

Into the Deep

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Body and Blood

From 'Eucharistic Miracles', by Joan Carroll Cruz, p.59

In 1263 a German priest, Peter of Prague stopped at Bolsena while on a pilgrimage to Rome. He is described as being a pious priest, but one who found it difficult to believe that Christ was actually present in the consecrated Host.

While celebrating Holy Mass above the tomb of St Christina (located in the Church named for this martyr), he had barely spoken the words of Consecration when blood started to seep from the consecrated Host and trickle over his hands and onto the altar and the corporal.

The priest was immediately confused. At first he attempted to hide the blood, but then he interrupted the Mass and asked to be taken to the neighbouring city of Orvieto, the city where Pope Urban IV was then residing.

The Pope listened to the priest's account and absolved him. He then sent his emissaries for an immediate investigation. When all the facts were ascertained, he ordered the Bishop of the diocese to bring to Orvieto the Host and the linen cloth bearing the stains of blood. ... The linen corporal bearing the spots of blood is still reverently enshrined and exhibited in the Cathedral of Orvieto.

It is said that Pope Urban IV was prompted by this miracle to commission St Thomas Aquinas to compose the Proper for a Mass and an Office honouring the Holy Eucharist as the Body of Christ.

One year after the miracle, in August of 1264 Pope Urban IV introduced the saint's composition, and by means of a papal bull instituted the feast of Corpus Christi.

*"The Christ who calls us to the
Eucharistic banquet is always the same
Christ who exhorts us to penance."*

Pope John Paul II, Redemptor Hominis, 20

Infinite Joy

From Pope Benedict XVI's Ash Wednesday homily 2009

Conversion...means to give oneself to the teachings of Jesus and to obediently follow in his footprints. The words he uses to explain how to be his true disciples are enlightening. After affirming that "he who wants to save his own life will lose it; but he who will lose his own life for me and the Gospel will save it", he adds: "To what good can man earn the whole world, if he loses his own soul"? (Mk 8:35-36)

Attainment of success, longing for prestige and search for comfort: when these things absorb life entirely until they exclude God from one's own horizon, do they really lead to happiness? Can there be true happiness without God? Experience shows that we are not happy because we satisfy material expectations. In truth, the sole delight that fills a man's heart is the one that comes from God: we truly need this infinite joy.

Neither the daily worries, nor the difficulty of life can cancel out the joy that comes from our friendship with God. At first Jesus' invitation to take up our cross and follow him can seem hard and against our wishes – even mortifying because of our desire for personal success. But if we look closer we discover that it is not like that: The saints are proof that in the Cross of Christ, in the love that is given renouncing self-possession, we find a profound serenity that is the foundation of generous devotion to our brothers, especially the poor and the needy. This gives us joy.

www.zenit.org 06-02-2008

"Prayer is hope in action. And in fact true reason is contained in prayer: we come into loving contact with the one God, the universal Creator, and in so doing we come to realize the futility of human divisions and prejudices and we sense the wondrous possibilities that open up before us when our hearts are converted to God's truth, to his design for each of us and our world."
Pope Benedict XVI

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

Youth Taken for a Ride

I attended the recent (3/5/2009) youth catechesis session (called “RE for the Rabble”) at St Patrick’s community centre in Pakenham. I’m a busy person with challenging and lengthy university placements. Therefore, I have no hesitation in labeling the attendance as a nearly complete waste of precious time.

The session began with a collection of “songs”, mostly Hillsong music. This was generously provided by the visiting people of National Evangelization Team, who are posted in Melbourne. Whilst I respect aspects of the NET ministry, this trademark “praise and worship” activity did not seem to be appreciated by the local youth or myself. The majority of young people present mumbled the lyrics with their arms crossed, probably because the songs chosen were not well known. The agony lasted for around 30 minutes.

The group was then introduced to Fr Bernie Krotwaar, who was the guest lecturer for the evening. The infamous priest was dressed in a polo shirt and slacks without a clerical collar. He was obviously nervous about his task of addressing a younger audience.

Fr Krotwaar began his talk by assuring the audience of his experience on the Eucharist, that he usually presents seminars on the Eucharist for adults over five evenings. He also quoted his ‘inspirational’ text from Fr Frank Andersen’s book called “Eucharist, Participating in the Mystery” which he claimed had taught him more than 7 years in the seminary and 10 years as a priest. I was stunned by how amazingly predictable and boring his opening was.

He then went on to tell of his experiences with the Catholic youth pre-WYD, where he found out in conversation that the diocesan young people didn’t really understand the Mass or its purpose. His insightful comment demonstrates that the Sale diocese is finally waking up from its ignorance regarding the deficiencies of its own religious education.

The main summary of his talk consisted of the following. In his opinion, receiving the Eucharist was a small part of the community worship, as the Eucharist was only the “identity” of Our Lord. However, taking Jesus to others was of most importance. He also dictated that deeds of adoration, such as receiving communion on the tongue and kneeling in silence were “unfortunate acts” that originated from the Arian heresy created by the Church to boost the significance of the Real Presence. With Bible and Church History blatantly misrepresented to further his agenda, the cleric had an incredible ability to blur fiction and reality that surely rivals the writings of Dan Brown, author of “The Da Vinci Code” and “Angels and Demons”!

After question time, people were asked to move to the church for Mass. However, Fr Krotwaar had a request for a special “liturgy” that would replace the bell ringing at the Consecration with his additional bonus spoken responses. I had already attended Sunday worship and could see little benefit in participation.

There are two things that sadden me deeply about the situation. The first is that despite a Catholic education and seminary training, Fr Krotwaar has failed with word, action, dress and attitude to understand and accept the teaching of the Real Presence with its subsequent magnitude. What is even worse is that he is misinforming and confusing parishioners of all ages on a constant basis without reprimand.

It was also disappointing that despite the readership of ITD and advertising of the event, the room was apparently absent of other young Catholics willing to defend or explain the most important of Church teachings. In future, I would encourage any youth who read ITD to attend Diocesan catechesis sessions and use the event to better evangelise and educate other young Catholics who long for real truth.

Xavier O’Kane, Melbourne

Grateful to Thomas

From a reflection by Father Thomas Rosica, CSB

The words addressed to Thomas were given to us: “Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed!”

Long ago St Gregory the Great said of Thomas the Apostle: “If, by touching the wounds on the body of his master, Thomas is able to help us overcome the wounds of disbelief, then the doubting of Thomas will have been more use to us than the faith of all the other apostles.”

Centuries after Thomas, we remain forever grateful for the honesty and humanity of his struggle. Though we know so little about Thomas, his family background and his destiny, we are given an important hint into his identity in the etymology of his name in Greek: Thomas (Didymous in Greek) means “twin”. Who was Thomas’ other half, his twin? Maybe we can see his twin by looking into the mirror. Thomas’ other half is anyone who has struggled with the pain of unbelief, doubt and despair, and has allowed the presence of the Risen Jesus to make a difference.

www.zenit.org 19-04-2009

The Feminist Con

John Henderson (ITD May 09, p.8), asks how it is that 'feral' nuns have established themselves in the Church? He answers that "they have lost their identity". To this must be added the policy of the bishops of promotion and WATAC (Women and the Australian Church) financial subsidy.

But how did all this come about?

The authorities have truly swallowed the feminist con, as part of the larger secular-liberal-humanist con.

While God's creation is good, Jesus warned his followers about the way of the world, but in this world of progress we have chosen to ignore this.

None of us wants to be narrow-minded or opposed to true progress, but liberalism in the religious field is opposed to religious authority and wants to accommodate everything to the spirit of the age – and what an age it is!

"Unless a seed falls into the ground..." was an example Jesus used to tell us the need for humility and truth. That humility has been replaced by worldly pride and the urge for self-promotion. It is part of the mood of our times, but religious are supposed to have forsaken this. Instead it has infected many of them.

The push among them for women priests is simply a result of the more basic problem: the urge for power, because there are very few true religious superiors requiring obedience of them today, which they once publicly pledged as a distinguishing mark of their chosen vocation in life. It was proclaimed by a distinctive form of dress acknowledged by all; now they are just anonymous substitutes. No wonder they are clamouring for something extra in life.

Perhaps the Church would be better off if they left and got married – sorry, the most vociferous and pushy wouldn't be any happier, but we would!

But no, they want the jobs and power within the Church, and the money. It is secular feminism that we face, and the bishops ought to wake up to it and themselves.

If religious women are so concerned about "the poor", as some claim, they could well work from convents instead of rented flats. If the Orders can't overcome all this individualism *within* works of the institute, then they face the same fate as the Order for the Redemption of Captives, which went out of existence hundreds of years ago because there was no longer any need for it.

S.C., Melbourne

Pell on Ireland Abuse

Statement on the report of the Commission into Child Abuse in Ireland

+ Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, 21 May 2009

I have only read the Executive Summary (and a few other sections) of the Irish report of the Commission into Child Abuse which deals mainly with physical cruelty, sexual abuse, neglect and emotional abuse in institutions for children from 1936 - 1970 perpetrated by priests, brothers and nuns.

It is grim reading. Sexual and physical abuses are crimes. I was deeply moved by the brutality and cruelty suffered by the children. The only way forward is to acknowledge the wrongs that have been, to institute just procedures to process the complaints (where this has not been done), to offer help to healing and compensation. Sincere apologies have to be offered.

Please God this will be the beginning of the end of a sad and shameful period in the Catholic Church in Ireland. The Irish Church leadership is facing up to the past and they now face the difficult task of working towards the future.

The report will be examined thoroughly by us for any links to clergy or members of religious orders in Australia, and whatever needs to be done in the Sydney Archdiocese, and indeed more widely in Australia, will be done to bring justice to victims.

Ireland is not Australia. In 1996 Catholic bishops and religious orders in Australia established the Towards Healing protocol to investigate allegations of sexual abuse in the Church, and to provide support, pastoral care and justice to victims. This work continues.

The Catholic Church in Australia will continue to accept its responsibilities toward victims of sexual abuse, and I encourage anyone who may have been abused by a Catholic priest or a member of a religious order to contact the police or the Towards Healing contact line (1300 369 977).

Good Catholic Reading

For those readers who are not aware of an excellent orthodox Catholic journal I recommend to them "AD2000", whose editor is Michael Gilchrist, the author of "Rome or The Bush" and "New Church or True Church". Contact details are: PO Box 186 North Melbourne, Vic 3051 or phone (03) 9326 5757. E-mail is: editor@ad2000.com.au

John FG McMahon, Kolonga, QLD

"Let everyone reject the destructive power of hatred and prejudice, which kills men's souls before it kills their bodies!" Pope Benedict XVI

Year for Priests

[In an address to members of the Congregation for the Clergy on 16 March 2009] Benedict XVI highlighted the “indispensable struggle for moral perfection which must dwell in every truly priestly heart.

“In order to favour this tendency of priests towards spiritual perfection, upon which the effectiveness of their ministry principally depends, I have”, he said, “decided to call a special ‘Year for Priests’ which will run from 19 June 2009 to 19 June 2010”. This year marks “the 150th anniversary of the death of the saintly ‘Cure of Ars’, Jean Marie Vianney, a true example of a pastor at the service of Christ’s flock”.

[...] Benedict XVI stressed the need to “have care for the formation of candidates to the priesthood”, a formation that must maintain “communion with unbroken ecclesial Tradition, without pausing or being tempted by discontinuity. In this context, it is important to encourage priests, especially the young generations, to a correct reading of the texts of Vatican Council II, interpreted in the light of all the Church’s doctrinal inheritance”.

Priests must be “present, identifiable and recognisable – for their judgement of faith, personal virtues and attire – in the fields of culture and of charity which have always been at the heart of the Church’s mission”.

“The centrality of Christ leads to a correct valuation of priestly ministry, without which there would be no Eucharist, no mission, not even the Church. It is necessary then, to ensure that ‘new structures’ or pastoral organisations are not planned for a time in which it will be possible to ‘do without’ ordained ministry, on the basis of an erroneous interpretation of the promotion of the laity, because this would lay the foundations for a further dilution in priestly ministry, and any supposed ‘solutions’ would, in fact, dramatically coincide with the real causes of the problems currently affecting the ministry”.

Vatican Information Service 16-03-2009

Marian Conference DVD

The Diocese of Sale Marian Conference was held in Traralgon on 16 May. Bishop Peter Elliot was the guest speaker, giving talks on ‘The Basis for Marian Devotion’ and ‘Reflections on the Visitation’.

Summaries of these talks will appear in future issues of ITD.

A DVD recording of the conference is available from Marianne Bagguley at \$10.00 per copy. Contact Marianne at bagguleyc@vic.australis.com.au or on 0407 353 750.

One and Three

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

Many ask: But what is this puzzle of three who are one and one who are three? Would it not be easier to believe in a God who is just one, as the Muslims do?

The answer is simple. The Church believes in the Trinity, not because it likes to complicate things, but because this truth has been revealed by Christ. The difficulty of understanding the mystery of the Trinity is an argument in favour of, and not against, its truth. No man left to himself would have ever come up with this mystery.

... There can only be love between two or more persons; if therefore “God is love,” there must be in God one who loves, one who is loved, and the love that unites them. Christians are monotheists; they believe in a God who is one, but not solitary. Who would God love if he were absolutely alone? Perhaps himself? But then his love would not be really love, but rather egoism or narcissism.

I would like to consider the great and formidable teaching about life that comes to us from the Trinity. This mystery is the maximum affirmation that there can be both equality and diversity: equal in dignity but different in characteristics. ...

This teaching has its first and most natural field of application in the family. The family must be an earthly reflection of the Trinity. It is made up of persons of different sex (man and woman) and age (parents and children) with all the consequences that derive from these differences: different sentiments, different attitudes and tastes. The success of a marriage and a family depends on the measure by which this diversity knows how to tend toward a higher unity: unity of love, intentions and collaboration.

... Husband and wife do not have each to be the “better half” of the other in the sense of two halves perfectly equal, as an apple cut in two, but in the sense that one is the missing half of the other and the complement of the other. ... This all presupposes the strength to accept the difference of the other, which is the most difficult thing for us to do and in which only the most mature marriages succeed.

From this we also see how erroneous it is to consider the Trinity a mystery that is remote from our lives, one to be left to the speculation of theologians. On the contrary, it is a mystery that is very close to us. The reason is very simple: We were created in the image of the Trinitarian God, we bear this imprint and we are called to realize the same sublime synthesis of unity and diversity.

www.zenit.org 01-06-2007

We're Not Talking to the Bloke Next Door

*From an interview with Cardinal George Pell, by Luke Coppen, editor of The Catholic Herald, 20-03-2009
www.catholicherald.co.uk [reprinted with permission]*

Where do you think the liturgical development is heading?

I don't know. I'm not a professional liturgist. I am keen that we strengthen the vertical dimension of the liturgy, if we can, in the popular understanding, so that it's very obviously not just community-centred, it's God-centred, it's an act of worship. I'm very sympathetic to that. I'm even sympathetic for the Canon of the Mass that the priest has his back to the people.

As something obligatory?

Yes. Now there's nothing like a consensus in favour of that at the moment. I think I would be in favour of it because it makes it patently clear that the priest is not the centre of the show, that this is an act of worship of the one true God, and the people are joining with the priest for that.

Another way of acknowledging that: I'm very much in favour of having a crucifix in front of the celebrant during the Mass when we're facing the people.

Between the priest and the people, in front of the altar?

Yes, sometimes it might be flat, sometimes it might be vertical. But that distracts attention away to some little extent from the main celebrant. I think also I find the figure of Christ is a great aid to recollection and prayer while you're saying the Eucharistic Prayer.

As president of the Vox Clara Committee you have been advising the Congregation for Divine Worship on the new English translation of the Mass. Do you hope that the new translation will help to emphasise that vertical dimension of the Mass?

Yes, very much so. I'll be surprised if there's more than a few hiccups when it comes to it. I think it will go well. I think people will recognise that it's beautiful and appropriate. We've tried to keep changes to the community responses, the people's parts, to a minimum. The translations are accurate, forceful and some of them in particular are very beautiful.

It looks like it has the potential to be controversial. Some people may say: "This translation is being thrust upon us by Rome."

Nothing's being thrust upon anyone. This matter has gone out repeatedly to the national hierarchies. It's approved by the national hierarchies. The level of change now will be very small in comparison with the enormous changes that were foisted upon the people just after the Second Vatican Council. Undoubtedly there will be a small element which will try to resist them. I'm quite confident the overwhelming majority of Mass-going people will quickly learn to love them. The quality of the language there will emphasise that we're not talking to the bloke next door. We're worshipping the one true God. Not in old-fashioned, archaic language, but in beautiful, strong and appropriate language. I'm quite confident it will be successful.

Where are we up to in the whole process?

I think towards the end of next year... For about five years I've been saying we've got two years to go. And now that's becoming more and more likely. So people will be aiming towards the end of next year for it to happen.

Commitment to Catholic Education

This is part of the commitment made by newly appointed principals and senior Catholic Education Office staff in the Diocese of Sale at a recent diocesan "Leadership Mass". Keep it handy for when you complain about what's going on in Catholic schools.

"As Catholic leaders in the Diocese of Sale our beliefs are based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the tradition of the Catholic Church. It is by living and teaching these values that we share in the mission of the Church."

A Question of Conviction

"Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the Good News. First and foremost every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth.

"A university or school's Catholic identity is not simply a question of the number of Catholic students. It is a question of conviction – do we really believe that only in the mystery of the Word made flesh does the mystery of man truly become clear? Are we ready to commit our entire self – intellect and will, mind and heart – to God?"
Pope Benedict XVI, 17-04-2008

Get Off Your Knees

The following letter was written to John Henderson by Morwell parishioner Mr Terry Lappin, with copies sent to Sr Elizabeth and the parish Liturgy Committee, and permission given to publish. It relates to John Henderson's letter in May ITD, p.8. John's response is alongside. -Ed.

It is with a certain sense of sadness that I find myself writing this letter, but your recent unprovoked and completely inaccurate attack on Sister Liz, in that publication called Into the Deep (which I refuse to read, I have only read your letter) leaves me no choice but to put a few facts to paper.

I wonder who gave you and your associates the responsibility of overlooking and reporting on, the activities of us, the members of the Diocese of Sale. Firstly there was the morality police, checking on the behaviour of priests. Then your attack on Bishop Coffey, over the Speekman affair. You people hounded a humble, holy, brilliant academic, a man any Diocese would be proud to call their Bishop, but because you disagreed with his findings, you of course assumed that you were right. I don't see the letters D.D. behind any of your names! And now Sister Liz! And I notice that you waited until Father Peter was out of the country, really brave!

I was at the celebration you wrote about, and Sister Liz was reading from a prepared paper and did not alter any words during her reading. I consider that she, and all who took part, did an excellent job. I think if you concentrated more on being part of the celebration instead of looking for faults, you would have enjoyed the celebration as it was intended to be. Sister Liz is a hardworking chaplain to the Italian community and covers the whole of the diocese, but as she lives in Morwell she generously gives her time, when available, to Morwell Catholic Parish. And as for you suggesting that she is acting as Parish Associate, NONSENSE – we have not had a Parish Associate, per se, since Sister Maureen left.

John, I know you and your friends spend a lot of time in Church and in front of the Blessed Sacrament, but as it says in Scripture, prayer without good works is an empty vessel. There are many ministries that are needed, special ministers, readers, collectors, money counters, liturgical groups, church cleaners etc. So my advice to you, John, is to get off your knees and become an active part of our parish. Let us try to work together in harmony for the betterment of us all. Just as a final comment, "Jesus was not judgemental." You are all in my prayers.

"The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the font from which all her power flows."

Sacrosanctum Concilium, n.10

Liberal-Speak

The first two paragraphs of Terry Lappin's letter are typical liberal-speak. His defence of Sr Elizabeth rests on the fact that she read from a prepared paper. The question that needs to be asked is who prepared the paper? Sr Elizabeth, the liturgy committee, who? My point was that no one has the authority to alter any reading. Sr Elizabeth with her experience would or should have known it was an inaccurate version of St John's account. Terry fails to mention my other point, Sr Elizabeth reading the introduction to the General Intercessions. Again this is not allowed.

The point on being "part of the celebration instead of looking for faults" is a nonsense. These are not faults but liturgical abuses. We the laity are entitled to expect that the norms of the Church are observed when we attend Mass or any other liturgical celebration.

I stand by my assertion that Sr Elizabeth was involved in the removal of Fr Speekman to which no denial was made. As a matter of fact I can also state that Terry Lappin and some of the Josephite associates were also involved. Terry showed his hand when he chaired that highly organised infamous public meeting of 29-08-2004 with Fr Cleary present. It turned out to be a forum for Fr Speekman and Gregory Kingman to be freely denigrated in their absence. Now that is what I call a real display of "courage".

Terry mentions Fr Peter. I have on a number of occasions raised my concerns with Fr Peter. I did so on this occasion. Terry and others would not want to know what Father said.

Terry's statement that we have not had a pastoral associate since Sr Maureen left is a blatant untruth. Gregory Kingman was the pastoral associate after Sr Maureen's departure for a period of 3 years until his employment was disgracefully and unprofessionally terminated by Fr Cleary. This deliberate omission by Terry I find contemptible.

He and others are so vehement in their defence of Sr Elizabeth yet so condemnatory of Fr Speekman when the case against him was built on lies and innuendo. I didn't assume Bishop Coffey was wrong – the Congregation said he was wrong. Twice. But neither Bishop Coffey nor Terry accepted Rome's ruling on the matter.

As for my involvement in the parish, I stand by my contribution over the past 50 years. After doing such a fine job of judging me I find his final comment hilarious.

Incidentally I hope he and his colleagues watched Australian Story (ABC, 25 May). They would have gained an insight into what happens when we think we know better than the Church. If things keep going the way they are in the Morwell parish, what has happened in South Brisbane will be replicated here – a frightening thought.

John Henderson, Morwell

The Genuine Beauty and Value of Celibacy

An article by Fr Thomas Euteneuer, President, Human Life International www.hli.org

Some recent high-profile priest scandals have put celibacy back in the limelight as a topic for the pagan world to rage about, but rarely will you hear what the Catholic Church *actually* teaches about it. I hope that the following insights will be a short-course in the dynamics of a marvellous life of grace: namely, celibate chastity. The world needs to hear “the other side” of the story.

Number One: Celibacy is a gift to the world, not a rule imposed by the Church on a few seemingly-abnormal men. Celibacy initiates men into a life of spiritual fatherhood in a strikingly positive way for others. We are called “father” for a reason: we bring spiritual life to our people through the sacred mysteries which we handle, and they are drawn into a spiritual family thereby. A truly dedicated priest has thousands of spiritual children who sometimes make immense demands on him – I often wish I had *only* seven children like my father! In an age where men have massively renounced their sacred duty to generate, protect and nurture families, there are myriads of selfless, celibate men sacrificing themselves in a truly manly way for the sake of God’s family and, indeed, even for the sake of many individual families. The fact that some priests fail at it does not make the gift of celibacy anything less than a true blessing; in fact, its failures force us to reflect more deeply on its quiet successes. It’s hypocritical to think that we should throw away the gift of celibacy (i.e., make it “optional”) based upon a miniscule percentage of failures of its practitioners. We don’t say the same thing about the much higher percentage of failures in marriage. Should we allow polygamy just because some married men can’t stick to one woman? This is the time to reaffirm the genuine beauty and value of celibacy, not change this immense gift to us.

Number Two: Celibacy is the personal renunciation of the legitimate goods of marriage and family as a fruitful sacrifice for the kingdom of God. The astonishment of this generation that a perfectly normal, red-blooded male could make *that* particular sacrifice is exactly the *point* of celibacy. The world needs to know that there are some men walking around who are not bound either by the expectations of society or by the terms of our fleshly human nature. They are bound by only one concern; that of a kingdom that is not of this world, and they are willing to sacrifice everything for it. The presence in society of men who make this sacrifice is profoundly *challenging* to a culture that wants to reduce everything in life to the pleasure principle. Such a total renunciation is truly counter cultural: it’s like choosing to live with a permanent wound in the heart that never heals but out of which flow “rivers of living

water” (Jn 7:38) that heal countless others. Celibacy is not easy for anyone to live, in fact, it is a constant death to self; but it is enormously life-giving to others, and the Church has not lost sight of that for two thousand years.

Number Three: vows are vows. Married men make vows and so do priests. A vow is a promise before God of fidelity to a particular person or state in life. From a spiritual point of view a vow in marriage has the same significance as a vow of celibate chastity: it is permanently binding on the individual and requires total fidelity. We all know that vows are broken by weak and fallible men, but we also know and have seen that vows can be repaired, sins repented of, amends made and forgiveness granted to those who have offended others. Who of us does not depend in some way on the Mercy of God and those we have hurt when we have fallen? The return to fidelity breaks our pride and chastens our passions. What we must never do is make excuses or justify our compromises with pop cultural moral relativism. For example, the fact of “falling in love” with someone is no more an excuse to abandon the celibate priesthood than it is to abandon a wife and family for another woman. I have known many married men who have had that experience and then, in a more rational moment, picked themselves up, dusted themselves off and returned to fidelity – sometimes at a great cost. Thankfully God gave us a rational will, in addition to our lower passions, so that we have something other than whimsical feelings to govern our actions. Fidelity is always possible for those who desire to return to their deepest commitments.

Well, although a short article on celibacy is not enough to explain such a beautiful mystery, it is just enough to witness to a very dynamic way of life whose adherents have given life to millions throughout the centuries. In this time of great secular challenge to our faith, let us pray for the celibate men and women who have served us so well in this life and especially for those who are still trying to return to fidelity.

Teacher of Prayer

St Teresa of Avila

“I do not understand how anyone can think of the Queen of angels and of all the trials she suffered during the early years of the divine child Jesus, without thanking Saint Joseph for the perfect devotion with which he came to assist them both. May anyone who lacks a teacher of prayer choose this admirable Saint as a master, for under his guidance no one need be afraid of going astray.” (Life, 6)

Plenary Indulgence for Year for Priests

...Benedict XVI will grant priests and faithful Plenary Indulgence for the occasion of the Year for Priests... The means to obtain the Plenary Indulgence are as follows:

(A) All truly penitent priests who, on any day, devotedly pray Lauds or Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament exposed to public adoration or in the tabernacle, and ... offer themselves with a ready and generous heart for the celebration of the Sacraments, especially the Sacrament of Penance, will be granted Plenary Indulgence, which they can also apply to their deceased confreres, if in accordance with current norms they take Sacramental Confession and the Eucharist and pray in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff. Priests are furthermore granted Partial Indulgence, also applicable to deceased confreres, every time they devotedly recite the prayers duly approved to lead a saintly life and to carry out the duties entrusted to them.

(B) All truly penitent Christian faithful who, in church or oratory, devotedly attend Holy Mass and offer prayers to Jesus Christ, supreme and eternal Priest, for the priests of the Church, or perform any good work to sanctify and mould them to His Heart, are granted Plenary Indulgence, on the condition that they have expiated their sins through Sacramental Confession and prayed in accordance with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff. This may be done on the opening and closing days of the Year of Priests, on the 150th anniversary of the death of St Jean Marie Vianney, on the first Thursday of the month, or on any other day established by the ordinaries of particular places for the good of the faithful.

The elderly, the sick and all those who for any legitimate reason are unable to leave their homes, may still obtain Plenary Indulgence if, with the soul completely removed from attachment to any form of sin and with the intention of observing, as soon as they can, the usual three conditions, "on the days concerned, they pray for the sanctification of priests and offer their sickness and suffering to God through Mary, Queen of the Apostles".

Partial Indulgence is offered to all faithful each time they pray five Our Father, Ave Maria and Gloria Patri, or any other duly approved prayer "in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to ask that priests maintain purity and sanctity of life".

Vatican Information Service 12-05-2009

**"God is the only wealth that, definitively,
mankind wishes to find in a priest."**

Pope Benedict XVI

What is an Indulgence?

Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 1471-1473)

An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven ...

An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin. ...

To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a *double consequence*. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the "eternal punishment" of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory. This purification frees one from what is called the "temporal punishment" of sin. These two punishments must not be conceived of as a kind of vengeance inflicted by God from without, but as following from the very nature of sin. ...

The forgiveness of sin and restoration of communion with God entail the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, but temporal punishment of sin remains. While patiently bearing sufferings and trials of all kinds and, when the day comes, serenely facing death, the Christian must strive to accept this temporal punishment of sin as a grace. He should strive by works of mercy and charity, as well as by prayer and the various practices of penance, to put off completely the "old man" and to put on the "new man".

Happy Anniversary, Father

As the "Year for Priests" approaches your readers might like to honour each and every one of their priests in a very special way.

They might like to mark the anniversary of Father's ordination to the priesthood by encouraging as many parishioners as possible to attend Holy Mass on the appropriate date. The intention of the Mass could be "To thank Almighty God for Father's vocation." The participants could also sign a special anniversary card beforehand in the vestibule as they enter the church to be presented to their priest at the end of Holy Mass together with a tiny memento to mark the occasion such as: "True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary" by St Louis Mary de Montfort.

Why not arrange with Father for a photograph taken on his ordination day to be on display. It would delight all present and remind their Shepherd of the enthusiasm he felt for the priesthood on that never to be forgotten day in his life.

Pat Ryan, London UK

Liturgy “So Very Dry”

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

www.zenit.org

Q: Nowadays there seems to be a shift from the spirit of the liturgy to mechanical and ritualistic performance. Since our liturgy is so very dry, many Catholics in several parts of India are going to Protestant churches where the worship is spontaneous, meaningful and gives them a sense of involvement and satisfaction. Some of the questions put to you and your answers seem to be not appealing to the soul. Should we not think of promoting meaningful liturgy in the light of the local culture and its needs? - P.J., Dindigul, India

A: ... I do not believe that it follows that an exact and precise liturgical celebration is thereby a soulless and mechanical ritual. Nor is a cavalier attitude toward rubrics an inevitable proof of authentic Christianity. There can be both good faith and hypocrisy behind both attitudes, but these are the failings of individual human beings that do not touch the heart of the question.

I strongly defend fidelity to liturgical norms because I believe that the faithful have a right to be able to participate in a recognizably Catholic liturgy, a liturgy that flows from Christ himself and is part of the great stream of the communion of saints.

While not doubting the sincerity of my correspondent, I must take exception to his way of characterizing Protestant worship with respect to Catholic liturgy. I believe that we are before a question that goes much deeper than external forms. The crux of the problem is not that our separated brethren have more exciting performances but that we have failed to teach our faithful basic Catholic doctrine on the Mass and the Eucharist.

Any Catholic who has the tiniest inkling of what it means to assist at Mass; to be present at the Lord's Passion, death and resurrection; to be able to unite his or her prayer presented to the eternal Father united together with Christ's supreme sacrifice; to have the possibility of sharing the Bread come down from heaven – how could such a Catholic ever compare this privilege to any Protestant service, even though admittedly it might have better music and more able preaching?

At the same time, the Church's liturgy is already endowed with flexibility and a richness that can readily respond to local characteristics as determined by the national bishops' conferences. Apart from the essential problem of lack of liturgical formation there is the question of the abandonment or lack of use of many treasures, both ancient and new, that can transform our liturgies into beautiful and deeply spiritual experiences. When the full possibilities of genuine Catholic liturgy are used, the celebration is not a tad less participative, spontaneous and meaningful than any non-Catholic service. The difference is that in liturgy, just as in sports, authentic spontaneity, participation and creativity are found within the rules and not outside of them.

Apart from the liturgy Catholicism has a plethora of forms of prayer and associations, from historic confraternities and sodalities to modern charismatic prayer groups and ecclesial movements. I believe that these multifarious expressions can satisfy all forms of spiritual sensibility and desire for involvement much better than any individual group of Protestants.

Therefore if some of our Catholic faithful are migrating to Protestant groups, I don't think we should be blaming the liturgy but rather double our efforts to celebrate it properly and proclaim the truth of the great mystery of faith.

Another Priest Defying Church Authority

Excerpts from an article by Fr Wrex Woolnough, Parish Priest of Caboolture QLD, in the parish newsletter:

“One of the worrying things that I can see coming out of all the hoo-haa surrounding the South Brisbane saga is that it will all be put down to a runaway parish doing weird things which is stomped on and all will be well again. That would be tragic, not just for the injustice it would allow to take place at the moment, but also because of the implications for the future.”

“Peter [Fr Kennedy] has been willing to...give the community a significant say in decision-making. You may not agree with the solutions they have come up with (e.g. replacing the words Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Baptismal formula), but hopefully we are aware of the problem (we are burdened with an overabundance of masculine words in such formulae), and see the need in a more sensitive world to search for more inclusive alternatives.”

“There are those who run around looking for something to report. There is a very small, but strong, group of right-wing Catholics who will go around from church to church searching out things to report to authorities. They attend services in bad faith, at no time intending to participate fully or reverently, but to take notes and pick the service to pieces. ... In actual fact, their concern is not to be able to worship as they prefer, but to impose their preferred ways of living their faith onto everyone.”

Don't Be Misled

There was a buzz of excitement in the classroom, familiar faces waving to their children. The teacher warmly welcomed everyone, and appealed to the children to settle. We listened to the story of the lost child, which turned out to be about the child Jesus being found in the Temple. At the conclusion, the priest offered explanations about the life of the child Jesus.

It was emphasised to the parents, grandparents and children that "contrary to some people's opinions" who think the child Jesus knew His Divinity, that He was God, this was not so, it was an incorrect assumption. He went on to strongly state that the child Jesus was fully human and was like any other child in every way, that Jesus lived in an ordinary family that had conflicts just like other families do! Sad to say the tone and words blurred the divinity of the Christ-Child and downplayed the holiness of God's chosen earthly parents.

Help! What can we do? What happens to those who don't realise they are misinformed? Or to those who may not want to hear that they are being told a revised story about God, deliberately interfered with by misguided, confused, even well-meaning people?

I also have been guilty, and I continually need to shed my ignorance, arrogance and pride by correcting these errors. We need to apologise to God, keep Him company, pray, increase our vigilance, familiarize ourselves with the Catechism, build on our relationship with the Holy Trinity and with the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is a mother, a Heavenly Mother, she is so well loved by the Holy Trinity, and if anyone can put a good word in for us, she can! St Joseph is another one, how obedient and humble is he. He protected his family and took upon himself total acceptance of God's plan, even though he did not at times understand. What a wonderful role model for all of us. Their lives consisted of total obedience to God. Of course they experienced difficulties in their lives like any other human beings, suffering, hunger and cold, but how could they behave disrespectfully and have *conflict*? We can imitate them, but because we are what we are, we sin. From Mary's immaculate conception she remained without sin, pure. St Joseph was a holy, just man, with a deep respect towards Mary.

I am so grateful that I have sound teaching resources – money well spent! It has helped to defuse frustration and ease the grief and confusion caused by erroneous teachings. Resources such as a Catholic Bible, the Catholic Catechism and its Compendium; EWTN, the Catholic satellite television station that adheres to the teachings of the Church; the internet; and ITD. Also how wonderful for those who have the good fortune of being exposed to faithful, vigilant teachers of the faith. Don't be misled by people who proclaim their own opinions, who tamper with the word of God, for this could result in long-term spiritual famine for you!

Name and Address supplied

A Big Thing

Archbishop Charles Chaput of Denver, 24-02-09

St Augustine once said, "to be faithful in little things is a big thing." ... Devotion to family sounds like a simple thing, and it is. Gratitude, honesty, humility, faithfulness – these all are simple things. They're also very difficult. It's easy to talk about fixing the problems of society with big national programs and policies, because we can always blame somebody else when they don't work. Personal change, personal moral integrity, personal fidelity to people and principles – that's much harder work, because we're stuck with the clay of who we are, and there's nobody to blame but ourselves if we fail. But in persisting in these little things, we accomplish a big thing. We affect others.

Beg for Mercy

I suspect that travelling around on holiday and going to Sunday Mass at different places qualifies me as a "spy" or one of the "temple police". However, I'd much prefer that my right to the proper liturgy of the Church would be respected so I'd have nothing to report.

At a Mass in Ulladulla NSW we had to listen to the mad ravings of a liberal priest in a long, agitated homily. He was a visiting priest to the parish, a teacher at Chevalier College near Bowral (Missionaries of the Sacred Heart), and seemed intent on squeezing in every bit of anti-Catholic belief he could think of into his homily time. I shudder to think of all the students he is leading astray year after year. Amongst other things he says there is much in the Catechism that needs revision ('although there are parts that are good'), Sunday Mass is not an obligation, the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament is over-rated while the Real Presence in ourselves is under-rated (which is why he was happy to "affirm" the parishioners in their noisy talking in the church). It was a nightmare.

Meanwhile in Bathurst NSW, we enter the beautiful cathedral to be faced with enormous rainbow banners hanging down on either side of the sanctuary. Either there's a new rainbow liturgical season that I haven't heard of yet, or there's a strong 'gay pride' thing happening in Bathurst diocese. The priest celebrating Mass seemed much more intent on celebrating himself and us than the Holy Sacrifice. His homily was empty pop-psychology about self-affirmation. He couldn't smile often enough or hard enough at us all. He waved around the Host in one hand like a magician. The sanctuary almost wasn't big enough to accommodate all the Extraordinary Ministers gathered behind the altar.

Orthodox Catholics are at the mercy of the priest wherever they go. Let's use the Year for Priests to offer up prayer and sacrifice for these men more than ever before.

- Ed.

Confirmation: Fulfilment of Baptism

This is the second in a series of articles on Confirmation catechesis appearing in ITD on this page. - Ed.

The sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist) should be a foundational reality in every Catholic's daily life, giving direction, light and meaning to our entire existence.

Easter and Pentecost are in direct relationship to Baptism and Confirmation whose full meaning and effects are realized and fulfilled in the Church through the regular Sunday celebration of the Eucharist.

It is at the Easter Vigil, when candidates for Baptism are initiated and inserted into the life of the Risen Christ, that Catholics can rediscover and renew their awareness of their own entrance into the Risen life of Christ. It is at the baptismal liturgy for catechumens (converts in the Rite of Christian Initiation Adults process) that we are called to reflect upon our understanding of what it means to be a Catholic Christian and renew our own baptismal commitments and promises.

For even though the Church has been practising infant baptism for hundreds of years now, it is here at the climax of the whole catechumenal process, the Easter Vigil, where the sacraments of initiation have preserved the original form, order and structure they had when the majority of those who were initiated into the risen life of Christ were adults.

It is in this paschal context (celebration of the events of Jesus', passion, death and resurrection) that the deepest, richest and fullest meaning of Confirmation is expressed, revealed and realized in its totality.

Here the liturgy gives what it teaches, and makes it clear that the sacrament of Confirmation is not only an organic part of the sacrament of Baptism, but is performed as the completion and fulfilment of it, just as the participation in the Eucharist is the fulfilment of the sacrament of Confirmation.

If we hear what the liturgy says and see what it does, then we learn that the sacraments of initiation traditionally received their definitions, explanations and meaning through the Mass. Here we learn that Christian initiation is an entry by stages into the Church whose core is communion with the Risen Lord in the Holy Eucharist.

We learn what the Church means when it teaches that the three sacraments of initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, form an organic unity, that Baptism is necessary for salvation and is the gateway to all the other sacraments.

We see that these three sacraments are intimately connected to each other and belong together to form one liturgical sequence because each sacrament is fulfilled in the other in such a way that we cannot

fully understand the meaning of one independently of the other two.

Importantly, we learn that Confirmation administered immediately after Baptism, follows the pattern of Jesus' own Baptism in the river Jordan by John the Baptist, where Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit as he came out of the water.

Traditionally in the liturgy of initiation, the sign of the newness of the risen life of Christ is marked by a ceremony of vesting the newly baptised in a white shining garment. This vesting ceremony marks the end of Baptism and the beginning of Confirmation.

To put it simply, at the liturgy of initiation in the Easter Vigil it is the person recreated by the Holy Spirit who died with Christ in the water of Baptism and is regenerated by the Holy Spirit in order that he may receive the Holy Spirit himself.

He receives the Holy Spirit so that he may become a living member of the Body of Christ, the Church, in order to grow into the fullness of Christ. What this means is that we become members of the Church in order to lead a Eucharistic life. We lead a Eucharistic life in order to be more perfectly conformed to Christ, to be completely transformed by Him so as to become a living tangible embodiment of Christ in the world.

Prepared for and made possible by Baptism, the sacrament of Confirmation fulfils Baptism and takes the person beyond it. Baptism prepares the person, opens him up as it were, makes him ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, their personal Pentecost.

All three sacraments of initiation conform us more closely to Christ and directly insert us into communion with him as the Head of the Body and the mystery of his risen life.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Made More Like Christ

Words of the celebrant prior to Confirmation at the Easter Vigil Mass:

"My dear newly baptised, born again in Christ by baptism, you have become members of Christ and of his priestly people. Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptised.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death, and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love."

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

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

Where is God?

Father Raniero Cantalamessa

On the feast of Corpus Christi I cannot hide a certain sadness. There are certain forms of mental illness that prevent people from being able to recognize persons who are close to them. They continue to call out for hours: “Where is my son? Where is my wife? Why don’t they come?” And maybe the son and wife are there holding their hand and saying: “I’m here. Don’t you see me? I’m with you!”

This also happens with God. Our contemporaries look for God in the cosmos or in the atom; they debate over whether there is a God who created the world. They continue to ask: “Where is God?” They do not realize that he is with us and in fact that he became food and drink to be united to us even more intimately.

Sadly, John the Baptist had to repeat: “There is one among you whom you do not know.” The feast of Corpus Christi was born precisely to help Christians be aware of this presence of Christ among us, to keep alive what John Paul II called “Eucharistic wonder.”

www.zenit.org 23-05-2008

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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- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
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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.