



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on February 19, 2013

## 21st Annual Movieguide Awards

It's the time of the year again for wholesome, family-friendly movies to be recognized for their value — in an industry that seems to favor depravity. On Friday, February 15, the 21st Annual Movieguide Awards were held to celebrate films that uphold the American values of patriotism and faith.

The [Movieguide Faith and Values Awards](#) are sponsored by the Christian Film & Television Commission and Movieguide, founded by Dr. Ted Baehr. This year's glittering event, also dubbed the "Christian Oscars," attracted a number of major celebrities, Hollywood executives, producers, writers, and directors. The event was hosted by *Criminal Minds* television star Joe Mantegna and daughter Gia Mantegna. Award presenters for the evening included Disney Channel stars Debby Ryan and Bella Thorne.

A number of worthy films were honored at the awards gala for their wholesome, Christian nature. *Ice Age: Continental Drift* earned a Crystal Teddy Bear Award for the Best Family Movie of the Year, edging out a number of other worthy contenders including *The Odd Life of Timothy Green*, *Here Comes the Boom*, and *Journey 2: The Mysterious Island*. *Ice Age: Continental Drift* espouses important Christian themes, such as the importance of family and of sacrifice.

The Grace Award honors those actors whose performances "exemplify God's grace and mercy toward us as human beings." This year's recipient of the Grace Award is Andy Garcia for his performance in *For Greater Glory*, a film about the Mexican Cristero War. In the inspiring film, Garcia plays Enrique Gorostieta, an atheist and decorated general who accepts an offer to lead the National League for the Defense of Religious Liberty in the war. Though Gorostieta does not share the spiritual passion of those around him, he believes in the basic right of freedom and fights for it. *For Greater Glory* breaks from the typical Hollywood mold by portraying Christianity as heroic.

It is for that reason that *For Greater Glory* also earned this year's Faith & Freedom Award for promoting positive American values.

The Grace Award for Most Inspiring Television Performance went to Kyla Kenedy in *Raising Izzie*, a film about two young orphaned girls who find a home and love with a childless couple.

At the Movieguide Awards, the \$100,000 Epiphany Prizes are given to one movie and one television program that have increased man's love and understanding of God.

The nominees for the Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring Movie were *Les Misérables*, *For Greater Glory*,





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*Snow White and the Huntsman*, *The Odd Life of Timothy Green*, and *Lincoln*. This year's winner of the Epiphany Prize for Movies is *Les Misérables*. *Les Misérables* is a film about redemption and sacrifice. The film does not shy away from the novel's focus on the Christian theme of redemption, and as such, God is invoked in a number of scenes. The presence of Christian symbols throughout the musical can hardly be missed. Over and over, God's loving grace is discussed and requested, and the film makes a clear statement about the impact of God's absence in one's life. A Universal Pictures executive announced the \$100,000 cash prize would be donated to charity.

For the Most Inspiring television program, the nominees for the Epiphany Prize were *Blue Bloods: the Job*, *Tim Tebow's Wild Rise*, *Raising Izzie*, *The American Bible Challenge*, and *Married to Jonas: Prom Night With the In-Laws*. For its celebration of God's Word and biblical stories and laws, *The American Bible Challenge* earned the coveted \$100,000 Epiphany Prize.

Though the majority of the films and television programs celebrated at the awards gala are considered family friendly, the Movieguide Awards also include a category for mature films that, while they espouse Christian themes, may not be suitable for younger audiences. *Marvel's The Avengers* earned this admirable award, defeating worthy competitors like *Les Misérables*, *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Snow White and the Huntsman*, *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*, *Act of Valor*, *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Men in Black 3*, *Skyfall*, and *Red Dawn*. *Marvel's The Avengers* is a film that honors heroic qualities of dedication, empathy, and sacrifice.

The Friess Free Enterprise Prize, presented by Foster and Lynn Friess, is a new element to the Movieguide Awards this year. It awards those movies that "improve understanding of free markets, ownership and stewardship by showing a positive or more balanced view of American enterprise than commonly seen in the mass media." The Friess Free Enterprise Prize went to *Jiro Dreams of Sushi*, a documentary about an 85-year-old sushi master.

Dr. Jack Templeton, president of the John Templeton Foundation and son of the late founder Sir John Templeton, who established the Epiphany Prizes with Movieguide, was very pleased with this year's success at the Awards Gala.

"Not only was it sold out," Dr. Templeton said of the Gala, "but for the first time (as these programs go on long) not a single person left and there was the highest level of joy that I've felt at any one of these past events."

Throughout the evening, Movieguide also posted a variety of interesting facts acquired from Dr. Ted Baehr's annual report to Hollywood. This year's annual *Report to the Entertainment Industry* from Movieguide was 79 pages and was given to every attendee of the awards gala. Perhaps the most interesting fact of the evening was that five times more Americans attend church than go to the movies. Such a tidbit speaks volumes about the current climate of American culture, and emphasizes once more the need for more Christian and family-friendly films. He added, however, that film and television continue to have a significant impact on children, which he emphasized by playing a video of a child imitating Michael Jackson.

Musical acts of the evening included *American Idol's* Ruben Studdard, and songs from The Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles.

Overall, the evening was an absolute success, and proved to be quite entertaining. Dr. Baehr said of the Movieguide awards that they emphasize once again that "family-friendly movies with Christian, spiritually uplifting, biblical, patriotic, conservative, and traditional values and no foul language, sex,



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nudity, or graphic violence inspire viewers rather than offend them.”

“They also make the most money,” he added, “as our annual *Report to the Entertainment Industry* has shown time and time again.”



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