

Into the Deep

Issue 192

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

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Such is the Plan

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

Unless there is a Good Friday in our lives, there will never be an Easter Sunday. Unless we die to this world, we will never live in the next. Unless there is the crown of thorns, there will never be a halo of light. Unless there is the Cross, there will never be an empty tomb. Unless we lose our life, we shall not find it. Unless we are crucified with Christ, we shall never rise with Christ. Such is the plan, and on our choice depends eternal issues.

The Cries of Jesus from the Cross, p.295

The 'Hour'

Pope Benedict XVI, World Youth Day closing Mass, 21-08-2005

At the celebration of the Eucharist, we find ourselves in the "hour" of Jesus, to use the language of John's Gospel. Through the Eucharist this "hour" of Jesus becomes our own hour, his presence in our midst. ...

What is happening? How can Jesus distribute his Body and his Blood?

By making the bread into his Body and the wine into his Blood, he anticipates his death, he accepts it in his heart, and he transforms it into an action of love. What on the outside is simply brutal violence – the Crucifixion – from within becomes an act of total self-giving love. This is the substantial transformation which was accomplished at the Last Supper and was destined to set in motion a series of transformations leading ultimately to the transformation of the world when God will be all in all (cf. 1Cor15: 28).

In their hearts, people always and everywhere have somehow expected a change, a transformation of the world. Here now is the central act of transformation that alone can truly renew the world: violence is transformed into love, and death into life. ...

This first fundamental transformation of violence into love, of death into life, brings other changes in its wake. Bread and wine become his Body and Blood.

But it must not stop there; on the contrary, the process of transformation must now gather momentum. The Body and Blood of Christ are given to us so that we ourselves will be transformed in our turn. We are to become the Body of Christ, his own Flesh and Blood.

We all eat the one bread, and this means that we ourselves become one. In this way, adoration becomes union. God no longer simply stands before us as the One who is totally Other. He is within us, and we are in him. His dynamic enters into us and then seeks to spread outwards to others until it fills the world, so that his love can truly become the dominant measure of the world. ...

Jesus' hour is the hour in which love triumphs. In other words: it is God who has triumphed, because he is Love. Jesus' hour seeks to become our own hour and will indeed become so if we allow ourselves, through the celebration of the Eucharist, to be drawn into that process of transformation that the Lord intends to bring about. The Eucharist must become the centre of our lives.

w2.vatican.va

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Study the Faith

Many thanks for the latest issue of ITD, excellent as always.

It occurred to me, reading Gregory Kingman's article on the lack of catechesis today (March ITD, p.4), which indeed was the core of my submission to the Plenary Council, that one way for adults to learn the faith they were deprived of in the schools is my DVD series and book *Journey into Truth*. Many parishes and individual couples are using it along with other couples, and sometimes their children, to study the faith. The program follows the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and has many film clips, images, and quotations to make it easy to watch. There are 24 half-hour sessions. The section on the Profession of Faith is currently being shown on EWTN.

Fr John Flader, Sydney, New South Wales
www.fatherfladerblog.com

"We must thank the poor
for allowing us to love Jesus in them."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Quotable Quote

I was talking to a friend the other day about the imminent demise of Sale's diocesan Catholic newspaper, *Catholic Life* (its April issue will be its final issue). I was going to write about it, but I think his one-line musing is a sufficient summary: "The value of *Catholic Life* can be measured by the degree to which it will be missed."

Ed.

A Certainty

Pope Francis, General Audience 20-03-2019

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Lk 22:42). Jesus is crushed by the evil of the world, but trustfully abandons Himself to the ocean of the love of the will of the Father. Even the martyrs, in their trial, did not seek death; they sought what came after death, resurrection. God, out of love, can lead us to walk on difficult paths, to experience painful wounds and thorns, but He will never abandon us. He will always be with us, next to us, within us. For a believer, this is not a hope but a certainty. God is with me.

A Real Way of Sanctification

Pope Francis, 29-03-2019 to Confessors

Jesus came to save us by revealing to us the merciful face of God and drawing us to Him with His Sacrifice of love. Then, we must always remember that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a real way of sanctification; it is the effective sign that Jesus left to the Church so that the door of the Father's house would always remain open and that the return of men to Him was always possible. ...

For us priests, the fourth sacrament is the way of sanctification, first and foremost when, humbly, like all sinners, we kneel before the confessor and implore divine mercy for ourselves. Let us always remember before going to the confessional, that we are first of all forgiven sinners, and only then are we ministers of forgiveness.

Furthermore as confessors, we have the privilege of constantly contemplating the "miracles" of conversions. We must always recognize the powerful action of grace, which is capable of transforming the heart of stone into a heart of flesh, of changing a sinner who fled far away into a repentant son who returns to his father's house. ...

Reconciliation itself is a good that the wisdom of the Church has always safeguarded with all her moral and legal force with the sacramental seal. Although not always understood by the modern mentality, it is indispensable for the sanctity of the sacrament and for the freedom of conscience of the penitent; who must be certain, at any time, that the sacramental conversation will remain in the secrecy of the confessional, between one's conscience that opens to grace, and God, with the necessary mediation of the priest. The sacramental seal is indispensable and no human power has, nor may it claim, jurisdiction over it.

Zenit.org 29-03-2019

Clerical Abuse of a Different Nature

Maureen Bennett has become an overnight sensation on the internet. She is a Catholic from Elizabeth Town, Tasmania, and she has made it abundantly clear to her new parish priest how much she despises him (and the Catholic Church, for that matter, although she probably doesn't realise that).

To her credit, she has not written anonymously. I know a number of orthodox Catholic priests who have faced the same sort of vitriol, but have been unable to make it public for one of a number of reasons – protecting the abusive parishioner's privacy, or the abuse was verbal and not written, or it was written but anonymous. Maureen, God bless her, has been unafraid to make her displeasure known publicly. She allows us to gain an insight into what many orthodox priests have to face, thanks to previous generations of liberal priests who have 'empowered' parishioners to such an extent that they think they run the parish, have the right to turn the Catholic faith into what they want it to be, and have the right to abuse a priest.

The poor priest in question is Father Rhyne. Pray for him. Here are some excerpts from Maureen's letter:

- In explaining yourself this weekend you have made me realise even more clearly why we in this — our – parish feel such hostility to you being appointed to run this parish.
- You know why you are spat on for wearing clerical dress and I am with those who do so as I think that it is ridiculous to wear a cassock and even a collar in this day and age.
- Your dress and your actions have not earned you respect nor will they.
- For us it is the same as ISIS or the Taliban coming into town with their troops and telling us, "This is the way it will be done from now on."
- Your attitude to women on the altar, depriving us of positions we have humbly held in the past and the jerky manner in which you now turn to the people and the way you pray the consecration are all annoying.
- I have no desire to have a one-on-one conversation with you on these matters as like the Archbishop you will try to charm us into accepting your way as the only way while disregarding anything we say just like Julian Porteous and I presume other members of your sect.

I don't know Father Rhyne. Maureen makes no mention of what he's done that is outside the authority of a parish priest. It's interesting that she refers to "our" parish. We have Catholics in our area who consider the parish "theirs" and the priest just someone who passes through providing the sacraments on demand and following their directions (you can see this in school Masses in particular, where the priest appears to be a puppet-on-a-string, controlled by the school). Of course, bishops play into the hands of these parishioners by moving priests around like pawns and providing parishes with no stability. Any priest courageous enough to take a stand will soon be complained about and moved on. Maureen's attitude of "humbly" holding "positions" is also common, and contradictory. If you get upset about being "deprived" of a "position" then I'm guessing you were not humbly serving, but proudly occupying. I imagine a deeper understanding of what the Mass is and who the priest is, would go a long way to resolving such issues.

Ed.

St Joseph's Help

The prayer to St Joseph (March ITD, p.10), touched a chord. When we moved to Traralgon, house-hunting became a priority chore. This presented some difficulties for a family with six children. So I included the prayer to St Joseph in my evening prayers. In the fullness of time we bought the Josephite convent at Cowwarr at a public auction. St Joseph certainly answers prayers, and understands the challenges of family life.

John Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria

All Three Together

St John Chrysostom

Fasting is the soul of prayer and mercy is the life of fasting. Let no one divide them because they cannot be separated. He who has only one or not all three together has nothing.

Therefore, he who prays must fast. Those who fast must have mercy. Who, in asking, wants to be answered, must answer to those who ask him. Whoever wants to find God's heart open to him, must not close his heart to those who beg him.

The Two Alone Remained: Mercy with Misery

Pope Francis before Confessions, 29-03-2019

"The two of them alone remained: mercy with misery." In this way, Saint Augustine sums up the Gospel we have just heard. Those who came to cast stones at the woman or to accuse Jesus with regard to the Law have gone away, having lost interest. Jesus, however, remains. He remains because what is of value in his eyes has remained: that woman, that person. For him, the sinner comes before the sin. I, you, each one of us come first in the heart of God: before mistakes, rules, judgments, and our failures. Let us ask for the grace of a gaze like that of Jesus, let us ask to have the Christian perspective on life. Let us look with love upon the sinner before his or her sin; upon the one going astray before his or her error; upon the person before his or her history.

"The two of them alone remained: mercy with misery". The woman caught in adultery does not represent for Jesus a paragraph of the Law, but instead a concrete situation in which he gets involved. Thus he remains there with the woman, for the most part standing in silence. Meanwhile, he twice performs a mysterious gesture: he writes with his finger on the ground (Jn 8:6,8). We do not know what he wrote and perhaps that is not the most important element: the attention of the Gospel focuses on the fact that the Lord writes. We think of the episode at Sinai when God wrote the tablets of the Law *with his finger* (cf. Ex 31:18), just as Jesus does now. Later, God, through the prophets, promised that he would no longer write on tablets of stone, but directly on the heart (cf. Jer 31:33), on the tablets of the flesh of our hearts (cf. 2Cor3:3). With Jesus, the mercy of God incarnate, the time has come when God writes on the hearts of men and women, when he gives a sure hope to human misery: giving not so much external laws which often keep God and humanity at a distance, but rather the law of the Spirit which enters into the heart and sets it free. It happens this way for the woman, who encounters Jesus and resumes her life: she goes off to sin no more. ...

All the same, evil is strong, it has a seductive power: it attracts and fascinates. Our own efforts are not enough to detach ourselves from it: we need a greater love. Without God, we cannot overcome evil. Only his love raises us up from within, only his tender love poured out into our hearts makes us free. If we want to be free from evil, we have to make room for the Lord who forgives and heals. He accomplishes this above all through the sacrament we are about to celebrate. Confession is the passage from misery to mercy; it is God's writing upon the heart. There – in our hearts – we constantly read that we are precious in the eyes of God, that he is our Father and that he loves us even more than we love ourselves. ...

Forgiveness gives us a new beginning, makes us new creatures, helps us take hold of a new life. God's forgiveness is not a photocopy which is identically reproduced in every passage through the confessional. Receiving pardon for our sins through a priest is always a new, distinctive and unique experience. We pass from being alone with our miseries and accusers, like the woman in the Gospel, to being raised up and encouraged by the Lord who grants us a new start.

"The two of them alone remained: mercy with misery". What do we need to do to come to love mercy, to overcome the fear of Confession? Let us accept once more the invitation of Isaiah: "Do you not perceive it?" (Is 43:19). It is important to perceive God's forgiveness. It would be beautiful, after Confession, to remain like that woman, our eyes fixed on Jesus who has just set us free: no longer looking at our miseries, but rather at his mercy. To look at the Crucified One and say with amazement: "That's where my sins ended up. You took them upon yourself. You didn't point your finger at me; instead, you opened your arms and forgave me once again". It is important to be mindful of God's forgiveness, to remember his tender love, and taste, again and again, the peace and freedom we have experienced. For this is the heart of Confession: not the sins we declare, but the divine love we receive, of which we are ever in need.

We may still have a doubt: "Confessing is useless, I am always committing the same sins". The Lord knows us, however; he knows that the interior struggle is difficult, that we are weak and inclined to fall, that we often relapse into doing what is wrong. So he proposes that we begin to relapse into goodness, into asking for mercy. He will raise us up and make us new creatures. Let us start over, then, from Confession, let us restore to this sacrament the place it deserves in life and pastoral ministry!

Sunday Mass Effort

Pope Benedict XVI, WYD Mass, 21-08-2005

On Easter morning, first the women and then the disciples had the grace of seeing the Lord. From that moment on, they knew that the first day of the week, Sunday, would be his day, the day of Christ the Lord. The day when creation began became the day when creation was renewed. Creation and redemption belong together. That is why Sunday is so important.

It is good that today, in many cultures, Sunday is a free day, and is often combined with Saturday so as to constitute a "week-end" of free time. Yet this free time is empty if God is not present.

Dear friends! Sometimes, our initial impression is that having to include time for Mass on a Sunday is rather inconvenient. But if you make the effort, you will realize that this is what gives a proper focus to your free time.

Do not be deterred from taking part in Sunday Mass, and help others to discover it too. This is because the Eucharist releases the joy that we need so much, and we must learn to grasp it ever more deeply, we must learn to love it.

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Cardinal Pell's Collar

In the aftermath of Cardinal George Pell's conviction and sentencing, I heard a journalist comment on how the Cardinal was dressed. He said that for every court appearance in the past, he wore the same thing –black shirt, Roman collar, cream jacket. After he was found guilty, he spent the night in jail before appearing in court for his sentencing. This journalist noted that this was the first time he'd seen him without his collar, and put it down to the requirements in jail.

It struck me that it's taken *jail* to stop the Cardinal from wearing his Roman collar. Yet in the world I inhabit, with no jail and no persecution, hardly any priests could be bothered to wear their collars. I wish I could understand their reasoning for such casual and persistent disobedience, for their desire to remain unrecognisable as a priest, their desire for 'time off' from being a priest. How hard is it to wear a collar? Are there any collar-less priests out there willing to explain?

Ed.

Someone to Pay the Price

Like many Catholics, I have been thinking a great deal about the recent incarceration of Cardinal Pell. I found such injustice inexplicable until I remembered what Caiaphas the High Priest had said (under inspiration by the Holy Spirit), namely, "You do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people."

Poor Australia is now in a complete mess, Almighty God has been so offended He needs to cleanse His Church. Someone needs to pay the price for so many sacrileges. Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom has decreed that His chosen soul Cardinal George Pell be His instrument to make the necessary sacrifice to placate His anger.

I believe that Our Heavenly Father has chosen your Cardinal to offer up his sufferings for the failings of the clergy. Apparently, some have lost the faith. How can they preach Christ if they do not know Him?

Pray for a miracle, that some rotten trees start to bear good fruit. God can work miracles. May I wonder if all the recent weather problems you experienced have been influenced in any way by the manner in which nature has been abused?

Let us send greetings to the Cardinal so that he becomes aware he is loved by very many of us.

Pat Ryan, London, UK

Identifiable as Priests

Code of Canon Law, Can. 284:

Clerics are to wear suitable ecclesiastical garb according to the norms issued by the conference of bishops and according to legitimate local customs.

**Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Complementary Legislation for Australia (ACR LXII, 4,
October 1985):**

...[C]lerics are to dress in such a way that they are identifiable as clerics; they are to observe a standard of dress appropriate to each occasion. Owing to different circumstances and climate in various areas of Australia, further determination of the matter of clerical dress is to be made by the diocesan bishop.

The Service of a Priest

Pope Benedict XVI to priests, Chrism Mass 2008

Every year the Chrism Mass exhorts us to enter into that "yes" to God's call, which we pronounced on the day of our priestly ordination. ... Can we always affirm what Paul wrote to the Corinthians after years of Gospel service, often marked by fatigue and suffering of every type: "Our zeal has not slackened in this ministry which has been entrusted to us by God's mercy" (cf. 2Cor 4:1)? ...

The word "serve" contains many dimensions. In the first place, part of it is certainly the correct celebration of the liturgy and of the sacraments in general, accomplished through interior participation. We must learn to increasingly understand the sacred liturgy in all its essence, to develop a living familiarity with it, so that it becomes the soul of our daily life. It is then that we celebrate in the correct way; it is then that the *ars celebrandi*, the art of celebrating, emerges by itself. In this art there must be nothing artificial. If the liturgy is the central duty of the priest, this also means that prayer must be a primary reality, to be learned ever anew and ever more deeply at the school of Christ and of the Saints of all the ages. Since the Christian liturgy by its nature is also always a proclamation, we must be people who are familiar with the Word of God, love it and live by it: only then can we explain it in an adequate way. "To serve the Lord" – priestly service precisely also means to learn to know the Lord in his Word and to make it known to all those he entrusts to us.

Lastly, two other aspects are part of service. No one is closer to his master than the servant who has access to the most private dimensions of his life. In this sense "to serve" means closeness, it requires familiarity. This familiarity also bears a danger: when we continually encounter the sacred it risks becoming habitual for us. In this way, reverential fear is extinguished. Conditioned by all our habits we no longer perceive the great, new and surprising fact that he himself is present, speaks to us, gives himself to us. We must ceaselessly struggle against this becoming accustomed to the extraordinary reality, against the indifference of the heart, always recognizing our insufficiency anew and the grace that there is in the fact that he consigned himself into our hands.

To serve means to draw near, but above all it also means obedience. The servant is under the word: "not my will, but thine, be done". ... We do not preach ourselves, but him and his Word, which we could not have invented ourselves. We proclaim the Word of Christ in the correct way only in communion with his Body. Our obedience is a believing with the Church, thinking and speaking with the Church, serving through her. What Jesus predicted to Peter also always applies: "You will be taken where you do not want to go". This letting oneself be guided where one does not want to be led is an essential dimension of our service, and it is exactly what makes us free. In this being guided, which can be contrary to our ideas and plans, we experience something new – the wealth of God's love. ...

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Singing at Mass

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n.40

Great importance should, therefore, be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass, with due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly. Although it is not always necessary (e.g., in weekday Masses) to sing all the texts that are of themselves meant to be sung, every care should be taken that singing by the ministers and the people is not absent in celebrations that occur on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.

Questions

Out of a world population of 7,408 million, what percentage are baptized Catholics?

- a. 17.7%
- b. 22.6%
- c. 4.1%

Of the population of baptised Catholics, what percentage live in Oceania?

- a. 10.4%
- b. 5.5%
- c. 0.8%

See page 8 for the answers

New Ordinary for Australia

Pope Francis on March 26, 2019, appointed Canadian priest Fr Carl Reid the second Ordinary of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross – a role he will take up in August. Pope Francis has also accepted the resignation of Msgr Harry Entwistle, who has served as leader of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross since it was established in 2012.

The Personal Ordinariates, of which Our Lady of the Southern Cross was the third in the world, were established to provide a way for groups of Anglicans to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church – as Catholics – while retaining distinctive elements of their theological, spiritual and liturgical patrimony.

Fr Reid grew up in the Anglican Church of Canada before going on to serve as a deacon, minister and suffragan bishop in the Anglican Catholic Church in Canada. He was later received into full communion with the Catholic Church and was ordained a Catholic priest in January 2013. He is currently dean of all Canadian parishes of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St Peter, which also covers the United States.

Fr Reid said that in addition to the shared British heritage of Australia and Canada, there will also be similarly vast distances that he will need to travel. So, too, the size and shape of the Ordinariate in both countries are also comparable. "I understand that the Australian Ordinariate communities are of varying sizes, but mostly modest in terms of faithful adherents, which is very similar to Canada," he said. "Therefore, looking ahead, my particular challenge will be to continue the good work begun by Msgr Entwistle, not only in establishing new communities but also in encouraging the growth of those communities already in place."

Beyond the practical planning that is required, Fr Reid said the months between now and his installation at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney on August 27 would also involve "prayer that I will be faithful to this particular calling".

Zenit.org 26-03-2019

Taped Music at Mass

Answered by Fr Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy and dean of theology at the Regina Apostolorum university

Q: In the case of a small parish where there is not an organ or piano or a musically talented person to lead singing, is it acceptable to use taped music during Mass for people to sing to? - N.B., Arlington, Texas

A: ... The relatively few norms that exist on this point tend to explicitly forbid using recorded music during the liturgy. This would also include, most of the time, pre-set accompaniment to live singing, a possibility offered by many modern organs.

The principal documents that deal with music in Church always emphasize the importance of singing and presume the presence of live musicians who are considered as being part of the assembly. The 1958 instruction "De Musica Sacra" issued by the Congregation of Rites states: "Finally, only those musical instruments which are played by the personal action of the artist may be admitted to the sacred liturgy, and not those which are operated automatically or mechanically." This document followed Pope Pius XII's 1955 encyclical "Musicae Sacrae," in which he insisted that liturgical music be "true art" if it is to be a genuine act of worship and praise of God.

Although these documents precede the Second Vatican Council, there is practically nothing in the conciliar or post-conciliar documents which would contradict the principles enunciated or invalidate their general normative value. Indeed the council's insistence that choir and musicians form part of the liturgical assembly would even strengthen the presumption against the use of mechanical music.

According to the above documents, it is preferable to sing without musical accompaniment than resort to artificial means.

Zenit.org 19-03-2019

Restore Fatherly Leadership

On March 16, the Church celebrated the feast of St Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Patron of the Universal Church. He was chosen by the eternal Father as the trustworthy guardian and protector of his greatest treasures, namely, his only begotten Son, the Redeemer of mankind, and Mary his Mother. Basically, God chose and appointed Joseph to be the foster-father, head and leader of the Holy Family of Nazareth and gave him all the gifts and graces of the Spirit needed to fulfil the task at hand. He took this vocation seriously and carried it out with complete fidelity and trust until the very end. With humble obedience, he accepted his call to the fatherhood of Jesus, and through faith, grace and the light of the Holy Spirit, he discovered more fully the indescribable gift and responsibility that it entailed.

The example of St Joseph's fatherhood provides the key to fixing the Church, and the many crises and scandals that currently engulf her.

Since the introduction of state sanctioned no-fault divorce, the family has been under constant hostile attack and is in a state of grave crisis. Even the great Family of God, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is being attacked from within and without, and her hierarchical fatherhood crisis is being exposed by revelations of homosexuality and its relationship to current and historical horrific sexual abuse.

How on earth did this happen? How did God's great Catholic family become so vulnerable to the attacks of Satan and his minions? Who morally and spiritually weakened her defences, watered down her doctrines and corrupted her faith in order to allow the entry and free rein of the devil and the world?

The answer lies in the question: Who are the divinely appointed guardians, heads, leaders and protectors of the family? Fathers! In both the Church and the home – whether episcopal, priestly or biological. The Church, since the beginning has always been a patriarchal hierarchical family. This can be read and seen in her Tradition, Scripture, Liturgy, the Catechism, and numerous encyclicals.

Since the Second Vatican Council there has been a widespread critique and rejection by Bishops and Religious of the Church as a divinely willed patriarchal hierarchical family and institution. Many of these consecrated men and women, bishops especially, were hell-bent on eradicating every trace of fatherhood in the name of liberty, fraternity and equality. In the name of equal discipleship, they abused their authority and treated the once Holy Spotless Bride of Christ as an outdated human institution that needed to be fashioned into their own progressive images and likeness. They abdicated their fatherly authority and responsibility to the point of even rejecting being called "Father", the very name that was in use since the beginning of time and handed to us by the Apostles.

Abandoned by the father, the family disintegrates and chaos ensues. This is what is happening in the Church in our country and more generally in the Christian West. Nothing so damages the faith, holiness, mission, spirituality, unity and wholeness of the Church as the absence and dysfunction of her fathers.

No, the way I see it, the Church will not be restored as the great Family of God unless the patriarchal and hierarchical Tradition in her leadership, family life and spirituality is renewed and restored.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

Easter Quiz

There's a fun Easter Quiz on our Facebook page. Go and have a look and see if you can score 10 out of 10. Then share it with your friends and family. First question, to whet your appetite:

When is Easter each year?

- 21 April
- the Sunday following the first full moon after the northern spring equinox
- 16 weeks after Christmas

Answers

See page 6 for the questions

Out of a world population of 7,408 million, 1,313 million or 17.7% are baptized Catholics, distributed by continent: 48.5% in America, 21.8% in Europe, 17.8% in Africa, 11.1% % in Asia and 0.8% in Oceania.

From The Pontifical Yearbook 2019 and the *Annuario Statisticum Ecclesiae* 2017, compiled by the Central Office of Church Statistics, published by the Vatican Press. (Zenit.org 07-03-2019)

In Their Own Words

On their website, Australian bishops tell us that they have three main responsibilities:

1. **To Teach.** A bishop is the principal teacher in his diocese and has a responsibility to preach the Word of God to his people. He must ensure that those delegated to teach in his name, namely priests, teachers, catechists and others, teach the truth.
2. **To Govern.** This refers to meeting the needs of the local community (material, social, personal and spiritual) as well as ensuring that church laws are observed. He is ultimately responsible for training and supplying priests for parishes, for the finances of the diocese and for all church property. A bishop has the power to make church laws, be a judge in church matters and to enforce observance of these laws. These laws generally relate to worship, preaching, administration of the sacraments, safeguarding the faith and morals of the faithful and religious instruction.
3. **To Sanctify.** A bishop is responsible for ensuring that the sacraments are administered and has the special authority to ordain priests and to confirm. It is usually the case, then, for a bishop to ordain the priests who are to serve in his diocese and to travel around the diocese and administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. He must also ensure that Mass is celebrated in the diocese every Sunday and on major feast days.

How well do they perform these responsibilities?

1 Teaching How long is it since we heard bishops and priests point out the great offence to God of abortion? About contraception? About sin? The four last things? The responsibilities of Christian marriage? Modesty in dress? The disgusting nature of sodomy? Our bishops produce tons of propaganda on topics dear to the left of politics, so it is not as if they lack resources.

2 Governing The Church has laws on attending at Mass on Sundays and holy days. Then there are laws on fasting and abstinence. Laws on abuses in the Mass. Laws on not receiving Holy Communion at Easter and Christmas (if that's the only time you go) without first going to confession. Bishops have newspapers, and they have the pulpit, but these are often devoted to social justice, while more serious matters are rarely mentioned.

3 Sanctifying Bishops are supposed to provide Masses in parishes. Sometimes this is difficult: there is a shortage of priests. However, much of this is caused by the invasion of women and girls into the sanctuary, with little or no resistance from bishops. Where girls rule, boys go elsewhere, and where you have altar-girls, you don't have vocations. And you have the phenomenon of priests claiming that they need a day (or more days) off each week. What? Mass is just half an hour a day, and some parishioners hold down full-time jobs and still come to daily Mass.

As Our Blessed Mother said at Fatima, many souls go to Hell because there is no one to pray for them. Let us say an extra five decades of the rosary a day to save our bishops and priests.

Richard Stokes, Burpengary, Queensland

Daily Celebration

Code of Canon Law, Can. 904

Remembering always that in the mystery of the eucharistic sacrifice the work of redemption is exercised continually, priests are to celebrate frequently; indeed, daily celebration is recommended earnestly since, even if the faithful cannot be present, it is the act of Christ and the Church in which priests fulfill their principal function.

"If we live as Jesus taught us, and in harmony with what we proclaim,
our witness will bear fruit."

Pope Francis, Tweet, 03-01-2019

Awaiting Our Inheritance

From an article by Fr Pius Mary Noonan, OSB, Prior, Notre Dame Priory, Colebrook, Tasmania

And just like any inheritance, there is a waiting period during which one must not lose the grace of the Father who is bequeathing such an inestimable treasure to us. There are people who lose their inheritance because they have a fall-out with their own parents. That is very sad, but it cannot be compared with falling out with God through mortal sin or the refusal to fulfil the role He has destined for us.

As we await the moment when that heavenly inheritance becomes ours, we must be tried, like gold in the fire; we have to be tested; we have to be proven true to our destiny. Eternal glory in Heaven is not something that just “happens” to you when you die. No, everyone does not “die and go to Heaven”. That would be to turn God into some sort of divine vending machine, a false god for sure who is at our fingertips, that we leave up on a shelf and take down and use when we need him. That is not God. That is making oneself a god.

The True God tries His faithful servants, just as a true father puts his son to the test, imposing demands which always seem to the child hard and unfair, but in reality are destined to make him grow, mature and deserve a reward. Later, only later, he realises this and is grateful. ...

So if we strive to keep His commandments – the Ten Commandments of course, as an expression of our love for God and neighbour – then we love God. And if we love Him, we know that we will see Him one day, after the clouds are dispersed, and the darkness subsides, and the rain is gone. When the short day of human history is over, then will dawn the unending day of a blessed eternity for all those who, in this life, love Jesus without seeing Him.

Ab Austro, newsletter of Notre Dame Priory, February 2019

Heroines of the Church

MARCH 06, 2019, ZENIT The pontifical foundation Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has launched a Lenten and Easter campaign to strengthen its support for religious sisters in those countries worldwide that are most affected by war and poverty or in which Christians are a minority.

The executive president of ACN, Dr Thomas Heine-Geldern, commented at the start of the campaign, “Religious sisters are the heroines of the church. They show us a way to holiness and set an example for a happy and meaningful life. This can also be the way to healing for a society marked by ongoing discussion about the role of women.”

Among others, ACN supports over 4,500 religious sisters to ensure that they can continue their monastic lives as well as carry out their pastoral and social work caring for the sick, orphans or older people even in those regions where they do not have any way of earning a living. For example, this is the case in Ukraine, Russia and in crisis-ridden Venezuela.

A large number of convents have been destroyed or severely damaged, not only in war zones such as Iraq, Syria, the Central African Republic and South Sudan but also after natural disasters such as the earthquake in Mexico. It would be virtually impossible for religious sisters to carry out their work in these regions without rebuilding aid from ACN. ...

Even though the number of vocations to orders is declining most notably in Europe and America, the number of vocations continues to grow in Africa and Asia. This is why more than 80% of all projects supported by ACN in the area of formation for religious sisters and novices are on these two continents.

The foundation pays particular attention to the contemplative orders. As is written in the Apostolic Constitution *Vultum Dei Quaerere* issued by Pope Francis on the contemplative life of women, this life “is rooted in the silence of the cloister; it produces a rich harvest of grace and mercy” and represents “the praying heart” of the church. ... 80% of the aid granted by ACN to contemplative orders supports cloistered sisters in eastern European countries who continue to find themselves in dire economic and spiritual need due to their communist past.

To Become Good is Harder Than to Do Good

Fr John Speekman, Homily for 7th Sunday of Ordinary Time - Year C

Jesus is speaking to his disciples. For 'his disciples' read 'us'. For 'us' read 'me'. Jesus is speaking to me, his disciple. In only eight sentences Jesus gives seventeen imperatives – seventeen commands. Let me read them to you: love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who treat you badly; present the other cheek; do not refuse your tunic; give to everyone who asks; do not ask for your property back; treat others as you would like them to treat you; love your enemies; do good; lend without any hope of return; be compassionate; do not judge; do not condemn; grant pardon; give...

These are not just things Jesus asks us to do - these are things Jesus asks us to become.

- Become a person who loves his enemies.
- Become a person who is generous.
- Become a person who doesn't judge others.
- Become a person who is forgiving.

You see, that is the big mistake the Pharisees made. They thought God wanted them just to do certain good things. Big, big mistake. God wanted them to become good.

To become good is a lot harder than to do good. The Pharisees said, 'We fast and we give tithes and we keep all the laws.' Jesus said, 'But you are still rotten inside. Like beautifully painted graves. Magnificent on the outside but rotten on the inside.' The battle between good and evil is not fought with swords but with hearts. A man or a woman who is good in their hearts is the fiercest weapon against evil.

And why does God want us to be like him? Well, it's because we shall have a great reward: *You will be sons of the most High*. Wow! Imagine being the son or daughter of God! Nothing would be able to touch us. Even if they put us to death we would be safe – we would go straight to the Father's Kingdom and live with him for all eternity in utter, sublime happiness.

So how does loving our enemies and doing good to them make us like God? Because *he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked*. Be compassionate – as your Father is compassionate. If we can withhold judgment from others we shall become like God and he will withhold judgment from us. If we refuse to condemn others we ourselves will not be condemned. If we forgive those who hurt us God will forgive us. If we give to others God will give to us.

And what can we expect if we refuse the wonderful, extraordinary, mind-boggling invitation to become like God? At the end of time, when we stand before him, he will look closely at us and say, Depart from me into the everlasting fire. I do not know you. I don't recognise you. You are not one of my children. Go!

homiliesfromaustralia.blogspot.com.au

No One is Without a Family

Familiaris Consortio, n.85

For those who have no natural family, the doors of the great family which is the Church – the Church which finds concrete expression in the diocesan and the parish family, in ecclesial basic communities and in movements of the apostolate – must be opened even wider. No one is without a family in this world: the Church is a home and family for everyone, especially those who "labour and are heavy laden."

Alleluia!

St Augustine

So now, my brethren, I urge you to praise God: this is what we all say to one another when we say Alleluia.

"Praise the Lord!" you say to the one you are addressing, and he says the same to you; and by urging one another in this way, people do what they are urging the other to do.

Praise God with the whole of yourselves; it is not only your tongue and your voice that should praise him, but your conscience, your life, your deeds.

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfield	1 st Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30pm Heyfield 10.00am – 4.30pm
Cowwarr Ord.	Wednesday (Low Mass 10am) 10.30 – 11.00am
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10.00am –11.00am
Cranbourne	Fri & Sat in church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11.00am 1 st Friday 4pm–8pm (every 2 nd month, Dec on)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Maffra	Wednesday (5pm Mass) – 6pm
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday 2pm - 6pm (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am–12pm; 1 st Friday till 4pm
Trafalgar	Wed & First Sat: (9.30am Mass) –10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10.00am – 11.00am 1 st Fri 4pm–8pm (every 2 nd month, Jan on)
Wonthaggi	1 st Friday 7.00pm – 8.00pm

Seek Him Out

St Anselm of Canterbury

Come now, insignificant man, fly for a moment from your affairs, escape for a little while from the tumult of your thoughts.

Put aside now your weighty cares and leave your wearisome toils.

Abandon yourself for a little to God and rest for a little in him.

Enter into the inner chamber of your soul, shut out everything save God and what can be of help in your quest for Him and having locked the door, seek Him out.

Speak now, my whole heart, speak now to God: "I seek Your countenance, O Lord, Your countenance I seek." (Ps27:8)

"We adore You, O Christ,
and we bless You,
for by Your holy Cross
You have redeemed the world!"

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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. There is no guarantee that every letter will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. 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.

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