

# ***Into the Deep***

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## **Truth Has Been Born**

*Pope Benedict XVI, Urbi et Orbi message, 25-12-2012*

In this *Year of Faith*, I express my Christmas greetings and good wishes in these words taken from one of the Psalms: “Truth has sprung out of the earth”.

Actually, in the text of the Psalm, these words are in the future: “Kindness and truth shall meet; / justice and peace shall kiss. / Truth shall spring out of the earth, /and justice shall look down from heaven. / The Lord himself will give his benefits; / our land shall yield its increase. / Justice shall walk before him, / and salvation, along the way of his steps” (Ps 85:11-14).

Today these prophetic words have been fulfilled! In Jesus, born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, kindness and truth do indeed meet; justice and peace have kissed; truth has sprung out of the earth and justice has looked down from heaven. Saint Augustine explains with admirable brevity: “What is truth? The Son of God. What is the earth? The flesh. Ask whence Christ has been born, and you will see that truth has sprung out of the earth ... truth has been born of the Virgin Mary”.

*“Nothing emboldens the wicked so greatly as the lack of courage on the part of the good.”*

*Pope Leo XIII, 1890*

**“Have patience** with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections but instantly set about remedying them – every day begin the task anew.”

*St Francis de Sales*

## **It’s Not Over**

*From a column by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput,  
Bishop of Philadelphia*

St Leo the Great once described Christmas as “the birthday of life,” and his words remind us that the manger in Bethlehem contained much more than generic good will. It cradled something far more intense and particular: the Word of God incarnate, the flesh and blood of God’s son.

Christmas is “heart-warming” because it radiates the fire of God’s love. The real story of Christmas is revolutionary and true, and it ends not in a January sale, but in an empty cross and tomb – the glory of our redemption.

This year, in the days of the Christmas season, let’s turn off the noise and turn our hearts instead to the narratives of Christ’s birth in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew.

The Prince of Peace is with us. In his life, God invites us to eternal life. This is the source of our happiness. This is our reason to celebrate.

## **No Excuse**

*Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 01-08-2012*

...St Alphonsus Liguori coined a famous, very elementary maxim which says: “Those who pray will be saved and those who do not will be damned!”

Commenting on this lapidary sentence, he added, “In conclusion, to save one’s soul without prayer is most difficult, and even impossible... But by praying our salvation is made secure, and very easy”.

And he says further: “if we do not pray, we have no excuse, because the grace of prayer is given to everyone... if we are not saved, the whole fault will be ours; and we shall have our own failure to answer for, because we did not pray”.

[www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

**All issues of *Into the Deep* are at [www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com)**

## Reassess Priorities

*Pope Benedict XVI, in The Financial Times.*

*[The Financial Times had requested the Holy Father's comments on the occasion of Christmas following the publication of his recent book on the infancy of Jesus Christ.]*

The birth of Christ challenges us to reassess our priorities, our values, our very way of life. While Christmas is undoubtedly a time of great joy, it is also an occasion for deep reflection, even an examination of conscience. At the end of a year that has meant economic hardship for many, what can we learn from the humility, the poverty, the simplicity of the crib scene?

Christmas can be the time in which we learn to read the Gospel, to get to know Jesus not only as the child in the manger, but as the one in whom we recognize that God made man. It is in the Gospel that Christians find inspiration for their daily lives and their involvement in worldly affairs – be it in the Houses of Parliament or the stock exchange. Christians should not shun the world; they should engage with it. But their involvement in politics and economics should transcend every form of ideology.

Christians fight poverty out of a recognition of the supreme dignity of every human being, created in God's image and destined for eternal life. They work for more equitable sharing of the earth's resources out of a belief that – as stewards of God's creation – we have a duty to care for the weakest and most vulnerable. Christians oppose greed and exploitation out of a conviction that generosity and selfless love, as taught and lived by Jesus of Nazareth, are the way that leads to fullness of life. The belief in the transcendent destiny of every human being gives urgency to the task of promoting peace and justice for all.

Because these goals are shared by so many, much fruitful co-operation is possible between Christians and others. Yet Christians render to Caesar only what belongs to Caesar, not what belongs to God. Christians have at times throughout history been unable to comply with demands made by Caesar. From the emperor cult of ancient Rome to the totalitarian regimes of the past century, Caesar has tried to take the place of God. When Christians refuse to bow down before the false gods proposed today, it is not because of an antiquated worldview. Rather, it is because they are free from the constraints of ideology and inspired by such a noble vision of human destiny that they cannot collude with anything that undermines it.

In Italy, many crib scenes feature the ruins of ancient Roman buildings in the background. This shows that the birth of the child Jesus marks the end of the old order, the pagan world, in which Caesar's claims went virtually unchallenged. Now there is a new king, who relies not on the force of arms, but on the power of love.

*Zenit.org 20-12-2012*

## Christmas Date

Thank you for your latest Into the Deep. I would like to bring to your attention a discrepancy in your Christmas Quiz (ITD Dec 2012, p.11).

Regarding the following questions:

*Why is Christmas on the 25th of December?*

*When did Christians first celebrate Christmas?*

You give the answers as:

- *to Christianise the pagan feast of the Birthday of the Sun (by celebrating the Birthday of the Son on the same day); and*

- *in the early 300's*

Author Mark Shea, in his blog "Catholic and Enjoying It!" quotes material regarding this issue from his books. Mark outlines the theory for Sol Invictus being instituted in 274 to suppress/overshadow the celebration of the Birth of Christ. Also Pope Benedict in *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (p.107) suggests that date of 243 for the first written record of Christmas as this developed from the date of Easter.

The Pope goes on to say, "The claim used to be made that December 25 developed in opposition to the Mithras myth, or as Christian response to the cult of unconquered sun promoted by Roman emperors in the third century in their efforts to establish a new imperial religion. **However these old theories can no longer be sustained.**" (emphasis added) (p.107-108).

I was only made aware that this was a myth myself, in the last few years.

I enjoy your newsletter and thank you for it.

*K.E., Melbourne*

## Looking For Books

I'm trying to get hold of the following set of books (all in Latin) now out of print and no longer available. I've already pursued the usual channels around the world, but no success. What I'm hoping for is a second-hand solution closer to home. There might be a Catholic library, or a priest (retired?), or someone who has acquired books from the estate of a priest/friend in the family, with just this item sitting on a shelf, unused.

A full set of all four volumes of the  
*Liturgia Horarum Iuxta Ritum Romanum*,  
otherwise known as the Divine Office, or the Latin  
Breviary, or the Liturgy of the Hours according to the  
Roman Rite, copyright MM (2000AD)  
by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana (Vatican Press)  
ISBN 88-209-2809-4

If only individual volumes are available, I will consider. Please contact John Henderson on 03 5134 1742 who will negotiate on my behalf. Thank you.

*Name and address supplied*

# Why Does God Allow Wickedness?

By Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, Archbishop of Philadelphia

Scripture is a love story, the story of God's love for humanity. But it's a real story filled with real people. It's not a fairytale. In Scripture, as in the real world, evil things happen to innocent persons. The wicked seem to thrive. Cruelty and suffering are common.

The Psalmist cries out to heaven again and again for justice; Job is crushed by misfortune; Herod murders blameless infants; Jesus is nailed to a cross. God is good, but we human beings are free, and being free, we help fashion the nature of our world with the choices we make. This is why evil is frightening, but it's not incomprehensible. We know it from intimate experience. What we never quite expect is for our private sins, multiplied and fermented by millions of lives with the same or similar "little" sins, to somehow feed the kind evil that walks into a Connecticut school and guns down 26 innocent lives, 20 of them children.

Thirteen years ago, as archbishop of Denver, I helped bury some of the victims of the Columbine High School massacre. Nothing is more helpless or heart-breaking than to sit with parents who kissed their children goodbye in the morning and will never see them alive again in this world. The pain of loss is excruciating. Words of comfort all sound empty. The victims in the Sandy Hook massacre were even younger and more numerous than those at Columbine, and if such intense sorrow could be measured, the suffering of the Connecticut family members left behind might easily be worse. With such young lives cut so short, every parental memory of an absent child will be precious – compounded by a hunger for more time and more memories that will never happen. This is why we need to keep the grieving families so urgently in our hearts and prayers.

People will ask, "How could a loving God allow such wickedness?" Every life lost in Connecticut was unique, precious and irreplaceable. But the evil was routine; every human generation is rich with it. Why does God allow war? Why does God allow hunger? Why does God allow the kind of poverty that strips away the dignity of millions of people in countries around the world?

All of these questions sound reasonable, and yet they're all evasions. We might as well ask, "Why does God allow us to be free?" We have the gift of being loved by a Creator who seeks our love in return; and being loved, we will never be coerced by the One who loves us. God gives us the dignity of freedom – freedom to choose between right and wrong, a path of life or a path of death. We are not the inevitable products of history or economics or any other

determinist equation. We're free, and therefore we're responsible for both the beauty and the suffering we help make. Why does God allow wickedness? He allows it because we – or others just like us – *choose* it. The only effective antidote to the wickedness around us is to live differently from this moment forward. We make the future beginning now.

... The evil in the world is bitter and brutal, but it's not new. Nor, in the light of human history, is it a surprise. Yet in the Old Testament, the Song of Songs tells us that "love is strong as death," and in God's redeeming plan, love is *stronger* than death. The *surprise* is the persistence of God's fidelity and mercy. The surprise is that, despite our sins, we still long to be the people God intended us to be.

Christmas is the birthday of Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel, a name that means "God with us." The surprise is that God sends his own Son into a dark world to bring us light and hope. So it has been with every generation since Bethlehem. So it remains – even now.

*Zenit.org 18-12-2012*

## It's Not About the Priest

*Cardinal George Pell, in an address on the New Evangelisation, Scotland, 10-12-2012*

The most obvious day-to-day change [following Vatican II] took place in the liturgy, where the transition into the vernacular for the celebration of the sacraments was not explicitly mandated by the Council itself. I suspect that not many of the Council Fathers anticipated that our liturgies would so quickly resemble, at least on the surface, Protestant eucharists rather than the Tridentine Mass. Pope John XXIII had only expected that a portion of the Mass would be celebrated in the vernacular.

On that point, it has been pleasing to see, some 40 years later, how the new translation has improved the quality and fidelity of the English text of the liturgy to the Latin original. More importantly, this more sacral language has helped turn us more towards transcendence, the worship of the one true God. Christ should always be at the centre of the Mass, rather than the priest.

As a consequence, I strongly support placing a crucifix between the people and the officiating priest and would support a return to the practice of the celebrant facing east, with his back to the people. This would make it abundantly clear that whoever is at the centre of the celebration, it is not the priest.

## Empty Pews

There is something drastically wrong with a diocese's sacramental preparation program and policy when in spite of sacramentalising hundreds and thousands of children year in and year out, parishes are virtually devoid of young families. It appears that baptismal preparation programs have all but abandoned the Church's evangelisation mission.

I have always held the view that our bishops' main lack of credibility has stemmed from their mindless positivity and their refusal to confront hard facts; including their inability to reflect critically on their own ailing and failing pastoral plans, policies and programs over many years.

What's the good of writing and preaching about grace, faith, the new evangelisation and starting afresh from Christ when you continue with policies and programs which encourage baptism of children while leaving their parents unconverted? To continue baptising children of unevangelised parents where there is an absence of "a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion" (Canon 868) is like building a house without a foundation. The devastating effects of this practice are there for all to see.

The sacrament of Baptism is the cornerstone of our Catholic faith and life. It is necessary for salvation and the gateway to the other sacraments. Through this sacrament we are freed from all sin, reborn as children of God, made like Christ and incorporated into His Body, the Church. Baptism preparation programs should call parents to faith and a commitment to conversion by entering into a relationship with the living sacramental God in His holy Catholic Church.

Baptising the children of unevangelised parents is not going to restore the basis of what is necessary for parents to rekindle their faith and to start practising it again. Only proper and adequate evangelization will.

If souls are lost to Christ because the sacramental policies and preparation programs fail to evangelise people properly then it is incumbent upon the bishop to act and fix it.

As the director, regulator and moderator of the entire liturgy, the bishop alone is ultimately responsible for the sacramental policies and programs in his diocese. As the principal dispenser of the sacred mysteries of God he is to endeavour constantly that the souls entrusted to his care can grow in grace through the celebration of the sacraments and that they understand and live the paschal mystery (Canon 387). If he is serious about the new evangelisation and the handing on of faith to future generations, then it is imperative that he change the way parents are prepared for the Baptism of their children. How else can the Church expect parents to live up to their responsibilities as the primary educators of their children's faith?

*Gregory Kingman, Morwell*

## Touching God

*Fr Wojciech Giertych, O.P., the Pope's theologian, in an interview with Edward Pentin, NCRRegister, 12-11-2012*

When we make an act of faith, which is possible when we've received the grace of faith, immediately there is a contact with God, and so we can say this first movement of faith is like a spark plug in a car engine which issues the spark, which ignites the gasoline and gets the car moving. ...

But every time that we do this, it is like the woman who was suffering from the haemorrhage in the Gospel of Mark. She came and touched the rim of Jesus' cloak with her finger, and Jesus says, "Somebody touched me." The apostles say, "You're crazy; they're all touching you; you're in the middle of the crowd." But Jesus says, "No."

Somebody touched him because she touched Jesus' cloak with her finger. But she touched his heart with her faith. Then the apostles ask Jesus how he knows that, and he replies, "Because power came out of me." Every time we make an act of faith, the power of God comes out of God and fills us.

We make these acts of faith because we've been enabled by God to do this.

Now, sometimes we only do it once in a moment, but the issue for the New Evangelization is to learn how to make these acts of faith every day – when you're standing at a bus stop and waiting for the bus to come, make an act of faith, and the bus comes; when you're preaching, when you're teaching, when you're praying, engaged in a conversation with a difficult teenager who's going through a difficult phase.

In every situation before we open our mouths, we [need to] make an act of faith and believe that that faith has the power of touching God. Then the spark plug is lit, and the grace of God is then within us. We can then call as an ally to our conversations the Holy Spirit, who is living in the hearts of those to whom we are speaking or writing. ...

The act of faith is something that is conscious. We cannot feel grace, but we can psychologically perceive the fact that we are making an act of faith, and there are situations where sometimes reason and emotions, the whole context, may suggest [otherwise]. To love our neighbour when our neighbour is difficult, we need to make an act of faith to believe that God is here, to invite the charity of the supernatural love of God into this difficult relationship, into this difficult situation.

So acts of faith are conscious, and we are aware of the fact that, as we are rooted in faith, as we grow in faith, the habit of inviting God into every situation becomes almost spontaneous. But we have to learn that, and we learn that in contemplative prayer when we kneel and sit in front of the Blessed Sacrament and believe that he's there.

## Ignorance of the Faith

*Pope Benedict XVI, to French Bishops*

The Good News we must announce to mankind in all times and in all languages and cultures, may be summarised in these words: God, creator of mankind, in His son Jesus, has shown us His love for humanity. ‘God is love’ and pursues the happiness of His creation, of all His children. The pastoral constitution ‘Gaudium et spes’ asks key questions on human existence, the meaning of life and death, evil, disease and suffering, all present in our world. It recalls that, in His paternal goodness, God brings answers to all these questions and that Christ founded His Church in order to bring those answers to all mankind. This is the reason why one of the gravest problems of our time is the ignorance of religion on the part of many men and women, also among the Catholic faithful.

This is why the new evangelisation, in which the Church is resolutely engaged, ... assumes such importance. One of the most formidable obstacles to our pastoral mission is ignorance of the content of faith. Indeed, this is a dual form of ignorance: the ignorance of Jesus Christ as a person and ignorance of the sublime nature of His teachings, of their universal and permanent value in the search for the meaning of life and happiness.

*Vatican Information Service 30-11-2012*

## Disobedient Priest

There is a parish here in Brisbane where the priest refuses to follow the words of the new translation of the missal.

Even before this, he refused to recite the creed, making up his own (and theologically highly contentious) version. Sometimes he invites the congregation to meditate yoga-style instead of reciting the creed. Other “activities” at his Masses are also very questionable.

Is there someone to whom we could report this apart from our local Bishop? Archbishop Bathersby knew about this for years but did nothing about it.

Any advice would be highly appreciated.

*Francis Ribeiro, Brisbane*

I suggest you write to your new bishop, Archbishop Coleridge, with a copy to our new Apostolic Nuncio, His Grace Archbishop Paul Gallagher, at The Apostolic Nunciature, PO Box 3633, Manuka ACT 2603.

- Ed.

## Holy Days of Obligation:

How many are there in Australia in 2013?

See page 11 for the answer.

## The Liturgy is Not Ours

*Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 03-10-2012*

...We must always be mindful of and accept the logic of the Incarnation of God: He has drawn close, become present, by entering into history and into human nature, by becoming one of us. And this presence continues in the Church, his Body. The liturgy then is not the memory of past events, but rather the living presence of Christ’s Paschal Mystery, which transcends and unites both time and space. If the centrality of Christ does not emerge at the forefront in the celebration, we will not have Christian liturgy, which is totally dependent upon the Lord and sustained by his creative presence. God acts by means of Christ and we cannot act except through him and in him. Every day, the conviction must grow in us that the liturgy is not ours, my own “doing”; rather, it is God’s action in us and with us.

Therefore, it is neither the individual – priest or faithful – nor the group who celebrates the liturgy; rather, it is primarily God’s action through the Church, who has her own history, her own rich tradition and her own creativity. This universality and fundamental openness, which is proper to the liturgy as a whole, is one of the reasons why it cannot be designed or modified by individual communities or by experts, but must be faithful to the forms of the universal Church.

Even in the liturgy of the smallest communities, the entire Church is always present. For this reason, there are no “strangers” in the liturgical community. In every liturgical celebration the whole Church participates together, heaven and earth, God and men. The Christian liturgy ... is by its very nature catholic; it comes from the whole and leads to the whole, in unity with the Pope, with the Bishops, with believers of all times and ages and from all places. The more a celebration is animated by this awareness, the more fruitfully will the authentic meaning of the liturgy there be realized.

Dear friends, the Church is made visible in many ways: in charitable works, in missionary endeavours, in the personal apostolate that every Christian should carry out in his own environment. But the place where she is fully experienced as the Church is in the liturgy: it is the act, we believe, whereby God enters into our reality and we can encounter him, we can touch him. It is the act whereby we enter into contact with God: He comes to us, and we are enlightened by him. Therefore, when in our reflections we focus our attention only on how we may render it attractive, interesting, beautiful, we risk forgetting the essential: the liturgy is celebrated for God and not for us; it is his work; he is the subject; and we should open ourselves to him and allow ourselves to be guided by him and by his Body, which is the Church.

*[Translation by Diane Montagna] Zenit.org 03-10-2012*

# God is Good

Homily by Fr John Speekman for 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Year B, Isaiah 53:10-11; Hebrews 4:14-16; Mark 10:35-45  
*homiliesfromaustralia.blogspot.com*

*The Lord has been pleased to crush his servant with suffering.*

What strange words these are at first sight! Just to harass an employee, let alone to ‘crush a servant with suffering’, is a chargeable offence in our country. On the lips of the prophet Isaiah, however, these words are not what they seem; they are instead words of wisdom, love and mercy and they seek to radically correct our all too human way of thinking.

Firstly, they cause us to question ourselves about whether we really believe that God is good.

For many of us it seems the jury is still out on this question. Every bad experience, every hurt or suffering, every unhappy news report of a volcano or tsunami or earthquake makes it plain that we have not yet confidently and totally reached the conviction that God is good. ‘How could God do this? How could God allow this? Why does God not put an end to this?’

Many years ago, as a seminary student, I reached a point where I came to believe I could not go on to ordination. I had given up a teaching career and a house and I was very angry with God. I complained to him one night in a way that now causes me to blush with shame. I blamed God for causing me this humiliation and I told him so in no uncertain terms. When God’s response finally came I was utterly stupefied at his goodness and mercy towards me. Immediately I experienced the most intense remorse and vowed I would never again blame God for anything!

I had learned that God is good; that God is good when the sun is shining and when dark clouds blanket our lives. He is good when all is going well and he is good when disaster strikes. As Job affirmed: *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* (13:15)

When a man truly believes that God is good, and when this belief in God’s goodness, like a solid foundation stone, is firmly in place in his life there is a great peace and a great strength which comes to him. No more anxieties or doubts and no more criticisms. Our God is good!

Secondly, these words cause us to question ourselves as to who is servant and who is Lord.

We may notionally acknowledge that God is Lord and that we are the servants but in actuality we often seem to live and pray as though it’s really the other way round. That’s one of the reasons we get so angry and frustrated when he doesn’t seem to be answering our prayers the way we want him to, or when our plans are thwarted.

The wise man says: *If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.*

The good God is not my servant; I am his servant. I am here to do *his* will and wait on *his* plans for me. Let’s get this straight in our minds and hearts once and for all.

In many of us, also, there is a *de facto* understanding that God is the one who must do our will and bend to our agenda and belief system.

‘God must save everyone and must not allow anyone to go to hell.’ Oh, really? You don’t say?

‘God condones homosexual acts because God is inclusive.’ Actually, he doesn’t – and he isn’t.

‘A good God would never allow anyone to suffer like that.’ Ok, so what do those words mean: *The Lord has been pleased to crush his servant with suffering?*

A servant listens to his Master and obeys his word; he doesn’t put words in his Master’s mouth.

Thirdly, these words cause us to reassess our notions about suffering.

No person in his right mind would claim that suffering is good in itself; certainly it is evil, and we Christians claim that it entered our lives because we misused our gift of freedom; we wanted to set our own limits, to be our own god. Suffering now accompanies almost every move we make; we are born in suffering and we die in suffering.

And yet there is a positive dimension to it all. Suffering can bring good. It dogs our footsteps but it can become an instrument of healing and growth; it can bring us to come to resemble the Lord himself, who *learnt to obey through suffering.* (Heb 5:8)

His sufferings brought him to perfect obedience, redemptive obedience, and our sufferings can lead us to come to bear a likeness to him.

As the vintner is pleased to crush the grapes (with suffering) so that he can transform them into wine, we too can be transformed if we accept, in the Lord, the sufferings involved in our own purification. We, too, shall become wine, pure and fragrant, and after that we live in the Christian hope that our good God will say over us the words, ‘This is my Body, this is my Blood’ and our transformation will be complete.

*“Who except God can give you peace?  
Has the world ever been able  
to satisfy the heart?”*

*St Gerard Majella*

# Confession Poser

I have a poser for you. It is on the Sacrament of Confession. My deep concern is what I have been told by a priest. In our parish, Healing Masses are held on different occasions – all well and good. But here is the thing that bugs me. A priest at one time said to me that a healing Mass is the same as going to Confession. If that statement is true, where please is the absolution, and penance for the sin, or sins, committed?

Whilst on that subject, another person informed me one day that when you go to Mass and say, “through my fault, through my grievous fault”, that was also the same as Confession. How sad to see this most holy Sacrament so neglected. Maybe it has not been explained properly?

My only wish is simply this, that in our Catholic school system the children would be taught and helped on these very important matters. If teachers, parents and principals – one could go on – do not teach or show that example, then what can you expect! “Suffer not” the little children.

*Peter Duyndam, Newborough, Vic*

The following are attempts to address the various aspects of Peter Duyndam’s concerns above.

## Healing Masses

It is difficult to find any official teaching on what actually constitutes a “healing Mass”. There is however, an “Instruction on Prayers for Healing” by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (2000), which distinguishes between liturgical and non-liturgical prayers for healing.

Liturgical prayers for healing are part of the liturgical books approved by the Church (Art.2 of the Disciplinary Norms) and are celebrated according to the specific rites prescribed in the Rite of Blessings of the Sick (Art.3§1). Prayers which are not contained in the Church’s liturgical books are non-liturgical.

Neither liturgical nor non-liturgical prayers for healing may be inserted into the Mass:

“Without prejudice to what is established above in art. 3 or to the celebrations for the sick provided in the Church’s liturgical books, prayers for healing – whether liturgical or non-liturgical – must not be introduced into the celebration of the Holy Mass, the sacraments, or the Liturgy of the Hours.” (Art.7§1) [However], “one may include special prayer intentions for the healing of the sick in the general intercessions or prayers of the faithful, when this is permitted.” (Art.7§2)

## Anointing of the Sick

With regards the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that it is “intended to strengthen those who are being tried by illness” (para.1151). One of the effects of the sacrament is mentioned as forgiveness of sins (para.1520), “if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance” (para.1532).

## Confession

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that:

“According to the Church’s command, after having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year.” (para.1457)

“Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church.” (para.1458)

## The Penitential Rite

Fr Edward McNamara addressed the question of the efficacy of the penitential rite in the Mass as far as the forgiveness of sins is concerned, in a Zenit column (28-06-2005). He quotes No. 51 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:

“Then the priest invites those present to take part in the Act of Penitence, which, after a brief pause for silence, the entire community carries out through a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the priest’s absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance.”

Fr McNamara adds: “Thus it is clear that the absolution formula that concludes the act of penance is not sacramental absolution and in no way dispenses from the obligation of confessing grave sins before receiving Communion. ...

“The non-absolutive nature of the penitential rite does not mean that venial sins are not forgiven during this rite; they are also forgiven by receiving Communion and by the other intercessory prayers of Mass. This forgiveness is due to the general reparatory nature of all positive acts of prayer, sacrifice, devotion and worship which in some way create a positive counterbalance to those common sins, defects and imperfections which plague our daily lives.”

- Ed.

“Anyone who is aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion, even if he experiences deep contrition, without having first received sacramental absolution, unless he has a grave reason for receiving Communion and there is no possibility of going to confession.” (Catechism para.1457)

## Modernist Errors

Recent articles concerning Holy Mass and Confession both in ITD and elsewhere suggest, to me anyway, that the Church has among those professing to be members, some who act as though there is now no reason for her teaching authority and seem to have forgotten there was any reason for it in the first place.

The Venerable Fulton J. Sheen comments that “Our Lord finds it necessary to warn us not to fear because there are three false fears that keep us away from God: [1] We want to be saved but not from our sins. [2] We want to be saved but not at too great a cost. [3] We want to be saved in ‘our’ way not His” (*Peace of Soul*, p.42). Sheen also notes that Psalm 139:7, “Where would I go to escape from you?” implies that man is an escapist. (*ibid*, p.48)

Among the many modernist errors refuted in 1907 by Pope Pius X in ‘Lamentabili’ and ‘Pascendi’, were the rejection of the Church’s teaching on the expiatory death of Christ, and that John 20:22 does not refer to the Sacrament of Penance.

By gradually weakening the Church’s teaching that Holy Mass is also a sacrifice through an emphasis on a community gathering to participate in a sacred meal, the meaning of the doxology “through Him, with Him and in Him” can also become lost. With this comes the real danger of indifference towards the Sacred Species. St Paul was very specific in warning of such danger and the consequences in 1Cor11:27-32.

The Sacrament of Penance requires humility and contrition both internally and externally. The popular and comfortable Third Rite of Reconciliation (to be used only in grave situations yet still conditional on later individual Confession – was this ever disclosed to the laity?) lacks any external and visible sign of humility.

But the real problem is even deeper. Under the influence of moral relativism through teaching situation ethics, fundamental option, and proportionalism etc. many seem to have lost the reality of objective personal sin. In such cases, presenting one’s self at individual Confession would be like presenting one’s self at the doctor, telling him you are sick, but being unable to tell him where your pain is. The queues awaiting individual confession may now not be as long as they once were, but our innate need to confess has not really diminished; only the means of doing so have changed. To paraphrase Fulton J. Sheen: to appease our own conscience we now confess the sins of others through gossiping, scandal sheets and current affair expose.

While some in society have become adept at supplying what appear to be perfectly reasonable reasons to justify almost anything, some of the ‘reasons’ are very unreasonable as they lack critical judgement a.k.a. common sense. In some instances, we appear to no longer be able to distinguish the sin from the sinner.

*John Royal, Bundaberg West, Qld*

## Complete Fidelity Required

*Pope Benedict XVI to American bishops, 09-12-2012*

The love of Christ impels us to devote ourselves without reserve to proclaiming His name throughout America, bringing it freely and enthusiastically to the hearts of all its inhabitants. ... For this reason we ought to take up this commitment, ... encouraging priests, deacons and consecrated men and women and pastoral agents to purify and strengthen their interior lives ever more fully through a sincere relationship with the Lord and a worthy and frequent reception of the sacraments. This will be encouraged by suitable catechesis and a correct and ongoing doctrinal formation marked by complete fidelity to the Word of God and the Church’s Magisterium and aimed at offering a response to the deepest questions and aspirations of the human heart.

*Vatican Information Service 10-12-2012*

## Retreat in Marlo

The next orthodox Catholic retreat at the Ark in Marlo, is from 1 - 4 February, with Fr Bernard McGrath of Bendigo.

Payment is by anonymous donation. For further enquiries or bookings, please contact me on (03) 5154 8419.

*Richard Earle, Marlo, Vic*

## Destroy What You Have Made

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, para.1458*

Indeed the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit. ...

“Whoever confesses his sins...is already working with God. God indicts your sins; if you also indict them, you are joined with God. Man and sinner are, so to speak, two realities: when you hear "man" – this is what God has made; when you hear "sinner" – this is what man himself has made. Destroy what you have made, so that God may save what he has made... When you begin to abhor what you have made, it is then that your good works are beginning, since you are accusing yourself of your evil works. The beginning of good works is the confession of evil works. You do the truth and come to the light.” - St Augustine

# Genuflections and Ciboria

Answered by Father Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy at the Regina Apostolorum university

**Q:** At my parish we still go to the tabernacle during the “Lamb of God” for hosts to supplement those already consecrated. Sometimes three or four full ciboria are brought to the altar so that the newly consecrated hosts can be added to those from the tabernacle. After the deacon places these ciboria on the altar, he genuflects, but not the priest. The priest waits until after the “Lamb of God” is chanted. Aside from the intention of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal to not use hosts from the tabernacle, is the deacon correct in genuflecting at this time? (He also genuflects, of course, when opening or closing the tabernacle doors.) - R.V., Chicago

**A:** First of all, our reader is correct in saying that insofar as possible the faithful should receive from hosts consecrated in the same Mass.

The GIRM, No. 85, says: “It is most desirable that the faithful, just as the priest himself is bound to do, receive the Lord’s Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and that, in the instances when it is permitted, they partake of the chalice (cf. below, no. 283), so that even by means of the signs Communion will stand out more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated.”

Of course, it is necessary to renew the hosts in the tabernacle and so on at least some occasions these must be used in the distribution of Communion. There are also numerous situations when it is difficult to calculate the number of hosts required, and having a sufficient reserve is a pastoral necessity. However, it would not be a correct response to this desire of the Church for the majority of hosts to be habitually taken from the tabernacle.

With respect to the precise question at hand I would say the following: The usual custom is to genuflect before taking and after leaving the Blessed Sacrament in a specific place. This practice, however, would naturally be omitted in this case, since Christ is already really present upon the altar and under both species.

The priest’s genuflection after the “Lamb of God” is a ritual action of the Mass and is related to his taking Communion. It has nothing to do with the presence or absence of ciboria taken from the tabernacle.

I would also say that if the tabernacle is directly behind and close to the altar, then the deacon should not genuflect before taking the ciboria for communion as Christ is already present behind him. If the tabernacle is off to one side or in a separate chapel, then he should genuflect at this time. He should always genuflect upon replacing the ciborium in the tabernacle after communion. He does this before closing the tabernacle door.

Zenit.org 25-09-2012

# Sacrament of the Sick

Catechism of the Catholic Church

**1511** The Church believes and confesses that among the seven sacraments there is one especially intended to strengthen those who are being tried by illness, the Anointing of the Sick:

**1512** From ancient times in the liturgical traditions of both East and West, we have testimonies to the practice of anointings of the sick with blessed oil. Over the centuries the Anointing of the Sick was conferred more and more exclusively on those at the point of death. Because of this it received the name “Extreme Unction.” ...

**1513** The Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum infirmorum*, following upon the Second Vatican Council, established that henceforth, in the Roman Rite, the following be observed:

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given to those who are seriously ill by anointing them on the forehead and hands with duly blessed oil – pressed from olives or from other plants – saying, only once: “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

**1514** The Anointing of the Sick “is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived.”

**1515** If a sick person who received this anointing recovers his health, he can in the case of another grave illness receive this sacrament again. If during the same illness the person’s condition becomes more serious, the sacrament may be repeated. It is fitting to receive the Anointing of the Sick just prior to a serious operation. The same holds for the elderly whose frailty becomes more pronounced.

**1516** Only priests (bishops and presbyters) are ministers of the Anointing of the Sick. It is the duty of pastors to instruct the faithful on the benefits of this sacrament. ...

**1532** The special grace of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects:

- the uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church;
- the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age;
- the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance;
- the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul;
- the preparation for passing over to eternal life.

# Reversing the Decline

*Cardinal George Pell, in an address on the New Evangelisation, Scotland 10-12-2012*

...In many, perhaps most, parts of the Western world the Church is still losing ground. In the Western world, all those of us who love the Church cannot afford to ignore this, much less to be in a state of denial. If we cannot recognise where we are, it is much more difficult to plan for re-evangelisation.

... Let me suggest some simple measures and the best way to resist hostile pressures. To reverse decline – whether it be in sport or religion – is to insist that the fundamentals are in place.

First, we must emphasise the importance of faith in the one true God who loves us. ...

Second, the crucified Christ and his teachings have to be at the centre of all our catechetical and religious formation work with the young. ... No new evangelisation is possible without a sound catechesis for the young. ...

My third point ... consider the four last things: death, judgement, heaven, hell. If the fires of hell are never populated (in our view), then our life is likely to lack a sense of urgency. If purgatory has lapsed into limbo also, so that we are unconcerned about the necessity of purification before entering into God's presence, then we might be drifting towards supporting an unreflective attitude that heaven is a universal human right. ... We certainly understand today that the God who judges us is loving and sympathetic as well as just, but Jesus also said that 'narrow is the way that leads to salvation' (Mt 7:14). ...

My fourth point is that today even in regular Christian formation Christ is too often displaced from the centre, His hard teachings obscured or neglected. While disinterest is usually the greater problem, we have a whole range of alternatives, e.g. the charisma of the founder, global warming, the sustainability of the planet, theorising about social justice, even the struggle for life rather than stressing the call to repent and believe, to follow our brother the redeemer Jesus Christ the only Son of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; so too misdirected zeal worked to turn our eucharists too often into community celebrations rather than solemn traditional acts of worship. ...

A fifth fundamental. I repeat that youngsters and their parents from every type of Catholic family, good, bad or indifferent, need to be informed that the Ten Commandments are the indispensable moral framework for all Christians, not just for a few old churchgoers. The primacy of conscience (a damaging notion when applied to the Word of God) cannot dispense anyone from any of the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are not like a final examination of ten questions where only six need be attempted. ...

# Loss of Faith

It is often the case that outsiders see us better than we see ourselves. Roger Scruton, a well-known English critic, not a Catholic, has observed: No wonder the Catholic Church is in trouble; it is constantly holding conferences to debate issues settled hundreds of years ago!

A while ago there was a conference in Ireland that had all the hallmarks of confusion. Priests and laity issued strong calls for priests to be allowed to marry, which has only ever been a matter of Church discipline, not faith.

Mingled with this was the call for women to be ordained priests, which is a different kettle of fish altogether. This is a matter of Catholic faith, which the Church cannot change like it can change its discipline according to circumstances.

The thing that struck me about the call for married priests was how green distant fields can seem. The break-up rate for first marriages in Australia is 40% - nearly half! For the rest it is no bed of roses either. Divorces are both painful and expensive. Have these issues been faced realistically by the dissatisfied? I doubt it.

As rich as it can be personally, no doubt the priesthood can also be lonely if one is not a well-adjusted human being. Do such men perform better in marriage? The record of unhappy marriages is anything but good, so how can married clergy be the answer?

For good reason there are cases of married clergy within and outside the Catholic Church, but has anyone considered the implication of wives and children? There is no doubt that married clergy are concerned for their wives and family, as they should be, but that would mean a whole new type of priestly life, which is not going to be cheap. Who is going to pay? Many are already reluctant to donate directly to the upkeep of their clergy.

The loss of Catholic faith inherent in the demand for women priests is a serious matter of faith, not just discipline. What has happened to priests and people from "The Land of Saints and Scholars" that they should have come to this?

*S.C., Melbourne*

# Prayers

Please pray for our Special Correspondent (S.C.) who is battling with multiple health issues at present. - Ed.

**"The saints** have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church's history."

*Pope John Paul II*

## We Have Lost Credibility

*From the intervention of Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of New Evangelization, at the Synod of Bishops*

“We are wrapped up in ourselves, we demonstrate a self-sufficiency that prevents us from drawing near to one another as a living and fruitful community that generates vocations, having so greatly bureaucratized the life of faith and the sacraments. In a word, we no longer know whether being baptized is equivalent to being evangelizers. Incapable of being proclaimers of the Gospel, unsure of the certainty of the truth that saves, and cautious in speaking because we are oppressed by control of language, we have lost credibility and we risk rendering vain the Pentecost.”

## Holy Days of Obligation

See question page 5. Answer: 54

*From the Code of Canon Law:*

**Can. 1246 §1.** Sunday, on which by apostolic tradition the paschal mystery is celebrated, must be observed in the universal Church as the primordial holy day of obligation. The following days must also be observed: the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Epiphany, the Ascension, the Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Mary the Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception, her Assumption, Saint Joseph, Saint Peter and Saint Paul the Apostles, and All Saints.

§2. With the prior approval of the Apostolic See, however, the conference of bishops can suppress some of the holy days of obligation or transfer them to a Sunday.

**Can. 1247** On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass.

Moreover, they are to abstain from those works and affairs which hinder the worship to be rendered to God, the joy proper to the Lord's day, or the suitable relaxation of mind and body.

*From the Liturgy Office of the Archdiocese of Sydney:*

The number of holy days of obligation was once much greater. With the *motu proprio Supremi disciplinae* of 2 July 1911, Pope Pius X reduced the number of such non-Sunday holy days from 36 to 8 (the above 10 minus the feasts of the Body and Blood of Christ and Saint Joseph). The present list was established in 1917. ...

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference determined that, in addition to all the Sundays in the year, the only feast days to be observed in Australia as holydays of obligation are the solemnities of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ [25 December] and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary [15 August]. The Decree of Promulgation became effective on 16 September 2001.

## Truth Has a Future

*Pope Benedict XVI in an interview for the documentary "Bells of Europe – A Journey into the Faith in Europe"*

**Q:** Your Holiness, your Encyclicals present a compelling view of man: a man inhabited by God's charity, a man whose reason is broadened by the experience of faith, a man who possesses social responsibility thanks to the dynamism of charity received and given in truth. ... [Y]ou have repeatedly stated that this rediscovery of the human countenance ... is a cause of great hope.... Can you explain to us the reasons for your hope?

**A:** The first reason for my hope consists in the fact that the desire for God, the search for God, is profoundly inscribed into each human soul and cannot disappear. Certainly we can forget God for a time, lay Him aside and concern ourselves with other things, but God never disappears. St Augustine's words are true: we men are restless until we have found God. This restlessness also exists today, and is an expression of the hope that man may, ever and anew, even today, start to journey towards this God.

The second reason for my hope lies in the fact that the Gospel of Jesus Christ, faith in Jesus Christ, is quite simply true; and the truth never ages. It too may be forgotten for a time, it may be laid aside and attention may turn to other things, but the truth as such does not disappear. Ideologies have their days numbered. They appear powerful and irresistible but, after a certain period, they wear out and lose their energy because they lack profound truth. They are particles of truth, but in the end they are consumed. The Gospel, on the other hand, is true and can therefore never wear out. In each period of history it reveals new dimensions, it emerges in all its novelty as it responds to the needs of the heart and mind of human beings, who can walk in this truth and so discover themselves. It is this reason, therefore, that I am convinced there will also be a new springtime for Christianity.

A third reason, an empirical reason, is evident in the fact that this sense of restlessness today exists among the young. Young people have seen much – the proposals of the various ideologies and of consumerism – and they have become aware of the emptiness and insufficiency of those things. Man was created for the infinite, the finite is too little. Thus, among the new generations we are seeing the reawakening of this restlessness, and they too begin their journey making new discoveries of the beauty of Christianity, not a cut-price or watered-down version, but Christianity in all its radicalism and profundity. Thus I believe that anthropology, as such, is showing us that there will always be a new reawakening of Christianity. The facts confirm this in a single phrase: *Deep foundation*. That is Christianity; it is true and the truth always has a future.

## Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Cranbourne	Friday and Saturday in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday 6am – 6pm (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 12.30pm First Friday 11.30am – 4pm
Trafalgar	Wednesday and First Saturday: (9.30am Mass) 10am – 10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, January onwards)
Wonthaggi	First Friday 7pm – 8pm

### *Mary*, our mother

And mother of the Redeemer,  
Gate of heaven and Star of the sea,  
Come to the aid of your people,  
Who have sinned,  
Yet also yearn to rise again!  
Come to the Church's aid,  
Enlighten your devoted children,  
Strengthen the faithful throughout the world,  
Let those who have drifted  
Hear your call,  
And may they who live as prisoners of evil  
Be converted!

*Pope John Paul II*

## Seek the Lord

*Pope Benedict XVI, 23-12-2012*

Unless we desire him  
we will never know the Lord,  
unless we expect him,  
we will never meet him,  
unless we seek him,  
we will never find him.

## Contact *Into the Deep*

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**PO Box 446, Traralgon, VIC, 3844  
Australia**

- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
- We rely on donations (cheques made out to John Henderson please).
- Donate to ITD via Ritchies Supermarkets Community Benefit program by nominating Into the Deep as your group, with CB number 81799, and shopping at your local Ritchies Supermarket (56 supermarkets throughout Eastern Australian) with your Community Benefit Card.

ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email and on the website; printed copies about a week later. Deadline for contributions is one week before the end of the month (but preferably by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month).

Editor - Janet Kingman

The purpose of ITD is to provide a forum for those who:

- no longer have a voice in Catholic Life, and other diocesan newspapers,
- wish to understand and defend the teachings of the Catholic Church,
- wish to support and defend those who are unjustly treated by Church bureaucrats and organisations,
- wish to campaign for the renewal of our Catholic schools,
- wish to promote Eucharistic adoration in all parishes,
- wish to have a means of support and contact for one another in remaining true to our Catholic faith.

### Letters to the Editor

Readers are encouraged to contribute letters or articles. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. The purpose of sharing letters is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for making positive changes, that is, in line with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We live in joyful hope that the diocese we love can be faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church. As such, Into the Deep aims to be a messenger of hope and not of doom. Name and contact details must accompany letters. However, if there is sufficient reason, anonymity will be preserved when publishing. Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of ITD.

## Enjoy His Company

*St Alphonsus Liguori*

“When our dear Saviour left this world, he did not wish to leave us alone, and therefore he devised a means of remaining with us in the Holy Eucharist to the end of time, that even here below we may enjoy his sweet company.”