

Into the Deep

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Be Confident!

Pope Benedict XVI

Certainly the present is a difficult time for the Church, and many of her children are experiencing difficulty.

Society is experiencing moments of worrying disorientation. The sanctity of marriage and the family are attacked with impunity, as concessions are made to forms of pressure which have a harmful effect on legislative processes; crimes against life are justified in the name of individual freedom and rights; attacks are made on the dignity of the human person; the plague of divorce and extra-marital unions is increasingly widespread.

Even more: when, within the Church herself, people start to question the value of the priestly commitment as a total entrustment to God through apostolic celibacy and as a total openness to the service of souls, and preference is given to ideological, political and even party issues, the structure of total consecration to God begins to lose its deepest meaning. How can we not be deeply saddened by this?

But be confident: the Church is holy and imperishable (cf. Eph 5:27). As Saint Augustine said: "The Church will be shaken if its foundation is shaken; but will Christ be shaken? Since Christ cannot be shaken, the Church will remain firmly established to the end of time."

A Mark of Greatness

It is a mark of greatness to be able to say: "I have made a mistake; I have sinned, Father; I have offended you, my God; I am sorry; I ask for pardon; I will try again because I rely on your strength and I believe in your love. And I know that the power of your Son's paschal mystery – the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ – is greater than my weaknesses and all the sins of the world. I will come and confess my sins and be healed, and I will live in your love!"

John Paul II, In My Own Words p.101

Witness Without Compromise

From an address by Pope Benedict XVI

From Jerusalem and from every part of Judea people came to listen to John the Baptist and be baptized by him in the river, confessing their sins (cf. Mark 1:5). The fame of the baptizer grew to such an extent that many asked whether he might be the Messiah. But John – the Gospel writer emphasizes – resolutely denied it: "I am not the Christ" (John 1:20).

Nevertheless, he is still the first "witness" of Jesus, having received instruction about him from heaven: "The man on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is he who will baptize in the Holy Spirit" (John 1:33). This happened precisely when Jesus, having received baptism, came out of the water: John saw the Spirit descend on him like a dove.

It was then that he "knew" the full reality of Jesus of Nazareth and began "to make it known to Israel" (John 1:31), naming him as Son of God and redeemer of man: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

As an authentic prophet, John bore witness to the truth without compromise. He denounced transgressions of God's commandments, even when the protagonists were people in power. Thus, when he accused Herod and Herodias of adultery, he paid for it with his life, sealing with martyrdom his service to Christ, who is the truth in person.

Let us call on his intercession together with that of Mary Most Holy so that the Church of our time will know how to be ever faithful to Christ and testify with courage to his truth and his love for all.

www.zenit.org 25-06-2007

"The greatest love story of all time is contained in a tiny white host."

Archbishop Fulton Sheen

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A Window of Opportunity

Whenever Catholic politicians comment on proposed legislation on moral and ethical issues in this 21st century, the media and ‘experts’ proclaim that they should not be listened to because they are guided by their religion. We are told that in this ‘modern’ world there is no place for religion to interfere in our modern secular society. This is particularly so with the Federal Minister for Health, Mr Tony Abbott, who committed the unpardonable sin of training for the priesthood in his youth. Therefore voters should ignore such views.

Until the last half of the 20th century our laws were largely based on the Ten Commandments. As religion has declined and secular humanism become the prevailing mentality, the morality of our laws has been eaten away to be replaced by whatever seems a good idea at the time. Hence we have gone from the contraceptive pill to abortion-on-demand to the RU486 abortion pill to embryo research; from marriage for life between a man and a woman, to almost any relationship between two people; and a growing mentality that regards children as a burden which should not interfere in our seeking the selfish pursuit of material possessions.

Yet while all this is stretching the fabric of our society, surely this provides a great opportunity for the Catholic Church and its members to remind people that the human destiny is not seeking pleasure in this world but preparing for Heaven. We believe that God has provided a paradise that ‘eye has not seen, mind has not conceived, and heart has not believed’ if we but strive to know, love and serve God here on earth and then we will be happy with Him forever in Heaven. We should be shouting this reality from the roof tops rather than meekly accepting that we cannot change the parlous state of our society and thus remaining silent. We know that Jesus directed the Church and its followers to go out and tell the whole world the good news that, following His death and resurrection, salvation is available for all if we but obey His Commandments and love Him with all our heart and mind.

While many may not listen, we know that many are suffering and left destitute by our secular society. They will listen and benefit if only we have the courage and conviction which our faith provides to tell them the greatest story ever told.

Pat O'Brien, Sale

Suffering is necessary to detach us from the earth, and to make us look up higher than this world, to detach us from all that is created, from all that is not Jesus, and to purify us.

St Thérèse of Lisieux

The Good Fight

St Thomas Becket

Still, who can doubt that the Church of Rome is the head of all the churches, the source of Catholic teaching? Is not the whole structure of the Church built up on Peter's faith and teaching, so to grow until we all meet Christ as one perfect man, united in faith and in our recognition of him as Son of God.

Many are needed to plant the word, and many to water it. The spread of the faith, the increase in population demand this. But whoever waters or plants, God gives no increase except to him who has planted in Peter's faith, and who has assented to his teaching. [...]

Remember, then, how our fathers were saved; how the Church has grown, and with what sufferings she has increased. Remember the storms the ship of Peter has weathered, with Christ as passenger. Remember how they have attained a crown, whose faith has come to shine more brightly through tribulation. So it is that the throng of the saints has grown. The saying remains true for all time, ‘Only he who has fought the good fight receives the crown.’

The Essential Gift We Seek

Pope Benedict XVI to Bishops in Brazil 11-05-2007

The mission entrusted to us [Bishops] as teachers of the faith consists in recalling...that our Saviour “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1Tim2:4). This, and nothing else, is the purpose of the Church: the salvation of individual souls.

For this reason the Father sent his Son, and in the Lord's own words transmitted to us in the Gospel of Saint John, “as the Father has sent me, even so I send you” (John 20:21). Hence the mandate to preach the Gospel: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Matt28:19-20).

These words are simple yet sublime; they speak of our duty to proclaim the truth of the faith, the urgent need for the sacramental life, and the promise of Christ's continual assistance to his Church.

These are fundamental realities: they speak of instructing people in the faith and in Christian morality, and of celebrating the sacraments.

Wherever God and his will are unknown, wherever faith in Jesus Christ and in his sacramental presence is lacking, the essential element for the solution of pressing social and political problems is also missing.

Fidelity to the primacy of God and of his will, known and lived in communion with Jesus Christ, is the essential gift that we Bishops and priests must offer to our people (cf. *Populorum Progressio*, 21).

Protesting (1)

As readers of ITD have been aware for some time, a Catholic Education Conference was held in the Diocese of Sandhurst in March 2007. From my long experiences of education conferences here and abroad, I cannot recall another so lavishly funded, nor one that gave rise to so many questions. Why would a Bishop of the Catholic Church permit such a conference, allocate such extraordinarily large sums of his Catholic people's money to it, and, by his presence throughout, honour the very costly guest speakers, not one of whom appears to accept Catholic teaching nor have a mission to spread it.

To this conference, I, among others, went on March 15th to Shepparton to protest, in silent sorrow, against my Bishop's responsibility for such a conference (misnamed "Catholic") and for his presence at it.

I had once before been at a protest, but in a different role. On August 31st 2003 I had gone to Melbourne for Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral in support of Archbishop Pell, who at that time was being plagued by people who thought that he should change Church teaching and his beliefs at their behest – the Rainbow Sash people.

The speaker for these gays and lesbians was none other than Dr Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli who, four years later, would be lavishly paid by Bishop Joseph Grech to use her considerable speaking skills to win the hearts and minds of all those employed in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Sandhurst. But in 2003 she was using them from the steps of St Patrick's Cathedral to insult "the dinosaurs in the Vatican" in a general way, and Archbishop Pell in particular, before urging her gay and lesbian troops to proceed with her into the Cathedral where their behaviour distracted all of us from our prayers. (I wonder if she thought of that when Phonse Corboy burst into the Shepparton Conference to the Bishop of Sandhurst's chagrin.)

On that day at St Patrick's, I did not anticipate that I would next see her, not railing against an Archbishop but the honoured guest of another bishop, Joseph Grech. Nor did I anticipate that she would be comfortably ensconced *inside* while I was on the footpath *outside*, behind the locked gates of Church property, the acquisition of which four generations of my family had contributed towards in loyal support of and in friendship for the Bishop of Sandhurst. Have today's sixth generation good reason for taking their loyalty elsewhere?

Molly Brennan, Bendigo

He Remains With Us

From an address by Pope Benedict XVI

Every time that the priest renews the Eucharistic sacrifice, in the prayer of consecration he repeats: "This is my body ... this is my blood." He does this giving his voice, his hands, and his heart to Christ, who wanted to remain with us as the beating heart of the Church. But even after the celebration of the divine mysteries, the Lord Jesus remains living in the tabernacle; because of this he is praised, especially by Eucharistic adoration, as I wished to recall in the recent post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis*.

Indeed, there is an intrinsic connection between celebration and adoration. The holy Mass, in fact, is in itself the Church's greatest act of adoration: "No one eats this food," St Augustine writes, "if he has not first worshipped it". Adoration outside holy Mass prolongs and intensifies what happened in the liturgical celebration and renders a true and profound reception of Christ possible.

I...strongly recommend to pastors and all the faithful the practice of Eucharistic adoration. I express my appreciation to the institutes of consecrated life, as also to the associations and confraternities that dedicate themselves to this practice in a special way. They offer to all a reminder of the centrality of Christ in our personal and ecclesial life.

I am happy to testify that many young people are discovering the beauty of adoration, whether personal or in community. I invite priests to encourage youth groups in this, but also to accompany them to ensure that the forms of adoration are appropriate and dignified, with sufficient times for silence and listening to the word of God. In life today, which is often noisy and scattered, it is more important than ever to recover the capacity for interior silence and recollection: Eucharistic adoration permits one to do this not only within one's "I" but rather in the company of that "You" full of love who is Jesus Christ, "the God who is near us."

May the Virgin Mary, Eucharistic Woman, lead us into the secret of true adoration. Her heart, humble and silent, was always recollected around the mystery of Jesus, in whom she worshipped the presence of God and his redemptive love. By her intercession may there grow faith in the Eucharistic mystery, the joy of participating at holy Mass, especially on Sunday, and the desire to bear witness to the immense charity of Christ.

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*"Most people today are seeking master's degrees,
then they forget the Master."*

Mother Angelica

A Founded Hope

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

Q: A woman explained that her son was Catholic, though not a practicing one, who married a Jewish girl and they never had their baby baptized. This woman dearly wanted the child baptized.

A: [...] Although the grandmother deeply desired the child's baptism, the education of children usually falls upon the parents who are called to be the primary educators of children. Canon law (Canon 868) also requires that for an infant to be baptized licitly:

“1. the parents or at least one of them or the person who legitimately takes their place must consent.

“2. there must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic Religion; if such hope is altogether lacking, the baptism is to be delayed according to the prescripts of particular law after the parents have been advised about the reason.”

At the same time the canon specifies that “An infant of Catholic parents or even of non-Catholic parents is baptized licitly in danger of death even against the will of the parents.”

The grandmother could perhaps [ask] permission from the parents to allow her to have the child baptized ... and then take charge of its religious upbringing.

In all cases she should do all in her power to transmit the faith to the child, above all through her living witness to the Catholic faith.

Authentic Heralds of Truth

Pope Benedict XVI

“The Bishop is the person primarily responsible for catechesis in his diocese. Indeed, it falls ultimately to him to direct catechesis, surrounding himself with competent and trustworthy co-workers. It is therefore clear that the catechist's task is not simply to communicate faith-experiences; rather – under the guidance of the Pastor – it is to be an authentic herald of revealed truths.”

Out of Character

I like many good articles you publish, but I wonder why in the world would you include the comments by Fr McDonagh? (ITD June 2007, p.4) His comments are lacking humility and balance, and seem offensive to the last two Popes. Please comment.

Bohdan Szejner, Kraków, Poland

Rest assured that we printed Fr McDonagh's comments simply to show that he dissents from Church teaching (contrary to what Fr Cleary was claiming in ITD May 2007, p.10). Ed.

The Youth of the Church

Pope Benedict to Youth in Brazil www.zenit.org 10-05-2007

To understand what is good, we need help, which the Church offers us on many occasions, especially through catechesis. Jesus himself shows what is good for us by giving us the first element in his catechesis: “If you would enter life, keep the commandments” (Mt 19:17). ... They are the great signs which lead us along the right path. Whoever keeps the commandments is on the way that leads to God.

It is not enough, however, simply to know them. Witness is even more important than knowledge; or rather, it is applied knowledge. The commandments are not imposed upon us from without; they do not diminish our freedom. On the contrary: they are strong internal incentives leading us to act in a certain way. [...]

These years of your life are the years which will prepare you for your future. Your “tomorrow” depends much on how you are living the “today” of your youth. Stretching out in front of you, my dear young friends, is a life that all of us hope will be long; yet it is only one life, it is unique: do not let it pass in vain; do not squander it. Live it with enthusiasm and with joy, but most of all, with a sense of responsibility.

You are the youth of the Church. I send you out, therefore, on the great mission of evangelizing young men and women who have gone astray in this world like sheep without a shepherd. Be apostles of youth. Invite them to walk with you, to have the same experience of faith, hope, and love; to encounter Jesus so that they may feel truly loved, accepted, able to realize their full potential. May they too discover the sure ways of the commandments, and, by following them, come to God.

You can be the builders of a new society if you seek to put into practice a conduct inspired by universal moral values, but also a personal commitment to a vitally important human and spiritual formation. [...]

Be men and women who are free and responsible; make the family a centre that radiates peace and joy; be promoters of life, from its beginning to its natural end; protect the elderly, since they deserve respect and admiration for the good they have done. The Pope also expects young people to seek to sanctify their work, carrying it out with technical skill and diligence, so as to contribute to the progress of all their brothers and sisters, and to shed the light of the Word upon all human activities (cf. Lumen Gentium, 36). But above all, the Pope wants them to set about building a more just and fraternal society, fulfilling their duties towards the State: respecting its laws; not allowing themselves to be swept along by hatred and violence; seeking to be an example of Christian conduct in their professional and social milieu, distinguishing themselves by the integrity of their social and professional relationships.

Unruly Political Branch Meeting

I have been following the state of affairs in the Redfern Parish in the Sydney archdiocese ever since the death of their much loved parish priest Fr Ted Kennedy in 2005. Fr Ted Kennedy was renowned for his spirit of inclusiveness and his work amongst the Aborigines in the area, especially the marginalized. However, he was not known for his orthodoxy.

Not long after his death, Bishop Anthony Fisher had to write to a group of parishioners warning them that if they did not heed the new (orthodox) parish priest's decisions regarding the liturgy (in accordance with liturgical norms), the police would be called in. This group of parishioners had allegedly been causing disruptions during Mass by interjecting and pretending to say their own Mass.

In commenting on the state of the Redfern parish in the Sydney Morning Herald recently (article by Linda Morris 01/06/07), Cardinal Pell referred to the "sad and shameful attitudes" of the group of parishioners responsible for mounting a "program of intimidation, harassment and disturbance" against the parish priest Fr Gerry Prindiville. He maintained that this group treated the parish like an unruly political branch meeting and that as a priest and bishop for 40 years he had "never encountered anywhere the level of rudeness and disruption often foisted on worshippers at Mass."

The group of agitators in turn accused the Cardinal of failing to hear and respect their concerns, and of appointing conservative priests insistent on "imposing an alien and hostile form of religion and liturgical worship" on them. They accused Fr Prindiville of subjecting parishioners to bullying and verbal abuse, and withholding Holy Communion.

Judging by the comments of the group, orthodoxy is not only an imposition but is alien and hostile as well, damaging to the parish of Redfern and the whole archdiocese.

What we are witnessing in the Redfern parish is concrete evidence of the effects of the liberal agenda which advocates the consultative model of "We are Church" – where the parish is considered a democratic 'faith community' of equal discipleship that collaborates in the ministry of the parish priest, where the community determines what to believe and how to worship and what pastoral needs should take priority, where the Gospel has been translated into a social justice program, and where the Church is considered a human organization that has been added to the Faith to co-ordinate the common activities of its believers.

Interestingly enough, Fr Speekman was removed from his parish in Morwell because of the same accusations as those levelled at Fr Prindiville – that he was divisive, exclusive, bullying, and even that he withheld Communion (although no evidence of this

has been offered). The important difference however, is that Cardinal Pell has come out in support of his priest and has publicly reproached the disruptive behaviour of the agitators.

In the parish of Morwell, the agitators had their erroneous and misguided views supported by the diocese and reinforced by the pastoral plan and Catholic education system. The group's 'cause' was championed by the clergy, religious, teachers, the CEO and the Union, all of whom stampeded Bishop Coffey into a decision to remove Fr Speekman for no valid canonical reason; and not once but twice.

The unruly group in the Redfern parish is a good example of parishioners who have been disconnected from the teaching authority of Holy Mother Church through their late pastor's personal social agenda and mission. Their "sad and shameful" attitudes together with their ill-conceived grievances are the bitter fruits of the liberal seeds that have been sown by Bishops, priests and religious over a very long time.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

How Much Longer?

Is a bishop an absolute ruler in the church? Can he be? Not really, even though most Australian bishops think that way. Every bishop is, in some way, subject to the Pope.

Can a bishop be removed? Yes, but is it expedient? That is the wrong question. Is it expedient to leave him there? That is a different question.

Everybody in Australia knows that in the diocese of Sale you don't have to obey religious authority anymore.

There is a certain kind of spirit inherent in the Sermon on the Mount, which can be called the charter of Christianity. Can we find that spirit exemplified in the actions of the Bishop of Sale? Hardly! Rather, 'win at all costs' no matter what the price is evident, even in the actions of the Vicar General and those clergy who thought that their own futures could be secured by denigrating and sacrificing one of their own, instead of committing themselves to finding out the real truth before sailing under a false flag.

The Holy See is naturally reluctant to remove any bishop, but how much longer can this farce go on? Rome is showing itself to be a toothless tiger.

Whatever Fr Speekman is alleged to have done, which amounts to nothing as the Roman Curia see it, it is not nothing that the school principal, the CEO and its officers, and the Bishop, have done.

S.C., Melbourne

What Does it Mean to be Catholic?

Cardinal George Pell recently spoke out against embryonic stem cell research (based on Church teaching of course), and reminded Catholic politicians that this is a serious moral issue and that those who vote in favour of legislation to allow experimentation on human embryos would have to consider the consequences of their actions for their place in the life of the Church. This raised an enormous amount of consternation among politicians, journalists, and liberal Catholics.

In a front page article in the Sydney Morning Herald, 8 June 2007, Cardinal Pell added the following (emphasis added):

“...all of us who wish to remain Catholics have to be measured against Catholic teaching.

To be a disciple of Christ means accepting discipline because the Catholic Church has never followed today’s fashionable notion of the primacy of conscience, which is, of course secular relativism with a religious face.

In a pluralist democracy bishops are free to explain Catholic doctrines and discipline, while all individuals and legislators are free to accept or reject what is proposed. But actions have consequences, some of which follow naturally, some of which are imposed and just as members of a political party who cross the floor on critical issues don’t expect to be rewarded and might be penalized, so it is in the Church.”

In his Sunday Telegraph column on 10 June 2007, Cardinal Pell responded to the criticisms (emphasis added):

“...controversy erupted over whether bishops, or the Pope, have any rights to point out Catholic teaching to the public and remind the politicians, especially Catholics, that public acts usually bring public consequences.

Some seemed to suggest that while a football club, a political party or a business certainly could in some circumstances sack or exclude a member or employee, it was totally out of order to suggest a Christian church might even consider a similar possibility. Certainly, Pope Benedict teaches that an unrepentant abortionist should not receive Communion.

A few intolerant politicians want to ban religious argument in public life, so that the only permissible reasoning will be irreligious or anti-religious. [...]

The debate also raised interesting questions about what it means to be a Catholic follower of Jesus Christ. A few politicians trumpeted their Catholicity as they publicly rejected Catholic teachings; this is not good logic.

The Catholic Church is not a duty-free assembly of free-thinkers. Neither is it a group of people who loyally follow their conscience. Every person has to do that.

A Catholic is someone who believes Christ is Son of God, accepts His teachings and lives a life of worship, service and duty in the community. Catholics are not created by the accident of birth to remain only because their tribe has an interesting history.

All Catholics who continue to reject important Catholic teachings - even in areas such as sexuality, family, marriage, abortion, euthanasia, cloning where "liberals" claim the primacy of conscience rules - should expect to be confronted, gently and consistently, rather than comforted and encouraged in their wrongdoing.”

Thank you Cardinal Pell! It was hard to keep up with all the hostilities levelled at him. Reactions (generally quite amusing) around the country included:

- Greens MP Lee Rhiannon announced that she would refer Cardinal Pell to the parliamentary privileges committee.
- NSW premier Morris Iemma, a Catholic, said he would “not take kindly” to being refused communion. He said that research on human embryos met his ethical and moral standards.
- NSW Deputy John Watkins, a Catholic, was “mystified” by the Cardinal’s “authoritarian view”.
- NSW Minister Nathan Rees referred to Pell’s statements as a “clear and arguably contemptuous incursion into deliberations of the elected members of this parliament.”
- Federal Minister Joe Hockey objected to Pell making “any suggestion that there are consequences.”
- When Perth Archbishop Barry Hickey also said there could be consequences for Catholic politicians who voted for stem cell research, he was taken to task by WA Parliament Speaker Fred Riebeling for “improper interference”. Riebeling warned the Archbishop that his comments may be considered contempt of parliament and punishable by the committee.
- WA Attorney-General Jim McGinty suggested that Archbishop Hickey was threatening or intimidating members of parliament.
- On the other hand, Catholic Liberal MP David Clarke supported Cardinal Pell, saying it was the Cardinal’s duty to give the Church’s teaching. He said it was up to those Catholic MPs who have a different view to reconcile their differences with the Church. “But don’t whinge and whine because Cardinal Pell enunciates what the Church’s stand is and what they need to consider to remain in harmony with the church.” Ed.

Priests Being Priests

The beautiful Marian conference held at St Joseph's church Iona (Gippsland) was spiritually very beneficial. I would like to give a big thank you to Pat Crozier for organising the event superbly, as well as his 'masterstroke' of being able to 'get' Fr Gerard Ryan and Fr Glen Tattersall.

Fr Ryan's talks were great, solid Catholic teaching; Fr Tattersall's explanation and then reading the High Mass in Latin facing East (symbolises the risen Son) turning to the congregation at the appropriate times to invite them to join in the prayers; the cantor singing beautifully in Latin from the balcony at the back of the church; the incense rising towards the dome above the high altar; the solemnity of it all – there was the priest as the mediator between God and his people.

It reminded me how it was in the Old Testament where the High Priest alone was allowed in the inner sanctuary to offer sacrifice (animal) to Yahweh. We as Catholics have in the Eucharist the supreme and perfect sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, celebrated in the Mass.

A very special thanks must go to Fr Michael Willemsen. He made himself available to hear confessions all day long. Most present used this sacrament of mercy to their great spiritual advantage. Father reminded me of blessed Padre Pio, who spent up to 18 hours in the confessional. Padre Pio lived his priestly vocation to the fullest, i.e. to save his soul and to bring as many of his flock to heaven.

It is sad that nowadays far too many priests are burdened with paperwork and meetings. They are always busy busy busy! They were not ordained to become glorified office managers! Their priestly duties are also to save their soul and as many of the flock entrusted to them as possible, by fulfilling the duties they were ordained for e.g. Mass, Eucharistic adoration, more time for reconciliation, homilies with solid Catholic doctrine (e.g. the reality of hell, grave sin, missing Mass on Sunday without proper reason is a grave sin), take charge of the schools under their authority to teach the whole splendour and beauty of our Catholic faith and not a half-baked semi-protestant version; and dare I say *Humanae Vitae* which has been ignored for too long. Our kids and grandkids have a right to that.

I am sure most of our priests, given the chance to eliminate or delegate paperwork and countless meetings, would love to get back to their priestly vocation.

Fons Janssen, Willung South

“He who abandons the Chair of Peter, upon which the Church is founded, lives in the illusion that he still belongs to the Church.”

St Cyprian

Leaders and Followers

The new hierarchy of post-Christian Australia have got rid of Sheik Al Hilaly; now they have Cardinal Pell in the cross-hairs.

You and I might have thought that the job of a spiritual leader was to lead, advise and guide; but no longer, apparently. He should follow!

I would dearly like to know the religious history and background of these so strident critics of any religion left in Australia.

Peter Norton, Leongatha

Unworthy Communion

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

In diverse societies such as the United States, celebrations such as weddings and funerals almost always convene people of many stripes and different faiths. Therefore the danger of someone incorrectly receiving Communion is very real.

But it is not a new problem, and parishes across the country have found many viable solutions.

In some cases the pastor or another person makes an appropriate announcement either before Mass or before Communion. This announcement tactfully explains that, because it is central to our faith, Communion is reserved to Catholics in the state of grace. Another means is to clearly print the requirements for Communion and distribute it to those present or even include it in the special booklets that are usually prepared on occasion of weddings.

If he has taken appropriate steps to inform those present of the importance of receiving Communion in the state of grace, then responsibility for an unworthy Communion falls exclusively upon the conscience of the person who receives it.

Twisting Words

Amnesty International deputy secretary-general, Kate Gilmore, says that their decision on abortion is about women's "right to be free of fear, threat and coercion as they manage the consequences of rape and human rights violations". So we're not actually killing our children here, we're simply managing consequences. Ah, that's much better!

Ed.

Protesting (2)

The Bishop of Sandhurst publishes a diocesan newspaper, the "SandPiper". As was to be expected, the Catholic Education Conference of March 2007 in Shepparton was very fully reported – many photographs, much praise. Only one thing was omitted – that there had been a protest outside Notre Dame College where the conference was held.

Perhaps the editors felt that the protest had been given more than enough publicity by the local media; or perhaps they felt that their editorial policy would be better served if one of the editorial team, Mr Frank Purcell, passed himself off as a reader and wrote to the paper expressing his indignation at the protestors.

As a reader, Mr Purcell's editorial-cum-letter to the editor would have the advantage of appearing on the most-read page of any newspaper ("Words from our readers" page) and perhaps, as a reader, he would not feel bound by the ethics of journalism (such as establishing facts), and free from any restraints that the Bishop's policy imposed on the editorial staff.

Whatever the motives, this member of the editorial team published, under the headline "Protesting", a highly derogatory psychoanalysis of the state of the faith and of the common state of mind of all the protesters without distinction, though we varied in age from 92 years to teenage, and Mr Purcell did not know one of us. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate to accuse all of us of anger, faith without reason, of bullying people into ignoring the truth, of being frightened of debate and discussion, of religious fundamentalism that has little to do with faith, of not heeding Pope Benedict, and of being without the "new understanding of the way the gospels were written and the nature of our sexuality".

Twice, however, in his imaginings he did manage to hit the nail on the head – he accused us of not being reassured by the presence of the Bishop and the Catholic Education officials; and he opined that we were "probably unable to believe that their beloved Church was permitting all this to happen."

With supporting evidence, I corrected some of the errors in Mr Purcell's article/letter and demanded publication to restore my damaged credibility. Not unexpectedly, judging from the past, publication was refused. I appealed to my Bishop, under the Canon that confers the right on me, for an interview to clarify if it is, or is not, an application of his policy for his newspaper to allow a member of the editorial team, in the guise of a reader, to publish a defamatory, fictitious character analysis; and then to refuse to publish a factual response in defence. I repeated my request several times before I received a reply from His Lordship. He refused to see me, directing me instead to the editorial board.

Molly Brennan, Bendigo

Not a Human Right

Abortion is murder. It is not a human right. An unwanted pregnancy for an unmarried woman, especially as a result of rape or incest or in a war zone, is a very difficult thing, but with enough love, care and effort it can be turned into a beautiful thing, no matter what the circumstances. Abortion can never be turned into a good thing. The pro-life movement says, "Why not love them both?", but all efforts are taken to drown out the voice of reason.

Abortion sweeps the problem under the rug and makes the situation "easier" for everyone involved except the woman who must live with the aftermath, and of course, the child who is murdered. Human rights organizations have a mission to provide love, care and effort to help bring about the best possible outcome. Why else do they exist but to bring justice to terrible situations? Abortion is a grotesque injustice.

This is why it is so disappointing that Amnesty International has abandoned the unborn child as deserving human rights protection. Now, this once great human rights organization has bought into the lie that one person's rights over their own body trumps the rights of another person's – the unborn child's – right to life.

Amnesty International's Widney Brown has actually come out and said that: "[The pregnant woman's] right to health and the right to the quality of life that she needs and the healing that she needs, this is what we would say should be the priority," (The National Catholic Register, "No Amnesty for the Unborn," June 12-23). There is no healing to be found in abortion. Abortion is something from which a woman needs to be healed.

Abortion is murder. This is an objective fact. Today it has reached the point of genocide. It is a grave injustice and violation of human rights. It is something Amnesty International should be addressing as a violation not treating as a solution. The humanity of the unborn child is not an "imposition" of one's morality or "religious values" on another. The humanity of the unborn child is an empirical scientific fact. [...]

Their claim to be a "voice for the voiceless" does not extend to the innocent human being in the womb. By throwing in with the international abortion lobby they have abandoned the moral high ground on which they stood that gave credibility to their mission, opting instead for the quicksand of moral relativism.

Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace stated in the same National Catholic Register article cited above, that Amnesty International has "betrayed its mission" and that if "Amnesty International persists in this course of action, individuals and Catholic organizations must withdraw their support." [...]

*Rev. Thomas J. Euteneuer, President, Human Life International
www.hli.org Reprinted with permission*

Interview with Bishop Peter Elliot

Zenit interviewed Monsignor Peter Elliott, 63, of Melbourne, prior to his episcopal ordination on June 15 (www.zenit.org 10-06-2007). The following are excerpts:

Q: You are a well-known commentator on liturgical questions. Amid all the worries over changes in liturgy and a lack of respect for Church norms, how do you think we can recover a sense of the sacred in the liturgy, while at the same time making it attractive to a mentality that often sees ceremonies as boring and repetitive?

A: ... I love the liturgy, and it was largely through the liturgy that I “came home” to Catholicism. That is why I deeply regret the abuses of liturgy or the sheer liturgical laziness found in various places. While these abuses continue, I believe they are less frequent, and I see signs of hope, particularly through the liturgical vision and leadership of Benedict XVI. He takes us beyond techniques, details and issues, and he leads us deeply into the “spirit of the liturgy.” The wonderful vision of the Second Vatican Council was of a liturgy that linked earth to heaven, the worship of the mystical body. Our Holy Father understands this well, and interprets it wisely. The sense of the sacred is returning, gradually. Young Catholics bear witness to this trend.

I am delighted at the prospect of real, dignified and accurate texts for Mass in English, and that this reform is being extended to all languages.

Also, I am not so sure that many people see ceremonies as “boring and repetitive.” I think there has been a reaction against that phase when ceremonies were made so “meaningful” as to be performances, a liturgical cabaret approach. People seek stability in worship, and that is where the fixed liturgical forms of Catholic worship in the East and West come into play in our lives.

Q: Benedict XVI has specifically mentioned Australia, along with some other Western nations, as being one of the countries most affected by secularization and a weakening of the Church. What do you see as the priorities for the Church in Australia to affront this situation?

A: Yes, secularization is prevalent in Australia. ... The secularizing process, and a kind of ideology of secularism, has made great inroads into our families, and into the lives of individuals. But that is just the kind of challenge we have had to face, in other pagan forms, in other societies in the past.

In Australia we need to strengthen the Church by concentrating on two points: formation of priests and promoting vocations, and a radical revision of religious education and catechesis.

I have been involved in that second area since I returned from Rome 10 years ago. Cardinal George Pell made me episcopal vicar for religious education in Melbourne, and editor of a 13-volume set of school texts entitled “To Know, Worship and Love.” As a bishop, I will continue working in this field with Archbishop Denis Hart, a hands-on leader who recognizes priorities. We now see these texts spreading across Australia because they “put the beef back into the hamburger” – in an attractive, creative way.

Formation and education, these are the keys to family ministry, to parish revitalization, and will be evident at World Youth Day in Sydney next year.

In turn, formation and education lead to a real “new evangelization,” which, putting aside all the debates about detail, really means converting non-believing people to Jesus Christ and his Church. By forming better Catholics we can carry out a mission to others. So many “secular” people are hungering for God, even if they do not know it. But without formation we have little to offer them.

Nevertheless, when it is all said and done, we Catholics still have to respond to the greatest gift of Vatican II, the universal call to holiness. That is how we meet and transform a secularized society, by deeper personal spirituality, by union with the merciful heart of the Lord Jesus.

No Deception

“If the preacher of truth is really not deceiving us when he says that all who want to live godly lives in Christ will suffer persecution, then no one, I think, is exempted from this general rule.

If he is, it is because he neglects or does not know how to live a sober, upright and religious life in this present age.”

St Raymund of Penyafort

Why Not?

“St Ignatius, lying wounded in hospital, began to read the lives of the saints. On learning what conflicts they had been through and with what courage they had fought for God, he said to himself: “Now, why can’t I do what these saints have done? Have I not the same God who will help me to fight, the same Heaven to hope for, and the same Hell to fear?”

The Cure of Ars, St John Vianney

Catholic Talks on CD

Readers might find the lectures given by Monsignor Cormac Burke in Sydney recently, of some interest. The Mustard Seed Bookshop is happy to offer CDs of these two outstanding lectures by Mgr Burke.

The lecture on “Married love in John Paul II’s Theology of the Body” was given at the Strathfield campus of the Australian Catholic University on 2 May 2007 before a capacity audience of 250. In it, Mgr Burke developed the theme that marital happiness is the fruit of total and mutual self-giving, open to life and free from a selfish desire for pleasure.

His lecture on “Self esteem: secular myth and Christian reality” was given at the Kenthurst Study Centre on 3 May. In it, Mgr Burke showed how the movement to build up young people’s self esteem uncritically is being challenged by secular psychologists and runs counter to a Christian anthropology based on Sacred Scripture and spiritual theology.

Mgr Burke is well known for such books as *Conscience and Freedom* (1978 and 1992), *Authority and Freedom in the Church* (1988), *Covenanted Happiness* (1990 and 1999) and *Man and Values – a Personalist Anthropology* (2006). In addition, he has published widely in theological and canon law journals, including *Communio*, *The Jurist*, and *The Thomist*.

A civil lawyer and canon lawyer, Mgr Burke served as a judge of the Roman Rota, the High Court of the Church, from 1986 to 1999. He is currently a Professor of Modern Languages at Strathmore University in Nairobi, Kenya.

The CDs are available for \$7 each (plus postage and handling). Contact the Mustard Seed on Ph: 02 9643 3660, Fax: 02 9643 3669, www.mustardseed.org.au or postal address Locked Bag 888 Silverwater DC 1811.

Carmel Taffa
Catholic Adult Education Centre, Archdiocese of Sydney

Eucharist is the Centre

Sacramentum Caritatis, no. 17

If the Eucharist is truly the source and summit of the Church’s life and mission, it follows that the process of Christian initiation must constantly be directed to the reception of this sacrament.

As the Synod Fathers said, we need to ask ourselves whether in our Christian communities the close link between Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist is sufficiently recognized.

It must never be forgotten that our reception of Baptism and Confirmation is ordered to the Eucharist. Accordingly, our pastoral practice should reflect a more unitary understanding of the process of Christian initiation. [...]

The Power of Jesus

*From a commentary by Pontifical Household preacher,
Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa*

Faced with the clamorous liberation of one possessed person which Jesus had performed, his enemies, unable to deny the fact, say: “He casts out demons in the name of Beelzebul, the prince of demons” (Luke 11:15). Jesus shows that this explanation is absurd. If Satan were divided against himself, his reign would have ended long ago, but instead it continues to prosper. The true explanation is rather that Jesus casts out demons by the finger of God, that is, by the Holy Spirit, and this shows that the kingdom of God has arrived on earth.

Satan was “the strong man” who had mankind in his power, but now one “stronger than him” has come and is taking his power away from him. This tells us something quite important about the person of Christ. With his coming there has begun a new era for humanity, a regime change. Such a thing could not be the work of a mere man, nor can it be the work of a great prophet.

It is essential to note the name or the power by which Jesus casts out demons. The usual formula with which the exorcist turns to the demon is: “I charge you by...,” or “in the name of ... I order you to leave this person.” He calls on a higher authority, generally God, and for Christians, Jesus. But this is not the case for Jesus himself: His words are a dry “I order you.”

I order you! Jesus does not need to call upon a higher authority; he is himself the higher authority.

The defeat of the power of evil and of the demons was an integral part of the definitive salvation (eschatological) proclaimed by the prophets. Jesus invites his adversaries to draw the conclusions of what they see with their eyes. There is nothing more to wait on, to look forward to; the kingdom and salvation is in their midst.

The much discussed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit has its explanation here. To attribute to the spirit of evil, to Beelzebul, or to magic that which is so manifestly the work of the Spirit of God meant to stubbornly close one’s eyes to the truth, to oppose oneself to God himself, and therefore to deprive oneself of the possibility of forgiveness.

www.zenit.org 23-02-2007

*Holiness is the true revolution,
which can promote the authentic
reform of the Church and society.*

Pope Benedict XVI

Diocese Following a Pattern

Maria Clara Bingemer, who espouses “a new way of doing theology”, will be visiting Australia in July. She will speak at Shepparton, in Sandhurst Diocese on the 12th July.

Bingemer has co-authored a book called, “Mary, Mother of God, Mother of the Poor” with Sr Ivone Gebara. The back cover of their book claims, “Here is the first thorough reflection on the importance of Mary by women writing from the perspective of Latin American liberation theology.”

Her co-author, Sr Ivone Gebara has been ordered into silence, for two years, by the Vatican authorities for her support for legalized abortion for the poor.

A critique of the book written by Rosemary Radford Ruether claims, “Ivone Gebara and Maria Clara Bingemer’s volume is a landmark work in the freeing of Mariology from its patriarchal usage, and in its presentation as an integral part of a feminist liberation theology. Here we see Mary as representative of the messianic community of the poor and the oppressed who are lifted up as the mighty are put down from their thrones.”

It is interesting that Ruether has been asked to write for the cover of this book. She has been a member of the board of directors of the feminist pro-abortion organization Catholics for a Free Choice since 1985. She spoke at the first meeting of the Women’s Ordination Conference. In her book “Sexism and God-Talk” she states, “Eucharist is not an objectified piece of bread or cup of wine that is magically transformed into the body and blood of Christ. It is the people, the “ecclesia” who are being transformed into the body of the new humanity, infused with the blood of new life.”

“Mary, Mother of God, Mother of the Poor” expresses the same transformation theology. Mary, in all her titles (Mother of God, Virgin, Immaculate Conception) is seen as symbolic of the people who are being transformed into a new humanity. Being earthly in character, this is not the same as the transformation focused on eternal salvation expressed by Pope John Paul II as “a new springtime in the Church” or that many of the Saints have referred to as “the new and divine holiness”.

Bingemer and Gebara along with other liberation theologians claim that the Magnificat is Mary’s “war chant” that “Mary the mild Virgin of the “yes”, she whom traditional catechesis has over and over again presented as the passive and silent mother of the Child Jesus, comes out as someone who stands up and clearly and valiantly takes on as her own this God’s “no” (to oppression, the pride of the haughty, the ambition of the powerful and the stuffed bellies of the rich)” (p.168/9). There is no doubt that Mary, the Mother of

God favours the poor, however, liberation theologians see Christ and his Mother as earthly revolutionaries and liberators of those in economic hardship.

“The Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation” promulgated by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1986 makes interesting reading and can be downloaded from the internet. Liberation theology is described as earthly liberation, very necessary for the poor and oppressed of this world, but missing the radical form of liberation which is freedom from evil and the “introduction of humanity into the true freedom of the children of God.” (no.97)

Of serious concern is Bingemer and Gebara’s statement about virginity: “The dogma of Mary’s virginity, which is quite closely connected to that of her divine motherhood, shows up differently in scripture and in the course it has taken in the church’s tradition. It is a delicate subject and hard to approach, especially in today’s world where sexual liberation and the findings of modern psychology raise serious questions about whether virginity is positive at all.” (p.100)

Caritas Australia, the agency for overseas aid and development, sponsored Bingemer’s visit to Australia in 2000. She was the final speaker in the Caritas Helder Camara Lecture Series. Although liberation theology has been condemned by the Vatican, their media release was happy to announce that, “Caritas Australia...is proud to sponsor the visit of one of Latin America’s most prominent women liberation theologians.”

Which other dioceses will she be visiting this time?

Jane Munro, Beechworth

Doing His Duty

Cardinal Keith O’Brien, archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, Scotland ... called upon Catholic politicians to avoid “cooperating in the unspeakable crime of abortion” reminding them of “the barrier such cooperation erects to receiving Holy Communion,” and adding that “peace cannot be built in the shadow of the abortion rooms.”

“I would be failing as a pastor not to highlight the gravity of this situation, not just to lawmakers but to anyone: mother, father, boyfriend, counselors who in any way lead a mother to abortion,” he said.

Cardinal O’Brien continued: “Signs of hope are appearing, earlier this month it was reported that many doctors are no longer willing to cooperate in abortion. They know, better than most, the humanity of the unborn.

“We need to support anyone who takes the same line believing always that truth will eventually triumph.”

www.zenit.org 31-05-2007

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

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	Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Fridays 4pm – 8pm (alternating months, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	<i>CANCELLED</i>
Orbost	Friday 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10.30am – 11.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
Trafalgar	Tuesdays 10am – 11am First Saturdays 10am – 11am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Fridays 4pm – 8pm (alternating months, January onwards)

Please contact us to update and extend this list with hours of Adoration throughout Gippsland.

Mass for Vocations

Sale Saturday 9am

Reform

Sacramentum Caritatis, no. 6

Every great reform has in some way been linked to the rediscovery of belief in the Lord's eucharistic presence among his people.

Love Him Greatly

St Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)

Let us humble ourselves profoundly and confess that if God were not our breastplate and our shield, we should at once be pierced by every kind of sin. This is why we must invariably keep ourselves in God. ...

We must always have courage, and if some spiritual languor comes upon us, let us run to the feet of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Let us place ourselves in the midst of the heavenly perfumes, and we will undoubtedly regain our strength. ...

I beg you, for the honour of God, to fear nothing at all, as He doesn't want to do you any harm. Love Him greatly.

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.
- Donations are welcome! (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 up to 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, our diocesan newspaper,
- 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.