

Monthly Media Monitor



A Media Apostolate Newsletter of the Congregation of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary

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Rejoicing in the Hope of the Risen Lord!



Noli Me Tangere (1735) by Carle Vanloo

We begin this Easter Season MMM with an image of our Risen Lord, as this is a consoling and powerful image of the reality of new life in Jesus Christ.

In last month's Monthly Media Monitor, we learned how newly-purchased cameras (at St. Clement Shrine in Boston) and Facebook Live streaming helped to communicate the joy-filled events of Deacon Paul Nguyen's Final Vows and Diaconate Ordination.

Now, one month later, we learn how the same technology in the very same church was carefully and sensitively used to communicate another, more somber event.

Fr. Greg Staab, OMV, died on March 1st after a long illness. Greatly loved by those to whom and with whom he ministered, Fr. Greg became the first Oblate of the Virgin Mary to die in the United States.

The wake at St. Clement Shrine on March 6th presented Director of Communications Christopher Kelley with a challenge.

"There was a lot of coordination on the ground between the program for the prayer service and designing appropriate message for the e-mail and social media," said Chris in a

recent interview.

A respectful and prayerful live stream required some practice on the part of Chris, who was the director and camera switcher of the event.

"There was a lot of time spent double and triple-checking camera angles and shots," he said, "as well as developing text cards and still images. We have never done anything like this before and we wanted to make every effort in terms of preparation and planning. Our goal was to be able to provide the live stream so that

(continued on page 2)

The Monthly Media Monitor is published by the Oblates of the Virgin Mary on the first day of every month, except for June, July, and August (summer break in the northern hemisphere). This publication is not a monthly summary of OMV life in general. Instead, it is an instrument to disseminate news concerning the work of Oblates of the Virgin Mary in the apostolate of social communications. Part of the OMV apostolic work is to propagate the truth through the mass media. This newsletter celebrates the works of this important media apostolate. — Fr. John Wykes, OMV, Media Producer



Did You Know...?

- That Pope Francis has been re-organizing Holy See communications since he was first elected back in 2013?
- That the Vatican has launched a new Vatican News website (www.vaticannews.va) which is a combination of Vatican Radio and Vatican Television?
- That the Holy See Press Office, the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, and the Vatican Information Service have all been subsumed into the new Secretariat for Communications?

Rejoicing... (continued)

family and friends from all over the world could still participate in the prayer service and offer up their prayers for the repose of the soul of Fr. Greg, in communion with those present at the wake in Boston.”

“Dealing with issues of death requires a delicate balance...we wanted to show the beauty of what it means to live life as an Oblate, a religious, and as a Catholic priest. Many people have never seen a wake in a church before...we wanted to show how fitting it was to have the wake in the church for a religious whose whole life was dedicated to serving the Church....those who were watching left behind beautiful messages and prayers on Facebook. Of the data we have available, we also know that the broadcast reached at least four thousand people.”

Chris, adding a personal note, concluded his interview with a sense of gratitude.

“Fr. Greg was always so generous and kind with me over the years,” said Chris. “I did the consecration to Jesus through Mary with him...I am grateful that we were able to share such a beautiful and intimate moment with so many people. I more grateful still for the gift of Fr. Greg and his vocation.”

In his memorable reflections at the wake, Fr. Bill Neubecker, OMV, encouraged us to remember how Fr. Greg’s life was centered on Jesus and Mary.

“Everyone who went into that room (at the hospital) came out happy,” said Fr. Bill, “because he was transmitting God’s love and mercy. He’s been waiting for this his whole life. So let’s not be selfish, okay? Let’s let him go. I

pray that he shares, with Fr. Lanteri, the joys of God’s Kingdom.”

Thank you, Fr. Bill. And thank you, Fr. Greg, for all that you were, and all that you continue to be. May you rejoice in the Easter blessings of the Risen Lord!

And to all of our MMM Readers: have a very Happy Easter — and don’t forget to read on (the next page) for Part Six of our “Monthly Movie Musings.” God bless you all.



Fr. Bill Neubecker, OMV, gives his reflections at the wake of Fr. Greg Staab, OMV, during a live stream of the service from St. Clement Shrine in Boston, MA, USA.

Monthly Movie Musings — Part Six

IMAX, 3D, and Other Glorious Triumphs and Failures

By Fr. John Wykes, OMV

I really wanted to see the film *Dunkirk*. It was filmed using the large IMAX format (with its huge cameras) and I was curious to see the film the way it was meant to be seen — in an IMAX Theater.

I am sorry to say I was disappointed. The film was so immersive that it no longer felt like a film, but more like an amusement park ride. At least one member of the audience reported feeling sick to his stomach. And I found the domed screen to be a distraction — at one point in the film, a soldier bravely

held up his rifle. The shot was almost comical in the IMAX theater, as the rifle, when held up, instantly started to curve along the shape of the dome, looking more like a gooey, floppy Twizzler stick than a weapon of war.

Such are the vagaries of modern cinema. What is meant to be a new and glorious way of viewing the moving image can sometimes turn out to be anything but glorious.

It is the continuous race to keep hold of a visually-saturated audience that has pushed professional moviemakers to explore all kinds of interesting technological options. Some of them have worked — others have not.

When television came to the fore in the 1950s, movie studios had to readjust, and quickly, to offer something that people could not get in their living rooms. The result was invention of wide screen formats — Cinerama, Cinemascope, Todd A-O, and so many others. There was also 3-D, which utilized special glasses of two different colored lenses to help the human brain interpret the special image on the screen as 3-D. Sometimes it worked, many times it did not. Then there was Smell-o-Vision, which enchanted audiences by spraying various scents into the theater that were somehow connected to the scene being projected on screen. This also backfired, as the various smells (such as perfume, ocean breeze, pine forest, and smoked meat) often lingered from one



It wasn't particularly noteworthy that the film *Dunkirk* (2017) was released in IMAX Theaters. What was noteworthy is that the film was actually shot using the huge and unwieldy format. This created some pretty startling visuals, and earned the film an Oscar nomination for Best Cinematography. Image copyright by Warner Brothers Pictures.

(continued on page 4)

Monthly Movie Musings — Part Six (continued from page 3)



Do you want to buy this lovely, like-new Panasonic 3-D camcorder? Neither does anyone else. Image from B&H.

scene into the next, combining into a stench that was quite unbearable. Last but not least was Sensurround, used for the disaster film *Earthquake* (1974), which utilized strong bass sounds that would cause the theater seats to vibrate during the dramatic tremors on screen. I remember the network television premiere of the film, and the effort to transmit the bass signals which would supposedly vibrate the furniture in your own home. Much to my disappointment, the attempt failed.

Then came 3-D — again. Some people thought James Cameron was a little off his rocker filming a very high-budget fantasy adventure film in the format that had been dead for many decades. But when *Avatar* (2009) became the

most profitable film in motion picture history, the studios stopped laughing at Cameron and started planning more 3-D films. Suddenly, in the early 2010s, 3-D was everywhere. Films were either made in 3-D (results often successful) or filmed in regular 2-D and converted later to 3-D (results often less successful). On the home front, 3-D Blu-ray players were sold, along with the necessary 3-D glasses and 3-D televisions. Critics of 3-D such as Roger Ebert (who blasted 3-D for being too dark as well as being often poorly done) were practically shouted down as 3-D was touted as the wave of the future.

Soon, independent filmmakers were told they needed to get on-board. 3-D cameras for the independent videographer (such as the one shown above) began to be sold, and professional “evangelists” for various editing software companies charged wedding and event videographers quite a chunk of change to be trained in the art of shooting, editing and finishing 3-D projects.

And then, in the twinkling of an eye, 3-D was gone.

To shoot in 3-D was both time-consuming and expensive, a lethal combination that did not sit well with studio brass. When 3-D was done carefully it was great. When it was done only fairly well the results were often terrible. The plug was pulled on proposed 3-D projects — or they were simply made in 2-D. 3-D content vanished. And because 3-D content vanished, so did 3-D Blu-rays, 3-D Blu-ray players, 3-D glasses for home use, and 3-D televisions. Independent videographers no longer needed 3-D software, nor did they need 3-D independent-level cameras. The Panasonic camera you see above is still available — as a used camera that no one wants to buy.

It made sense that the next leap forward would be one that, well, made sense — an improvement in dynamic range, color correction capabilities, and resolution. This was not a fad like 3-D or Smell-o-Vision — this was a logical development that was here to stay. Next month, the last part of our series, will cover the current 4K, 6K, and 8K technology — and even a newly-resurrected love for good ol’ Super-8. Stay tuned!