

These are reviews of television and movie media from the standpoint of a traditional Catholic mindset for our homeschooled children. I am no expert--just a mother, who is trying to be faithful. I am collecting these reviews for my own future reference and to share with other interested families. ~ I will be sharing be Katherine Lauer

Note about negative review : We do not need to include negative reviews of the vast majority of movies which are so obviously modernistic ok and offensive to our Catholic faith or so frenetic that they violate the calm upbringing and formation of our children's souls. However, there are some numerous film titles that seem Who wept and w attractive and could easily be watched by a well-intentioned family, only to be told forced r K's discovered to be terrible T we(e.g., a modern version of "Paddington," or the many period pieces released lately, like "Downton Abbey"), and we eagerly want to include those forewarnings in this list.

Movies I Need to Preview

- Nicholas Nickleby (2002)
- Puss N Boots (2022): Strongly recommended for families by Coffee and COVID. (We did not like the original movie in this series but that was years ago.)
(https://m.imdb.com/title/tt3915174/?ref_=ext_shr_lnk)
- Sister Boniface Mysteries: Recommended by a traddie Catholic (Tracy Cruz)
(https://m.imdb.com/title/tt15407098/?fbclid=IwAR3G4Bpd3IHkJPzmW-TLwTxS8UgvCli7sOcWJi-wJ8eGepCJu_fM_M8G0vE?ref_=ext_shr_lnk)
- "The Shop Around the Corner" (1940) recommended by Ben Shapiro
- "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944) is v by Ben Shapiro
- "The Bishop's Wife" (1947) recommended by Ben Shapiro
- **"Anastasia" (1956) – I want to preview this movie.**

Leila Lawler's favorite movies for us to consider: My top 10 movies, and my criteria are (haha edited bc I was going to have ONE criterion but obviously that wasn't going to work) that it's a movie I can see again and again, has great lines and details, and can be heartily recommend to friends as being moral at least overall (in parentheses are movies that are related in my mind, and also good -- I'm afraid I'm forgetting some, but will add in the comments!)

FURTHER EDIT: do your OWN due diligence. People have different ideas of what is appropriate, etc. Don't blame me!!:

1. Babette's Feast

2. A Man for all Seasons

3. Jean de Fleurette and Manon of the Spring, which must be seen together -- a real ironic tragedy in the classical sense (The Tree of the Wooden Clogs -- try to find a remastered version; The Well-Digger's Daughter -- the 2011 remake, and you must have the French movement Le Manif Pour Tous in mind as you watch; Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles)

4. It's a Wonderful Life (The Quiet Man; It Happened One Night)
5. Children of Heaven -- Iranian film, watch to the very last frame. (War of the Buttons; Millions)
6. Next Stop Wonderland -- this delightful indie film has lots of little touches that reward subsequent viewings, includes Philip Seymour Hoffman as the unsuitable boyfriend.
7. Modern Times, Charlie Chaplin (My Cousin Vinny -- slightly morally off with the sleeping together, and some language, but such a good plot and the funniest movie ever, thanks to the fabulous Marisa Tomei; The Paper with Michael Keaton, Glenn Close, and Marisa Tomei, also language, but to excellent effect I must say; Ghost Town, much funnier than the title suggests, with the hilarious Tia Leoni; The Gods Must be Crazy and TGMBC II;)
8. Doubt, with Philip Seymour Hoffman -- single best portrayal of the narcissistic character I've ever seen (To Kill a Mockingbird; Rope by Hitchcock, shot in one take!)
9. The Princess Bride (Robin Hood, the Disney animated version, one of the best romcoms ever! Who hasn't dreamed of marrying Fox Robin Hood!; The Princess and the Frog, a Disney movie with great music exploring all the genres of Louisiana, but a dark excursus into a voodoo scene, not suitable for children; Chicken Run; Slumdog Millionaire)
10. Zelary - heartbreaking and some sexual content -- but this is a genre I love above all the others: a headstrong woman falls in love with the unlikely man she is somehow stuck with (others in this category that are light and have happy endings: Sweet Land [edited to add -- just rewatched Sweet Land and found it annoying so forget that one]; The Magic of Ordinary Days -- a really sappy movie, literally a Hallmark movie, that I'm sorry, I just love; Overboard -- slightly flawed morally, but super funny and overall fits in this category; ditto Mostly Martha, the German version, a really lovely movie) (as a film set in wartime, other movies this one reminds me of: Casablanca; Life is Beautiful, The Lives of Others, which I took off but am putting back on with a warning about sexual content.)

For children:

1. Robin Hood (see above)
2. The Railway Children
3. The Sandlot (In the words of my son "a brilliant depiction of an old school perfect world scenario of a boy's summer." -- There is a scene where Squint gets the lifeguard to kiss him, sort of -- you can view it on youtube and decide if it's too much for your kiddos. I think in our family we all just thought it was funny, including the young boys, but it's your call, of course.) (There's also mild swearing.)
4. The Little Kidnappers (this stars Charlton Heston!)
5. Kit Kittredge (I will always love this movie -- among other reasons, it has hobos)

6. Apollo 13
7. Little Women, 1994 (Pollyanna - I never saw the Disney one -- I loved the 2003 remake; The Little Princess)
8. The Parent Trap (the original is perfection; the remake is pretty funny but also a bit vulgar)
9. 101 Dalmatians -- both the animated one and the real life one are perfection -- the latter has many memorable lines
10. Yours, Mine, and Ours (with Lucille Ball, not the dumb remake)

ALPHABETICAL LIST

“The Absentminded Professor” -- Recommended by a friend but not reviewed by us

“The Adventures of Ocie Nash”

“The story of nine-year-old Ociee Nash in the year 1898 who is sent from her father and brothers in rural Mississippi to live with her refined aunt in Asheville, North Carolina.” My only criticism is a feminist undertone. Girl wants to be masculine and saves the day by playing a boys’ role.

<https://www.common sense media.org/movie-reviews/the-adventures-of-ociee-nash>

“The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin” - about a boy and his dog -- old TV series recommended by our children’s godfather but not yet previewed by us

“The Adventures of Robin Hood” (143 episodes from 1955-1960), review by KTL

We have watched only some of these episodes in our DVD set, but they are decidedly very old-fashioned and black-and-white. They have been a good way to watch the 1883 tale by Howard Pyle. (I dislike and no longer allow the 1973 cartoon movie.)

“The Alamo” (1960), review by KTL

My husband has watched this with our kids 10 and 12 and approves of it.

“All About John Deere for Kids” (2006), review by KTL

This is a four-DVD series that has been mesmerizing for my sons. It is live action, simply showing lengthy shots of John Deere tractors driving around while a narrator describes the history of the machines and how each one works: four full hours of that. The music is pleasant country music with any lyrics being about John Deere tractors. Fantastic for boys 2+.

“Animal Magic” by Johnny Morris, note by KTL

This BBC-produced zoology show for children has been highly recommended. I want to check it out on YouTube.

“Animals in the Bible: Powerful Lessons from God’s Amazing Creatures” (2008, Piedmont Education Services and Declaration Films), review by KTL

I have sought out some nature documentaries because I have a moral problem with the vast majority of high-quality, beautiful nature films because their secular viewpoint teaches ecology to a disordered degree, teaching that we should value animals and environment more than humans (which contradicts the Bible). “Animals in the Bible” is a DVD narrated Dr. Edward Panosian and comes with a companion book and can be used as a science curriculum for primary school years, or just for enjoyment. The filmmakers are Protestant Christian, but nothing offends Catholicism. It is a very calming film, slow-paced, and my younger children have always enjoyed it, but even my sheltered homeschoolers find it too slow/quiet once they are about 9 or 10 years old.

“Anne of Green Gables” (1985), review by KTL

Our family enjoys the 1985 version of the 1908 novel series by Lucy Maud Montgomery. The story does portray mischief and poor behavioral choices, all wrapped up in touching good humor, that a parent can talk through with her children.

“Anne with an E” (2017 Netflix Original), review by KTL

I recommend avoiding this version of “Anne of Green Gables.” The writers have added in things that are NOT in the family-friendly, sweet book that make the movie unacceptable. They have a whole discussion about marital sex (and mocking it, no less--invented from whole cloth), and then a party (invented from whole cloth) at which many homosexuals attend and then the kids discuss how "all that matters is love."

“Apollo 11” (2019)--Review by KTL

This documentary uses entirely archival footage (in color) and audio without any commentary or re-enactments. It was absolutely fascinating and my husband and I remarked that we don’t know why it took so long for such a documentary to be made using the plethora of film footage. Our 12-year-old son was glued to his seat watching it.

“Apple Dumpling Gang” -- Watched by us years ago but need to review again

“Arthur” cartoon series

Features two men “married” to each other.

https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/arthurs-mr-ratburn-marries-man?fbclid=IwAR2sHBMdxAjtak_oxTEI6oVzhQH9X7hM05LFXNJH6Z7Fy_VAF2LVLsYiLm0

“Arthur Christmas” (2011, PG)

“This movie reveals the incredible, never-before seen answer to every child's question: “So how does Santa deliver all those presents in one night?” The answer: Santa's (Jim Broadbent's) exhilarating, ultra-high-tech operation hidden beneath the North Pole. But at the center of this movie is a story about a family in a state of comic dysfunction and an unlikely hero, Arthur (James McAvoy), with an urgent mission that must be completed before Christmas morning dawns.”

This movie is about Santa, which our family does not even “do.” However, our children are all old enough not to be confused, so we can now enjoy silly Santa movies. This is an absolutely darling story about caring for children and devotion to duty. Very good example of family dynamics and loving each other despite our quirks. We all loved it.

“Assisi Underground”--looks really good!

“This is a true story based on a 1978 book of the same title by Alexander Ramati. In World War II, when the Nazis begin to round up Jews in Italy, Bishop Nicolini of Assisi tabs a Franciscan friar to organize an underground to hide and help Jews to escape to freedom. Father Rufino establishes one of the most successful large-scale Jewish rescue operations during the war. He enlists local people, including a printer to make fake documents. He establishes hideouts in convents, monasteries, and homes, and sets up a communication network. And, he helps Jews with fake IDs land jobs in German Army offices. By war's end, several thousand Jews have been saved through the Assisi underground. Years after the war, the government of Israel named Bishop Nicolini, Padre Rufino and Don Aldo Brunacci of Assisi Righteous Gentiles.—SimonJack”

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0088746/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg

“Aunt Mary” (1979)

WONDERFUL MOVIE. Our family loved it. “The story is told over a couple of years of a disabled woman living in Baltimore, MD. The story opens in 1954 when the St. Louis Browns relocate to become the Orioles. Mary Dobkin sets up a baseball team of street kids to save them from juvenile delinquency. Because the team includes black and white kids she struggles with some of the authorities. After losing part of a foot before the movie takes place, she has half of her other leg amputated and believes she will be unable to coach for the 1955 season. She receives encouragement from a young boy who has his entire arm amputated at the same time in the same hospital. He learns to play on her team with one arm. In the end, she takes on a girl for the outfield. A field is dedicated to her in Baltimore for the hundreds of children she coached.”

“A Time to Remember” (1988), rated G

We want to watch this: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0088274/?ref_=fn_al_tt_2 (streams on Amazon)

“Babe” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“A Bear Named Winnie” (2004), rated PG, review by KTL

This movie is about the inspiration for the A.A. Milne books about Winnie-the-Pooh. Was there a real bear who inspired it all? I cannot vouch for the historical accuracy, but this movie is about the original bear Winnie who was adopted as a mascot into the army. Misadventures ensue, much humor, very heartwarming scenes. I greatly enjoyed watching this movie and think children ages 10+ would love it, too. It's a movie set amidst the army, so it will probably be even more enjoyed by boys, but without overly frightening war scenes. Note that there is one frightening battle scene in which two soldiers are surrounded by the enemy and all their horses shot dead (no blood and gore, but dead horses lying on the ground). One soldier finally realizes what it is to be a brave man and he decides to run headlong into battle to defend his men and his beloved horses, even though it means near sure death. He runs off into an opaque cloud of battle dust and we hear guns going off, knowing he is dead, but we neither hear screams nor see him again.

“Beautiful Boy” (2018), rated R, review by KTL

This is a movie about drug addiction and the father ultimately deciding to use tough love, allowing his son to hit rock bottom. There are very graphic scenes of shooting up, overdosing, collapsing on the floor of a dirty public bathroom. Even though I watched this movie two weeks ago, I cannot remember if there are any sexual scenes, but I think there are not. We have serious addiction on both sides of our family, which is why I take note of a movie like this because I may use this in the future with my high-schoolers. I think it is important to be baldly truthful with youth about substance abuse: there is absolutely nothing glamorous about addiction. However, a Catholic parent should watch this movie in its entirety before showing it to a youth.

“Beckett” (1964), PG-13, review by CSL

Regarding the optional assignment this upcoming week to watch the 1964 film Beckett (PG-13), with parents' approval, I wanted to offer our review since it's very hard for any of us to find two and a half hours to preview a movie (but we did happen to preview it just a few months ago, not knowing about the syllabus, in hopes of showing it to our oldest kids). Obviously, each family will make their own decisions.

This film has some deserving elements about a great saint demonstrating fortitude; however, it also contains graphic scenes of the debauchery of King Henry II. For our family, we decided that there were just too many scenes deserving the fast forward button.

There are scenes of the king in bed with seemingly young girls, even one scene showing a young girl completely nude with only her hands protecting her modesty. There are also scenes of him screaming shockingly vulgar insults against his wife and children. In another scene, the king is making pretty raunchy sexual advances toward a 16-year old girl. I think better writers could have demonstrated the king's debauchery and crudeness in a less visually graphic way.

We have read that the original film was wholesome when it was released in theaters; however, it was filmed with alternative scenes that include this sexual content. This original version is, sadly, no longer available.

“Bedknobs and Broomsticks”-- Recommended by a friend but not reviewed by us

“Beethoven” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“Belle & Sebastian” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“The Bells of St. Mary” (1945), review by KTL

It’s been a long time since I watched this one, but my husband loves it.

- **Review by J.:** This is a delightful story. We haven’t watched it with the kids yet, but will when it becomes available again on Prime.

“Beyond the Mask” (2015)--Review by KTL

This is a Christian-produced film and was advertised to an audience of the faithful. While not morally objectionable, this movie is not a favorite of either of us parents, both of whom watched it all the way through with our kids. It is a historic movie set in the time period of the Revolutionary War. However, the entire ‘feel’ of the film is anachronistic, with one character who is an assassin and various villains who use technology and tactics that seem hyper-modern. There are many action-packed battle scenes that belong in The Matrix, not in a Christian Revolutionary War film. Also, there is a romance line between two “Hollywood beautiful” characters. Maybe this would be appealing to a family with teenagers who are looking to allow romance plot lines that do not include actual immoral activity depicted. However, as a parent of only elementary and middle-school ages, the long, romantic looks, heaving bosoms, and passionate declarations were a part of the movie I did not enjoy.

“Blessed Rupert Mayer,” recommended by Scott C.

Father Rupert Mayer, a WWI veteran, dedicated his life to preaching against the Third Reich. In WWII, Father Mayer is forced into Sachsenhausen concentration camp, where his faith and beliefs are only strengthened.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tml2jeTZAtE>

“Blue Miracle” (Netflix, 2021, rated PG)

Fantastic. We liked it a lot. It does bring up adult topics, like orphaned boys, divorce, parental abandonment, drunkenness, but in a safe way. The strong thing is the importance of fatherhood.

“Breakthrough” (2019, rated PG)

Our family quite enjoyed this movie. It is Protestant, so we had to explain certain beliefs and we skipped the scene with the Christian rapper at their church service. Heartwarming and a

tear-jerker. "When he was 14, Smith drowned in Lake Saint Louis and was dead for nearly an hour. According to reports at the time, CPR was performed 27 minutes to no avail. Then the youth's mother, Joyce Smith, entered the room, praying loudly. Suddenly, there was a pulse."

"The Bridge on the River Kwai" (1957)

We've watched it, great movie, good for ages 10+.

"Brother Andre: The Wonder Man of Mount Royal," recommended by Scott C., no review yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTM2w2STIAE>, or

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTM2w2STIAE&list=WL&index=9>

"Brother Andre Documentary," recommended by Scott C., no review yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGzM8sr6w7s>

"The Bug Diaries" (review by KTL)

This Amazon Prime original cartoon series features lesbian parents of the earthworm character, so we avoid it.

"The Cardinal" (1963)

Robinson's novel was based on the life of Francis Cardinal Spellman, who was then Archbishop of New York. The Vatican's liaison officer for the film was Rev. Dr. Joseph Ratzinger, later to become Pope Benedict XVI. The story touches on various social issues such as interfaith marriage, sex outside of marriage, abortion, racial bigotry, the rise of fascism, and war. For teenagers and up.

"The Case for Christ" (PG, 2017)--review by KTL

A movie based on a true story: "A hard-driving journalist, Lee Strobel was exactly where he expected to be at work: on top. His award-winning investigative reporting recently earned him a promotion to legal editor at the Chicago Tribune.

"But things weren't going nearly as well at home where his wife Leslie's newfound faith in Christ went against everything Lee believed—or didn't believe—as an avowed atheist.

"Utilizing his journalistic and legal training, Lee begins a quest to debunk the claims of Christianity in order to save his crumbling marriage. Chasing down the biggest story of his career, Lee comes face-to-face with unexpected results that could change everything he knows to be true."

This movie is available on Amazon streaming and we watched it with our children 13, 11, and almost 9. This movie is very well done and we appreciated a chance to see a movie entirely Christian but that was as slick as a 'Hollywood movie.' This movie is a wonderful, positive representation of Christianity, showing that the decision can be made rationally.

Difficult moments: We stopped this movie many, many times as parents to discuss moments with our children, especially the almost-9-year-old. The movie is made by PureFlix, so there is no foul language and no sexuality, only a few moments of single kisses between the

married couple. The wife does go into labor but we see none of the labor on screen. There is a secondary plot line about a gang member informant who purportedly shot his cop handler, so we had to define those terms; no violence is shown. The wife's conversion causes great marital tension and ultimately one, huge screaming fight between the wife and the very drunk husband. He does not hit her, but he does throw something. In one calm conversation, the husband does threaten divorce. For Catholic viewers, note that this is a Protestant movie, so at Lee's conversion at the conclusion, becoming Christian is described as accepting Jesus as one's personal savior. This requires pausing to clarify for Catholic children, although mine know all about it because of my Evangelical background. Also, the baptism shown is done in a river. Interestingly, when Lee does his exhaustive research on Christianity, he consistently goes to the CATHOLIC CHURCH for scholarship, but then he converts to Protestantism anyway.

“The Case for Christ” (2017, PG), review by KTL

No idea why I did a second review, but might as well leave it here, anyway!

“An investigative journalist and self-proclaimed atheist sets out to disprove the existence of God after his wife becomes a Christian.” We watched this movie with our children 11 and 13 and it was a fabulous example in modern times of a conversion. See IMDB parents' guide for a few moments, but the only difficulty I would be concerned about is the marital tension: there is one fighting scene in which the husband throws a plant and there is general tension in which he is deciding whether to abandon/divorce his wife. For a truly sheltered Catholic young person, those may be very new concepts.

“Charlie and the Chocolate Factory” (1971) -- Review by KTL

Wonderful movie. We do not recommend 2005 with Johnny Depp.

“Cheaper by the Dozen” (1950), review by KTL

Fabulous movie. Does mention birth control one time (in a Catholic way!). Avoid the modern versions.

Review by J.: Its been a while, but I recall that the teen girls are NOT thrilled to have to dress “modest” at the beach, especially when their “crush” is nearby, and they are hiding because they don't want to be seen as geeks in modest clothes (not their exact words, but I remember that being the gist). For this reason, we have not watched this with the kids since our modesty journey:)...but its been more than a few years since we've seen it so we might check it out and preview it again.

“Chicken Run”

“Chitty Chitty Bangbang”-- Watched by us years ago, need to review again

“Children of Heaven” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“The Christmas Candle”

Our kids love this Hallmark-style Christmas movie.

“A Christmas Carol” (1951), review by KTL

“A Christmas Carol” is a classic Dickens tale with a beautiful Christian message. It has been made many times, but the best classic is with Alistair Sims. This movie can be frightening to sensitive children because of the various ghosts, so preview before your children watch and keep you up at night with fears.

“Christmas with the Kranks” (2004, PG), review by KTL

We parents watched this fluffy, mindless movie and it was really pretty cute and hilarious. It would be entirely clean except for two scenes to try to skip over: (1) Before Luther tells Nora about his cruise idea, she misunderstands him and starts gulping wine and undressing (she only strips her vest) before she realizes what he meant to do. Their Saturday night marital date is referred to twice. Luther and (2) Nora go to a tanning salon. Nora wears a bikini and once we get a closeup of her bosom. Luther is shown wearing a "Speedo". (3) Somewhere at the end (party scene?), it is referenced that the young lady will live with her boyfriend out of wedlock.

“A Christmas Story” (1983), review by KTL

My husband and I watched and loved this movie as children, but now we don't feel very comfortable with it watching through parental eyes. Maybe we will relax over the years, but right now we don't share this with our children.

“Christopher Robin” (2018, PG), review by KTL

This is a delightful live action movie about Christopher Robin all grown up and stodgy, having lost the ability to play and being distanced from his wife and daughter. Using skillful CGI that is pleasing to the eyes, Christopher re-encounters his childhood friends of Winnie the Pooh and the whole group, going on an adventure to save them in which he himself is saved. He rediscovers play, joy, and laughter, reconnects with his family, and saves his company to boot. The humor is wonderful and adults may want a Kleenex nearby. Every single one of our children loved this movie, such that I haven't heard such loud laughter in as long as I can remember: “I want to recommend this to all my friends!”

“The Chronicles of Narnia” (2010, 4-DVD series produced by BBC), review by KTL

Our family loves the Narnia series of books, but we find the Hollywood version of films too big, too much, too scary for our children yet, the oldest at 12. This BBC version is a much more accessible version similar to a theatrical production. In fact, the animals are all high-quality puppets, but still puppets. The four children characters seem much more realistic as pudgy, awkward little British kids who look their real ages. Our upper elementary age children might roll their eyes a bit at the silliness (that the movie is not using computer-graphic, entirely realistic, and terrifying special effects) but then they end up greatly enjoying the movies every time we play them . . . and they don't have nightmares from them. ** NOTE: These movies can be found on YouTube and that is where we first watched them. But once we knew we liked them, we bought the DVD for a cleaner copy and better convenience. **

“Cinderella” (2015)

Review by KTL: We love this version. Virtue is exemplified. Children should probably be 8+ or older if very tender.

Review by J.: Hands down, best modern movie out there for families. I am NOT a fan of Disney, but they hit a home run with this movie in my book. The prince is MANLY, noble, virtuous..., and he falls in love with Cinderella when she is dirty, poor, and a mess (unlike the cartoon where he only falls in love with her when he sees her in a gorgeous ballgown with makeup). He sees her “virtue” and that’s what intrigues him. The ONLY thing that could be interpreted as problematic is that it is implied that the virtuous thing for Cinderella to do was to stay in an abusive environment. Matt and I used this as a chance to explain to the kids “healthy boundaries” and that no one is obliged to willingly stay in an abusive situation in the name of “charity”. We told them Cinderella CHOSE to stay because she loved the house of her parents and promised them she’d care for it. We love her “I forgive you” line to the step mother at the end.

“Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“Courage to Love,” (2000) Review by KTL

This movie is about New Orleans in the early 1800s--before the Civil War and Emancipation--which was a unique and curious place to live. Although in the Deep South of America, New Orleans was like Europe, and especially France, in its architecture, dress, and societal norms. European men, in particular, liked to move there to take on light-skinned “quadroons” as their concubines and raise families with them--but never, ever marry them, as that was against American law. This movie would be excellent to watch during a year older students are learning American history, as it is a reminder of great injustices done to black Americans, even when they were legally free, even if they were dressed in beautiful European gowns.

MANY SPOILERS FOLLOW: We see the black matriarch and white patriarch who have raised their two daughters to the age to be paired off in concubinage, and then the father abandons his family after 25 years because he must produce a legitimate heir. This wrecks devastation to the abandoned wife. Similarly, the older sister who has been a concubine and had three children is “abandoned” by her man’s death and the law’s failure to protect her: she may not receive inheritance. Our protagonist and devout Catholic, Henriette, sees this injustice and refuses to become a concubine, so she is left bereft of her parents’ financial support and begins a life of social service in the church. A major sub-plot of this movie is Henriette’s fight to form an order of black nuns and the Catholic Church’s reserved and careful--but ultimately honorable--path to supporting these black women in a very racist time and place.

DIFFICULT THEMES: I think this movie should be reserved for teenagers and older who know all the “birds and bees,” or the plot lines do not make sense. They need to be well-formed in the Catholic Church teaching on marriage, which is what makes concubinage so horrifying. Several conversations occur in which the white man is trying to convince why his financial

support and “love” is enough, when he is confronted with the fact that he will not introduce his concubine and children to his own parents--or even tell his parents that they exist. There is a plot line of a 12-year-old slave girl whose master “breeds her,” with lofty promises of freeing her and the baby. We know adultery is taking place. There are numerous plot lines of men who will enjoy the physical pleasures and society of women but without the honor of marriage and I believe this opens up an excellent doorway to conversation (especially to teenage daughters) about how men still do that commonly if women will let them--even in the modern scenario in which women think they are “in control” and making free choices--and this is why we have certain religious and behavioral standards in place to avoid that tragedy.

This movie shows no bedroom scenes, nothing but a kiss (not passionate) and hands rubbing on the neck. This movie shows the results of a slave being beaten, but shows no violence, and it also shows a nasty scene of patients of yellow fever.

“Curious George,” Review by KTL

We let our children watch the cartoon series of shows, whose only music is an inoffensive little theme tune. The movies are very different from the cartoon, not outright bad, but we make them “a-couple-times-a-year” movies. They are less innocent, more worldly, have bigger themes, more tension, and contain modern pop-style music that our children would memorize and be singing for weeks after one viewing.

“Despicable Me” (PG, 2010), review by KTL

Cute and the whole family enjoyed it.

“Despicable Me 2”

Cute and the whole family enjoyed it. Some tense scenes and some minimal slapstick humor, but nothing problematic. There is a romance plot line between Gru and his co-worker Lucy and the movie ends very cheerfully at the wedding.

“Dr. Thorne”- BBC short series by creator of Downton Abbey, review by KTL

This is a wonderful four-part mini series for teens. It is appropriate, although does show alcoholism and its destruction. Our 11- and 13-year-old girls loved it and I highly recommend it.

“The Donut King” (2019 documentary). Review by KTL.

I watched The Donut King today and highly recommend it. In fact, the older kids would probably enjoy it and would learn a lot.

I can recall only one problematic scene, very short. A man is in a commercial talking and in the background behind him are some babes in bikinis lined up as eye candy. It lasts just a few seconds.

The documentary is about the fall of Cambodia and the horrors, the violence of the Communists. One particular family escaped and the man came to the camps here in California. He learned how to make doughnuts and then started his very own doughnut shop. He and his family members worked so hard, nearly 24 hours a day, that they began building up doughnut shops. This man became incredibly wealthy, at his peak earning \$100K per month. He ended up sponsoring more than 100 families to come over from Cambodia (so that is something like more

than 600 people whom he paid their airfare, lodging, school, training, food, furniture, etc., until they were self-sufficient). This man even won the Presidential Award for the American Dream. He was a big time Republican who was close to all the big wigs in the party during the Reagan era.

It is an amazing, incredibly patriotic story about America, capitalism, and freedom, while teaching the evils of Communism. Also, the movie shows just how doggedly hard people work for success and, in contrast, how much pampered youth do not have to work.

Then the final 30 minutes describes this man's downfall, which is heartbreaking, but serves as an incredible lesson about the devil and the allurements of the world. This man became addicted to high-roller gambling in Vegas and he lost everything he had. He lost his \$2M home, he lost every single one of the 70 doughnut shops he owned. (At the peak, 90% of all the doughnut shops in California in the 1980s were owned by Cambodians.) He was reduced even to stealing from his own relatives who would work around the clock for years to save up the \$20,000 to open their own doughnut shop, and he'd take that \$20K and gamble it away in one night. It shows the depths to which even a "saint" can fall. Finally, the man even has an affair on his amazing, love-of-his-life wife and they end up divorcing.

There is contrition and redemption in the end, but the man at 80 knows all he can do is spend the rest of his life apologizing and making amends.

It was truly an excellent film.

“Downton Abbey” - BBC series. Review by J.

I watched this to see if it would be okay with preteen/teen girls. It is not. There are a couple “bedroom” scenes. You see the oldest daughter go from being horrified at losing her innocence to, in a later season, being a loose woman. There is a lot of interesting historical aspects of this show....but it's the “bedroom behavior,” the trying to get you to empathize with a homosexual character, and the gradual reduction of decorum and decency that although is historically accurate of the 1910-1930s, is just so sad to see. I confess I did get caught up in the story line. But the “bed” scenes make this a no-show for our teen/s.

“Dr. Dolittle” (1967)

“The Eagle” (2011), review by KTL – not yet watched

Recommended by friends for teenagers, based on historic fiction book. Does contain violence. Review at IMDB. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1034389/>

“Eight Below” (2006, rated PG)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0397313/?ref_=tt_pg

“Emma” (with Gweneeth Paltrow)- review by J.

Based on Jane Austen's book, this movie is wonderful. Its one of those that I treasure and save for as my girls get older. The older two have seen it once, but I'll save it again for when they are older (because eventually we will run of of decent things!). Recommend for age

12 and up so they can understand and more fully appreciate the witty humor and follies of a young woman who learns not to meddle in other people's lives!

“Enchanted” (2007, rated PG)

IMDB: “The beautiful Princess Giselle (Amy Adams) is banished by evil Queen Narissa (Susan Sarandon) from her magical, musical animated land and finds herself in the gritty reality of the streets of modern-day Manhattan. Shocked by this strange new environment that doesn't operate on a "happily ever after" basis, Giselle is now adrift in a chaotic world badly in need of enchantment. But when Giselle begins to fall in love with a charmingly flawed divorce lawyer who has come to her aid - even though she is already promised to a perfect fairy tale Prince back home - she has to wonder: Can a storybook view of romance survive in the real world?”

Basically very cute and entertaining movie. There are three or four scenes I wish they had done differently. I would feel comfortable with my teenagers watching this because I could “parent through” those moments, but I'm not so comfortable showing this to a group of Catholic teens. Also, the dragon/queen at the end is reminiscent of Sleeping Beauty but is much scarier because it is live action.

“Escape to Witch Mountain”-- Recommended by a friend but not reviewed by us

“Facing the Giants” (2006)- review by J.

We really like this movie. It's a age 10 and up for our family, with the caveat that we do have discussions with them about a few things either before or pausing and during the movie. It is an inspiring story about doing sports FOR GOD and HIS GLORY, and that's where the “win” is. Didn't have to fast forward anything. We did pause it and briefly explain the couple's struggle with infertility, but didn't find it inappropriate, and the couple does ultimately decide and learn to trust God and to stop thinking they are owed good things on a silver platter- nothing our children had trouble making sense of once we discussed it. It was an opportunity to discuss what the Catholic Church teaches about IVF and why it is “off the table”. Also spurred a discussion about the non-Catholic Christian misunderstanding about being “born again.” Pausing the movie to go over these things paved the way for a good discussion with our middle school ages.

--- Review by CSL

The following scenes could be problematic and require explanation to Catholic children/viewers:

1. **00:06:30 Mark:** The coach, Grant, comes home from work and his car putters out as he is pulling into his front yard. He comes in the house and he and his wife have a deeply emotional discussion about trying to have a baby ... this scene is not terrible, but it is an intimate conversation between husband and wife.

2. **00:12:00 Mark:** After an embarrassing loss of a football game the coach, Grant, and wife are in the parking lot of the stadium and their car wont start, so he has to ask someone for a jump

start which is doubly embarrassing. After they get home they have another intimate discussion about trying to have a baby and going to the doctor and getting tested.

3. **00:26:38 Mark:** After David the young kicker and his wheelchair bound dad share a tender moment painting their home, the scene switches to Coach Grant sitting at the doctors office talking about reproductive options including IVF, which Grant dismisses as being too expensive.

4. **00:56:00 Mark:** During a school day, Coach Grant is sitting in his office and another teacher comes into his office asking him if he is aware of what is going on at the football field. They walk out to a scene of a large number of students kneeling in small groups confessing to each other and being "born again" in some mass public evangelical display. This is hokey but could be confusing without contextual reference.

I think knowing what to look for I could easily skip through these four scenes and this movie would be acceptable for kids 10+.

“The Father” (2021, PG-13) – **not yet watched**

“A man refuses all assistance from his daughter as he ages yet as he tries to make sense of his changing circumstances, he begins to doubt his loved ones, his own mind and even the fabric of his reality.”

“Father Goose” -- Recommended to us by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“Fiddler on the Roof” (1971)

Review by KTL: While I personally take great enjoyment in this film, having seen it played live several times,too, I recently watched it through my Catholic parental lense and was extremely bothered by the overarching message which is to reject tradition from culture and insight from parents. I feel so cautious about showing this to my children and wonder if it is an outright bad movie or a redeemable movie that could corrode Catholic formation if shown too early. I struggle because, on the natural, I love the film and music. Perhaps there is a strong argument for allowing only older children (maybe over 13) to see it and then have discussion. "What do you think could happen to the girl who marries outside her religion, her race, her culture? Would she face extra difficulties? How would the children be raised? Jewish? With no faith?" This discussion could be very helpful to young people to 'see through' an initially romantic idea to the real practical problems. Talk about what the church calls "mixed marriages" (which is not race but religion!) and the wisdom of the Church.

Review by J.: We own this movie. Since journeying more into a Traditional life ourselves, we have not been pulling this movie out for the reasons already mentioned above.. We haven't tossed it out, and haven't decided about it.....we consider that perhaps it is not damaging to our kids to see it once, but frequently or repetitively is when they could get the

message that that behavior is okay. This is one of the movies we have stopped putting on though. We do sing the songs from it though:)

“The Fighting Sullivans” (1944), review by KTL

This is a touching story, beautifully done, about the real life of five Catholic brothers who all shipped out in World War II and all died on the same shift (in 1942). This movie is funny, hilarious, and deeply touching. Even our youngest children loved it, and boys especially will enjoy it. Highly recommended. Available only on DVD.

“Finding Neverland” (2004, PG), review by KTL

We enjoy the *Peter Pan* story, so I previewed this movie for our children. While it is technically accurately rated as PG, it contains some topics requiring mature understanding that I would prefer wait until later teenage years (versus childhood or early teenage years). Mr. Barrie is in an unhappy marriage when he begins spending all of his time with a widow and her four sons, who later inspire his writing *Peter Pan*. This is a highly inappropriate friendship and, while some criticism is made of it, I would want my teenage viewer to be able to spot that such a friendship of a married man outside his marriage is very damaging. Later in the movie, Mrs. Barrie is found to be having an extramarital affair. This is handled quietly and without anything graphic, not so much as a kiss, so it is a good opportunity to discuss such sin and destruction with an older teen, but I would not want it to be normalized for a younger viewer (as the movie does not make a particularly big deal out of it).

There is a sub-plot about the grandmother of the widow being overbearing and controlling, trying to rescue her adult daughter and grandchildren. The movie resolves it well in the end, and this does show how messy real life can be, but along the way the viewer is seeing angry yelling against one’s elders and a lot of disrespect, which I would not want to be seen as normal by too young of children.

Note that in real life, Mr. Barrie was good friends with both husband and wife, whose family inspired *Peter Pan*, and later adopted their sons after the parents’ untimely death. But Hollywood felt it useful to “kill off” the father before Mr. Barrie meets this family so that it can introduce a controversy and possible love plot.

“Flight of the Butterflies” (2012), review by KTL

This is a rare nature movie-documentary hybrid that is inoffensive to the Christian viewer! I have watched it twice through and, while it has been about a year, I cannot even remember any discussion of evolution. This dramatized story is about scientist Fred Urquhart who studied the migration of the monarch butterfly for 40 years and who figured out the mystery of where the monarchs disappear to each year. Interwoven into the nature studies is the story of his own personal life and marriage. It’s a delightful, calm movie that kids of all ages would enjoy.

“Fly Away Home” (1996, PG), review by KTL

Daughter of divorced parents is orphaned when her mom dies, so she goes to live with the father she doesn’t know. They bond over discovering goose eggs, raising baby geese, and finding a way to guide the geese on their migration. Note that the movie requires explanation of

divorce, that little ones might be very sad about the mother dying (there is no blood shown in the car accident). There are two swear words, we skip the scene where the 13-year-old takes a shower, and there is one scene where the father runs outside wearing only his underwear. Note that there is an introduction of the father's "friend" (girlfriend): the daughter asks, "Do you live here, too?" and the girlfriend answers, "Sometimes."

"For Greater Glory: The True Story of the Cristada" (2012, rated R), review by KTL

This was an excellent and moving movie about the 1920s Cristero War in Mexico. It has been years since I watched it, but I remember battle violence plus torture violence against the child saint. This was decidedly a movie for a well-formed late teenager or adult Catholic. [EDITED TO ADD: My oldest two children ended up seeing this at ages 11 and 13.]

"Fr. Brown" (BBC mini series)- review by J.

I want to include this review because I love the GK Chesterton Fr. Brown mysteries, and I have heard other Catholic families saying they want to find this show and let their kids watch it. I previewed many episodes and have drawn the conclusion that they are NOT okay. Besides the dead bodies and murder investigations, which I can get past for an older kid viewer, there are random bedroom scenes, unfaithful spouses (one of the leading ladies and best friend of Fr. Brown is an adulterous woman), and at least one episode has a lesbian kiss. This is only very loosely based on Chesterton's stories. I do **not** recommend them.

"Fury" TV series - about a boy and his horse -- old TV series recommended by our children's godfather, not yet previewed by us. Available as \$5 DVD at Catholicvideo.com.

"The Ghost and Mr Chicken" -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us

"Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story" (2009, Not Rated but probably around PG or PG 13 for violence, no sexuality)--review by KTL

This movie is an inspiring biographical documentary on pediatric neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson. "Bennie" was raised by hard-working but depression-prone and illiterate single mother in the ghetto. She wants the best for her sons, so the viewer watches as she makes changes such as getting rid of their television and then requiring the boys to read two library books per week and write essays about them. Dr. Carson faces racism graduating from Yale medical school but still succeeds a world renowned neurosurgeon. There are distinct positive themes of him relying on his Christian faith. We loved this movie!

We watched this with our children 13, 11, and almost 9 and we considered it a stretch for the youngest child. We did skip a few scenes. Difficult subjects: Bennie punches a bully. The mother describes how she was abandoned by her drug dealer husband who really had a legitimate wife and children elsewhere; she had been "married" at only 13 years old. We see the mother have depressive episodes lying in bed, she does mention suicidal thoughts once, and she checks herself into a psychiatric ward for help; the ward is *not* scary and she comes out healed. Bennie falls in with gang members, buys a knife. At his worst time, Bennie as a teenager speaks very disrespectfully to his mother and picks up a hammer to threaten her. He

knives a fellow student. As an adult, Ben's wife suffers a miscarriage, so we see her lying in bed and pull back the sheets to a lot of blood. Later, the first couple of surgeries shown do not show any cutting or blood, but the second two surgeries do show some of that.

“Gimme Shelter” (2013) - not yet watched

Recommended by Catholic FB friend of mine. Very mature topics. Only for adults.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1657510/plotsummary>

https://m.imdb.com/title/tt1657510/plotsummary?ref_=tt_ov_pl

“God's Career Women,” circa 1950

“God's Career Women was a film produced by Hardcastle Films Production around 1950. The film discusses the spiritual path of a young woman into a religious community, including being a postulant, a novice, and taking her religious vows. The film features Bishop John Cody several times, beginning at the 16:35 time mark. The Archdiocesan Archives had the film digitized in 2015 by Cintrex AV.”

Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5OGI8ZAFRw&feature=youtu.be>

“Greater” (2016, rated PG), review by KTL

This movie was a fantastic pick to watch with our 13-year-old boy. *Greater* is a true story and a Christian-produced film about American football player Brandon Burlsworth. Brandon was accepted after a walk-on try out to the Arkansas Razorbacks where his incredibly hard work and true Christian love for others earned him a spot as a scholarship student and ultimately an NFL pick before his tragic and early death. It is so difficult to find sports movies that really appeal to adolescent males that are clean and truly inspiring, but this is one of them. Difficult areas of the movie are: (1) Brandon was obese and he is teased for his weight as a youth and then severely during his first year in college football. The teasing is so unkind and cruel that it is hard to watch. However, this film is aimed at teenagers and this teasing is an excellent opportunity for discussion about moral choices. (2) The movie remains clean in reference to dating and sexuality throughout except for one line I thought was uncharacteristic and went too far. When Brandon's eyesight starts to fail and he gets the ugly black glasses that end up being his trademark, his fellow teammates tease him and one person says he will not go on any dates with the ladies if he wears those glasses (but says it in a way more crude than I will publish here). (3) Alcoholism is a subplot because Brandon is of a Protestant religion that does not drink any alcohol whatsoever. His biological father is an alcoholic and we see scenes of the father becoming drunk. However, this provides wonderful opportunity for discussion with a teenager because of the father's growing maturity, his apologies, and God's grace at the father's beautiful death.

“The Great Escape” (1963)

“Allied prisoners of war plan for several hundred of their number to escape from a German camp during World War II.” Amazing, incredible movie. Also watch the documentary on the subject.

“Great Expectations” (2012, PG-13), info by KTL

Recommended by a good friend but for later teenage years due to violence.

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1836808/parentalguide?ref_=tt_str_y_pg

Gunda (2020, G) – not yet watched

“Documentary looks at the daily life of a pig and its farm animal companions: two cows and a one-legged chicken.” (<https://m.imdb.com/title/tt11464016/>)

“The Guns of Navarone” (1962), review by KTL

Our family has enjoyed this numerous times.

“From Amazon: Academy Award®-winners Gregory Peck (1962, Best Actor, To Kill A Mockingbird), David Niven (1958, Best Actor, Separate Tables), and Anthony Quinn (1952, Best Supporting Actor, Viva Zapata!; 1956, Lust For Life) star as a team of Allied military specialists recruited for a dangerous but imperative mission: to infiltrate a Nazi-occupied fortress and disable two long-range field guns so that 2,000 trapped British soldiers may be rescued. Faced with an unforgiving sea voyage, hazardous terrain, and the possibility of a traitor among them, the team must overcome the impossible without losing their own lives. Adapted by screenwriter Carl Foreman from Alistair MacLean’s best-selling novel, THE GUNS OF NAVARONE was nominated for seven Oscars®, including Best Picture, and won for Best Special Effects (1961).”

“Hacksaw Ridge”

This movie comes recommended and John wants to watch it. Only conscientious objector (would not carry a gun) who won the Medal of Honor.

“Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison” (1957)

Movie used by Fraternus and recommended by godparents; worth checking out

“During World War II, an American marine and an Irish nun form an unlikely friendship after being stranded on a South Pacific island. They find comfort in one another while hoping for a rescue, as they try to avoid capture by the Japanese.”

“Heidi” (2005 starring Emma Bolger), review by KTL

The 1885 novel by Johanna Spyri is deeply Christian and expressive of the doctrinal concept of God’s providence. While I have to imagine the author is Protestant, the presentation of God’s providence is more Catholic than many Catholic stories portray. The 2005 movie version is our family’s favorite and we judge it to be most true to the novel. The scenery is beautiful, costumes and sets believable and lacking Hollywood nonsense. All ages of our children watch this movie.

“Homeward Bound” (1999), review by KTL

This is not our family’s favorite movie because there is a lot of sassy talk among the animals. We would rather watch “Milo and Otis” or “Incredible Journey.”

“Home Alone” (1990), review by KTL

We had avoided this movie for fifteen years before Chris decided to give it a try with the older kids. The kids loved it, and we rewatched it with our eight year old. It has a lot of slapstick violence that mom was not a fan of, but the kids don't mind! There are several scenes we skip. Throughout the whole movie there is a lot of name calling and rude backtalk from all the kids (the beginning is the worst of it), so we just have a family talk before the movie reminding everyone that we don't say things like that. We also found Kevin's older brother is a bit too foul-mouthed for our family. We compromise by muting, but not skipping, his scenes. There is one scene where Kevin is in his brother's room and picks up and glances briefly at an adult magazine, and there are some inappropriate pictures on the walls, so we just fast forward through this scene. During the crooks' final attack, there is one thirty second-ish injury scene we don't like where Kevin shoots one robber in the groin with his BB gun. Overall there is a wonderful message of family and we get to watch while Kevin matures a lot in just three days.

“Hondo” (1953) with John Wayne & Geraldine Page. Reviewed by BW. Not yet watched by KTL.

She's a widowed mother with a young son (about 8 or 9) and John Wayne's character befriends them and protects them from Apache. It's in color, is only 83 minutes long, and has zero objectionable content.

Review:

<http://thegreatwesternmovies.com/2013/09/21/hondo/?fbclid=IwAR1-TXOu6UQ0Eo0Gjm34cPeAvgakilbRVJvjWU3q-Kyj22U9zt53XTn41Kg>

“Hoosiers” (1986, PG)

Movie used by Fraternus, worth checking out

“Based on the true story of a small-town Indiana team that made the state finals in 1954, this movie chronicles the attempts of a coach with a spotty past, and the town's basketball-loving drunk to lead their high school team to victory.”

“Hugo” -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us

“I, Confess” (1953)

Movie used by Fraternus, worth checking out

“A priest, who comes under suspicion for murder, cannot clear his name without breaking the seal of the confessional.”

“I Heard the Bells Ring” (2022) – review by KTL

Absolutely excellent movie to watch in the Christmas season. Beautiful period piece. There is an intense scene in which a woman dies by catching on fire, which may be too much for sensitive viewers or those under ~10.

“Inception”

Mary wants to watch this movie.

“Indiana Jones” movies

Mary wants to watch this movie.

“Incredible Journey” (1963), review by KTL

We like this family movie, as it is wholesome. In comparison, “Homeward Bound” (1999) includes a lot of sassy talk. “Incredible Journey” a 1963 live-action Walt Disney film based on the 1961 novel *The Incredible Journey* by Sheila Burnford.[2] Narrated by Rex Allen, the film follows the adventure of Luath the Labrador Retriever, Bodger the Bull Terrier and Tail the Siamese cat (Syn Cat) as they journey 250 miles (400 km) through the Canadian wilderness to return to their home.”

“The Inn of the Sixth Happiness”

Recommended for us to watch. Margaret has read this story.

<https://substack.com/notes/post/p-114449137>

“The Impossible” (2012) review by J.

A very vivid depiction and re-enactment of the horrific 2004 Tsunami in Thailand. I’d say maybe age 14 and up (that said, none of our kids have seen it yet,...too scary still). It is a story of a family being separated and not giving up on finding each other. Very inspiring story of perseverance when all seems bleak and lost. The most graphic part is when the mother is caught in the flood rapids and driftwood catches her thigh and tears her flesh. I think later it might show her flesh hanging from her leg, and she ties it up with cloth and keeps going. She starts to suffer sepsis, and is helped by her teen son. It’s very emotional when family members get separated and can’t find the others. But, it has a happy ending and is based on a true story of a real family. The message of perseverance is very strong, and of helping strangers in need.

“I Remember Mama” (1948)--Recommended by Scott C., review by KTL

From Amazon: “Irene Dunne stars in this moving family drama about a family of Norwegian immigrants who face the trials of life in turn-of-the-century San Francisco.” We have read this book several times aloud to all the children and it is an absolute favorite, full of humor and great family connections. Our family simply loved watching this movie!.

“The Island on Bird Street” – not yet watched

“During World War II a Jewish boy is left on his own for months in a ruined house in the Warsaw Ghetto, where he must learn all the tricks of survival under constantly life-threatening conditions.” I would show this to my 14- and 16-year-olds. See parent guide:

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0119389/?ref_=tt_pg

“It’s a Wonderful Life” (1946)--Review by KTL

Absolutely classic Christmas movie that we watch annually. The youngest of children might be startled by the drunken townsmen, the bar fight scene, and

the sensual woman of the town. These are all shown briefly during the “what if” scenes. The movie teaches beautiful lessons and is a family favorite.

“Itzhak” (2018, PBS)--Review by KTL

This is a documentary about the violinist Itzhak Perlman, which we, a musical family, found fascinating. The romance of Itzhak and his soulmate wife Toby is a theme, but nothing untoward is discussed. The Holocaust and Auschwitz are mentioned, with presumption that the viewer knows the implications, and there is one old photo of (fully clothed) Auschwitz captives, so this could provide opportunity for discussion, but also can be skipped/ignored if your viewers are too young to yet delve into this topic.

“James and the Giant Peach” -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us

“Joseph of Nazareth” (2009), review by KTL

We own this movie and **I'm hoping my husband (or anyone else) will complete a review.**

“Joyeux Noel” (2005, PG-13)--review by KTL

My husband previewed this French film, then watched it again with our children 11 and 13. We felt the 8-year-old was too young, both due to war content and that she probably would have found the plot boring. The movie was absolutely wonderful.

That said, there is that one unnecessary sex scene. My husband tells me that it is NOT a surprise and is very easily seen to be coming. He paused the TV, had the kids leave the room, fast-forwarded, and called them back. We would advise a parent watch the whole movie before watching with kids.

Also, there is a scene with a married couple that does *not* turn out bad, but I don't want your heart to jump like mine did. There is a wife of a soldier who gets to visit her husband over Christmas, so she is actually in the trenches with all the soldiers. It is nighttime and she was unable to get back to Headquarters as planned, so she has to shelter there. We see the husband and wife fully clothed under a blanket preparing to overnight in the shelter. I thought it was moving into romance or such, but it does NOT.

It was so beautifully Catholic and one of those hard-to-find movies that is enjoyable and meaningful for both adults and youth instead of being some dumb kid movie we are merely tolerating.

Review: <https://parentpreviews.com/movie-reviews/joyeux-noel>

“The Juggler of Notre Dame”-- review by JF

We watch it as a family every year (since we discovered it several years back) leading up to Christmas Eve. It's old and definitely a lower budget film but the story line is beautiful about the journey of a soul through grief to finding his purpose through giving his talent to the Blessed Mother at Christmas.

I can't mention this movie without also mentioning how it inspired us to start a new family tradition of everyone making gifts for the Blessed Virgin on Christmas Eve (and we've since heard of other families who have done the same). Everyone decides what to make or do each year, giving some part of their best (ie: a talent), however big or small, but from the heart. For example, a child who loves to bake one year made and decorated sugar cookies in a Marian theme (then picked their very best couple to offer, and we ate the rest). One year my then 8 year old said that since we told them they made the best scrambled eggs that's what they would make for her: a plate of very lovingly scrambled eggs. Quilting squares, creative writing, piano music, a best math page, are other examples from over the years. Little children might color or give a craft they made. We provide very little to no guidance (mostly no) and let the kids come up with their own gifts from the heart. Whatever they think they are really good at, they give it to God as a gift to Mary at Christmas. My husband and I also participate, and we have a family procession around the house, sing a hymn to Mary, lay our gifts at our indoor manger (missing the infant, since he appears there Christmas morning), husband leads us in prayer, and we have cookies after.

All that to say, the movie inspired this for us, so I say it's worth a watch! It's on Formed.

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“Kidnapped” (1960)- review by KTL

Great movie based on the book by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886).

“Kim: The Shirley Temple Storybook Hour” (1958-1961), review by KTL

Shirley Temple as an adult hosted family-friendly shows from 1958 to 1961, and some are available on Amazon. Our family has enjoyed "Kim," based on Rudyard Kipling's 1901 novel.

"King and I" (1960 something musical with Yule Brenner)- review by J.

We own this one. Decent movie. Kids need an explanation about why he has SO many wives. There is a "head wife". I tell the kids he doesn't know better, hasn't been exposed to Christianity, and is a Pagan. There is a scene where a "new girl" is gifted to him, and she joins the harum, but runs off with her lover from afar and gets caught. The king goes to whip her and it is very dramatic and scary for my kids. There is also a scene where the Siam women are put in English ballgowns for an event to appear like Siam is "modern"- but no one thinks to give them undergarments, and they all bow the the king on the ground in their floor bow, (with their backsides not in view to us), and the Woman (can't remember her name!) is horrified to see they don't have undergarments. Again, its not emphasized, and not seen by the viewer, but it is clearly suggested that the women do not have underwear on. Songs in this movie are good. The dance scene with the king and teacher is classic. Recommend preview first before watching with kids.

"Kit Kitteridge: An American Girl" (2008)--review by KTL

It is hard to find girl movies that are sweet, wholesome, and do not contain romantic elements (unnecessary and harmful for the little girls 9, 10, 11 this movie is aimed at). I appreciate that this movie set in the Great Depression uplifted wholesome family life, married parents, the great need of sons especially to have a close relationship with their fathers. There is a plot line of criminal activity but it is not scary or frightening. I appreciate that the clothing in this movie is all lovely and decent, except for that of the dance instructor character who is dressed immodestly but not as badly as Flappers of the 1920s. **That said, there are negatives.** (1) The movie portrays political conservatives/Republicans very badly. The movie presents that there is one and only one way to view the Great Depression and that is very pro-welfare, pro-The New Deal, pro-Democratic party. Those who are teaching their children otherwise will have to "parent through that." (2) This movie shares a similar problem with many movies, such as Ocee Nash, in which the young girl is the hero, putting herself in dangerous positions against grown men. For example, this little girl (10 years old?) discovers the true identity of the criminals, then leaps into their car in order to follow them to the hidden treasure, presuming that she is stronger and tougher than two grown men criminals. This is a strong message of feminism perpetuating the lie that women are as physically strong as men and can do everything they can do (and better!). My husband and I try to avoid movies that present this (which is a lot of movies).

"Klaus" (2019, PG)--review by KTL

We watched this animation film with hesitancy because our family doesn't "do" Santa Claus. However, if the viewer wants to explain to the kids that this is a fairy tale imagination kind of movie, then we felt it was no problem. This film has more depth and meaning for an older kid/teenager/adult audience, but, because it is animated, little kids will be captivated. This Mama

found it really delightful and humorous, plus it was a tear-jerker at the end. Overall good moral lessons.

Plot: "When Jesper (Jason Schwartzman) distinguishes himself as the postal academy's worst student, he is stationed on a frozen island above the Arctic Circle, where the feuding locals hardly exchange words let alone letters. Jesper is about to give up when he finds an ally in local teacher Alva (Rashida Jones), and discovers Klaus (Oscar® winner J.K. Simmons), a mysterious carpenter who lives alone in a cabin full of handmade toys. These unlikely friendships return laughter to Smeerensburg, forging a new legacy of generous neighbors, magical lore and stockings hung by the chimney with care."

"Ladder 49"

Movie used by Fraternus, worth checking out

"Lassie Come Home" (1943 with Elizabeth Taylor)- review by J.:

Fine movie, endearing. We did not like at the very end when the father figure tells a flat out lie and gets away with it...for that reason, we don't watch it again and again. Some movies we are okay watching once or twice or occasional, but not more than that. ---NOTE: one of the sequels called "**Son of Lassie**" is **NOT GOOD!** Very violent, dead bodies, a town gets bombed to nothing, one minute people are smiling and the next they are a heap of bodies. Also, the actors emotional portrayal often did not match the circumstances, which we think is confusing to kids.

"The Legend of Rin Tin Tin" (about 50 episodes from the 1930s), review by KTL

We own these DVDs and have not watched them in a long time. They are very old-fashioned adventures (that we should revisit). The dog fighting criminals makes for tense scenes so probably good for 6+. (Note, I want to preview "**The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin,**" which ran from 1954-59.)

"Life is Beautiful" (1998), review by KTL

We still own this movie about the Holocaust but have not watched it since having children. I remember finding the movie inspiring for me, but I would have to preview it again now with Catholic parental eyes.

"Light of My Life" (2019, rated R for some violence), review by KTL

"A girl (Anna Pniowsky) and her father (Casey Affleck) journey through the outskirts of society a decade after a pandemic has wiped out nearly all the world's female population. As a father struggles to protect his daughter's innocence, shielding her from newfound dangers, their bond and the character of humanity is tested." (source: Rotten Tomatoes) I appreciate dark films and this is a rare opportunity to see one that is actually clean. There is not one single curse word, no sexuality presented, and the violence is very muted. In this film, the father protecting his 11-year-old daughter (who must appear as a boy) expresses morally good sentiments and there are scenes revealing Christianity: one of the father's sentiments is that he will never hurt anyone unless he is protecting someone else, and this is proven out. A plot within the movie is

that the girl is starting puberty and strangers are now being able to recognize, even with her short hair and boys' clothing, that she is a female, which places her at extreme danger for marauders and rapists (although those words are never used). Imagine a female who has grown up without ever seeing another female in her life: She has no reason to know anything, so we see her dad have to finally explain puberty and the female fertility cycle to her, and how babies are made, and it there is a nascent dawning in her mind of why her dad has to protect her so vigilantly against discovery by other men in this post-apocalyptic world. In the end, we witness the girl start to grow into her own autonomy and how the father realizes he must do some trusting of God in order to keep her safe. Note that there is, I recall, only one scene of violence in which a group of men have invaded the home in which they are staying. During the fight, the light is very dark, it's hard to see anything, and the fight is remarkably *human* instead of *Hollywood*, with the men wrestling quietly, grunting, hitting in an unprofessional way, and the blood is very hard to see in the dark: death results. This movie would be for late teenagers or grown adults.

“Lilies of the Field” (1963), review by KTL

It's been a long time since I watched this one, but we and the kids love it.

“Little Boy” (2015)

Our children watched this a few years ago, but we need to watch it again to write a review. There are some racial issues for more mature children, and some scenes to skip.

“Little House on the Prairie” (Disney version from 2005), review by KTL

This live action version is wonderful and not as Hollywood even as the more popular television series. I prefer this version. Young children will find the tense scenes too scary (like crossing the river, or almost shooting the dog as it approaches in the dark).

“The Little Kidnappers” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“Little Margaret of Castello,” recommended by Scott C., no review yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbKblplfJu8>

“Little Men” (1998)

Recommended to us by S.C.

“Little Women” (1933), review by KTL

We own this black-and-white classic on DVD. It has been ages since we watched it, but I suspect it is great. Need to watch anew.

“Love and Friendship” (2016, PG), review by KTL

Based on a lesser-known Jane Austen novella. “Lady Susan Vernon takes up temporary residence at her in-laws' estate and, while there, is determined to be a matchmaker for her daughter Frederica -- and herself too, naturally.” Wickedly funny. My 12- and 14-year-old girls

and I loved it. One does need to understand basic reproductive biology to understand the conclusion of the movie, but it is subtle.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3068194/>

“Madeline: The Shirley Temple Storybook Hour” (1958-1961), review by KTL

Shirley Temple as an adult hosted family-friendly shows from 1958 to 1961, and some are available on Amazon. Our family has enjoyed “Madeline,” based on Ludwig Bemelman’s 1939 novel.

“A Man for All Seasons” (1966), review by KTL

We own this movie about Sir Thomas More and **I’m hoping my husband (or anyone else) will complete a review.**

“The Man Who Invented Christmas” (2017, PG)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6225520/>

“Marcel the Shell with Shoes On” (2021, PG)

Recommended by the Williams family. Looks really cute.
https://www.imdb.com/title/tt15339456/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg

“Marco Polo” (2007, starring Ian Somerhalder), review by KTL

I am in the midst of previewing this visually stunning two-part series (three hours total). I have high hopes for this series, especially for boys 10+.

“Mary Poppins” (1964) -- Watched years ago by us but not reviewed here.

“Meet the Robinsons” -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us

“Of Mice and Men” (1992, PG-13)

I’d like to preview this movie to consider whether it is worthwhile for older teens.

“Mighty Ducks” (1992)

Chris previewed and said it was a “no go,” even for our hockey-playing boys.

“Milo and Otis” (1989)- review by J.

WONDERFUL children’s’ movie for ALL ages. Highly recommend. Live animals with human voice of narrator telling the story. My kids love it. At the times it gets a little scary (like a bear coming near, or Milo gets caught down stream) I just remind the kids “there’s a happy ending, it will be okay.” I have one or two kids that just close their eyes and I tell them “its okay to be scared”. But really- the way its portrayed here is more mild than in other movies.

“Minority Report” (PG-13)

Chris and I want the two oldest teens to watch this with us.

“Minuscule: Lost Valley of the Ants” (2015), review by KTL

In a peaceful little clearing, the remains of an abandoned picnic spark warfare between two tribes of ants. The entire animated movie is without words, yet the viewer feels that she knows exactly what is going on! It is absolutely delightful. There are a few scenes that are tense for the youngest of viewers: Will the ant drown in the white water rapids? Will the black ants be burned up when the red ants attack their nest with fire?

“Miracle” (2004, rated PG), review by KTL

We own this movie about the 1980 U.S. ice hockey’s triumphant Olympic victory against the Soviet Union and **I’d like my husband (or anybody else) to review it. My 12-year-old son tells me that it contains bad words and tense sports scenes.**

“Miracles from Heaven”

Sweet Christian (Protestant) movie about a girl who falls from a tree and should have died, but is instead cured of a fatal illness.

“Miracle of Marcelino” (1955), review by KTL

Our whole family considers this subtitled film a favorite! The story is extremely moving. “Young orphan Marcelino (Pablito Calvo) lives in a monastery, where he remains guileless, if mischievous. One day after sneaking into the attic, which has always been to forbidden him, he finds a life-size crucifix. Frightened at first, he then believes the figure on the cross is alive and suffering, and brings it food. The figure speaks and thanks the child. When Marcelino brings food again later, the voice tells him that he can have anything he wishes – and Marcelino asks to see his mother.”

“Miracle of Saint Therese” (1952), recommended by Scott C., no review yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfHFVv5BoCE>

“Miracle of the White Stallions” (1963) – not yet watched

This is a G Rated Disney movie from 1963 that is about horses in WWII ... this might be a winner for the whole family. (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057312/>)

It is available for free on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_XDeZvyDIg

“The Miracle Worker” (1962)

Mom would like us to watch this.

<https://substack.com/notes/post/p-110100108>

“Miss Potter” (2006, PG)-- Have not yet watched. Looks great, but my 11- and 13-year-old are disinterested in anything romantic yet and this movie costs \$10 on Amazon.

“Misty of Chincoteague” (1961), review by KTL

Wonderful movie based on the book.

“Moody Science Classics” series, review by KTL

I have sought out some nature documentaries because I have a moral problem with the vast majority of high-quality, beautiful nature films because their secular viewpoint teaches ecology to a disordered degree, teaching that we should value animals and environment more than humans (which contradicts the Bible). This is a series of 17 science videos, each about a half hour long, produced in the late 1950s. They are certainly dated, but the science information is basic enough that it is not out-of-date. Students can learn about animals, physics, chemistry, blood, time, and other interesting topics with a Biblical overlay. This series was very appreciated by my most-science minded son in his elementary years. The producers are Protestant and I do recall that there is occasionally a line that would indicate one needs only faith to be saved, but in the well-catechized child, this has proven very easily clarified in our home.

“The Mortal Storm” – not yet watched

I am adding this to our movie list to watch! What makes it most fascinating is its accurate portrayal of the Nazis in 1940, which was well before the American public understood the danger.

<https://filmschoolrejects.com/the-mortal-storm/>

“Mr. Wizard” series (1980s and 90s), review by KTL

I have sought out some nature/nature documentaries because I have a moral problem with the vast majority of high-quality, beautiful nature films because their secular viewpoint teaches ecology to a disordered degree, teaching that we should value animals and environment more than humans (which contradicts the Bible). This series of 10 DVDs (each about 2 hours and showing about 35 experiments) is wonderful and, while it has no Christian overlay, it is purely scientific with no liberal ideology. The children-students in the film dress plainly and conservatively and respectfully. The experiments are really interesting and, over the years, my children have run a number of them on their own. Seton sells this DVD series as one of its science options, and I have used it over the years as our entire science curriculum (just watching DVDs!) during hard times, such as during a pregnancy year. ** NOTE: You can find the Mr. Wizard clips on YouTube, but I caution viewers strongly because I discovered that are bad, offensive videos in between the Mr. Wizard ones, and the videos will roll to the next one and your child will see something bad. **

“Mrs. ‘Arris Goes to Paris” (1992 made-for-TV movie with Angela Lansbury)

This movie was absolutely darling and a great “chick flick.” It was entirely clean and such an enjoyable way to spend the evening with my daughter.

“The Music Man” (1961)- Review by J.

Fun songs, modest dress, funny scenes. We talked to the kids about the ethics (or lack thereof) of using “manipulation” as a salesman. We skip the song called “Sha-poopie” because

too many of our kids think they are singing about going poop (which they are not- but I don't want them running around singing the song if it sounds like a potty word song!). Note: the teen girl and a troubled teen boy do sneak off to get a milkshake or go to the library, against her father's express wishes. This is portrayed as "normal teen thing to do". For this reason, we've stopped showing this movie, but won't mind it being a once in a blue moon (every couple years) movie night. Professor Herold Hill does sing a song about being a ladies man, and we skip that now too....its called "A Sadder but Wiser Girl for Me".

"My All American" (2016)

We want to watch this movie, available on Amazon Prime. "From the writer of Hoosiers and Rudy, this is the inspiring true story of Catholic athlete Freddie Steinmark. What Steinmark (Finn Wittrock) wants most in the world is to play college football. Although he is deemed too small by many, Freddie brings a fierce fight to the game that gets him noticed by legendary University of Texas coach Darrell Royal (Aaron Eckhart).

Awarded a scholarship and a chance to play for the Longhorns, Freddie sets off to Austin with his high school sweetheart, Linda (Sarah Bolger), determined to make the team. Alongside his old teammate Bobby Mitchell (Rett Terrell) and new pal James Street (Juston Street), Freddie is put through the paces of a grueling practice schedule. The boys' camaraderie off the field translates into solid playing on it, and they help the Longhorns have an amazing season.

Led by Steinmark, a National Championship is within reach for Texas, but Freddie's courage and faith in God are severely tested when he receives a shocking cancer diagnosis, and his teammates discover in him what it truly means to have a heart of a champion. Rated PG for thematic elements and language."

"My Fair Lady" (with Audrey Hepburn) review by J.

We bought this thinking it would be a great addition to our collection, then trashed it after watching it once (with the kids, unfortunately). The Lord's name is taken in vain more times than I can count, and the word "D##N" is repeated in an exclamatory way over and over and over again (probably 10 times in a row). Also, this is NOT a love story. She loves him, but he mistreats her and even in the end the unspoken message is that if she loves him she lets him walk all over her and treat her like a servant. We do allow some of the songs from here on our "broadway song list" that the kids can sing for fun, but we don't watch this movie.

"My Friend Flicka" (1943) review by J.

Innocent story. A horse does die towards the beginning, which was hard for a couple of my kids. Rest of the movie was fine.

"My Octopus Teacher" (2020) review by M.

Super sweet story. If my memory serves me right, there are some mentions of evolution, but nothing too bad. The octopus ends up getting eaten by a shark, and there are several tense scenes where the octopus is attacked, but mild enough that the littlest ones weren't too disturbed.

“My Side of the Mountain” (1969)

“Nanny McFee” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“National Velvet” (1945) review by J.

One of my favorites growing up, I own this and the kids have watched it for years. However, more recently, I started putting it up so it is perhaps only infrequent because the little boy (only son with all sisters) and in it gets his toenails painted by his big sister (something we determined not good for our only son with all sisters to see as it can be confusing in its message) , and also later a girl cuts her hair and dresses like a boy so she can ride in the race. Subtle message of “Girls can do what boys can”. This is subtle- but just mentioning. We do like the movie overall and don't mind it being an occasional movie night.

“Nicholas Nickleby” (2002), rated PG

This movie was recommended to us. “Parents need to know that this movie has child abuse, some tense and upsetting family scenes, and sad deaths. A character commits suicide and it is portrayed as a just response to a terrible revelation. There is a brief and somewhat graphic childbirth scene with a nude baby.” One parent review emphasizes that the child abuse scenes and non-graphic suicide scene are scary, so sensitive youth need to be careful.

“Night Crossing” (1982), rated PG, review by KTL

Our family watched this movie and was on the edge of our seats the entire time! It led to a fruitful political discussion and everybody raved about it. We let our 8, 10, and 12 years old watch it, but covered our 8-year-old's eyes during the one violent scene. I highly recommend it!

Review from “[Deep Roots at Home](#)”:

One [reviewer](#) writes:

“Tired of superheroes and special effects? Weary of ear-damaging noise levels and gore-fests? Had it with bumbling parents and their smart mouth kids? Rent “Night Crossing,” the 1982 Disney release based on the true story of two families who escaped from East Germany in 1979 in a homemade hot air balloon.

[Night Crossing](#) opens with three families — the Kellers, the Strelzyks and the Wetzels — all of whom are close friends. When the Keller's oldest son, Lukas, is killed trying to escape to the west, his family is destroyed by his death and the cruel treatment of the survivors by the secret police, or Stasi. (The violence here is brief, but disturbing. We see and hear as Lukas is torn apart by automatic machine gun fire from weapons imbedded in the border fence. Be prepared. This is the only such scene.) The other two families realize that they can no longer live as prisoners in their own land. They resolve to escape.

Inspiring Theme: Holding out hope for freedom for your family, going against the odds to secure liberty for your posterity. This true story is incredibly inspiring and one that should be watched and discussed with older children. Truly remarkable.

WORTH WATCHING AND DISCUSSING in light of many of the things that are currently happening in America. This movie and "The Printing" are excellent introductions to Socialism and Communism for young people.

"Nikki, Wild Dog of the North" (1961), rated G, review by KTL

Our family has enjoyed this. Be forewarned of some frightening dog fight scenes: our sensitive children younger than 8 don't watch this one.

"The Nutty Professor" (1963)-- Recommended by a friend but not reviewed by us

"Ocee Nash" -- Recommended by a friend. We watched this a few years ago and felt it had attractive elements, but were concerned about the strongly feminist theme (e.g., Ocee can do anything boys, and even grown men, can do and do it better, plus being feminine is bad and worthless).

"October Baby" (2011, rated PG-13)

We've watched this, enjoyed it, and ready for our 13- and 15-year-olds to watch it.

"Oddball" (2015 rated PG)- Review by M.G.

Oddball is the story of an "eccentric, Australian chicken-farmer" who, with the help of his granddaughter, trains his Maremma Sheepdog to protect a penguin sanctuary from extinction. There is mild violence toward the end, two or three people get shot by a tranq gun, and the mother says "D###N" one time, but we watched it as a whole family and everyone loved it.

"Oklahoma" (1955)- Review by J.

Fun songs, okay story. BUT- there is a "modernized" (dream) scene with some strange modern dance if I remember correctly. Also, there is a dark scene with the obsessive town man who tries to kill himself. We have NOT watched this with the kids.

"Old Yeller" (1957)

Review by J.: Great family classic. Well done. Can be scary for young ones, but hasn't bothered my current batch of young ones. The younger brother can be mischievous but I haven't seen this have a negative impact on my kids behavior.

Review by KTL: We love this movie, but, as an English major and a mother of sons, note that I am perturbed that the movie changes the entire coming-of-age story for the boy. In the original novel, the boy is the one who makes the decision to shoot Old Yeller, who has

contracted hydrophobia. The boy doing this manly and terribly sad task is seminal to the story. In the movie, the moment is feminized terribly: the mother is the one who demands that Old Yeller be shot and the boy resists. The turning of the movie on its head causes me to pause the movie and lecture the children every time we watch it.

“Oliver!” (1968)

Recommended to us by S.C. as less scary and more kid-like than the “Oliver Twist” (2005) version which older kids might enjoy.

“Paddington” (2015)

Review by KTL: Nasty, scary version, very dissimilar to the book. AVOID.

Review by J.- we did watch this once. TERRIBLE. NEVER AGAIN. Bad preteen girl attitudes, sibling nastiness, creepy Nicole Kidman (her character is seriously beyond evil in this movie). Too dark.

“Paddle to the Sea” (1969), review by KTL

This wonderful little movie based on the novel is available in three parts on You Tube.

“Padre Pio” in English, recommended by Scott C., no review yet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG9iDTT-7Ms&t=495s>

“Padre Pio” (2023 with Shia LaBoeuf)

Not appropriate for young viewers and probably not befitting the saint. Shows a naked woman trying to seduce the saint. Shows the saint swearing the F-word.

<https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/padre-pio-review-movie-on-mystic-misses-the-mark/?fbclid=IwAR0JpJvFI6fDj8dNAUqr00cCEvEJlpHnlwU1AtKnd7MUmeo3M1A4UAZ-LW8>

“The Passion of the Christ” (2004 with Mel Gibson), review by KTL

Obviously, this movie is extremely violent and contains frightening supernatural elements. Even many adults do not want to watch this, or watch it once and not again, yet it has spiritual benefits, too. I did ask a mother of 11, including adults, and she said she would not allow her children to watch this until late teenage years and then on a case-by-case basis.

“Peter Pan” (1960) with Mary Martin

We prefer this version of Peter Pan. That said, we still skip all the scenes with Tiger Lily due to immodesty of dress, which ends up cutting out a large section.

“Pete’s Dragon” -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us

“Pinocho” (Pinocchio) (2008), PG, review by KTL

I have thus far previewed the first 90-minute episode of two (3 hours total). The movie is truly beautiful and set in an Italian village, with excellent acting from Bob Hoskins and Robbie

Key. It is not the Disney fluff story, but is proving much more true to the 1883 book by Collodi, which showed in raw truth what the “id” of a newborn child (to borrow Freud’s term) if we could envision the child born fresh at eight years old--or however old Pinocchio is supposed to be!--and without any prior parental and societal molding at all. We also get to see the terrible errors of a parent who has not had the opportunity to ‘grow up’ himself with a baby. I think many children ages 8+ will appreciate this movie, but I know all my children so far are too sensitive about the more frightening aspects of the movie, which also exist in the book but are much less overwhelming without sound track and special effects. Frightening scenes include the thief, the two scam artists, the scene in jail, Fire Eater from the carnival has a very frightening voice, the scene in the woods with the tiny fairies, the wolves and being attacked for his money in the dark woods. Some language (idiot, stupid). In summary, I actually recommend this movie to most, but not to my own children or to particularly sensitive children.

“Pippi Longstocking: The Shirley Temple Storybook Hour” (1958-1961), review by KTL

Shirley Temple as an adult hosted family-friendly shows from 1958 to 1961, and some are available on Amazon. Our family has enjoyed “Pippi Longstocking,” based on Astrid Lindgren’s 1944 novel.

“Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl” (2003, PG-13)

We have not allowed our teenagers to watch this movie because we think the horror, gore, and violence is not humorous, but is titillating for no purpose but enjoyment.

“Planet 51” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

“Poirot” (28-disc series of 70 episodes of the television show from the 1989-2013, produced by PBS and A&E), review by KTL

We parents enjoy “Poirot” (based on Agatha Christie’s books) very much for a good old-fashioned detective show that shows limited violence and sexual elements. That said, the plots do involve dark motives, murders, and intrigue, so they should be watched by well-catechized, moral adults. Most violence is shown indirectly, such as the viewer hearing some tense music, hearing a scream and a thump off screen, then seeing a body on the ground. We have found a mere handful of episodes that we considered suitable for our 10- and 12-year-olds to watch and, if I can remember their names, I will add them here. (Example: one is about a child kidnapping, but one does not see the kidnapping happen, no violence, no sexuality, and the end result is that the child was kidnapped and hidden on the property by his own family member.)

“Pollyanna” (2003), review by KTL

We like this one! “Wealthy, impossible to please lady Polly, whom only gardener Tom’s irresistibly charming, indomitably cheerful son Tim, the chauffeur-handyman, can handle, grudgingly lets her late sister’s orphaned daughter Pollyanna (11) move into her grand home. The staff takes to the playful brat, who finds the grimly stern dignified house regime stifling, but often gets round it. The happy game Pollyanna’s father taught her soon spreads friendship and

joy in the village. After succeeding to adopt a stray cat and dog, she sets her mind to 'fellow orphan' Jimmy Bean. Finding recluse rich neighbor Pendleton with a broken leg and another accident starts a cascade involving his and her family's past."

"The Prince and the Pauper" (1962), review by KTL

Our family has enjoyed this movie based on Mark Twain's 1881 novel.

"The Printing" (1990), review by KTL

"A story of religious persecution against Christians in the Soviet Union during the 1980s and the illegal printing of Bibles." This movie was powerful and greatly enjoyed by our children (13, 11, 8). This shows the reality of Communism without being terrifying for younger viewers: there is no language, no sexuality. The one death is accidental and seen from a distant. There is one tame torture scene in which the KGB wraps a person in wet clothes like a mummy (leaving face exposed), then put him under heat lamps so the cloths get tighter. This movie and "Night Crossing" are excellent introductions to Socialism and Communism for young people.

"The Prisoner" (1955), review by KTL

We own this movie about a Cardinal who resisted the Nazis during World War II and **I'm hoping my husband (or anyone else) will complete a review.**

"The Quiet Man" (1952), review by KTL

My husband watched this with our 12-year-old. This old John Wayne flick was much appreciated and was an opportunity for conversations about family and cultural customs and about marriage. My husband said the only potentially problematic scene is that the couple (the man in his 40s, the woman a grown adult) are courting and they run away from their chaperone and, while alone, share a kiss.

"The Railway Children" -- Watched by us but not reviewed yet here

'Rebuilding Notre Dame' -- not yet watched

Highly recommended by Catholic Culture. Good documentary for Advent.

<https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/rebuilding-notre-dame-highly-recommended/>

<https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/rebuilding-notre-dame-highly-recommended/?fbclid=IwAR3zyH52JxsmVJakrlx5MQiGMYIbVUJgQeYV3r0Aa9GarsEbREY8pjNP5iw>

"Rescued by Ruby" (2022, rated G)

Excellent, clean, and so heartwarming! Wonderful for the whole family.

"The Rifleman" - about a father & son -- an old TV series recommended by our children's godfather but not yet previewed by us

"The Riot and the Dance: Part I: Earth" (2018), review by KTL

This is a modern, exquisitely beautiful and well-filmed nature documentary made from a Christian perspective. I give it a top rating for including Scripture and a narrative about God's creations all around us. Finally there is a nature documentary to view that is not full of evolution talk or liberal ecology that values animals over human beings! Also, this one does not contain any overly frightening scenes of animal fights/attacks that sometimes are too much for the younger viewers. My one criticism is that the background music is less than perfect and, while all instrumental without lyrics, some of the music has a heavier beat or a rock sound that we would not choose to listen to otherwise. "The Riot and the Dance" will be releasing two more documentaries soon.

"Risen" (2016)- PG13- review by J.

We tend to avoid Gospel based or even saint based movies because once one sees them it's hard to imagine the Gospel portrayed any other way. But this movie is different. It IS gruesome and realistic in the bodies that are dug up. Basically a right hand man of Pilate is digging up graves looking for Jesus (he himself had confirmed him dead on the cross). He goes on a full out gorey manhunt for all the apostles. He finds them....but enters a profound conversion. He then witnesses some Gospel scenes as an observer, sees Thomas put his hands in Christ's side, etc. We liked how Christ is portrayed in this one....there is a noticeable "brotherhood" between him and his disciples, and between all the disciples among themselves. We didn't expect to like this movie, and found it instead inspiring. It's too gory for our teen right now....but we may watch it with teens in the coming year/s.

"Roann Innish" -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

"The Rocketeer" (1991, PG)

Movie used by Fraternus, worth checking out

"Straight from the pages of a pulp comic from a past era, the Rocketeer recreates 1930's Hollywood, complete with gangsters, Nazi spies, and the growth of the Age of Aviation. Young pilot Cliff Secord stumbles on a top secret rocket-pack and with the help of his mechanic/mentor, Peevy, he attempts to save his girl and stop the Nazis as The Rocketeer."

"Roe v. Wade" (2021) – not yet watched

We parents are excited to watch this movie about what really happened in this lawsuit, from a pro-life perspective.

https://www.lifenews.com/2021/02/24/new-movie-roe-v-wade-premiers-friday-to-tell-the-story-of-what-really-happened/?fbclid=IwAR1HiCm38YWJ-6OsXjzANEg_GuW8bwXiX1qB0B9NoII7bzkfOvaZL6Ep0R4

"Robin Hood" (1938) with Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland and Basil Rathbone -- Review by BW

This is probably the best swashbuckling action film ever made. Technicolor with great sets & costumes, and one of the best movie scores ever.

“Robin Hood” (1952), review by KTL

Our family has enjoyed this version of the 1883 novel by Howard Pyle.

“Robinson Crusoe” (1952), Review by KTL

This is a fine piece of cinema based on the 1719 classic by Daniel Defoe (which we had read aloud prior). It has been some years since we watched it, but I remember all ages of ours watching it. There may be some tense scenes, for example when the captive slave is trying (and succeeds) to escape his fellow cannibal tribesmen.

“Sandlot” (1993, PG)

This is in the spirit of “A Christmas Carol,” meaning it is an adult narrator remembering his childhood with fondness but also rawness and with some adult humor. There are two back-to-back scenes in the beginning that we skipped entirely. (1– An attractive girl is shown and the camera gives a close-up of her body as boys ogle. 2–A competing team arrives and there is an excessive amount of crude, potty humor.) There is some low-level use of coarse language throughout. The movie teaches some very good lessons, but is also not purely Catholic and saintly.

“Saving Mr. Banks” (2013, PG-13)- Review by KTL

I enjoyed this movie very much and would let my 13- and 15-year-olds watch it. See Parents’ Guide: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2140373/parentalguide?ref_=tt_stry_pg

“Scarlet and the Black” (1983)- Review by J.

I suggest preview first. For us, its age 12 and up range, only after discussing the horrors of World War II. Our 13 year old just watched it a few months ago. Spurred excellent discussion about Nazi’s, and tension with the Catholic Church in Rome. Inspiring story of those who risked their lives to save the innocent. A priest is shot (martyred), but is heroic in his demeanor, forgives them, and it portrays his faith well. Amazing ending (I won’t spoil it!) of mercy and redemption, and based on a true story. A German soldier might convert based on mercy shown him;)

“Sea Hunt” TV series - scuba diving adventure series -- old TV series recommended by our children’s godfather but not yet previewed by us

Sense and Sensibility (1981 BBC)--Review by KTL

We greatly enjoyed this seven-episode version of Jane Austen’s 18th century novel. The mini-series is in typical BBC style: much more sedate, quiet, and slow than Hollywood versions of the same. I felt that the BBC interpretation better suited Austen’s actual novel. Note that to watch any version of this film, children watching will need to be old enough to understand the basics of biology. The plot line covers a teenage girl who was misused by a male character, resulting in a baby out of wedlock. There is discussion of how the young ladies must always be

chaperoned in London. The plot in general, not specific to this version, lends itself extremely well to pausing frequently to discuss social mores, why we should not give away our hearts readily, and the tragedy of being abandoned with a baby, as well as the beauty of duty.

“Sergeant Stubby: An American Hero” (2018, PG)--Review by KTL

All of our children watched this movie and loved it, which makes it a special find! This movie is a cartoon but is meant for a wider audience than just little tots. A true story about a dog who joined the Army in World War I, this movie is of interest to boys who love war, kids who love dogs, and whole families. There are three tiny problematic scenes listed in the Plugged In Review, but we found them to be totally non-issues. Read the thorough review yourself: <https://www.pluggedin.com/movie-reviews/sgt-stubby-an-american-hero/> (Note that, as of this review, we could not find this movie on Amazon or Netflix, so we bought it on YouTube.)

“Seven Brides for Seven Brothers” (1954)- review by J.

We own this and it is a FAVORITE. Fun songs, great dances, cute. The 7 rowdy brothers do kidnap their girls that they want to marry, but Milly (their sister in law) scolds them, punishes them by making them sleep in the below freezing weather, and they learn their lesson. Sometimes I just give some commentary through this movie. There is ONE scene where the 6 girls are in their old fashioned corsets and lingerie and they sing about waiting for spring. It didn't used to bother me, but now I'm deciding if I want to skip that part. Otherwise, definitely recommend this movie. There are punching fight scenes...but again, the lesson is “this is not okay,” and Milly is trying to teach them to act like gentlemen.

“1776” (1972, G)

“A musical retelling of the American Revolution's political struggle in the Continental Congress to declare independence.”

“The Small Miracle”--review by KTL

Our children ages 4, 7, 8, 11, and 13-year-old loved this old film: “A beautiful, touching story based on the book by Paul Gallico about a young Italian boy in Assisi who travels to Rome to ask the Pope's permission to let him take his dying donkey to the tomb of St. Francis to pray for a miraculous cure. Shot on site in Assisi and Rome.”

Available: <https://www.amazon.com/Small-Miracle-Vittorio-Sica/dp/B000MV8K36>

“Something the Lord Made” (2004), recommended by Scott C.

Something the Lord Made is a 2004 American television film about the black cardiac pioneer Vivien Thomas and his complex and volatile partnership with white surgeon Alfred Blalock, the world-famous “Blue Baby doctor” who pioneered modern heart surgery

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1E7KFLJ7fY8&t=30s>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lokpzTf5vyQ>

“Sometimes, Always, Never” – review by KTL to CSL

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5068162/>

Recommended for adults only.

This movie is kind of quirky, along the lines of *The Royal Tenenbaums* but *less so*, and the plot is hung on the framework of Scrabble. Seeing that made me think of your mom, which is why I began watching it.

The main character is a grandfather whose son walked out of the house during an argument during Scrabble and never returned. He's been missing all these years, maybe 15 years. This grandfather is an absolute shark Scrabble player and the conversations around Scrabble technique are a delight to listen to because of your mom. Those conversations pepper the whole movie. If you watch nothing else, I'd really recommend the first twenty minutes, which takes you through a scene in which this man meets strangers in a bar and ends up pretending he doesn't really know much about Scrabble, but wins the entire game (like being a card shark). It is so funny.

There is a beautiful theme about the sorrow of being the good son instead of the prodigal son. There is a remaining son who did not disappear (run away), and he has to live in the shadow of his missing brother his whole life. The father has to learn a lesson about how he is failing to have a relationship with his living son because he is only in relationship with the missing son.

Then there is a mystery because in all these years, now there is such a thing as online Scrabble games. This grandfather thinks he has met an online player who plays just like his missing son and so maybe it is his missing son. You will have to watch the movie to see how that resolves.

The movie is very clean except for one scene in the middle. A couple has been having relations and, while we see nothing, not even them lying in bed, there is a five-minute conversation about what has just happened.

Even without that scene, it is not a movie for the older kids. It's just too adult of themes.

“Song of Bernadette” (1945)-- review by MML

The 1945 film, *Song of Bernadette*, tells the story of a peasant French girl, Bernadette Soubirous, (now St. Bernadette) and the apparitions of Our Lady. This happened in Lourdes, France in 1858. The actress, Jennifer Jones, who won Best Actress for this role, plays an extremely convincing Bernadette. In portraying her innocence and simplicity, the actress does not lose the saint's qualities of fortitude and courage. Bernadette's family, friends, the civil authorities and the parish priest are all well done. The film also explores the divide between faith and reason, which makes for some good discussion between members of the family, no matter their age. This theme is carried through to the end of the film, as the Mother Superior of the religious order Bernadette enters does not believe that the Blessed Virgin appeared to her at Lourdes.

Although it was a bit intense and dark for small children, *Song of Bernadette* is an enriching film for family movie night. I would recommend it especially for feast days like the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a title of Mary that this story highlights, or certainly for Our Lady of Lourdes or St. Bernadette's Day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rF-ppDiopiU&t=15s>

“The Sound of Music” (1965), review by KTL

Wonderful movie, wonderful music. Younger children will not appreciate the romance line between the 16- and 18-year-olds, nor between the adult father and the duchess (?) or later the nanny. Romance is chaste. We always take our youngest children out of the room for the end during the Nazi scenes, which can be frightening, which the kids find boring anyway.

Review by J.- all our kids watch this entire movie. It's one of our most viewed movies. Now and then a young one gets scared of the nazi scene, but we stop it and talk about it or I just say “don't worry, they get away. There's a happy ending.”

“Spelling the Dream” (2018, G)

Inspirational and delightful documentary on the high percentage of Indian-Americans who participate in and win the Scripps Spelling Bee. Not explicitly mentioned but shown is all these intact, devoted families whose highest goal is the next generation. Good viewing for the whole family!

“The Staircase” (1998), review by CSL

Chris watched this movie about the Miraculous Staircase built in New Mexico. There are some adult themes that might shock children, so we decided to avoid showing it to our kids (oldest is 12) for the time being. The mother superior is struggling with a crisis of faith at the beginning. ... and she receives a supernatural imperative to pray the novena. There is also a lot of heavy drama added that looks contrived. Murder plots and imbezzeling funds etc.

“Stan and Olie” (2018), review by KTL

This period piece about Laurel and Hardy was surprisingly pleasant and enjoyable. I cannot vouch for the historical accuracy of the film telling the story of the personal relationship of Laurel and Hardy after the peak of their success, during the tail end of their careers. We found the movie quite touching. The only visual immodesty in the whole movie was one scene when the comedians are walking through a Hollywood set and pass by several females scantily dressed in dancing costumes. There is mention of the comedians' multiple divorces. Middle schoolers and above might find this movie interesting.

“Stone Fox” (1987), review by Scott C.

Its 1905 in Wyoming. Willy and his grandfather have been running their cattle ranch since the death of Willy's parents. When the plains are hit by a hard winter, Willy's grandfather falls ill and unable to tend to things. It is then that Willy must take things into his own hands by entering a dog race against the infamous Stone Fox in order to save the family farm.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTIN26sl1bQ>

“The Story of Jonah,” recommended by Scott C., no review yet

45 minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpqX63AmV8U>

“**Story of Ruth,**” recommended by Scott C., no review yet
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kW5WyJ1QNpM&t=685s>

“**St. Martin de Porres,**” English subtitles, recommended by Scott C., no review yet
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtA5mWCACUw>

St. Giuseppe Moscati (2018), review by KTL

This movie is available as DVD purchase or, at time of writing, for rent at FORMED.org.

Summary from Ignatius Press:

“Giuseppe Moscati, “the holy physician of Naples,” was a medical doctor and layman in the early 20th century who came from an aristocratic family and devoted his medical career to serving the poor. He was also a medical school professor and a pioneer in the field of biochemistry whose research led to the discovery of insulin as a cure for diabetes.

“Moscati regarded his medical practice as a lay apostolate, a ministry to his suffering fellowmen. Before examining a patient or engaging in research he would place himself in the presence of God. He encouraged his patients to receive the sacraments. Dr. Moscati treated poor patients free of charge, and would often send someone home with an envelope containing a prescription and a 50-lire note.

“When Mount Vesuvius erupted in 1906, Dr. Moscati evacuated a nursing home in the endangered area, personally moving the frail and infirm patients to safety minutes before the roof of the building collapsed. He also served beyond the call of duty during the 1911 cholera epidemic and treated some 3,000 soldiers during World War I.

“Moscati was outspoken in his opposition to the unfair practices of nepotism and bribery that often influenced appointments at that time. He could have pursued a brilliant academic career, taken a professorial chair and devoted more time to research, but he preferred to continue working with patients and to train interns.

“Giuseppe Moscati died in 1927 at 46 yrs old, was beatified in 1975 and declared a saint by Pope John Paul II in 1987. His feast day is November 16.”

Review by KTL: I watched this movie with my children 8, 10, and 12, and we greatly appreciated and enjoyed it. This saintly doctor is very likable, I appreciated being able to watch a portrayal of a *modern* saint (more relatable in many ways), and viewers who are interested in medicine would appreciate this. My warnings for parents are few:

There is a scene during an earthquake in which the doctor goes back into the building to retrieve what turn out to be the psychiatric patients locked up on the top floor. Their moaning and maniacal laughter and their unkempt appearance was very unsettling for my children, even though I fast forwarded it as best I could. This led to fruitful conversations about how the mentally ill *are* distressing to us and why, and how this exemplified the doctor’s love even more in an era when the mentally ill were considered subhuman.

There is a long plot line running at least half of the movie about an out-of-wedlock birth. This was masterfully done, as this movie contains no foul language, no nudity, no revealing clothing at all. Even this woman, who is promiscuous at best, a professional woman at worst, dresses in a gown to her ankles with sleeves to her wrists, as was the dress of the time. The language describing her is very subtle, the most straightforward being, “Every man in Naples

knows Cloe!" For children who do not fully understand the facts of life, this plot line will require explaining things like that a man and woman can still make a baby without being married, and why doing so is grievously harmful to the baby deprived of married parents. There is also one reference to how the father desired the baby to be aborted (the phrase being "get rid of it"). The plot line also probably requires explaining to children why this loose woman was disdained by society and why the doctor was risking his reputation and career to help her as he did. We see the mother abandon her baby on church doorsteps, which would require explanation if children viewers never knew that babies are abandoned.

"Strange World" (2022, PG) –Review by K. Stroud

Because my kids will ask, I watched Strange World.

It's really bad.

It's too late for me, but save yourself:

The whole film is one long lecture about how we need to sacrifice our energy sources to live in harmony with the world and the people are like parasites living on the back of a giant turtle. It is like the left woke's dream story... I have nothing against interracial marriages or having 3 legged dogs, but they only eat vegetables, the son is gay and flirts with a boy, the father reunites with his wife after being presumed dead for 25 years and her new husband embraces him (really hoping that isn't directed at polygamy or a threesome of some sort, but ???), the new hot game all the teens play is a card game about living peacefully with others and building a better community through the resources you have. The "strange world" is all pink, except at night when it looks like Avatar.

There is not one sung song in the entire film.

I can see why the left would drool over it... but I have no qualms telling my kids or telling you, you aren't missing a thing skipping this one. Disney deserved to bomb on this 100%. By the end of the film I felt like I'd been beaten over the head for almost 2 hours.

"Summer Magic" (1963), review by KTL

We liked this very much! "Disney musical about Margaret Carey (Dorothy McGuire), a Bostonian widow and her three children who move to Maine. Postmaster Ostia "Osh" Popham (Burl Ives) helps them move into a run-down old house and fixes it up for them. It's not entirely uninhabited, though. The owner, a Mr. Tom Hamilton (Peter Brown), is a mysterious character away in Europe, but Osh assures them he won't mind their living there, since he won't be coming home for a long time yet. The children and a cousin who comes to live with them have various adventures before an unexpected visitor shows up."

"Swiss Family Robinson" -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us (although I think we've watched this many times)

"Tangled"

We enjoy this family movie!

"Thirteen Lives" (2022)

A couple of nights ago, I watched Ron Howard's new film "Thirteen Lives" and I would like to strongly recommend it for teenagers and up. It is the real life story of the 12 boys and their soccer coach who became trapped for 19 days in a flooded cave. This story is incredibly inspiring, showing how 5,000 people gathered in Thailand from all over the world, free of charge, to rescue 13 souls. The film is entirely free of "woke" aspects, instead highlighting true heroism and the absolute best of manhood. The reason it is for teens and older is that the scuba diving scenes are truly that tense; there is no sexuality and something like only three swear words. I have not been this gripped in decades and then I had a good cry. We plan to let our teens watch it this week and I want to watch it all over again! (Since watching the film, I read all the trivia on IMDB. For example, the real divers had ZERO visibility in the cave, which required a six-hour dive each direction. To think about how these divers walked into that situation over and over again during the 19 days for children they did not even know . . . If that doesn't make you proud of the human spirit, nothing will.)

"Till" (PG-13, 2022)

Mom watched this movie and found it extremely well done. The violence is shown tastefully, with a screaming boy in the distance in a barn. The mutilated face of Emmett is shown on two occasions. There is no sexuality. The language is essentially clean except for the N-word, which is appropriate to the movie. Highly recommended, and I would like my teens to watch this movie.

"Tin Tin" -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us

"Titanic"

We do not support this movie as useful to watch. By making the fiance a cartoonish villain, it is easy to support the rebelliousness and foolish life decisions of the woman/main character. She is also a loose woman who seduces Jack in a graphic way, presented on screen (sex scenes).

"The 13th Day" (2009), review by KTL

We own this movie about Fatima and **I'm hoping my husband (or anyone else) will complete a review.** I recall that it is frightening for younger viewers.

"Toby Tyler" (1960)

Recommended to me by Susannah C., not yet reviewed by me. "A boy thinks his foster parents do not love him and runs away to join the circus."

"Togo" (2019), note by KTL

We would like to preview this movie for our older children. Currently available on Netflix or DisneyPlus.

<https://www.pluggedin.com/movie-reviews/togo-2019/>

"In 1925 there was a deadly outbreak of diphtheria that threatened to kill the children of Nome, Alaska. A small, secluded town near the Arctic Circle, Nome was a hard place to get to

at any time. But in the dead of winter, it was almost entirely cut off from large cities like Fairbanks. The only hope of getting critical medication to the town was by dogsled.

“But as a deadly, ominous storm approached, the chances of receiving help even in this time-honored way seemed implausible. That is, until Leonhard Seppala became the first man, later joined by other mushers, to trek the Alaskan tundra with his pack of dogs and lead champion, Togo.

“Eyeing a 640-mile round trip at 60 degrees below zero, Seppala ventured out into inconceivable conditions to attempt what no man had before. And what he encountered and achieved was only made possible by his sheer willpower and, of course, man’s best friend.”

“Tom Sawyer” -- Recommended by a friend, but not yet reviewed by us

“The Treasure Seekers” (1996 British version), review by KTL

Our family has enjoyed this movie based on the 1899 novel by Edith Nesbit. My daughter, who had read the novel, says that there are a number of differences in the movie, but the movie is still enjoyable and not problematic.

“Treasures of the Snow” (1981), review by KTL

I'd like to recommend a movie, "Treasures of the Snow" ([click here to watch it on YouTube](#)). It was so excellent, I've added the original 1950 book to our wish list.

"A story of vicious revenge and hard repentance Annette and Lucien are enemies. After Annette gets Lucien into trouble at school, he decides to get back at her by threatening the most precious thing in the world to her: her little brother Dani. But tragedy strikes. Annette is so filled with rage that she sets out to alienate and humiliate Lucien at every turn. As Lucien seeks to repent and restore, light floods both of their dark hearts and Christ proves that He makes all things new."

As our children's godfather wrote to us of the movie, "Sometimes of the consequences of our sins are hard to accept. But we must all be taught about grace, forgiveness and repentance. Otherwise the consequences of our sins could be too hard to bear."

Forewarning: There is an especially difficult opening scene in which an angry boy dangles a kitten over a cliff, the kitten falls, and a five-year-old boy falls after him, and we presume he has died. We watched this scene ahead of time, then explained it to our 5- and 7-year-olds, that these were actors. This movie is so good that it was worth our children seeing that scene--that scene is the *sin qua non* of the plot.

“The Trouble with Angels (1966), review by KTL

This comedy film is “about the adventures of two girls, later best friends, in an all-girls Catholic school run by nuns.” At the beginning of their high-school career, these girls play many hijinks--but nothing cruel--on the nuns. They are decidedly disobedient and there are many

opportunities for discussion with youth watching. However, the viewer is slowly growing to love the girls. Meanwhile, the nuns are not a point of mockery: each nun has a distinct personality, quirks and all, but they are women of respect and we get to know them more deeply as the four years of high-school pass by. During the senior year of high-school, the viewer gets to see the main character truly mature and (spoiler alert!) decide to enter the novitiate herself. It is a beautiful and actually believable end to the story. This is a great point to discuss: how much a soul can transform through the years. There are some points of concern. I watched with my daughters 11 and 9. (1) There is a scene in which band uniforms are lent to the girls to wear for a competition. The band uniforms are very immodest and, while the mother superior is shocked, she lets the girls go to the competition anyway, and they win the cash prize which will buy a new heater for the school. My daughters and I felt this was entirely out of character and the outfits were too immodest. (I would not have my husband or sons watch this scene.) (2) There is one passing line in which it is said that there is a rumor that a certain girl is "illegitimate." The other person replies that no, the girl is not illegitimate, as her father is "very careful about that sort of thing."

"Twelve Angry Men" (1957)

"Uncharted"

Mary requests to watch this movie.

"Unprotected: A Pope, The Pill, and the Perils of Sexual Chaos" (Ignatius Press, 2019)

This movie has a distinctly Catholic bent: however, it contains such documentation of history and so many statistics and hard facts that I feel it would be appreciated even by non-Catholic audiences. This is a difficult movie with graphic adult topics, so parents should preview this before showing it to their children. My husband and I think it is important for every young person to watch this movie before graduating high-school: young adults are going to see, hear, and learn all of this sick trash that is in the culture pretty much as soon as they step foot on a college campus or into the workplace, so we would rather they learn it with us, from a religious perspective, and have conversations with us about the culture. However, our oldest child is only 12, so we don't have the experience to say the age range when young adults should watch this. See: <http://unprotectedmovie.com/>.

"Wallace and Grommit" -- Review by KTL

We enjoy these episodes, but do skip some of the scarier ones because of our littlest ones.

"The War of the Vendee" (2012), review by KTL

This is a wonderful movie professionally made by a group of mostly Catholic homeschoolers, which is an inspiring story itself. If I remember correctly, it is good for the entire family.

“We Were There: True Stories of World War II Told by Those Who Lived It” (2011), review by KTL

(I have watched the first half of this movie so far.) This is an absolutely fine and wonderful documentary about WWII. I am so grateful for a movie that allows young people or sensitive souls to learn more about this war without theatrics that are terrifying, gruesome, or too tense. This documentary involves the interviewing of something like 21 military personnel (mostly men, at least one female nurse) who are sitting in their various living rooms, simply talking. Interspersed are film clips of scenes from the war, many of the films colorized, and (so far) they are easy to watch. I have not seen gruesomeness or death scenes. I came away with deep meditations about how these frail, elderly people were once those vigorous, healthful, and handsome young adults and how much respect we owe to the elderly in general, even when we don't yet know their stories. The stories told are clean and sweet without curse words, and their stories of how they met future spouses are charming and endearing. My 12-year-old son was entranced and deeply moved.

“Whirlybirds” TV series - helicopter adventure stories -- old TV show recommended by our children's godfather, not yet previewed by me.

“White Fang” (1991)

Recommended to us by S.C.

“Why Beauty Matters? With Roger Scruton”, notes by KTL

“Documentary portraying the British philosopher's essay on the neglecting of beauty by contemporary arts and life, as well as the urge to restore it according to its essence.”

Available at:

<https://vimeo.com/128428182?fbclid=IwAR3fRQCzF9Ag0Rpw5Ygy5gl-OQX5gp7ihhCbHds9d96DEK6iqN4NeH3sPjM>

Chris watched this documentary and asks Katherine: “There are some disturbing images in this video, that shows sacrilegious art and some erotic (without actual nudity) images. Our kids will be exposed to these images in the world, the good thing about this video is it portrays these images in the context of beauty which makes them disgusting and grotesque. My question is ... what age is this appropriate for our kids? 16? 18?”

“Wild Hearts Can't Be Broken” (1991, rated G)

IMDB: “Thrilled by a performance she sees at a fair, Sonora Webster tries to land a spot as a daredevil who rides horses off of high dives. With the help of Al Carver (Michael Schoeffling), whose father runs the show, she works toward her goal. An injury to star rider Marie paves her way, and she finds herself on the diving platform. Her life looks complete now that she and Al are in love, but she is about to be thrust into the most trying time of her life.”

There are about three kissing scenes that are fairly tender, but do incite emotions. Viewers may notice the age difference between the love interests, which may need to be discussed.

“Winnie-the-Pooh: The Shirley Temple Storybook Hour” (1958-1961), review by KTL

Shirley Temple as an adult hosted family-friendly shows from 1958 to 1961, and some are available on Amazon. Our family has enjoyed this puppetry version of “Winnie-the-Pooh,” based on A.A. Milne’s 1926 novel.

“The Winslow Boy” (1999, rated G), review by KTL

We have watched this movie with the older children and it provides excellent material for discussions about honesty, sacrifice, and loyalty. This is a period piece that is absolutely clean.

“Wonder” (2017, rated PG), review by KTL

“Based on the New York Times bestseller, this movie tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences who enters the fifth grade, attending a mainstream elementary school for the first time.” See IMDB parents’ guide: 3 brief kisses between teenagers, taking the Lord’s name in vain, background music that is harsher than we would choose. The overall message is very touching and opens up conversation with kids. We watched this with our 11- and 13-year-olds.

“The World of Peter Rabbit and Friends” (1992, 1993, 1995, BBC), review by KTL

This is a beautiful version of Peter Rabbit. The episodes themselves are cartoons but calmer, quieter than normal, and exquisitely drawn. In between each cartoon is a live-action segment showing Beatrix Potter herself in period dress drawing pictures of a live rabbit and so forth out on the British countryside. The classical music is pleasing.

“Worth”

This movie was really a good one and I enjoyed it very much. The movie is about after 9/11 when an attorney had to be hired as a Special Master to calculate the worth of each life lost in order to make restitution to the loved ones. It wrestles with the moral issues of how much a life is worth (in God’s image versus in economic capacity) and also about who the loved ones are who merit restitution. (There is one plot line about a homosexual unmarried partner who is unable to receive restitution.)

It is not black and white. The movie doesn’t pretend these matters are clear or easy. I cried. My intellect was stimulated. Michael Keaton is also superior. Very good movie.

Teenager viewers should be mature and should be well-catechized.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8009744/>

“The Quiet Man” (1952) review by J.

Great movie. Had to discuss with the kids about Irishmen getting drunk, and also about understanding the boxing fight scene. The lead does smoke cigarettes too (so we had to have that talk about how in 1952 they didn’t realize how bad that is for our bodies). All in all, fun movie for a one time movie night.

“The Yearling” -- Recommended by a friend but not yet reviewed by us. We greatly appreciate the book.

MOVIES I WANT TO PREVIEW

Garbandal (when it becomes available online):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxmCYRDdX-s>

Hello, Dolly

Oliver

Annie Get Your Gun

Brigadoon

Guys and Dolls

Boys Town (1938)

Where the Red Fern Grows (1974)

Captains Courageous (1937)

Sargeant York (1941)

Ben-Hur (2016)

Boys' Town (1938)

Chariots of Fire (1981)

Bright Eyes (1934)

Suggestions from:

<https://deeprootsathome.com/wholesome-classic-movies-for-the-whole-family/>

Pride of the Yankees (1942)

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)

The Agony and the Ecstasy (1965)

Madame Curie (1943)

Ivanhoe (1952)

Gifted Hands (2009)

The Great Escape

The Miracle of the White Stallions

The Long Gray Line (1955)

The Shop Around the Corner (1940)--good to watch at Christmas season

Delightful romantic comedy set in a Budapest department store where two clerks (James Stewart and Margaret Sullavan) nurture a mutual dislike of the

other while each exchanges love letters with a lonelyheart's penpal until ultimately discovering they have been corresponding with each other. Director Ernst Lubitsch treats the workaday friction between the clerks with some wry humor while building sympathy for both, then brings them together in an emotionally satisfying conclusion that has charmed viewers ever since. Romantic complications. (A-II) (NR)

The Nativity Story (2006)

Dramatization of the New Testament birth narratives from the Annunciation to the birth of Jesus, focusing on the relationship between Mary (Keisha Castle-Hughes) and Joseph (Oscar Isaac) and their arduous trek from Nazareth to Bethlehem, with subplots tracking the journey of the three Magi and the efforts of King Herod (Ciaran Hinds) to prevent the prophecy of a messiah from coming to pass. A composite of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, embroidered with apocryphal traditions and the imagination of the filmmaker, the Bible story gets the prestige treatment in director Catherine Hardwicke's artful, reverent and affecting retelling, with soulful performances from an excellent international cast -- including Shohreh Aghdashloo as Elizabeth -- and impressive production design. Mike Rich's screenplay manages to flesh out Mary and Joseph while remaining faithful to Scripture, poignantly suggesting the humanity beneath the halos. Some violent images. A-I (PG)

Come to the Stable (1949)

Sentimental but amusing picture from Clare Booth Luce's story of two French nuns (Loretta Young and Celeste Holm) trying to establish a hospital in New England with some help from an eccentric artist (Elsa Lanchester) and a cynical songwriter (Hugh Marlowe). Director Henry Koster gets some smiles from the nuns' adapting to American ways and the bemused reactions of the locals to the newcomers' otherworldly simplicity, with mostly heartwarming results. Unpretentious, generally high-minded fun. (A-I) (NR)

Jesus of Nazareth (1977, G)--miniseries 6.5 hours

"Lord of the Ring" trilogy (2001, 2002, 2003)-- We have watched these as adults and think they are so visually frightening, it is hard for us to know when youth would be old enough to watch these. We'd like to hear from parents of older children. (KTL)

BBC Versions of Emma, Mansfield Park, Persuasion, Pride and Prejudice, Sense and Sensibility, and Northanger Abbey -- We owe this DVD series from the 1980s but have not yet watched it. (KTL)

"Shakespeare: The Animated Tales": 12 tales, 25 minutes each, published by Ambrose DVD. We own these but I need to watch them all again and review them. Some are problematic, but otherwise offer an accessible way for younger children to watch Shakespeare. (KTL)

MOVIES TO AVOID

Cabaret
Sweeney Todd