



**A chance to watch films together.
An opportunity to discuss the issues raised.
A time of friendship, food and fun.**

4th Aug	Silver Linings Playbook
1st Sep	Les Misérables
6th Oct	The Hunt
3rd Nov	Fambul Tok
8th Dec	<u>As it is in heaven</u>
5th Jan	The Angel's Share

**Films start at 5:30pm
Followed by food, coffee and conversation**

**10 Bletchington Road
Islip**

**Further details from Jonathan (Ox 842214)
Email: info@spiritualityonscreen.org.uk
Web: www.spiritualityonscreen.org.uk**

Spirituality
SOS
n
screen

SOS

Spirituality
SOS
n
screen



Some thoughts on watching films

Stories are the stuff of life. They allow us to reflect on all sorts of issues at a safe distance as we engage with the characters, cry with them, laugh with them, get cross with them and generally share their experience. How they deal with the issues they come across may frustrate us, or give us new insights; cause us to laugh or cry; result in us hurling abuse at the screen or willing there to be a happy ending. And through it all we can encounter God in all sorts of unexpected places if only we take time to look.

Questions to ask yourself

- ▶ What did you think of the film? What do you like most? Least?
- ▶ Which incidents made you think or feel most strongly? How well did you think the film treated those incidents?
- ▶ What issues did the film raise for you?
- ▶ What character(s) do you most identify with and why?
- ▶ Does the film have any echoes of Christian beliefs or stories from the Bible? Does it support or challenge Christian values?

Some facts about the film

- ▶ In spite of being the most loved Swedish film for several years, it didn't receive a single Golden Beetle, the most prestigious Swedish film award (similar to our BAFTAs), even though it was nominated in every category.
- ▶ Director and screenwriter, Kay Pollak, has a PhD and is a university lecturer in Mathematical Statistics.
- ▶ Michael Nyqvist, who plays Daniel, has twice been voted "Sexiest Man in Sweden". In 2009 he received international critical acclaim for his portrayal of Mikael Blomkvist in the Millennium Trilogy based on the books by Stieg Larsson.
- ▶ *As it is in heaven* was particularly successful in Australia. A cinema in Sydney showed the film for over 2 years, thus making it one of the longest running films in Australian history.

Memorable Quotes

Daniel: You mean you know what I am going to be doing in eight years time?

Agent: Yes. Philadelphia.

Inger: God doesn't forgive because he has never condemned.

Gabriella: I want to feel that I have lived my life.

Daniel: When you like someone, how do you know that you love them?

Lena: Well, it makes you happy when you see him.

Daniel: Yes. And more?

Lena: You think about him all the time.

Daniel: Right. What else?

Lena: You're happy when you are with him.

Daniel: Happy when you are together.

Stig: I was somebody here. People looked up to me. You have taken everything away from me. Everything! I can't show my face around here now! Why did you come here? Why come here?

Elder: Mass is cancelled.

Beyond the church walls

In the end, the glimpse of heaven the film affords is to be found beyond the church walls. The pastor, in particular, is unable to cope. How often does the church get bogged down in its own structures and practices that it misses the truth of the gospel? How can we ensure that heaven is to be found both inside and outside the church?

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

(Revelation 21: 1,3 &4)

As it is in heaven

Daniel is an accomplished musician and is enjoying a glittering career as a conductor when he collapses during a performance and is told his heart has had enough and he needs to stop. He returns to his childhood town in Northern Sweden to live the life of a recluse but before long he is drawn into helping out the local church choir. He has never conducted a choir before and his methods prove rather unorthodox but as they explore music together so they begin to examine some of their own relationships. As they do so, changes begin to take place and the choir begins to catch a glimpse of how things might be in heaven. Meanwhile, the vicar looks on, aghast at what is happening to his community.

As it is in heaven (or *Så som i himmelen*) was made in 2004 and was nominated for the Best Foreign Language Film in the 2005 Oscar awards.

An accepting society

Heaven is an inclusive place and one where people are valued for who they are. It takes a while for Tore to be accepted as part of the group but, in the end, it is he who sparks off the moving musical conclusion. Those who are “different” often have the most to give, in terms of deepening our understanding of what it means to love, if only we have the courage to let them approach us, as the L’Arche communities bear witness. Have there been times in your own life, or that of the communities of which you have been a part, where things have happened that you regret? Conversely, when has such integration been truly enriching?

An open society

The choir becomes a place where people feel able to be honest. However, what they say is not always something that others find easy to hear. What is your reaction to the way the group conducts itself? How do we find ways to be open and honest without being destructive?

Heaven

Advent is that season when we look forward in hope to a time when “God’s love will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea”; when heaven will burst in in all its fullness, rather than there just being glimpses of heaven alongside the bad bits, as at present. The film gives us one of those glimpses but where else have you glimpsed heaven? How do you picture it? And how can you help bring it about?

The music of heaven

“Drawing down” the music that is already there, listening and capturing “your voice”, is a well-known technique. It encourages listening at a deep level. It encourages creating harmony together, as people blend in, then take the lead, then give way. It can be a very enriching experience and the music produced can, indeed, sound like the music of heaven. In some ways it is akin to “singing in tongues”, something which again requires a deep level of listening and a sense of almost being taken over by the music that is already there.

Such is the power of music that it is often claimed to reach parts of us that nothing else can reach. What has been your experience of the power of music? When, and how, has “your heart been opened”?

Fulfilling one’s aspirations

Daniel’s lifelong aspiration is to create music that will open people’s hearts. What is yours? Have you achieved it? If not, do you think you will? How important is it to have and to pursue such life enhancing goals?