



The story line of the film, *October-Baby*, tells of a 19-year-old woman who has her problems: asthma, epilepsy, and depression. She was raised by Christian parents who sought to protect her from feelings of guilt and rejection that they were sure would come from discovering her origins: rejection because she was adopted and because she was a failed abortion attempt, guilt because she was one of twins, and her brother died because he was more seriously damaged in the abortion attempt.

With the help of her boyfriend, her parents and a priest she is able to forgive her biological mother and her parents. She also gets free of feeling guilty about her brother dying rather than her.

Part of the power of the film comes during the credits when one of the actresses (who plays the woman who sought the abortion) is interviewed. She explains in the interview that she actually had an abortion under very similar circumstances to those described in the film. It was while she was shooting the scene about being forgiven that she actually experienced the Lord's forgiveness.

Not surprisingly, [most critics](#) don't like it. Only 25% rate it positively, probably for one of three reasons: its clear pro-life message, its faith basis, its artistic merit.

However, of the people who see the movie, 91% like it.



APRILBABY

On April 6, 1977, a saline injection abortion failed. The baby was born alive and had to be taken to a hospital. She weighed only 2 pounds. The abortionist signed the birth certificate of Gianna Jessen.

At 17 months, Miss Jessen was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, caused by her brain being starved of oxygen during the termination. The doctors expected she would never be able to lift up her head, but eventually she did. They expected she would never be able to sit up straight, but she did. They said she would never be able to walk, but by the age of three she was walking with a frame and leg braces.

She learned her true story from her adoptive mother on Christmas Day at age thirteen when she asked, "I was aborted, wasn't I?" She was bullied in high school and told: children with disabilities are a burden on society.

Forgiving has not come easy, but she has done it toward her mother and the abortionist (whose clinics make \$70 million per year).

Gianna believes the Lord intervened to save her and did it for a purpose: to uphold the sanctity of life and to proclaim the gospel.

Today she speaks forthrightly about her Christian faith and campaigns for pro-life issues.

Her powerful testimony is available here: [Gianna Jessen](#).

SAYING IT'S SO DOESN'T MAKE IT SO

The film, *OctoberBaby*, reveals a developing reality in youth work – the need to deal with new forms and levels of brokenness among today's youth.

In the film, 19-year-old Hannah says, "I'm fine," when she knows she's not. She is offended when it is shown, by her own hand, that she is not "fine."

Denying that there is a problem is nothing new among youth. Most youth with problems, whether drugs, alcoholism, pornography, or any other addiction, typically deny the problem.

Some actions cause such shame that youth are very reticent to talk about them with anyone ever! Abortion is one of the most significant. Young women who have had an abortion (that is [one in five](#) women under 25) are very unlikely to bring it up. Facing the shame, the guilt, or the emotional pain they are trying to bury is far too difficult. They especially need to hear the gospel of forgiveness!

Hidden guilt and shame are significant challenges in evangelizing, especially if the underlying cause is sin. It is all the more challenging when the surrounding culture loudly proclaims that sin is not sin – whether that is drunkenness, lying, cheating, sex outside of marriage, abortion, or homosexual acts.

Some young people know better. They know what they are doing is



wrong – but lie to themselves. Some don't know. All of them live in the post-modern culture of immorality, amorality, and false morality.

Soon we will be dealing with the problems that come from being raised by "my two dads/my two moms" or we will be working with teens who have already had a sex change operation (a [rising phenomena](#)).

Sexual identity confusion is bound to become a more common problem. So will helping such youth deal with their parents. What's a youth worker to do?

Fortunately, the first part of the answer is simple. We must proclaim the truth that still sets people free. There is a God who loves us. There is a God who forgives! There is a God who heals and delivers us.

MISSION MINDED

I was recently in Cuba, my boyhood home, during the visit of Pope Benedict XVI. It was the first time I had been back in over 50 years.

The large crowds made things appear better than they were. I overheard a conversation as we were leaving the papal Mass in Havana. One man asked another if he came because he wanted to. His answer: "No, I was told I had to come by the government." The other man replied, "Me, too." In Cuba the Christian faith has been widely annihilated. It is still the case that you can lose your job if you are caught attending church.

Another great concern for me was the fact that Cuban culture has totally lost its moral compass. For the past 50 years youth have grown up in a culture where coercion, lying, prostitution, stealing, and

cheating are the main things youth must learn in order to survive.

Democracy coming to Cuba would be a help, but I do not expect that personal virtue will suddenly exist because of democracy. And simple conversion to Christ won't instantly transform the individuals or society. To change Cuba we will need to send youth to *make disciples* of the next generation *and teach them all that the Lord has commanded*.

Cuba is only a small example. There is a world full of youth that need to hear the truth – the whole truth of Christ. The mission we face in the next generation is not small, and it is not easy. It will demand more saints, missionaries, and martyrs than any age has ever seen. Fortunately, God is sovereign and he is raising up a new generation to make disciples of all nations.

~ Bill Brown



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