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TEILHARD: Visionary Scientist, A Film For Our Ever-Evolving World

Teilhard's life is marked by scientific adventure and search for meaning

Teilhard's explorations bring him fame for the discovery of Peking Man

Teilhard's writings celebrate faith compatible with science, and inspire an ecological movement

WASHINGTON, DC, April 24, 2024 – The film *TEILHARD: Visionary Scientist* will have its broadcast debut on Maryland Public Television on May 19 at 4:00 pm. Telling the story of the late French Jesuit priest and scientist, the documentary masterfully weaves together themes from his life, including scientific adventure, the search for meaning, unresolved conflict with authority, the primacy of spirit, and the power of love.

“Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for the second time in the history of the world, we will have discovered fire.” These words of Teilhard open the film, framing the journey of the two-hour biographical film that spans from his birth on May 1, 1881, in Orcines, France, to his death on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1955, in New York City.

Teilhard develops a passion for geology and paleontology, fostered in his childhood by hikes with his father exploring neighboring volcanic mountains. He becomes a Jesuit priest, based on a deep spirituality fostered by his mother, who home schooled him.

The words of Teilhard himself provide the main thread that leads the viewer through the events of his life, supplemented by interviews with experts from the fields of science and religion, as well as through conversations with family and friends.

The film presents his message as relevant for our day and its rapidly evolving technology. His focus on the evolution of consciousness resonates with today's ascent of artificial intelligence (AI). His writings have also contributed to movements that include ecology, care for the earth, and a hopeful faith, compatible with science. He has inspired followers among believers and non-believers alike.

Teilhard's own interior struggle between love of the earth and love of God leads to a very personal understanding of cosmic evolution, which he called cosmogenesis. This enthusiasm for evolution, including what it can do to enhance dialogue between scientific thinking and religious belief, puts him in conflict with his Jesuit superiors. This leads to exile in China for 25 years, suppression of his writings, and a second exile at the age of 70 to New York City – making him a sort of 20th Century Galileo. Exile in China, ironically, places Teilhard on a geological team that discovers the world-famous Peking Man, the most important “missing link” in evolution of humans to that point.

His spiritual essays and books, notably *The Divine Milieu* and *The Human Phenomenon*, would be published after his death, and in many languages. They reflect what Teilhard spoke of as the “twin peaks” of his “interior life” – “an unbounded faith in our Lord and a clear-eyed faith in the world.”

“This man has given us a vision of hope that really is hope and not pipe dreams,” Most Reverend Michael Bruce Curry, presiding bishop and primate of the Episcopal Church, says in the film. “That is the stuff of prophets. That is the stuff of people who change the world.”

Thirteen years in the making, *TEILHARD: Visionary Scientist*, was produced by award-winning documentary filmmakers, Frank and Mary Frost (Frank Frost Productions, LLC). The production took them to four countries on three continents, a total of 25 locations, and included more than 35 interviews. The film's editor is Bob Kanner.

TEILHARD: Visionary Scientist will be available for national and international streaming for two years, beginning on May 20, 2024, on the free PBS App. Visit <https://www.mpt.org/anywhere/pbs-app/> to download the app, and then search for the film's title. DVDs of the program will be available at that time as well, at www.MPT.org/shop.

More information on the film and on Teilhard de Chardin, including his views on evolution, the feminine, Peking Man, love, and the Universal Christ, may be found at www.TeilhardProject.com.

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The Teilhard de Chardin Project, which includes the film, TEILHARD: Visionary Scientist, is an initiative of Frank Frost Productions, LLC, (FFP), an award-winning film and television production company dedicated to entertaining and informational programming for broadcast, DVD, and the web. FFP produces independent documentaries for national broadcast as well as educational and corporate films and videos. More than 100 million viewers have watched over 30 high-caliber FFP documentaries. These productions focus on historical, biographical, cultural, and religious subjects in pursuit of human understanding across cultures, nationalities, and religions. Many have aired on ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, and The Hallmark Channel; others have been shown in educational and corporate venues.