

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 we only 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

- The scene in which the young characters run in the park is a re-make of the scene shown in *Jules et Jim* (1962), another movie about a love triangle.
- In the airport scene, where taxi drivers hold up signs with the names of people they're waiting for, one sign reads "S Blumberg." This is the name of the writer of the film, Stuart Blumberg.
- Casanova, the businessman in the office across the street, is played by Jenna Elfman's husband, Bodhi Elfman.
- The film is Edward Norton's directorial debut, and was dedicated to his late mother, Robin Norton.
- The film was released in 2000 and won the award for Best Screenplay at the Tokyo Film Festival that year.



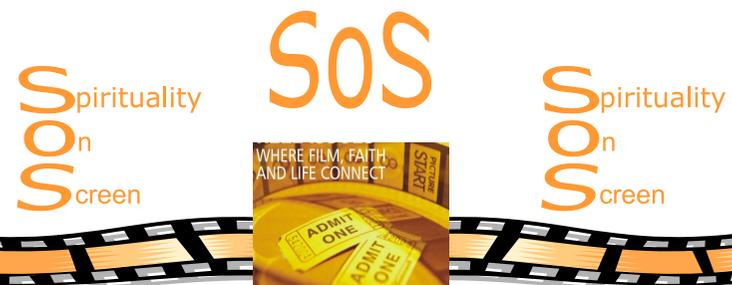
**A chance to watch films together.
An opportunity to discuss the issues raised.
A time of friendship, food and fun.**

3rd Apr Precious
8th May Creation
5th Jun Keeping the Faith
3rd Jul Never let me go
7th Aug The Illusionist (2010)
4th Sep Lemon Tree

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

**10 Bletchingdon Road
Islip**

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Keeping the Faith

Keeping the Faith tells the story of a love triangle between three friends. Rabbi Jake Schram and Father Brian Finn are out to update their religions and draw in more worshippers. With the arrival of Anna Reilly, an old childhood friend, the men's lives are thrown into confusion. Anna has become a stunning beauty, as well as an ambitious business woman, and both of them fall for her. However, for both of them there is one problem: their religion. For Jake, as a rabbi, taking on a non-Jewish partner is frowned upon. Not only that, his mother has already disowned his brother for marrying a non-Jewish woman. Meanwhile, Brian, as a Catholic priest, has taken a vow of celibacy.

Contemporary worship

Both Brian and Jake try to liven up the worship of their respective communities in various ways. What do you think of their efforts? As a member of their congregation, would you have responded positively? If not, why not? How do we strike a balance between being contemporary whilst still meeting the needs of those who have been coming along all their lives and find the more traditional things helpful (remembering that all “traditions” were introduced at one time or another).

Commitment

“You cannot make a real commitment unless you accept that it’s a choice that you keep making again and again and again.” How committed are we to the lifestyle choices we make?

Celibacy

Is there a role for celibacy in the church? What might be the advantages? Or is it a tradition which has had its day?

Faith

“Faith is not about having the right answers. Faith is a feeling. Faith is a hunch. And that feeling, that hunch, is God.” So says Brian in one of his sermons. Do you agree? What is faith like for you? Are there any certainties, any “right answers”? Or is it the questions that are important?

Friendship and honesty

Brian and Jake have a very strong friendship. But even their friendship falters when Brian discovers a truth Jake has kept from him. How honest do we need to be in our relationships with others? Are there moments when it is right not to tell someone something? Or do we use that as an excuse because we lack the courage or fear the other’s response?

Mobile phones

Modern forms of communication can be a great asset, but they can also take over. How do we ensure we use them appropriately?

Memorable Quotes

- Anna** You don't understand. I have a relationship with my phone, we have a chemistry together, I can't explain it.
- Bartender** May those who love us, love us. And those who don't love us - may God turn their hearts. And if He cannot turn their hearts, may he turn their ankles, so that we may know them by their limping.
- Brian** Sometimes we don't see certain things until we're ready to see them in a certain way.
- Anna** I work harder than God. If He had hired me, He would have made the world by Thursday.
- Brian** The truth is, I don't really learn that much about your faith by asking questions like that... because those aren't really questions about faith, those are questions about religion. And it's very important to understand the difference between religion and faith. Because faith is not about having the right answers. Faith is a feeling. Faith is a hunch, really. It's a hunch that there is something bigger connecting it all... connecting us all together. And that feeling, that hunch, is God. And coming here tonight, on your Sunday evening... to connect with that feeling, that is an act of faith.
- Jake** Jews want their rabbis to be the kind of Jews they don't have the time to be.
- Brian** Yeah, and Catholics want their priests to be the kind of Catholics they don't have the discipline to be.
- Jake** Ein Keloheinu. It's a joyous song, a prayer about praising the Lord, telling the Lord how much we love him, or her, but no matter what I do, I can't seem to be able to get you folks to sing it with any feeling. I mean, I brought in the band. That didn't work. I brought in my bongos last week. I think we can all agree that was a backwards step. So this morning, I've brought in a little outside help.
- Brian** I keep thinking about what you said in seminary, that the life of a priest is hard and if you can see yourself being happy doing anything else you should do that.
- Havel** That was my recruitment pitch, which is not bad when you're starting out because it makes you feel like a marine. The truth is you can never tell yourself there is only one thing you could be. If you are a priest or if you marry a woman it's the same challenge. You cannot make a real commitment unless you accept that it's a choice that you keep making again and again and again.
- Brian** I don't doubt myself because of you. I feel like the best version of myself when I'm with you, and that makes me doubt everything else.