

“THERE BE DRAGONS” IS A HIT

Prior to its release in May, Tom Arkin of the Catholic League previewed the film “There Be Dragons” and found it inspiring. Here is his review:

Academy-Award-nominated director Roland Joffe’s film, “There Be Dragons,” is a fictional account based on the life of the canonized saint Father Josemaria Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei.

Roberto is a middle-aged Spanish-American journalist assigned to write a book about Father Jose. Set in Madrid in the mid-1970s, he tries to reach out to his ailing father, Manolo, from whom he has become bitterly estranged. Roberto courteously telephones his father only to be hung up on when he broaches the subject of the priest. Intrigued, the son learns not only that his father knows a great deal about Father Jose, but also that they were boyhood friends before parting ways during the Spanish civil war of the 1930’s.

The bulk of the movie is a flashback. The lives of Father Jose and Manolo are traced from their boyhood to the end of hostilities in 1938; it is narrated by Manolo, who is dictating his words onto tape for his son. The word “dragons” is used throughout the film to denote the effects of experiences during that violent time that threatened to destroy the priest’s faith, and all but decimated Manolo’s.

The main theme is the importance of faith and forgiveness in defeating one’s own “dragons,” and the film takes great pains to show that it is Roberto’s research into Father Jose’s life that provides the great opportunity for father and son to settle lifelong differences.

It was extremely refreshing to see a movie showing priests in a favorable light, and Joffe deserves praise for doing so.

Of the movie, Bill Donohue said, “The Catholic League heartily

recommends this film!"