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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW 1964 136 min. b&w (d) Pier Paolo Pasolini (c) Tonino delli Colli (p) Alfredo Bini (Italian dialog with English subtitles) Order number: CIC-3 Rental: \$22.00

Film Description

One of those rare achievements appreciated by widely varying audiences, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW has received acclaim from church groups, the public, critics and film festivals (including the Special Jury Prize of the Venice Festival). Pier Paolo Pasolini (ACCATONE, THE HAWKS AND THE SPARROWS, TEOREMA), Italy's controversial writer-poet-director, has avoided the spectacular over-dramatization so characteristic of films on Jesus' life. "I haven't put the Gospels together," he has stated, "and written a scenario of the life of Christ; no this is precisely the Gospel according to Saint Matthew."

Pasolini's unconventional approach is reflected in his use of rugged southern Italian landscapes, hill towns, costumes of coarse material and faces without make-up. There are no "stars," all of the performers are non-actors whom Pasolini selected for their natural, unglamorous quality. Pasolini's Christ is a man who preaches with urgency; feels deeply for the afflicted people around him; experiences anguish, impatience and anger. The film is basically a simple recreation of a human drama, set against the everyday life of the times.

Critical Comments

Certainly the best life of Jesus ever placed on film and probably the finest religious film ever made as well. Indeed, it may come to rank as the years add to our perspective, among the great movies of all time, regardless of subject.

--Life