Prayers for Bobby

January 23, 2009 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

Prayers for Bobby premieres on Lifetime at 9 p.m. Eastern time on Saturday, January 24. After watching an advance copy, I encourage every LGBT person—and everyone who loves someone that is LGBT—to watch this TV movie.

The plot goes like this: Mary Griffith, a Christian conservative mother, rejects her gay son Bobby when he comes out. He tries to repress his sexual orientation, but fails. He commits suicide. The mother struggles to reconcile her religious beliefs with homosexuality. She eventually becomes a strong advocate for LGBT civil rights.

Sigourney Weaver's excellent performance as Mary makes this tearjerker (I certainly cried) better than your average TV movie, despite its imperfect dialogue. Leroy Aarons, founder of the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association, wrote the book that the movie is based on--and both are based on a true story.

Here are two sad stats from The Trevor Project, which operates a national 24-hour suicide prevention hotline for LGBT youth:

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth are up to four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers.

(Massachusetts 2006 Youth Risk Survey)

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth who come from a rejecting family are up to nine

times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers.

(2007 San Francisco State University Chavez Center Institute)

Bobby’s suicide was in 1983, but unfortunately LGBT youth remain at high risk for suicide.

FYI, if you can’t watch the premiere, Lifetime will air encores at 8 p.m. Eastern time on Sunday, January 25, and at 9 p.m. Eastern time on Tuesday, January 27.

Click here to read an interview by Advocate.com with the movie’s producers.

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