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Around the Dials

Daly to Star as 'Barabbas' In TV Drama Palm Sunday

By MARGARET McMANUS

MOST ACTORS are nervous, very nervous. Between parts, if they spend a lot of time around the house, they usually drive their wives to the brink of madness, not knowing what to do with their time, convinced they will probably never work again.

James Daly used to be nervous. He's not any more. He's reasonably contented puttering about his old, remodeled farm house in Suffern, N. Y., growing his roses, breeding his sheep and, now that it's close to summer, taking his 40 laps every day in his swimming pool. He is, in fact, so contented, it's almost a dangerous content and the explanation is simple—money.

For the past six years, Daly has been moonlighting in a very lucrative way. He's the commercial spokesman for a cigarette company, which adds up to about 30 days work a year, a lot of dough, and gives him the privilege of taking only acting jobs which please him. Few actors in any community can make that claim.

Daly will be seen on television tomorrow in a drama which he considers worthy of people's time. "Give Us Barabbas," the original religious drama, written by Henry Denker, televised on Palm Sunday last year on the "Hallmark Hall of Fame" series, will be repeated, 6 to 7.30 P. M., NBC-TV.

DALY STARS as Barabbas, the murderer whose life is spared when Christ is condemned; Kim Hunter plays Mara, the woman who loves him, and Dennis King plays Pontius Pilot.

"I know it's corny to say,

but I like a play with a message," said Daly. "I like a part with meat and substance so that the audience comes away with something to think about. These little frothy entertainments are all right if you just want to pass time, but when the curtain comes down, so what?"

James Daly made his finest success on Broadway in the role of Job in Archibald MacLeish's Pulitzer prize-winning drama, "J. B." He also co-starred with Helen Hayes in a revival of "The Glass Menagerie," at the City Center, and in 1957 he went to Berlin to act in the world premiere of Thornton Wilder's "Bernice."

On television he starred in the series, "Foreign Intrigue," which was filmed on location in Paris and Stockholm and he has done all of the better television drama series, including three-point, very good "Omnibus" shows, "Henry Adams," "The Court Martials of Billy Mitchell" and the verse drama, "Lee at Gettysburg."

JAMES Firman Daly, 44, was born in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., the son of Percifer Charles Daly and Dorothy Ethelbert Hogan Daly. His grandfather operated a lumber raft on the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers and his late father was in the fuel business in Wisconsin Rapids, where Daly grew up and graduated from Lincoln High School.

His mother now works for the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington, D. C., and a brother, David, who works for the FBI, also lives in Washington. He has two sisters, one married, living in Los Angeles, and the other, Major Mary El-

len Daly, is second in command of the WAFs, in Dover, Delaware.

While he was a student at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, Daly said he considered several other occupations, including writing and teaching. He said he had insufficient patience for writing and he immediately decided against teaching after he took some education courses.

He decided to become an actor after he was discharged from service and his first Broadway job was understudy for Gary Merrill as the newspaperman in the Judy Holliday hit, "Born Yesterday." He substituted for Merrill in 40 performances of the Garson Kanin play.

DALY SAID he has really no preference as to whether he is working in the movies, the theater or in television.

"The only thing important to me is the part," he said. "I think I'm less nervous doing television than I am performing for a half-full theater of a couple hundred people. Who can visualize an audience of 6,000,000 people? It's just a figure. It doesn't mean anything."

This man of independence is married to the former Mary Hope Newell, a college classmate, and an actress who, in her own way, is just as independent as he.

The Dalys have four children, Pegeen, 19, a student at Bennington; Ellen Tyne, 16, who wants to be an actress; Mary Glynn, 13, and James Timothy, six.

"We do not lack for activity around the house," said Daly.

Ah, the joys of an actor with a commercial subsidy!

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