

Content Guide

Title: Charting the Course

Themes: Forgiveness, Second chances, Importance of Family, Discovering the Catholic faith

Educational Value: This story highlights the high school drama that occurs in every era. Liz is given a glimpse into her father's past during his high school reunion. She also discovers through the crew members from different countries that while she has her fair share of difficulties, she also has been blessed with many advantages.

Positive Messages: No matter what we have done, God forgives us. It is never too late to change our behavior and start living our life for Christ. We have the power to help others by being a good friend and sharing our faith with them.

Spiritual Messages: The main character is not Catholic but has attended Catholic church with her best friend. Before Liz leaves on her trip with her estranged father, her friend gives her the Holy Family Novena to pray. To please her friend, Liz reluctantly begins the prayer. As the week progresses, she realizes her bad decisions have affected others and knows the only way to get past the pain of her past is to turn her life fully to Christ. She confides in a priest and ultimately decides to look further into the Catholic church.

Positive Role Models: Liz meets several people that deeply influence her. First, her friend who shared the novena and invited Liz to attend church and youth group. Cole, the young man that she meets on-board is a nice guy that she can confide in. Midge, an older passenger that shares words of advice.

Violence/Gore: none

Sexuality: There is a growing romance in the story. The couple shares a few dances.

Language: none

Drinking, Drugs & Smoking: Adults in the story are seen drinking.

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW Liz's parents divorced when she was young and did not provide much faith training. Over the years, Liz's friend Josie (from my novel *Into the Spotlight*) has invited Liz to attend church with her family. During the cruise, Liz turns to a childhood coping mechanism of pilfering items. When she discovers her reckless behavior has affected someone else, she decides to take her friend's advice and explore her faith. This character and her continued journey to the Catholic church is featured in the short story *Finishing the Journey* found in the CTB anthology, *Ashes: Visible & Invisible*.

Rating Scale: MODERATE

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Light- For all readers.

Moderate - Story includes subject matter for teens 13 plus

Advanced - Although not graphic in description, the subject matter is recommended for teens older than 15.