



A FILM BY CHRISTOPHER NOLAN

DUNKIRK

THE EVENT THAT SHAPED OUR WORLD

**MOVIE
MOMENTS**

Nick and Carol Pollard from EthosMedia.org share thought-provoking reflections on the latest films.

Communal heroism

Christopher Nolan, the writer and director of *Dunkirk* describes the true event on which it is based as 'one of the greatest stories in human history'. Brilliantly bucking the trend of recent war films he does not resort to gore and special effects, as he provides an immersive experience that enables the viewer to empathise with the young soldiers in their apparently hopeless situation, trapped between the sea and the advancing German army.

By cleverly moving around the timeline, we experience the different perspectives on land, sea and air. Particularly powerful is the interplay between two characters on one of the small boats heading to Dunkirk. Cillian Murphy plays a shell-shocked soldier picked up from a torpedoed ship, on the outward journey, and desperate not to be taken back towards the beach. Previously having starring roles in Nolan films (*Inception*, *The Dark Knight*) here Murphy is credited only as 'Shivering Soldier', a nameless character representing the 338,000 beaten and demoralised men who were rescued. Also in the boat is the 17-year-old George (played by Barry Keoghan) who is the only character whose back-story is revealed, when he says he has never achieved anything but wants to do something valuable



with his life. George's only skills appear to be making tea and carrying life-jackets, thus providing a poignant representation of the many ordinary people who joined together to make the Dunkirk evacuation possible.



Nolan says: 'as a group of people we can achieve so much more than we can individually', an important message for all of us. At that crucial time in history, King George VI called the nation to pray. As we pray for our nation today, perhaps God will open our eyes to see how we can each use our limited skills and resources for the common good.

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EthosMedia.org provides free resources to help people explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through the latest feature films.

