

Into the Deep

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The Audacity of God!

Pope Benedict XVI, 11-06-2010

The Year for Priests which we have celebrated on the 150th anniversary of the death of the holy Curé of Ars, the model of priestly ministry in our world, is now coming to an end. We have let the Curé of Ars guide us to a renewed appreciation of the grandeur and beauty of the priestly ministry.

The priest is not a mere office-holder, like those which every society needs in order to carry out certain functions. Instead, he does something which no human being can do of his own power: in Christ's name he speaks the words which absolve us of our sins and in this way he changes, starting with God, our entire life. Over the offerings of bread and wine he speaks Christ's words of thanksgiving, which are words of transubstantiation – words which make Christ himself present, the Risen One, his Body and Blood – words which thus transform the elements of the world, which open the world to God and unite it to him.

The priesthood, then, is not simply “office” but sacrament: God makes use of us poor men in order to be, through us, present to all men and women, and to act on their behalf. This audacity of God who entrusts himself to human beings – who, conscious of our weaknesses, nonetheless considers men capable of acting and being present in his stead – this audacity of God is the true grandeur concealed in the word “priesthood”.

That God thinks that we are capable of this; that in this way he calls men to his service and thus from within binds himself to them: this is what we wanted to reflect upon and appreciate anew over the course of the past year. We wanted to reawaken our joy at how close God is to us, and our gratitude for the fact that he entrusts himself to our infirmities; that he guides and sustains us daily. In this way we also wanted to demonstrate once again to young people that this vocation, this fellowship of service for God and with God, does exist – and that God is indeed waiting for us to say “yes”.

www.zenit.org 11-06-2010

Attacks From Within

Pope Benedict XVI, on the way to Portugal, 11-05-2010

...There is also the fact that attacks on the Pope and the Church come not only from without, but the sufferings of the Church come precisely from within the Church, from the sin existing within the Church.

This too is something that we have always known, but today we are seeing it in a really terrifying way: that the greatest persecution of the Church comes not from her enemies without, but arises from sin within the Church, and that the Church thus has a deep need to relearn penance, to accept purification, to learn forgiveness on the one hand, but also the need for justice. Forgiveness does not replace justice.

In a word, we need to relearn precisely this essential: conversion, prayer, penance and the theological virtues. This is our response, we are realists in expecting that evil always attacks, attacks from within and without, yet that the forces of good are also ever present and that, in the end, the Lord is more powerful than evil and Our Lady is for us the visible, motherly guarantee of God's goodness, which is always the last word in history.

www.zenit.org 12-05-2010

Faithfulness Over Time

Pope Benedict XVI, Fatima, 12-05-2010

Let me open my heart and tell you that the greatest concern of every Christian, especially of every consecrated person or minister of the altar, must be fidelity, loyalty to one's own vocation, as a disciple who wishes to follow the Lord. Faithfulness over time is the name of love, of a consistent, true and profound love for Christ the Priest. “Since Baptism is a true entry into the holiness of God through incorporation into Christ and the indwelling of his Spirit, it would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalistic ethic and a shallow religiosity” (John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 31).

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

Both Are Demanded of Us

Henk Verhoeven, of Beacon Hill NSW, writes in the June edition of ITD (p.5) that a local Protestant minister says it is more Christian to do works of mercy than it is to spend time in contemplation.

Unfortunately our Protestant brother is not alone in this view. Some Catholics also share it. However, as 'simple bible believing Christians', Catholic and Protestant, perhaps Luke's Gospel can assist us in seeing there is no dichotomy between action and contemplation – both are demanded of us.

In Luke 10:25-37, Jesus tell us the parable of the Good Samaritan. Quite briefly, in this story a man actively engaged in works of mercy is held up as an example of Christian discipleship pleasing to God and worthy of imitation. Likewise in the story there are people who do nothing, and they are not held up as models of discipleship. Please note, immediately after this parable (Luke 10:38-42) Jesus enters the home of Mary and Martha. This is the other side of the coin. While Martha is actively doing things Mary is contemplating Jesus, the Living Word, and it is she, the one who is not actively engaged who is this time held up as a model of discipleship, whereas Martha, "busy with many things" is not. Two sides of the one coin.

Every major event in the active life and ministry of Jesus is preceded, celebrated and affirmed in prayer, often in solitude. Surely Jesus didn't get it wrong?

Some people duck and weave when it comes to settling down to prayer. Unfortunately too many of us. Why? Because, as the Catechism frankly tells us – it's a battle. Ah! But what a glorious battle! Especially when we come to see that prayer, as much as the works of mercy are the 'opus dei' – the work of God, that is, not you or I doing anything – we are mere instruments, but it is Christ who works in and through us, and it is Christ who prays in us and brings our perfected prayer before the throne of the Father and transforms us into images of Himself as His disciples.

I would have thought this would have been totally acceptable to anyone from the Reformation tradition. It is certainly Catholic theology too. No dichotomy surely?

Phillip Turnbull, Jakarta, Indonesia

Fruitfulness of Adoration

Pope Benedict XVI, St John Lateran, 15-06-2010

I ask everyone to rediscover the fruitfulness of Eucharistic adoration: before the Most Blessed Sacrament we experience in a quite special way that "abiding" in Jesus, which he himself, in John's Gospel, imposes as a prerequisite for bearing much fruit (cf. Jn 15:5). Thus we avoid the reduction of our apostolic action to sterile activism and instead ensure that it bears witness to God's love.

Choose Love

Pope Benedict XVI, St John Lateran, 15-06-2010

The very nature of love demands definitive and irrevocable choices of life. I address you in particular, dear young people: do not be afraid to choose love as the supreme rule of life. Do not be afraid to love Christ in the priesthood and, if in your heart you become aware of the Lord's call, follow him in this extraordinary adventure of love, abandoning yourselves to him with trust!

Do not be afraid to form Christian families who live faithful and indissoluble love that is open to life! Bear witness that love, as Christ lived it and as the Church's Magisterium teaches, takes nothing from our happiness but on the contrary provides that profound joy that Christ promised his disciples.

Darkening the Mass

Pope Benedict XVI to Brazilian Bishops

Paying less attention at times to the rite of the Most Holy Sacrament constitutes a sign and a cause of the darkening of the Christian sense of mystery, such as when Jesus is not the centre of the Mass, but rather a community preoccupied with other things instead of being taken up and drawn to the only one necessary: their Lord. If the figure of Christ does not emerge from the liturgy ... it is not a Christian liturgy.

Worship cannot come from our imagination: that would be a cry in the darkness or mere self-affirmation. True liturgy supposes that God responds and shows us how we can adore Him. ... The Church lives in His presence and its reason for being and existing is to expand His presence in the world.

Vatican Information Service, 15-04-2010

New Translation

Pope Benedict XVI to "Vox Clara" members and consultants, 28-04-2010

I welcome the news that the English translation of the Roman Missal will soon be ready for publication. ... Through these sacred texts and the actions that accompany them, Christ will be made present and active in the midst of His people.

Many will find it hard to adjust to unfamiliar texts after nearly forty years of continuous use of the previous translation. The change will need to be introduced with due sensitivity, and the opportunity for catechesis that it presents will need to be firmly grasped. I pray that in this way any risk of confusion or bewilderment will be averted, and the change will serve instead as a springboard for a renewal and a deepening of Eucharistic devotion all over the English-speaking world.

Vatican Information Service, 29-04-2010

Priests Patronised by CEO

“Our priests: foundation of Catholic Education.” I beg your pardon? This was the title of an article written by Director of Catholic Education Peter Ryan in the June 2010 issue of Sale diocesan newspaper Catholic Life. Priests, foundation of Catholic education. If he was talking theoretically, or as something to aspire to, something that *should* be the case, I’d understand. But the man writes as if this *is* the case! Who is he kidding?

“We need all to be grateful to our priests”, he writes (specifically including those “many fine and good men” who left the priesthood, whose “changing life circumstances led them to believe they were called in other directions”, as if it’s just a career change).

Let’s not forget that it was on the instigation of the Catholic Education Office that Fr Speekman was removed from his parish. *Removed!* They actually convinced a bishop to remove a priest. Why? Because he was taking his proper role in Catholic education too seriously for their liking. And now they suggest that they are grateful for the contribution of priests in Catholic schools?

“In today’s Church, our priests continue to play a central and critical role”, writes Mr Ryan, presumably tongue-in-cheek.

He goes on to write that some presbyteries that used to be full have “empty bedrooms in them now”. Yes, Morwell presbytery comes to mind. Fr Speekman’s room, his home, has been occupied by others or no one at all, for the last 7 years, thanks to the Catholic Education Office’s hand in his removal.

A few years ago there was a push from various Catholic Education Offices in Victoria to get priests out of any serious role of governance in schools at all. The “consensus” was that Catholic schools would be better served under more “expert” governance than that of a priest. The good thing to come out of that whole exercise was a wonderful summary from Fr Ian Waters JCD on the definitive canonical authority of parish priests in Catholic schools, titled *The Canon Law of Governance in Victorian Catholic Primary Schools* (see a summary in ITD August 2007, p.2).

Now Mr Ryan writes, “We need to be examining the role of the priest in schools to ensure their health and wellbeing, while enhancing their sacramental and pastoral presence” – does this translate to: we’re happy for the priest just to be on call for when we need him to do what we want him to? “We need to identify what is, for us, too important to let go...”, he continues. *We* need to? For *us*? Is the priest’s role at the discretion of the Catholic Education Office? Perhaps there’s a renewed interest within Catholic education to change Church law about a priest’s governance of Catholic schools.

- Ed.

False Neutrality Sides With the Oppressor

*From a Biblical reflection by Father Thomas Rosica, CSB,
for the 11th Sunday of Ordinary Time C*

There is a widespread misunderstanding that in any conflict a Christian should be a peacemaker who avoids taking sides and tries to bring about a reconciliation between the opposing forces.

This makes reconciliation an absolute principle that must be applied in all cases of conflict.

In some conflicts one side is right and the other side is wrong, one side is being unjust and oppressive and the other is suggesting injustice and oppression. As Christians, we are never asked to reconcile good and evil, justice and injustice. Rather we are to do away with evil, injustice and sin.

Second, neutrality is not always possible, and in cases of conflict due to injustice and oppression, neutrality is totally impossible.

If we do not take sides with the oppressed, then we end up taking sides with the oppressor. “Bringing the two sides together” in such cases can end up being beneficial to the oppressor, because it enables the status quo to be maintained; it hides the true nature of the conflict, keeps the oppressed quiet and passive and it brings about a kind of false reconciliation without justice. The injustice continues and everybody is made to feel that the injustice does not matter because the tension and conflict have been reduced.

Third is the commonly held view that Christians should always seek a “middle way” in every dispute.

Those who are afraid of conflict or confrontation, even when it is nonviolent, are usually convinced of the need for change. Their caution hides an un-Christian pessimism about the future, a lack of authentic, Christian hope. Or they use the Christian concern for reconciliation to justify a form of escapism from the realities of injustice and conflict. ...

Such mistakes about Christian reconciliation are not simply a matter of misunderstandings, but come from a lack of real love and compassion for those who are suffering or who have been victimized, or from a lack of appreciation of what is really happening in serious conflicts.

The pursuit of an illusory neutrality in every conflict is ultimately a way of siding with the oppressor. This is not the reconciliation and forgiveness that Jesus taught through his life and ministry. ...

The reconciliation, peace and forgiveness that God wants are based on truth, justice and love.

Fr Rosica is chief executive officer of the Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation and Television Network, Canada, and consultant to the Pontifical Council for Social Communications

www.zenit.org 08-06-2010

Afraid of Being Burned

From Pope Benedict XVI's homily for Pentecost 2010

The fire of God, the fire of the Holy Spirit, is that of the bush that burned without being consumed. It is a flame that burns but does not destroy...

A Father of the Church, Origen, in one of his homilies on Jeremiah, reports a saying attributed to Jesus, not contained in the sacred Scriptures but perhaps authentic, which he puts thus: "Whoever is near me, is near the fire". In Christ, in fact, there is the fullness of God, who in the Bible is compared to fire. We just observed that the flame of the Holy Spirit burns but does not destroy. And nevertheless it causes a transformation, and it must for this reason consume something in man, the waste that corrupts him and hinders his relations with God and neighbour.

This effect of the divine fire, however, frightens us, we are afraid of being "burned," we prefer to stay just as we are. This is because our life is often formed according to the logic of having, of possessing, and not the logic of self-giving. Many people believe in God and admire the person of Jesus Christ, but when they are asked to lose something of themselves, then they retreat, they are afraid of the demands of faith. There is the fear of giving up something nice to which we are attached; the fear that following Christ deprives us of freedom, of certain experiences, of a part of ourselves. On one hand, we want to be with Jesus, follow him closely, and, on the other hand, we are afraid of the consequences that this brings with it.

Dear brothers and sisters, we always need to hear the Lord Jesus tell us what he often repeated to his friends: "Be not afraid." Like Simon Peter and the others we must allow his presence and his grace to transform our heart, which is always subject to human weakness. We must know how to recognize that losing something, indeed, losing ourselves for the true God, the God of love and of life, is in reality gaining ourselves, finding ourselves more fully. Whoever entrusts himself to Jesus already experiences in this life peace and joy of heart, which the world cannot give, and it cannot even take it away once God has given it to us.

So it is worthwhile to let ourselves be touched by the fire of the Holy Spirit! The suffering that it causes us is necessary for our transformation. ...

Thus enlightened and comforted by these words of life, let us lift up our invocation: Come, Holy Spirit! Enkindle in us the fire of your love! We know that this is a bold prayer, with which we ask to be touched by the flame of God; but we know above all that this flame – and only it – has the power to save us. We do not want, in defending our life, to lose the eternal life that God wants to give us. We need the fire of the Holy Spirit, because only Love redeems. Amen.

[Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic] www.zenit.org 23-05-2010

A Priest Can

Curé of Ars

Go and confess to the Blessed Virgin or to an angel. Will they absolve you? Will they give you the body and blood of Our Lord? No, the Blessed Virgin cannot make her divine Son descend in the host. Even if you had two hundred angels there with you, they could not absolve you. A priest, no matter how simple he may be, can. He can say to you: go in peace, I forgive you.

Oh! The priest is truly something great!

Groome Still Kicking

I recently had an article published in an online journal called RenewAmerica.com. The article contains a reference to how Thomas Groome distorted the truth in an article he had published in your Sale diocesan newspaper, Catholic Life, back in July 2006. Your readers may be interested. There is also a link to images of the book containing Groome's name (the book he denied his name appears in).

There have been protests in Scotland against Groome giving lectures at Catholic venues there. As usual, the catechetical establishment fete him.

I am about to write a series of articles on the priesthood for RenewAmerica. I would be happy for you to reproduce part or all of them, whenever you wish.

Eamonn Keane, Sydney

ITD readers may remember that Groome's article in Catholic Life (July 2006) was published to counter the "vitriolic criticism of Thomas Groome, whose educational methodology was employed in Journeying Together in Hope" (Catholic Life editorial comment). Catholic Life noted the "persistent campaign of attack directed at the Diocesan Religious Education curriculum" and claimed that Groome did not reject Church teaching or Church authority.

ITD covered criticisms of Groome (with evidence) in many issues, but primarily throughout 2006. Eamonn Keane's main articles appeared in the December 2005 and February 2006 issues of ITD. All issues of ITD can be accessed at www.stoneswillshout.com.

Eamonn's latest article on Groome, referred to above, is posted in full on the ITD website in the Documents section. Excerpts appear opposite (p.5). There are also others of Eamonn's columns from RenewAmerica on the website.

Eamonn Keane is a Catholic teacher in Sydney and author of numerous books and articles, including *A Generation Betrayed: Deconstructing Catholic Education in the English-Speaking World*, 2002.

- Ed.

Groome Still Influencing Catholic Education

By Eamonn Keane, from his article: "Thomas Groome's and Fr Robert Drinan's impact on the consciousness of Catholics" published 12 May 2010 on RenewAmerica.com; also available in full at www.stoneswillshout.com.

On his Boston College website, Groome has his book *Sharing Faith* on offer for purchase. Above the 'purchase' icon he has a promotional blurb stating: "A comprehensive approach to religious education and pastoral ministry; offers the definitive statement on a shared Christian praxis approach."

Attacking the Ministerial Priesthood

Sharing Faith contains one of the worst attacks on Catholic doctrine regarding the origin and nature of the ministerial priesthood that I have ever come across. Here is a sampling of passages from it: ...

"...It seems that the exclusion of women from ordained ministry is the result of a patriarchal mind-set and culture and is not of Christian faith. The injustice of excluding women from priesthood debilitates the church's sacramentality in the world; and is a countersign to God's reign" (*Sharing Faith*, p.328).

"I am convinced that the exclusion of women from ordination reflects injustice in at least three significant ways. (1) It is an injustice to women who recognise themselves as gifted and called by God to serve the church in ordained ministry; (2) it is an injustice to the church and its people, who could be served so significantly by ordained women; and (3) such exclusion functions as a legitimating sign for patriarchy and sexism - thus doing spiritual and moral harm to society" (p.517 note 114). [...]

Effectiveness of Shared Christian Praxis

In *Sharing Faith*, Groome documents how in one parish where he conducted an adult education course, he used the *Shared Christian Praxis* process to change the position of attendees from that of support for the Church's doctrine on the impossibility of ordaining women to one of opposition to it. He says:

"In a six-week Lenten program with the Altar Society of a Catholic parish, the participants had chosen the generative theme of Women in the Church with a particular focus on the issue of women's ordination" (*Sharing Faith*, p. 247). He adds that apart from himself, "the group was of women who were senior members of the congregation," and that "it became evident in the opening movements that they agreed, and I disagreed, with our church's official position of refusing ordination to women" (ibid.) ...

Groome went on to recount how the evening concluded by saying: "[O]ne of the oldest members finally announced, 'I'm going to write to my granddaughter in California and tell her that I think the church is sexist in many ways, and we must all work together to see to it that women are fully included in every aspect of Church life, including ordination'. ... Finally, a group decided to each write a letter to some young woman about whose faith they cared deeply (granddaughter, grandniece, neighbour's child, etc),

telling her of their new hopes for and commitments to an inclusive church" (*Sharing Faith*, p.282). [...]

Women Priests Needed

After first commenting on why he believed the Church should change its discipline on priestly celibacy, Groome in an article he had published in the April 28, 2002 edition of Boston Globe went on to add:

"Likewise, the presence of women as priests and bishops would be an extraordinary gift to the life of the Catholic Church. What a loss it is when ordained ministry is limited to men, excluding the consciousness and gifts of women; at best we benefit from only half our priestly resources. To ordain women would surely hasten the demise of clericalism – the antithesis to priesthood as servant leadership – and catalyze a renewed ministry of "holy order."

...Groome's contradiction of the doctrinal teaching of the Catholic Church on the question of women's ordination is a clear example of "dissent" and as such is a source of scandal. [...]

White-anting the Church through Catholic Education

White-anting is an Australian term which in its original usage referred to the activity of termites that gain entry to a wooden structure. Over time the ants invisibly eat away at the structure's timber, thereby bringing about its inner decomposition and collapse. In more general parlance, white-anting is taken to refer to the activities of those who set out through stealth or otherwise to undermine or sabotage an enterprise.

In terms of its destructive impact, dissent within the educational institutions of the Catholic Church can be likened to white-anting. Dissidents work within the Church's institutions undermining allegiance to the teaching of the magisterium. They relativise and corrupt the Church's doctrine and lead those in their charge into error, thereby rendering them less capable of teaching the faith to others and of imbuing the temporal order with the light of the Gospel.

In 2001, the U.S. dioceses of Peoria and Pittsburgh refused to fund teachers wishing to attend the National Catholic Educational Association Convention on grounds that it involved "objectionable speakers." Peoria's Bishop John Myers indicated that he objected to the presence of Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister as a keynote speaker. In her writings and lectures, Sr Joan is frequently critical of the Church's teaching on topics such as the ordination of women and homosexuality. This action by Bishop Myers (now Archbishop of Newark) illustrates that defending Catholic students from error must of necessity involve doing all in one's power to shield them from the influence of dissenters. The Jesuit authorities who run Boston College would do well to follow the example of Archbishop Myers.

Spitting on their Graves

In April and May the Fathers of Mercy have been conducting parish missions and retreats, mostly in Victoria.

Just as in the U.S.A. and most Western countries only about 10% of our parishes are orthodox. Most readers will be familiar with the boring ‘me’-centred homilies that constantly remind us to come as we are, gather as a community and not to worry as we are all going to Heaven anyway! Sin is rarely mentioned and funerals are an ‘open celebration of the life of ...’.

In a mission talk, one of the Fathers of Mercy said that anyone who preaches or believes this nonsense is ‘spitting on the graves of the martyrs’.

So obvious when you stop and think. Why deny yourself, try to keep the Commandments, do penance and frequent the Sacraments if we are already saved regardless?

Richard Earle, Marlo, Vic

What is a Votive Candle?

Something that is “votive” has to do with a vow. God is pleased with our vows, provided we keep them (Mt 5:33, Acts 18:18). A Catholic who lights a votive candle, makes an offering and places an intention before the Lord. The candle symbolizes their intention, it can also stand for their presence in prayer before God, and their union, as a Christian, with Christ the light of the world. The votive element is the exchange of the offering for God’s answer to their prayer.

From an answer by Colin B. Donovan, STL, www.ewtn.com

Votive

Etymology: Latin *votivus*, from *votum* vow

1: consisting of or expressing a vow, wish, or desire <a votive prayer>

2: offered or performed in fulfillment of a vow or in gratitude or devotion

Merriam-Webster online dictionary

No Father’s Day Cards

Glasgow and Edinburgh schools, and a number of other Scottish ones, have decided to stop pupils making Father’s Day cards. Why? So as not to embarrass children of single and lesbian mums. (Does every child not have a biological father...?)

Will those Scottish schools also ban the use of words such as “brother”, “sister”, “cousin”, “aunt”, “uncle” and “grandfather”? After all, some kids do not have any of those either; we must not upset them...

Can we expect such puny-mindedness and absence of consistency in Australia as well? If the answer is “yes”, then beam me up, Scottie!

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill NSW

The Readings at Mass

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

Q: Why does the Church read selected portions from the Bible, and at times even deliberately leave out some verses of a given passage?

A: At the risk of sounding facetious, in part it is because the liturgy is older than the Bible.

The liturgy certainly precedes the formation of the New Testament and the definition of the books pertaining to the Old. Indeed the liturgy’s relationship with the sacred text is very complex, as the liturgical use of a specific book sometimes determined its inclusion or exclusion from the canon of Scripture.

From a practical point of view, until the advent of the printing press in the 15th century the possession of a complete manuscript of the Bible was a rare luxury. Christians, who were mostly illiterate anyway, received their knowledge of Scripture from the texts read in the liturgy, and from the Bible stories related in sermons or in painting, sculpture and glass.

The selection of readings was first developed in the first centuries of Christianity for the major feasts in order to transmit the essential elements of salvation history. As the celebrations of the Church year reached maturity so did the selection of readings.

In making this selection the Church occasionally “centonized,” that is, selected, those passages and verses which best served to transmit a specific message regarding the mystery of salvation. While this process may have left out a verse or two when these touched upon another theme, it never went so far as to create a new text or join texts from distinct passages.

Far more often, it connected passages from different books by reading them within the same celebration thereby establishing an authoritative interpretative relationship between texts. The best example of this are the readings of the Easter Vigil. ...

The Church has never doubted its authority to make these selections as ... the task of authoritative scriptural interpretation is an ecclesial, not a private or individual, endeavour and one in which it is assisted by the Holy Spirit. This guidance assures us that the selection the Church has made over the centuries is trustworthy and will never betray the true sense of God’s Word even though some selections might not be immediately intelligible to our minds.

Furthermore, the scriptural readings were always considered as being intimately connected with the mystery being realized on the altar. The readings had to be seen as part of the greater picture of salvation history that embraced Scripture, Tradition and the sacramental system.

www.zenit.org 10-10-2006

Your Unhappiness Not Due to Lack of Vitamins

Fr Fulton J. Sheen, 1945

You ask yourself: "What do I desire above all things?" You want perfect life, and perfect truth, and perfect love. Nothing short of the Infinite satisfies you, and to ask you to be satisfied with less would be to destroy your nature. You want life, not for two more years, but always; you want to know all truths, not the truths of economics alone, to the exclusion of history. You also want love without end. All the poetry of love is a cry, a moan, and a weeping. The more pure it is, the more it pleads; the more it is lifted above the earth, the more it laments.

With your feet on earth, you dream of heaven; creature of time, you despise it; flower of a day, you seek to eternalize yourself. Why do you want Life, Truth, Love, unless you were made for them? How could you enjoy the fractions unless there were a whole? Where do they come from? Where is the source of light in the city street at noon? Not under autos, buses, nor the feet of trampling throngs, because their light is mingled with darkness. If you are to find the source of light you must go out to something that has no admixture of darkness or shadow, namely, to pure light, which is the sun. In like manner, if you are to find the source of Life, Truth, and Love, you must go out to a life that is not mingled with its shadow, death; to a Truth not mingled with its shadow, error; and to a Love not mingled with its shadow, hate. You go out to something that is Pure Life, Pure Truth, Pure Love, and that is the definition of God. And the reason you have been disappointed is because you have not yet found Him!

It is God you are looking for. Your unhappiness is not due to your want of a fortune, or high position, or fame, or sufficient vitamins; it is due not to a want of something *outside* you, but to a want of something *inside* you. You cannot satisfy a soul with husks! If the sun could speak, it would say that it was happy when shining; if a pencil could speak it would say that it was happy when writing – for these were the purposes for which they were made. You were made for perfect happiness. That is your purpose. No wonder everything short of God disappoints you.

But have you noticed that when you realize you were made for Perfect Happiness, how much less disappointing the pleasures of earth become? You cease expecting to get silk purses out of sows' ears. Once you realize that God is your end, you are not disappointed, for you put no more hope in things than they can bear. You cease looking for first-rate joys where there are only tenth-rate pleasures.

You begin to see that friendship, the joys of marriage, the thrill of possession, the sunset and the evening star, masterpieces of art and music, the gold and silver of earth, the industries and the comforts of life, are all gifts of God. He dropped them on the roadway of life, to remind you that if these are so beautiful, then what must be Beauty! He intended them to be bridges to cross over to Him. After enjoying the good things of life you were to say: "If the spark of human love is so bright then what must be the Flame!"

From the book You (p.4-6)

Prejudice Against Judging

Mr Christopher Holt (ITD May 2010, p.2) claims, "You make judgement an art form..."

In view of this misleading prejudice against judging actions, speech and writing compared with truth, obviously some need to be reminded of the commands of Christ and His Church. We are commanded to:

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but underneath are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them" (Mt 7:15,16).

"Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. So by their fruits you will know them." (Mt 7:19,20).

"Stop judging by appearances, but judge justly." (Jn 7:24).

"Test everything: retain what is good." (1Thess 5:21).

"I am speaking as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I am saying." (1 Cor 10:15).

"Beloved, do not trust every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1Jn 4:1).

Peter D Howard, Springwood, QLD

The Faithful Expect Only One Thing

Pope Benedict XVI to clergy, Warsaw, 25-05-2010

The faithful expect only one thing from priests: that they be specialists in promoting the encounter between man and God. The priest is not asked to be an expert in economics, construction or politics. He is expected to be an expert in the spiritual life.

With this end in view, when a young priest takes his first steps, he needs to be able to refer to an experienced teacher who will help him not to lose his way among the many ideas put forward by the culture of the moment.

In the face of the temptations of relativism or the permissive society, there is absolutely no need for the priest to know all the latest, changing currents of thought; what the faithful expect from him is that he be a witness to the eternal wisdom contained in the revealed word. Solicitude for the quality of personal prayer and for good theological formation bear fruit in life.

Sweep Away Fear and Indecision

From a homily by Pope Benedict XVI, Lisbon, 11-05-2010

We know that [the Church] also has quarrelsome and even rebellious sons and daughters, but it is in the saints that [she] recognizes her most characteristic features, it is in them that she tastes her deepest joy. They all share the desire to incarnate the Gospel in their own lives, under the inspiration of the eternal animator of God's People – the Holy Spirit.

...[T]oday's pastoral priority is to make each Christian man and woman a radiant presence of the Gospel perspective in the midst of the world, in the family, in culture, in the economy, in politics. Often we are anxiously preoccupied with the social, cultural and political consequences of the faith, taking for granted that faith is present, which unfortunately is less and less realistic. Perhaps we have placed an excessive trust in ecclesial structures and programmes, in the distribution of powers and functions; but what will happen if salt loses its flavour?

In order for this not to happen, it is necessary to proclaim anew with vigour and joy the event of the death and resurrection of Christ, the heart of Christianity, the fulcrum and mainstay of our faith, the firm lever of our certainties, the strong wind that sweeps away all fear and indecision, all doubt and human calculation. The resurrection of Christ assures us that no adverse power will ever be able to destroy the Church. Therefore our faith is well-founded, but this faith needs to come alive in each one of us. A vast effort at every level is required if every Christian is to be transformed into a witness capable of rendering account to all and at all times of the hope that inspires him: only Christ can fully satisfy the profound longings of every human heart and give answers to its most pressing questions concerning suffering, injustice and evil, concerning death and the life hereafter.

www.zenit.org 11-05-2010

It Makes Sense

The following is from an article that appeared in Cathnews (25-06-2010) and goes a long way to explaining why we have a vocations shortage in religious life in Australia. - Ed.

"Some 100 leaders of religious orders across the country will gather in Hobart next week for their National Assembly, which takes as its theme "Ecology and the following of Jesus". A statement from Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) says they will consider the importance that a commitment to ecology and sustainability places upon followers of Jesus. They will also investigate and plan the future role of religious in taking concrete action for ecological sustainability."

Hello Hello!

At the start of every Mass, the celebrant fulfils the Church's greeting to the congregation with words like: "The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." The people respond "And also with you". Naturally, the greeting is not repeated.

Every time I hear this introductory greeting and response accompanied by the celebrant's "Good morning/evening everyone" followed by "Good morning/evening Father", I can't help having a subdued chuckle to myself. It's the same as if the exchanged greeting "G'day, 'ow ya goin?" with the reply "Great, mate" was automatically repeated. I'm even reminded of childhood school days when the local parish priest would enter the classroom with the greeting: "Good morning, children". The prompt, rehearsed reply in rather vocal, united chorus burst forth: "Good mooorning, Faaaa...tha".

Somehow I can't escape this link between the regular "automatic chorus" reply in the superfluous exchange of greetings at the start of Mass and the memory of my youthful schooldays' with "Faaatha".

Peter Phillips, Springvale, Vic

Middle East Special to Us

Pope Benedict XVI, Cyprus, 06-06-2010

The Middle East has a special place in the hearts of all Christians, since it was there that God first made himself known to our fathers in faith. From the time when Abraham set out from Ur of the Chaldeans in obedience to the Lord's call, right up until the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's saving work was accomplished through particular individuals and peoples in your homelands. Since then, the message of the Gospel has spread all over the world, but Christians everywhere continue to look to the Middle East with special reverence, on account of the prophets and patriarchs, apostles and martyrs to whom we owe so much, the men and women who heard God's word, bore witness to it, and handed it on to us who belong to the great family of the Church.

www.zenit.org 06-06-2010

Daily Weight of Suffering

Pope Benedict XVI, 02-05-2010

"Living your sufferings in union with the crucified and risen Christ, you participate in the mystery of His suffering for the salvation of the world. Offering our pain to God through Christ, we can share in the victory of good over evil, because God makes our offering, our act of love, fruitful."

Vatican Information Services, 02-05-2010

Bathersby and Buddhism

By Tim Pemble-Smith, in a review of the book "Peter Kennedy: The Man Who Threatened Rome", in the March 2010 issue of Lepanto www.lepanto.org.au

The book powerfully re-confirms that Peter Kennedy's St Mary's "community" was not philosophically Catholic and that the "community" is well aware of this fact – all the while demanding accommodation within the boundaries of the institutional Church. ...

For Archbishop Bathersby personally, the most challenging aspects of the book are contained in Michele Gierck's chapter on Fr Terry Fitzpatrick, where Fitzpatrick elaborates on comments previously made to ABC radio by Fr Peter Kennedy, "John Bathersby himself, as spiritual director in the seminary, some of the Masses he said with them, today he would say that they're wrong. He introduced Terry and many people to Buddhism, John Bathersby did."

In her chapter on Terry Fitzpatrick, Gierck writes: "A week-long Zen Buddhist retreat for seminarians. Fitzpatrick sat on his mat, incense wafting, listening to the eastern bells being rung, and bowed as he had been taught. The sacredness of the practice enthralled him. He was immediately drawn by the contemplative aspect of Buddhism, captured by its beauty. It was unlike anything he had experienced.

"But perhaps what is more surprising, in the light of recent events at St Mary's, is that the man he sat next to for eight days on that retreat was the spiritual director of the seminary, Fr John Bathersby, now the archbishop of Brisbane.

"After the retreat, Fitzpatrick set up his own Zendo place in the seminary, in a spare room downstairs – a place used for private Masses. The Zen practice had opened a door to contemplation, to being present in any given moment. He learnt how to really sit for meditation, how to empty the mind. He also discovered the concept of embracing paradox. He couldn't help reflecting on it, and continues to do so decades later. The Zen experience also taught him to respect diversity."

Salvation First

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Pontifical Household preacher

"Christianity does not begin by telling man what he must do, but what God has done for him. Jesus did not begin to preach saying: 'Repent and believe in the Gospel so that the Kingdom will come to you'; he began by saying: 'The Kingdom of God is among you: repent and believe in the Gospel.' Not conversion first and then salvation, but salvation first and then conversion."

Failure to Redress Injustice

I would like to congratulate S.C. for his insightful observations with regards to the Fr Speekman case in the diocese Sale in last month's ITD (p.6).

I agree whole heartedly that the ordinary Catholic must be wondering how the Church actually works. If truth, charity and justice cannot be found in the Church, then where in God's creation can the faithful find it?

This scandalous controversy has been screaming out for a special brand of leadership – the type that would come from one who believes in justice, loves it and is prepared to administer it.

The faithful, in particular the 350 parishioners who petitioned Fr Speekman's return, had every right to expect that their new bishop would in good faith show leadership, charity and courage by redressing the dreadful injustices that had been inflicted upon Fr Speekman and his parishioners. This is what the faithful have been praying for, for the last 8 years.

A new bishop is not bound by the actions of his predecessor. Bishop Coffey's right to lodge an appeal did not in any way oblige his successor to pursue the appeal, especially since the mandate to pursue the appeal had been suspended because Bishop Coffey retired. Furthermore, what would be the new bishop's grounds for pursuing an appeal?

Canon 1446 dutifully urges an out-of-court resolution to a controversy and encourages the Catholic faithful, and in particular bishops, to strive diligently to avoid litigation among the people of God as much as possible, without prejudice to justice, and to resolve litigation peacefully as soon as possible.

This gracious opportunity was offered to the new bishop by the Apostolic Signatura but he chose to pursue Bishop Coffey's appeal and subjected Morwell parish to its fourth administrator (part-time, aided by supply priests) and more time of instability, confusion and chaos. All the while we have our rightful parish priest living in the diocese but still exiled from his parish.

The new bishop may have endeared himself to his predecessor and those priests who signed the petition against Fr Speekman's return, but his silence and lack of concrete action to resolve this controversy equitably and peacefully have fallen far short of what was expected by others in the diocese.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

"There is nothing more certain than our faith, nothing safer, nothing more holy, nothing that rests on firmer principles."

Pope Pius XI, 1846

Impressive Without Trying

Recently I was present at what must be some kind of minor miracle in this age of the 'grunge Church' – a good sermon!

The priest didn't want to be loved, so he didn't have the conversational approach we have to put up with so often. He had something to say, and he said it loud enough for everyone to hear. He must have understood what he was there for, and was well prepared, so there were no 'ums' and 'ehs'. He got on with the job.

What a blessing it was to hear someone who can preach without looking down at his notes, as so many politicians do these days. This defect in a public speaker takes eye contact away from the audience/congregation, who soon loses interest.

I'm not sure what the most amazing aspect of this experience was, but the priest must have been trained somewhere at some time in the task of preaching because, although he was noticeably disabled physically, yet he could project his voice with vigour that made people sit up and take notice!

He had a message, of course, which came through loud and clear; the congregation knew that he knew what he was on about. Perhaps it was all evident in the way he said Mass. He didn't try to invent anything, or give the Mass some kind of personal spin. He presented us with the Mass as the Church has it, doing what is required of him. He didn't need to impress.

Of course he did impress us, just by doing well and properly what the Church is telling priests to do at Mass. That was almost a sermon in itself, so probably his preaching is just typical of his general approach!

He didn't mention the environment, ecology or climate change once, but he was able to relate the circumstances of life around us today to the clear and obvious ideals Jesus puts before us in the Gospel, and how the Church ought to be following that line in preference to all others.

I wondered about the background of this man. Why is the state of preaching in the Church generally so poor when individuals here and there, even in spite of physical limitations, can show us what can be done? I suspect that there is a great loss of confidence amongst the clergy, sad to say. Yes, times are difficult, so all the more important for our priests to grasp what priesthood is not.

S.C., Melbourne

Lukewarm Priests Weaken the Church

From a sermon by Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Papal Household Preacher

The call to conversion resounds in crucial moments of the New Testament: at the beginning of Jesus' preaching: "repent, and believe in the Gospel" (Mk 1:15); at the beginning of apostolic preaching, the day of Pentecost: "Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and be baptized ... and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:37).

However, these are not the contexts that concern us priests more directly. We have believed in the Gospel, we have been baptized and have received the Holy Spirit. There is another "repent!" that concerns us closely, that which resounds within every one of the seven letters to the churches of Revelation. It is not addressed to nonbelievers or neophytes, but to persons who have lived for a long time in the Christian community. A fact renders these letters particularly significant for us: they are addressed to the pastor and to the one responsible for each one of the seven churches. ...

The call to conversion takes on the aspect of a return to the first fervour and love of Christ. Which of us priests does not remember with emotion the moment in which we realized we were called by God to his service, the moment of the profession for the religious, the enthusiasm of the first years of ministry for the priests? It is true that there also was the factor of age, youth. But in this case it is not about nature: it was grace then and it can be grace today. ...

The letter that should make us reflect more than all the others is the one to the angel of the church of Laodicea. We know its severe tone: "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth [...] be zealous and repent" (Rev 3:15 ff).

The lukewarmness of a part of the clergy, the lack of zeal and apostolic inertia: I believe it is this that weakens the Church even more than the occasional scandals of some priests that make more noise and against whom it is easier to hasten to take measures. The great misfortune for us parish priests - said the Holy Cure of Ars - is that the spirit becomes sluggish. He certainly was not among the number of these parish priests, but this phrase of his makes us think.

www.zenit.org 26-03-2010

The Sign of the Cross

"The Blessed Trinity comes to dwell in us on the day of Baptism. And each time we make the sign of the cross we remember the name of God in which we were baptised. ... The sign of the cross and the name of the living God contain, then, the announcement that generates faith and inspires prayer." *Pope Benedict XVI*

God, Even a Merciful God, is Still God

*Bishop Robert F. Vasa, Diocese of Baker, USA
Catholic Sentinel 15-04-2010, sentinel.org*

I seriously doubt that there is anyone who finds the concept of divine mercy troubling.

There is a possibility that some, due to pain and tragedy in their lives, may find it difficult to believe that the God in whom we believe is kind, compassionate, merciful and forgiving. Yet, even those in this category would not object to the concept. They may simply have a more difficult time identifying with that concept.

At the same time there is a possibility that some, due to a failure to allow God to be God, may have a tendency to exaggerate the concept of divine mercy. In older terminology, the spiritual writers would refer to the two-edged danger of despair on one hand and presumption on the other.

There was an age when there was a greater tendency toward despair and the active promotion of the notion of Divine Mercy serves as a beautiful antidote to this despair.

On the other hand the tendency toward presumption, which could be described as an excess of confidence in or reliance on the mercy of God, needs a different kind of antidote. Perhaps the apparent increased ambivalence toward sin and towards sin's remedy, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, signals this tendency toward presumption. A proper understanding of the justice of God and an appropriate fear of the Lord provide the needed balance.

Now I can already hear the shouts of protest, "God does not want us to fear him, he is all merciful!" "The God I believe in would never send anyone to hell!" "I believe in a compassionate God, not a God of vengeance!" Please note, I did not say or imply that God lacks mercy. I did not say or imply that God is reluctant to forgive. I am saying that it is spiritually dangerous to forget that God, even a merciful God, is still God.

...When God draws near to Abraham we read that Abraham was enveloped by a "deep terrifying darkness." This was not the darkness of despair and it certainly was not the boldness of presumption; it was the overwhelming experience of the nearness of God. Even if Abraham understood that God was kind and merciful, he also understood that God was still God.

The experience of Abraham, in the face of the God who is, needs to be reflected upon. It seems to me that Abraham was confronted with something, someone, so great that his limited human senses could not even begin to comprehend what he was encountering. He thus experiences complete sensory over-load and only knows, in his contact with the

almighty, infinite, all-knowing, all-loving God that God is very great and he is very small.

He perhaps realizes how close he has come to the ultimate of everything and thus terrifyingly recognizes his own nearness to nothingness.

Prior to that moment, Abraham could boast of his own worldly significance. After this encounter, which brought him to deep terrifying darkness, he would have to live very differently. No one who truly encounters the living God can come away unscathed. ...

Abraham understood both the mercy and the power of God. His ability to "fear" God did not at all diminish his appreciation of the goodness and mercy of God but it did keep him from taking that mercy for granted.

The Israelites, by contrast, seemed to forget rather quickly the negative consequences of their infidelity and relied too heavily on God's mercy. Perhaps they were a bit presumptuous because of their excess of confidence in what it meant to be God's chosen people. Perhaps phrases familiar today were also familiar then. "God loves us just the way we are." "I know that God forgives me." "God does not really care what we do, after all he loves us."

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy does not presume on God's mercy; it manifests a proper reverence for him who is still God while pleading to him for that mercy because of a confidence that he who is all powerful is also kind and merciful.

"For the sake of his sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world."

Begging for mercy and refusing to utilize the sacrament of reconciliation implies that there is no repentance component associated with a reliance on God's mercy. Begging for this mercy and presuming that it will be granted even without repentance or contrition is presumption. Begging for this mercy while manifesting an inability to accept that it will be granted, even with great repentance and contrition, is despair.

Proper reverence for God, even a God whom we know to be infinitely merciful, demands of us that we approach this vast storehouse of infinitely abundant mercy with a kind of fear and trembling. When we recognize that we who are so lacking in mercy are approaching the one who is mercy itself then I suspect that we will make that approach with a more appropriate degree of reverential fear.

It is spiritually dangerous to forget that God, even a merciful God, is still God.

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 st Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Cranbourne	Friday and Saturday in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	6pm Thursday – 6pm Friday (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Friday 9.30am – 10.30am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10am – 11am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
Trafalgar	Wednesday and First Saturday: (9.30am Mass) 10am – 10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, January onwards)
Wonthaggi	First Friday 7pm – 8pm

Great Need of Our Time

From an article by St Peter Julian Eymard, July 1864

I am not afraid to say it: the cult of Solemn Exposition is the great need of our times; this public and solemn profession of faith in the divinity of Christ and in the reality of His Sacramental Presence is a necessity.

It is the best refutation which can be levelled at the renegades, the apostates, the impious and the indifferent. It will crush them like a mountain of fire, but a fire of love and goodness.

This solemn cult of exposition is also necessary to arouse the slumbering faith of many good people who have forgotten Jesus Christ, because they have lost sight of the fact that He is their Neighbour, their Friend, and their God. ...

It is needed to save society. For society is dying out, because it no longer has a vital principle of truth and charity, no family spirit. Each one shifts for himself, becomes self-centred and self-sufficient. So dissolution is at hand. But society will revive when all its members group themselves around our Emmanuel.

Mary, our mother

And mother of the Redeemer,
Gate of heaven and Star of the sea,
Come to the aid of your people,
Who have sinned,
Yet also yearn to rise again!
Come to the Church's aid,
Enlighten your devoted children,
Strengthen the faithful throughout the world,
Let those who have drifted
Hear your call,
And may they who live as prisoners of evil
Be converted!

Pope John Paul II

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Editor - Janet Kingman

The purpose of ITD is to provide a forum for those who:

- no longer have a voice in Catholic Life, and other diocesan newspapers,
- wish to understand and defend the teachings of the Catholic Church,
- wish to support and defend those who are unjustly treated by Church bureaucrats and organisations,
- wish to campaign for the renewal of our Catholic schools,
- wish to promote Eucharistic adoration in all parishes,
- wish to have a means of support and contact for one another in remaining true to our Catholic faith.

Letters to the Editor

Readers are encouraged to contribute letters or articles. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. The purpose of sharing letters is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for making positive changes, that is, in line with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We live in joyful hope that the diocese we love can be faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church. As such, Into the Deep aims to be a messenger of hope and not of doom. Name and contact details must accompany letters. However, if there is sufficient reason, anonymity will be preserved when publishing. Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of ITD.