Film as an Expression of Spirituality

Film as an Expression of Spirituality:

The Arts and Faith Top 100 Films

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

Andrew Sarris, in his refreshingly direct manner, calls "soul" the "intangible difference between one personality and another" (563). In his "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962," the premise that a director has a "personality," which he (or she) infuses into a film, is a given. That this personality is accepted as a "criterion of value" is listed as an important premise of auteur theory, second only to the premise that the director's "technical competence" is the first criterion of value.

When we say things plainly, important ideas embedded in our criticism are suddenly easier to see, no longer obscured by critical catch phrases or the weight of tradition. Here, the important idea that too often gets obscured is that auteur theory makes value judgements about a director's (and hence a film's) "personality" or "soul." It is not necessarily wrong that it does so, but it is suspicious (at least to me) that those engaging in auteurist criticism rarely admit the subjective quality of criticism focusing on amorphous and abstract concepts such as "personality" or "soul."

Almost every critic I have known wants to be thought of as objective. If a critic is not objective, what is criticism beyond the enumeration of one's personal preference? But one can describe "technical competence" much more easily than "distinguishable personality" precisely because there are a core set of rules that define the boundaries of competence that are more widely held in common than any rules about personality. This distinction can be seen as analogous to judging grammar and homiletics in speech. Different listeners might disagree as to the effectiveness of volume, tempo, or rhythm in a persuasive speech, but they rarely have trouble agreeing upon whether a speech was comprehensible — a judgment about competence rather than style. One may prefer the long takes and stationary cameras of Ozu's *Tokyo Story*, while another may prefer the restless, relentless cutting in Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby*. It is rare, however, that the viewer who owns such preferences will describe the other style as incompetent. Such a label is usually reserved for a director (or team) unaware of the effect that directorial choices will have or unable to convey the message they want. There is no one correct personality or soul. But there can be relative unanimity about color correction, continuity, consistency in tone, or the most frequently understood meanings of certain shot compositions.

Defining the criteria of value that makes a film "spiritually significant" for Arts & Faith readers or voters has never been an easy task. In one of the web site's more contentious threads back when it was a discussion board, I asked a previous administrator if Arts & Faith was intended to be a "Christian" site. The answer I got was "yes," though what made it so in practice or content was never entirely clear to me.

I bought the domain that housed the discussion site from the previous owners and administrators around 2019. By that time, participation had waned as individual blogs and other means of content delivery (YouTube, Substack, individual blogs) became common and discussion migrated to the comment sections of Twitter, Facebook, Letterboxd and other social media platforms. Eventually the costs associated with patching and updating early-2000s software could no longer be justified for a site that served mainly as an archive of previous conversations.

There was, however, content worth saving, including five "Top 100 Spiritually Significant Films" lists that had been created by different iterations of site participants as well as a handful of thematic "Top 25" lists that were created in years in which there was not a new Top 100 list. These were folded into the current website, along with a record of votes by the "Arts & Faith Ecumenical Jury" listing the Top 10 films of the year recommended to Christian audiences. Those annual lists were initiated when *Christianity Today*, where several Arts & Faith participants wrote, stopped publishing regular film criticism. At one point, that magazine and site had a half-dozen freelance reviewers and would annually aggregate their votes for the best films of the year as well as the "most redemptive." The lists seemed to me worth preserving, in part because the magazine and website provided a much-needed venue for those interested in film and faith to challenge easy cultural assumptions about what, if anything, made a film "Christian," signaling it was okay to prefer serious artistic examinations of faith over products from the nascent Christian film industry that mostly produced Evangelical propaganda.

That last sentence probably sounds cattier than I mean it to be, but I include it for a specific reason. If this anthology has a reason for being (beyond the academic expectation to occasionally publish one's scholarship), it is that canon formation is one of the most important ways that academics and film criticism can hope to leave a positive spiritual and intellectual footprint. I identify as Christian, though not everyone associated with Arts & Faith does (or has in the past). American Christianity has long cast a scared and gloomy eye at the arts, and in my lifetime television and movies have replaced secular music as the most popular bogeyman to be preached against from pulpits. It is not surprising that those from such a culture who

wish to develop their appreciation for the art form have leaned heavily on Catholic and World cinema in order to find expressions of faith (and examinations of it) that feel more universal and are judged by some standard other than whether a film is safe to show to the church youth group.

That is not to say that the films on this list are exclusively Christian — or even exclusively religious. Some, such as *Ushpizin* or *A Fiddler on The Roof* depict other faith traditions. Others, such as *Ikiru* or *A Moment of Innocence* are products of cultures steeped in other faith traditions that inform their content even when their narratives are not specifically religious in nature. Can any one faith tradition claim *Stop Making Sense*, *2001: A Space Odyssey* or *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*? The presence of these films reminds us that "spirituality" is something different from "religion" even if the latter is one of the most common expressions of the former. It is important to note, too, that art can interrogate religious traditions in addition to celebrating them. Films such as *The Mission*, *Do the Right Thing*, *Secret Sunshine*, or *Night of The Hunter* remind us that religion and spirituality can be warped and twisted, instruments of personal and cultural destruction as well as uplift.

To date there have been six different Arts & Faith Top 100 lists, and the essays in this collection focus on selections from the most recent list, created in 2020. The most significant feature of that list is that voters chose to limit the list to one film per director, hoping to clear some space for new, diverse titles. (For more on the voting process, see the article "Crawling Towards Diversity" in the online magazine, *The Porch*.) To some degree, that strategy was successful. Five films discussed in this anthology made their way into the Arts & Faith Top 100 for the first time in 2020: *Silence*, *L'Avventura*, *Do the Right Thing*, *Lourdes*, and *First Reformed*. *Witness* returned to the list after appearing in the inaugural 2004 iteration but falling out in 2005, 2006, 2010, and 2011.

That may sound like recency bias, but it is important to note that both *First Reformed* and *Silence* were released after 2011 and so made the first list for which they were eligible to be voted on. And both were from established directors whose work was already valued by Arts & Faith voters. The inclusion of Antonioni's film and Spike Lee's film felt like long overdue corrections to past oversights. And as Matthew Page mentions in his chapter, there are a core group of films that have been on all six lists: Dreyer's *Ordet*, Pasolini's *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, Axel's *Babette's Feast*, and Kieślowski's *Blue* (either on its own or as part of the *Three Colors* trilogy.) Other staples of the list include Bresson, Tarkovsky, the Dardennes, Rossellini, De Sica, Wenders, and Denis. Several of these auteurs have had their works discussed in the three-volume series *Faith and*

Spirituality in Masters of World Cinema, which I recommend for any readers who finish this book and are hungry for more.

When arranging the contents of this volume, it seemed logical to follow a roughly chronological order, although essays that covered more than one film made that impossible. I started with *Ordet* because Dreyer's film was ranked sixth, first, first, third, and first on the last five iterations of the Arts & Faith Top 100. Other essays have direct or indirect connections to Dreyer. Steven D. Greydanus's look at *Lourdes* and *The Song of Bernadette* examines the issue of miracles, the very topic at the heart of *Ordet*. Matthew Spencer's essay on *First Reformed* both closes the book and brings it full circle since Schrader's own work, *Transcendental Style in Cinema*, was instrumental in bringing Dreyer to the attention of an entire generation of film scholars.

God's silence, described so poignantly in Brian Duignan's close readings of *The Seventh Seal* and *Silence*, leads seamlessly into the existential crises in *L'Avventura,* described equally poignantly by Domenic Cregan. The inability to extract issues of faith, spirituality, and morality from political and social issues runs from *The Mission* to *Do the Right Thing* to *First Reformed*. We see clashes of cultures in *Babette's Feast*, *Of Gods and Men,* and *Witness*. Another refreshing aspect of the anthology is the variety of critical approaches taken: Deconstruction, Formalism, Feminism, Reader-response, and Historicism are all on display…sometimes in the same essay!

There are other connections to be made, but such an introduction is meant to whet the reader's appetite rather than to summarize the author's ruminations. I am grateful to the colleagues who published their work here, especially those who shared of themselves at Arts & Faith before we ever dreamed that the site would lead to a book. The number of people who contributed to this book indirectly by participating in Arts & Faith is too long to list, but I would be remiss if I did not mention Alan Thomas (pseudonym) and Greg Wolfe who both shepherded the site before it fell to me to do so. It is the nature of academia, publishing, and the Internet that often our labor bears fruit only after we have moved on to other endeavors. While neither of my predecessors bears any blame for errors or mistakes in this book, they do deserve some of the credit for its existence. Without them, there would not have been an Arts & Faith Top 100 list to write about.

—Kenneth R. Morefield (2023)

CHAPTER ONE

CARL THEODOR DREYER AND THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN REALISM

KENNETH R. MOREFIELD

Carl Theodor Dreyer is firmly and deservedly established in the canon of great film directors, but…

To finish such a sentence is an act of both hubris and folly. For most who know Dreyer's work, his place in the canon needs neither explanation nor qualification. Even were one to concede that Dreyer's reputation is not currently as high or as widespread as that of Bresson, Tarkovsky, or Kieślowski, it would have to be acknowledged that the factors that go into the formation of an auteur's critical reputation are complex and varied.

Bresson may be more widely known today because James Quandt put together a complete retrospective in 1998 that toured North America and abroad — most of the films screening for the first time ever in major US cities — producing a lot of ink (including a large volume of essays). Those prints, Rialto's theatrical releases, and the slow trickle of readily available Criterion/New Yorker DVDs have kept Bresson in the pop-critical spotlight the past few years. Dreyer hasn't had any significant (re)presentation, his films rarely appear in revivals, and the Criterion box set (all the sound films lumped together) tended to stay within Criterion circles and only well-stocked DVD stores. (Neither Blockbuster Online nor Netflix currently carry the discs from this box set.) Kieślowski had Weinstein driven publicity in Miramax's glory days (his untimely death didn't hurt his name recognition, either). Tarkovsky remains alive through revivals and genre circles due to *Solaris* and *Stalker*. Among serious world cinema aficionados, Dreyer remains solidly in the upper stratosphere, but programmers and critics still haven't figured out how to present him or sell him to a wider audience yet, in part because his work resists classification within the most familiar critical rubrics dealing with spirituality in film.

This paper seeks to use Dreyer's work, specifically *Ordet* and *Vampyr*, to illustrate ways in which genre and genre expectations mediate critical

reputation in the liberal arts. Representations of religious faith, particularly Christianity, can be complicated by the fact that depictions of the supernatural or miraculous are often hallmarks of horror, science fiction, or fantasy genres, which are sometimes afforded less respect within academic (and some artistic) communities. The term "realism" denotes a style, of course, so theoretically any subject matter, even religious faith, could be depicted using a realistic style. Some subject matter, however, is so strongly associated with particular genres (or artists who use them) that it becomes effectively linked to those genres. When thinking about art in genre terms, it is necessary to acknowledge that such a link is conventional rather than necessary, but to the extent that genre conventions mediate viewers' expectations, failing to adhere to them can create difficulties that impede the acceptance of such works. After providing a brief summary of Dreyer's career, this paper will attempt to explain how and why the rejection of the supernatural has historically informed the definitions of realism (first in literature and then, by extension, in film) and how such narrow definitions of genres have complicated the critical responses to Dreyer's work.

The standard biography of Dreyer is *My Only Great Passion: The Life and Films of Carl Th. Dreyer* by Jean Drum and Dale D. Drum. The authors of this work had access to and the approval of Dreyer himself during their work on this project as well as cooperation from the Danish Film Museum and full access to its archives (xvii). There are also serviceable biographical sketches in David Rudkin's BFI Film Classics companion to *Vampyr* and at the Internet site Carldreyer.com, which is part of the Masters of Cinema network devoted to online resources about Dreyer, Robert Bresson, Yasujiro Ozu, and Andrei Tarkovsky.

Carl Theodor Dreyer was born in February of 1889 of a Swedish mother, Josefine Nilsson, and adopted in infancy by Danish parents: Carl Dreyer and Inger Marie Dreyer. He grew up in Copenhagen and worked for a time as a journalist before apprenticing at the Nordisk Film School. He worked full-time for Nordisk after June 1915, mostly developing scripts from novels, but he did not direct his first film until 1919 (Drum 44). Throughout his career, Dreyer continued to draw source material from other media; *Gertrud* (1964) and *Ordet* (1955) are both adapted from plays, while *Michael* (1924) is based on a novel. This fact is not mentioned to suggest that Dreyer was overly constricted by notions of fidelity in adaptation but that the genre conventions that affected the interpretation of literary works could indirectly have an influence on how Dreyer's adaptations were understood and evaluated.

Rudkin claims that of Dreyer's first five films, only *The Parson's Widow* (1920) is of sufficient quality to suggest its auteur was capable of such later

masterpieces as *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), *Day of Wrath* (1943), and *Ordet*. Drum and Drum, however, call *Master of the House* (1925) Dreyer's first real success, noting that its popularity in France led the Société Général de Films to bring Dreyer to Paris to film what became *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (125). Dreyer's earliest films, particularly *Leaves from Satans Book* (1919), show the influence of D.W. Griffith in style and structure (Rudkin 10). It may then be reasonable (if somewhat reductive) to think of his career in terms of a movement from apprenticeship and imitation to original style and vision. While all such reductive descriptions have seeds of truth in them, details from Dreyer's biography illustrate that he was concerned with breaking (or at least not being limited by) genre conventions early in his career. Drum and Drum mention that the Société Général de Films originally wanted Dreyer to film a version of *Tosca*, but the director wanted the material to be a straight drama rather than an opera (125). In his biographical sketch for *Masters of Cinema*, Acquarello notes that it was Dreyer's "reluctant" use of a "conventional representation" of Jesus instead of a "large and realistic" Christ figure that largely contributed to his dissatisfaction with the crucifixion episode in *Leaves from Satan's Book* and may have contributed to his lifelong but unfulfilled desire to film a biography of Jesus.

While the above examples illustrate the reductive and artificial nature of breaking down an auteur's career into discrete periods, it must be acknowledged that the arc and development of Dreyer's career does offer some support to the notion that his latter (i.e. post-*Joan*) films exemplify the fruition or maturity of the style of which we see hints in the earlier work. Dreyer directed six films between 1919 and 1925, but only one full work, *Vampyr* (1932), in the fifteen-year interval between *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928) and *Day of Wrath* (1943). [This accounting does not include the twelve-minute short, "Good Mothers."] These later works, building on the foundation of *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, are the primary source of Dreyer's critical reputation and the film's most likely to be cited as characteristically Dreyer-like in their style and approach to their subject matter.

How, precisely that approach can be labeled is a bit problematic. Acquarello uses the terms "Realized Mysticism" and "Psychological Realism" to describe and categorize Dreyer's latter films. Rudkin calls *The Passion of Joan of Arc* Dreyer's most "iconic" film and says part of what makes it such is that it takes place in "*metaphysical* space" (13, emphasis Rudkin's). Paul Schrader links Dreyer's approach to that of Bresson and Ozu under the umbrella term of his title *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer*. Critics generally agree that Dreyer's subject matter displays an interest in spiritual or psychological issues, but there is less

agreement about whether this subject matter is depicted in a style reserved for or particular to it. Since Schrader has been particularly successful at garnering and generating interest in the auteurs listed in his title — he provides an eight-minute introduction to the Criterion Collection's DVD reissue of Robert Bresson's *Pickpocket* in which he summarizes some of the key ideas from *Transcendental Style in Film* — his attempts to place Dreyer in the category of "Transcendental" stylists warrant special attention.

Schrader says that his book has "one assumption: that the transcendental style is the proper method for conveying the Holy on film" (151). In the same passage, however, he admits that this assumption is problematic: "Why do austerity and asceticism stand at the games of the Transcendent; cannot the Transcendent also be expressed through exuberance and expressionism?" (152)

This quote evidences a claim not just that the qualities of "austerity and asceticism" have successfully depicted "the Holy" on film but that it is the correct style, perhaps the only style, appropriate for such subject matter. In other words, Schrader defines and describes an entire genre (that which conveys the Holy) in such a way as to preclude artists who use a particular style from participating in it. This stance creates a problem to which this essay will return shortly: that of how genre expectations can be difficult to change or challenge because unconventional works are simply labeled differently and placed outside the genre they are rethinking. It is worth noting first, however, that by Schrader's own admission, such a definition is highly problematic for an artist such as Dreyer.

Schrader has admitted in an interview in *Sight & Sound* what should be readily apparent to most readers of *Transcendental Style in Film*: "Transcendental" is not so much a universal style as his designation for the style of Robert Bresson:

> Three years later I wrote *Taxi Driver*, which is that film with a lot of anger in it. It's not meditative or transcendental, but it came from *Pickpocket*. So, from one Bresson film came my book *Transcendental Style in Film - Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer* - and *Taxi Driver* itself, which arose from the incentive and justification to create that *Pickpocket* gave me.

In other words, the extent to which a film or artist fit Schrader's definition of "transcendental" was the extent to which it (or he) conformed stylistically to Bresson's style in one particular film. In his chapter on Dreyer, Schrader quotes Dreyer from an interview with *Cahiers du Cinema* saying he tried to use a different style appropriate for each particular film (113), yet he paradoxically accounts for differences in style between Bresson's work and Dreyer's by implying that Dreyer (and Rosselini, for

that matter) used the transcendental style but "without mastery" (112). He repeats that Dreyer "never totally yielded to the transcendental style" (112) while suggesting that "towards the end of his life" Dreyer was "moving more and more towards an austere, predominantly transcendental style" (112). Later, however, he suggested that *Gertrud* (Dreyer's final film) is less transcendental than *Ordet* and most similar to the earlier film *Michael* (114).

The point here is not to excoriate Schrader, whose work has been indispensable in presenting world cinema to American audiences. Rather it is to exemplify the fact that, even amongst his admirers, Dreyer's films resist the sorts of stylistic generalizations that are key to genre criticism and important to auteurist criticism. The differences between Dreyer's films and Bresson's might be sufficient to explain why a young Schrader valued Dreyer slightly less than Bresson, but they are probably not sufficient in understanding the factors at work in negotiating Dreyer's critical reputation. To explore the issue of Dreyer's reputation more deeply, it is necessary to discuss some of the common assumptions of the genres in which Dreyer's films are most commonly placed.

A key element that runs through many of Dreyer's films is his depiction of the supernatural or miraculous. One difficulty in classifying Dreyer's works stems from the fact that while the depiction of the supernatural is most common in the twentieth-century art in a particular literary genre — the gothic — it occurs in a range of Dreyer's works that do not otherwise conform to the expectations of that genre. Literary critic Leslie Fiedler says of gothic literature: "Certain devices are built into the gothic from the start to help resolve its contradictions. There is, for instance, the convention of treating magic as science and thus reclaiming it for respectability in the Age of Reason…. Much more important in the early stages of the gothic was the convention of the 'explained supernatural'" (139). The convention of the "explained supernatural" means, simply, that actions that appear to be supernatural will be revealed later in the text (or narrative) as having a materialist explanation. A "ghost" will turn out to be a somnambulant sleepwalker; ethereal voices will be shown to have their origin in a nearby ventriloquist.

Gothic literature had its origins in the late 1700s — the end of the age of enlightenment. This time period, as well as being steeped in philosophical skepticism and materialism, was the period of development of the modern novel, which is one of the reasons the dominant mode of the novel through all of the nineteenth century (and a good part of the twentieth) was that of social realism. While narrative film was developed much later than the English novel, it inherited the modernist skepticism of the supernatural and a predisposition to see its narrative function as signaling the fact that the

work in which it occurs is meant to be taken as something other than realism. There is either an expectation that the apparent supernatural will be debunked (as it would be in a true gothic work), or an understanding that the world being depicted is a fantasy world and only commenting on or depicting our own by means of analogy.

When twentieth-century art has not conformed to the early gothic convention of materially explaining the supernatural, it has filtered the experience of it through an individual consciousness to create an ambiguity. A good example would be Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*, which neither debunks nor affirms the supernatural answer to prayer at the heart of the matter but leaves the matter ambiguous since there is an equally plausible psychological explanation for the supernatural occurrence. It is worth noting that a work such as Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth* was largely received not as magical realism but as horror or fantasy. The supernatural, in other words, is something that is experienced internally and psychologically, not externally nor physically. Schrader says of *Pickpocket*, the quintessential transcendental film that "the decisive action is the 'miraculous' element within it" (80).

Schrader says of the conclusion of *Pickpocket*: "It's a 'miraculous' event: the expression of love by an unfeeling man within an unfeeling environment" (81). That this miracle occurs inside of Michel (the protagonist), that it is both simultaneously visible (we see its effects) and invisible (we see only its aftermath not the miracle itself), is the key difference between Bresson's depiction of the spiritual and Dreyer's. Schrader says of the "miracle" in *Pickpocket* that it "forces the viewer into a confrontation with the 'Wholly Other'" and that "irony can no longer postpone [the viewer's] decision" (81). Faced with the supernatural transformation of an unfeeling man into a loving one, the viewer must either accept or reject the "miracle" (81).

Is it true that irony can no longer postpone the viewer's decision of whether to accept or reject the supernatural as real? Just as the presence of spiritual direction is announced in Bresson's *A Man Escaped* ("the wind bloweth where it will") but its effects can be explained in naturalist terms (the prisoner was lucky or skillful, his escape was not evidence of supernatural guidance), so too can Michel's transformation be explained as rooted in psychological rather than spiritual phenomena. Schrader seems unquestionably right as to Bresson's intentions — it is clear that his films want to invite the reader to contemplate or consider the presence of an unseen spiritual dimension. He also seems, however, to underestimate the modern capacity for irony and skepticism that makes ambiguity the only truly acceptable way to represent the supernatural to it. That audience may

accept Tarkovsky's *Solaris* as plausible science fiction since its depiction of the supernatural is at least compatible with some sort of gothic, psychological explanation, but *The Sacrifice* and *Stalker*, with their more explicitly supernatural events are relegated to the category of fantasy, however close the world around the supernatural events may correspond to the ontological world the modern viewer claims to live in and experience in realistic fiction.

The same reflexive prejudices often interfere with the experience of Dreyer's works. *The Passion of Joan of Arc* can be read and interpreted psychologically. *Day of Wrath* clearly participates in the gothic tradition Fiedler mentions, hinting at a possible supernatural explanation but leaving a materialist one accessible. There is no explaining the moving herring in *The Parson's Widow*, however, or the resurrected body at the end of *Ordet*. These works resist not just irony, but skepticism. They confront the viewer with miracles that do not simply reside in the human soul and result in internal transformation but with miracles that change the physical world, that move objects, defy scientific laws, and restore breath and movement to dead tissue. It is Dreyer's miracles, not Bresson's, that in Schrader's terms must be either "accepted or rejected," and it is the contention here that it is precisely this refusal to give the skeptical materialist viewer the wiggle room of psychological explanations or narrative ambiguity that has led some critical estimations to devalue Dreyer's most spiritual works.

Dreyer's own defense of his films reinforces the interpretation that he was questioning the dichotomy between realism and the depiction of the supernatural rather than using the latter in conventionally generic ways. He responded to Guido Aristarco's critique of *Ordet* in *Film Culture* that *Ordet* rejected science for "the miracles of religion" (qtd. in Dreyer's reply):

> […] The new science brings us toward a more intimate understanding of the divine power and is even beginning to give us a natural explanation to things of the supernatural. The Johannes figure of Kaj Munk's can now be seen from another angle. Kaj Munk felt this already, in 1925 when he wrote his play, and intimated that the mad Johannes may have been closer to God than the Christians surrounding him. As will be seen from the above, I have not rejected modern science for the miracle of religion. On the contrary, Kaj Munk's play assumed new and added significance for me, because the paradoxical thoughts and ideas expressed in the play have been proved by recent psychic research, represented by pioneers like Rhine, Ouspensky, Dunne, Aldous Huxley, and so forth, whose theories, in the simplest manner, explained the seemingly inexplicable happenings of the play and established a natural cohesion behind the supernatural occurrences that are found in the film.

This letter illustrates that what this essay has called "the problem of Christian realism" is actually twofold. The representation of orthodox Christian beliefs in the (apparently) supernatural causes that work to either be marginalized (by situating it as a genre piece, inferior to realistic fiction) or rejected (as failing to conform to the expectations of the genre in which it is trying to participate). Drum and Drum report that Dreyer said in a personal interview: "A director must believe in the truth of his subject. He must believe in vampires and miracles" (150). The linking of Dreyer's belief in "miracles" with a belief in "vampires" ought to give us pause as it does the Drums. They suggest that this belief is strictly internal to the particular project — necessary for the purpose of creating a credible artistic surface that doesn't ironically wink at its subject matter. He is "decidedly sympathetic" to Joan without taking a "direct position" on her "sanity or veracity" (150). The miracle in *Ordet* is "presented as a very real thing" (150). The Drums suggest that the depiction of the miraculous as real was approached by Dreyer more as a technical problem than the expression of a personal, spiritual conviction (150-151). Dreyer's own comments in *Film Culture* make this assertion problematic, but in either case (whether due to religious conviction or technical-aesthetic conviction) it is clear that Dreyer's treatment of the supernatural is very different from that of his contemporaries, that rather than using the material world to hint at or point to an invisible, spiritual world, he wants to use the representation of the supernatural to make us question the assumption that these two worlds are separate and that the spiritual world is invisible.

Dreyer's defense of *Vampyr*, quoted in the documentary film, *Carl Th. Dreyer: My Métier*, supports the claim that Dreyer was more interested in questioning the line between rational and supernatural rather than exploiting it through ambiguity:

> It's absolute nonsense to say I'm a mystic. What do people mean by mysticism? *Vampyr* is a completely realistic film. It's simply been enveloped in an atmosphere of strangeness. You can't just separate mysticism from reality in that way, as if mysticism were something supernatural beyond what is logical and psychological. Our definitions of what is mysticism and what is realism are far too narrow.

It appears obvious from this example that when Dreyer calls *Vampyr* a "completely realistic film," this pronouncement is more about style than content. He avoided the more expressionistic approach to the subject matter common in early horror films (Drum and Drum 151), and in doing so attempted to situate *Vampyr* outside of the category of the genre, horror, that would be most likely to mediate its interpretations. As with *Ordet*, the term

"realistic" is used in contrast to whatever term will allow the viewer (or critic) to label the film, due to the presences of the supernatural in it, and hence preemptively dismiss it (or marginalize it) rather than truly engage its themes on a thematic or philosophical level.

It is important to make a distinction here between "realistic" and "reality." Dreyer claims that *Vampyr* is realistic, but he also apparently believed that the role of art was to move beyond documentary depictions of the everyday world in order to show "inner reality" (*Carl Th. Dreyer: My Metier).* He says of the subject matter of narrative film: "What takes place on the screen is not reality, and is not supposed to be. Otherwise it would not be art" (*Carl Th. Dreyer: My Metier).* The apparent tension between these statements and the way Dreyer goes about defending *Ordet* and *Vampyr* could be resolved in a number of ways. One could argue that Dreyer's philosophy of art evolved as he aged and that he became less conventional in his thinking about trying to convey an inner truth. (Ironically, such a reading could suggest that Dreyer's development was the exact opposite of what Schrader claims — moving away from the transcendental towards a more concrete representation of the spiritual). Another possibility is that Dreyer's emphasis depended upon the nature of the film he was talking about. In dealing with a film with historical subject matter such as *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, he might stress inner, artistic truth to ward off complaints about anachronisms or a lack of fidelity to history. In dealing with films such as *Ordet* and *Vampyr*, his concern is to preempt the rejection of the film on the basis of fidelity to a surface-level reality.

This essay has suggested that Carl Theodor Dreyer deliberately blurred the line between the natural and the supernatural by depicting content that included supernatural occurrences in a style normally associated with genres that reject or cast suspicion on the existence of supernatural events in the actual world. Is that methodology adequate to explain why his critical reputation has lagged behind other notable auteurs who eschewed depicting the supernatural or did so in a way that was more consistent with what Schrader called the transcendental style?

Consider the fact that Drum and Drum, supporters of Dreyer and his art, say that it is "too bad" that "the question of whether the miracle is real attracts so much attention" in the critical deliberations surrounding *Ordet* (224). Einar Federspiel is quoted to confirm that for Dreyer "the real miracle [was] the husband's gaining belief" (qtd in Drum and Drum 224). It is strange that the reality of the miracle is interpreted as a concession to playwright Kaj Munk's intentions despite the fact that the play, in gothic tradition, intimates that the coroner may have made a mistake and that the

miracle could have a naturalistic explanation (224). In other words, the source material is more traditionally ambiguous, so whatever Dreyer's spiritual beliefs, his artistic decisions seem quite clear: the miracle is supposed to be taken as real. Earlier, Drum and Drum suggested that *Ordet* was an experiment in style in preparation for Dreyer's long-planned but never realized film about the life of Jesus and that the director wanted to find out "if a miracle could be made believable on the screen" (223).

Most of the biographical and critical evidence suggests that Carl Theodor Dreyer's singular style in depicting the supernatural is neither a failure of mastery, nor a concession to Munk, but rather a deliberate attempt to express a philosophy (in reference to the supernatural) in conflict with the dominant view of his subject held in the latter half of the twentieth century. Dreyer's refusal to allow the supernatural to remain ineffable and invisible, to insist on its reality, and his willingness to highlight its presence in the contemporary world (rather than its absence) was enough to make critics such as Aristarco devalue his work and supporters such as Schrader, Drum, and Drum highlight those elements of it that are most compatible with an abstract or metaphysical interpretation in which the supernatural is suggested or inferred through the moral transformation of the individual rather than depicted as an ontological reality.

Carl Theodor Dreyer is firmly and deservedly established in the canon of great film directors, but his stylistic mix of realism and philosophical openness to the supernatural was contrary to the spirit of his (doubting) age — an age that preferred skeptical art or ambiguous art to art that allowed for the possibility of transcendent spiritual reality or art that insisted upon it.

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Chapter Two

Loving Someone in Darkness: The Silence and Voice of God in the Arts and Faith Top 100 Films

Brian Duignan

> "Faith is a torment. Did you know that? It's like loving someone in the darkness, no matter how loud you call." — Knight in Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*

> "But I, O, Lord, cry to you; in the morning my prayer comes before you. O Lord, why do you cast my soul away? Why do you hide your face from me?" — *Psalm 88:13-14*

Ever since the birth of talkies, the movies have delighted in the sounds of speech. Characters whisper and shout to each other on screen and find all manner of words to express their thoughts, dreams, fears, and longings. The very existence of a list like Arts & Faith's Top 100 Spiritually Significant Films, though, invites us to consider more than just the speech of the characters in our movies. It begs us to take a tantalizing off-ramp toward a different question: Does God speak in our movies?

Even if we never get close to settling the question of whether or not a divine being speaks in cinema, the question leads us to another subject that *can* be approached more closely. We can consider whether our God-haunted cinema seems more concerned with the silence of God or the voice of God. When we say "silence" or "voice," we should clarify that this may only rarely be presented in these films as a literal voice of God that we hear with our ears. The question is perhaps even more about the presence or absence of God's self-expression in the film's world.

Does a movie's world seem to make room for a God who can be heard in some way? Can the characters in the film hear God? If they do not hear God with their ears, perhaps the hearing is more with the heart or the mind. Perhaps God is heard through truth, love, grace, beauty, justice, or in other

ways. Let us turn our attention to the Arts & Faith Top 100 and consider these things.

Let us begin by examining the two films on the list that seem to be most deeply concerned with the problem and question of the silence of God. Some films, like *The Seventh Seal* and *Silence*, are deeply concerned with the apparent silence of God. Though these two films share a passion for that subject and go to harrowing places pursuing it, they are profoundly different in the ways they do this. For the most part, the characters in *The Seventh Seal* experience the silence of God in a way that suggests God's absence. However, the central figure in the film *Silence* seems ultimately to hear God's voice *through* God's very silence.

At the start of Ingmar Bergman's legendary *The Seventh Seal* from 1957, a knight on the Swedish seashore meets a figure in a black cloak who identifies himself as Death. When the knight asks Death if he has come for him, Death tells the knight he has long been by his side. The knight then challenges Death to a game of chess whose outcome will determine whether the knight will gain freedom from Death's looming shadow. After the opening moves, Death seems to leave the knight until a future day when the fearsome game can be continued. We then watch as the knight, who has just returned from the Crusades, stumbles his way back home. His road is littered not only with the threat of the ongoing chess game, but also with evidence of the prevailing Black Death and an even more prevailing human depravity.

In a startling scene in the first act, we join the knight in the confessional booth of a country church. We find him conversing with a confessor about his own sense of isolation from others and his desire to gain some kind of knowledge or guarantee before his dying day. The knight laments: "Must it be so cruelly inconceivable to know God through one's senses? Why must He hide in a fog of half-spoken promises and unseen miracles?" Soon after this statement, the knight discovers that Death himself has been the confessor who has been listening to his laments on the other side of the confessional screen. The fact that the knight seems to be met at this moment of searching by Death rather than by God cuts very close to the bone of the film's deepest concern. It is one of several ways the film suggests that an absent God is what lies behind God's silence.

The knight continues toward his castle home, eventually traversing a forest deep with shadow and darkness. He eventually loses his chess game to Death in the forest, but in doing so manages to turn Death's attention away from a small baby and his kindly parents who are part of a traveling troupe of actors. The parents and child slip away, seemingly unnoticed by Death. Despite the doom of the lost chess game hanging above his head, the

knight realizes he has helped to save the lives of the young family. After the game ends and Death announces that the next time the knight meets him "you and your companions' time will be up," the scene takes a very strange twist. The knight asks if Death will soon be revealing his secrets, but this is greeted with Death's proclamation that "I have no secrets." The knight asks, "So you know nothing?" After Death replies, "I know nothing," we can almost imagine that we glimpse Death's own existential dread in his eyes as he considers his own place in a world in which even he cannot find meaning. The film seems to suggest that, if even Death is lost, God is nowhere to be found.

We may be tempted to see the knight's saving act as an act of faith and thus ultimately as a moment giving hope that a divine voice lies behind the silence. It seems Roger Ebert may have interpreted the act in this way. In his Great Movies essay on *The Seventh Seal*, Ebert writes, "We are left, almost until the end, with the possibility that although Death exists as a supernatural figure, there is no larger structure in which God plays a part." The crucial "end" he refers to here is almost surely the moment in which the knight helps to save the young family. It is certainly legitimate to view this twist as one in which God is no longer absent. This is true especially if we realize that this event could qualify as a *seen* rather than one of the *unseen* miracles mentioned in the knight's earlier lament. I would say, though, that it may be even more fair to interpret the knight's act as a triumph of his own cleverness rather than a God moment. After all, this is a film that many times throughout its course is very direct in its mention of God yet here does not invoke any divine impetus behind this key twist.

On the course of the journey home, the knight has been joined by several others who have taken his invitation to enjoy shelter from the plague. Just as the group closes in on the castle, a great storm buffets the trees and the travelers. Once they all reach shelter, they sit down for a weary breakfast together.

The meal is accompanied, curiously, by the knight's wife Karin reading from the Bible passage that gives the film its name. The text that is read from Revelation 8 begins, "And when the Lamb had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." The verse as read in the film, perhaps tellingly, seems to have had an original text reference to God left out as Karin reads, "And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound." (The original text refers instead to "seven angels who stand before God.") The selective Revelation 8 reading goes on after the reference to Jesus opening the seventh seal to describe several trumpet blasts and the vivid judgments that accompany them. While this very text is being read, an ominous knock is heard at the

door followed by Death himself appearing silently on the other end of the room from the gathered group.

The scene that follows is endlessly fascinating. It shows each member of the party reacting in their own way to the arrival of Death on the doorstep. Karin welcomes the visitor warmly into the home. One member of the group praises his own skills as a smith and then is sure to point out that his recent marital spat is "no worse than most people." The smith's wife curtsies to the visitor silently but petulantly.

The knight and his squire's responses to Death's visit beg for the rapt attention from us as viewers. The knight holds his face in his prayerful hands and cries: "Out of our darkness we call to Thee, O Lord! O God, have mercy on us, for we are small and frightened and ignorant." The squire responds bitterly to his knight: "In the darkness where you claim to be, where all of us probably are, there's no one to hear your cries or be moved by your suffering. Dry your tears and mirror yourself in your own indifference." Defiantly looking to heaven, the knight intones, "God, you who are somewhere, who must be somewhere, have mercy on us." A mute servant girl kneels before Death, as if submitting to him in the throes of a religious sort of ecstasy, and finally opens her mouth to say, "It is finished." A shadow then closes over her enraptured face. The same shadow of the visitor Death, we presume, is also closing over all members of this group as the scene ends.

This scene is quite complex and could inspire endless discussion. Out of all of this complexity, I would like to highlight how the scene supports the theme of God's silence and ultimately undergirds the film's suggestion that God's absence stands behind that silence. The film's use of the Bible text itself could be viewed as a reference to God's activity and voice in the judgment and death of this group. The original text, with its own reference to the angels standing before God and the surrounding context of the book of Revelation, does itself put forth God as a present and active being at the moments of judgment being described. However, the rest of the events and words in this scene indicate that the film has its mind on a silent and absent God. First, the knight's earnest pleas to God are ultimately not answered even as Death's shadow is coming for his life. Next, the squire's words are a stiff rebuke to faith, with their harsh assertion that there is in fact no one to hear the prayerful cries being lifted to the heavens. Finally, the servant girl's own religious fervor seems directed to Death rather than God as she stands in as a dark inversion of the picture of a believer submitting to a present God. Her last and only words, "It is finished," remind us of Jesus's own words in John 19:30 right before He died on the cross. However, the girl's own words likely present another "faith-inversion" as they signify an

embrace of death rather than the reference to Jesus's saving work that is normally attributed to Jesus's "It is finished" from in the gospel text.

After the shadow falls, the film cuts away to the young family that had escaped and survived Death's grip. They awaken and rejoice to a beautiful dawn, but then are stunned when the father of the family sees a vision of the now-departed group dancing in a line with Death at the head. Agape with the surprise of this vision, he exclaims, "And Death, the grim master, bids them dance." Here, in the final moment of the film, we feel a nail being hammered down. The film seems to be saying that Death, not God, is the master of this dance. This is presented as a supernatural dance, to be sure, but God is both silent and absent in the face of that dance.

Now we take our adventure 59 years forward in film history. We take this journey in order to sit before another deeply significant film about the silence of God from the Arts and Faith list. In 2016, Martin Scorsese realized his decades-long dream of bringing Japanese Catholic writer Shusaku Endo's novel *Silence* to the screen. Scorsese's film of the same name ranks even higher on the list than the Bergman film.

When we enter the world of the film version of *Silence*, we find ourselves in seventeenth-century Japan looking into the void along with a Portuguese missionary priest named Father Ferreira. The captive priest must watch with open eyes as Catholic Christian leaders are being tortured to the death for their faith. Right from the film's first moments, we are staring straight into the twin questions of evil and why God seems to be silent in the face of that evil.

Soon after this, we meet Fathers Rodrigues and Garupe in Portugal. These are two Jesuit priests so fervent in their faith that they are willing to risk their lives traveling to Japan to find the lost Father Ferreira. They make this decision following the news that Ferreira, their mentor in the faith, may have apostatized in the face of the tremendous wave of anti-Christian persecution in the Japan of that era. Ferreira's last letter had described the persecution, but then no more had been heard from his pen.

The mystery of Ferreira's sudden silence is an echo of the mystery of the silence of God in the face of evil. Just before the journey to Japan, we hear a voice-over monologue from Rodrigues that pits his deep love for Jesus in stark contrast against the desperate state of Jesus's church in Japan. "...as I prepare to do His work, I see His face before me. He looks as He must have when He commanded Peter, 'Feed My lambs…' It fascinates me. I feel such great love for it." Then after a brief image of the Christ who the priest sees in his mind's eye, we cut to the voyaging ship and hear Rodrigues say, "And during the calm and storm of the voyage, I reflected on the twenty

years which has passed since the persecution has broken out. The black soil of Japan is filled with the wailing of so many Christians. The red blood of priests has flowed profusely. The walls of the churches have fallen down." The face of Christ, yes, but also twenty years of wailing and blood and fallen church walls.

Once Rodrigues and Garupe reach Japan, they seem to experience a brief season of God's blessing even though they have not found their beloved mentor. They find groups of hidden Christians eager to have them perform sacraments like penance and communion that they long had to forego during the many months priests had been absent. Rodrigues, seeing this encouragement among the locals, reflects on the renewal of "the promise that all their suffering would not end in nothingness, but in salvation." With this renewal comes the hope that perhaps God not only speaks, but even speaks life. Does He still speak in those places where His silence seems to have fallen like a shadow?

Inevitably, the eye of the persecutors casts its gaze upon the local Christians among whom Rodrigues and Garupe have been hiding. As the priests watch from afar, three of these Japanese Christians are crucified at the foot of a waxing and waning tide. One of the local Christians, Mokichi, survives the torment for a full four days. We see him calling out to Jesus in prayer from his cross as waves bury his head in a pummeling rhythm. As we hear Mokichi's broken voice lift up in a song that sears the sky, Rodrigues notes in voice over, "At the end he sang a hymn. His voice was the only sound. Prayer. Worship. Yet the silence still falls."

Father Rodrigues laments this silence in a letter to home just after Mokichi's waterlogged body is burned so it will not be given a Christian burial: "You will say that their death is not meaningless. Surely God heard their prayers as they died. But did He hear their screams? How can I explain His silence to these people who have endured so much? I need all my strength to understand it myself."

This silence, already thunderous, becomes deafening as Rodrigues is captured by Japanese authorities and brought face to face with a Father Ferreira who has not only apostatized but also urges Rodrigues to renounce his faith as well. Now in league with the captors, Ferreira visits Rodrigues's prison cell. He tells Rodrigues that he himself must make a public renouncement of faith so that other captive Japanese Christians can be freed from certain torture and death. After hearing Rodrigues praying, Ferreira tells him, "I prayed too, Rodrigues. It doesn't help. . .They call out for help just as you call to God. He is silent, but you do not have to be…If Christ were here, he would have acted. Apostatized for their sake." A desperate Rodrigues replies, "No. No, He's here. Christ is here. I just can't hear Him."

Soon, Rodrigues stands on the edge of a precipice before the *fumi-e*, or image of Christ, that he is being urged to trample on as a visible statement of renouncing his faith. If he tramples, the five Japanese Christians who are hanging over torture pits in front of him will be immediately set free. Suddenly all audible noise vanishes from the soundtrack as the face of Christ on the glowing *fumi-e* fills the frame. (We note the dirt smeared and littered over the face of Christ on the *fumi-e*.) Even the prisoners' cries and Rodrigues's panting sobs go silent for this one moment. Then we hear these words, gently spoken: "Come ahead now. It's all right. Step on me. I understand your pain. I was born into this world to share men's pain. I carried this cross for your pain. Your life is with me now. Step." With these words, the film imagines the overwhelming silence of God being broken by divine speech. The words are at once soothing, devastating, peaceful, and heartbreaking.

Then we see Rodrigues leaning over the *fumi-e* with his foot on it. After that, in slow motion, the falling Rodrigues reaches a hand over the *fumi-e* almost as if in passionate embrace. We feel that if he could embrace the voice who gave those words, he surely would do it. But how, Rodrigues may feel, can I embrace a voice that has gone silent again and who I have just trampled underfoot? That question haunts every minute of the rest of the film.

Finally, a consideration of *Silence*'s dealings with the silence of God would not be complete without spending some time with the character Kichijiro. He is at once the most fascinating, the most tragic and hope-giving, and the most recognizably human figure in the film. The way Kichijiro himself wrestles with faith and doubt throughout the film is shot through with implications about the silence of God.

Kichijiro makes an inauspicious entry to the film − we first see him drunk on the floor of a Portuguese bar and being kicked awake by the local proprietor. The priests are introduced to him as their best hope for finding a guide to Japan. Rodrigues asks Kichijiro if he is a Christian. After all, Rodrigues thinks, where else would this man have learned his Portuguese than from missionaries who years ago had been with him in his homeland Japan? "I am not Christian! Christian die!," Kichijiro responds violently.

This unlikely guide leads the priests over the vast seas directly to the first group of hidden Christians they will encounter in Japan. Through reports of other local folk as well as the testimony of Kichijiro himself, we eventually learn of a shattering trauma in the guide's past. Eight years earlier, Kichijiro and his Christian family were asked by the brutal Inquisitor to give up their faith, to step on the *fumi-e* as an outward sign of their apostasy. Kichijiro himself stepped on the *fumi-e*, but the whole rest of his

family refused. Feeling that he could not abandon his family even if he had abandoned God, Kichijiro stayed and watched his family succumb to the terrible and literal flames of persecution.

Now as he sits with Rodrigues and asks to give his confession, the traumatized man says, "Wherever I go, I see the fire and smell the flesh. When I saw you and Padre Garupe for the first time, I started to believe that maybe God might take me back, because in my dreams the fire was no longer so bright!" We can see the senses of vision and smell being invoked in this speech, but in the context of the film's themes the sense of hearing cannot be far from our minds. Kichijiro has felt adrift in silence for these eight years, but encountering the priests has allowed him to hope that perhaps God's voice can be heard once again. Rodrigues does indeed hear Kichijiro's confession, but he does it with a barely concealed dismissiveness and contempt for one who could stoop so low as to deny the faith.

When next we meet Kichijiro, Rodrigues finds him in the wasteland of one of the Christian villages after persecution has just bowled it over. Kichijiro initially seems to help Rodrigues, but then basely betrays him to local authorities. The betrayer later comes groveling back to the imprisoned Rodrigues asking the priest to again hear his confession. "I am sorry for what I did to you…Take away the sin. I will try again to be strong!" This time, Rodrigues hears the confession less with dismissiveness than with a numb rage. Soon after this, Kichijiro is prompted by the authorities to step on the *fumi-e* in front of all the Christian prisoners. Whatever of God's voice and presence Kichijiro may have sensed up to this point, it likely vanishes as he shamefully runs out the door of the prison.

Finally, Kichijiro comes to the home of Rodrigues years after the priest's own moment of apostasy. The priest has been living in the brokenness of that public denial of his faith ever since his foot touched the *fumi-e*, even being asked to repeatedly sign vows of apostasy that he no longer even pretends to resist. Kichijiro now sits before the broken priest and asks him to hear his confession one more. Rodrigues adamantly refuses, saying he is no longer a priest. You can feel Kichijiro tilting his ear to the void, wondering if a divine voice can still be heard in the vast desert of his own sin, shame, and disappointment.

Kichijiro insists that he has been thrice betrayed – not only by Rodrigues and Kichijiro's own family, but also by "our Lord." Now silence falls, a silence that echoes that fateful moment before Rodrigues's *fumi-e*. After we hear Rodrigues's own voice saying, "Lord, I fought against Your silence," that silence is filled by the same voice Rodrigues heard right before he trampled the image, the one he attributes to the divine voice. "I suffered beside you. I was never silent." "I know," Rodrigues replies as he raises a

tremulous hand to bless the kneeling Kichijiro. "But even if God had been silent my whole life to this very day, everything I do, everything I've done speaks of Him. It was in the silence that I heard Your voice."

At this moment, Rodrigues does not hover from above and say the priestly words of absolution. Instead, he kneels in front of the penitent Kichijiro with one hand on the visitor's head, one open to the skies, and his own forehead touching Kichijiro's own forehead. It is at last a posture of humility that Rodrigues takes here, one that is willing to dwell with the penitent man in his own brokenness. Perhaps it is a picture of Rodrigues joining together with the one he had always considered a wretch, of coming alongside him. We could see it, in the context of the film, as the two men bowing together to hear a sweet divine voice that they realize had been there all along. It had been there all along, you see, even in the silence.

Before we fully cross the line from Top 100 films about God's silence to those about the divine voice, it would be wise to briefly pause for a detour. It would be fruitful to consider how these Top 100 films consider the relationship between human silence and God's voice. We have already been only a wisp away from this subject with Scorsese's *Silence*. I think of the moment in that film in which we are invited to gaze upon a painted image of Christ's face as Father Rodrigues thinks upon that image while lying in bed. Rodrigues is not silent for long in this scene, but I believe the scene stands in for days and months of Christ-focused contemplation that Rodrigues has conducted in the silence of his quarters.

As we think upon the ways God's voice eventually "appears" in *Silence*, we should realize that Rodrigues's own silence and contemplation may have helped prepare the way for these final moments of humility and prayerfulness with Kichijiro. Rodrigues, after all, may not have been able to even notice such a voice had he not first spent time in his own silence.

Danish theologian and philosopher Søren Kierkegaard spoke with great power on this issue when he said:

> The present state of the world and the whole of life is diseased. If I were a doctor and were asked for my advice, I would reply: Create silence! The Word of God cannot be heard in the noisy world of today. And even if it were blazoned forth with all the panoply of noise so that it could be heard in the midst of all the other noise, then it would no longer be the Word of God. Therefore create Silence.

One film on the Arts and Faith Top 100 Film list that could make Kierkegaard cheer, or at least buy his first film ticket, is *Into Great Silence*. This 2005 documentary allows us to live for three hours inside the walls of