



The Walt Disney Company
With a cricket named Jiminy as his official conscience and a magical Blue Fairy as his guardian angel, Pinocchio learns to be brave, truthful and unselfish and that a lie is as plain as the nose on his face.

Pinocchio still delights young, old

By Henry Herx and Gerri Pare
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — A classic is back in the theaters this summer with the re-release of Walt Disney's 1940 animated feature, *Pinocchio* (Disney).

The story is timeless in its imaginative account of the misadventures of a wooden-headed puppet (voice of Dick Jones) who wants to be a real boy but keeps getting into trouble by listening to foxy Honest John (voice of Walter Catlett) instead of appointed conscience Jiminy Cricket (voice of Cliff Edwards).

Parents with youngsters who have never seen *Pinocchio* will need no urging to make it a family movie outing.

But the movie has endured and, indeed, become part of American popular culture, not because of nostalgia but because it is such an outstanding achievement in the art of animation.

Disney has also re-mastered the print to enhance its visual and audio quality.

Integral to the success of the story's fantasy is the music of Leigh Harline and the lyrics of Ned Washington whose songs, such as the Academy Award-winning *When You Wish Upon a Star*, further the emotional validity of events.

Though small fry may get some frights on Pleasure Island and in the sea depths with Monstro the Whale, that's part of what makes it such a good experience for the entire family.

As one of Disney's grandest contributions to family entertainment, *Pinocchio* is classified A-I — general patronage — by the U.S. Catholic Conference. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is G — general audiences.

When an architect's marriage proposal is rejected, the dream house he built is invaded by a *Housesitter* (Universal).

Housesitter

Davis (Steve Martin) can't seem to get over Becky (Dana Delany), who turned down his marriage offer when he showed her the dream house he built for them in his hometown.

Returning to Boston, he tells of his house and heartache to kooky waitress Gwen (Goldie Hawn) during an impulsive one-night stand. She promptly takes off for the empty house, and — being a pathological liar — tells the townspeople, including Becky, that Davis swept her off her feet and married her. Though not amused, Davis goes along, hoping to make Becky jealous, win her back and pretend to divorce his "wife" so he can marry Becky once and for all.

Hawn and Martin give the perky performances emblematic of screwball comedies, but this is a misguided effort from director Frank Oz.

Hawn does her lovable loony bit very well, but the pieces don't add up to anything more than a trite sitcom with a cavalier attitude toward casual one-nighters.

Martin has a few inspired moments alongside parents Julie Harris and Donald Moffat, but it's likely *Housesitter* will play to mostly empty houses.

Because of an implied bedroom encounter and much sexual innuendo, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

Girzone allegory has limits

Kara, the Lonely Falcon, by Joseph F. Girzone; Collier Books (New York, 1979); 69 pages; \$8.95.

By David and Julianne Palma
Guest contributors

None of us chooses the circumstances of his or her birth and upbringing. But many of us — as we grow to adulthood — experience a spiritual awakening when we suddenly and deeply feel that something is not right about the way we are living.

Father Girzone's allegory tells the story of such an awakening, of the protagonist's subsequent spiritual journey, and of the eucharistic community which forms as a result. Although ostensibly a children's book, the tale has much for the adult reader as well.

The title character undergoes a conversion from his natural practice of killing for food and earns the friendship of a small group of woodland creatures. Their affection for the changed falcon forms them into a model Christian community. Even though "animals, birds included, just don't share with anyone, even their own kind ..." (p.38), the book culminates in a eucharistic feast.

The story suffers from some confusion as a result of mixing allegory with natural history lessons about the habits and abilities of birds and animals. The author makes it very clear that these are not cruel, malevolent creatures. They simply do what their Creator intended them to do. Yet, Kara experiences guilt over obeying his natural instincts.

Thus, the story's action appears to derive from the bird's rejection of his God-given abilities. In fact, Father Girzone only intends Kara to represent

the individual who is confronted with his or her own failings.

Kara, the Lonely Falcon also experiences the limit of all allegory: one-dimensional characterization. Kara never backslides on his spiritual quest, nor doubts himself. He does, at first, try to justify his killing by preying only on other predators, but a single episode persuades him that this course is also wrong. After that point his only concern is over what to eat.

Despite these difficulties, the book offers many lessons. Each reading surfaces a new idea, as the reader's own circumstances change. It speaks of true freedom: "It made him feel proud that he was no longer enslaved to the things that made him a mere bird." (p.21)

The book revolves around the discovery of God within community: "... the sun gently touched Kara every morning as it rose and gave him strength and a feeling of oneness with all the life around him and with what seemed to be the center of life itself." (p.61)

It's a story about living out Eucharist: "They all decided to 'chip in' together and share some of their meager winter rations with Kara ... it wasn't much, but it was a beautiful gesture of love and friendship." (p.53)

Kara is a good story with important messages for young and old. As one of his earliest books, it introduces Father Girzone's vision of community — a vision which is further developed later in such books as *Joshua*.

The Palmas live in Marion, where David serves as deacon and pastoral associate at St. Gregory/St. Anne's Church. Julianne teaches English at Our Lady of Mercy High School in Brighton.

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KARA, THE LONELY FALCON by Joseph F. Girzone

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Kara strikes fear into all the animals in the forest because they never know who will be his next victim. One day, as the result of a moving experience, Kara's life radically changes. He can no longer kill, even for survival.

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It is not unusual for people to read Kara fifteen or twenty times, going deeper and deeper with each journey through Kara's world.

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