

# Theological Servings In 11 Food Films

Have you ever considered the spiritual significance hidden beneath the delectable scenes of food in your favorite movies? Films have a unique way of weaving culinary delights into their narratives, and sometimes, these food moments carry deeper theological meanings. Join us on a delicious journey as we explore 11 food films that serve more than just delicious dishes on the silver screen.

## 1. "Chocolat" (2000)

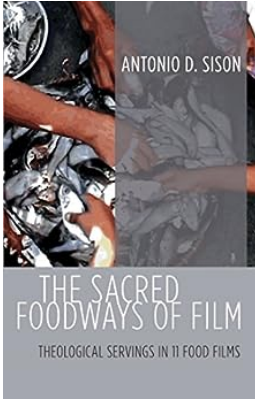
Delight in the sinfully tempting chocolate indulgences depicted in "Chocolat." Beyond the mouth-watering confections lies a metaphorical exploration of religious dogma, tradition, and the power of temptation. The arrival of the free-spirited chocolatier, Vianne Rocher, brings about a confluence of change in the lives of the townspeople. Discover how the film challenges the concept of rigid orthodoxy, inviting viewers to embrace acceptance and diversity.

## 2. "Babette's Feast" (1987)

This Danish masterpiece tells the story of Babette, a French refugee who uses her culinary skills to bring joy and transformation to a remote, puritanical community. Through the meticulous preparation and presentation of a luxurious feast, Babette turns the hearts of the villagers towards gratitude, forgiveness, and the appreciation of life's pleasures. Experience this cinematic feast for the senses and ponder its deeper spiritual implications.

## The Sacred Foodways of Film: Theological Servings in 11 Food Films

by Antonio D. Sison (Kindle Edition)



★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 7841 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 134 pages
Lending	: Enabled



### 3. "Eat Drink Man Woman" (1994)

In this Taiwanese film, the art of cooking becomes a medium for exploring the complexity of family relationships, traditions, and the generational gap. "Eat Drink Man Woman" serves up a thought-provoking examination of the tensions between tradition and modernity, reflecting on the evolving dynamics within families. Each culinary creation becomes a metaphor for familial connections, highlighting the importance of communication and understanding between generations.

### 4. "Ratatouille" (2007)

While "Ratatouille" may seem like a fun animated film about a rat who aspires to become a gourmet chef, it also offers profound insights on talent, passion, and the pursuit of purpose. Remy's journey teaches us that inherent gifts should not be thwarted by societal norms or appearances. This film gently reminds us to follow our dreams, embrace our unique abilities, and not let external judgments limit our potential.

### 5. "Big Night" (1996)

Set in the 1950s, "Big Night" celebrates the beauty of food, friendship, sacrifice, and the search for the American dream. Brothers Primo and Secondo run an Italian restaurant and plan a "big night" to impress a famous jazz musician. The film delves into themes of artistic integrity, cultural identity, and the sacrifices we make for our passions.

## **6. "Chef" (2014)**

"Chef" tells the heartwarming tale of Carl Casper, a chef who rediscovers his passion for cooking after a personal setback. As he embarks on a journey with his food truck, we witness the power of reinvention, the importance of embracing change, and the value of pursuing one's true calling. This film serves a reminder that life's setbacks often lead to incredible opportunities for growth and self-discovery.

## **7. "The Lunchbox" (2013)**

Experience the poignant story of a mistaken lunchbox delivery that connects a lonely widower and a neglected housewife. The culinary exchange between them serves as a metaphor for the emotional nourishment they find in each other's company. "The Lunchbox" explores themes of longing, the search for connection, and the transformative power of simple acts of kindness.

## **8. "Julie & Julia" (2009)**

Indulge in this delightful culinary tale based on the lives of chef Julia Child and writer Julie Powell. Parallel narratives intertwine as these women, separated by time, discover a sense of purpose and fulfillment through their passion for food. "Julie & Julia" is a celebration of perseverance, the joy of cooking, and the ways in which food can connect us to our identities and dreams.

## **9. "Like Water for Chocolate" (1992)**

This Mexican film serves up a sumptuous feast infused with magical realism. Tita, the protagonist, channels her emotions into her cooking, which then gets transmitted to those who consume her food. "Like Water for Chocolate" explores the transcendent power of food, love, and the transformative effects of expressing oneself through culinary creations.

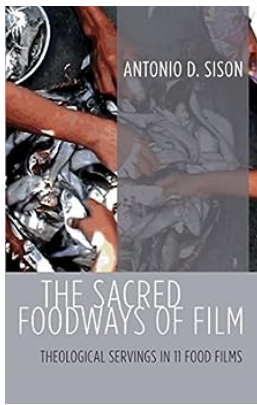
## **10. "Jiro Dreams of Sushi" (2011)**

Follow the extraordinary journey of Jiro Ono, an 85-year-old sushi master who dedicates his life to perfecting the art of sushi-making. This profound documentary provides a glimpse into the pursuit of excellence, the importance of dedication, and the intergenerational bond between fathers and sons. "Jiro Dreams of Sushi" is a soul-stirring exploration of craftsmanship, devotion, and the profound impact of lifelong dedication.

## **11. "MasterChef" (TV Series)**

While not a film in the traditional sense, "MasterChef" offers a captivating exploration of the culinary world, competitive spirit, and the pursuit of gastronomic perfection. This popular TV series showcases aspiring home cooks, testing their skills, resilience, and creativity in pursuit of their dreams. The show inspires viewers to embrace their passion for cooking and follow their own culinary journeys.

Food films have the power to nourish both our bodies and souls. Beyond the sumptuous visuals, they offer insights into the human condition, our relationship with food, and the spiritual dimensions hidden beneath the surface. By exploring these 11 theological servings in food films, we can broaden our understanding of the world around us and deepen our appreciation for the art of storytelling through culinary experiences.



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The Sacred Foodways of Film explores the ways by which the portrayal of food in film offers creative spaces for theological insight. From the Oprah Winfrey and Steven Spielberg produced title *The Hundred-Foot Journey* (2014) to the Oscar Best Foreign Language Film winner from Japan *Departures* (2008), eleven diverse films invite us to taste and see the mutually enriching blend of food and faith depicted onscreen. Smithsonian magazine describes the last two decades as "The Era of Crazy Oral Gratification." The explosion of interest in food culture, what is touted as the "foodie revolution," is evident across media platforms in the United States as well as in many other parts of the world. Curiously, there has not been a book specifically dedicated to the confluence of theology/religion and food films. *The Sacred Foodways of Film* is a timely contribution to this fascinating area of interest that has long been simmering on the stovetop of scholarship.

"Do I dare say how quickly I devoured this book? Sison blends three of my passions: food, film, and theology to concoct a brilliant guide that will satisfy the novice and film foodie alike. Even more, he introduces us to fascinating lesser-

known films, expanding the genre, enlarging the table. I hope many will 'eat this book!'"

--Leslie Leyland Fields, author of *The Spirit of Food: 34 Writers on Feasting and Fasting toward God*

"In *The Sacred Foodways of Film*, Antonio Sison evokes, provokes, and nourishes our theological imagination with a diversity of films containing food imagery charged with visceral power. He transforms the current so-called 'foodie revolution'--within the field of global cinema--into a rich and complex theological feast. By theologically engaging films with a food motif, Sison exquisitely re-narrates the numerous radical gestures of Jesus' acts of feeding the hungry and his welcoming all human communities into a sacred and inclusive banquet. Sison invites us to savor an excellent menu of foodways-oriented cinematic expressions, turning them into food for thought, and making us aware of both our mundane/bodily and sacred/spiritual appetite."

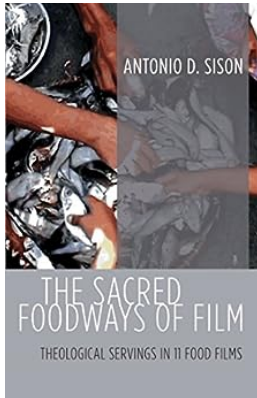
--Angel F. Méndez-Montoya, author of *The Theology of Food: Eating and the Eucharist*

"From the very first page, this beautiful and reflective book makes your mouth water. But, as the saying goes, 'hunger makes the best sauce' as Antonio Sison goes on to nourish your eyes, mind, heart, and soul. This is the work of a sensitive theologian, a talented artist, and a connoisseur of simple pleasures who finds beauty and meaning even in the most unlikely places."

--Stephen B. Bevans, author of *Models of Contextual Theology*

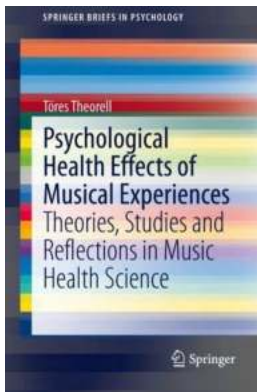
Antonio D. Sison, CPPS, PhD, faculty member at Catholic Theological Union at Chicago, is the author of *World Cinema, Theology, and the Human* (2012) and *Screening Schillebeeckx: Theology and Third Cinema in Dialogue* (2006). A

digital filmmaker, his work ICHTHUS (2006), a theological art film showcased at various film festivals and academic circles, is one of the case studies of this book.



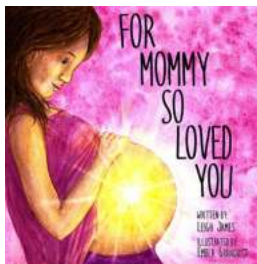
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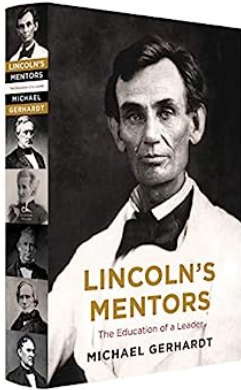
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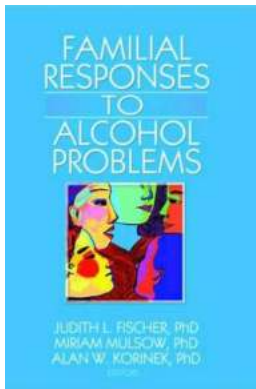
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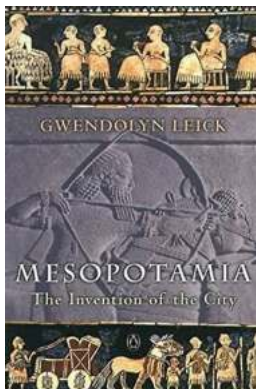
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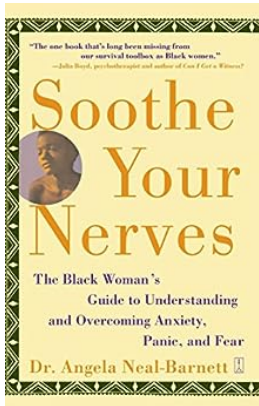
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