



Christian Life Communities

NEWSLETTER

Winter, 1989

Annunciation *January*

Without any warning
You enter my world
You overturn the tables of my soul
Astonish me
My face, my eyes, my life
With your swift angel-sure announcements
They never arrive as questions.

Instead you shatter my composure like an
unexpected kiss
With these new proclamations, declarations,
consternations.

In spite of my heart's fear
At taking you like this
You recreate within the depths of me a rush
of brand-new boldness
And I find

when I am alone again
and you are gone away

That I am big with strange new promises
Heavy with the burden of my yes.

Frances Stefano, S.C.

DIRTY DANCING

Our CLC has been discussing in our meeting, the role of the media in the upbringing of our children: that is videos, T.V. communication games, etc. Our question was, what part should these communication vehicles have in the formation of our children and how much time should be spent with them? Generally we recognized that T.V. leads to passivity. Also, we become viewers of other people's lives while taking away time to live our own lives and reflect on our own living. The question became less academic when we discovered our children had seen a video called "Dirty Dancing".

Since the film, from its title, was suspect, our CLC decided to view it. We also read movie reviews on it in the Catholic New Times. Some reviewers condemned the permissive attitude towards pre-marital sex and the abortion presentation in the film. Other reviewers emphasized that the film was able to captivate the children's hearts, that is, to bring them to a position of empathy with the characters in the plot through the music and through the presentation of the main dancers as "under dogs" etc. These reviewers state that Jesus too is able to captivate his followers and get them to want to join or belong or become converted to Him. So perhaps the film had something to teach us which would serve better than taking a moralistic stance against the film.

Later when we viewed the film with our children we were able to agree with them that the hero & heroine showed courage and charity and the lives of the "straight" people seemed empty and hypocritical. From this we were able to discuss with them the abortion and pre-marital sex. This helped us become more comfortable discussing sexuality with our children and helped us put sexuality in the Christian context, i.e. discussing the abortion. It also helped us see the reality of sexuality in our society and help us become aware of our own sexual hang-ups.

We concluded that rather than act as censors for our children we need to recognize that they are going to make their own decisions soon and so we could be in a position to help them make their own good decisions with some direction. Some questions they should be asking are:

1. How do I feel, what do I think about this?
2. Should I be involved here?
3. If so, am I following the crowd or is this my own decision?

Also, in our discussion we realized we can't just focus on sex and exclude other big topics like drugs, honesty, justice, love, fair play, etc. We need to be there to be part of the critical analysis and perhaps discuss the questions with the other parents of our children.

Overall, through this process we have grown in our awareness of the force the media plays in our lives, both positive and negative.

Elora CLC

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