

Into the Deep

Issue 107

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

August 2011

It's Over

Not the way we wanted it to be, not the way we expected it to be, but it's finally over. The Apostolic Signatura has spoken, and the decision is final. The decision is in favour of Bishop Coffey in his removal of Fr Speekman from Morwell Catholic Parish in 2003. Doesn't make sense, doesn't seem just, and those of us who know Fr Speekman know that he is a good, faithful priest and that his ministry is effective. But that's not the point. We have to accept that this matter is now closed.

- Ed.

Public Statement from Bishop Christopher Prowse, Bishop of Sale, released 28-07-2011:

THE DISPUTE BETWEEN BISHOP J. COFFEY AND FR. J. SPEEKMAN

In the Catholic Diocese of Sale and beyond many would be aware of the long standing dispute between Bishop Jeremiah Coffey, the retired Bishop of Sale, and Fr. John Speekman, priest of the Diocese of Sale.

It pertains to Fr. Speekman and his appointment as Parish Priest of Morwell by Bishop Coffey (appointed July 2000).

In July 2003 Bishop Coffey issued a Decree removing Fr Speekman as Parish Priest of Morwell.

Ultimately, the issue was referred to Rome for adjudication. The Congregation for the Clergy on two occasions supported Fr Speekman in the matter (2004, 2006). Bishop Coffey then appealed to the Apostolic Signatura, the highest judicial authority in the Catholic Church, in 2007.

In recent days we have finally received a definitive judgement on the matter from the Signatura. As the Signatura is the Supreme Apostolic Tribunal, there can be no appeal from its judgements.

The Signatura has judged that the Congregation for the Clergy was correct in the procedure in which it carried out its decision. However, according to the judgement of the Signatura, the argumentation the Congregation for the Clergy employed was wrong because it did not consider all the reasons presented to it.

Therefore the removal by Bishop Coffey of Fr. Speekman as Parish Priest of Morwell has been upheld by the Signatura.

A new Parish Priest for the Parish of Morwell will need to be appointed. Let us pray for the parish afresh in these times.

My prayer and hope is that this definitive judgement by the Signatura will help us move to a closure and healing of this vexed issue. Please join me in prayer that this becomes a reality in the years ahead. Our effective proclamation of the Gospel of Reconciliation in Gippsland insists on this.

Soon I will discuss with Fr. Speekman suitable possibilities for a fresh appointment in the Diocese of Sale.

I am grateful for the patience and priestly zeal that both Bishop Coffey and Fr. Speekman have demonstrated in these many years of waiting. Let us pray for them.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Bishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Bishop of Sale

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

Fr Speekman's Response

You asked me for my response to the Decree from the Signatura.

I appealed my removal twice and twice my appeal was upheld. This time the decision went against me. Naturally I am disappointed. However, I accept the decision as authoritative and have put the matter to rest in my own mind.

It is good that Morwell Catholic Parish is now free from the grip of this dispute and can move on.

As for my future I will await the decision of Bishop Prowse as to how I may best serve the diocese in the future.

Fr John Speekman

Catechesis is More Than Preparation for Sacraments

Pope Benedict XVI, 02-07-2011

In the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, the Second Vatican Council stated:

Christian education "has as its principal purpose this goal: that the baptized, while they are gradually introduced the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of Faith they have received, ... and be conformed in their personal lives according to the new man created in justice and holiness of truth" (No. 2).

In this educational effort, the family remains the first responsible party.

Dear parents, be the first witnesses of the faith! Do not be afraid of the difficulties amid which you are called to realize your mission. You are not alone! The Christian community is close to you and sustains you.

Catechesis accompanies your children in their human and spiritual growth, but catechesis is a permanent formation, not limited to preparation to receive the sacraments; we must grow throughout our lives in knowledge of God, thus in knowledge of what it means to be a man.

Know how to draw strength and light from the liturgy: participation in the Eucharistic celebration on the Day of the Lord is decisive for the family, for the whole community, it is the structure of our time.

Let us remember always that in the sacraments, above all in the Eucharist, the Lord Jesus works for the transformation of men assimilating us to himself. It is precisely thanks to the encounter with Christ, to communion with him, that the Christian community can give a witness of communion, lending itself to service, receiving the poor and the little ones, recognizing the face of God in the sick and in every needy one.

[Translation by ZENIT] www.zenit.org 05-07-2011

Thank You, Fr John

I would like to applaud and thank Fr John Speekman for standing up and fighting for the Church and Truth – if it wasn't for this process, I and many others would not have grown stronger in the Catholic Faith.

It is very sad indeed to hear that after 8 long years and after 2 decrees in Fr John's favour, the Signatura finds reasons that had not been considered.

Fr John is a very holy priest and over these past years of being patient and prayerful has reached many, many souls through the gift of writing his homilies. Those of us who have had the access and privilege of reading these homilies would agree with me that they have been spiritual, inspiring and educational.

I can't understand why it's possible for Fr John to get another appointment in the Sale Diocese when Morwell needs desperately to get back on its feet and this would have been the parish to be involved in when Fr John returned.

Reflecting on recent Gospel readings about the treasure hidden in the field, Fr John holds the Treasure and is willing to share it with Morwell Catholic Parish, but this has been snatched out of our grasp.

May the Holy Spirit always be your guide, Fr John, and never give up the good fight. You are always in my prayers.

Josie Vitale, Morwell

Exercising Authority

*Bishop Samuel J. Aquila, Bishop of Fargo, 18-03-2011
in his address "Good Shepherd: Living Christ's Own
Pastoral Authority", Philadelphia*

Jesus at times was direct in calling people to conversion – to change their way of acting and thinking. This directness makes many of us uncomfortable today. We should follow his example and language, even if we do not use his precise words. His language is good to contemplate and definitely should challenge us to look at how we correct the faithful, including priests and bishops, and speak the truth especially with those who say they are with Christ and the Church but do not accept the teaching of Jesus and the Church. ...

Bishops and priests, as an act of loving obedience to Christ, must return to a full exercise of the governing authority of Christ witnessed in the Gospel. If we do not exercise that authority, are hesitant to exercise it, or doubt it, then it only leads to the "father of lies" taking hold of the minds and hearts of the faithful, and their continuing to act in the ways of man and not the ways of God.

www.fargodiocese.org

Traditional Latin Mass

The Extraordinary Form of the Mass will be celebrated by Fr Andrew Wise at St Mary's Cathedral, Sale, as a Low Mass on Saturday mornings at 10am, starting 30 July. Reconciliation will be from 10.45 - 11.15am.

On Sunday 18 September there will be a Solemn High Mass sung in the Cathedral at 11am, for the feast of the anniversary of dedication of the Cathedral.

An Eternity to Face

Father Paul O'Callaghan, professor of theological anthropology at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome, in an interview with Zenit on his book "Christ Our Hope: An Introduction to Eschatology"

The Holy Father's encyclical *Spe Salvi* came out in 2007, when I was writing the book, and I used it throughout. ... *Spe Salvi* very openly admits that for many people nowadays the promise of eternal life is unattractive. They're interested in this life, not the next life, which for many is considered as a source of eternal boredom. And since they don't hope, they don't believe. So in each chapter I've attempted to show that eternal life, judgment, resurrection, post-mortem purification and all the rest, are extraordinarily attractive and meaningful from the human point of view. Far from distracting us from the world we live in, they motivate us deeply and prompt us to live life to the fullest. In Christianity, on earth we can "store up treasure in heaven". The provisional character of human life inculcated by different versions of reincarnationism does the exact opposite.

... Christian hope is the fruit of God's action and promise. It's not our doing. Our task as Christians is to open ourselves to God's saving action, for eternal life consists principally of God's life in us. ...

When we read in the New Testament that those who die confirmed in sin will be condemned for all eternity, immediately we begin to ask: but what does this mean? Could it be that Jesus was just provoking his disciples to react decisively to his message, to convert, to make up their minds once and for all? This was the understanding of Origen and others.

Obviously, Jesus achieved the conversion he sought, but I don't think this was the primary purpose of these statements, because he moved his followers to conversion not through fear and harshness, but by love and mercy. I think Jesus meant just what he said: that those who persevere in their infidelity to the end of their lives will be lost forever. This is such a serious issue, such a real possibility, that he was prepared to give up his life to save us from sin. God gives more weight to human freedom than we do at times.

www.zenit.org 02-06-2011

Bad Priests

St John Eudes

The most evident mark of God's anger and the most terrible castigation He can inflict upon the world are manifested when He permits His people to fall into the hands of clerics who are priests more in name than in deed, priests who practice the cruelty of ravening wolves rather than the charity and affection of devoted shepherds. Instead of nourishing those committed to their care, they rend and devour them brutally. Instead of leading their people to God, they drag Christian souls into hell in their train. Instead of being the salt of the earth and the light of the world, they are its innocuous poison and its murky darkness.

St Gregory the Great says that priests and pastors will stand condemned before God as the murderers of any souls lost through neglect or silence. ... Elsewhere St Gregory asserts that nothing more angers God than to see those whom He set aside for the correction of others, give bad example by a wicked and depraved life. Instead of preventing offenses against His Majesty, such priests become themselves the first to persecute Him, they lose their zeal for the salvation of souls and think only of following their own inclinations. Their affections go no farther than earthly things, they eagerly bask in the empty praises of men, using their sacred ministry to serve their ambitions, they abandon the things of God to devote themselves to the things of the world, and in their saintly calling of holiness, they spend their time in profane and worldly pursuits.

When God permits such things, it is a very positive proof that He is thoroughly angry with His people, and is visiting His most dreadful anger upon them. That is why He cries unceasingly to Christians, "Return, O ye revolting children ... and I will give you pastors according to my own heart" (Jer.3:14-15). Thus, irregularities in the lives of priests constitute a scourge visited upon the people in consequence of sin.

On the other hand, the greatest effect of God's mercy, the most precious grace He bestows upon mankind, is to send worthy priests, men after His own heart, seeking only His glory and the salvation of souls. The greatest blessing that God bestows upon a church ... is to have a saintly shepherd, be he bishop or priest. This is indeed the grace of graces and the most priceless of all gifts for it includes within itself every other blessing and grace.

The Priest: his dignity and obligations. Chapter 11

**"For us to let children be children,
we need parents to be parents."**

From the UK Report of an Independent Review of the Commercialization and Sexualization of Childhood

Majority Rules

Again and again we read in the nation's secular newspapers that there is majority support for voluntary euthanasia, which ostensibly justifies its legislation. What is it about majorities? Are they sacrosanct? Are their wishes intrinsically more worthy than those of minorities? Besides, do majorities automatically reflect common sense?

An overwhelming majority of US citizens was in favour of invading Iraq. Did that justify its bloody invasion? After Hitler's rise to power, the majority of Germans supported the Führer with unbridled enthusiasm – until things started to get sour. And that things can get sour in the area of euthanasia we should have learnt from the Netherlands, the country which now has quite a range of killable categories: the terminally ill, persons of any age who are disabled and chronically ill, elderly people who are 'tired of life', infants who have 'imperfections', and more.

Another by-product of Holland's voluntary euthanasia culture is the possibility that one's life may be snuffed out without having requested it; those who do the killing may get a slap on the wrist though – if they are caught. To claim that Australia cannot be compared to the Netherlands is nonsensical – unless of course, human nature Down Under is of a totally different kind.

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill, NSW

Not a Social Organisation

Pope Benedict XVI, 02-07-2011

Hence, being Church does not happen only by our own human organizational strength, but finds its source and its real meaning in the communion of love of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: This eternal love is the source from which the Church springs and the Most Holy Trinity is the model of unity in diversity and generates and moulds the Church as a mystery of communion.

It is always necessary to start again and in a new way from this truth to understand and to live more intensely our being Church, "People of God," "Body of Christ," "Communion." Otherwise, we run the risk of reducing the whole to a horizontal dimension, which alters the identity of the Church and the proclamation of the faith and would make our life and the life of the Church poorer.

It is important to stress that the Church is not a social, philanthropic organization, as so many others are: She is the Community of God, the Community that believes, that loves, that adores the Lord Jesus and opens her "sails" to the breath of the Holy Spirit, and because of this, she is a Community capable of evangelizing and humanizing.

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Pope Benedict's Ordination Memories

From a homily by Pope Benedict XVI, 29-06-2011

"Non iam dicam servos, sed amicos" – "I no longer call you servants, but friends".

Sixty years on from the day of my priestly ordination, I hear once again deep within me these words of Jesus that were addressed to us new priests at the end of the ordination ceremony by the Archbishop, Cardinal Faulhaber, in his slightly frail yet firm voice.

According to the liturgical practice of that time, these words conferred on the newly-ordained priests the authority to forgive sins.

"No longer servants, but friends": at that moment I knew deep down that these words were no mere formality, nor were they simply a quotation from Scripture. I knew that, at that moment, the Lord himself was speaking to me in a very personal way.

In baptism and confirmation he had already drawn us close to him, he had already received us into God's family. But what was taking place now was something greater still. He calls me his friend. He welcomes me into the circle of those he had spoken to in the Upper Room, into the circle of those whom he knows in a very special way, and who thereby come to know him in a very special way. He grants me the almost frightening faculty to do what only he, the Son of God, can legitimately say and do: I forgive you your sins. He wants me – with his authority – to be able to speak, in his name ("I" forgive), words that are not merely words, but an action, changing something at the deepest level of being.

I know that behind these words lies his suffering for us and on account of us. I know that forgiveness comes at a price: in his Passion he went deep down into the sordid darkness of our sins. He went down into the night of our guilt, for only thus can it be transformed. And by giving me authority to forgive sins, he lets me look down into the abyss of man, into the immensity of his suffering for us men, and this enables me to sense the immensity of his love.

He confides in me: "No longer servants, but friends". He entrusts to me the words of consecration in the Eucharist. He trusts me to proclaim his word, to explain it aright and to bring it to the people of today. He entrusts himself to me.

"You are no longer servants, but friends": these words bring great inner joy, but at the same time, they are so awe-inspiring that one can feel daunted as the decades go by amid so many experiences of one's own frailty and his inexhaustible goodness.

www.zenit.org 29-06-2011

Spiritual Rebellion

Currently the Church in Australia is experiencing strident rebellion from self-professed ‘mature, thinking Catholics’ – a description which is nothing more than a euphemism for serial dissenters.

Many bishops, priests, religious and Catholic organizations openly and aggressively challenge and defy the Pope, contradict and disobey the Magisterium, and deride orthodox Catholics, all under the guise of engaging in constructive dialogue and debate. One only has to look at Cathnews, the Swag, the National Council of Priests, Catholic Education offices, some religious orders and various bishops around the country to understand what I am talking about.

This crisis of dissent has been born of the systematic rejection over many years of the Church’s doctrines and teachings under the leadership of our bishops.

Doctrine lies at the heart of genuine catechesis and a bishop has a serious duty to obey, teach and defend these doctrines and to correct souls entrusted to his care that contradict or deny them. Remaining silent because he too subscribes to dissent is not an option for a bishop entrusted with the sacred teaching authority of the Church.

This is particularly the case with regards to the doctrine relating to the Church – a doctrine which professes the Church as a mystery which has its origin and source in the Blessed Trinity. As such the Church is essentially related to Christ since she is his fullness, his body, his voice and his bride. She is the sacrament, not only of salvation, but of Christ’s permanent living presence and activity in the world.

This truth of the Catholic faith is barely understood by those ‘intelligent Catholics’ who claim to know about it but stubbornly refuse to believe it. A big part of their conceit is the claim that those who dissent are ‘informed’ and do so only after long and careful study of the Church’s doctrines. However, more often than not their rebellious slogans, chants, and assertions reveal that they have barely read the prologue of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. They find it very hard to believe in the Church as a divine reality, a mystery that is beyond human wisdom, creation and manipulation. And even though they may profess their belief in the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church on Sundays, they relentlessly campaign, petition and scheme to change the Church to suit their own needs.

This disbelief has resulted in the falling away from the faith by young people, the decline of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, the confusion about the true vocation of the laity and the absurd mentality that the Holy Mass can be manipulated to attract and entertain.

As the history of Christianity shows, to rebel against the Church and her teachings is to rebel against Christ and his Gospel.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Teach the Children

Blessed Mother Teresa

“You and I and every single human being in the world is a child of God, created in the image of God to love and to be loved.”

“And it is for us, especially for you who have young girls and young boys ... to teach them the dignity, the respect, the love for life. Teach them purity, teach them holiness. Teach them and don’t be afraid... Teach them not to touch each other so that on the day of their wedding they can give each other a virgin heart, a virgin body.”

“To be able to control yourself, to be able to love, you must pray.”

“Again, I appeal to you: teach the children love; teach the children the commandments of God.”

“And so I think it will be a wonderful thing if you all join together and will help the government to abolish that law of abortion, so that the people will protect the child, and will love the child and will want the child, the gift of God. You must help the government.”

“I just want to tell you one more beautiful thing – God’s tenderness and love for each one of us. And so, amongst you ... any who have already done the abortion, tell to God, say, ‘I am sorry. I will never do it again.’ ... God will give you a clean heart, because God’s mercy is much greater than our sinfulness. He will forgive.”

Squandering Your Assets

Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, 29 May 2011

Despite the fact that the number of men studying for the priesthood doubled during the years of Pope John Paul II, Catholic people are aware that priestly vocations are down in Australia, although different patterns of recruitment exist in various regions. ...

Catholic priests are unmarried and vowed to sexual abstinence and many see this as the major cause of the shortage. I believe the challenges are deeper. ...

I am not in favour of abandoning mandatory celibacy for priests in the Latin rite of the Catholic Church. The Orthodox Churches, although their bishops are unmarried, and the Anglican and Protestant Churches all have married clergy. Despite these many counter examples, I believe Catholic vitality and identity would be radically weakened by such a change.

Being a spouse and a parent are wonderful vocations, life-giving physically and usually life-giving emotionally and spiritually. To do these tasks properly takes considerable time. Priesthood is also a full-time job, when taken seriously.

The Catholic Church is different, primarily because of its unmarried priests, brothers and nuns. It is also better because of them. The going does not get better when you squander your assets.

Neither Conductor Nor Composer

*From a homily by Archbishop Vincent Nichols at the
Diocese of Westminster's annual Celebration of
Priesthood, 07-06-2011*

...I would like to reflect on our priestly part in the celebration of the Mass. ... Among us priests Liturgy easily becomes a point of contention. It should not be so. ...

Liturgy is never my own possession, or my creation. It is something we are given, from the Father. Therefore my own tastes, my own preferences, my own personality, my own view of ecclesiology, are marginal, of little importance, when it comes to the celebration of the Mass. We don vestments to minimise our personal preferences, not to express or emphasise them. Liturgy is not ours. It is never to be used as a form of self-expression. Indeed the opposite is the truth. Within the diocese, when the priests of a parish change there should be clear continuity in the manner in which Mass is celebrated. The Mass is the action of the Church. That's what matters, not my opinion. ...

My second point flows from this: the Liturgy forms us, not us the Liturgy. The words of the Mass form our faith and our prayer. They are better than my spontaneous creativity. At Mass my place is very clear: I am an instrument in the hand of the Lord. I am not a conductor, still less a composer. Ordained into the person of Christ the Head, I am just an instrumental cause of this great mystery. ...

At Mass we need space – spaces of silence, spaces for the quiet recollection of the people, both before and during Mass. So, the fashion of our celebration of the Mass should never be dominating or overpowering of those taking part. It should be well judged, respectful of its congregation, sensitive to their spiritual needs.

Whenever the Liturgy of the Church, the celebration of the Mass, truly enters our heart and soul, then the result is a vibrant sense of mission. When we meet the Lord in all His love for us, then we are ready to respond, especially in the care we give to the poorest and those most in need, those closest to the Heart of our Saviour. ...

Among us let there be a humble, joyful service of the Lord. Let us accept with joy the search for a renewal in our celebration of the Mass guided solely by the Church and let our own faith and prayer be tutored daily by what is asked of us. Amen.

www.zenit.org 27-06-2011

Who Sets the Standards?

Perhaps I should take the advice of our Cardinal Pell and not be too concerned about the method in which dissidents from many angles have been attacking the Catholic Church on matters of morals, the power of the Biblical Commission in Rome and the Articles of Faith.

To be true, this has all been happening from about the 17th century, but the variety and direction from which these attacks are emanating in this modern era does gain some assistance from an obvious quarter and, with the help of an antagonistic media, it seems to be without challenge as the censorship duly applied makes it appear to any reader or listener that there are no dissenters to these controversial attacks on, in particular, the Catholic Church.

The question came into my thoughts many months ago after some selective reading and many hours of contemplation: What or who is out there to advise the many Catholic congregations who are now zombie-like watchers or readers of endless hours of “me footie” or “me soapies” or - heaven forbid - the cartoons? Who is now the local “instructor” who was once educated within a religious seminary and has not been fed secularism via the court/political inspired whims of wimpish agnostic or atheistic opponents of Christianity.

A case in point is, now in the Parish of Holy Spirit a parishioner taking Holy Communion to an elderly person is required to hold a Police permit illustrating cartoons of children and of course costing the parish the nominated permit fee. I need no permit, at the time of writing, to visit that same person. Where are our lawyers who will challenge such secular intrusion? Will I be required, in future, to hold a Police permit before I am allowed to attend Mass where a company of school children have been taken to “gain experience” or for a similar “adventure”?

It appears that the parish problem everywhere is the lack of youthful thinkers and the lack of religiously educated school leavers, a percentage of whom could be ideal candidates for a religious vocation which is most unlikely in the present situation. Does a parish priest ever become aware of a likely candidate to the seminary when he visits, if ever, a secondary college?

It may seem endless as to where my mind wanders. We are forever surrounded here in Holy Spirit Parish with the thinning of the elderly, and in the absence of youth, we are encouraged to attend “workshops” for this and that, when at our time of life our day is done and we are only looking forward to the warmth and the peace of our homes, often in isolation.

John Bohan, Geelong West

“Our Virgin Mother, Victorious Queen of the World, show us your power.”

Prayer of Sr Natalia of Hungary

Forms of Martyrdom

Raymond Cardinal Bourke, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, Sydney 11-03-2011

The witness of holiness of life is, in fact, martyrdom, in one form or another. In the words of the Holy Scriptures, it is dying to self, in order to live for Christ.

Martyrdom of blood

When we hear the word, martyrdom, we tend to think exclusively of those who have given their lifeblood out of faithful love of Christ, who have been killed because of hatred of Christ and of the Christian faith.

Red martyrs or martyrs of blood give the highest form of witness and are our models in giving daily witness to our love of Christ, even though we may not be asked to pour out our lifeblood. Through their martyrdom, they also win for us so many graces for our daily living. In the words of the Servant of God Father Hardon, “through their sufferings we are all made richer, as through their merits the whole Church becomes more holy.” ...

Martyrdom of persecution

There is also the martyrdom of persecution. Father Hardon explains: “Not all the faithful who suffer for Christ also die for Christ. Opposition to the Christian faith and way of life does not always end in violent death for the persecuted victims. Consequently it is well to distinguish between what may be called martyrdom of blood and martyrdom of opposition which is bloodless indeed but no less – and sometimes more – painful to endure.” ...

Martyrdom of witness

Finally, there is the martyrdom of witness, the most common form of martyrdom, the martyrdom which is inherent to the Christian life. It can take the form of suffering personal hostility or simply indifference in giving the witness of holiness of life. The Servant of God Father Hardon describes the martyrdom of witness with these words:

“All that we have seen about the martyrdom of violence applies here too, but the method of opposition is different. Here the firm believer in the Church’s teaching authority; the devoted servant of the papacy; the convinced pastor who insists on sound doctrine to his flock; the dedicated religious who want to remain faithful to their vows of authentic poverty, honest chastity and sincere obedience; the firm parents who are concerned about the religious and moral training of their children and are willing to sacrifice generously to build and care for a Christian family – natural or adopted – such persons will not be spared also active criticism and open opposition. But they must especially be ready to live in an atmosphere of coldness to their deepest beliefs.”

The hostility and the even more pervasive indifference to the beliefs we hold most dearly tempts us to discouragement and even to avoid the more public witness to our faith. But the martyrdom to which we are called and for which we are consecrated and fortified by the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, requires us to offer tirelessly our witness, confident that God will bring forth the good fruit. ...

Finding strength

The Holy Eucharist not only strengthens us spiritually to be true martyrs, but is the model of our martyrdom, pure and selfless love, without condition, “to the end”.

The life of the martyr for the faith finds its centre and source in the Eucharistic sacrifice, in Eucharistic adoration, and in all forms of Eucharistic devotion, especially visits to the Blessed Sacrament and Spiritual Communion throughout the day. ...

The Sacrament of Penance renews the grace of our baptism and confirmation through a personal encounter with Christ for the confession and forgiveness of our sins. ... The integrity and courage needed to be a martyr of witness in the world today demand the intimacy with Christ, which can only come through the daily examination of conscience and Act of Contrition, and the regular meeting with Him in the Sacrament of Penance.

A Leader of the Christian Resistance

Cardinal George Pell,

at the Consecration of Bishop Bill Wright, 15-06-2011

The Second Vatican Council was explicit in its endorsement of the role of the baptised and so we have parish councils, school boards, finance councils, levels of democratic involvement not present before Vatican Two.

But the greater task of the laity is to take the Christian message out into the wider society as a yeast.

Catholics are a significant minority in Australia, more than a quarter of the population, while regular worshippers are a much smaller minority. The secular pressures on us from the majority are enormous and without hard work and a clear vision to resist we shall more and more take on the colours of those who surround us.

The bishop has to be a public teacher, a regular part of the give and take with the rest of society, committed to dialogue, but a leader of the Christian resistance.

Religion is Good for Society

Religion works well for the greater good of society despite some doubters. It benefits millions by the moral improvements due to the Churches, schools, hospitals and institutions it runs.

Sadly, religion has been abused at times, like colour and race, to incite people to violence. But this abuse does not detract from its proper use for the benefit of millions more.

Three of the greatest commandments of our Judeo-Christian heritage form the very bulwark of our civilisation – the sacredness of human life, the purity of marriage, and the right to private property. Without these laws, many unwanted or allegedly useless lives are killed for convenience – the unborn, the defective, and the aged. Just like on an animal farm, these people are treated as no longer useful commodities and so are put down, resulting in the untold misery of broken homes, broken lives, and the broken hearts of anguished fathers, mothers and children. And without these laws increasing numbers cannot be trusted to be honest in their dealings regarding property, and the fair time, money and effort needed for work and social affairs. Fewer seem to care anymore and the trend is tragic.

Even 4000 years ago Hammurabi of Babylon had the wisdom to discern 6 of the 10 commandments for the peace and prosperity of his people, recognising the natural laws of good behaviour/morality. But unique to our Judeo-Christian heritage are the commandments against polytheism, idolatry, and evil thoughts. These are ennobling rules and are hard to account for without a revelation of God as a loving Creator, Lawgiver (nature) and Saviour, giving us the necessary reason and strength to be self-sacrificing, when necessary, for the sake of others and the truth – like Socrates (from reason alone).

Churches preach, teach and practise persuasively against hate in thought, speech and deed whereas mere civil laws on such are easily used to suppress free speech and religion by those who claim to be offended “victims” of others’ beliefs. Why kill the goose that lays the golden eggs?

Democracy works best when most people, most of the time, are virtuous and can be trusted. Few laws are then needed. “He governs best who governs least”. A South-Sea islander once reproved a soldier for using the thin pages of a Bible to roll his cigarettes. “If it weren’t for the Bible, you’d be in my cooking pot!” he said.

What will stop the present mad rush into lawlessness and the slaughter of the innocents? What the gods (devil) wish to destroy they first make mad. How mad when evil becomes a free choice? God help us all.

Fr Bernard McGrath, Bendigo

Petitions at the back of the church

We’re all familiar with the occasional petition promoted after Mass, with copies at the back of the church for those who wish to sign. Usually they’re about the right to life, or religious freedom, or opposition to euthanasia, or something equally consistent with Church teaching.

Now we have dissenters drawing up a petition *against* the Church, and sending it to each parish requesting that the parish priest promote it and leave copies at the back of the church.

The petition rambles on about how concerned they are about the Church and how competent they are to offer their wisdom. It is addressed to Pope Benedict XVI and the Bishops of Australia. It accuses the Church of no longer inspiring communities, of alienating adult Catholics, and being irrelevant to children; of being focussed on centralism and legalism and control instead of being collegial and listening. They are “shocked” at the “lack of due process” in the removal of Bishop Morris. They are “dismayed” that there was no “proper consultation” about the new translation of the missal. They “can no longer accept” the refusal to consider women priests. And they ask the Pope to allow a “more accountable and consultative” process for the appointment of bishops (i.e. one that involves them).

These Catholics (“Christ’s faithful”, they call themselves) claim to have “sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit” before attacking the Church in this petition. Imagine being faithful to Christ, but not to His Church, faithful to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but not to the Church He guides. Please tell me that no priest actually put this petition at the back of his church!

- Ed.

Travel Safely

St Louis de Montfort

It is difficult to persevere in sanctity. That is because of the strange corruption of the world. The world is so filthy it seems to sully all of us. Even the hearts of religious are smeared with dust, if not with mud or slime.

It is something of a miracle if one stays firm in the torrent without being carried away; if one sails through a stormy pirate-ridden sea without being shipwrecked, drowned, or attacked by corsairs; or if one walks safely through a countryside reeking with pestilence.

And it is the Virgin Mary who works the miracle. She works it for those children who serve her the right way. This being clear, we must now, certainly, choose that right way, the true devotion, to her.

Rejoice in the Lord Always

Pope Benedict XVI, 04-06-2011, Croatia

Saint Paul tells us to “rejoice in the Lord always” (Phil 4:4). These words are stirring if we consider the fact that the Apostle of the Nations is writing this letter to the Christians of Philippi while imprisoned and awaiting trial. He is in chains, yet the preaching and testimony of the Gospel cannot be chained. Saint Paul’s experience reveals how it is possible, along the journey of our lives, to preserve joy even in moments of darkness. ...

Jesus enables you to know at first hand the love of God the Father; he helps you realize that your happiness comes from his friendship, from fellowship with him. Why? Because we have been created and saved by love, and it is only in love, the love which desires and seeks the good of others, that we truly experience the meaning of life and find happiness in living it, even amid difficulties, trials and disappointments, even when it means swimming against the tide.

www.zenit.org 04-06-2011

Posture at the Consecration

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

Q: “I assume there are no rubrics, but what is the recommended posture while kneeling? Specifically, I feel it makes most sense to bow my head deeply during the words of the consecration and then to look up, adore, and say, ‘My Lord and my God’ while doing so as the host and chalice are elevated. It seems I’m not normal, though, as I’ve noticed a lot of folks doing the opposite – looking during the consecration and bowing during the elevation. Any suggestions?” - Trenton, New Jersey

A: As our reader says, there are no rubrics regarding this point except that the faithful should kneel. I have written on a couple of occasions that bowing during the elevation is not quite correct, since the purpose of the elevation is precisely for the host and chalice to be seen. Kneeling is already an act of reverence, so there is no particular need to bow the head during the words of consecration. At the same time, if this helps one to concentrate the mind and spiritually unite oneself more attentively to the sacred action, then I see no reason why it cannot be done. It is a question of each person’s spiritual sensibility. Some will profit more by looking at the moment of consecration, others, such as our reader, gain more by refraining from doing so. The Church neither obliges nor reproves one or the other practice.

www.zenit.org 22-02-2011

Archbishop Chaput

in an interview with John L Allen Jr, NCR, 19-07-2011

Not conservative

I actually don’t see myself as a conservative at all. I try to be faithful to the church’s teaching, as the church has handed it on to us. I don’t feel that as a Christian or as a bishop I have a right to play with that tradition, which is the apostolic tradition of the church. I hope that I’m creative and contemporary, however, in applying that teaching and in the structural living out of it in the local church.

You have to lead

You can’t lead unless you first enter into dialogue with people. My point was that a priest can’t just be a man of dialogue and consensus, because at some point he also has to lead.

Seeing things more clearly

Prayer really does double our energy. It doubles our insight, and it more than doubles our capacity for work. You get things done more quickly if you see them more clearly. Prayer is where you give yourself over to God, so God can tell you clearly what your responsibilities and obligations are. I really do think that the heavier the burden, the greater the necessity for prayer.

“What about your role as a spiritual leader for the archdiocese? Is there any particular devotion or practice of prayer, for example, that you want to promote?”

I’m firmly convinced by a lifetime of being in the church that the traditional practices of the church are the ones we need to follow, and if we follow them, we really will be able to engage in all these issues in an appropriate way.

The first thing is regular prayer, and for priests that means the divine office and the daily celebration of the Mass. Beyond that, we should embrace the sacramental life, which means personal confession as well as encouraging others to enter the sacrament of confession. There’s also fasting ... Jesus tells us that ‘some devils can’t be driven out without fasting.’ We need to find time for spiritual reading, especially the reading of the scriptures. ...

Many people find praying the rosary daily to be a very important thing. Certainly devotion to the Blessed Mother is an intrinsically necessary part of Catholic life, because Mary is the mother of the church and our mother personally. Christ gave us Mary as our mother, and we should take that seriously. If we believe these things and faithfully apply them to our lives, we’ll work our way through this.

I think devotion to the saints is also an important part of this. As a bishop, I have a huge devotion to St Augustine and to St Charles Borromeo. ... I really do depend on them a lot in the Communion of Saints. Also, St Francis is in some sense the foundation of my spirituality.

The Futility and Lie of Atheism

A growing number of people today claim to be an atheist. The reasons for their claim may be many and varied, but that is their business, at least it's not mine. Some atheists occupy positions of prominence in our society and many do possess academic qualifications. As such, they are in a position to greatly influence others. Having qualifications unfortunately does not always equate to the use of that most necessary of attributes – common sense.

The atheist will tell you that there is no God – that God is non-existent. [It is interesting that while they are most emphatic about their disbelief in God, they are often vague and evasive in demonstrating what it is they do believe.] It is not only the atheist's disbelief that concerns me, it is their state of mind – their reasoning and the potential to pass on this infected reasoning to the unwary and vulnerable – especially children.

Psalm 139:7, “Where could I go to escape from you?” implies that man is an escapist, so comments Bishop Fulton Sheen (*Peace of Soul* p.48). He further states thus: “Atheism is not the knowledge that God does not exist, but only the wish He did not, in order that one could sin without reproach or exalt one's ego without challenge.” (ibid. p.47,48)

A Christian, for example, can be readily challenged if caught in the act of breaking one of the Ten Commandments or, as in the case of Catholic politicians, openly dissenting against Catholic Church teachings. The atheist then thinks that escape is possible because by disbelieving in God, His commandments do not apply to him. However there is no escape. “The pillars upon which atheism mounts,” continues Fulton Sheen (ibid. p.48) “are sensuality and pride. An atheist may be moral in the popular sense of the word, but the atheist is not humble.”

Often the atheist, as do some other modern thinkers, resorts to reasoning against miracles (at Lourdes or in

the requirement for saintly canonization for example) to bolster his disbelief. Now it is true that modern medicine and science has found cures for many diseases but this is merely a case of God acting slowly by gradually imparting His knowledge to His creatures (a Good teacher never overburdens His students with too much too soon) whereas miracles are a case of God acting very quickly indeed if He so chooses (see GK Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, 1908 ch.viii). Why one is cured and not another is God's business, not mine. He most definitely never imposes His Will on anyone but we all need a reminder from time to time, in case we forget, that He is still around.

Donald de Marco, co author with Benjamin Wiker of “Architects of the Culture of Death”, in the chapter dealing with the life and ideology of Friedrich Nietzsche, who ended up in an asylum, comments: “As Jacques Maritain has rightly remarked ‘atheism cannot be lived. The good we aspire to, the natural object of the human will, is goodness itself, not the fulfilment of our ego. Atheism ties a person in knots. It rejects the pure goodness that is the true object of the will and replaces it with an illusory good. Being one's own God is not heroic. It is foolish and self destructive. And it is so because it is essentially unrealistic. Genuine heroism takes place with the realm of the real. Real courage demands more than posturing ‘thus every will, even the most perverse, desires God without knowing it’, argues Maritain. Further, no rebellion against the order of the Creator can ever be truly creative but must end in destruction, so that every absolute experience of atheism, if it is conscientiously and rigorously followed, ends by provoking its psychical dissolution, in suicide”. (p.53)

Unless we freely choose to approach the fount of God's infinite mercy with “a humble and repentant heart” (psalm 51:17) while the opportunity is available, what else can we expect save His Infinite Justice.

John M. Royal, Bundaberg West, Qld

True Authority is Divisive

Bishop Samuel J. Aquila, Bishop of Fargo, 18-03-2011

While the challenges to living out the pastoral authority of Jesus are great, bishops and priests must contemplate the words and actions of Christ in the Gospel to learn from him the proper exercise of their authority as they teach, sanctify and govern. We must come to accept the fact that the exercise of true authority will be divisive as it was in the time of Jesus. Ultimately living the pastoral authority of Jesus in loving obedience will lead us to the Cross as it led him to the Cross, for we will love the Father with the heart of Jesus.

The Divine Heart

St Margaret Mary Alacoque

*The Divine Heart
is an ocean full of all good things,
wherein poor souls can cast all their needs;
it is an ocean full of joy
to drown all our sadness,
an ocean of humility to drown all our folly,
an ocean of mercy to those in distress,
an ocean of love
in which to submerge our poverty.*

Giving Up Your Citizenship

From an article by Mark Miravalle, professor of theology and Mariology at Franciscan University of Steubenville; on the Irish clerical abuse scandal

Catholics in Ireland are direct followers of Jesus Christ, who are guided by his human representative on earth, Benedict XVI. They are not direct followers of any particular bishop, priest or theologian. This is why it is entirely illogical for any Irish Catholic to leave the Catholic Church because of the wrongdoing or scandalous behaviour of an individual bishop or priest, or even groups of erroneous clergy.

An Irish citizen would never change his or her citizenship to that of another country simply because they were scandalized by the actions of their local public official, or national political representative. In baptism, an Irish Catholic receives his or her supernatural identity as a Catholic Christian, which in Catholic belief is far more important than even their national identity, as it immediately effects their eternal destiny. No local or national scandal by Church clergy should deprive an Irish Catholic of their faith in Jesus Christ, whom they truly faithfully seek to follow, or in the Church, which Catholics believe was founded by Jesus Christ in its fullness.

www.zenit.org 21-07-2011

More Good Wine

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience 08-06-2011

In our own day, while we unfortunately see an increase in separations and divorces, the fidelity of spouses has itself become a meaningful witness to the love of Christ, which permits marriage to be lived out for what it truly is: the union of one man and one woman who, with the grace of God, love one another and help one another for a lifetime, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health.

The first education in the faith consists precisely in the witness of this fidelity to the spousal covenant: Through it, children learn without words that God is faithful, patient, respectful and generous love. Faith in the God who is Love is handed on first of all by the witness of a fidelity to spousal love, which translates naturally into love for the children who are the fruit of this union.

But this faithfulness is not possible without God's grace, without the support of the faith and of the Holy Spirit. This is why the Virgin Mary unceasingly intercedes with her Son, so that – as at the Wedding Feast of Cana – He might continually renew spouses in the gift of the “good wine”; that is, of Grace, which enables them to live as “one flesh” through the various seasons and situations of life.

www.zenit.org 08-06-2011

Only Saints Renew The Church

*Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience 09-10-2010,
on St John Leonardi (1541-1609)*

There is another aspect of St John Leonardi's spirituality that I would like to emphasize. On various occasions he reasserted that the living encounter with Christ takes place in his Church, holy but frail, rooted in history and in its sometimes obscure unfolding, where wheat and weeds grow side by side, yet always the sacrament of salvation.

Since he was clearly aware that the Church is God's field, St John was not shocked at her human weaknesses. To combat the weeds he chose to be good wheat: that is, he decided to love Christ in the Church and to help make her, more and more, a transparent sign of Christ. He saw the Church very realistically, her human frailty, but he also saw her as being ‘God's field,’ the instrument of God for humanity's salvation.

And this was not all. Out of love for Christ he worked tirelessly to purify the Church, to make her more beautiful and holy. He realized that every reform should be made within the Church and never against the Church. In this, St John Leonardi was truly extraordinary and his example is ever timely.

Every reform, of course, concerns her structures, but in the first place must have an effect in believers' hearts. Only saints, men and women who let themselves be guided by the divine Spirit, ready to make radical and courageous decisions in the light of the Gospel, renew the Church and make a crucial contribution to building a better world.

Search in Prayer Rather

St Bernard of Clairvaux

“The search for this God who is not yet sufficiently sought must be continued, yet it may be easier to search for him and find him in prayer rather than in discussion.”

A Moving Tribute

A priest, talking to a group of his parishioners, asked, “What would you like people to say when you're in your coffin?”

One said, “I'd like them to say I was a fine family man.” Another said, “I'd like them to say I helped people.” A third responded, “I'd like them to say – 'Look! I think he's moving!'”

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 |

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

Simple Solution

Blessed Mother Teresa

“When God created us, he created us out of love. There is no other explanation because God is love. And he created us to love and to be loved. If we could remember that all the time, there would be no wars, no violence, no hatred in the world. So beautiful. So simple.”

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.
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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.

Good Soil

Prayer of St Albert the Great

“Let me leave behind my old life, so that the seeds of your Word won't be eaten up by the birds of frivolous thought, or choked out by the thorns of worry. Give me a soft heart full of humility and joy, so that I will be good soil and bring forth fruit in patience.”