SHORT DESCRIPTION OF « Joyeux Noel »

« Joyeux Noel » is an extraordinary film that deals with the theme of fraternity in the most-surprising circumstances, i.e. In the trenches during the First World war on Christmas Eve in 1914 when there was an unofficial truce.

The three armies, i.e. The Scots, the French and the Germans celebrate Christmas Eve in their own particular traditional way, e.g. The French eat their Christmas dinde aux marrons and drink red wine, they form a real community/family around their Lieutenant ; the Scots eat haggis, drink whisky and listen to the music of the bagpipes and sing the key tune of « I'm Dreaming of Home » ; the Germans ate German sausage, drink German beer and admire the Christmas trees that decorated their trenches. The Scottish officer takes a back seat to let his men enjoy their Xmas, the German officer is very much in control of his men, he has more apparent authority while the French officer seems to be at the head of the « family » of his men.

Each group sits or stands in their own trenches ; then the Scots begin to play the pipes and sing, the Germans start to sing and the Scots accompany their singing with the pipes. This leads to an unexpected truce where the three nations meet in No Man's Land.

It becomes apparent that the men and officers have much in common; they all miss their wives, families, and they in fact, are not so very different from each other.

It becomes clear then that each man, irrespective of nationality or rank is on his own personal ODYSSEY ; a long adventurous journey.

The remarkable over-lapping of these destinies is the high point of the film.

i.e. Id est = that is/ that is to say

e.g. Exempli gratia = for example