

THE GODFATHER

PART III

The surprise, of course, is not that Paramount Pictures has finally made **The Godfather: Part III**. The surprise is that it took so long.

After all, the first two *Godfather* films, released in 1972 and 1974, have passed into movie history. Between them they were nominated for 16 Academy awards and won nine, including best picture in their respective years of release. The films established Francis Ford Coppola as one of the most significant filmmakers of his generation and introduced Al Pacino as a major new star.

So why the 16-year delay in making **Part III**? "Well, Francis was reluctant for a long time to make a third film," concedes Fred Roos, coproducer of the newest installment. "He didn't want to rehash what he'd already done."

In the intervening years, says Roos, Paramount had come close to giving a green light to several different scripts with several different directors attached. But nothing got the nod until, early last year, Coppola agreed to write and direct a third movie.

"I always felt there was a whole new chapter to the Michael Corleone story that you could tell," says Roos, who served as casting director on the first *Godfather* movie and producer on the second. The screenplay that Coppola and cowriter Mario Puzo (author of the original novel) finally wrote is, indeed, a whole new chapter.

The year is 1979, Michael Corleone (Al Pacino once again) is 60 years old and suffering from diabetes, as well as a guilty

conscience. He has removed the Corleone family from all illegitimate businesses — they are now involved in banking and international finance — and he wants to make peace with his soul.

But redemption isn't the only thing on his mind; so is family succession. He has a daughter, Mary (portrayed by Coppola's daughter Sofia) with whom he likes to play chess. But he's pinning his hopes for the future on his son, Tony, a recent graduate from law school. When Tony announces, however, that he does not want to join the Corleone businesses but intends to pursue a career as an opera singer, a shadow is cast over the future of the family.

Enter Vincent Mancini, played by Andy Garcia. The illegitimate son of Sonny Corleone (portrayed by James Caan in the first movie), Vincent is a tough guy in a leather jacket, a street fighter — not the sort of guy to look after the cleaned-up Corleone fortunes. Still, Michael's sister, Connie Corleone (Talia Shire once again), sees a kind of strength in Vincent and introduces him to Michael.

Thus begins an intense family drama played out against a beautiful, brooding canvas: everything from the Vatican, during a Papal election, to a Sicilian opera house, where Tony Corleone makes his operatic debut, to



Reprising their roles as Michael and Kay Corleone are Al Pacino (above right) and Diane Keaton (below right). New faces include Andy Garcia (above left) as Michael's illegitimate nephew, and Bridget Fonda (below left) as a reporter.

