

Into the Deep

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Whipped Cream

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 18-08-2013

The Word of God this Sunday contains words of Jesus that put us into crisis and need to be explained so that they are not misunderstood. Jesus says to the disciples: "Did you think that I came to bring peace to the earth? No, I say to you, I came to bring division" (Lk 12:51).

What does this mean? It means that the faith is not something decorative, ornamental; living the faith is not decorating life with a little religion, as if life were a pie and faith like the whipped cream that you use to decorate it.

No, faith is not this. Faith entails choosing God as the basic criterion for life, and God is not empty, God is not neutral, God is always positive, God is love, and love is positive!

After Jesus has come into the world we cannot act as if we do not know God, as if God were something abstract, empty, a mere name; no, God has a particular face, he has a name: God is mercy, God is fidelity, he is life that is given to all of us.

This is why Jesus says: I came to bring division; not that Jesus wishes to divide men against each other. On the contrary, Jesus is our peace, he is our reconciliation! But this peace is not the peace of a grave, it is not neutrality, Jesus does not bring neutrality, this peace is not a compromise at all costs.

Following Jesus means rejecting evil, egoism, and choosing the good, truth, justice, even when that requires sacrifice and renunciation of our own interests.

And, yes, this divides; we know that it divides us even from the closest bonds. But remember: it is not Jesus who divides! He posits the criterion: living for ourselves or living for God and for others; be served or serve; obey ourselves or obey God.

Zenit.org 19-08-2013

The Most Important

Pope Francis, Homily, 14-04-2013

The passage that we heard from the Book of Revelation speaks to us of worship: the myriads of angels, all creatures, the living beings, the elders, prostrate themselves before the Throne of God and of the Lamb that was slain, namely Christ, to whom be praise, honour and glory (cf. Rev 5:11-14).

I would like all of us to ask ourselves this question: You, I, do we worship the Lord? Do we turn to God only to ask him for things, to thank him, or do we also turn to him to worship him?

What does it mean, then, to worship God? It means learning to be with him, it means that we stop trying to dialogue with him, and it means sensing that his presence is the most true, the most good, the most important thing of all.

All of us, in our own lives, consciously and perhaps sometimes unconsciously, have a very clear order of priority concerning the things we consider important. Worshipping the Lord means giving him the place that he must have; worshipping the Lord means stating, believing not only by our words that he alone truly guides our lives; worshipping the Lord means that we are convinced before him that he is the only God, the God of our lives, the God of our history.

This has a consequence in our lives: we have to empty ourselves of the many small or great idols that we have and in which we take refuge, on which we often seek to base our security. They are idols that we sometimes keep well hidden; they can be ambition, a taste for success, placing ourselves at the centre, the tendency to dominate others, the claim to be the sole masters of our lives, some sins to which we are bound, and many others.

This evening I would like a question to resound in the heart of each one of you, and I would like you to answer it honestly: Have I considered which idol lies hidden in my life that prevents me from worshipping the Lord?

Worshipping is stripping ourselves of our idols, even the most hidden ones, and choosing the Lord as the centre, as the highway of our lives.

Zenit.org 15-04-2013

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Homilies Need to be Improved

Pope Benedict XVI in Verbum Domini, n.59

In the Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, I pointed out that ‘given the importance of the word of God, the quality of homilies needs to be improved. ...’ (no. 46).

The homily is a means of bringing the scriptural message to life in a way that helps the faithful to realize that God’s word is present and at work in their everyday lives. It should lead to an understanding of the mystery being celebrated, serve as a summons to mission, and prepare the assembly for the profession of faith, the universal prayer and the Eucharistic liturgy.

Consequently, those who have been charged with preaching by virtue of a specific ministry ought to take this task to heart. Generic and abstract homilies which obscure the directness of God’s word should be avoided, as well as useless digressions which risk drawing greater attention to the preacher than to the heart of the Gospel message. The faithful should be able to perceive clearly that the preacher has a compelling desire to present Christ, who must stand at the centre of every homily.

For this reason preachers need to be in close and constant contact with the sacred text; they should prepare for the homily by meditation and prayer, so as to preach with conviction and passion. The synodal assembly asked that the following questions be kept in mind: ‘What are the Scriptures being proclaimed saying? What do they say to me personally? What should I say to the community in the light of its concrete situation?’

The preacher ‘should be the first to hear the word of God which he proclaims,’ since, as Saint Augustine says: ‘He is undoubtedly barren who preaches outwardly the word of God without hearing it inwardly.’

The homily for Sundays and solemnities should be prepared carefully, without neglecting, whenever possible, to offer at weekday Masses *cum populo* brief and timely reflections which can help the faithful to welcome the word which was proclaimed and to let it bear fruit in their lives.

Interpreting Scripture

Pope Francis to Pontifical Biblical Commission, 12-04-13

The interpretation of the Holy Scriptures cannot be only an individual scientific effort, but must always confront itself with, be inserted within, and authenticated by the living tradition of the Church.

The Bottom Line

I’d like to respond to M.P. Emerson’s Arrogant, Presumptuous and Judgmental (letter in August ITD, p.8).

Emerson does not seem to disagree with the events I catalogued, nor with the points I made. Instead, there seems to be a series of personal attacks, such as:

“Arrogant”: nothing I have said is disputed. How am I arrogant? I reported on events, not persons.

“Presumptuous”: what have I presumed? Do the facts not support what I said? Overwhelmingly?

“Judgmental”: The common label of a modernist, used to attack an orthodox Catholic when logic is absent. We cannot judge souls. That belongs to God. What we must do is judge actions. This I have done. As John Paul said: Error must be unmasked and judged.

M.P. Emerson writes: “Nowhere has he provided statistical or empirical evidence to substantiate his claims.” If Emerson goes to Mass at Easter, for example, there is no shortage of evidence. As to figures, in my own parish about 400 go to Sunday Mass out of 11,000. The 2% of Catholic children practising after leaving Catholic schools is perhaps well-enough documented and known.

“With the greatest respect Mr Stokes, may I point out that whatever goes on between a husband and wife in the intimacy of marriage is a matter between themselves and God.” Actually, no. It is the Church’s job to teach that using anything to prevent conception is mortally sinful. The Church, in charity, does not want people to go to Hell. My concern is that because bishops and priests are not teaching, many souls are being lost. Incidentally, I did not detect much of that ‘greatest respect’ there.

It goes on: “The same sentiments apply to those receiving the Blessed Sacrament at Christmas and Easter.” Bishops and priests are there to teach the faith, and to save souls. People who miss even one Sunday Mass without good reason are in mortal sin. It is an act of charity to warn them of their danger. My argument is that priests are simply not doing this.

Now for the 21st century: “How cruel it is for us to educate our daughters and say that once they are married and have a family their place is at the kitchen sink!” There is nothing wrong with being a housewife. Mary, the mother of God, was a housewife, and I believe she had a better education than any of us today. Blessed Anna-Maria Taigi was a housewife. St Bridget. Many others. I don’t know of any female saint who married and outsourced the raising of her children. Not even one.

There’s more, but I have found it too hard to condense it to a manageable size. The bottom line is simple. After 50 years of non-teaching, it is clear that Catholics do not know their faith. Emerson’s letter has proved my points, perhaps better than I did.

Richard Stokes, Burpengary, Queensland

Recover Clarity About Right and Wrong

From a column by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput

We are Christ's witnesses. Our mission is to respond to the fire of God's love. But desire alone won't remake the world. So how do we accomplish the work God sets before us?

First, we need to wake up, shake off the cocoon of the world's narcotic noise, and recover our clarity about right and wrong. We do this by praying, and we need to pray every day. Praying, no matter how unfocused we might be at first, clears the head and the heart. It also clears the ears, so we can hear God's quiet voice. Setting aside some silent time with God each day plants the first seed of sanity. It sends down deep roots, and the soul grows a little stronger every day. If we listen well enough and long enough, God will tell us what he wants uniquely from each of us.

Second, we need to seek out confession regularly and stay close to the Eucharist. We can't lose hope when we know we're forgiven. We can't starve to death when we're being fed with the Bread of Life. And the stronger we get in the Lord, the more we have to give to others. The sacraments are literally rivers of grace. They bring us new life. They have real power.

Third, we need to share Jesus Christ consciously with someone every day. We need to make a deliberate point of it. And we don't have to hit people over the head with the Bible to do it. Life naturally presents us with opportunities to talk about our faith with friends or colleagues. Nothing is more attractive than a sincere, personal witness to the truth. And remember that what we give away in faith, we get back a hundredfold.

Fourth, we need to show a little courage. In the same Scripture passage where Jesus tells us to go and make disciples of all nations, he also tells us that he'll be with us always, even to the end of the age. If that's so – and of course, it *is* so – then what can we really worry about? What better friend can we have in the struggle for soul of the world, than the God who created it and us?

Fifth and finally, we need to be faithful to those who love us, and to those whom God calls us to love. So often we overlook the simple fabric of daily life and the persons who inhabit it. But that's where real love begins. That's where all discipleship starts. It's why Augustine wrote that "to be faithful in little things is a big thing."

God made each of us to make a difference. Whether we seem to succeed or fail is not the point. We may never see how God uses us to achieve his will. But it's enough that we try – and then profound things can happen.

CatholicPhilly.com 16-05-2013

A Child of the Church

Pope Francis, in answer to a journalist on the flight home from Brazil, 28-07-2013

Q: In Brazil a law has been approved which extends the right of abortion and has allowed matrimony between persons of the same sex. Why didn't you speak about this?

A: The Church has already expressed herself perfectly on this. It wasn't necessary to go back to this, nor did I speak about fraud or lies or other things, on which the Church has a clear doctrine.

... Moreover, young people know perfectly well what the position of the Church is.

Q: What is the position of Your Holiness, can you tell us?

A: That of the Church. I'm a child of the Church.

Zenit.org 01-08-2013

Be Generous With Jesus

Pope Francis, Angelus address, World Youth Day 28-07-13

The Immaculate Virgin intercedes for us in heaven as a good mother who watches over her children. May Mary teach us by her life what it means to be a missionary disciple.

Every time we pray the Angelus, we recall the event that changed the history of mankind for ever. When the Angel Gabriel proclaimed to Mary that she would become the Mother of Jesus the Saviour, even without understanding the full significance of that call, she trusted God and replied: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."

But what did she do immediately afterwards? On receiving the grace of being the Mother of the Incarnate Word, she did not keep that gift to herself; she set off, she left her home and went in haste to help her kinswoman Elizabeth, who was in need of assistance; she carried out an act of love, of charity, of practical service, bringing Jesus who was in her womb. And she did all this in haste!

There, my dear friends, we have our model. She who received the most precious gift from God, as her immediate response sets off to be of service and to bring Jesus.

Let us ask Our Lady to help us too to give Christ's joy to our families, our companions, our friends, to everyone.

Never be afraid to be generous with Christ. It is worth it! Go out and set off with courage and generosity, so that every man and every woman may meet the Lord.

Zenit.org 28-07-2013

Monthly or Weekly

Re the article "Frequent confession", August ITD, p.10.

I have been told that one month is sufficient for non-serious sins to be confessed, and that venial sins are forgiven in Mass (assuming you are sorry).

What was not mentioned was that regular confession also gives the graces to help overcome venial sins.

This point is covered in the Catechism of the Catholic Church – see 1458.

Soon to be Saint, Pope John XXIII in "Journal of a Soul" p. 304, entry of 11th August 1961, said, "During my whole life I have kept faithful to my practice of weekly confession."

Need comment be made on monthly/weekly confession?

On another subject: "What would Jesus say/do?" We have would all have read or heard this at times.

The answer implied is that Jesus would have agreed with the writer or speaker, who would not have made this comment if he/she believed that Jesus disagreed with him/her.

In any case, *they* have to agree with Jesus – and make sure they in fact do.

John Schmid, Boronia, Victoria

Working With God

Catechism of the Catholic Church, para 1458

Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church. 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. By receiving more frequently through this sacrament the gift of the Father's mercy, we are spurred to be merciful as he is merciful:

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

Be Very Careful Indeed

After reading your "Editor's Clarification" in the August issue of ITD (p.8), I say you would be well advised to be careful, very careful indeed, as to what you reduce to print.

In your rigid zeal, you have totally misrepresented me and the sentiments expressed in my letter which was to give voice to those persons who I believe were unjustly criticized by Mr Stokes. I merely stated facts and gave reasons for the actions of some people gleaned from knowledge accrued over many years of working with, for want of better words, the flotsam and jetsam of society but nevertheless people I see as "the salt of the earth". These people would know nothing of the dichotomies of objective or objective thought [*sic*] but God knows that and I am sure He will judge them accordingly. Or is that some form of heresy to you? I claimed nothing and I surely would not be so presumptuous as to form an opinion as to the state of another person's soul.

Unfortunately, instead of reading my letter with a modicum of intelligence and in the spirit in which it was written, you have raced off to find the nearest Catechism and searched for some conspiracy against the Church's teaching which you envisage is contained in my 'opinions'. For goodness sake! Not only have you demonstrated a total lack of understanding of my intentions but you have even suggested that I leave (the Church, I expect). This begs the questions as to by what authority and with what qualifications are you deemed sufficiently competent to make such an impertinent and arrogant suggestion?

What I notice particularly in ITD is the lack of any adherence to the gospel message of charity. Bishops, priests and lay persons are criticized *ad nauseum* but nowhere do I find the voice of understanding. There is a story in one of the gospels about Christ and the woman found in the act of adultery – wherever the male participant is in this story, does not rate a mention. In any event I believe it is rather apt to ITD. You might care to read it.

If you are really interested in what the 'highest authority of the Church' has to say about judging others I invite you to read the latest edition of TIME Magazine (August 12, 2013).

M.P. Emerson, Murchison, Victoria

Thank you for your friendly advice. However, it seems, to use your words, that "in your rigid zeal, you have totally misrepresented me". Nowhere did I presume to judge anyone's soul. I was simply stating what the Catholic Church teaches and what Catholics are therefore obliged to believe and follow. It was not intended to be upsetting or confusing.

- Ed.

Why Go to Mass?

Lately I have been wondering why we go to Mass. Is it for the priest? Is it for fellow parishioners?

My understanding is that we go to Mass to meet Jesus in the Eucharist which is the focal point of our Mass.

I have met so many people in the last few weeks who say: I am not going to Mass in my parish anymore as I do not like or agree with what our parish priest says or does!

Parish priests are human beings also. Some nights they may not get much sleep as they get called out to hospitals, or some other crisis, so I guess they get tired and cranky the same as the rest of us.

Sometimes a homily can be very challenging and I know I myself can get a bit uncomfortable and think he is talking about me! If you feel the same way then maybe it is your conscience telling you something.

Confession can also be a bit challenging if the priest chastises you. I have been in that situation also.

Maybe we should be praying for our priests and asking the Holy Spirit to guide them instead of turning away.

A couple of months ago I met a friend in the street who asked me what brought me back to Mass. We discussed why I never used to go very much and her response has stuck in my mind: No-one keeps me from my God or my own parish Mass!

I think of her and thank her as I know I was deliberately staying away from my fellow parishioners for all the wrong reasons!

Gwen Thomas, Sale, Victoria

Married Love

Humanae Vitae, n.8

Married love particularly reveals its true nature and nobility when we realize that it takes its origin from God, who “is love,” the Father “from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.”

Marriage, then, is far from being the effect of chance or the result of the blind evolution of natural forces. It is in reality the wise and provident institution of God the Creator, whose purpose was to effect in man His loving design. As a consequence, husband and wife, through that mutual gift of themselves, which is specific and exclusive to them alone, develop that union of two persons in which they perfect one another, cooperating with God in the generation and rearing of new lives.

The marriage of those who have been baptized is, in addition, invested with the dignity of a sacramental sign of grace, for it represents the union of Christ and His Church.

Effective Ministry

*Pope Francis to priests, religious and seminarians,
Rio de Janeiro, 27-07-2013*

I believe it is important to revive in ourselves this fact that we so often take for granted amid the many tasks of our daily lives: ‘You did not choose me but I chose you’, says Jesus.

We were called by God and we were called to be with Jesus. This living in Christ, in fact, marks all that we are and all that we do. This ‘life in Christ’ is precisely what ensures the effectiveness of our apostolate, that our service is fruitful. ...

It is not creativity, pastoral though it may be, nor meetings and planning that ensure our fruitfulness, even if these are very helpful, but what ensures fruitfulness is our being faithful to Jesus. ...

And we know well what that means: to contemplate Him, to worship Him, to embrace Him, especially through our faithfulness to a life of prayer, and in our daily encounter with Him, present in the Eucharist and in those most in need.

“Being with” Christ does not mean isolating ourselves from others. Rather, it is a “being with” in order to go forth and encounter others.

Vatican Information Service 28-07-2013

Exaltation of the Cross

Pope Benedict XVI, Lebanon, 14-09-2012

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross [is] a celebration originating in the East in 335, following the dedication of the Basilica of the Resurrection built over Golgotha and our Lord’s tomb by the Emperor Constantine the Great. ...

Are not Christian communion and witness grounded in the Paschal Mystery, in the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Christ? Is it not there that they find their fulfilment?

There is an inseparable bond between the cross and the resurrection which Christians must never forget. Without this bond, to exalt the cross would mean to justify suffering and death, seeing them merely as our inevitable fate.

For Christians, to exalt the cross means to be united to the totality of God’s unconditional love for mankind. It means making an act of faith!

To exalt the cross, against the backdrop of the resurrection, means to desire to experience and to show the totality of this love. It means making an act of love!

To exalt the cross means to be a committed herald of fraternal and ecclesial communion, the source of authentic Christian witness. It means making an act of hope!

Zenit.org 14-09-2012

Coffins and Cradles

Today, nearly all developed countries, 40% of the world's population in 70 countries, produce more coffins than cradles because of their declining birth rates.

An anti-life contraceptive mentality has taken over in the West; for selfish convenience, recreational sex has separated love-making from baby-making.

As predicted, contraception invariably leads to other unnatural behaviours which further lessen birth-rates and even life-expectancy.

The loss of respect for life and motherhood leads to abortion, infanticide, sterilization, infidelity, divorce, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, assisted suicide, euthanasia and even imposed population controls in some countries.

Human life is becoming cheap and disposable, subject to design, to utility, and a use-by date like in animal breeding.

The natural laws of healthy human sexual behaviour have been deduced by philosophers, confirmed by common experience and scientific evidence, and lived out by many prosperous societies.

We defy these laws at our peril. No one can claim a "right" to deny the basic prior rights of natural law.

When love-making and baby-making (the unitive and procreative act) are separated, the full self-giving love and openness to new life are missing.

Having "sex" prevails over being in "true love" and our bodies become only commodities for pleasure and logically, in any way we feel, as many do.

Anti-life behaviour and sex perversions make a culture of death, and are literally wiping out societies as we see everywhere.

God bless all those married couples who enjoy living and loving generously open to new life whenever. We badly need such families today for a prosperous culture of true love and life naturally, from womb to tomb, and then we will have no more worries about birth rates.

Fr Bernard McGrath, Bendigo, Victoria

Meeting God

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

Love is one way. It distances from oneself towards the other. Love is the final gift of oneself to the other. When we stop giving, we stop loving; when we stop loving, we stop growing and only in growing we reach personal realization. If we do not love, we will never open ourselves to welcome God's life. It is through love that we meet God.

What Do You Want Me to Do?

Pope Francis to WYD volunteers, 29-07-2013

God calls you to make definitive choices, and he has a plan for each of you: to discover that plan and to respond to your vocation is to move toward personal fulfilment.

God calls each of us to be holy, to live his life, but he has a particular path for each one of us. Some are called to holiness through family life in the sacrament of Marriage. Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion; in a culture of relativism and the ephemeral, many preach the importance of "enjoying" the moment. They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision, "for ever", because we do not know what tomorrow will bring. I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes that you are incapable of responsibility, that you are incapable of true love. I have confidence in you and I pray for you. Have the courage "to swim against the tide". Have the courage to be happy.

The Lord calls some to be priests, to give themselves to him more fully, so as to love all people with the heart of the Good Shepherd. Some he calls to the service of others in the religious life: devoting themselves in monasteries to praying for the good of the world, and in various areas of the apostolate, giving of themselves for the sake of all, especially those most in need. I will never forget that day, 21 September - I was 17 years old - when, after stopping in the Church of San José de Floresto to go to confession, I first heard God calling me. Do not be afraid of what God asks of you! It is worth saying "yes" to God. In him we find joy!

Dear young people, some of you may not yet know what you will do with your lives. Ask the Lord, and he will show you the way. The young Samuel kept hearing the voice of the Lord who was calling him, but he did not understand or know what to say, yet with the help of the priest Eli, in the end he answered: Speak, Lord, for I am listening. You too can ask the Lord: What do you want me to do? What path am I to follow?

Zenit.org 29-07-2013

What Counts

St Francis Xavier

It is not the actual physical exertion that counts towards a man's progress, or the nature of the task, but the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken.

The Most Important Area of Catechesis

From an interview by ZENIT with Cardinal Raymond Leo Burke, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, on liturgy

How important is a sound understanding of the liturgy in today's Church?

To me, it's fundamental. It's the most important area of catechesis: to understand the worship accorded to God. The first three commandments of the Ten Commandments are to do with this right relationship to God, especially with regards to worship. It's only when we understand our relationship with God in offering worship that we also understand the right order of all the other relationships we have. ...

Some argue the liturgy is mostly about aesthetics, and not as important as, say, good works done in faith. What is your view of this argument that one often hears?

It's a common misconception. First of all, the liturgy is about Christ. It's Christ alive in his Church, the glorious Christ coming into our midst and acting on our behalf through sacramental signs to give us the gift of eternal life to save us. It is the source of any truly charitable works we do, any good works we do. So the person whose heart is filled with charity wants to do good works will, like Mother Teresa, give his first intention to the worship of God so that when he goes to offer charity to a poor person or someone in need, it would be at the level of God Himself, and not some human level.

Some also say that to be concerned with liturgical law is being unduly legalistic, that it's a stifling of the spirit. How should one respond to that?

Liturgical law disciplines us so that we have the freedom to worship God, otherwise we're captured – we're the victims or slaves either of our own individual ideas, relative ideas of this or that, or of the community or whatever else. But the liturgical law safeguards the objectivity of sacred worship and opens up that space within us, that freedom to offer worship to God as He desires, so we can be sure we're not worshipping ourselves or, at the same time, as Aquinas says, some kind of falsification of divine worship.

What basis of liturgical formation do we need in our parishes, dioceses and particularly in our seminaries?

The first important lesson that has to be taught is that the sacred liturgy is an expression of God's right to receive from us the worship that is due to Him, and that flows from who we are. We are God's creatures and so divine worship, in a very particular way, expresses at the same time the infinite majesty of God and also our dignity as the only earthly creature that can offer him worship, in other words that we can lift up our hearts and minds to him in praise and worship. So that would be the first lesson.

Then to study carefully how the liturgical rites have developed down the centuries and not to see the history of the Church as somehow a corruption of those liturgical rites. In the true sense, the Church over time has come to an ever deeper understanding of the sacred liturgy and has expressed that in several ways, whether it be through sacred vestments, sacred vessels, through sacred architecture – even the care for sacred linens which are used in the Holy Mass. All of these are expressions of the liturgical reality and so those things have to be carefully studied, and of course then to study the relationship of liturgy with the other aspects of our lives.

On the Traditional Mass:

...in the reforms as they were introduced after the Council, a fundamental misunderstanding took place. Namely, this was that the reforms were undertaken with the idea there had been a rupture, that the way in which the Mass had been celebrated up until the time of the Council was somehow radically defective and there had to be what was really violent change, a reduction of the liturgical rites and even the language used, in every respect. So in order to restore the continuity, the Holy Father gave wide possibility for the celebration of the sacred rites as they were celebrated up until 1962, and then expressed the hope that through these two forms of the same rite – it's all the same Roman rite, it can't be different, it's the same Mass, same Sacrament of Penance and so forth – there would be a mutual enrichment. And that continuity would be more perfectly expressed in what some have called the "reform of the reform".

On the causes:

There's no question in my mind that the abuses in the sacred liturgy, reduction of the sacred liturgy to some kind of human activity, is strictly correlated with a lot of moral corruption and with a levity in catechesis that has been shocking and has left generations of Catholics ill-prepared to deal with the challenges of our time by addressing the Catholic faith to those challenges. You can see it in the whole gamut of Church life.

Zenit.org 25-07-2013

"The priest should lose himself in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, he is not the protagonist, Christ is."

Cardinal Burke, Dublin, 08-07-2013

Jesuits - Faithful and Humble

Pope Francis, Feast of St Ignatius of Loyola, 31-07-2013

The symbol of the Jesuits is a monogram, the acronym of 'Jesus Hominum Salvator'. It reminds us constantly of a fact we must never forget: the centrality of Christ for each one of us, and for the entire Society, that St Ignatius chose to call 'the Society of Jesus' to indicate its point of reference. ...

The centrality of Christ also corresponds to the centrality of the Church: they are two flames that cannot be separated. I cannot follow Christ other than in the Church and with the Church.

And also in this case, we Jesuits and the entire Society are not in the centre; we are, so to say, removed; we are in the service of Christ and of the Church. ... To be men rooted and grounded in the Church: this is what Jesus wants. We cannot walk in parallel or in isolation. ...

Looking to Jesus, and especially looking at Christ crucified, ...we feel that sentiment, so human and so noble, that is the shame of not being able to measure up; ...and this leads us always, as individuals and as a Society, to humility, to living this great virtue.

Humility makes us aware every day that it is not we who build the Kingdom of God, but rather it is always the grace of the Lord that acts in us; humility that urges us to give ourselves not in service to ourselves or our ideas, but in the service of Christ and the Church...

Vatican Information Service, 31-07-2013

The Bishop of Rome

Pope Francis, in answer to a journalist on the flight home from Brazil, 28-07-2013

Q: Since March 13, you have introduced yourself as the Bishop of Rome, with very great and strong insistence. So, we would like to understand what the profound meaning is of this insistence, if perhaps more than collegiality there is talk perhaps of ecumenism, for the case of being *primus inter pares* [first among equals] in the Church? Thank you.

A: Yes, on this we must not go beyond what is said. The Pope is bishop, Bishop of Rome, because the Bishop of Rome is the Successor of Peter, Vicar of Christ. There are other titles, but the first title is "Bishop of Rome," and everything stems from there. To speak, to think what this means to be *primus inter pares*, no, this isn't a consequence of that. It's simply the Pope's first title: Bishop of Rome. But there are also others.

Zenit.org 01-08-2013

Universal Grizzlers

Too many women of today are universal grizzlers. That is a broad generalization, meaning that not all individual women are like that. But listening to those voices most frequently encountered in the media these days, they are unhappy, clamouring for so much more, as if the struggle to outpace and exceed men in all fields is their natural right, even though exhausting them.

Sentiments very close to these have recently been bravely uttered by Cardinal Napier, of South Africa. In a society where there are already so many very serious problems, he can see that what so many want as the way to freedom and happiness is really a road to social confusion and unhappiness. The clamour for 'rights' without the acknowledgment of responsibilities is a problem we face as individuals, as well as a society.

In this sense Cardinal Napier's thoughts – I hope I am not misrepresenting him – are well worth considering in our situation here. Every level of Australian society and culture is dominated by what females want, but what for? I see so many of them jogging around the streets in pursuit of the 'body beautiful', but to what purpose? To share it with the dog, or some other inadequate substitute for traditional family life?

To continue a race or group of people nature usually ensures that males slightly outnumber females. It is a delicate demographic balance that is required, but the fact now is that, in Australia, females outnumber males. Therefore, many women of today, unlike those of not so long ago, will never be married. Is this what the strange forms of social union now emerging conceal under the quest for equality and happiness, which are not the same thing?

Why are we so blind as to go along with the pernicious social forces around us, yet seek special status so as to claim privileges when we think we might be disadvantaged? It sounds like 'having two bob each way' to me. Christianity gives us an understanding of ourselves which we don't want to accept because we are more committed to the myth of progress and perfection than to the deep truths of our faith, which we are happy to wear only skin deep. So when the bell tolls, ask not for whom it tolls, it tolls for thee, as the poet, John Donne, put it so succinctly.

S.C., Melbourne

“The young people and the elderly: these...are the hope of a nation; the young, because they bring strength, idealism and hope for the future; the elderly because they represent the memory, the wisdom of the people.”

Pope Francis, Rio de Janeiro, 27-07-2013

Tell Them the Truth

*Papal Theologian Fr Wojciech Giertych, OP,
in an interview with LifeSiteNews.com, 04-07-2013*

On the problem of homosexuality, gay ‘marriage’ and their incursion on religious freedom:

“This is not an issue which is reacting against the Church’s teaching – this is a fundamental anthropological change. It is a distortion of humanity which is being proposed as an ideology, which is being supported, financed, promoted by those who are powerful in the world in many, many, countries simultaneously.”

“The Church is the only institution in the world which has the courage to stand up to this ideology.”

“I’ve seen the Communist ideology, which seemed to be so powerful, and it’s gone! Ideologies come and go, and they have the idea of changing humanity, of changing human nature. Human nature cannot be changed; it can be distorted. But the elevation of perversion to the level of a fundamental value that has to be nurtured and nourished and promoted – this is absolutely sick.”

“The Church, standing up to this ideology which we are seeing now in the Western world, the Church is saying something very normal and humane, which corresponds to the understanding of humanity, which humanity has had for millennia, long before Christ, long before the appearance of Christianity. So it’s not a question of the Church fighting the ideology, it’s a question of the distortion of humanity, and the Church standing up in defence of human dignity.”

Speaking of practising homosexuals Fr Giertych said:

“Of course they have to be treated with dignity, everybody has to be treated with dignity, even sinners have to be treated with dignity, but the best way of treating people with dignity is to tell them the truth.”

“Homosexuality is against human nature. Now, there are many things that people do that are unnatural - smoking cigarettes is also unnatural. You can live with the addiction to tobacco, you can die of it, but there are people who are addicted to tobacco, yet they live and we meet with them and we deal with them and we don’t deny their dignity. So certainly people with the homosexual difficulty have to be respected ... And so the important thing is how to pastorally help such people to return to an emotional and moral integrity.”

The Gaze of Jesus

Let us also remember Peter: three times he denied Jesus, precisely when he should have been closest to him; and when he hits bottom he meets the gaze of Jesus who patiently, wordlessly, says to him: “Peter, don’t be afraid of your weakness; trust in me”. Peter understands, he feels the loving gaze of Jesus, and he weeps. How beautiful is this gaze of Jesus – how much tenderness is there! Brothers and sisters, let us never lose trust in the patience and mercy of God! - *Pope Francis, 07-04-2013*

Boat People

We are witnessing the largest persecution of Christians in history. Most persecution occurs at the hands of Muslims. Of the top fifty countries that persecute Christians, forty-two have either a Muslim majority or sizeable Muslim populations, including Indonesia which frequently is described as a “tolerant and moderate” nation.

While Aussie blood was spilt in Afghanistan, a March 2010 Court order led to the destruction of the last Christian church. In Iraq, after Hussein’s removal, half of the Christians fled because of persecution by the country’s Muslims. In 2010, Baghdad’s Our Lady of Salvation Church was bombed during Mass; fifty-eight innocents were killed and hundreds wounded.

The Grand Mufti, the highest authority on Islamic law in the birthplace of Islam, the Arabian Peninsula, announced it was “necessary to destroy all the churches of the region.” (Imagine the outrage if the Pope had called for the destruction of all the mosques in Italy...)

Since Mubarak was ousted, many Coptic churches have been attacked by Muslim mobs, including St George’s church in Edfu, where the chief of the town’s intelligence unit was observed directing the mob that destroyed the church.

Question: Are *any* of the boat people arriving at our shores Christians?

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill, NSW

Please Pray For Me

*Pope Francis, in answer to a journalist on the flight home
from Brazil, 28-07-2013*

Q: Holiness, I want to ask you why you ask so insistently that we pray for you? It’s not usual to hear a Pope ask so much to pray for him.

A: I’ve always asked for this. When I was a priest I asked for it, but not so frequently. I began to ask for it with a certain frequency in my work as Bishop, because I feel that if the Lord doesn’t help in this work of helping the People of God to go forward, one can’t... I truly feel I have so many limitations, so many problems, also being a sinner – you know it! – and I must ask for this. But it comes from within! I also ask Our Lady to pray for me to the Lord. It’s a habit, but it’s a habit that comes from the heart and also from the need I have for my work. I feel I must ask.

Zenit.org 01-08-2013

Bigger Than World Cup

Pope Francis, World Youth Day prayer vigil, 27-07-2013

Jesus asks us to follow him for life, he asks us to be his disciples, to “play on his team”.

I think that most of you love sports! Here in Brazil, as in other countries, football is a national passion. Now, what do players do when they are asked to join a team? They have to train, and to train a lot!

The same is true of our lives as the Lord’s disciples. Saint Paul tells us: “athletes deny themselves all sorts of things; they do this to win a crown of leaves that withers, but we a crown that is imperishable” (1Cor 9:25).

Jesus offers us something bigger than the World Cup! He offers us the possibility of a fulfilled and fruitful life; he also offers us a future with him, an endless future, eternal life. But he asks us to train, “to get in shape”, so that we can face every situation in life undaunted, bearing witness to our faith.

How do we get in shape? By talking with him: by prayer, which is our daily conversation with God, who always listens to us. ... By the sacraments, which make his life grow within us and conform us to Christ. By loving one another, learning to listen, to understand, to forgive, to be accepting and to help others, everybody, with no one excluded or ostracized. Dear young people, be true “athletes of Christ”!

Zenit.org 28-07-2013

Faith is Not Irrelevant

Lumen Fidei, n. 51

The light of faith is capable of enhancing the richness of human relations, their ability to endure, to be trustworthy, to enrich our life together.

Faith does not draw us away from the world or prove irrelevant to the concrete concerns of the men and women of our time.

Without a love which is trustworthy, nothing could truly keep men and women united. Human unity would be conceivable only on the basis of utility, on a calculus of conflicting interests or on fear, but not on the goodness of living together, not on the joy which the mere presence of others can give.

Faith makes us appreciate the architecture of human relationships because it grasps their ultimate foundation and definitive destiny in God, in his love, and thus sheds light on the art of building; as such it becomes a service to the common good.

Faith is truly a good for everyone; it is a common good. Its light does not simply brighten the interior of the Church, nor does it serve solely to build an eternal city in the hereafter; it helps us build our societies in such a way that they can journey towards a future of hope.

Bishop Prowse Blesses The Ark

Soon after arriving back from World Youth Day, Bishop Christopher Prowse spent a few days in Far East Gippsland visiting our parishes and conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation on children at Buchan, Lakes Entrance, Orbost and Bairnsdale. We were impressed with the Orbost ceremony. His leadership was strong and kind. On his knees he joined us in the Rosary before Mass.

Our retreat centre at Marlo is called the Ark because Mary is the Ark of Salvation. Most readers will know that is why we need to consecrate ourselves to Her Immaculate Heart and come on board her Ark!

Through many graces obtained through our precious Mother we have been hosting about four retreats per year for sixteen years now. Ever since becoming our bishop, Bishop Christopher has been very supportive and finally, on the feast of St Mary of the Cross, he was able to visit the Ark himself.

While here he was most impressed with our magnificent view, rosary walks, shrines (especially to those killed in abortion), the accommodation and our beautiful Trinity Chapel for the Triumph which he blessed. He then prayed to Jesus through Mary to abundantly bless all those who came here on retreat.

If you want to know more about our retreats [see below] contact us and come on board the Ark while there is still time!

Richard Earle, Marlo, Victoria

Upcoming Retreats

You are invited to a Country Retreat at The Ark in Marlo. We have booked two excellent orthodox Catholic priests:

- Fr Michael Corriveau (formerly of the Fathers of Mercy), assistant priest at St Paul’s, Kealba. 23-27 September, Monday afternoon to Friday morning.
- Fr Terry Hoare, retired priest living in Queensland. 14-17 November, Friday to Monday morning.

Payment is by anonymous donation. Everything is provided: home cooking, talks, Holy Mass, rosary, Stations of the Cross walks, beach walks, shrines, adoration, prayer and daily Benediction.

For booking and further information, phone 5154 8419.

Richard Earle, Marlo, Victoria

“To act responsibly is to see one’s own actions in the light of other people’s rights and God’s judgement.” - Pope Francis

Meekness

Pope Francis to Japanese students visiting Rome, 21-08-13

I greet you. This visit gives me pleasure. I hope this journey for you will be very fruitful, because to meet other people, other cultures, is always good for us, it helps us grow. And, why? Because if we are isolated in ourselves we only have what we have, we cannot grow culturally; instead, if we go in search of other people, other cultures, other ways of thinking, other religions, we come out of ourselves and begin that beautiful adventure that is called “dialogue”.

Dialogue is very important for one’s maturity, because in relations with other people, relations with other cultures, also in healthy relations with other religions, one grows ... matures.

Of course, there is a danger: if in dialogue one closes oneself and gets angry, or fights. ...

And what is the most profound attitude that we should have in order to dialogue and not fight? Meekness, the ability to find people, to find culture, with peace; the ability to make intelligent questions: “Why do you think this way?” “Why does this culture do that?” To listen to others and then talk. First listen, then talk. All of this is meekness. And if you do not think like me - well, you know...I think in a different way, you do not convince me - but we are still friends, I have listened to how you think and you have listened to how I think.

And do you know what, one important thing? This dialogue is what makes peace. You cannot have peace without dialogue. All wars, all struggles, all problems that are not resolved, with which we face, are due to a lack of dialogue. When there is a problem, dialogue: this makes peace. And this is what I wish for you in this journey of dialogue: that you may know how to dialogue; how this culture thinks; “How beautiful this is”, “This I don’t like”, but in dialogue. And thus it will grow. I wish you this and I wish you all a good trip in Rome.

Zenit.org 21-08-2013

Scripture and the Church

Pope Benedict XVI, in a reflection on Vatican II with the clergy of Rome, 14-02-2013

On the question regarding Revelation, the fulcrum was the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. ... Certainly, what is important is that the Scriptures are the Word of God and the Church is subject to the Scriptures, obeys the Word of God, and is not above Scripture. Nevertheless, the Scriptures are only such because there is a living Church, its living subject. Without the living subject of the Church, Scripture is only a book open to different interpretations and gives no definitive clarity.

Vatican Information Services 15-02-2013

Praying Pilgrimage

I write to request your assistance to get the word out about a “Praying Pilgrimage” tour to the Holy Lands scheduled to include Christmas Mass in Bethlehem.

I have been prompted to put this Praying Pilgrimage together because I have been to the Holy Lands twice before with Catholic groups and both times I have been disappointed with the secularization of these tours – whole days spent visiting places such as Petra and Masada while rushing through the Holy places.

When I was in Jerusalem last December I met up with representatives from the Bible Land Tourist Bureau and found a group of people who also want to share the story of God and his people. Since my return we have worked together to design this unique pilgrimage.

We will visit a far greater number of places significant to our faith than most tours provide. Our Christian Tour Guide will give us time at each of these sacred sites to reflect and pray. There will however be free half days and whole days so that people can go to other places of interest, or shop in the souqs if they wish.

We will stay at the Pontifical Institute of Notre Dame where there is daily Eucharistic Adoration at 5.30pm, Benediction at 6.15pm and Mass at 6.30pm. This beautiful hotel is next to the wall of Jerusalem and about a 10 minute walk to the Holy Sepulchre. We could not be in a more central location.

There will be a visit to the Bethlehem Catholic University where we will hear about the wonderful evangelising outreach of this university. Over 50% of the students are disadvantaged Muslims and more than 50% female.

We will also visit Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum and tour the Memorial Gardens that honour the many Christians who helped save escaping Jews.

Finally we will visit and pray with a group of Messianic Jews in Tel Aviv. We will learn from them about the current situation and join them in intercessory prayer for peace in Israel.

I am excited to present this “Praying Pilgrimage” for the first time ever. It will depart from Brisbane on 15 December, returning 29 December 2013. To make this happen we need 15 people to register with their \$500 deposit by the end of September. The full cost of the trip is approx \$6000 depending on exchange rates.

I am praying that Jesus will choose those He wants to bless with this opportunity to draw closer to Him by walking in His steps.

Please contact me for further information including full itinerary, registration form and terms and conditions.

Julie Borger

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Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 st 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 10am – 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

Give Until It Hurts

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

To love is to donate. God has so much loved the world that He gave His Son. Jesus has loved so much the world, He has loved so much you, He has loved so much me that He gave His life for us. He wants that we love as He loved. And so now we must love until it hurts. True love is to give, to give until it hurts.

Contact *Into the Deep*

www.stoneswillshout.com

stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au

**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 Australia) 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 15th 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.

Rich Through Sharing

Pope Francis, 25-07-2013

Let us always remember this: only when we are able to share do we become truly rich; everything that is shared is multiplied! The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty!