

Ask Mason & Teo



Abortion: What about women who are raped?

Dear Mason & Teo,

I have a friend that is pregnant and thinking of having an abortion. She says it's her choice and it is legal. I know that the Catholic Church says that abortion is wrong. Why is it wrong? What about women who are raped? Is it always wrong? (Legally Chosen)

Dear Legally Chosen,

Everything that is legal is not necessarily morally right. Civil law cannot contradict the law of God. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1782) The legality of abortion does not make it morally right. "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

The Catholic Church holds that abortion is always immoral. Christian morality — doing what is good and avoiding what is evil — is living in a way worthy of our human dignity which is rooted in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). As human persons made in the "image of God," we are made to reflect the creative, life-giving, generous love that symbolizes the relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We should not treat others like objects but regard each person with respect and honor. As God values each of us for our own sake, we too should value others. As Catholics, we believe that life begins from the moment of conception. From the moment of conception, the embryo is human. The life of an embryo is consistent with the life of a fetus which is consistent with the life of a newborn baby. No change in being takes place.

Not only is the embryo a human life, he or she is also an innocent life, powerless and vulnerable. Our church prohibits the taking of innocent life. As Christians, we are responsible for protecting the rights of the powerless, born or unborn. So to kill an embryo is to kill a human person, which is against the fifth commandment, "Thou shall not kill."

While every woman has the right to care for her own body, the fetus is not a "part" of her body. Once conception has taken place, the fetus is a separate and unique person. The right of this new individual to be born surpasses the woman's rights with respect to her own body.

When a pregnancy threatens the mother's life, the church teaches that every effort should be made to save both the unborn child and the mother. If a pregnant woman develops a cancer in the womb, it is acceptable to remove the cancer even if the fetus is harmed, because the direct intent is not to remove the fetus but to remove the cancer.

But a "direct" abortion is never permitted in Catholic teaching. Yes, even in rape cases where a pregnancy has occurred under violent circumstances, abortion is not permitted. We must reach out to the woman with compassion and support in such difficult situations.

To those who have had an abortion, again, we must never respond with condemnation but with love and support. Countless women have suffered physically, emotionally and spiritually because of abortion; many have lost their lives. Many men, too, mourn the loss of their children, while others carry the heavy burden of having persuaded their daughter, wife or girlfriend to have an abortion.

The Pearson Foundation Problem Pregnancy Center, Project Rachel and other ministries are available to help the broken-hearted. We must have hearts full of compassion for the unborn children and we must find ways to help young women who are confused and suffering.

When a woman contemplates abortion, she may believe she has no other choice. We must listen to her and understand her isolation and despair. We must reach her heart and give her hope through the example Jesus Christ.

"There is no offense, however serious, that the church cannot forgive. Christ who died for all men desires that in his church the gates of forgiveness should always be open to anyone who turns away from sin" (CCC 982).

If you are having sex and got pregnant, it doesn't mean something went wrong. It means something went right. Unwanted babies are the result of people having sex without being open to children. God wants to restore the full truth about the goodness, the beauty and the demands of sexual love. And when that happens we will prevent unwanted babies and their murder.

"In (God's) hand is the soul of every living thing and the life breath of all mankind" (Job 12:10).

Mason and Teo Matsuda are parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Ewa Beach and have served in youth and young adult ministries for years. Write to them at yaadvice@yahoo.com.



Cassie Clemente, who is with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, assists students in 2007 at Holy Wisdom Academy in Milwaukee, where she teaches and tutors students.

CNS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass

Ask not what your country can do for you ...

The presidential candidates' call for greater service gets a (brief) mention

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON

If there was one day during the marathon presidential campaign when the candidates were not making digs and tossing accusations at each other, it would have been Sept. 11, the seventh anniversary of the terror attacks on American soil.

It was that day when Sens. Barack Obama, D-Ill., and John McCain, R-Ariz., the major-party presidential candidates, gave back-to-back live broadcast interviews on service at Columbia University in New York.

McCain said that, had he been president during those deadly attacks, he "would have created organizations ranging from neighborhood block watch to making sure that our nuclear power plants are secure." He also would have expanded not only the military but the Peace Corps and Americorps, two federal service organizations.

"There's a great (service) role for faith-based organizations, volunteer organizations — and the private sector," McCain said. "I think we've got to involve more businesses and industries that routinely provide goods and services, rather than rely on the federal government to do it."

"When I graduated from Columbia, I had a choice. I could pursue a lucrative career on Wall Street or go immediately to law school," Obama said in his interview, "or I could follow through on the inspiration that I had drawn from the civil rights movement — and from the Kennedy era — and try to work in the community. And I chose the latter. But it was tough.

"I made \$12,000 a year plus car

expenses in Chicago working with churches to set up job training programs for the unemployed and after-school programs for youth, trying to make the community better," he said.

"And so part of my job, I think, as president," he continued, "is to make government cool again — and to say to young people even as we're transforming Washington, 'Come up. We want you. We want you to get involved at every level.'"

But "government can't do it all,"

said Jeanne Haster, executive director of Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest, which has its headquarters in Portland, Ore., and has 100 volunteers working in about 75 different volunteer assignments in five states.

The number of volunteers has been holding steady, Haster said, but the organization "absolutely" could use more. "The need is great," she added.

Haster related a story that connects the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, founded in 1956, with the Peace Corps.

"One of our very first volunteers came from a college in the East where one of the Kennedy women went," she said in an interview with Catholic News Service.

Sargent Shriver, President John Kennedy's brother-in-law and the first Peace Corps director, approached his female in-law and asked her, "If young people will volunteer for their church, will they volunteer for their country?" Based on her answer, the Peace Corps was created in 1961.

Plenty of ways to put faith into action

In the last Mana'olana, we profiled Tania Brown, a volunteer with the Capuchin Franciscan Volunteer Corps (Cap Corps). Hundreds of U.S. Catholic domestic and international lay service programs are looking for young adult volunteers. Many pay housing, medical and living expenses. Some offer AmeriCorps Education Awards and loan benefits and all offer a chance to put one's faith into action through service. Here's a taste of what's out there.

• **Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE):** About 90 volunteers teach for two years in Catholic elementary and secondary schools in 13 states while earning a master's of education from the University of Notre Dame.

• **Casa de Esperanza (House of Hope):** Houston-based volunteers serve as substitute parents for abused, neglected and HIV-positive children under the age of six.

• **Heifer Project International** Volunteers work at Heifer International's Learning Centers in Arkansas, Massachusetts and Cal-

ifornia, educating people on global hunger and ways to solve it through sustainable agriculture and livestock.

• **Jesuit Volunteer Corps:** One of the larger Catholic programs. JVs commit to a year of work in the U.S. ranging from homeless advocacy to community organizing. International JVs serve in eight countries, mostly in education, for two years.

• **Marianist Volunteer Program:** Volunteers work for peace and justice in education, social services and community organizing during a year's service in the U.S. (Hawaii, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, New York and Texas) or two years in Malawi.

• **Medical Volunteer Program — Catholic Medical Mission Board:** Arranges for U.S. and Canadian health care professionals to work in developing countries for several months to two years.

Learn about more programs at these websites:

• Catholic Network of Volunteer Service — www.cnvs.org.

• St. Vincent Pallotti Center — www.pallotticenter.org.

Movie reviews

Beverly Hills Chihuahua (Disney): A pampered pooch (voice of Drew Barrymore) is kidnapped by a Mexican dog-fighting ring while on a junket in the custody of her dotting owner's (Jamie Lee Curtis) self-absorbed niece (Piper Perabo), escapes with the help of a protective ex-police dog (voice of Andy Garcia) and discovers life on the streets while the ardent Chihuahua (voice of George Lopez) she once spurned leads the search for her. Along with entertaining adventures, director Raja Gosnell's sprightly live-action canine quest offers lessons about ethnic prejudice and class distinctions while also portraying the personality-warping effects of materialism. Mild menace. A-I (PG)

Body of Lies (Warner Bros.): Taut and engrossing Mideast thriller about a conscientious U.S. intelligence agent (Leonardo DiCaprio) who — in an environment of deception and betrayals — seeks out an Osama-like terrorist leader while taking orders from his long-time colleague, a hard-nosed CIA chief (Russell Crowe) back in Virginia. Director Ridley Scott maintains a good pace, and there are intelligent performances by all, including Mark Strong as the agent's Jordanian liaison, while the culturally enlightened script encourages humanistic understanding of the politically and socially volatile region. Relatively brief but graphic images of violence, torture, and medical procedures, pervasive rough language and profanity, and some blunt sexual expressions. L (R)

City of Ember (Fox Walden): Imaginative futuristic tale about a doomed underground city whose inhabitants know nothing of the world above, and a brave girl (Saoirse Ronan) and resourceful inventor's son (Harry Treadaway) who try to discover the secret way out before the city's failing generator breaks down completely. With an intricate and clever production design, and an interesting cast in-



CNS photo/Screen Gems

Quarantine (Screen Gems): Frenzied, intense and thoroughly silly horror film about an L.A. reality TV reporter (Jennifer Carpenter) and her cameraman (Steve Harris) — through whose jerky lens all the action is viewed — who, while filming a routine profile of the local firefighters' night shift (Jay Hernandez and Johnathon Schaech), find themselves sealed in an apartment building with mysteriously rabid tenants whose voracious bites can kill and all external communication blocked. Writer-director John Erick Dowdle works up an increasing lather as the infection and body count spread, with the cocky reporter eventually reduced to a state of mounting hysteria. Considerable violence and gore, though shown in quick shots; killings; sporadic rough language and profanity; some crude expressions; and mad dogs, rats, children and old ladies. L (R)

cluding Bill Murray, Tim Robbins, Martin Landau and Toby Jones, first-time feature director Gil Kenan's well-paced adaptation of Jeanne DuPrau's novel imparts good values and makes excellent family entertainment for all but the youngest viewers who might be frightened by a particularly scary monster and some other scenes of peril. A-I (PG)

Religulous (Lionsgate): Comedian and TV host Bill Maher attacks spiritual beliefs and religion by traveling the globe interviewing officials and adherents of various faiths — Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Mormon, among them — subjecting all to ridicule. Ignoring

both the good done by religious people and institutions and the millions murdered by militantly atheist regimes in the past century, he seeks out a parade of people who make all-too-easy targets, but does not grapple with the answers the great religions offer to the serious questions people face. His sneering dismissal of all religious beliefs as mere superstition makes director Larry Charles' documentary blatantly irreverent and journalistically spurious. A consistently irrereligious, sometimes blasphemous, tone; rough language; crass expressions and some profanity; brief sexual references and imagery; and upper female nudity. O (R)

Ratings

Conference of Catholic Bishops Office for Film & Broadcasting classifications: A-I — general patronage; A-II — adults and adolescents; A-III — adults; L — limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling; O — morally offensive.

Motion Picture Association of America ratings: G — general audiences, all ages admitted; PG — parental guidance suggested, some material may not be suitable for children; PG-13 — parents are strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13; R — restricted, under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian; NC-17 — no one 17 or under admitted; NR — no rating.

- An American CarolA-III (PG-13)
- AppaloosaA-III (R)
- Babylon A.D.L (PG-13)
- Beverly Hills ChihuahuaA-I (PG)
- BlindnessL (R)
- Body of LiesL (R)
- Burn After ReadingL (R)
- The DuchessA-III (PG-13)
- Eagle Eye.....A-III (PG-13)
- The ExpressA-III (PG-13)
- Flash of GeniusA-III (PG-13)
- FireproofA-II (PG)
- Get SmartA-III (PG-13)
- Henry Poole Is Here.....A-II (PG)
- IgorA-I (PG)
- Journey to the Center of the EarthA-I (PG)
- Kung Fu PandaA-I (PG)
- Lakeview Terrace.....A-III (PG-13)
- Miracle at St. AnnaA-III (R)
- Nick & Norah's Infinite PlaylistL (PG-13)
- Nights in RodantheA-III (PG-13)
- Rachel Getting Married.....L (R)
- ReligulousO (R)
- Pineapple ExpressO (R)
- Sex DriveO (R)
- Step BrothersO (R)
- WALL-EA-I (G)

HI Seminarian

Jason Nunez



Jason Nunez, 25, was born in Fort Riley, Kan., and grew up in North Carolina and Puerto Rico. After attending the Community College of the Air Force and Hawaii Pacific

University, he entered Mount Angel Seminary in Saint Benedict, Ore., in fall 2007. He is in his second year of philosophy studies.

When did you consider the priesthood and why?

I have always felt the call since a very young age, but I truly considered the call upon receiving the sacrament of Confirmation in 1999.

What are you looking forward to as you begin seminary studies?

Expanding the knowledge of what I already think I know regarding the church and her teachings, building and living in community, and becoming, as stated in the Program of Priestly Formation, an effective Christian male.

Do you see any potential challenges?

The potential challenge I see is that of a balance of life. While I am the type of person that wants to be involved with everything, I also need to study and have my own personal time with God. This balance can be difficult and challenging at times, especially in the ever so active, vibrant community life here at Mount Angel Seminary.

Calendar

• **Youth & Young Adult Vicariate Meeting for Central and Leeward areas:** For those interested in promoting Y&YA ministry. Food and fellowship follow the meeting; 7-9 p.m., Oct. 20; St. John Apostle & Evangelist Church, Mililani. (Nick Helsham, kingnick_50@yahoo.com)

Ongoing

- **Young Adult Ministry Night:** Potluck dinner, Divine Mercy, and bible study; Wednesdays, after 6 p.m. Mass; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Ewa Beach. (olphyam96706@gmail.com)
- **St. Elizabeth Young Adult Ministry:** Scripture discussion; 7 p.m., Tuesdays; St. Elizabeth Church Hall Meeting Room 8, Aiea. (Chucky, 478-9917; George, 783-4303; YAMstelizabeta@aol.com)
- **Basic Christian Community young adult cell group:** Rosary, dinner, faith sharing, bible study; 6:30-9:30 p.m., Tuesdays. Chancery Building (1184 Bishop St.), next to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace; (Anna, 226-2675 or aweaver@rcchawaii.org)

Want to see your parish or organization's young adult activities listed here? E-mail herald@rcchawaii.org.

Saintly saying

“Keep your heart very wide to receive in it all sorts of crosses and resignations or abnegations, for the love of Him who has received so many of them for us.”

—St. Francis de Sales

Our turn



Therese J. Borchard | Cyberbullying: The truth about Internet harassment

What do you think the most disruptive threat to the school day is? The pierced punks harassing the overweight science nerd or the popular clique of girls making fun of the new girl sporting some unflattering fashion?

Maybe. But it no longer happens in the school cafeteria where teachers can interrupt it. No. It's much more subtle than that.

Many experts claim that cyberbullying — harassment that happens online — is so prevalent today that schools need to create and enforce strict policies to prevent it from doing irreparable harm, even taking a life.

Take the case of Megan Meier of Dardenne Prairie, Mo. Her 13th year had been miserable at her school, as she was the outcast fat girl trying to fit in. She fled to the Internet where a cute guy was flirting with her on MySpace.com.

Except that he wasn't real. His identity had been made up by some girls who wanted to know what Megan said about them.

One night Megan went online and found a message from Josh, the fictitious guy, saying that he didn't want to be friends anymore. She was stunned and upset. Harsh messages went back and forth between him and Megan.

Then the girls who created Josh enlisted other friends to attack Megan. “Bulletins” were sent out, linking friend-list to friend-list, and messages were being broadcast all over MySpace that Megan was fat, a slut, a bad friend.

That night Megan looped a belt around her neck and hung herself in the bedroom closet.

A 2007 Pew Internet and American Life Study released this summer found that as many as one in

three teens who use the Internet had experienced some form of harassment online. States from Rhode Island to Arkansas to Oregon have proposed legislation that would make cyberbullying between students subject to expulsion or prosecution.

John Tassoni Jr., a state senator who proposed a bill to prosecute students and their parents if the student is caught sending an e-mail or text message that's disruptive to school, explained the legislation in a McClatchy-Tribune



article on the topic of cyberbullying.

The legislation “includes content that they send from private computers during non-school hours. The bottom line is that if what they are doing either from a school computer or from their own comes back to cause problems for the school, the school should be able to punish it.”

John Halligan of Essex Junction, Vt., advocated for strict legislation concerning cyberbullying back in 2004 after his 13-year-old son Ryan was harassed for three years with one e-mail and instant message after another. Ryan, like Megan Meier, ended his life.

“The kind of bullying that kids are facing today is almost impossible for some of us of an older generation to understand,” Halligan said in the McClatchy-Tribune story. “I've had a lot of kids tell me that they'd much rather deal with a black eye or a broken arm than to have someone spread mass rumors about them via the Internet.”

I suppose in our information age — when you consider the power and influence of such social networking sites as MySpace and Facebook — the adage “sticks and stone may break my bones, but words will never hurt me” simply isn't true.