COURSE DESCRIPTION: The modern cultural entity of film is a century-old, powerful artistic genre surpassing literature as our main venue for experiencing, appreciating, and reflecting on human life. Films were dismissed as popular entertainment through the early 90s, but this trend has changed: film studies is now a thriving academic discipline that acknowledges film has assumed the role of family, school, and church through its pervasive and predominant influence in society.

Religious appreciation of film transcends rational, materialistic, empirical, and logical approaches by drawing upon myth, theology, ritual, liturgy, and the mystical, often in a slower, more meditative, quiet, visually stunning, and reflective manner than Hollywood blockbusters with multi-million dollar budgets to afford FX and superstars. In a Religious Studies course, our focus will be on the profound search for human values and meaning, specifically in films that depict the desire to re-ligare (re-link) to a meaningful beyond: the divine, sacred, and holy.

Our emphasis will be on the profound religious insights, reflections, and wisdom in our selected film, as well as proposals for reformation of both religions themselves and of daily life. Then we might go beyond materialism, temporality, and secularity...reaching for imaginative and wonder-full supernatural and transcendental dimensions.

PURPOSE OF STUDYING RELIGION AND FILM:
1. To acknowledge the modern cultural entity of film as a powerful new cultural medium—along with the Internet, music, and TV—as one of the main venues for experiencing, appreciating, and reflecting on the value of human life.
2. To understand and appreciate the power of films in people’s religious quest.
3. To open up an important avenue and perspective—the religious perspective—for modern people to appreciate and enjoy stories and enhance their self-awareness.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. To equip students to appreciate the power of films in the formation of our consciousness.
2. To develop a critical way of thinking and writing about modern reality through dissecting the religious elements (under- and overtones) in films.
3. To read films: to understand and appreciate the religious elements (themes, characters, symbols, settings, mise en scene, montage, etc.) of contemporary films and to master the art of critiquing film’s ideological and formal components in well-developed, coherent, insightful essays.

LASTING BENEFITS OF AN EXPLORATIONS COURSE IN RELS:
1. Religious Studies develops imagination, problem solving, communication, self-understanding, and awareness of human diversity. Analyzing films will sensitize you to diverse historical and cultural contexts!
2. Religious Studies is an appropriate discipline for the 21st century, since our approach is as interdisciplinary and multicultural as our global, one-world, small planet reality. You will be able to describe various aesthetic and value systems and the ways they are communicated across time and cultures!
3. Religious Studies courses are rich with insights and epiphanies because of an emphasis on critical thinking, analysis, oral and written communication skills, and questions of meaning and value. RELS 364 will help you identify issues in the humanities that have personal and global relevance!

4. You will always need the invaluale, priceless ability to approach complex problems and ask complex questions that draw upon a knowledge of the humanities! (Tuition and your time are small prices to pay. You’ll be far more prepared as leaders in the 21st century.)

**Required Texts:**

Weekly online readings (film reviews, criticism, and interviews) posted on Blackboard.

I bought all the films so you don’t have to. Just attend class for free screenings. I will have as many films as possible available on reserve in the Media Library, and many are available on Amazon instant video streaming for $3-12.

**FYI Recommended Reading:**


**Grading:**
As a courtesy to you, the following breakdown is an estimate of the weight of assignments; actual values may vary based on the difficulty level and time invested in the assignment:

- Quizzes/Assignments: 50%
- Essay Test #1: 25%
- Essay Test #2: 25%
- Total: 100%

**Grades:**
> Grades will be posted regularly on Blackboard during the semester. After you refer to Blackboard, if you still have questions about a posted or unposted grade, please bring a current printout of your grades and all necessary documentation (essay, quiz, etc.) to Dr. Fox after class or during office hours listed above. I welcome all informed questions!
> No make-ups unless you have a documented emergency; retakes, late work, or exemptions only at the discretion of Dr. Fox. You have the syllabus now, so manage your time well and plan realistically so you can succeed this semester.

**Attendance:**
> Please be prepared for lively, respectful discussions and informed questioning, so read the material in advance and be present (mind and body) Thursday evenings. To help you appreciate your comprehension, we will have weekly assignments (in-class quizzes and/or responses, and online Discussion Board posts), plus two essay tests (a midterm and final). You have an A+ when you walk in the door, and you can keep it by preparing for class, attending class, taking notes actively, joining the discussion or following along attentively, and doing well on the assignments.
Participation:
> PRESENCE: No laptops or cellphones or any wireless instrument other than your brain. One warning will be given and after that, violations will result in being marked “absent” for the day.
> INTEGRITY: Plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation, and dishonesty of any kind “that is intended to gain unfair academic advantage” will be reported and result in the appropriate sanctions as defined by the SDSU Center for Student Rights & Responsibilities in the “Standard for Student Conduct” (41301, Title 5, California Code of Regulations).
> RESPECT: This course is not religiously-biased from any particular faith tradition, but rather, an academic study of religion in film. Please keep in mind that religion is considered sacred to millions, which may include your fellow students, so please be respectful and reserve personal issues for outside of class. This class is for people with and without faith.
> ENGAGE: This is your class, and I want to hear your sincere thoughts in the spirit of honest, optimistic, and relentless critical and creative inquiry. Keep our purpose and objectives in sight as students of religion and film.

MLA Formatting of Papers
> Any typed papers should use MLA format: 1) Heading in upper left on first page with four lines: a) your name, b) professor’s name, c) course number and name, d) date; 2) thematic title centered above the introduction; e.g. “Execute the Blasphemous Auteur of Water” and NOT “Assignment 1”; 3) number every page; e.g. “Fellini 2”; 4) double-space throughout; 5) 12-point font, Times New Roman or Arial; 6) cite source and page number at the end of a sentence using parenthetical notation; e.g. (Siskel and Roepert 49); 7) only when required, include a “Works Cited” list of accurately referenced books, reviews, and films; this is your bibliography; do not begin a new page, but simply list “Works Cited” under your concluding paragraph to save paper.

> ONLINE WRITING LAB: For details on grammar, research, writing, or formatting, see Purdue University’s free online resource, OWL (Online Writing Lab), under “MLA Formatting and Style Guide” at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/

Course Schedule
(Only necessary changes for the students’ benefit will be made and announced in class and on Blackboard.)

Islam
Thurs., Jan. 17th ~ Welcome! Syllabus; Preview film list and vote next week
PREVIEW: Corrigan’s A Short Guide to Writing About Film
SCREEN IN CLASS: Submission, dir. Theo van Gogh, 2004 (aired on Dutch TV, VPRO, 11 min.) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGtQvGGY4S4
ALSO: > Hijab, Niqab, or Nothing, 10 min., Canadian TV, CBC (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXzUuK_dfnRE);
> Innocence of Islam (13 min. controversial—and lame—film and subsequent attack on U.S. Embassy in Libya);
> Mohammed on South Park (death threats to Trey Parker & Matt Stone)
HINDUISM

Thurs., Jan. 24th ~ Gandhi, Part One
IN CLASS: Jeopardy review of Film Terms (pp. 183-6), and highlights; VOTE on films
QUIZ: shorthand for taking film notes (pp. 29-30, I will give the 13 abbreviations, you will write out full definitions)
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard

Thurs., Jan. 31st ~ Gandhi, Part Two
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard
QUIZ: “Glossary of Film Terms” (pp. 183-6), abbreviations (pp. 29-30); highlights; short questions on Gandhi (part one of film and reading)

Thurs., Feb. 7th ~ Water
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard; be ready for a brief quiz at the start and/or end of class over reading (no make-ups if you're late or leave early unless it's an emergency cleared with me)

Thurs., Feb. 14th ~ Sita Sings the Blues
(the greatest Hindu break-up film of all time for Valentine's)
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard; be ready for a brief quiz at the start and/or end of class over reading

BUDDHISM

Thurs., Feb. 21st ~ Kundun
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard; possible quiz

Thurs., Feb. 28th ~ Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...and Spring (2003), dir. Ki-duk Kim
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard; possible quiz

CONFUCIANISM

Thurs., March 7th ~ Beijing 2008 Olympics opening ceremonies; scenes from Confucius
READ: Online reading posted on Blackboard; possible quiz

TEST

Thurs., March 14th ~ short essay quiz in a large blue book over Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian films (Islam short films; Gandhi; Water; Sita; Spring; Kundun; Beijing Olympics); four prompts given in advance, and you will answer two in class; PLUS review the Glossary Terms in the Short Guide to Writing About Film for a matching quiz

JUDAISM

Thurs., March 21st ~
FILM: Life is Beautiful (1997), dir. Roberto Benigni
READ: Online readings; possible quiz
CHRISTIANITY

Thurs., March 28\textsuperscript{th} ~ SAINTS (St. Francis and Joan of Arc), *7-10 pm screening, or leave at 9:40pm and finish \textit{Joan} on Youtube  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxJSGMK9yRE

FILM: \textit{The Flowers of St. Francis}  
RECOMMENDED: \textit{Diary of a Country Priest}; \textit{Andrei Rublev}

and

FILM: \textit{Passion of Joan of Arc}  
RECOMMENDED: \textit{The Messenger}; \textit{Agnes of God}

ONLINE POST: Compare one aspect of St. Francis and Joan of Arc (form and content of that one aspect)

Thurs., April 4\textsuperscript{th} SPRING BREAK

Thurs., April 11\textsuperscript{th} ~ MONKS & ANGELS \{VOTE\}  
VOTE ON ONE: \textit{Wings of Desire}; \textit{Dogma}; \textit{Razor’s Edge}; \textit{Into the Wild}; \textit{Life of Pi}

READ: Online readings; possible quiz

DISCUSS: the religious impetus for retreat into nature vs. society; end of class quiz or short response, or online post

Thurs., April 18\textsuperscript{th} ~ JESUS

FILM: \textit{Jesus of Montreal}

READ: Online readings; possible quiz

DISCUSS: role-playing, allegory (as above, so below), archetypes; end of class quiz or short response, or online post

Thurs., April 25\textsuperscript{th} ~ JESUS \{VOTE\}

VOTE ON ONE: \textit{Gospel According to St. Matthew}; \textit{Last Temptation of Christ};  
\textit{The Passion}; \textit{Life of Brian}; \textit{Jesus Christ Superstar}

READ: Online readings; possible quiz

DISCUSS: Jesus as a comic/tragic hero; in-class quiz or short response, or online post

Thurs., May 2\textsuperscript{nd} ~ MISSION (LAST DAY)

FILM: \textit{The Mission}

READ: Online readings; possible quiz

DISCUSSION BOARD POST: Compare the two paths in \textit{The Mission} (form and content): compose it while you’re listening to the soundtrack?!  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5qlWLXhFL4

RECOMMENDED: \textit{The Seventh Seal}

TEST

Thurs., May 9\textsuperscript{th}, 7-9pm FINAL EXAM: bring a large blue book; I will screen an unannounced one-hour film (from the 20 recommended films) in class and you will write a single, one-hour, in-class essay in response to a given prompt (I may give you several prompts to choose from that night, but you will only write one essay); compare/contrast the in-class film with your choice of the most relevant three of our last six films (Judaism and Christianity); don’t worry, I’ll bring snacks since it’s my birthday.

FIN
DESCRIPTIONS OF REQUIRED FILMS

_Gandhi_ (1982), dir. Richard Attenborough. Biography of Mahatma Gandhi, the lawyer who became the famed leader of the Indian revolts against the British through his philosophy of non-violent protest. Too weak from World War II to continue enforcing its will in India, Britain finally grants India's independence. Indians celebrate this victory, but their troubles are far from over as religious tensions between Hindus and Muslims erupt into nation-wide violence. Gandhi declares a hunger strike, saying he will not eat until the fighting stops. The fighting does stop eventually, but the country is divided. The northwest and eastern part of India (current day Bangladesh), both places where Muslims are in the majority, become a new country, Pakistan. It is hoped that by encouraging the Muslims to live in a separate country, violence will abate. Gandhi is opposed to this plan and spends his last days trying to bring about peace between both nations. He angers many dissidents on both sides, one of whom finally gets close enough to assassinate him. (SDSU DVD-6197) ($12 new on Amazon; $12 on Amazon Instant Video)

_Water_ (2005), dir. Deepa Mehta. The film examines the plight of a group of widows forced into poverty at a temple in the holy city of Varanasi. It focuses on a relationship between one of the widows, who wants to escape the social restrictions imposed on widows, and a man who is from the highest caste and a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1938, Gandhi's party is making inroads in women's rights. Chuyia, a child already married but living with her parents, becomes a widow. By tradition, she is unceremoniously left at a bare and impoverished widows' ashram, beside the Ganges during monsoon season. The ashram's leader pits out Kalyani, a young and beautiful widow, for household funds. Narayan, a follower of Gandhi, falls in love with her. Can she break with tradition and religious teaching to marry him? The ashram's moral center is Shakuntala, deeply religious but conflicted about her fate. Can she protect Kalyani or Chuyia? Amid all this water, is rebirth possible or does tradition drown all? (SDSU DVD-3141) ($3 to rent/stream on Amazon; or free for Amazon Prime)

_Sita Sings the Blues_ (2008), dir. Nina Paley. An animated version of the epic Indian tale of Ramayana set to the 1920's jazz vocals of Annette Hanshaw. The movie is about Sita, the Hindu Goddess from the epic _The Ramayana_, who accompanies Lord Rama on a 14-year exile in the forest. Sita is abducted by Ravana, the ruler of Lanka. This movie tells the story of Rama and Sita, along with a biographical account of the director's relationship with her husband. (Free online at http://www.sitasingingtheblues.com/watch.html)

BUDDHISM

_Kundun_ (1997, directed by Martin Scorcese), the story of the 14th (current) incarnation of the Dalai Lama being found and raised and confronted with the invasion by the People's Republic of China was shot in Morocco. It has one of my favorite Philip Glass scores, gorgeous cinematography by Roger Deakins (Mountains of the Moon, Fargo), and used Tibetans rather than making the movie about a western observer (as in "Seven Years in Tibet"—which was shot in Argentina, BTW). (SDSU VTC-1443)

_Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring (Bom yeoreum gaesul gyeoul geurigo bom, 2003), dir. Ki-duk Kim_. A young boy lives in a small floating temple on a beautiful lake, together with an elderly master who teaches him the ways of the Buddha. Years later the boy, now a young man, experiences his sexual awakening with a girl who has come to the temple to be healed by the master. The youth runs away to the outside world but his lust turns his life into hell, so he returns to the lake temple to find spiritual enlightenment. (SDSU DVD-1653) ($10 Amazon instant video, or buy new for $11.50)

_Why Has the Bodhi-Dharma Left for the East? A Zen Fable_ (1989), dir. Yong-Kyun Bae. Three people live in a remote Buddhist monastery near Mount Chonan: Hyegok, the old master; Yong Nan, a young man who has left his extended family in the city to seek enlightenment; and an
orphan boy, Haejin, whom Hyegok has brought to the monastery to raise as a monk. The story is mostly Yong Nan's, told in flashbacks: how he came to the monastery, his brief return to the city, his vacillation between the turbulence of the world and his hope to overcome passions and escape the idea of self. We also see Hyegok as a teacher, a protector, and a father figure, and we watch Haejin make his way as a curious and nearly self-sufficient child. (SDSU DVD-1630)

CONFUCIAN

Confucius (2010), dir. Mei Hu. The life story of the highly-influential Chinese philosopher, Confucius. The film was scheduled to screen later in 2009 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, as well as the 2,560th birthday of Confucius himself. The film begins with Confucius as an old man, thinking back. Then we see him in his early 50s, being promoted from Major to Minister for Law in his home state of Lu. He is confronted with ethical issues after saving a slave-boy who was due to be buried alive with his former master who has just died. There are a lot of complex politics and war, ending with Confucius being rejected and becoming a wandering scholar. After many hardships and losses, he is invited back as an old man. We see him finally preparing the Spring and Autumn Annals, expecting that this book will determine his future influence. (SDSU DVD-6654)

JUDAISM

Yentl (1983), dir. Barbra Streisand. Dramatization of "Yentl, the Yeshiva Boy," by Isaac Bashevis Singer (1902-1991); originally published in Yiddish c. 1960, then in English c. 1983. The story: In an Ashkenazic shtetl in Poland, Yentl Mendel is the boyishly klutzty daughter and only child of long widowed Rebbe ("Talmud Teacher") Mendel, who teaches Talmud (a codification of Jewish Law) to local boys - and to Yentl, but secretly because girls were not allowed to learn the law in those days. When her father dies, Yentl is all alone in the world. She takes the momentous decision to leave the village and - disguised as a boy and calling herself by the name of her late brother, Anshel - seeks and gets admitted to a Yeshiva, to study the texts, traditions, subtleties and complexities of Torah, Talmud, etc. She befriends Avigdor who is engaged to Haddas, but her family discovers his brother committed suicide so they call off the wedding (in case Avigdor possesses the same madness). (SDSU VTC-1180) ($3 to stream/rent on Amazon; or free for Amazon Prime Members)

CHRISTIANITY

Flowers of St. Francis (1950), dir. Roberto Rossellini. The film dramatizes about a dozen vignettes from the life of St. Francis and his early followers--starting with their return in the rain to Rivotorlo from Rome when the Pope blessed their Rule and ending with their dispersal to preach. The unconnected chapters are like parables, some with a moral. The slight and comic Ginepro returns naked to St. Mary's of the Angels, having given away his tunic, but not his ricotta. The aged Giovanni shouts and holds onto his cape; the beatific St. Clair visits. Humble Francis doubts his leadership, hugs a leper, and sends his brothers spinning, dizzy, and smiling into the world. This brotherhood is infused with whimsy as well as belief. (SDSU DVD-2343)

The Passion of Joan of Arc (La passion de Jeanne d'Arc, 1928), a silent film starring Maria Falconetti is widely regarded as Danish director Carl Theodor Dreyer's finest achievement and one of the greatest films of all time. Dreyer recreates the 15th century trial and execution of the martyr, St. Joan of Arc (1412-1431), with near-documentary authenticity. The director's use of huge, probing close-ups--detailing every pockmark and even the saliva at the sides of the mouths--adds a shocking immediacy which makes it hard to believe that this film is nearly 70 years old. The film's title is supremely double-edged: Joan's "passion" is shown to be as erotic as it is spiritual. (DVD-878)
Wings of Desire (Der Himmel über Berlin, 1987), dir. Wim Wenders, is one of cinema's loveliest city symphonies. Bruno Ganz is Daniel, an angel perched atop buildings high over Berlin who can hear the thoughts—fears, hopes, and dreams—of all the people living below, including a beautiful trapeze artist he falls in love with. Made not long before the fall of the Berlin Wall, this stunning tapestry of sound and images, shot in black and white and color by the legendary Henri Alekan, is movie poetry. (SDSU VTC-789) ($3 Amazon instant video)

Jesus of Montreal (1989), dir. Denys Arcand. A group of actors putting on an interpretive Passion Play in Montreal begin to experience a meshing of their characters and their private lives as the production takes form against the growing opposition of the Catholic church. (SDSU DVD-5670)

Gospel According to St. Matthew (Il vangelo secondo Matteo, 1964), dir. Pier Pasolini. Pasolini shows Christ as a Marxist avant-la-lettre and therefore uses half of the text of Matthew. Along a rocky, barren coastline, Jesus begins teaching, primarily using parables. He attracts disciples; he's stern, brusque, and demanding. He comes to bring a sword, not peace, he says. He's in a hurry, moving from place to place near the Sea of Galilee, sometimes attracting a multitude, sometimes being driven away. His parables often take on the powers that be, so he and his teachings come to the attention of the Pharisees, the chief priests, and elders. They conspire to have him arrested, beaten, tried, and crucified, just as he prophesied to his followers. After he dies, he appears to his disciples and gives them final instructions. (SDSU DVD-675)

Last Temptation of Christ (1988), dir. Martin Scorsese. The life of Jesus Christ, his journey through life as he faces the temptations that all humans face during their lives, and his final temptation upon the cross. The carpenter Jesus of Nazareth—tormented by the temptations of demons, the guilt of making crosses for the Romans, pity for men and the world, and the constant call of God—sets out to find what God wills for him. But as his mission nears fulfillment, he must face the greatest temptation: the normal life of a good man. Based, not on the Gospels, but on Nikos Kazantzakis' novel of the same name. (SDSU DVD-279) ($3 Amazon instant video)

The Mission (1986), dir. Roland Joffé, Featuring a majestic score by Ennio Morricone and lush Oscar-winning cinematography by Chris Menges, Roland Joffé's The Mission examines the events surrounding the Treaty of Madrid in 1750, when Spain ceded part of South America to Portugal, and turns this episode into an allegory for the mid-80s struggles of Latin America. Two European forces are on hand to win the South American natives over to imperialist ways. The plunders want to extract riches and slaves from the New World. The missionaries, on the other hand, want to convert the Indians to Christianity and win over their souls. Mendoza (Robert De Niro) is an exploiter dabbling in the slave trade. But after he kills his brother Felipe (Aidan Quinn) in a fit of rage, he seeks redemption and calls upon the missionaries to assist him. After repeatedly climbing a cliff with a heavy weight as penance, Mendoza finds redemption and becomes a devout missionary at a settlement run by Gabriel (Jeremy Irons). The missionaries want to promote a new society in which the natives will live together in peace with the Spanish and the Portuguese. But this concept frightens the royal governors, who would rather enslave the natives than encourage peaceful coexistence between the Europeans and the Indians. They order the mission to be burned to the ground. But this event causes a rift between Gabriel, who wants to pray and pursue peaceful resistance, and Mendoza, who wants to take up arms and fight the Europeans. (SDSU DVD-1281) ($3 Amazon instant video)

**RECOMMENDED JEWISH & CHRISTIAN FILMS**
(for the final and beyond; along with the other recommended films on our syllabus; 20 total)

Agnes of God (1985), dir. Norman Jewison. When a dead newborn is found, wrapped in bloody sheets, in the bedroom wastebasket of a young novitiate, psychiatrist Martha Livingston is called in to determine if the seemingly innocent novice, who knows nothing of sex or birth, is competent
enough to stand trial for the murder of the baby. While searching for the answer that her supervisors want, Dr. Livingston finds herself inevitably drawn into searching for the truth about the baby's conception and death. Despite the lack of cooperation that she receives from her own organization and the church itself, she eventually discovers more than she may have bargained for. (SDSU DVD-1565)

**The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys** (2002), dir. Peter Care. In the Seventies, the fifteen years old troublemaker and leader altar boy Tim Sullivan and his three great friends, Francis Doyle, Wade Scallisi and Joey Anderson, fight boredom, hormones and harsh teachers as they struggle to find something meaningful beyond the walls of their repressive Catholic school. Francis, an exceptional artist whose imaginative forays into a fictional universe of good and evil fill his notebooks with comic-book imagery, creates a netherworld of superhero alter egos for the two boys. When the ultra-strict Sister Assumpta (Jodi Foster) seizes their artwork one day, the boys embark upon an obsessed trail of revenge that ultimately changes their lives.

**Decalogue** (1988), directed by internationally-renowned Polish auteur, Krzysztof Kieslowski. Ten one-hour films for television all set in the same apartment building, with each film corresponding to one of the Ten Commandments (called the “Decalogue,” Greek for “ten words”). (SDSU DVD-87)

**Doctor Faustus** (1967), dir. Richard Burton. A man sells his soul to the devil in order to have the woman he loves. Faustus is a scholar at the University of Wittenberg when he earns his doctorate degree. His insatiable appetite for knowledge and power leads him to employ necromancy to conjure Mephistopheles out of hell. He bargains away his soul to Lucifer in exchange for living 24 years during which Mephistopheles will be his slave. Faustus signs the pact in his own blood and Mephistopheles reveals the works of the devil to Faustus. (IVC CAMPUS DVD-545)

**Exorcist** (1973), dir. William Friedkin, novelist William Peter Blatty based his best-seller on the last known Catholic-sanctioned exorcism in the United States. Blatty transformed the little boy in the 1949 incident into a little girl named Regan, played by 14-year-old Linda Blair. Suddenly prone to fits and bizarre behavior, Regan proves quite a handful for her actress-mother, Chris MacNeil (played by Ellen Burstyn, although Blatty reportedly based the character on his next-door neighbor Shirley MacLaine). When Regan gets completely out of hand, Chris calls in young priest Father Karras (Jason Miller), who becomes convinced that the girl is possessed by the Devil and that they must call in an exorcist: namely, Father Merrin (Max von Sydow). His foe proves to be no run-of-the-mill demon, and both the priest and the girl suffer numerous horrors during their struggles. The Exorcist received a theatrical rerelease in 2000, in a special edition that added 11 minutes of footage trimmed from the film’s original release and digitally enhanced Chris Newman’s Oscar-winning sound work. (SDSU DVD-5713)

**Into Great Silence** (*Die große Stille*, 2005), dir. Philip Gröning. A unique, transcendent and transporting cinematic event examining life inside the Grande Chartreuse, the head monastery of the reclusive Carthusian Order in France. (SDSU DVD-3620) ($3 Amazon instant video)

**Seventh Seal** (1957), dir. Ingmar Bergman. (A man seeks answers about life, death, and the existence of God as he plays chess against the Grim Reaper during the Black Plague.) A Knight and his squire are home from the crusades. Black Death is sweeping their country. As they approach home, Death appears to the knight and tells him it is his time. The knight challenges Death to a chess game for his life. The Knight and Death play as the cultural turmoil envelopes the people around them as they try, in different ways, to deal with the upheaval the plague has caused. *Meet Joe Black* of the 50’s. (SDSU DVD-69)