

Why Kathie Lee Gifford Refuses to Believe in Coincidence: 'God Sees Us'

Kathie Lee Gifford, the longrunning television host of *Today* and *Live with Regis and Kathie Lee*, is stepping back in front of the camera, appearing in *A Godwink Christmas: Meant for Love*. The film, premiering Sunday night on Hallmark Movies & Mysteries, is the second entry in the "Godwink Christmas" film series, based on the popular books by Squire Rushnell.

Gifford, who also serves as a producer, went to bat for the "Godwinks" series, appealing to Hallmark to "just give us a shot." As a result, the first "Godwinks" Christmas movie was "the highest rated one they did last year." So, production started on the newest one, with more on the way, she says.

"The new one is much, much better, and we're already writing new ones," she said.

In *Meant for Love*, two strangers from very different backgrounds—Alice (Cindy Busby) and Jack (Benjamin Hollingsworth)—meet at a wedding celebration. Gifford stars as Alice's mom Olga, who encourages her to pursue the new relationship, which takes unusual twists and turns during the Christmas season.

While the film revolves around romantic love, the actress is quick to point out there's a more divine connection that viewers are drawn to.

"(The networks) are discovering that rather than running from faith, people are running to it, because they're so afraid," she said. "They feel hopeless in this world. And they love hearing these love stories that are real, actual stories. Because God sees us. He cares about us. Love is ordained of

Him. He wants us to share our lives with people.”

Gifford is also quick to point out that the coincidences from the books and the films are not really coincidences at all.

“The world calls it coincidence,” she said. “Do you know in the Hebrew language, there’s no word for coincidence? That’s because it doesn’t exist. He’s either sovereign God or he’s not. It’s either a random world, or it’s perfect the way God made it.”

A Godwink Christmas: Meant for Love, directed by Paul Ziller, premieres Sunday, Nov. 17, at 9 p.m. on Hallmark Movies and Mysteries. {eoa}

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