

FEATURE

Set model of peace in families



family matters

By EILEEN MARX

The award is displayed prominently on our refrigerator and I can't imagine any other recognition our young son will receive in the years ahead that will make my husband and me prouder than this one.

The citation reads: "Bobby Marx has been named 'Peacemaker of the Week.' Acts of kindness, cleaning up, being helpful, thoughtful and kind and generally acting in a way that promotes peace in our class are some of the actions required to be honored in this way."

Each week a child in his class is chosen to receive this award in a simple classroom ceremony that begins to teach children about the profound concepts of peace. This award is part of the school's ongoing efforts to promote peace-making while always emphasizing that "Peace must first begin with me."

The school has also created a Peace Garden in one of the classrooms. Creations by the entire student body include 2-foot-high sunflowers, bright blue crepe paper waterfalls and skies, a wall of butterflies declaring, "We Are Peace Seekers," and another wall of students' Poems For Peace. It's very clear from this exhibit that children have much to teach us about the true meaning of peace and how to achieve it.

But how do we talk to our children about peace? We have an obligation to educate our children about the role and responsibility they have in shaping a peaceful world and the most effective way we can teach children about peace is through our actions — forgiving easily, speaking kindly, praying for peace as a family and speaking out against hatred and injustice. But with all the pressures of today's family life, it becomes a real challenge to set examples of



Greg Francis/Staff Photographer

Science takes flight

Students at Our Mother of Sorrows School, Greece, Sept. 15 tagged and released butterflies as part of a "Monarch Watch" in cooperation with the University of Kansas. Left, Robert Dill, 8, releases a butterfly to be tracked as it migrates to Mexico. Above, Janice Quinn helps Philip Rowland, 8, and Robert tag a butterfly.

peacemaking in our homes, especially when our communities and our world are touched by unspeakable acts of hatred and violence.

Lately we have been thinking of the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City and the conviction this year of Timothy McVeigh for that act. We remember the thousands of people in Oklahoma City who have been struggling to let go of their anger and bitterness and are trying to find their way back to forgiveness and peace. The rest of us can only imagine how difficult it must be for the parents there to teach their children about peace, justice, forgiveness and hope in the midst of such personal tragedy and terror.

My family had a special interest when we listened to the first news reports from Oklahoma City. My brother, Brian, his wife, Rose and their six children live in Edmond, Okla., just 15 miles north of Oklahoma City. Brian is a navy pilot at Tinker Air Force Base, eight miles east of the city. Because of the training Brian had received in his job, he knew instantly on that April morning that the sound was that of a bomb. Their older children were at school as the bomb exploded.

Six-year-old Katy was in her school library and, as she heard the explosion and

felt the ground shake, she ran back to her classroom terrified that they were experiencing an earthquake. Rose was getting two of their younger children ready for nursery school when she felt the explosion. Because of the proximity to the Air Force base, she thought it might be a sonic boom. But as she turned on her car radio she heard hysterical screaming and frantic cries of "We need help ..."

Brian and Rose knew people who were killed and injured in the explosion. Seven people from their parish, St. John the Baptist in Edmond, were also killed. A year later, the parish dedicated its own peace garden as a memorial to those who died in the explosion. The stone slab listing the names of those parishioners now rests in the garden and is an actual piece of the Murrah Building.

Brian and Rose brought their children to the site of the bombing two weeks after the explosion because their oldest son, Kevin, 11, had asked if their family could go downtown and see the Murrah Building.

And two weeks before the shattered Murrah Building was imploded, Rose and her friend Jodie returned to the site again.

"The TV coverage of the devastation was horrifying to watch but it's very different to be there in person and actually feel the

broken glass under your feet," Rose said.

She continued, "At one point, Jodie and I wondered if we were being good mothers by taking our two youngest children downtown and looking at all the destruction. And then, as we came around a corner Jodie grabbed my arm and we saw something I will never forget. On the side of one of the buildings hit by the blast, an artist had painted a picture of the Murrah building. But instead of painting clouds of smoke from the explosion, the artist painted clouds in the shapes of angels. The angels represented some of the victims of the bombing and they were holding hands as they walked toward heaven. Jodie and I couldn't speak. We knew we were standing on sacred ground.

"The artist gave us a gift. It was a reminder that I want to teach my children that peace and love are stronger than violence and hatred. And that even though there are some people who do terrible things, most people are good and kind. Too many lives were destroyed ... and those people's lives will never be the same. But I believe that those men, women and children who were killed so violently are now at peace, resting in God's loving hands."

Marx lives in Lawrenceville, N.J., with her husband and two children.

Disney classics, recent classic treatment, offer fine viewing



is available on VHS format. Theatrical movies on video have a USCC classification and Motion Picture Association of America rating. All reviews indicate the appropriate age group for the video audience

Sleeping Beauty

Animated children's tale in which a bad fairy casts a spell on the Princess Aurora (voice of Mary Costa) causing eternal sleep until her true love, Prince Philip (voice of Bill Shirley), gets some help from a trio of good fairies in overcoming a ferocious dragon and awakening the princess. Directed by Clyde Geronimi with music from the Tchaikovsky ballet, this classic story of love conquering evil remains the late Walt Disney's last great achievement of storytelling in fully-detailed animation. Fine family entertainment. The USCC classification is A-I —

general patronage. The MPAA rating is G — general audiences.

Sense and Sensibility

Splendid adaptation of Jane Austen's 1795 tale of two devoted but emotionally dissimilar sisters (Emma Thompson and Kate Winslet) who endure unexpected heartbreak only to eventually triumph in securing suitable husbands. Director Ang Lee's spirited period piece offers frequent subtle humor in its wry observation of the characters and social conventions of the day. Romantic complications. The USCC classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The MPAA rating is PG — parental guidance suggested.

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Mary Poppins

Walt Disney's musical adaptation of P.L. Travers' children's classic about the primly perfect nanny of the title (Julie Andrews) who uses her magical powers and common sense to straighten out the disorderly children and preoccupied parents of a London household at the turn of the century in London. Director Robert Stevenson fancifully integrates songs, dance numbers, animated characters and marvelous special effects into the live-action story, which features a bright performance by Dick Van Dyke as a Cockney

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worker who also does a comic turn as a bank president. Entertaining family fantasy. The USCC classification is A-I — general patronage. The MPAA rating is G — general audiences.

Celebration of
100th
Anniversary
of the Death of
St. Therese
the Little Flower
Doctor of the Church
Our Lady of Lourdes Church
(Rhinecliff and Imperial Drive)
Sunday, October 5, 10:00 A.M.
Blessing of a Formal Memorial Garden and Sculpture of St. Therese Follows
Mass Offered For Mother Teresa
Most Rev. Dennis Hickey, Celebrant
Father John Healy, O.Carm., Homilist
All are Welcome!