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Ask Mason & Teo



What sexual acts between husband and wife are OK?

Mason & Teo, The Oprah Show had a sex therapist, Dr. Laura Berman, which mentioned different ways where a couple could please each other. My question is for married couples and what the Catholic Church allows. I grew up in the old Catholic schools and sex between Catholic married couples was never discussed. Is touching to stimulate each other, as recommended by the sex therapist, OK? Is oral sex OK? Is pleasure and actions to satisfy and excite the long-lasting marriage OK? What sexual acts between man and wife are not OK? Thank you for hearing me. (Sex Query)

Dear Sex Query, The Catholic Church's teaching about sex and marriage is good news and challenging because it is about true love. When Christ says, "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12), he summed up the meaning of life and the meaning of human sexuality. Sexual morality is about expressing God's love through our bodies.

Pope John Paul II, in his "Theology of the Body," said "if we live according to the truth of our sexuality, we fulfill the very meaning of our being and existence." However, if we do not live according to the truth of our sexuality, we miss the meaning of our human existence and fall short of true joy.

The challenge is to discover the truth about our sexuality. In our quest, we encounter our deepest longings, aspirations, fears, wounds, selfishness and sins which inevitably lead us to the cross. It is Christ who reveals the truth about love and shows us the very meaning of life.

We are body-persons. We are not persons "in" a body that can be dispensed with. Humans are made with flesh and spirit, body and soul, physical and spiritual. We cannot separate the two realities. Thus, our spiritual reality as humans is expressed through our bodies as male and female.

The body expresses the soul. It makes the invisible visible. We cannot pray without our bodies. Husband and wife cannot express their "one flesh" union without their bodies. So what we do with our bodies we do with ourselves. Our bodies reveal the attitude of our hearts, whether we are expressing a genuine love or a counterfeit of it.

The term "oral sex" often refers to acts where orgasm is sought and achieved apart from an act of intercourse. Oral copulation to the point of ejaculation is simply not marital. It consumes nothing. It separates the pleasure of orgasm from the responsibility of fertility. It does not

represent a communion of persons between spouses.

In essence, it does not and cannot symbolize and participate in the free, total, faithful and life-giving love of God. It simply does not signify the marriage bond or renew the couple's vows. So, yes, oral sex is wrong if such a behavior is desired above the normal intercourse.

In regards to female orgasm, it is not objectively wrong if the wife achieves climax as a result of oral stimulation as long as it is within the context of a completed act of intercourse. There is nothing wrong with oral stimulation of the genitals as foreplay to intercourse as long as it expresses great purity and reverence so as not to degrade the goodness of marital intimacy.

This kind of purity is possible. But it is easy to cross the line between love and lust, between affirming the goodness of one another's bodies and seeking to gratify at the expense of the other. Spouses must be sensitive to one another. In particular, if a spouse is uncomfortable with such behavior, he or she must never be forced to perform it. Even if it is not objectively wrong, it shows a lack of respect for the spouse.

True love involves risk, sacrifice, pain and suffering. Most want pleasure without the risk, responsibility and suffering. We need to take a long hard look at the crucifix and realize that true love involves dying to self as Jesus Christ did, giving his body for his bride. So too, husbands are called to love their wives "as Christ loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25) and "wives should respect her husband." (Ephesians 5:33)

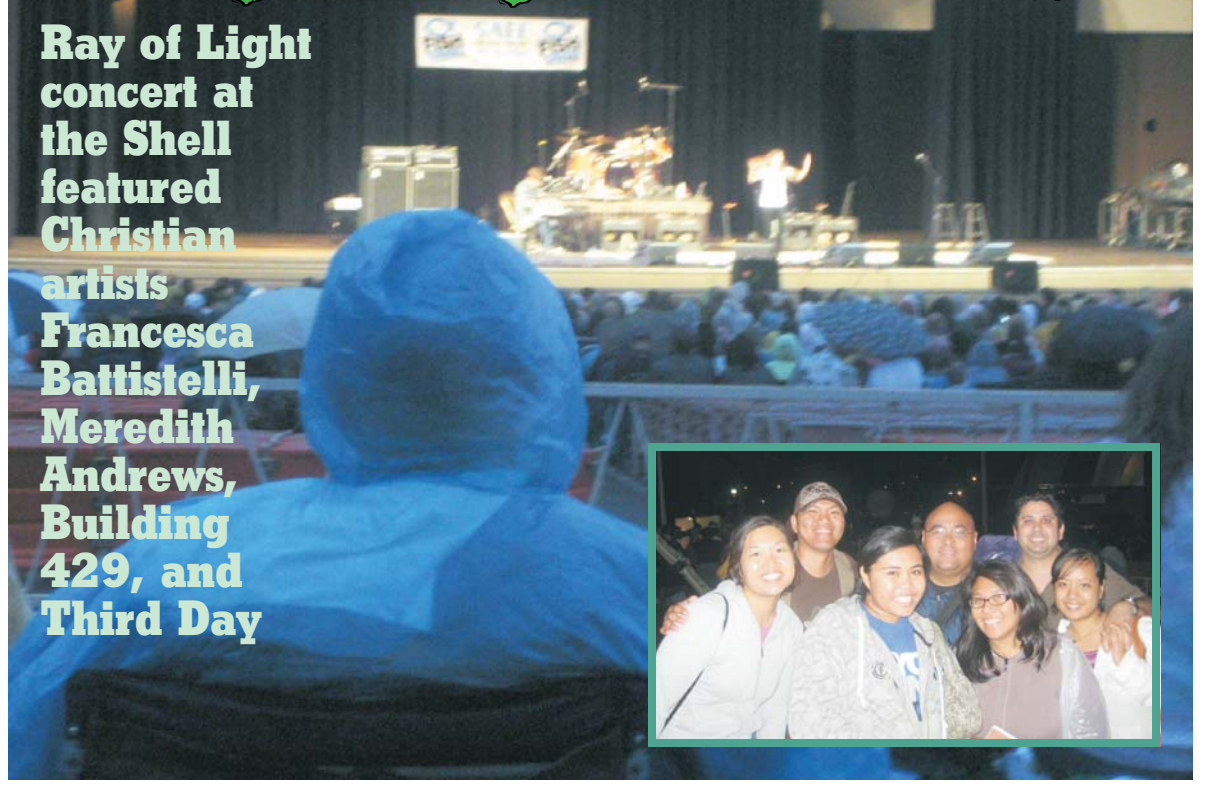
Authentic spousal love is an awareness of two fundamental movements: giving and receiving. A love that only gives will end in exhaustion, just as a love that only seeks self-gratification will gradually die. When love is sincere, it works toward the communion of becoming one flesh, in soul, mind and body.

Ultimately, the communion of love between a husband and a wife finds its source in God. Love needs to be built up day-by-day with courage, loyalty and responsibility. To get married is easy, but to live in love is an art. Everything will be less difficult if the spouses remain united in Christ, allowing their lives to be penetrated by the wealth of graces he gives through his sacraments of love.

True marriage is not a kind of balancing act; it is a journey together toward the fullness of life.

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.

Ray of Light concert at the Shell featured Christian artists Francesca Battistelli, Meredith Andrews, Building 429, and Third Day



The audience was all wet, but not the music at the Ray of Light concert at the Waikiki Shell, Nov. 29. Inset, a group of satisfied concert-goers from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Ewa Beach.

Music review

Praise'n kanikapila (Southern-style)

By Donna Lyn Rabe and James Baguio
Special to the Herald

Hawaii got a hearty helping of praise and worship Southern-style at the Ray of Light concert hosted by 95.5 The Fish radio at the Waikiki Shell on Saturday, Nov. 29. Under rainy skies, concertgoers ventured out to the Shell with umbrellas and raincoats ready to see their favorite Christian musicians — Francesca Battistelli, Meredith Andrews, Building 429 and Third Day.

Southern belles Francesca Battistelli and Meredith Andrews performed first. Battistelli belted out numbers while playing her acoustic guitar while Andrews' gentle voice was accompanied by her husband pianist, Jacob Sooter.

Building 429 followed the female performers with a high-energy set that kept the audience jumping, clapping, and waving their hands in the air. The jangly pop sound of their electric guitars and their raspy vocals gave the Tennessee group a musical style comparable to secular bands. They kept the crowd hyped with their current radio hits "You Carry Me" and "Never Let Go."

One song included a tribute to U2's "Where the Streets Have No Name." The band even invited up members of the audience on stage to dance to a sampling of C&C Music Factory's "Everybody Dance Now." Building 429 then lulled the audience into a bittersweet meditation with a new song, "Always," inspired by a woman the band met whose toddler son was killed by her ex-husband.

True to their Southern roots, the band then delivered a Dixieland-in-



Third Day members greet a fan.

strumental mix with three-part harmonies. Their driving guitar chords kept the crowd swaying with cell phones lit to the last song, "The Space Between Us."

Brandon Heath, another Tennessee native, brought the audience into another realm of acoustic music reminiscent of the Beatles, harmonizing with another acoustic guitarist and a pianist. Heath also had fun with the crowd by claiming that he wrote TLC's "Waterfalls."

"Waterfalls" led into a song of Heath's with a similar melody now popular on the radio called "I'm Not Who I Was." He later transported us to the streets of England with his heartbreaker "London."

Heath mesmerized the crowd with his other hits, "Give Me Your

Eyes" and "Love Never Fails," whose lyrics seemed to come straight out of 1 Corinthians. Heath and his band tickled ears when their vocals broke into a vibrato during their final, "What If We."

The headliner, Third Day, surprisingly performed without their entire band. Two founding members, Mark Lee and Mack Powell of Atlanta, got the crowd singing and standing with popular tracks like "I've Always Loved You," "You Are So Good To Me," "Tunnel," and "Call My Name," delivered with rock 'n blues guitar and Lee's country vocals.

Heath joined Third Day in "God of Wonders."

With its "dust in the wind" sound, the band ended its set with a new song, "Revelation," and an all-time Christian classic, "Holy is the Lord."

The evening ended with a surprise treat with all the performers, except Building 429, singing Christmas carols — including an exceptional "Mele Kalikimaka." Overall, the concert felt like a backyard kanikapila where our favorite Christian musicians graced us with their songs of praise and served as awesome worship leaders for the crowd.

They brought a "ray of light" to our rainy winter season here in Hawaii Nei.

Donna Lyn Rabe selects worship music for Ewa Beach Basic Christian Community cell Bible studies. James Baguio is a veteran drummer for the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church choir in Ewa Beach and in other amateur bands. Both serve as youth and young adult ministers at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish.