

## Ask Mason & Teo



### Why can't we have women priests?

Dear Mason & Teo, My cousin is an ordained minister at an Episcopal Church. She does what the priest does in the Catholic Church. Why can't women be priests in the Catholic Church? (Just Wonderin')

Dear Just Wonderin', Jesus instituted the Catholic Church and he instituted the all-male priesthood to fulfill his plan of salvation for everyone. Jesus is the bridegroom who laid down his life for the sake of his bride, the church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) states that men who, through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, participate in Christ's priesthood and carry on this bridegroom role, act "in the person of Christ the Head" on behalf of the faithful (CCC 1548).

Christ's teaching on the ordained priesthood should not be misunderstood as discrimination or an ancient cultural prejudice, now outmoded. In fact, during Jesus' time, women priests were common in many Greco-Roman religions. Indeed, Jesus was certainly unafraid to go against cultural taboos. In reality, Jesus did things and said things that shocked his contemporary followers, such as, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:53).

The Catholic Church has consistently taught that men and women have equal dignity in the eyes of God and that each, though different, have complimentary roles and functions in living out God's plan of salvation for humanity.

Ordination into the priesthood is a Sacrament of Holy Orders. It is not about giving a man "permission" to perform the functions of a priest. Anyone can do pastoral, teaching, preaching or administrative work. These activities, however, are not the essence of the priesthood. The essence of the priestly office is the celebration of Christ's Sacrifice in the Mass.

It is about the sacrament — an outward sign, instituted by Christ to give grace. It is an action that not only does what it symbolizes, but symbolizes what it does.

In Baptism, for example, the sacrament is administered through water, and only water, the symbol of cleansing and new life. One cannot substitute another liquid, such as milk. Likewise, in Holy Eucharist, Jesus' original choice of bread and wine cannot be switched with other food and drink, even if another food might seem more culturally accessible.

Water is the right "matter" for the Sacrament of Baptism; bread and wine is the right "matter" for Eucharist.

In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest is imparted with an indelible, permanent spiritual character that makes him a priest. His male gender is the right "matter" for this Sacrament.

Christ teaches that he is the "bridegroom" to the church's "bride" in the great marriage feast of the Kingdom (Matthew 25:1-13). And every Mass is a local "Marriage Feast of the Lamb" in which we enter into the self-sacrificial love of that cosmic bridegroom for his bride.

It is not that a man is "superior" to a woman in being "matter" for the priesthood. It is that a man is the proper symbol of the bridegroom, and a woman is not. The priest does not simply administer the Mass; he is actually one of the symbols of the mystery of the Mass.

Ordination, therefore, is a gift, never a right. Like all the other Sacraments, its symbols matter. Because the sacraments were instituted by Christ himself, the church has no power to change the symbols in their fundamental form. The tradition of the ordination of men goes back unbroken to Christ and the Apostles. God revealed what the "matter" should be and the church simply obeys (CCC 1577). "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you" (John 15:16).

The priesthood in the Sacrament of Holy Orders is not granted as an honor, or for the advantage of the priest, but for the service of God and the church. It is a Sacrament of service, a vocation and a free gift to the church.

The seven sacraments — Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony — are the "powers that comes forth from the Body of Christ, which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. They are the masterworks of God in the new and everlasting covenant" (CCC 1116).

As church, we are simply to receive and respond to this loving gift by safeguarding it and allowing these gifts to bear abundant fruit.

*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.*



Big Island Young Adult Connection participants and leaders

Photo courtesy of Chrislyn Villena

## Waiting on the Spirit



### 40 Big Island young adults spend Pentecost weekend on a secluded retreat

By Chrislyn Villena  
Special to the Herald

As the disciples gathered in the upper room to await the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, 40 Big Island young adults gathered at the Pahala Plantation Cottages on Pentecost weekend, prepared to be inspired.

And they were.

Coming together for the annual Big Island Young Adult Connection, May 28-31, they absorbed the wisdom of speakers from different islands who talked on hot topics facing young adults today.

The theme for the retreat was "Where he leads, we will follow."

Uncle Frank Chargualaf, from St. Theresa Parish in Kihei, Maui, brought with him his praise and worship team. Each member testified to the power and grace they receive from praising and worshipping God.

"It is more than just singing, it is praying to him through these songs," one said. "When I do worship the Lord, I can feel his presence every

single time."

Dominic Olaso of Holy Trinity Parish on Oahu implored his audience to break free from the grip of the "Un-holy Trinity" — "Me, Myself and I" — by turning toward the true majesty of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. When we come to God sorrowful, he said, we are healed, fed, cleaned and empowered to show that same love and mercy to others.

Chucky Unciano, a young adult from St. Elizabeth Parish in Aiea, spoke about the wonder and joy he feels as a single person.

"Don't stress yourself out looking for someone to love," Chucky said. "Love God by serving him and others; then he will send someone special to you when you are ready. Instead of spending so much time and effort looking for the right person to love, turn your actions to becoming that right person."

Sister Lusika and Sister Lisa of Hilo gave witness to God's call to consecrated life. "You don't choose which work you do for God. The Lord chooses the kind of work He wants

you to do."

They said God spoke to them through their fathers, who love them so much. Knowing their daughters were being called by God, they both gave their blessings upon them and their decision to become religious sisters.

Mason and Teo Matsuda of Oahu painted a picture of how much God loved them when he selected Mason for Teo and her for him. They disclosed personal stories about the trials and tribulations that tested their relationship. They consider themselves blessed beyond measure and respond with constant service and faithful prayer. Their motto: "A family that prays together stays together."

Saturday evening, Aunty Maka Secretario helped the young participants to connect with God in a prayer service. After a weekend of absorbing God's message through their ears and eyes, they turned over their minds and hearts in prayer, receptive to the outpouring of God's blessings.

Finally, the young adults listened to Aunty Deb and Uncle Gary speak about respect for the human body. "It is our choice to live a life of holiness and chastity," they said. "This life should be seen as a gift not a curse. Our lives should be to honor and glorify God, especially in our choices."

The Holy Spirit truly descended on 40 people that weekend. His presence was felt in the flow of the presentations, and seen in the eyes of those who opened their hearts.

In his closing homily, Msgr. Ted Mercado said, "The Holy Spirit was sent to help us live out our mission as Jesus taught us. The disciples described his presence as dynamic, just like dynamite. How does the Holy Spirit turn you on? Allow it to rock, rattle and roll you just as it did those many years ago."

*Mahalo to all who helped make this retreat a success especially the Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Board.*

## Movie reviews

**Imagine That** (Paramount/Nickelodeon): A work-obsessed investment adviser (Eddie Murphy) connects with his young daughter (Yara Shahidi) after accidentally discovering that the inhabitants of an imaginary kingdom she has created give accurate financial predictions, aiding him in his competition with a pretentious but popular rival (Thomas Haden Church). Director Karey Kirkpatrick's timely and charming comic fantasy, which also features Martin Sheen as a renowned tycoon, elevates family bonds over the paper kind and, a couple of slightly crass terms aside, makes appropriate viewing for all generations. A-I (PG)

CNS photo/Paramount



**The Hangover** (Warner Bros.): A 100-minute assault of crude behavior, violence, racial stereotypes and male nudity strung along a thin plot of three groomsmen (Ed Helms, Zach Galifianakis, Justin Bartha) searching for their pal the bridegroom (Bradley Cooper) after a drunken and drugged Las Vegas debauch the night before the wedding. Producer-director Doug Phillips and screenwriters Jon Lucas and Doug Moore work on the assumptions that any loutish behavior is hilarious, and if it's funny when a grown man gets hit in the face by a car door, it's even funnier when it later happens to an infant. Intermittent violence; pervasive crass, crude and profane language; upper female and explicit male nudity; drug use; frequent urination; and crude sexual gags, one involving an infant. O (R)

**My Life in Ruins** (Fox Searchlight): Cotton-ball-soft romantic comedy

about a travel guide in Greece (Nia Vardalos) who learns to absorb the spirit of the Greek islands in order to enjoy life and find romance with — who else? — a handsome Greek (Alexis Georgoulis). Director Donald Petrie and screenwriter Mike Reiss duplicate the slow, ambling formula of Vardalos' monster hit, "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," to the letter, replacing her passel of eccentric but lovable relatives with a busload of eccentric but lovable tourists. So devoid of objectionable elements, it's acceptable for older adolescents who probably will be dragged to the theater by Vardalos-adoring grandmothers. A couple of implied premarital encounters, mild sexual banter and innuendo. A-II (PG-13)

**Land of the Lost** (Universal): The innocent, mildly cheesy Saturday morning TV show from the 1970s has morphed into an overblown, special-effects-laden, but plot-thin

star vehicle for comedian Will Farrell, a washed-up scientist who claims that his invention, the "tachyon amplifier," is a time machine. With a beautiful academic (Anna Friel) and a sleazy sideshow operator (Danny McBride) at his side, he opens a "space time vortex" and lands in a prehistoric world filled with menacing creatures, reptilian aliens and furry Cro-Magnon natives. What ensues is a "Wizard of Oz" adventure as the trio seeks a way home. Unfortunately, what is being marketed as this summer's "family" film is far from one. Cartoonish violence and peril; rough language; sexual banter, innuendo and encounters; partial nudity; and drug use. A-III (PG-13)

**Drag Me to Hell** (Universal): Intentionally over-the-top horror tale in which a Los Angeles loan officer (Alison Lohman) is cursed to death and damnation by a woman (Lorna

Raver) on whose home her bank is foreclosing and, with the reluctant support of her skeptical boyfriend (Justin Long), enlists the aid of a fortuneteller (Dileep Rao) in her increasingly frantic efforts to undo the spell. Gross-out sight gags abound in director and co-writer Sam Raimi's canny shockfest, but bloodletting is generally minimal and the occult elements, like the dubious premise that one person can consign another to Hades, need not be taken seriously. Some hand-to-hand violence, a premarital situation, a couple of uses of profanity and of the S-word, and a few crass terms. A-III (PG-13)

**Next Day Air** (Summit): Brisk, low-budget brew of violence, street language and stoner comedy mixing dimwitted criminals with a Mexican drug lord as a pot-smoking overnight-delivery driver (Donald Faison from TV's "Scrubs") accidentally takes a package contain-

## 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.

**Angels & Demons** .....L (PG-13)  
**Dance Flick** .....L (PG-13)  
**Drag Me to Hell** .....A-III (PG-13)  
**Fast & Furious**.....L (PG-13)  
**Fighting**.....L (PG-13)  
**The Haunting in Connecticut** .....A-II (PG-13)  
**Imagine That (Paramount)**.....A-I (PG)  
**I Love You, Man** .....O (R)  
**Land of the Lost** .....A-III (PG-13)  
**My Life in Ruins** .....A-II (PG-13)  
**Next Day Air** .....O (R)  
**Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian**....A-I (PG)  
**Race to Witch Mountain** .....A-II (PG)  
**Slumdog Millionaire** .....A-III (R)  
**State of Play** .....A-III (PG-13)  
**Star Trek**.....A-III (PG-13)  
**Terminator Salvation** .....L (PG-13)  
**Tyler Perry's Madea Goes to Jail** .....A-III (PG-13)  
**Up!** .....A-I (PG)  
**X-Men Origins: Wolverine** .A-III (PG-13)

ing 10 kilos of cocaine to the wrong apartment, which just happens to contain misfit criminals (Mike Epps and Wood Harris) who plan to sell the drugs and start new lives. Director Benny Boom keeps these one-dimensional characters and the stale, predictable plot clattering along for just 84 minutes, but the only surprising twist is who survives the close-range brutality at the finish. Nonstop crude and profane language, drug use, brief upper female nudity, knife violence, the occasional fistfight, a slow-motion gun battle, racial stereotypes and an utter lack of redemptive behavior by any character. O (R)

## OUR TURN



## Therese Borchard | Maybe mom was onto something: Take your angels with you

Growing up, my mom would tell me and my three sisters every morning before school, "Take your angel with you."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, goodbye," we'd say.

She was so predictable. So convinced that a heavenly presence was beside us, protecting us from harm.

I never gave it too much thought until my older sister smashed her car into a wall and walked away unscathed, my twin sister totaled her car and walked home, and I spent many a drunken night in the "ghetto" off-campus housing area of the University of Dayton without getting myself into too much trouble.

Maybe her invocation did matter.

I've always been intrigued by

the presence of angels, and I'm hardly alone when you consider the popularity of angel books, pins and statues.

I used to work for a religious giftware company, and let me tell you: Without angels, we would have had to do something really creative with the saints. You know, something besides the St. Joseph Home Sales Kit.

The writings of bestselling author Joan Wester Anderson have long inspired me. I get goose bumps every time I read her story about her son and a friend being saved by an angel in the middle of a snowstorm on an isolated country road in Indiana.

A tow truck appeared out of the blue and offered to pull the stalled car to a nearby friend's house. But as soon as the two boys turned around to pay the kind and generous man, he was gone. And there was just one set of tire tracks in the snow: that of

the boy's car (not the tow truck).

Writes Anderson in "Where Angels Walk": "Angels don't submit to litmus tests, testify in court or slide under a microscope for examination. Thus their existence cannot be 'proved' by the guidelines we humans usually use. To know one, perhaps, requires a willingness to suspend judgment, to open ourselves to possibilities we've only dreamed about.

"Was it an angel? Our family will never know for sure. But on Christmas Eve in 1983, I heard the whisper of wings as a tow-truck driver answered a heavenly summons and brought our son safely home."

Joan now has company, because another believer, or translator (if I can use that term) has published a book of conversations with angels. In "Angels in My Hair" (Random House), Irish mystic and author Lorna Fitzgerald Byrne describes her encounters

and conversations with angels, and in doing so, offers readers a message of hope and love. "Angels are here to comfort and to teach us," she says. "All you have to do is ask."

Byrne was brought up in poverty and suffered from learning disabilities, and has had her share of skeptics. Yet she's won over many who were not prepared for her sense of serenity and innocence.

Byrne once told a reporter that she doesn't like to call herself a psychic and is even afraid to say she is a healer even though she says she sees things about a person's life and helps the person to understand it.

She also refuses to "tell fortunes," explaining that she feels "that is too dangerous."

I don't tell my kids to take their angels with them like my mom did, because I don't want to get the rolled eyes that my mom got when she commanded her kids to request some heavenly help. But I'm rethinking that, after reading Byrne's curious and uplifting testimony.

Maybe my mom was on to something after all.

## Heads up

### First young adult Connection Day for central Oahu is June 20

The theme of the first Central Oahu Vicariate Young Adult Connection Day, Saturday, June 20, at St. John Apostle and Evangelist Parish in Mililani, is "Here I am Lord! Where do I go now?"

The day will feature guest speakers and Herald advice columnists Teo and Mason Matsuda, Benedictine Sister Celeste "CC" Cabral and vicar general Father Marc Alexander. The Coda Financial Group will give financial advice for Catholics.

The day starts with 7:30 a.m. check-in followed by 8 a.m. Mass, and goes until around 5:30 p.m. It is open to all 18 and over. Registration is \$7 to cover food and supplies, and the cost of a snack to bring and share with the larger group.

Registration is due June 15. Forms are available by e-mailing yamstelizabeth@aol.com. For more information, call Chucky Unciano at 478-9917.