

Famed missionary story is on the big screen

NEW YORK (AP) — Far from home, five American missionaries died in brutal fashion: speared and hacked to death by tribesmen in the dense jungles of Ecuador.

That nightmare moment 50 years ago this month evolved into a remarkable example of reconciliation, and one of the most influential incidents in 20th century Protestant mission lore.

Now the saga is being retold in “End of the Spear,” a moving feature film about redemption in the jungle with a bigger budget (\$17 million) and broader release (in 1,200 commercial cinemas this weekend) than many films of this genre.

In January 1956, Bush pilot Nate Saint and American colleagues Jim Elliot, Pete Fleming, Ed McCully and Roger Youderian had teamed up in a high-risk attempt to contact, befriend and evangelize the violent Waodani people (also called Waorani or Auca). The five carried guns but didn’t defend themselves when attacked.

Their martyrdom became world-famous through a Life magazine feature by photojournalist Cornell Capa and subsequent books by Elliot’s widow, Elisabeth, who quickly matched her husband’s heroism.

She and Saint’s sister, Rachel, somehow managed to settle peacefully among the Waodani and brought them Christianity. Their example of responding to bloodshed with love inspired rapid conversions that are credited with ending internal warfare among the Waodani and ensuring the tribe’s survival. It also inspired generations of people to follow the call to become missionaries.

In another improbable sequel, one of the killers, Mincaye, became a virtual substitute father to Nate’s son, Steve Saint. The two friends are currently touring U.S. churches to tell their story and promote the “Spear” movie along with Saint’s new book of the same title.

In an interview (with Saint as interpreter), Mincaye, now in his late 70s, said his band killed the missionaries because “furious” elders felt, “Let’s not let the foreigners come to our place.”

The elders accused the missionaries of trying to kill tribesmen. “We knew it was a lie,” Mincaye said, but the group decided, “Let’s not kill each other; let’s kill the foreigners.”

Mincaye said his heart “was dark” until he learned about Jesus. “Waengongi (the Creator) used his son’s blood like soap. He cleaned it and I saw a new trail. Then I saw it’s enough,” he said, referring to tribal killings. The violence had to stop. “Waengongi said, ‘Come follow my trail, living well.’”

Besides slaying outsiders, the Waodani killed each other at the highest rate of any known group, University of Connecticut anthropology professor James Boster said. Before the missionaries came, they had dwindled to 600 and “were at

“ This story goes on and on.”

David Howard, former director of World Evangelical Alliance

the brink of cultural extinction,” because such a small group can’t sustain itself as a social unit, he said.

In a 2003 academic paper, Boster said the Waodani were desperate to halt the cycles of violence and had tried gift-giving, exchange of wives, fleeing and attempts to exterminate all enemies. Before Christianity, nothing worked.

Less hostile toward missions than are some anthropologists — who see evangelization as cultural imperialism — Boster said that “of all the ways in which native people confront the larger society, often the most benevolent and caring face of the other culture is by missionaries.

Catherine Peeke lived among the Waodani from 1960 to 1992 for Wycliffe Bible Translators, preparing a New Testament (they call it “God’s markings”) in their tongue. She said the population rebounded not only through ending warfare but because missions provided basic medical care and school compounds where men were able to find wives.

Also, Peeke said, Christian teaching caused the tribe to stop infanticide of children who were twins, born out of wedlock, had deformities or were sacrificed after their fathers were killed.

Steve Saint got involved after his

aunt Rachel died in 1994. When he attended her burial in Ecuador, the Waodani insisted that he leave his business career and take his aunt’s place as their helper in dealing with the outside world. Saint now divides his time between the jungle and Dunnellon, Fla., where his non-profit Indigenous People’s Technology and Education Center (I-TEC) devises inventions to aid jungle living and provide tribal employment.

Saint said he initially declined to assist the “Spear” movie because the Waodani Christians said they opposed the project. But the Waodani changed their minds when he told them about the 1999 Columbine High School massacre. They wanted to help Americans overcome violence like they had, Saint said.

The film depicts events from the Waodani viewpoint, using a largely indigenous cast in Panama. Saint was the stunt pilot, duplicating his father’s exploits. The team pro-

duced a related video documentary, “Beyond the Gates of Splendor.”

Today, Steve Saint estimates, 430 of the 2,000 Waodani are baptized Christians but he worries whether the tribe can maintain its identity. “Their existence as a church and a culture is very tenuous,” he said, due to encroachments from the outside world.

One further result from the saga: David Howard, former director of the World Evangelical Alliance and Elisabeth Elliot’s brother, said he’s been told that missionary recruits in the United States and dozens of other nations were inspired by the martyrdom. “Only eternity is going to show how many,” he said, but it’s “easily in the thousands” and vocations still occur.

“This story goes on and on,” he said.

On the Net:
Movie and video: <http://www.everytribe.com>
Saint’s ministry: <http://www.itecusa.org>

Ohio man sentenced to attend church for threats

CINCINNATI (AP) — A judge sentenced a suburban Cincinnati man to attend services for six weeks at a predominantly black church for threatening to punch a black cab driver and using racial slurs in a fight with the man.

Brett Haines, 36, of Anderson Township, picked church over spending 30 days in the Hamilton County jail. Judge William Mallory Jr. offered Haines the choice last week after Haines was convicted of disorderly conduct.

Haines was arrested in November for threatening cab driver David

Wilson and Wilson’s wife and telling them he hated black people. Prosecutors said Haines was drunk.

The church services could expand Haines’ cultural awareness, Mallory said. He told Haines he must go to six consecutive Sunday services and get the minister to sign a church program to prove he attended.

Wilson, the cab driver, said he would have preferred the jail sentence.

“Church don’t change everybody,” he said.

Churches help U.S. Marshals with fugitive surrender program

PHOENIX (AP) — A program that began in Ohio to entice fugitives into surrendering at churches is coming to Arizona this spring.

A church will transform into a makeshift courtroom for several days, hoping to convince some of the state’s 80,000 fugitives to turn themselves in, said U.S. Marshal for Arizona David Gonzales. Officers will process those who show up, and defense attorneys will be available.

Gonzales said the fugitives aren’t offered amnesty, but are promised “favorable consideration.” For non-violent felony or misdemeanor suspects, that usually means being released without bail after showing up at the church court and possible leniency at sentencing.

The first event is tentatively set for four days in May at Pilgrims Rest Baptist Church in Phoenix.

Peter J. Elliott, the U.S. Marshal for northern Ohio, came up with the idea for the program, called Fugitive Safe Surrender. The partnership of law enforcement and faith groups was launched in Cleveland in October. More than 800 suspects surrendered in four days of the program at a Baptist church.

The program is designed to let suspects surrender at a neutral location without endangering themselves, their family or neighbors. It helps law enforcement by getting suspects back on track in court without having to search for them or make potentially dangerous arrests.



Worship in the church of your choice this weekend.



CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 1145 S. Franklin - 460-6605, President Dave Geldmacher, 846-7740; Calvin Haverfield, 1st counselor, 672-4165; Matt Christensen, 2nd counselor, 460-0146.

Schedule of church services

ASCENSION-ON-THE-PRAIRIE EPISCOPAL, Rev. Don Martin, College Drive & Wheatridge Rd., 462-3041, Holy Eucharist, 9:00 a.m. every Sunday, Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m. Wednesday, September through May. Christian Education for Youth, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, September through May

COLLEGE DRIVE ASSEMBLY OF GOD, Pastor, Jeremy Gundling, 245 W. College Dr. - 462-8234, Early Service - 8:00 a.m.; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Morning Worship - 10:45 a.m.

BEREAN CHURCH, 1000 S. Franklin, 460-2763, www.colbyborean.com; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. Awana Clubs, Wednesday, 7 p.m., Middle & High School, Wednesday, 7 p.m. @ the Colby Armory

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Pastor Bradley L. Herndon, Grant & Webster Street, 462-2867, Morning Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday School 9:15 a.m., Evening Worship 6:30 p.m., Wednesday Bible 7:30 p.m.

COLLEGE VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH, (SBC), Pastor Tom Huffman, 1185 Wheatridge Rd. at College Drive, 460-7144, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship services, 10:45 a.m.

MINGO BIBLE CHURCH, 420 Main Mingo, 785-462-2992: An independent community church served by Village Missions Pastor Chris Shubert. Sunday School: 9:30AM - all ages. Sunday Services: 10:45AM. Sunday Nights: 1st Sunday of the month: potluck following morning service - no evening service; 2nd Sunday: services at 6:30 PM; 3rd Sunday: informal fellowship - bring a snack to share!; 4th and 5th Sunday: services at 6:30 p.m.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC, 462-2179, Father Dana Clark, Pastor, Saturday Eve. Mass 5:30 p.m., Sunday Masses 8:00 & 10:00 a.m., Confessions will be heard Saturday 4:30-5:05 p.m. and from 7:30-7:45 a.m. and 9:25-9:40 a.m. on Sunday.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Rev. Carol Rahn, 515 W. 4th, 462-6342, Worship, 9:00 a.m.

WESLEYAN CHURCH, 320 W. Pine - 462-8391, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:40 a.m., Sunday Evening Cell groups at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday Youth Ministries, Kids Clubhouse 7 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 1145 S. Franklin - 460-6605, President Dave Geldmacher, 846-7740; Calvin Haverfield, 1st counselor, 672-4165; Matt Christensen, 2nd counselor, 460-0146. Sacrament meeting 10 a.m., Sunday School and Primary 11:20 a.m., Priesthood, Relief Society, YM/YW, 12:10 p.m.; Family History Center open to public, 7-9 p.m. Thursdays or by appointment. Call 462-3571.

COLBY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, Rev. James Mardock, pastor, 950 S. Franklin, 462-6521, Sunday Worship Services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m., 6:30 p.m., Fellowship coffee 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., KXXX broadcasts 11:00 worship. <http://www.gbmg-umc.org/colby-umc/>

REDEEMING LOVE CHURCH, 345 N. Franklin, Apostle W.G. and Rev. Orvella Romine, Equipping Service, Sunday, 10 a.m., Sunday worship, 11 a.m., Thursday, RLM Training Center (Bible School), 6 p.m.

CHURCH OF CHRIST, 510 E. 4th, Jay Kelley, minister, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday Eve. Worship 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

COLBY EVANGELISM CENTER, Rev. Robert Cooper, 815 West 3rd - 462-2062, Sunday School 9:45; Sunday service 10:00 and 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday Bible Study 6:30 p.m.; Friday Youth Power Hour at 7:00 p.m.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, (Disciples of Christ), Pastor Bradley L. Herndon, 385 W. 3rd -

460-2718, Sunday Morning Worship at 9:00 a.m.; Sunday School at 10:30 a.m. E-mail: fccolby@st-tel.net

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Rev. John L. Schmidt, East 5th & Country Club, 462-3497, Services, Sat., 5:30 p.m., Sunday; Sunday School and Adult Bible Class 9:15 a.m.; Services, 10:30 a.m.

OUR SAVIORS LUTHERAN CHURCH, Brewster, Sunday worship 9:00 a.m.; 2nd Sunday of the month at 8:00 a.m.

PLEASANT HOME CHURCH, Pastor, Charlie Busch, 694-2242, 3190 Road 70, Edson, Worship, 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Evening service, 6:00 p.m.

LEVANT COMMUNITY CHURCH, 205 1st St., Pastor Jerry Vincent, 586-2376, Sunday School (classes for 3 years & up and 3 adult classes) 9:30 a.m., Morning worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday Evening Worship 7:00 p.m.

WINONA METHODIST CHURCH, Rev. Michael Eurit, Sunday School, 10:30 a.m., Morning Worship 9:30 a.m. (CDT)

BREWSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, PO Box 250, Brewster. Pastor Dorine Chambers, 785-462-6044, Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship, 10:45 a.m.

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF, REXFORD, Mr. Bob Leach, Director, 687-2565

REXFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH, Rexford, Pastor Lane Purcell, 687-3305, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

BREWSTER COMMUNITY CHURCH, Mike Pinkelman, Pastor, Brewster - 694-2720, Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Wed. mornings 6:30 a.m. - Men's Bible Study, Wed. 7:00 p.m. - Children's Ministries (Royal Rangers/Missionettes), Wed. 7:15 p.m. - Intercessory & Prayer, Thurs. 4:00 p.m. - Women's Bible Study

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