

The Priest's Children Movie - Croatian Butterfly Effect

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About the movie "The Priest's Children," [1] controversial criticism has been written [2]. Some praise it as one of the best Croatian comedies [3], while others attack it [4], mostly due to its alleged criticism of the Church and the use of clichés [5]. Probably both sides are right. However, in my opinion, the film's deep moral side remains underestimated.

The story unfolds through a lengthy confession, illustrating how a new priest on a small Croatian island tries to increase fertility—by ensuring that all the condoms sold at the kiosk are defective.

Actually, it does not matter in which area the action takes place. Similar situations are possible in the pharmaceutical industry, where, with entirely good faith, a drug that ultimately causes more harm than help might be provided, and its negative effects remain silent [6]. In politics, laws are enacted to seemingly protect people but actually open the door to new violations [7]. In banking, benevolent bankers recommend the most favorable loan in Croatia, such as loans in Swiss francs [8], which ultimately turn out to be expensive and have been the subject of lawsuits for decades [9]. Therefore, situating the story in a Church milieu says more about the relationship between the Church as a moral institution rather than the failures of its members, reflecting the extreme projection of errors due to the confidence in religion.

Beyond the topic of contraception, it is easy to overlook the moral issues the film touches upon, as they are only mentioned briefly: the relationship to sick children (abandoning a sick child), care for sick parents ("I will take the child"), hiding the truth about parenting, and the vow of silence ("he confessed to me, I confessed to you, and now no one is allowed to talk about it").

Why "butterfly effect"? This term describes a phenomenon in which a small, seemingly insignificant event has unforeseen consequences [10]. This concept is evident in the film: a small hole leads to a fatal outcome.

Indeed, the beginning of the film suggests that once such a moral limit is crossed, things cannot end well. Literature [11] presents similar stories of crossing limits, resulting in severe illness, depression, anorexia, or post-traumatic syndrome—often deadly, as in the film: a suicide.

"The Priest's Children" is not a comedy but a tragedy.

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Conflict of Interests

Nothing to declare.

Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

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