Movies: *Parents: You have more control than you think!*

Of all the forms of media, movies are an area in which parents may assist their children to make prudential choices. Here are some quick tips to guide the way:

- **Plan ahead**: In this day and age, the availability of trailers, abstracts and reviews of upcoming movies are easy to access via the internet. Put your ear to the ground and listen for the "hot buzz" about up-coming movies. Read up and even take a quick gander for a summary of the movie to begin to form an opinion.
- **Trust but verify**: MPAA ratings are not what they use to be. What might be PG-13 could also border on pornographic. Ratings are determined by a careful balancing act of violence, nudity, obscenities and mature themes and situations. Less of one may mean more of another.
- **Teach critical thinking**: Movies may be entertainment but they are also an indicator and evangelizer of popular culture and trends. Teach your children what to look for in movies from product placement to how various values are extoled or denigrated. Then, discuss as a family.
- **Avoid the Oops! Factor**: If you do not know anything about the movie – don't walk in blindly and view it. You do not have to see it today. It is always better to preview a movie and rent it to protect the moral and spiritual well-fare of your children.