

Into the Deep

Issue 91

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

April 2010

The Final Word

*Pope Benedict XVI, The Way of the Cross, 2006
Prayer at the Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb*

Lord Jesus,
Good Friday is the day of darkness,
the day of blind hatred,
the day when the Just One was put to death!
But Good Friday is not the final word:
the final word is Easter,
the triumph of Life,
the victory of Good over Evil.

Lord Jesus,
Holy Saturday is the day of emptiness,
the day of bewilderment and dread,
the day when everything seems over!
But Holy Saturday is not the final day,
the final day is Easter,
the Light that is kindled anew,
the Love that conquers all hatred.

Lord Jesus,
whenever we experience our own Good Friday,
and we feel the anguish of Holy Saturday,
give us Mary's unwavering faith,
so that we can believe in the reality of Easter;
give us her clear-sighted gaze
so that we can see the brilliant dawn
that announces the final day of history:
"new heavens and a new earth"
already present in you,
Jesus, Crucified and Risen. Amen!

Our Salvation

Pope Benedict XVI, Easter 2009

"At Easter there resounds unchanged and always new, in every corner of the earth, this good news: Jesus, who has died on the cross and been resurrected, lives in glory because he has defeated the power of death, he has brought human beings into a new communion of life with and in God. This is the victory of Easter, our salvation!"

Divine Mercy Sunday

Sunday 11 April 2010

St Michael's Catholic Church, Church Street, Traralgon, will celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday with:

1pm Adoration and Confession

2pm Mass

3pm Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Benediction

Principal celebrant: Bishop Christopher Prowse

Concelebrant: Fr Peter Bickley, PP

Jesus said to St Faustina: *"I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day, the very depths of My mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy."* (Diary, 699)

To fittingly observe Divine Mercy Sunday, we should precede the feast by a nine-day novena of chaplets to the Divine Mercy, beginning on Good Friday (privately said) and:

1. Celebrate the Feast on the first Sunday after Easter,
2. Sincerely repent of all our sins,
3. Place our complete trust in Jesus,
4. Go to Confession on that Sunday or within seven days before or after the Feast,
5. Receive Holy Communion on the day of the Feast,
6. Venerate* the Image of The Divine Mercy,
7. Be merciful to others, through our actions, words and prayers on their behalf

[*To venerate a sacred image or statue simply means to perform some act or make some gesture of deep religious respect toward it because of the person whom it represents – in this case, our most Merciful Saviour.]

Our Lord told Saint Faustina: *"Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet."*

"When you approach the confessional, know this, that I myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets the God of Mercy." (Diary 699, 1602)

Enquiries: Contact Pat – 0400 218 417.

All issues of *Into the Deep* are at www.stoneswillshout.com

40 Days Moments

The 40 Days For Life, Melbourne, campaign has been very successful so far [this written at its half-way mark].

On one occasion, a “people-mover” from St Peter Chanel turned up with 8 more pray-ers just as a tattooed woman in her late thirties passed our group and became very agitated! She accused us, and anybody who wanted to listen, of condemning her for aborting her baby and hated everyone.

Two pregnancy counselors from the Helpers of God’s Precious Infants were praying with us. They asked her to come away from the group to allow her to vent her anger. She hesitated, but fortunately I was able to move the rest of the pray-ers away and we continued praying the Rosary with renewed earnest! That gave the counsellors the opportunity to allow her to express her pain and anger to them.

About 5 minutes later I saw a counsellor and the woman embrace. I was almost moved to tears. It turned out that she was a lapsed Catholic and was thrilled to be given the Divine Mercy chaplet and a Miraculous Medal – a memory of her youth.

The woman was herself a counsellor for drug, alcohol and physically abused women. She was also grieving the loss of a close friend who had suicided after being forced by her family to have an abortion. She was appalled to hear that the abortion clinic “counsellor” was an employee of the clinic and not an independent. The much-subdued woman was given all the information she needed from the sidewalk counsellors to help start her own healing process.

On another occasion, late in the afternoon, a young Indian couple tried to go inside the abortion mill, not realising it was already closed for “business”. That gave some of us the opportunity to engage them in a friendly conversation. The young man told us that he was studying accountancy and his girlfriend was studying nursing. His girlfriend was now pregnant. They did not really want an abortion but being overseas students they were not eligible for Medicare and so had to find \$10,000 dollars to have the baby in Australia! Of course they did not have that kind of money! They could not go back to India to have the baby there because of their shame at failing their parents’ high expectations! They were given brochures that showed the development of the baby and the pain of abortion and later the couple were reading these in their car.

The important point here is that private prayer is of course important. However, do not let that be a cop out! We do need a real presence of pray-ers to show that there are people who care enough to be there praying for anyone contemplating an abortion or to offer any help which may be needed. Our Lord is asking each and every one to do our bit to stop this slaughter of the innocents!

Fons Janssen, Willung South

Found the Ball

The editorial in the January issue of ITD (p.2) was titled, “Where’s the Ball?” It was about no one being willing or able to explain where the situation is in relation to Fr Speekman. Bishop Coffey had taken his case to the Apostolic Signatura in January 2007 and nothing had been heard since. There was evidence to suggest that since his installation as Bishop of Sale in July 2009, the ball had been lobbed into Bishop Prowse’s court.

We now have confirmation that the ball is back in the Signatura’s court and we can resume our wait for a final decision from this Supreme Court of the Church.

No doubt it will be a welcome end to nearly 7 years of unnecessary heartache. How an innocent priest can be accused and removed by decree, unlawfully, without evidence, without opportunity for defence, and with Rome on his side; and then not be returned in 7 years, is just beyond me. For what? Still no one knows what he supposedly did wrong. - Ed.

Commandments Show The Way

From Pope Benedict XVI’s message for the 25th World Youth Day, Palm Sunday 2010

Jesus reminds the rich young man of the Ten Commandments as necessary conditions to “inherit eternal life.” They are essential points of reference to live in love, to clearly distinguish good from evil and build a solid and lasting plan of life. Jesus also asks you if you know the commandments, if you are concerned to form your conscience according to the divine law and if you will put it into practice.

They certainly are questions that go against the current of the present-day mentality, which proposes a liberty disconnected from values, rules and objective norms, and invites us to reject every limitation to desires of the moment. But this type of proposal instead of leading to true liberty, leads man to become a slave of himself, of his immediate desires, of idols such as power, money, unbridled pleasure and the seductions of the world, rendering him incapable of following his original vocation to love.

God gives us the commandments because he wants to educate us to true liberty, because he wants to build with us a Kingdom of love, justice and peace. To listen to them and to put them into practice does not mean to be alienated, but to find the path of authentic liberty and love, because the commandments do not limit happiness, but indicate how to find it. At the beginning of his dialogue with the rich young man, Jesus reminds him that the law given by God is good because “God is good”.

www.zenit.org 15-03-2010

Good for Ireland - Why Not Australia Too?

Pope Benedict XVI recently wrote a pastoral letter to the Catholics of Ireland concerning the sexual abuse crisis. At the end of his letter, he gives some practical suggestions to renew the Church in Ireland. The following are excerpts [my headings] from that last part of his letter. I suggest we adopt them as a pastoral plan for renewal of the Diocese of Sale! Or let's adopt them for the Church in Australia! - Ed.

Friday Penances

I ask that Lent this year be set aside as a time to pray for an outpouring of God's mercy and the Holy Spirit's gifts of holiness and strength upon the Church in your country. I now invite all of you to devote your Friday penances, for a period of one year, between now and Easter 2011, to this intention. I ask you to offer up your fasting, your prayer, your reading of Scripture and your works of mercy in order to obtain the grace of healing and renewal for the Church in Ireland.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

I encourage you to discover anew the sacrament of Reconciliation and to avail yourselves more frequently of the transforming power of its grace.

Eucharistic Adoration

Particular attention should also be given to Eucharistic adoration, and in every diocese there should be churches or chapels specifically devoted to this purpose. I ask parishes, seminaries, religious houses and monasteries to organize periods of Eucharistic adoration, so that all have an opportunity to take part. Through intense prayer before the real presence of the Lord, you can make reparation for the sins of abuse that have done so much harm, at the same time imploring the grace of renewed strength and a deeper sense of mission on the part of all bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful.

Mission for Bishops, Priests and Religious

I also propose that a nationwide Mission be held for all bishops, priests and religious. It is my hope that, by drawing on the expertise of experienced preachers and retreat-givers from Ireland and from elsewhere, and by exploring anew the conciliar documents, the liturgical rites of ordination and profession, and recent pontifical teaching, you will come to a more profound appreciation of your respective vocations, so as to rediscover the roots of your faith in Jesus Christ and to drink deeply from the springs of living water that he offers you through his Church.

Intercession of St John Vianney

In this Year for Priests, I commend to you most particularly the figure of Saint John Mary Vianney,

who had such a rich understanding of the mystery of the priesthood. ... Through the intercession of Saint John Mary Vianney, may the priesthood in Ireland be revitalized, and may the whole Church in Ireland grow in appreciation for the great gift of the priestly ministry.

Special Prayer

I wish to conclude this Letter with a special Prayer for the Church in Ireland, which I send to you with the care of a father for his children and with the affection of a fellow Christian, scandalized and hurt by what has occurred in our beloved Church. As you make use of this prayer in your families, parishes and communities, may the Blessed Virgin Mary protect and guide each of you to a closer union with her Son, crucified and risen.

Prayer for the Church in Ireland

God of our fathers,
renew us in the faith which is our life and salvation,
the hope which promises forgiveness and interior renewal,
the charity which purifies and opens our hearts
to love you, and in you, each of our brothers and sisters.

Lord Jesus Christ,
may the Church in Ireland renew her age-old
commitment
to the education of our young people in the way of
truth and goodness, holiness and generous service to
society.

Holy Spirit, comforter, advocate and guide,
inspire a new springtime of holiness and apostolic zeal
for the Church in Ireland.

May our sorrow and our tears,
our sincere effort to redress past wrongs,
and our firm purpose of amendment
bear an abundant harvest of grace
for the deepening of the faith
in our families, parishes, schools and communities,
for the spiritual progress of Irish society,
and the growth of charity, justice, joy and peace
within the whole human family.

To you, Triune God,
confident in the loving protection of Mary,
Queen of Ireland, our Mother,
and of Saint Patrick, Saint Brigid and all the saints,
do we entrust ourselves, our children,
and the needs of the Church in Ireland.

Amen.

www.zenit.org 20-03-2010

Memories of Ordination

From an address (16-01-10) by Pope Benedict XVI on becoming an honorary citizen of the German city of Freising, where he was a seminarian and was ordained

The Cathedral was always the centre of our life, just as at the seminary where we were one family. And it was Fr Höck who made us a real family. The Cathedral was the centre of it and for our entire life represented the unforgettable day of our priestly ordination. Three moments are particularly deeply impressed within me.

First of all, lying stretched out on the ground during the litany of the saints. In lying prostrate on the ground, one becomes newly aware of all one's poverty and asks oneself: am I truly capable of it? And at the same time the names of all the saints of history and the entreaty of the faithful ring out: "Hear us; help them." In this way the awareness grows that, yes, I am weak and inadequate but I am not alone, there are others with me, the entire community of the saints is with me. They accompany me and thus I can make this journey and become a companion and guide for others.

The second moment, the imposition of hands by the elderly, venerable Cardinal Faulhaber who laid his hands upon me, upon all of us, in a profound and intense manner and the knowledge that it was the Lord who was laying his hands upon me and saying: "You belong to me, you do not simply belong to yourself, I want you, you are at my service"; but also the awareness that this imposition of hands is a grace, that it does not only create obligations, but above all is a gift, that he is with me and that his love protects and accompanies me.

Then there was also the old rite in which the power to forgive sins was conferred at a separate moment. It began when the Bishop, pronouncing the Lord's words, said: "No longer do I call you servants... but... friends." And I knew we knew that this is not only a quotation from John 15 but a timely word that the Lord is addressing to me now. He accepts me as a friend; I am in this friendly relationship; he has given me his trust and I can work within this friendship and make others friends of Christ.

www.zenit.org 29-01-2010

Strange Twist of Thought

An 8 year-old is taken from her bed and murdered. The newspaper rightly describes this as an evil act. However I do not understand by what strange twist of thought the same act of murder is not condemned when the victim is killed while in its mother's womb. What makes the act of abortion acceptable?

Don Gaffney, Tarragindi, QLD

Celibacy and Child Abuse

Some critics of the Catholic Church think there would be less paedophilia if it allowed its priests to marry. Surely, men who desire marriage stay well clear of the priesthood!

Neither being Catholic nor being celibate predisposes a person to develop paedophilia; consequently, a married clergy would not solve the problem!!

It is horribly clear that priests who engaged in paedophile behaviour should never have been reassigned to duties that brought them again into contact with children.

There's absolutely no evidence that priests are more likely to abuse children than are other groups of men. (By the way, have men who contemplate marriage ever been examined for possible paedophile tendencies? Are there no married men who abuse children?)

Tragically, using children as objects for the sexual gratification of adults is endemic in all classes, professions, religions, and ethnic communities across the globe; figures on child pornography, incest, and child prostitution make that very clear. To focus on just one group of people, i.e. paedophile priests, will *not* help the world's sexually-abused children.

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill NSW

Gift-Giving

Thanks to those who responded to the Reader Survey regarding why you read ITD. It was a way of giving away a few gifts that were kindly donated to us, as well as learning more about our readers. Thank you for your continuing support and encouragement!

The following readers will each receive one of the gifts listed in the February and March issues of ITD:

- Helen Casanova of Westmore, Vic: "We appreciate it all, especially the writings of the Holy Father."
- Maureen Wright of Lurnea, NSW: see letter page 10 of this issue of ITD.
- Errol Duke of Adelaide, SA: "I always find your newsletter very informative and very Catholic."
- Tricia Bricknell of Camperdown, Vic: "I enjoy reading the articles as they are so informative."
- Phillip Fennessy of Morwell, Vic: "My daily conversion and continual reinforcement of my Christian Catholic way of life is complemented through many of the articles that I read from Into the Deep. Irrespective of the possible confrontational articles, I find them compatible with the truth and love that God, my/our Father is patiently and forever attempting to convey to me/us."

- Ed.

Teach Us

Pope Benedict XVI to bishops of Romania and Moldova

To keep and transmit the patrimony of faith is a task of the whole Church, but particularly of bishops.

The field of your ministry is vast and exacting; in fact, it is about proposing to the faithful an itinerary of mature and responsible Christian faith, especially through the teaching of religion, catechesis – also for adults – and the preparation of the sacraments.

In this realm it is appropriate to promote a greater knowledge of sacred Scripture, of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and of the documents of the magisterium, in particular, of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and of papal encyclicals.

www.zenit.org 12-02-2010

Nation-Building

In December last year there was a vote in a UN General Assembly regarding non-discrimination categories based on “sexual orientation and gender identity”, favoured by homosexual rights activists. It was defeated, but *no* thanks to traditionally Catholic nations (including Argentina, Chile, Mexico, the Philippines) who sided with the social “progressives” (including Australia and New Zealand).

It has profound and moral implications for the Body of Christ. It clearly indicates how nations are either *built* or *demolished* by the shepherds of Christ’s Church.

This is how the secular world view has infiltrated the minds of Catholic populations. We may ask the question: “In what way has the Church failed to teach its people – especially its children – moral theology based on the Word of God?” This is simply the Decalogue, commonly known as God’s 10 Commandments! The process of conscience is now based on the development of *compassion* as the reference; “if it feels good it is right!” – relativism!

My memory still takes me back to my parents’ generation, a time when my church, my school and my home taught me that sin was a fact, that there were consequences and that my conscience operated with a reference: God’s directives – not my own!

Christian nations are morally formed out of true, distorted, or muted teachings of the Christian communities, of which the Roman Catholic Church is seen to be *the standard bearer!*

How now shall we pray?
How now shall we speak?
How now shall we live?

Laurie Ryan, Brisbane

Pray for Vocations!

In the March 2010 edition of Catholic Life it was announced that the Diocese of Sale has a new Vocations Director – Deacon Tony Aspinall (who signed the Collins/Purcell petition in favour of married priests and women’s ordination – see ITD Dec 2007, p.5). He has two ‘team members’ to assist him in his role: Fr Brendan Hogan (known for his distaste for orthodoxy and liturgical norms), and Sr Doreen Dage (who believes the ordained ministry is no more important than other leadership groups – see ITD May 2003, p.2). Hard to imagine they’d have the motivation to promote vocations. But maybe they’ve changed and maybe it’s just added incentive for us to pray even harder for good, strong, orthodox young priests and religious who are faithful to the Church, who love the Church with joy!

Another scary fact from Catholic Life: Each issue has a “Reflections” column by Jim Quillinan (who is highly esteemed in the Diocese of Sale). I admit to never bothering to read his reflections but an asterisked footnote caught my eye while flipping through the March issue: he was authoritatively using a reference from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who he referred to as “Jesuit priest and scholar”. Why would he go out of his way to quote and give credit to a dissident priest who has been discredited by the Vatican? A recent article by Brother Jim Ward on Teilhard de Chardin refers to “a detailed list of no fewer than 13 official embargoes placed on Teilhard and his ‘nouvelle theologie’ by his superiors and the Vatican between 1926 and 1963.” Br Ward quotes from Teilhard de Chardin’s own writings to prove his anti-Catholic beliefs and theories. [For more detail you can read Br Ward’s full article at brightmorningstar.blog.com, thanks to the Australian Marian Academy of the immaculate Conception (AMAIC)] Jim Quillinan is noted in the same Catholic Life as being a presenter at diocesan “Catechist Formation Days”. Let’s hope he sticks to the Catechism.

It Only Gets Worse! Page 8 of the same Catholic Life has a group photo of 6 priests (including the Vicar General), 3 religious sisters, 1 deacon, and 2 lay women. Only the 2 lay women and Sr Mercy Akoh were dressed appropriately (thank you, Sister, for being unafraid to wear your religious habit!). Looking at the motley lot of casually dressed men and women left, you’d have no idea they were priests and religious!

It brings to mind the front page of the February edition of Catholic Life: a large colour photo of our Bishop Prowse, formally dressed in his clerical attire (as always – thank you, Bishop Prowse), flanked by 2 priests in casual dress. What an uninspiring picture. Is there perhaps a shortage of clerical collars along with the shortage of vocations? Maybe we need a Special Collection one Sunday to help them.

(I really must get back to my habit of not reading Catholic Life! It’s not good for my health!)
- Ed.

The Missing Ingredient

Many issues of concern to Catholics are discussed at length in the media and endless meetings around Australia. Cathnews provides information via the internet on events and happenings in the Church. It recently reported demands by Caritas International and Caritas Australia to contact politicians demanding action on global warming, a priest in Queensland applauding the Queensland Government for passing legislation permitting homosexuals to have surrogate children (thus putting them on equal footing with married couples), and so on.

However, there is one subject that is rarely mentioned and that is the reason why we are here on earth and what is our eternal destiny. It is surely the most vital ingredient necessary in any discussion, particularly in the Church, but is sadly missing.

When I was a boy I was taught that God made me to know, to love and to serve Him here on earth and then to be happy with Him forever in Heaven. This did not mean a lot to me at the time but has remained with me and is a simple explanation of what my destiny can be after I die.

I was also taught that God gave me the wonderful gift of free will, which means that I can choose to love Him or to reject Him and His teachings. I need to constantly remind myself that I have to choose now, as I do not know the day nor the hour that I will die. It is true that God is a God of love and forgiveness but if I choose to reject or ignore Him in this life it will be too late to change my mind after I die. It is my choice.

If I choose love, then I have a responsibility to ensure that I do everything in my power to take advantage of the graces Jesus won for me in His passion and death on the cross.

We know that our body needs the right vitamins if it is to remain healthy. We need to be constantly reminded that our soul needs sanctifying grace if it is to remain healthy and in harmony with God, and that we obtain

this grace from the sacraments that God has provided for us through His Church.

One of these is the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in which our sins are forgiven and we receive the graces necessary not to sin again. We see some wringing of hands because this most cleansing sacrament is largely ignored in today's sinful world. Perhaps it is because we are rarely reminded that sin is so obnoxious to God and that each and every one of us needs this most comforting sacrament if we are to stop offending Him.

So much is heard of helping the poor, loving each other, building schools, saving the world's environment, sharing our riches, and so many other issues of importance in themselves. But what is the good of these very worthwhile objectives if we forget the primary objective of saving our souls.

I was reading recently of an answer that the Cure of Ars gave to a question as to how he would revive the faith which had declined so much in Ars. He said his first objective was to save his own soul and then he would influence others. We all know how successful this great saint was. He was successful because he knew that by himself he could not achieve anything, but by doing God's will and using the graces he needed from the sacraments, he could and did work miracles. He had to save his own soul in order to succeed.

I believe that in the present chaotic state of the world, the Catholic Church has a wonderful opportunity to make a real difference, as long as we do not dumb down Catholic teachings. We can show Catholics who have drifted away, and many non-Catholics who are at a loss to understand why their lives are so often pointless, that the Catholic Church can give them peace, justice and eternal hope. But we have to show them the missing ingredient of eternal hope, not accommodate our views to the false values of Satan and the world.

Pat O'Brien, Sale

Gems

Thanks for ITD. I have been accustomed to save certain selections for homily preparation/use in the past. The March edition was packed with gems of sermon material.

Sorry to hear that Fr Speekman is not settled in yet. What is taking the new man so long? As a civil lawyer I can attest to the dictum that "Justice delayed is justice denied." I am praying for him.

*Fr Anthony J. Mastroeni, S.T.D., J.D.,
Paterson, New Jersey USA*

Priest and Victim

Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Papal Household Preacher

To be a priest "according to the order of Jesus Christ", the presbyter must, like Him, offer himself. On the altar, he does not only represent the Jesus who is "high priest", but also the Jesus who is "supreme victim", the two things being inseparable. In other words he cannot be content to offer Christ to the Father in the sacramental signs of bread and wine, he must also offer himself with Christ to the Father.

www.zenit.org 15-03-2010

Catholic TV – Australian Content

Many of you will be aware of the local content broadcasting on Telepace in Australia on Wednesdays and Friday evenings.

Thanks to Anne-Marie Irwin who has been most dedicated behind the scenes in the programming department. Also a special thank you to Fr Gerard Ryan (Wagga) who has been producing programmes so we can air once a week on Telepace.

On the 1st of May 2010 we will be launching our new website. However, right now you can access the weekly program guide on the temporary website: www.telepaceaustralia.org.au or email: info@telepaceaustralia.org.au.

*Ernesta Sculli, Executive Director
Telepace in Australia*

For installations or any other enquires regarding free-to-air satellite Catholic television – EWTN, Telepace or Padre Pio – you can contact Light of Christ Catholic Television on 1300 663 502 or mobile 0408 304 050.

Share Vocations Ideas

I read the letter by Pat O'Brien from Sale commenting on the possible shortage of priests in the future (ITD March 10, p.3).

It would be really interesting to read what the many readers of Into the Deep are currently doing in their own parishes to foster vocations. Sadly, some will not be very active.

Perhaps they could write to ITD and you could print a few of their comments so that some of us might copy their best practices.

Pat Ryan, London UK

To All Priests: I need your help!

Please, Fathers, can any of you tell me what is so extraordinarily difficult in remembering, reading or saying these words?

“This is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.”

Why on earth do so many priests find it impossible to say these words as the liturgy requires? Is it a secret test of creativity? Do you share ratings of who can make the most interesting variation? Are there bonus points if you manage to get through it without using a single word that you should after “This is”?

Free lifetime subscription to ITD to any priest who can explain this to me!
- Ed.

We Have Found Him

Pope Benedict XVI

God showed us his Countenance with Christ, his Face. The curtain of the temple was torn. It opened, the mystery of God is visible. The first commandment that excludes images of God because they might only diminish his reality is changed, renewed, taking another form. Today we can see God's Face in Christ the man, we can have an image of Christ and thus see who God is.

I think that those who have understood this, who have been touched by this mystery, that God has revealed himself, that the curtain of the temple has been torn asunder, that he has shown his Face, find a source of permanent joy. We can only say, “Thank you. Yes, now we know who you are, who God is and how to respond to him”.

And I think that this joy of knowing God who has shown himself, to the depths of his being, also embraces the joy of communicating this: those who have understood this, who live touched by this reality, must do as the first disciples did when they went to their friends and brethren saying: “We have found the one of whom the Prophets spoke. He is present now”.

Mission is not an external appendix to the faith but rather the dynamism of faith itself. Those who have seen, who have encountered Jesus, must go to their friends and tell them: “We have found him, he is Jesus, the One who was Crucified for us”.

www.zenit.org 19-02-2010

Sign of peace

By Fr Paul Gunter, OSB, professor of the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy Rome and Consulter to the Office of the Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff

The physical sharing of the pax is not an obligatory component of the liturgy. The deacon or the priest may invite everyone to offer a sign of peace. ...

It is not a moment when formality gives way to informality but a moment when the human intimacy that is an intrinsic part of order reveals itself in just proportion. “It is a ritual exchange, not a practical greeting.” ...

The priest gives the pax to the deacon or minister. It is not envisaged he leave the sanctuary to greet the faithful in the nave, though the faithful exchange the pax with those nearest to them. The rubric distinguishes these parallel demonstrations of the pax that avoids the ecclesiological confusion that might arise from a purely horizontal model. Clear punctuation marks affirm the distinctions intended. “Everyone, according to their local customs, gives expression to communion and charity, the one to the other; the priest gives the peace to the deacon or minister.”

www.zenit.org 19-03-2010

Did Jesus Really Rise?

*From a reflection by Fr Raniero Cantalamessa,
Pontifical Household preacher, Easter 2008*

To the women who had come to the tomb on Easter morning the angels said: "Do not be afraid. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He is risen!"

But did Jesus really rise? What assurances do we have that we are dealing with something that really happened and not an invention or suggestion? St Paul, writing no more than 25 years after the event, lists all the people who saw Jesus after the resurrection, the majority of whom were still alive. For what fact of antiquity do we have testimony as strong as this?

But a general observation will also convince us of the truth of the event. At the moment of Jesus' death the disciples were scattered; his case was taken to be closed: "We had hoped that he would," the disciples of Emmaus say. Evidently they did not hope anymore.

And then all of a sudden we see these same men proclaim together that Jesus is alive and face, on account of this testimony, trials, persecutions and, in the end, one after the other, martyrdom and death. What could have caused such a total change if not the certainty that he had truly risen.

They could not be deceived because they spoke and ate with him after his resurrection; and then they were practical men, not at all given to easy exaltation. They themselves doubted at first and put up not a little resistance to believing. Neither could they have wanted to deceive others, because, if Jesus was not risen, they were precisely the first to be betrayed and to return. Without the fact of the resurrection, the birth of Christianity and of the Church becomes a mystery that is still more difficult to explain than the resurrection itself. ...

Those who do not believe in the reality of the resurrection have always advanced hypotheses that it be treated as a phenomenon of autosuggestion; the apostles "believed" to see. But this, if it were true, would constitute, in the end, a miracle no less great than the one that people try to avoid admitting. Suppose that different people, in different situations and places, all had the same hallucination. Imaginary visions usually come to those who intensely expect and desire them, but the apostles, after the events of Good Friday, did not expect anything else. ...

St Paul writes: "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the death, you will be saved" (Rom10:9). "The faith of Christians is the resurrection of Christ," St Augustine said. Everyone believes that Jesus died, even the pagans, the agnostics believe it. But only Christians believe that he has also risen, and one is not a Christian unless he believes this.

www.zenit.org 21-03-2008 [Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic]

Blessed Mary of the Cross

I was interested in your little snippet in the January ITD, p.5, that we beg 'Blessed Mary MacKillop' to renew the hearts of her sisters.

Well said, but where would she start? Part of the problem is us all, i.e. the Sisters and us, even as high as the Popes (John Paul II and Benedict). We have first allowed, then continued the use, of "Bl Mary MacKillop" when in the Proclamation Pope John Paul II stated her name as Blessed was to be "Bl Mary of the Cross"; yet thereafter, even in the proclamation, the two names were used inter-changeably.

Of course the Popes would not have been aware of what was happening; their advisors/speechwriters might have been infected with this trend of reducing everything to the earthly level. (Notably, before Bl Mary was beatified, she was never invoked in the prayer for her Cause as Mother Mary MacKillop, and on her tomb are the words "Mother Mary of the Cross [MacKillop]").

In other words, the spirituality of Mary was stripped from the vocabulary, so then it was but a short step, as we know from all the 'engineering' of both our religion and our culture, to remove that special sense of spirituality from the group. Of course there are holy individual Sisters of St Joseph, but those I've seen in the media do not present themselves as being 'of the Cross' – i.e. the spirituality of sacrifice.

Thanks for the editorials and ever interesting practical and spiritual snippets in ITD.

Name and address supplied

Guide Us With Courage

Pope Benedict XVI

The "crisis" of the Sacrament of Penance, so often talked about, is a question that faces first of all priests and their great responsibility to educate the People of God in the radical demands of the Gospel. In particular, it asks them to dedicate themselves generously to hearing sacramental confessions; to guide the flock with courage, so that it will not be conformed to the mentality of this world, but will be able to make choices also against the current, avoiding accommodations and compromises. ...

Dear priests, what an extraordinary ministry the Lord has entrusted to us! As in the Eucharistic Celebration he puts himself in the hands of the priest to continue to be present in the midst of his people, similarly, in the sacrament of reconciliation he entrusts himself to the priest so that men will have the experience of the embrace with which the Father receives the prodigal son, restoring him the filial dignity and reconstituting him fully heir.

www.zenit.org 11-03-2010

Quality and Depth of Witness Inspires Vocations

Excerpts from Pope Benedict XVI's message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, celebrated on Good Shepherd Sunday, which falls on April 25 this year

The fruitfulness of our efforts to promote vocations depends primarily on God's free action, yet, as pastoral experience confirms, it is also helped by the quality and depth of the personal and communal witness of those who have already answered the Lord's call to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life, for their witness is then able to awaken in others a desire to respond generously to Christ's call.

I wish to invite all those whom the Lord has called to work in his vineyard to renew their faithful response.

The Lord makes use of the witness of priests who are faithful to their mission in order to awaken new priestly and religious vocations for the service of the People of God. For this reason, I would like to mention three aspects of the life of a priest which I consider essential for an effective priestly witness.

Eager to have the same experience

A fundamental element, one which can be seen in every vocation to the priesthood and the consecrated life, is friendship with Christ.

Jesus lived in constant union with the Father and this is what made the disciples eager to have the same experience; from him they learned to live in communion and unceasing dialogue with God.

If the priest is a "man of God", one who belongs to God and helps others to know and love him, he cannot fail to cultivate a deep intimacy with God, abiding in his love and making space to hear his Word. Prayer is the first form of witness which awakens vocations.

Joyfully, completely given

Another aspect of the consecration belonging to the priesthood and the religious life is the complete gift of oneself to God.

The Apostle John writes: "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us; and therefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

The story of every vocation is almost always intertwined with the testimony of a priest who joyfully lives the gift of himself to his brothers and sisters for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

By this will all men know

A third aspect which necessarily characterizes the priest and the consecrated person is a life of communion.

Jesus showed that the mark of those who wish to be his disciples is profound communion in love: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." In a particular way the

priest must be a man of communion, open to all, capable of gathering into one the pilgrim flock which the goodness of the Lord has entrusted to him, helping to overcome divisions, to heal rifts, to settle conflicts and misunderstandings, and to forgive offences.

If young people see priests who appear distant and sad, they will hardly feel encouraged to follow their example.

Signs of Contradiction

The very life of men and women religious proclaims the love of Christ whenever they follow him in complete fidelity to the Gospel and joyfully make their own its criteria for judgement and conduct.

They become "signs of contradiction" for the world, whose thinking is often inspired by materialism, self-centredness and individualism. By letting themselves be won over by God through self-renunciation, their fidelity and the power of their witness constantly awaken in the hearts of many young people the desire to follow Christ in their turn, in a way that is generous and complete.

Faithfulness radiates joy

Every priest, every consecrated person, faithful to his or her vocation, radiates the joy of serving Christ and draws all Christians to respond to the universal call to holiness.

May this World Day once again offer many young people a precious opportunity to reflect on their own vocation and to be faithful to it in simplicity, trust and complete openness. May the Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, watch over each tiny seed of a vocation in the hearts of those whom the Lord calls to follow him more closely, may she help it to grow into a mature tree, bearing much good fruit for the Church and for all humanity. With this prayer, to all of you I impart my Apostolic Blessing.

www.zenit.org 16-02-2010

Convincing Factor

Pope John Paul II, Pastores Dabo Vobis, 41

"The very life of priests, their unconditional dedication to God's flock, their witness of loving service to the Lord and to his Church – a witness marked by free acceptance of the Cross in the spirit of hope and Easter joy – their fraternal unity and zeal for the evangelization of the world are the first and most convincing factor in the growth of vocations."

Swimming in Deep Waters

As a small child I loved going out into the deep waters beyond the breakers, when at the beach with my parents. One or the other of them would hold me firmly as we passed through the waves and then as we reached the gentle lull in the deeper waters I could float and feel safe, knowing that their loving arms were there to support and protect me. As I grew older, too big to be carried out by my parents, I would sit on the shore and watch the waves to see if they were too big. I loved the deep. However to reach it I had to struggle out past the breakers – often being dumped or washed back to shore again. Because I feared the breakers, I rarely ventured past the swash.

Now I see our faith journey a bit like this call of the deep water. God calls us to put out into the deep. He knows the fullness of joy of a life lived with Him. He, as our most loving Father, will carry us out, support and protect us; but we have to become as little children to allow Him, to trust Him. We have to let go and let God! How hard this is for adults to do!

Atheists are not even aware of this wonderful “Deep”, and never go to the “beach”. Agnostics sit on the sand watching and waiting but never trusting enough to get their spiritual feet wet. Some paddle in the “swash” of lukewarmness, having little prayer life to give them the courage to battle the waves of temptations. Some try and battle the waves themselves, gaining strength from the Sacraments and a constant prayer life: sometimes reaching the deep, only to be drawn back in by a bigger wave of doubt, sometimes dumped by worldly worries, but mostly tossed to and fro by the ebb and flow of day-to-day life.

Too few understand the sure and simple way of the saints: to trust in the Divine Mercy – no need to fear, cling to our Abba, who provides for our every need, and rest in the Spirit whose Love fills us with the “utter fullness of God”. With this child-like faith we can confidently put out into the deep, knowing that with Christ we can do all things. When we “put on Christ”, we begin to see through His eyes, hear with His ears, be His arms reaching out to others, go where His feet take us and speak His loving words to others.

Our Faith is so beautiful and yet we rarely experience its power. How can we know this if we are never taught? How can we be taught if our teachers in the Faith don't know it? The Pope and the Magisterium are crying it from the roof-tops, but in many parishes and dioceses the beauty of our Faith is being diluted and contaminated. Thank you, ITD, for being the “stones” that “shout” and giving those of us who are not hearing the full message, a chance to read what our Holy Father is saying and what the Saints have written to help us in our faith development, and what other Catholics are experiencing to give us courage to step out *Into the Deep!*

Maureen Wright, Lurnea, NSW

Miserable Cowards

All leaders encounter difficulties. It is not easy at the top of the tree, just as handling a big heavy truck is not like driving a small lightweight car, or installing the big blocks of stone used in large public buildings is not as easy as laying ordinary bricks in a small domestic house. Running a diocese (or even the universal Church) is not the same as being the pastor of a small country parish.

We all realize that rampant secularism and atheism are emptying the Church and the world of the sense of mystery and the sacred. This is a particularly hurtful problem when priests and religious, from whom the flock expect good example, are so weak and ignorant. These, after all, have freely and knowingly pledged themselves to levels of responsibility and loyalty beyond the ordinary. This they did not have to do, but they have. Why do they now so dishonour their calling by their heedlessness, amounting at times to destructive disobedience?

Perhaps now is the time for the official leaders of the Church at all levels to grasp the nettle, difficult though it might be. The Church is facing an onslaught of forces from many directions, as is society and its institutions, to manipulate the family and the individual for reasons that are just wrong, and not to our personal, social, or religious benefit.

Faced with this unpleasant reality, our Church officials could do worse than learn from the leadership of the very successful American general, feared by all levels of the enemy during World War II, who spurred his men on with the battle cry: “Attack, you miserable cowards – you only have one life to lose!”

S.C., Melbourne

Extraordinarily Busy

At Burpengary the church holds around 200. At Sunday Mass (7 March) the church was about three quarters full. We had a bishop and two priests. But because the Mass would have been unduly delayed by the large number of communicants, we also had five extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, to help with the workload.

Richard Stokes, Caboolture QLD

Children Young and Old

Pope Benedict XVI's advice to children:

“Sometimes in life it seems inevitable to argue; but the art of reconciling with each other remains important, forgiving, beginning anew and not letting bitterness linger in the soul.”

Where Vocations Come From

That there is a critical shortage of priestly vocations in the Church in this country is no doubt a very sad thing. It certainly raises serious questions about her future, about her faith, about meeting the needs of the new evangelization given that she cannot provide sufficient priests for the ministry of God's word and Christ's sacraments. The need for priests is urgent, but the work for vocations is the responsibility of all the faithful and all parish priests; it is not some secondary or marginal matter that is primarily the business of one particular person or group.

Although there are clearly exceptions, scripturally and traditionally the rule has always been that the sacrament of marriage is the seed-bed of vocations. A man and a woman freely, faithfully, fruitfully and totally united in the sacrament of marriage, together with their children form a family. The family is the first school of faith, and this is how most Catholics first learn about their baptismal calling, duties and rights. The Church recognises this Catholic family with its many responsibilities, duties, obligations and rights, as the domestic Church. The Catechism teaches that the family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father, and the Son in the Holy Spirit (2205). As a communion of persons whose vocation is to know, love, serve and worship God in holiness forever, it assumes singular importance in the Church.

Candidates to the priesthood are more likely to come from committed faithful Catholic families, especially where the father is the key witness. The importance of the family for the life and well-being of the Church in carrying out her pastoral work and mission entails a particular responsibility upon a diocese to evangelize, catechise, support and strengthen Catholic marriage.

The re-evangelization of the family should be followed by putting the sacrament of the Eucharist at the centre of all the pastoral work for vocations in every parish in a diocese. This centralization of the Eucharist should be accompanied by a systematic catechesis directed at cultivating a Eucharistic faith and spirituality in families, since the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. Eucharistic Adoration is especially effective because it draws sharp attention to the great gift that makes the priesthood so extraordinary, so essential. In the regular silence and reflective listening of adoration a young person can hear Christ's gentle voice saying, "Do not be afraid, come".

The family is the basic cell of the Church and society. God has ordained that the future of both the Church and society should pass through the family. By re-evangelizing families and putting the Eucharist and adoration at the centre of vocational work, a diocese can serve the development of priestly vocations through family, prayer and the sacramental life.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Let Us Believe, and Believe Firmly!

By Saint Peter Julian Eymard

Let us then believe in the Eucharist. "I believe, Lord," we should often say. "Help my tottering faith!" There is nothing that gives greater glory to our Lord than this act of faith in His Eucharistic presence.

It honours His Divine truthfulness in a supereminent fashion; the greatest honour that can be offered any man is to believe him on his word, just as the greatest insult would be to suspect him of lying, to doubt his word, and to demand a proof or a guarantee. Now, if a child believes his father on his word, a servant his master, a subject his king, why not believe Jesus Christ on His word when He declares with an oath that He is present in the Most Blessed Sacrament?

This simple and absolute act of faith in the word of Jesus Christ gives Him glory because it pays Him the homage of recognition and adoration in His hidden state. The honour paid to a friend in disguise, or to a king without his royal insignia, is greater than any other, because it is really the person who is then honoured and not his trappings.

So it goes with Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament; to honour Him, to believe in His Divinity in spite of the veil of weakness thrown over Him is to honour His Divine Person and to respect the mystery which envelops Him.

Such an act of faith adds to our merit. Like Peter confessing the Divinity of the Son of man, like the Good Thief declaring the innocence of the Crucified, we proclaim Jesus Christ to be what He really is in spite of what He seems to be. Still more, we believe the opposite of what our senses tell us, relying solely on the truth of His infallible word.

Let us believe, and believe firmly in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist! Jesus Christ is there! When we enter a church, a feeling of respect should come upon us, a respect of faith and love on meeting Jesus Christ in person; for it is indeed He Whom we are meeting.

Let that be our apostolate, our preaching; it is the most eloquent for the unbelievers and the impious.

About Half!

The little fact tidbit on the number of employees working in the Holy See (ITD March 10, p.4) reminded me of the following:

When Pope John XXIII was once asked, "How many people work in the Vatican?" he allegedly answered, "About half." I loved that response!

Thank you for ITD!

Mark Gross, Boise, Idaho USA

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	6pm Thursday – 6pm Friday (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Friday 9.30am – 10.30am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10am – 11am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
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

Purification

Pope Benedict XVI

“From God we do not ask anything small or great; from God we invoke the divine gift of He Himself. In this sense that we must learn to pray...to Him to give us His Spirit, that we may respond to the needs of life and help others in their suffering. ... We must increasingly learn what things we can pray for, and what things we cannot pray for because they express our selfishness...and pride. Thus, praying before the eyes of God becomes a process of purification of our thoughts and desires. ... Only in this process of slow purification, of liberation from ourselves,...does the true path of life and joy lie.”

Vatican Information Service 13-02-2010

For the Solution

Pope John XXIII

“To keep me from sin and straying from Him, God has used devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. My life vows destined to be spent in the light irradiating from the tabernacle, and it is to the Heart of Jesus that I dare go for the solution of all my problems.”

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

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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.