the thrill of feeling scared. Graphic violence is not theatrical violence, but extremely realistic bloody and gory violence.

Puritans will say: movies are bad. Period. Catholics will say: it depends. Just compare *The Real Truth* to *The Angelus*. . .

Fr. David Sherry

The Society of Saint Pius X is an international priestly society of almost 700 priests. Its main purpose is the formation and support of priests.

The goal of the Society of Saint Pius X is to preserve the Catholic Faith in its fullness and purity, not changing, adding to or subtracting from the truth that the Church has always taught, and to diffuse its virtues, especially through the Roman Catholic priesthood. Authentic spiritual life, the sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means to foster virtue and sanctity and to bring the divine life of grace to souls.

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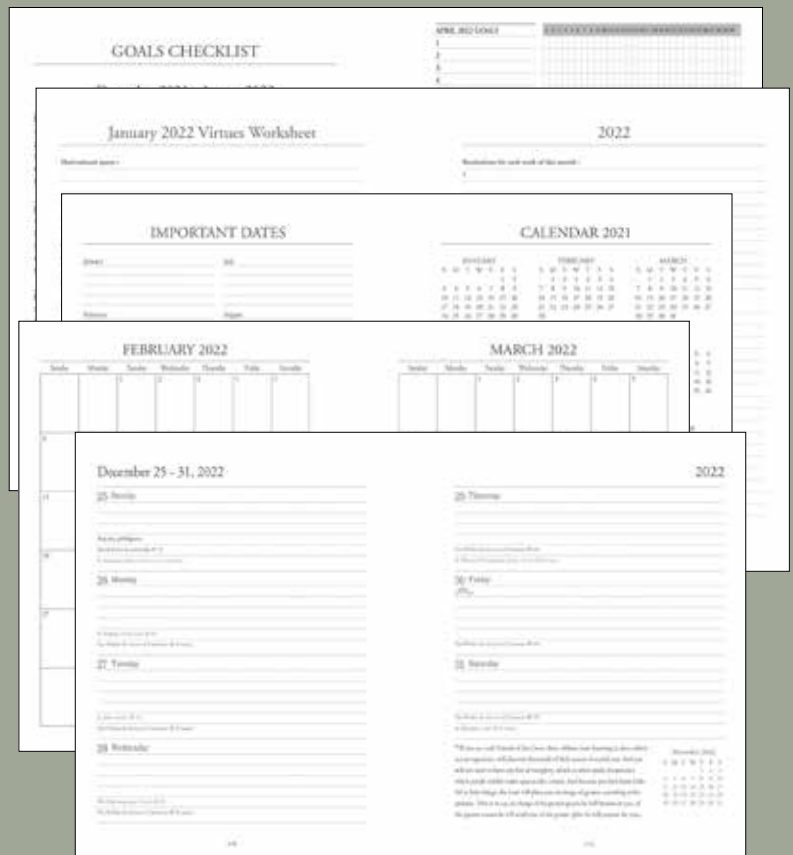
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