



February 2014

Ida

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Recommended Citation

Blizek, William L. (2014) "Ida," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 18: Iss. 1, Article 22.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol18/iss1/22>

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Ida

Abstract

This is a film review of *Ida* (2014), directed by Pawel Pawlikowski.

Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).

Ida
(2014)
Directed by Pawel Pawlikowski
Spotlight

Ida has been raised in a Catholic orphanage. In two weeks she will take her final vows and become a nun in a closed order. Before she takes



her final vows, her Mother Superior suggests that Ida visit her aunt, her only living relative. This will bring closure to her past and her connection to the outside world. Her aunt has been asked to visit Ida at the convent, but she has refused. So, at the urging of her Mother Superior, Ida sets off to meet her aunt. Ida's aunt is not happy to see her. It turns out that she is unmarried and it appears that she is promiscuous. Ida can only get in the way. Ida learns that she is Jewish before her aunt sends her back to the convent. While Ida is waiting at the train station, her aunt tracks her down and tells her about her past. Ida then decides that she would like to visit the grave of her parents before she returns to the convent.

Ida and her aunt begin an adventure together, a quite complicated and surprising adventure. The adventure is also heartbreaking. Through all of the

twists and turns and all of the temptations, Ida maintains her faith, and in the end we assume that she takes her vows and becomes a nun.

The twists and turns of the story are best experienced by watching the movie, so I have left those out; but each twist and turn generates a new challenge for Ida. And Ida responds positively to each of them, even when the task looks impossible. This is the story of a young woman whose faith, when tested under the most difficult of circumstances, stands the test.

When we review films for *JR&F*, we are not writing the usual movie review. We are less interested in the quality of the acting and the cinematography than we are in how religion is portrayed in the film under review. I would be remiss, however, if I did not add to the review above that this was simply one of the best movies I have ever seen.

— William L. Blizek