

“FOR GREATER GLORY” CUTS TO THE QUICK

Pope Benedict XVI's trip to Mexico this year would not have been possible under the brutally anti-Catholic Calles regime of 1920's Mexico, the setting of "For Greater Glory," the new film out in theaters June 1.

The movie dramatically portrays a government crack-down on the Catholic Church with such measures as a prohibition on the public wearing of clerical garb and the seizure of Church property. The National League for the Defense of Religious Liberty springs into action with a petition and a boycott. Peaceful resistance proves futile as violence against the Church escalates, with churches ravaged, altars destroyed, parishioners murdered, and priests hanged. Rebellions ensue. Women smuggle bullets. An army is raised. Their battle cry is "¡Viva Cristo Rey!" They are the Cristeros.

The film features a stellar cast and memorable scenes. There is Peter O'Toole's unforgettable performance as Father Christopher. Andy Garcia brings depth to his portrayal of General Velarde, who eventually leads the Cristeros. Mauricio Kuri plays the 14-year old Cristero, José Luis Sánchez del Río, who is ultimately tortured and executed in excruciatingly moving footage. (Incidentally, this martyr was beatified, along with 12 others in the resistance, at the request of Pope Benedict XVI.)

"For Greater Glory" is a compelling movie about religious liberty. It deserves a wide audience.