

Into the Deep

Issue 88

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

January 2010

“May the birth of the Prince of Peace remind the world where its true happiness lies; and may your hearts be filled with hope and joy, for the Saviour has been born for us.”

Pope Benedict XVI

Living Our Baptism

Pope Benedict XVI on Baptism, 08-11-2009, Brescia

Only if we find the light that illuminates and gives fullness of meaning can human beings be truly happy. That light is faith in Christ, a gift received at Baptism that must be constantly rediscovered in order to pass it on to others.

... At that moment [Baptism] Christ bound us to Himself forever. Yet do we, for our part, remain united to Him through choices coherent with the Gospel? It is not easy being Christian. It takes courage and tenacity not to conform oneself to the mentality of the world, not to allow oneself to be seduced by the temptations...of hedonism and consumerism; to face, if necessary, misunderstandings and sometimes even persecution. Living our Baptism means remaining firmly united to the Church, even when we see her face darkened by certain shadows and stains.

[It is the Church] that has regenerated us for divine life and accompanies us throughout our journey. Let us love her, let us love her as a true mother. Let us love and serve her with a faithful love which translates into tangible acts within our communities, not surrendering to the temptation to individualism and prejudice, and overcoming all rivalries and divisions. Thus will we be true disciples of Christ.

Vatican Information Service 08-11-2009

“The faith of the Church is this:

That one and identical is the Word of God and the Son of Mary, Who suffered on the Cross, Who is present in the Eucharist, and Who rules in Heaven.”

Pope Pius XII

An Immense Joy!

Pope Benedict XVI, 08-12-009

What an immense joy it is to have Mary Immaculate as our mother! Whenever we experience our own fragility and the lure of evil, we can turn to her and our hearts receive light and comfort. Even in the trials of life, in the storms that unsettle our faith and hope, we know that we are her children and that the roots of our life lie deep in the infinite grace of God. In her the Church, though exposed to the negative influences of the world, always finds a star by which to guide herself and to follow the route Christ shows her. Mary is, in fact, the Mother of the Church.

Our Own Cross

Pope Benedict XVI, 21-06-09, San Giovanni Rotondo

Suffering is part of the very mystery of the human person. Certainly we must do whatever we can to reduce suffering, ...but to banish it from the world altogether is not in our power. This is simply...because none of us is capable of eliminating the power of evil, which...is a constant source of suffering.

The only person who can eliminate the power of evil is God. Precisely because Jesus Christ came into the world to reveal to us the divine plan of our salvation, faith helps us penetrate the meaning of all that is human, hence also of suffering.

There exists, then, an intimate bond between the Cross of Jesus – symbol of supreme pain and price of our true freedom – and our own suffering, which is transformed and made sublime when lived with an awareness of God’s closeness and solidarity.

Vatican Information Service

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

Where's the Ball?

It was 3 years ago that the Speekman-ball was lobbed decisively into the Apostolic Signatura's court by Bishop Coffey. Since then it's been very hard to find! Let me explain.

People have been contacting me expressing their increasing frustration and impatience that Fr Speekman has still not been returned to his parish and that Bishop Prowse has done nothing and said nothing about the whole situation since his installation in July last year. Many of us expected that once Bishop Prowse was installed, he would either return Fr Speekman (following the last two decrees of the Congregation for the Clergy which Bishop Coffey refused to obey), or announce that he would be awaiting the final judgement of the Signatura (the Church's 'Supreme Court') which he would then act upon. People were asking what they could do, who they should write to. In October I contacted a canon lawyer for advice. He suggested the following:

"I would strongly recommend that you all write to your new bishop indicating: 1) that you believe that Fr Speekman was unjustly removed by Bishop Coffey as parish priest of Morwell, and that there was no canonical basis for his removal, 2) that the Congregation for the Clergy clearly upheld Fr Speekman's appeal of his removal with a lengthy decision after studying the case for a long period, 3) that it is a grave injustice to both Fr Speekman and to the parish community at Morwell, and 4) that you hope that he will make every effort in the near future to contact and work with the Apostolic Signatura to at long last resolve this case so that Fr Speekman can return soon as parish priest at Morwell. Bishop Christopher Prowse can be contacted at 8 Pearson Street, Sale, Vic 3850. I would recommend that you send copies of your letter to the Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, Archbishop Raymond Burke, Apostolic Signatura, Piazza della Cancelleria 1, 00186 Rome, Italy, Europe."

I considered publishing this advice at the time but, thinking it was pointless writing to the Bishop if the ball was in the Signatura's court, I wrote to the Papal Nuncio first. I had previously written to the Nuncio, Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto, in October 2008 asking if there was anything he could do to help (Bishop Coffey had been retired since January that year and there was still no word on our new bishop). The Archbishop had replied saying that he was certain that once we had a new Bishop, the case would be addressed in a "most just and opportune way". So in November 2009 I wrote asking where the situation stands now that we have a new Bishop but still nothing has been done. He replied confirming that the issue "belongs now to the juridical and pastoral responsibility of the Bishop of Sale."

Now that means the ball is *no longer* in the Signatura's court, but back in the Bishop's. So either the Signatura has made a decision but not made it public, and it is up to the Bishop to decide what to do about the decision; or the Signatura has *not* made a decision and it is *still* up to the Bishop! That would put us back in the same situation as we were with Bishop Coffey, who could arbitrarily decide Fr Speekman's fate without regard to Vatican Decrees, Canon Law, or simple justice!

I wrote back to the Nuncio to clarify this but he did not respond. So I wrote to Bishop Prowse in December, and asked if he would make a public statement to clarify the situation once and for all. He replied saying that he did not intend to make any public statement. He noted that he has been 'familiarising himself totally with all aspects of the situation and consulting people' (what more does he need apart from the two Decrees from Rome? Even the few excerpts opposite should be enough!). He had made contact with Fr Speekman and intended "moving forward with the situation in the New Year."

Now Bishop Prowse's letter also makes no mention of the case being at the Signatura. Can the ball really be in his court? If so, what is the Church's justice system worth? A priest can be clearly and officially exonerated (twice!), a bishop can be clearly instructed to return the priest (twice!), that bishop can fire the ball back into Rome's court, then retire and live happily ever after while his priest remains in exile, with justice denied him; a new bishop can be appointed, and the ball can be politely thrown back into his court. Surely this cannot be the case! But why won't anyone come clean about such a public matter?

A further opinion from the canon lawyer suggested that a just resolution to Fr Speekman's case would have implications for similar situations around the world. He noted, "Parish priests should not be forced to leave parishes by parishioners who will not accept the teachings of the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, this is happening around the world, and many of the bishops are too cowardly to put an end to it." Maybe that's the crux of the matter.

I contacted Fr Speekman for comment but there was little he could add: "I spoke with Bishop Prowse around mid-September 2009. No decisions were reached. I am due to see him again later in February 2010. You asked about the Signatura. I have been informed that the case was suspended when bishop Coffey retired but I don't know if it has, or has not, been resumed. Other than that I do not know what the future holds."

What a shocking situation to be in, 6½ years after being wrongfully removed.

[Excerpts of Decrees from Cong. for Clergy on page 3] - Ed.

What More Is Needed?

Congregation for the Clergy

Excerpts from the First Decree, 8 July 2004

- The allegations against Father Speekman do not concern his ministry *per se*, but his relationship with a small number of employees of the Parish. ... It concerns areas that are entirely in the competence of the Parish Priest.
- no evidence produced by a single parishioner of Morwell sustaining the claim of the ineffectiveness or harmfulness of Father Speekman's ministry has been included in the *acta*. In fact, the *acta* reveal quite the opposite.
- By not indicating sufficient reasons and by omitting to include arguments, the Most Reverend Ordinary deprived Father Speekman of his ability to defend himself against the charge that his ministry had become harmful or ineffective.
- In the end, the reasons for Father Speekman's removal are generic, and it is difficult to know in what specific way Father Speekman is responsible for confusion or disturbance at Morwell. In fact, any confusion or disturbance at Morwell which the Most Reverend Ordinary has ascertained might well be attributed more to the actions of the Most Reverend Ordinary than to those of Father Speekman.
- the Congregation for the Clergy hereby decrees that the recourse against the Most Rev. Ordinary's removal of Rev. John Speekman as Parish Priest of Morwell Catholic Parish is upheld ...

Excerpts from the Second Decree, 20 Nov 2006

- despite the inquiries of the Congregation as well as the intervention of the Apostolic Nuncio of Australia, the Ordinary has consistently refused to implement the legitimate Decree of the Congregation (2004) by restoring Father Speekman to the office of Parish Priest of Morwell Catholic Parish;
- on 14 December 2005, the Ordinary issued a Decree of Removal of Parish Priest which purported to once again remove Father Speekman from the office of Parish Priest of Morwell Catholic Parish; ... the Second Decree of Removal does not provide new causes and arguments – duly proven – which would justify the decision for removal
- The Congregation for the Clergy hereby decrees
 - (1) that the petition of Rev. John Speekman against the Second Decree of Removal dated 14 December 2005 is upheld ...
 - (2) that the dispositions of the Decree of the Congregation for the Clergy issued on 8 July 2004 are to be implemented without further delay and the Congregation is to be notified of such implementation in a prompt manner.

The End of Christmastide

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

Q: Is the feast of the Baptism of the Lord part of the Christmas season? ... Also, when does Ordinary Time start? ... - J.T., Singapore

A: Here are the relevant texts from the introduction to the lectionary:

“33. The Christmas season runs from evening prayer I of Christmas until the Sunday after Epiphany or after 6 January, inclusive.

“38. The Sunday falling after 6 January is the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. ...

“44. Ordinary Time begins on Monday after the Sunday following 6 January and continues until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday inclusive. It begins again on Monday after Pentecost and ends before evening prayer I of the First Sunday of Advent.”

From this, I think it is clear that the feast of the Baptism of the Lord is part of Christmastide and brings it to a close. The Monday which follows it initiates the first week of Ordinary Time and, like the week following Pentecost, is a “week” of six days, Monday through Saturday.

The following Sunday is the second Sunday of Ordinary Time, or perhaps more precisely, Sunday of the second week of Ordinary Time. This latter formulation allows us to see more clearly why there is no first Sunday of Ordinary Time in the missal, a fact which might have induced some, including a widely diffused missal for the faithful, to state that the Baptism of the Lord was in fact the first Sunday.

That this is not the case is also shown from the fact that the feast is sometimes celebrated on a Monday that is Jan. 9. This happens only in those countries that transfer the Epiphany to the Sunday between Jan. 2 and 8. When Christmas Day falls on a Sunday, Epiphany falls on Jan. 8, and so the Christmas season ends the following day.

It is further confirmed by the rubrics of the Liturgy of the Hours. After the concluding prayer of this feast's vespers, a rubric laconically proclaims: “The end of Christmastide.”

www.zenit.org

From the Fact File:

Buddhism is the second-largest religion in Australia after Christianity. The number of Buddhists increased by nearly 80% between 1996 and 2001. The Buddhist Temple in Berkeley NSW is the largest in the southern hemisphere.

[Australian Bureau of Statistics] Submitted by S.C.

‘Catholics Come Home’ Comes to Australia

“A six-week \$150,000 TV campaign, inviting Catholics to come home to the Catholic faith, in the dioceses of Phoenix and Corpus Christi in America, has seen 100,000 return to the Church,” Tom Peterson, the founder and president of Catholics Come Home, informed a conference organised by the National Evangelisation Committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in Melbourne in December.

Priests and lay people from Melbourne, Wagga, Adelaide, Sydney, Broken Bay, Wollongong, Brisbane, Canberra, Sale, and others, were enthralled to hear of the almost unbelievable success of such a program. A number of seminarians from the Melbourne seminary also attended. Mr Peterson said that beginning in 1998 the first \$30,000 Catholics Come Home program in local papers and radio saw 3000 people return to the Church. It was then decided that TV was the modern medium which should return the best results.

Mr Peterson pointed out that there were 42 million Catholics not practising the faith in America and if just 10% returned to the practise of the faith that would mean 4.2 million extra parishioners.

The TV ads used are in two parts. The first two-minute one details the 2000-year history of the Church (the Church began orphanages, universities, charities etc.) followed by shorter ads with personal testimonies from people who had returned to the Church and what it meant to them. All ads end with an invitation to return to the faith.

Six months after the Phoenix-Corpus Christi campaign, Mass attendance in parishes had increased by 12%. A Hollywood group whose normal function was to survey filmgoers following the release of films, was contracted to survey 6000 viewers of the program. The survey found that 76% were very impressed and maintained their interest right through the ads, 56% of non-practising Catholics said they would return to the practise of the faith, and 53% of those of all faiths and none said they would further investigate the Church. When those who came back to their faith were asked why, 90% replied, “because you asked me.” The survey group concluded that the ads were so successful because they were an invitation and not a hard-sell.

Mr Peterson gave an inspiring account of his own testimony how the Holy Spirit guided him to ask someone to come to Mass with him, and what led him to begin Catholics Come Home. He said that only one in 807 Catholics have invited someone else to return to the Church, so results such as the above highlight the potential if more of us asked the simple question “would you like to attend Mass with me.”

Organiser of the Conference, Mr John Collins, director of the National Office for Evangelisation, said his office would coordinate plans to begin the first program in Australia during Lent 2011. Several Bishops, including Sale’s Bishop Prowse, have expressed interest in becoming involved. Meanwhile many thousands out there are just waiting for your invitation to them to come home to the practise of the faith.

Pat O’Brien, Sale

‘Catholics Come Home’ Website

Catholics Come Home is a lay, non-profit charity in the U.S.A., faithful to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. It is behind a TV advertising initiative that reaches out to inactive Catholics and others on their faith journey, encouraging their return to a more active practice of faith. The television messages invite viewers to visit the interactive website, CatholicsComeHome.org, to explore answers to questions of faith and to find their local parish.

The inspiring and uplifting ad, “Epic”, depicts the accomplishments of the Catholic Church in serving the needs of humanity throughout history. The ad explains that the Catholic Church is a family that has spanned the centuries and the globe, a family “made up of every race, we are young and old, rich and poor, men and women, sinners and saints. ... We are transformed by sacred scripture and sacred tradition, which have consistently guided us for 2000 years.” It explains that the Catholic Church is the largest charitable organization in the world, educates more children than any other scholarly or religious institution, developed the scientific method and laws of evidence and compiled the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The sobering ad, “Movie”, encourages viewers to reflect on the ‘movie of their life’. It imagines us sitting down, perhaps before Judgment, to watch our own behaviour in a movie filmed throughout our life – including the most intimate moments of sin and error that no one else knew about, up before us – and presumably our Judge – on screen. But in happening *before* death, it offers us hope in Christ’s mercy, forgiveness and opportunity to start anew. “Thankfully you still can ask God to help edit your life story and create the ideal ending”, it reminds us.

From the “Testimonials” ad, there are inspiring quotes from returned Catholics, such as: “I have a peace when I walk through the doors of a Catholic Church, like, that’s where I belong”, and “I feel alive, complete, and at home.”

All three ads can be viewed on the website, CatholicsComeHome.org.

- Ed.

The Message of Bethlehem

From a homily by Pope Benedict XVI at Bethlehem, 13-05-09

From the day of his birth, Jesus was “a sign of contradiction” (Lk 2:34), and he continues to be so, even today.

The Lord of hosts, “whose origin is from old, from ancient days” (Mic 5:2), wished to inaugurate his Kingdom by being born in this little town, entering our world in the silence and humility of a cave, and lying, a helpless babe, in a manger.

Here, in Bethlehem, amid every kind of contradiction, the stones continue to cry out this “good news”, the message of redemption which this city, above all others, is called to proclaim to the world.

For here, in a way which surpassed every human hope and expectation, God proved faithful to his promises.

In the birth of his Son, he revealed the coming of a Kingdom of love: a divine love which stoops down in order to bring healing and lift us up; a love which is revealed in the humiliation and weakness of the Cross, yet triumphs in a glorious resurrection to new life.

Christ brought a Kingdom which is not of this world, yet a Kingdom which is capable of changing this world, for it has the power to change hearts, to enlighten minds and to strengthen wills.

By taking on our flesh, with all its weaknesses, and transfiguring it by the power of his Spirit, Jesus has called us to be witnesses of his victory over sin and death.

And this is what the message of Bethlehem calls us to be: witnesses of the triumph of God’s love over the hatred, selfishness, fear and resentment which cripple human relationships and create division where brothers should dwell in unity, destruction where men should be building, despair where hope should flourish!

www.zenit.org 13-05-2009

Starved Women

It’s hard to imagine how insecure one would actually have to be, to consider that referring to God as “he” somehow alienates women; or as Catholic New South Wales Premier, Kristina Keneally suggests: ‘starves women of language which explicitly recognizes the female sex’. Oh please, what an embarrassment to women!

On top of this, Keneally states that she is in “complete and utter agreement with the Church” on the “core teachings of the Church.” She obviously chooses to define for herself what the ‘core teachings’ of the Church are. She believes women should be priests, priests should marry, and abortion is acceptable. It’s safer to say that Keneally is in ‘complete and utter ignorance’ of Church teaching. - Ed.

Leaders and Heroes

Listen to almost any conversation among Catholic laity these days and before long one constant theme recurs: leadership – or lack of it – in the Church. It prompts us to ask: what is a leader, or what are the characteristics of leadership? If our bishops and the so-called leaders of our religious orders are no more than inadequate temporary administrators or managers, then we are being led up the garden path.

If we want to understand what true leadership entails, I would suggest that we need to recognize certain truths.

We are engaged in spiritual combat, and it has never been any different, but the present age seems very intense about resisting good, which makes moral demands of the individual.

Our age is that of the anti-hero. That is, we don’t want heroes, unless they conform to our own values. Winning at sport is OK, but forget anything higher. The pope has just spoken of the destructiveness of egoism; it is the selfishness of the “me generation”.

A true leader, therefore, will need absolute independence of mind, which springs from the ability to think for oneself and treat the prevailing consensus with a good deal of skepticism. A good leader, having made up his mind independently (that doesn’t mean without sound advice and facts), will act resolutely and consistently.

To succeed, leaders must ignore or reject everything that the media will throw at them, provided that they can maintain their conviction about doing right.

Finally, they must act with personal courage at all times, regardless of consequences to themselves. All history teaches that there is no substitute for personal courage. It is the noblest and best of qualities, and an indispensable element of heroism in all its different manifestations.

Without courage people are wimps, and perhaps this is what a lot of people sense is the Church’s present failing. A kind of self-serving pragmatism has become the mind-set of too many administrators. A good general, however, will lead from the front, not from the side-line or an office desk.

Can our “leaders” actually lead? I doubt it. They are not geared to the toughness of the fight, not convinced about it, are too insulated by bureaucracy and privilege, and simply lack the intestinal fortitude.

S.C., Melbourne

Beg Mary MacKillop

Blessed Mary MacKillop is set to become Australia’s first saint. As the founder of the Sisters of St Joseph, let us pray to her that she will renew the hearts of her sisters so that we can perhaps recognize something of her in them again.

- Ed.

Eucharist Not Symbolic

Pope Benedict XVI on Rupert of Deutz, Benedictine monk of the 12th century; General Audience address, 09-12-2009

A prodigious writer, Rupert left numerous works, still of great interest today, in part because he was active in several important theological discussions of the time. For example, he intervened with determination in the Eucharistic controversy that in 1077 led to the condemnation of Berengarius of Tours. The latter had given a reductive interpretation of the presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist, describing it as only symbolic. ...

Dear brothers and sisters, it seems to me that at this point we must also think of our time; the danger exists also today of re-appraising the Eucharistic realism, to consider, that is, the Eucharist almost as just a rite of communion, of socialization, forgetting too easily that the risen Christ is really present – with his risen body – which is placed in our hands to draw us out of ourselves, to be incorporated in his immortal body and thus lead us to new life. This great mystery that the Lord is present in all his reality in the Eucharistic species is a mystery to be adored and loved always anew!

I would like to quote here the words of the Catechism of the Catholic Church which bear in themselves the fruit of the meditation of the faith and of the theological reflection of 2,000 years: “The mode of Christ’s presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as ‘the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend.’ In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist ‘the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained’” (CCC, 1374). With his reflection, Rupert was a contributor to this precise formulation.

www.zenit.org 09-12-2009

Simplicity of Heart

Pope Benedict XVI, 23-12-2009

“Gazing on the Christ Child lying in the manger, we contemplate the love of a God who humbly asks us to welcome him into our hearts and into our world. By coming among us as a helpless Child, God conquers our hearts not by force, but by love, and thus teaches us the way to authentic freedom, peace and fulfilment. This Christmas, may the Lord grant us simplicity of heart, so that we may recognize his presence and love in the lowly Babe of Bethlehem, and, like the shepherds, return to our homes filled with ineffable joy and gladness.”

Prayer to St Monica

Last month ITD published an article (p.2) about the campaign of the Bishops’ conference of England and Wales to unite mothers in prayer for the return of their children to the Church. The campaign found inspiration in St Monica, who is described as the patron saint of ‘resting Catholics’. All people, but mothers especially, were invited to participate in a novena of prayer from 12-20 December.

Hardly had ITD gone out when I received an email from a reader asking what the novena prayer was. I had forgotten to include it!

Obviously too late for the December novena, but as I’m sure mothers will be happy to make this novena during other times, here is the prayer that was proposed for the campaign:

“Faithful God, Light of all hearts, we praise You for Saint Monica, woman of living faith and reconciling love. She nursed her son, Augustine, in the Name of Jesus, and urged him tirelessly to a Christian way of life. In answer to her prayers for his conversion, You gave her greater joy than all her tears had dared to ask. Hear our prayers: *(here mention your request)*. As once You captivated the heart of St Augustine, so now draw our hearts to You, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new. Amen.”

- Ed.

We Seek Faith in a Priest

From a reflection by Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the Pontifical Household

“The just man, because of his faith, shall live” (cf. Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17). This applies, in a special way, to the priest. He is the man of faith. Faith is what makes him what he is, that is to say, his “weight” and the efficacy of his ministry.

What the faithful capture immediately in a priest, in a pastor, is if he believes in what he says and in what he celebrates. Those who seek God above all in the priest, realize immediately; those who do not seek God in him can be easily fooled and even fool the priest himself, making him seem important, brilliant, in step with the trends, when in reality he is a “resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.”

Those who don’t believe, but approach the priest with a spirit of seeking, understand the difference immediately. What puts one in a healthy crisis is not generally a learned discussion on faith, but rather an encounter with one who truly believes with all his being. Faith is contagious. One does not catch something by hearing someone speak of a virus or by studying it, but rather by entering into contact with someone who has it. This is faith.

www.zenit.org 19-12-2009

40 Days For Life – The Beginning of the End?

What is so special about dictionaries is that we believe what the meaning of a word is as described in a dictionary.

Now here is a description of one particular word as per the Oxford universal dictionary: The procuring of premature delivery so as to *destroy offspring!* That one word of course is *abortion*.

Now why is it that pro-choice people (read pro-abortion i.e. in favour of killing innocent babies) substitute a 'less distasteful' word or expression for one more exactly descriptive of what is intended? I believe there are two very good reasons:

One: money. Giant Planned Parenthood raked in record amounts of taxpayer funding in the last year - over \$336,000,000 - to underwrite the organisation which aborts 250,000 babies every year!

Two: in every human being the moral law (directly from God) has been indelibly inscribed in their innermost being and has been violated by these people. To soothe their "customers' conscience" they use euphemisms. Words like embryo; foetus; unwanted by-product of a pregnancy; even a pesticide etc. They are all used to dehumanise the baby which is growing in the womb.

In Victoria we have the worst abortion laws in the world! Lawfully killing a baby right up till birth! How horrid is that!

Unaccountable judges continue to force their personal abortion agenda on us. The national media has overwhelmingly taken a pro-abortion stand. Numerous Christian churches have fallen silent about abortion and many of us Christians have become apathetic or indifferent, failing to "speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves."

Pro-Life Breakthrough!

A campaign called 40 Days for Life started in 2004 and now has spread to many cities in the U.S. and other countries. In Australia, Brisbane has been the trailblazer and ran a very successful campaign last year. Sydney and Melbourne are planning to participate this year.

40 Days for Life is unique because it is built first and foremost on a foundation of prayer and fasting. Why 40 days? God has used the period of 40 days throughout history to bring about major transformation.

The 40 Days for Life starts simultaneously all over the world from Ash Wednesday until Palm Sunday 2010.

Now when I found out about it through a good friend of mine, Denis McDonald from Brisbane, I was very interested but was looking for somebody else to do it (sound familiar?). Then after praying to Mary our heavenly mother, I started to feel maybe I can be a tiny

little glow worm in this age of darkness. That is how I started. Now all people of goodwill, especially our youth, may also feel called to become little glow worms.

We aim for at least 12 hours, say from 7am to 7pm, to pray in front of the Fertility Control Clinic, 118 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne.

Our 40 Days is to be dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Virgin and Mother. Please pray that you are called. If your answer is yes then the rest is simple. Become a glow worm.

Work out what times you can commit to, attending at the abortion mill in contemplative peaceful prayer and witness. Invite like-minded friends and family to also join. Make a commitment to do this by, if possible, 18 January. Contact me using any of the details below.

With the help of Our Lady of Guadalupe we can and will save many babies from the butcher's knife.

Presently more than 2100 babies have been saved. That is the number we know about. Isn't it wonderful?

Hundreds of women and men have been spared the pain and regret of abortion. Young people have made better lifestyle choices. Those with past abortion experiences have found profound healing.

Abortion mills have experienced sharp setbacks, cutting back hours and closing down for days at a time. Twenty-six abortion workers have quit their jobs and walked away from the abortion industry. Five abortion facilities have closed and gone out of business following 40 Days for Life campaigns outside their doors.

Media outlets have given the pro-life position prominent coverage.

With God's help, the growing momentum of this effort could mark the beginning of the end of abortion.

We invite you – and others in your sphere of influence – to join God through Mary in His work. May God bless each and every one of you.

*Fons Janssen
250 Lays Road, Willung South, Victoria 3847
Phone (03) 5194 2340, fonsforlife@skymesh.com.au*

40 Days for Life Mission

From www.40daysforlife.com

"The mission of the campaign is to bring together the body of Christ in a spirit of unity during a focused 40 day campaign of prayer, fasting, and peaceful activism, with the purpose of repentance, to seek God's favour to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, thus bringing an end to abortion [in America]."

Liturgical Dance

Cardinal Francis Arinze, Prefect for the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments: (in a public question and answer forum; video on Gloria.TV)

On dance during the Mass:

Dance is not known in the Latin Rite of the Mass. Our Congregation has considered it for years. There is no major document of the Church on that; but the directive we give from our Congregation is this: in the strict liturgy – that means the Mass, the Sacraments – Europe and America should not talk of liturgical dance *at all*, because dance as known in Europe and North America is not part of worship, so they should forget it, and not talk about it at all.

But, it is different in Africa and Asia; not a concession to them, but because their culture is different. [...]

The bishops of each country have to watch this, knowing that ... the reasons for Mass are four: adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, and asking for what we need. If the movements help towards that, yes; if they do not, no. [...]

We do not come to Mass to enjoy. We don't come to Mass to admire people, and clap for them ... That is alright for the auditorium, for the theatre, even for the parish hall (presuming that the dance is acceptable from a moral point of view). [...]

But as for North America, or Europe, we think that the dance should not enter the liturgy *at all*. And the people discussing liturgical dance should spend that time saying the rosary. Or, they should spend that time reading one of the documents of the Pope on the Holy Eucharist.

We have already enough problems – why banalise more, why desacralise more? Haven't we already enough confusion? If you want to admire a dance, you know where to go. But not Mass.

On secular music during the Mass:

Obviously, every music has its own setting. We come to Mass for again those four reasons I mentioned. Does that music mean adoration of God, or praise of God, or asking pardon for our sins, and reparation, or begging God for what we need? Recreation is very different. [...]

Everything has its proper place. Therefore, the bishops of each area should get a good music commission, so that they have a music book containing *Catholic hymns*, so that only Catholic hymns are sung. Because what we sing should manifest what we believe and should nourish our faith, and not just sing anything. It should be: theologically deep; liturgically rooted; and musically acceptable.

Unfortunately, many things sung in some Catholic churches should not figure *at all* inside the church.

Thanks to John Loughnan for this video in his extensive collection of Catholic resources at jloughnan.tripod.com

Teach Theology of the Body

I feel that it is important to write to you about a recent report pertaining to abortion from the Health Department, highlighted by an article in the Herald Sun November 21st 2009.

More than 3350 women under the age of 20 had an abortion in 2008, with some 209 being aged under 16 years, and 2 being merely 12 years old. The report also showed that one third had intercourse at age 14 or younger. One in 10 indicated that they had not received sex-ed in school. Where does this leave our youth?

I emailed these facts to both the CEO of Catholic Education in Melbourne and the National Catholic Education Commission, twice, both as a concerned Catholic and parent of 3 beautiful boys. I expressed to them my concerns that though the report does not indicate that any of those involved were from a Catholic school, it would be naive to consider Catholic schools immune from the problems of the greater community. I also indicated that a solution to this terrible issue lies in the gift given by Pope John Paul II in his talks on the body. And their reply? None!

Although the foundations of Catholic education should begin at home, if the parents are as uninformed as the children, where is there hope? Where is the leadership in Catholic education today?

I fear for the future of our children.

Sean Kennedy, Strathfieldsaye, Vic

Lenten Retreat in Sydney

For the information of your readers:

The 6th Annual Five Day Silent Traditional Retreat, based on the Ignatian Exercises, will be held Monday 22 to Friday 26 February 2010 at Assumption Seminary & Conference Centre, 200 Jersey Road, Plumpton NSW 2761.

The Retreat Director is Fr Michael Rowe, Latin Mass Chaplain for the Archdiocese of Perth.

The retreat itself is free but accommodation and meals and retreat expenses are \$330. A deposit of \$100 is required to confirm your attendance (book early as places are limited).

Come one and come all for an unforgettable Ignatian spiritual experience!

For enquiries, application forms and details please contact me at the details below, or Fr Michael Rowe on (08) 9444 9604 or email rowe@webace.com.au.

As this is a silent retreat, all accommodation is in single rooms to discourage talking.

Sue Russell, Bondi Beach

Ph 0411 108 771, suzannepatricia@ozemail.com.au

The Devil Attacks The Shepherd

*From a letter to Priests by Cardinal Cláudio Hummes,
Prefect of the Congregation for Clergy; December 2009*

Prayer necessarily occupies a central place in the life of the priest. This is not hard to understand, since prayer fosters the disciple's intimacy with his Master, Jesus Christ.

We all know that when prayer lessens, faith is weakened and the ministry loses content and meaning. The essential consequence of this is that the priest will have less joy and less happiness in his daily ministry. It is as if, following Jesus along the road, the priest, who walks along with many others, were to begin to lag behind bit by bit and so distance himself from the Master, even losing sight of him on the horizon. From that moment he will find himself lost and uncertain.

St John Chrysostom ... observes wisely: "The devil attacks the shepherd [...]. In fact, if by killing the sheep the flock is reduced, by instead eliminating the shepherd he will destroy the entire flock."

This statement makes one think about many contemporary situations. Chrysostom warns us that the lessening of the shepherds will and does make the number of the faithful and of communities decrease. Without shepherds our communities will be destroyed!

But here I would like above all to talk about the needfulness of prayer so that, as Chrysostom might say, the shepherds can defeat the devil and so that they are not lessened. Truly, without the vital food of prayer the priest becomes sick, the disciple does not find the strength to follow the Master, and thus dies of hunger. As a consequence his flock is scattered, and dies in its own turn.

In fact every priest finds an essential reference point in the ecclesial community. He is a very special disciple of the Lord who called him and who, by the sacrament of Order, configured him to Himself as Head and Shepherd of the Church. ... He cannot do any less than his duty, since without a shepherd the community withers. Rather, following the example of Moses, he must be found with his arms raised to Heaven in prayer so that the people will not perish.

It is for this reason that the priest, if he is to remain faithful to Christ and faithful to the community, must be a man of prayer, a man who lives close to the Lord.

Moreover, he needs to be strengthened by the prayer of the Church and of every Christian. Let the sheep pray for their shepherd!

When the shepherd becomes aware that his life of prayer is weakening, it is time for him to turn to the Holy Spirit and to beseech like the poor of heart. The Spirit will rekindle the fire in his heart.

www.zenit.org 09-12-2009

Making God the Priority

Pope Benedict XVI, Christmas Vigil Mass 2009

Let us return to the Christmas Gospel. It tells us that after listening to the Angel's message, the shepherds said one to another: "Let us go over to Bethlehem' ... they went at once" (Lk 2:15f.).

"They made haste" is literally what the Greek text says. What had been announced to them was so important that they had to go immediately. In fact, what had been said to them was utterly out of the ordinary. It changed the world. The Saviour is born. The long-awaited Son of David has come into the world in his own city. What could be more important?

No doubt they were partly driven by curiosity, but first and foremost it was their excitement at the wonderful news that had been conveyed to them, of all people, to the little ones, to the seemingly unimportant. They made haste – they went at once. In our daily life, it is not like that.

For most people, the things of God are not given priority, they do not impose themselves on us directly, and so the great majority of us tend to postpone them. First we do what seems urgent here and now. In the list of priorities God is often more or less at the end. We can always deal with that later, we tend to think.

The Gospel tells us: God is the highest priority. If anything in our life deserves haste without delay, then, it is God's work alone. The Rule of Saint Benedict contains this teaching: "Place nothing at all before the work of God (i.e. the divine office)". For monks, the Liturgy is the first priority. Everything else comes later. In its essence, though, this saying applies to everyone. God is important, by far the most important thing in our lives. The shepherds teach us this priority. From them we should learn not to be crushed by all the pressing matters in our daily lives. From them we should learn the inner freedom to put other tasks in second place – however important they may be – so as to make our way towards God, to allow him into our lives and into our time. Time given to God and, in his name, to our neighbour is never time lost. It is the time when we are most truly alive, when we live our humanity to the full.

www.zenit.org 24-12-2009

The Better Part

St Odo, abbot of Cluny

"Mary who, seated at the Lord's feet, with an attentive spirit listened to his word, is the symbol of the sweetness of contemplative life, whose taste, the more it is savoured, so much more induces the soul to be detached from visible things and from the tumult of preoccupations of the world."

Popular Opinion Doesn't Change Doctrine

From time to time there appear in the media angry and frustrated voices calling for 'reform' in one or other of the Christian churches. This reform, more often than not, is based on the very laudable aim of enhancing the spirit of ecumenism.

When you examine these calls in a little detail, they all bear one thing in common: they operate on the belief that the various Christian communions ought to mirror secular society by embracing the principles of participatory democracy and subsidiarity. But what would it mean for a particular Christian communion to operate on this basis?

The various Christian denominations all have their bases in a set of doctrinal beliefs which are derived ultimately from two sources, scripture and tradition. They are not derived from some popular vote or some utilitarian political programme.

This does not mean that doctrines are completely inflexible, but it does mean that their abandonment or alteration ought to be subject to careful rational analysis, with proper reference to both the theological and the practical implications.

Such analysis would require an expert knowledge of the actual basis of belief in each of the communions. This knowledge is not generally available to the lay person and, therefore, many important decisions are properly left to those in authority who possess this required knowledge.

Most of us are happy enough to rely on the expertise of climate scientists to supply us with the data and decisions on which to base our future actions in this sphere. How incongruous, then, that we should want to deny the same reliance on expertise in the Christian churches and rely instead on that most fickle of pointers, popular opinion. Our situation in some ways mirrors the Roman Empire when 'popular' religion was rampant. This was famously described by Edward Gibbon: "The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful."

In the later Empire, one religion arose which was not at all 'popular' in this way and suffered grievously as a result. Unlike most of the pagan cults, this religion not only survived but spread throughout the world. It is worth asking as to whether it could have survived and flourished in this way if it had been based solely on democratic principles and 'popular' opinion.

The recent request of the Bendigo Anglican Church to use St Kilian's Catholic Church for ordinations had serious implications beyond local laudable hospitality.

Fr Bernard McGrath, Bendigo

More Errors of Judgement

Further to the Bendigo Anglican ordination saga (see Fr McGrath's letter alongside):

In *The Age* of 28 November 2009, Barney Zwartz wrote a summary of the sadness and disappointment that Bendigo Catholics and Anglicans had expressed because Rome had the audacity to intervene and correct Bishop Grech's error of judgement in proposing to allow an Anglican ordination to take place in a Catholic Church. The article quotes Peter Bugden as saying in a letter to the Bendigo *Advertiser*, 'that the decision was evidence that the Roman Curia was concerned with power and control, and that Christianity had been usurped by Churchianity'.

Surely not the same Peter Bugden who was Deputy Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst (until retiring in 2007), is currently the chairman of the Catholic Super Fund in Victoria, and previously taught in Catholic schools? Or perhaps it's actually true that dissent (or ignorance of Catholic teaching, at the very least) is a fundamental requirement of being employed in Catholic education.

- Ed.

Not a Reception Centre

On a recent visit to pray in St Joseph's Church Springvale I saw a group of the parish primary-school children and teachers rehearsing for the Grade 6 Graduation Mass and celebrations to be held that evening in the church.

As always occurs on these occasions, the chatter and laughter among the children was present. At one point a teacher announced to all the children: "Now I want you to remember you're inside a church." This would mean they were in the Real Presence where people go to pray and worship in a sacred atmosphere of quiet and reflection. It would also mean that any rehearsals would be done in a manner showing decorum and respect towards the Blessed Sacrament in Our Father's House of Prayer.

The children's chatter and laughter continued. The same teacher with the others gave them cues when to give applause during the 'presentation of awards' to a row of children lined up across the sanctuary in front of the altar. Of course, this scenario is nothing new to schools and churches in many parishes across Australia.

It made me wonder if the teacher who reminded the children of where they were was himself really convinced of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament or if he had ever meditated on Our Lord's words in Scripture: "My Father's House shall be a House of Prayer" (not a reception centre for rehearsing and performing secular events).

Peter Phillips, Springvale

Reconciliation, Justice, Peace

Pope Benedict XVI, in an address to the Roman Curia, 24-12-09

One might say that reconciliation and justice are the two essential premises of peace and that, therefore, to a certain extent, they also define its nature. Let us limit ourselves to the word "reconciliation". ... Peace can only be achieved as the result of inner reconciliation. ...

Today Saint Paul's appeal to the Corinthians has again proved most timely. "We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5: 20).

If man is not reconciled with God, he is also in conflict with creation. He is not reconciled with himself, he would like to be something other than what he is and consequently he is not reconciled with his neighbour either. Part of reconciliation is also the ability to acknowledge guilt and to ask forgiveness from God and from others.

Lastly, part of the process of reconciliation is also the readiness to do penance, the willingness to suffer deeply for one's sin and to allow oneself to be transformed.

Part of this is the gratuitousness of which the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* speaks repeatedly: the readiness to do more than what is necessary, not to tally costs, but to go beyond merely legal requirements. Part of this is the generosity which God himself has shown us. We think of Jesus' words: "If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt 5: 23ff.).

God, knowing that we were unreconciled and seeing that we have something against him, rose up and came to meet us, even though he alone was in the right. He came to meet us even to the Cross, in order to reconcile us. This is what it means to give freely: a willingness to take the first step; to be the first to reach out to the other, to offer reconciliation, to accept the suffering entailed in giving up being in the right.

To persevere in the desire for reconciliation: God gave us an example, and this is the way for us to become like him; it is an attitude constantly needed in our world.

Today we must learn once more how to acknowledge guilt, we must shake off the illusion of being innocent. We must learn how to do penance, to let ourselves be transformed; to reach out to the other and to let God give us the courage and strength for this renewal.

Today, in this world of ours, we need to rediscover the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. The fact that it has largely disappeared from the daily life and habits of Christians is a symptom of a loss of truthfulness with regard both to ourselves and to God; a loss that endangers our humanity and diminishes our capacity for peace.

www.zenit.org 24-12-2009

On the Lighter Side

Prayer of a Liberal Clergyman

Lord I thank you that you have made me so tolerant, unlike those extreme right-wing nutcases who should not be allowed in your church, because of their extreme views.

I thank you that I am not judgmental like those right-wingers. I willingly accept the gay and lesbian agenda, and all that goes with it, including gay marriage.

I thank you that I am active in saving your environment from global warming, and if this turns out to be false, then global cooling.

I thank you for making me creative and forward-thinking. Through Your goodness I am able to deliver the sacraments with words and rubrics far better than those provided by the dead hand of Rome.

I thank you for giving me the insight to see how sex-education has made a wonderful difference in our Catholic schools.

I thank you for Catholic schools, which produce such good Catholic children, some of whom go to Mass on some Sundays, even after they have left school.

I thank you for giving us good pastoral bishops, who are willing and able to remove intolerant pastors who would attempt to return Catholics to the confessional box. And who know how to deal with those extreme right-wing Catholics who go to Mass, without any thought of reverence, but only to spy on good priests.

I thank you for bringing forward so many good women willing to be ordained.

I thank you for bringing diversity to those women who will become our priests and bishops, and for the numbers of female religious who are living out their vocations in new lifestyles and interesting ceremonies.

I thank you for getting rid of habits and other clerical clothing which would attempt to make the priesthood and religious life into something it is not.

I thank you for showing us that women can run our parishes, leaving us to do more important work.

I thank you that I am so compassionate toward the poor and disadvantaged that I talk about them often. I never cease to demand government programmes and grants in order to help them.

I thank you for removing unnecessary sins, such as contraception and abortion, from our notice, so that now we don't have to worry the laity with these outdated concepts.

And I thank you, Lord, for your kindness in removing from us the fear of Hell. Since no one has mentioned Hell, demons or even Purgatory for so many years, we can be sure that they don't exist. Amen.

Disclaimer: Please note that this is written as SATIRE and is NOT intended to be used in parishes after the Creed!

Richard Stokes, Caboolture, Qld

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 st Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Cranbourne	Friday and Saturday in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday (10am Mass) 10.30am – 12 noon (continuing until 6pm on First Fridays) [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	Tuesday 10am – 11am First Saturday 10am – 11am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, January onwards)
Wonthaggi	First Sunday 2pm – 3pm

Once a Year is Not Enough

*St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross,
“The Mystery of Christmas”*

“In order to penetrate a whole human life with the divine life it is not enough to kneel once a year before the crib and let ourselves be captivated by the charm of the holy night. To achieve this, we must be in daily contact with God. [...]

Just as our earthly body needs its daily bread, so the divine life must be constantly fed. ‘This is the living bread that came down from heaven.’

“If we make it truly our daily bread, the mystery of Christmas, the Incarnation of the Word, will daily be re-enacted in us. And this, it seems, is the surest way to remain in constant union with God. [...]

I am well aware that many think this an exaggerated demand. In practice it means for most of those who start the habit that they will have to rearrange their outer and inner life completely. But this is just what it is meant to do. Is it really demanding too much to make room in our life for the Eucharistic Saviour, so that He may transform our life into His own?”

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

Contact Into the Deep

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Australia**

- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
- We rely on donations (cheques made out to John Henderson please)

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.