

## Ask Mason & Teo



### Jesus descended into hell? Huh?

Dear Mason & Teo,

Maybe you can help me understand something. Each time I pray the Rosary with my family we recite the Apostles Creed. In the Apostle's Creed we proclaim that Jesus descended into "hell" after he died. What I don't understand is, if hell is a place of eternal damnation and Jesus did not sin, why did he have to go to hell? I thought hell was for those with grave sins. (Hell If I Know)

Dear "Hell If I Know,"

The English language sometimes does not accurately translate the original Scripture text. The English word used to describe "hell" in the Bible refers to two different places. The first hell is "Gehenna" (Matthew 5:22) which is the place where those who died in mortal or grave sin without repenting and accepting God's merciful love remain eternally separated from God. This is the hell, "the unquenchable fire" that you've referred to in your question, for those that chose to exclude themselves from communion with God. These are the souls that are eternally damned.

The second hell in Scripture, "Hades" in Greek (Revelations 20:14), or "Sheol" in Hebrew, refers to the "abode of the dead." This hell is the place where Christ spoke to the spirits in prison after his death (1 Peter 3:18-19; 4:6). The hell in the Apostles Creed refers to this place of the dead in which Jesus went down.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), prior to the death and resurrection of Christ, all souls, whether just or unjust, went to Hades or Sheol and were "deprived of the vision of God" (CCC 633). The gates of heaven were closed to those who died before Jesus since Adam and Eve went to Sheol. All the dead did not share the same lot, as Jesus shows through the parable of Lazarus who waited in "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22-26). The bosom of Abraham has also

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been called purgatory. When Jesus died he went into purgatory to free the just souls that died and had gone before him. He did not go to hell to deliver the damned or destroy Gehenna. Jesus' resurrection and ascension opened the gates of heaven for the righteous.

Jesus conquered death and sin. He has "the keys of death and Hades" (Revelations 1:18) and the power to release all men from the wages of sin, on earth and in purgatory. Those souls who have died in God's grace but who are still imperfectly purified, go to purgatory to be perfectly purified and achieve the holiness necessary to enter heaven. At the Last Judgment, as Scripture declares, Hades or Purgatory will be ultimately destroyed (Revelations 20:14).

In the Apostles Creed, the expression "He descended into hell" affirms that Christ really did die and he truly entered the abode of the dead. In entering death, Jesus fulfilled his saving mission for all people and for all times, even redeeming those that died before his birth.

Jesus Christ, the faithful high priest had to become like man in every way except sin (Hebrews 2:17). Christ's experience of death and then descending into hell were necessary for the salvation of all the just and righteous.

Therefore, continue to pray your rosary and profess with confidence that Jesus "descended into hell" and "ascended into heaven," for truly on the last day Jesus will raise us up. In a certain way, we have already been risen with Christ for, by the Holy Spirit, our Christian life on earth is already a participation in the death and the Resurrection of Christ. We have a taste of heaven here on earth.

*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.*



Photo courtesy of Buena Sejalbo

LIFT leader Jon Niven performs at the June 17 praise and worship event at St. Elizabeth, Aiea.



Photo courtesy of Buena Sejalbo

Father Marvin Bearis presents the Blessed Sacrament for adoration.

## A big LIFT!

### Newly ordained Father Marvin Bearis brings Hawaii an 'awesome night of praise and worship'

By Donna Lyn Rabe  
Special to the Herald

As a "mahalo" to all of his hometown supporters, newly ordained priest Capuchin Father Marvin Bearis gave them a big LIFT.

With his friends from Boston and Dedham, Mass., who were here for his June 13 ordination (see page 3), Father Marvin presented "LIFT," a praise and worship experience at St. Elizabeth Church in Aiea on June 17.

The new priest said he wanted Hawaii to "experience the same ministry I experienced in Boston because it transformed my life."

LIFT ministry is "purely about Christ," he said.

LIFT, founded by Heather Flynn and Jon Niven, has been described as "an awesome night of praise and worship, dynamic speakers and eucharistic adoration."

Indeed the crowd of mainly young adults, joined by some members of Waiialua's Benedictine Monastery, enjoyed a night praising God that was both high energy and deeply meditative.

Flynn and Niven led the crowd in

singing Christian hit songs by Matt Maher such as "Your Grace Is Enough" and Chris Tomlin's "Holy is the Lord." Flynn projected the lyrics on big screens while Niven jammed on his acoustic guitar belting out the songs.

Father Marvin welcomed guest speaker and friend Father Matt Williams, the director of the Archdiocese of Boston's Office for the New Evangelization of Youth and Young Adults. Opening in prayer, Father Matt implored God to move the attendees to change their hearts and that everyone would leave with "a piece of heaven."

Father Matt said he loved the sense of ohana here. "I want to take you all home with me," he said.

He joked that back in Boston they were known as "God's frozen chosen."

Father Matt poked fun at the T-shirts Father Marvin wore back in Boston with the pidgin phrases like "Choke" or "No can handle."

Turning serious, he spoke about Father Marvin's ordination, that it should make us feel "called to live

in this world challenged, strengthened, or changed." Father Matt asked everyone to continue praying for Father Marvin in his new vocation.

Afterward, Father Marvin, accompanied by incense bearer Ian Ibanez, presented the Blessed Sacrament for eucharistic adoration. Father Matt heard confessions. Niven sang meditative songs as the congregation knelt in prayer, hands extended toward the Body of Christ exposed. Before the Blessed Sacrament left the altar, Niven led a litany blessing the name of Jesus.

Closing the night out, Niven led the audience in Maher's "Declare Victory" with everyone shouting "Chee hoo!" during the chorus. The crowd cried "hana hou" and Niven graciously conceded with the classic song "Forever."

Flynn and Niven were amazed at the crowd's energy, from the first song to the last. Father Marvin felt it was a great turnout. He was glad that he and his Massachusetts friends had the opportunity to expose Hawaii to "a different way to pray."

He hoped that Father Matt motivated and inspired everyone and that they experienced spiritual healing with the eucharistic adoration.

Movie reviews

Ratings



**The Proposal** (Touchstone): To avoid being deported back to Canada, a hard-driving New York book editor (Sandra Bullock) coerces her brow-beaten executive assistant (Ryan Reynolds) into getting engaged, but the hostility underlying their charade of love mellows during a visit to his parents' (Mary Steenburgen and Craig T. Nelson) Alaska home for his grandmother's (Betty White) 90th birthday. Brief interludes of questionable humor and a largely predictable plot aside, director Anne Fletcher's effervescent romantic comedy is mostly a valentine to family affection and against-the-odds ardor. Implied premarital sexual activity, fleeting nudity, some sexual humor, a couple of crude and a dozen crass words, at least two uses of profanity. A-III (PG-13)

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.

- 17 Again .....A-III (PG-13)
- Angels & Demons .....L (PG-13)
- Drag Me to Hell .....A-III (PG-13)
- Easy Virtue .....O (PG-13)
- Fast & Furious .....L (PG-13)
- Fighting .....L (PG-13)
- The Hangover .....O (R)
- Imagine That .....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)
- Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian ....A-I (PG)
- The Proposal .....A-III (PG-13)
- Race to Witch Mountain .....A-II (PG)
- The Soloist .....A-III (PG-13)
- The Stoning of Soraya M. ....L (R)
- State of Play .....A-III (PG-13)
- Star Trek .....A-III (PG-13)
- The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3 .....L (R)
- Terminator Salvation .....L (PG-13)
- Up! .....A-I (PG)
- Whatever Works .....O (PG-13)
- X-Men Origins: Wolverine .A-III (PG-13)
- Year One .....O (PG-13)

**The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3** (Columbia/MGM): Brisk but gritty thriller that pits a New York subway dispatcher (Denzel Washington) against a psychopath (John Travolta) whose small gang (including Luis Guzman) has hijacked the titular train, taking its passengers hostage. Performances by the leads and supporting cast – James Gandolfini as the mayor and John Turturro as a police negotiator among them – are assured, but director Tony Scott's adaptation of John Godey's best-seller, previously filmed in 1974, treats its villain's Catholic upbringing ambiguously and has interludes of gory violence and relentlessly coarse language throughout. Brief but intense violence, pervasive rough and crude language, occasional use of

profanity. L (R)

**Year One** (Columbia): Ramshackle road comedy in which two misfit hunter-gatherers (Jack Black and Michael Cera) set out from their prehistoric village and encounter a series of biblical figures, including Cain (David Cross), Abraham (Hank Azaria), Isaac (Christopher Mintz-Plasse) and the elite of Sodom (most prominently Oliver Platt). Director and co-writer Harold Ramis' lumbering journey is fuelled by sophomoric humor and smug irreverence. Profane treatment of scriptural figures and practices, pervasive sexual and some scatological humor, implied premarital sexual activity, at least one use of the F-word, much crude and crass

language. O (PG-13)

**The Stoning of Soraya M.** (Roadside/Mpower): Compelling and often moving, if necessarily violent, fact-based drama set in Iran, in which a philandering husband (Navid Negahban) falsely accuses his wife (Mozhan Marno) of adultery with her employer (Parviz Sayyad), eventually convincing her neighbors (David Diaan and Ali Pourtash, among others) to condemn her, despite the vigorous protests of her courageous aunt (Shohreh Aghdashloo). Director and co-writer Cyrus Nowrasteh's adaptation of the best-selling book, which also features Jim Caviezel as author-journalist Freidoune Sahebjam, takes an admirable stand against injustice, but depicts the cli-

matic execution extremely graphically. A sequence of intense violence, torture, sexual references, one rough and a few crude and crass terms. In Farsi. Subtitles. L (R)

**Whatever Works** (Sony Pictures Classics): A pessimistic New York grouch (Larry David) finds his life transformed when he reluctantly shelters a homeless but irrepressibly cheerful young Southerner (Evan Rachel Wood), and they fall for each other. Though undeniably clever at times, writer-director Woody Allen's comedy of manners mocks evangelical Christians through the waif's parents (Patricia Clarkson and Ed Begley Jr.) and heavily-handedly rams home the message that, in a meaningless universe, any path to tempo-

rary fulfillment, particularly that of unbridled sexuality, ought to be pursued. Adultery, implied group sex and homosexual activity, images of full nudity, a suicide theme, some sexual humor, at least one crude and one crass word, and about a dozen uses of profanity. O (PG-13)

COMING OF AGE



Karen Osborne | **Conflicting messages about sex get complicated for teens**

Last year, an Alaskan girl named Bristol Palin became more famous than Britney Spears, and for a similar reason: sex.

Had her mother, Gov. Sarah Palin, not campaigned to be vice president of the United States in 2008, Bristol might have gone unnoticed, another nameless teen-pregnancy statistic. But recently, newly single Bristol posed in her high school graduation gown on the cover of People magazine to tell teen girls everywhere that "if girls realized the consequences of sex, nobody would be having sex."

Bristol knows. She's had to deal with feeding her son, Tripp, in the middle of the night, cleaning baby barf off her favorite shirts, changing diapers when she'd rather be changing into a prom dress and working extra hard just to graduate high school.

Bristol should be commended for choosing life, but this is prob-

ably not exactly how she wanted to spend her senior year.

To say that teens receive conflicting information about sex is like saying that the sky is blue. One moment they're in health class listening about the gross effects of STDs, the next they're at the school prom grinding to Lady Gaga's "LoveGame" with three guys they've never met before.

Sorting through these conflicting messages can get complicated.

The secular world has a very different opinion regarding sex than the church, which holds a pretty hard line on premarital sex. This viewpoint is espoused by old white men in funny red hats who vowed to be celibate. Teens often question if the church's opinions are relevant to their lives because of that fact, but this is one time when following these men's advice – "don't do it" – is the smartest choice.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 750,000 teenage girls be-

come pregnant each year, and two-thirds of those girls won't graduate from high school. Teenage mothers are most likely to find themselves living at the poverty line.

A friend had her first child the summer she turned 18. When the rest of us were decorating our dorms, she lived in a state of constant exhaustion, staying up all night with a screaming baby and then pulling 10-hour shifts at the discount mart to pay the bills.

We stopped by her house to see her one night before we left for college. Her words that night stayed with me. In three months

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she seemed to age three years. "My daughter's a miracle," she said. "But I wish I'd waited until I was older and could handle it."

I wish she could have talked to Bristol, who told a reporter recently that "everyone should wait 10 years."

If you choose to have sex, are you ready to face the consequences?

If you don't know the answer to that question, it's best to wait.

The consequences of having sex before you're married can be permanent for both guys and girls. Whether it's a sexually transmitted disease that will make future relationships difficult, a baby who will need your full emotional and financial attention for years, or emotional stress from an abortion or adoption, sex when you're a teenager is a loaded roulette wheel where you lose far more than you win.

Those old celibate guys are right this time: Giving sexualized culture the boot isn't uncool. It's a way to respect yourself, your significant other and your future kids.

The consequences of that respect are nothing but positive.

Save the date

**Diocese sponsoring religious vocation discernment days**

The diocesan Vocations Office is sponsoring two discernment days at St. Stephen Diocesan Center for young people interested in learning more about religious life and the priesthood. The first, July 11, is for high school students. The second, July 25, is for those 18 and older. Both days go from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A Vocations Office brochure states that the purpose of the office is "to foster opportunities for our young people to discover God's will for their future lives."

The two days will provide an "atmosphere of discernment" for those seeking ways to serve the church as a religious, a priest, a deacon, or in other ways.

Lunch and materials will be provided. For more information, call the director of vocations, Father Peter Dumag, at 585-3355, send e-mail to manao@rcchawaii.org, or visit vocations@catholicchawaii.org. Download a registration form at <http://icatholicfaith.files.wordpress.com/2009/06/idiscern-registration1.pdf>.