

GOYA Lenten Retreat 2010  
"Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me"  
Mark 8:34

Talking points from the films

**The Life and Passion of Christ - 1905**

**(9:28)**

- This is the first full-length movie about Jesus
- It was made in France in 1903 and released in the US in 1905
- There's no audio because there wasn't a way to record talking.
  - Silent movies used classical music
- There is some color. It looks as if some type of paint was applied directly to the negative of the film.

**Questions**

- What did you think about the movie?
- What do you think about the use of color?
- How did you react to the Crucifixion?

**Note:**

- The cloth bearing the image of Jesus is a reference to St. Veronica, the woman who had an issue of blood and was healed by touching the hem of Christ's robe (Matthew 9:20).
  - Tradition teaches us that St. Veronica wiped Christ's face with a napkin as He was carrying His Cross, and an image of His face was transferred to that napkin.
  - Veronica is actually a Latinized form of the Greek name Φερωνίκη, which means "she who brings victory."
  - It is an icon of Christ that was created without human hands.
  - St. Veronica is commemorated on July 12.
- There are other traditions of the image of Christ found on cloth:
  - Shroud of Turin – a linen cloth bearing the image of a man who appears to have suffered physical trauma in a manner consistent with the Crucifixion.
    - The face on the shroud look like classic images of Jesus
  - Holy Mandylion (Image of Edessa) – a holy relic consisting of a square cloth upon which a miraculous image of the face of Jesus was imprinted.
    - Tradition teaches us that Christ Himself washed His face and imprinted His likeness on a cloth to heal the ruler of Edessa.
    - The first record of the existence of the image was in the city of Edessa in 600 AD. Evagarius writes about the image.
      - The image was moved to Constantinople in the 10<sup>th</sup> century.
      - It disappeared during the 4<sup>th</sup> Crusade in 1204
      - It is reported to have reappeared in France and disappear again during the French Revolution.

- The Orthodox Church commemorates the Holy Mandylion on August 16 (Translation of the Image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ)

### From the Manger to the Cross - 1912

**(8:56)**

- This is the first American full-length movie about Jesus
- It was released in 1912.
- It was shot on location in Jerusalem and other historical cities.
- It uses biblical quotes to help tell the story.

#### **Questions**

- What did you think about the movie?
- How is it different from the first film?
- Did you react differently?

### King of Kings -- 1927

**(15:05)**

- King of Kings was released in 1927.
- It was directed by Cecil B. DeMille, who also directed the Ten Commandments

#### **Questions**

- What did you think about the movie?
- How is King of Kings different from the other two?
- Of the three, which was your favorite? Why?

### King of Kings - 1961

**(10:33)**

- This is a remake of King of Kings from 1927.
- It was filmed by a different director.
- The crucifixion scene had to be reshot because test audiences were offended by Jesus' hairy chest.
- This was the first, large budget color film in English to actually show Jesus' face.
  - Most color movies at the time (Ben-Hur) only showed His feet or hands.
- When the film was released on DVD in 2003, it received a PG-13 rating.

#### **Questions**

- How did you react to this film?
- How do you think Jesus was portrayed?
- How did you respond to the Crucifixion?

### The Greatest Story Ever Told -- 1965

**(12:06)**

- This was the second big screen epic about Jesus in the 60's
- It didn't do very well financially, and biblical epics disappeared for a long time.

- Simon of Cyrene is portrayed by Sidney Poitier, an African-American actor.
  - The civil rights movement was gaining momentum in the 60s
    - Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus in 1955
    - Martin Luther King Jr's "I have a dream" speech was given in 1963.

### Questions

- How did you react to this film?
- How do you think Jesus was portrayed?
- Which of the two that you've seen so far did you think was better?

### Jesus of Nazareth - 1977

(17:55)

- Jesus of Nazareth was a British/Italian television mini-series that aired in 1977; it was not released in theaters.
- The actor portraying Jesus rarely blinks; he did this on purpose to add to the mystique of Jesus. (the actor only blinks one time the entire movie)

### Questions

- What is different about Jesus in this film?
  - There is more emphasis placed on his emotions and humanity.
- How did you react to this portrayal?

### Jesus Christ Superstar - 1973

(9:27)

- Jesus Christ Superstar is a rock opera. It uses modern music and contemporary slang.
- A large part of the plot focuses on Judas Iscariot who is depicted as a tragic figure who is dissatisfied with what he views as Jesus' lack of planning and is also alarmed by the relatively recent claims of His divinity. He fears that Jesus will doom the Jewish people to destruction at the hands of the Romans.
- This film was controversial because of the way the Gospel is portrayed through pop music.
- The film also doesn't include the Resurrection, which bothered many Christians.

### Questions

- What were your reactions?
- Where you offended? Why or why not?
- Do you think it's appropriate to portray Jesus this way?

### Life of Brian - 1979

*\*\*note - The scene with "Always look on the bright side of life" was the portion used at the retreat. This scene contains an explicit word. Please use appropriate judgment when showing this to younger teenagers.*

(9:22)

- Life of Brian is a comedy written and performed by the Monty Python comedy team, a British comedy team that success on television and other movies (Monty Python and the Holy Grail)
- It tells the story of Brian Cohen, a young Jewish man who is born in a stable next door to the manger where Christ is born.
- The beginning of the film shows the Wise Men visiting him by mistake. They give Brian's mother the gifts reserved for Jesus (Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh), but they take the gifts back when they realize that Brian isn't Jesus.
- Throughout the movie, he is mistaken for the Messiah, and no matter what he does or says, people begin to worship him.
- In the end of the movie, he is crucified with a number of other people. The people crucified begin to sing a musical number, and the movie ends.
- This movie was controversial because of the rude humor and comical portrayal of the Messiah and of crucifixion.

### Questions

- What was your reaction?
- Were you offended?
  - Why or why not?
- Do you think it would ever be appropriate to use humor when addressing the crucifixion?
- Would you be motivated to protest something like this if it were released today?
  - If not, how far would the humor need to go before you would vocalize your outrage?

### The Last Temptation of Christ

#### (6:30)

*\*\*note – Jesus is nude on the cross, but because the way he is positioned with his hips turned to the side, there is no graphic nudity.\*\**

- The Last Temptation of Christ is a novel written by Nikos Kazantzakis.
  - He also write Zorba the Greek
- The novel is told from Jesus' perspective as He is tempted by every type of sin.
- The movie portrays Jesus as being confused about His identity as the Son of God. He has vivid dreams and hears voices. He appears to be tortured by them emotionally.
- Just before He dies on the cross, the devil appears to him as a little girl and tempts Him one last time, telling Him that everything was a test and He passed. He didn't have to be crucified.
- The end of the movie shows him marrying Mary Magdalene and having a family.
- When Jesus realizes that He was supposed to die on the cross, he prays that he can go back and fix everything.
- The movie ends with Him back on the cross.

- In 1955, Nikos Kazantzakis was excommunicated from the Greek Orthodox Church because of this novel.
- There were active protests against the movie before it had even finished filming.
  - The film was banned in several countries. It is still banned in the Philippines, Singapore, and South Africa.

### Questions

- What was your reaction to the film?
- Where you offended? Why or why not?

### The Passion of the Christ - 2004

(22:34)

- The Passion of the Christ was released in 2004.
- It is the highest grossing non-English language film.
  - The languages in the film are Aramaic, Latin, and Hebrew
- It is controversial because many people accuse the portrayal of the Jewish people as being Anti-Semitic
- It's also controversial because of its use of graphic violence
  - The scourging scene is over 10 minutes long and is one of the most violent scenes ever filmed (in my opinion)
- *Talk about theater experience (if you saw it in the theater)*

### Questions

- What was your reaction to the film?
- Had you ever seen this before?
- Why do you think there is so much violence in the film?
- Does this make you feel any differently about the crucifixion?
- How does the movie end?
  - Resurrection