

**Assessment Criteria:** When the assignment is taught well, excellent students articulate the ideas with evident facility. Good learners do a good job. Competent writers say back what is taught but don't bring much engagement to the ideas. In addition, depending on the teacher's interest in allowing personal voice and subjective reflection, a student-centered teacher can permit and ask for personal experience(s) in which good and bad choices were part of the student's own journey.

### **LECTURE IDEAS: CHRISTIAN THEMES AND THE MOVIE'S EVENTS**

**Original Sin:** Ray shoots the priest and the altar boy, the back story that has sent Ray and Ken into exile in Bruges; tries to wash blood off hands in bathroom of Burger King; tosses gun in Thames (first use of water for baptism and healing); Is sent to land East of Eden: Bruges

**The Birth of Christ:** The Christ Child is born to redeem Ray; set in Christmas season; no room at the inn; innkeeper, Marie, is pregnant

**Mercy:** Harry gives Ray a few days in Bruges before the crime leader orders Ken to kill the younger hitman; Ken sends Ray out of Bruges to live a life beyond his crime

**Harry's Eden before his Fall:** Harry's childhood visit to Bruges, last time he was happy

**Bruges as Paradise:** The medieval buildings, the fairytale elements, the lights at night, the swans, the happy tourist children, the churches and art galleries

**Bruges as a foreshadowing of Hell and a place of Sin:** Jimmy the Dwarf (deformed natural man); the prostitute from Amsterdam; drinking and drugs; Chloe as mugger of tourist men; Ray's unhappiness, haunted by guilt over his crime; Medieval painting of saint being skinned alive; Ray's suicide attempt in child's playground; Boschian figures in the fog in the European movie being filmed, homage to Roeg's horror thriller, Don't Look Now

**Bruges as Purgatory or Limbo:** Echoes of Hemingway, Sartre, Pinter, Beckett; Boredom; Waiting; No exit; Ray can't leave; In exile from London and Dublin; Is Ray a child not responsible for his sin?; Like a mediocre soccer team: Tottenham; better than hell: South Central Los Angeles; full of obese Americans and intolerant Canadians

**Yuri as Charon, The Ferryman:** get a gun and pay a toll to "The Ferryman" to get across the River from Life to Death

**The Clocktower:** The Watchtower; Medieval village outpost to see the enemy; Satan (Harry) and Jesus (Ken) in the temptation on the mountain; God's view from above human life; The moneychanger in the temple

**Battle between Good Angels and Bad Angels:** Saint Michael the Archangel vs. Lucifer; Ken vs. Harry; Ken "flies" down to warn Ray; echoes of Wings of Desire

**Slaughter of the Innocents:** Murder of the altar boy; shooting of Jimmy dressed as a schoolboy; execution of the child-like Ray

**Eirik as Judas:** Betrays Ray to Harry; Jealous of Ray and Chloe's love; Plays role in Ray's Passion Play

**Ray as Humankind:** Potential to change for the better; In need of and deserves redemption, mercy, forgiveness, a second chance

**Ray as Child:** Easily tempted and distracted; Bored by church relic of Jesus' blood; Wants to watch midgets be filmed; Moody and petulant; Comically innocent and youthful

**Chloe as Devil and Angel:** Woman as temptress and agent of Love; Eve; Confuses Ray

**Guardian Angel:** Ken as older brother watching out for Ray

**Harry as Satan:** Anger, Murder; Father of Lies; Makes Ken Lie; Interest in Wee vs. Poo scatology; "Jesus, he curses a lot"; Can only change for the worse; Hounds of Hell chase Ray through the town at end

**Evidences of Grace:** Swans; Fairytale; Black dog; Little kids; Kid's stuffed bear on canal wall; Water images; View from the Tower; Chloe's love

**Suicide is Worse than Murder:** No possibility of Redemption; Ken stops Ray and puts him on a train out of Bruges

**End Times and Apocalypse:** Bosch's Last Judgment; Midget Apocalypse in the Future War between Blacks and Whites at the end of the world

**Last Night on Earth:** How do the characters spend it?; Sex, drugs and rock and roll; With two "manky hookers and a racist dwarf"

**God is Love:** Chloe bails Ray out of jail; Her love offers him redemption; Marie and Chloe mourn over Ray's wounded body as he is removed from his site of execution: The Pieta

**Marie as Mary:** Intercedes between Satan and Mankind in shootout scene

**Eschatology: Death, Judgment, Salvation and Damnation:** Ken and Jimmy saved; Harry damned; Ray may or may not die, may or may not be redeemed for sin

**Ray's Salvation:** Sorry for his sin; Confesses to Chloe and Ken; Leaves all his material possessions to Marie's baby, like Wise Men at manger; Does penance and is punished; If given Mercy and lives, will go to altar boy's house and offer self to child's mother; Wants to leave Bruges