

Into the Deep

Issue 111

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

December 2011

Let The Light Enter

Pope Benedict XVI, 12-12-2010

Advent is a pressing invitation to us all to allow God to enter ever more deeply into our lives, our homes, our neighbourhoods, our communities, that we may have light amidst so much darkness and so much daily fatigue.

One Convert a Year

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

Just suppose that outside of the necessary structure of the Church, there was only one in all the world who believed in it, who received Communion, acknowledged the primacy of Peter, assisted at Holy Mass. Just suppose that that one zealous believer the first year converted one unbeliever to Christ and his Church. Suppose that the next year these two made a convert; then there would be four the second year. And suppose the next year, these four made one apiece next year, then there would be eight converts at the end of the third year.

Now how many would there be, from that one zealous believer, at the end of only thirty years?

There would be in the communion lines of the church at the end of the thirtieth year, one billion, seventy-three million, seven hundred and forty-one thousand, eight hundred and twenty-four souls breaking their fast with the Bread of Life.

The Cross and the Beatitudes, p.67

“It is an immense consolation to continually discover that Christ’s hand is ready to lift us up, if only we seek and grab hold of it.”

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Pontifical Household preacher

Advent

Pope Benedict XVI, 03-12-2010

While our hearts look forward to the annual celebration of Christ’s Birth, the Church’s Liturgy directs our gaze to the final goal: our encounter with the Lord who will come in the splendour of glory. For this reason in every Eucharist we “announce his death, proclaim his Resurrection until he comes again”, we watch in prayer. The Liturgy does not cease to encourage and support us, putting on our lips, in the days of Advent, the cry with which the whole of Sacred Scripture ends, on the last page of the Revelation to St John: “Come, Lord Jesus.”

The Door is Always Open

Porta Fidei, n.1

The “door of faith” (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church. It is possible to cross that threshold when the word of God is proclaimed and the heart allows itself to be shaped by transforming grace. To enter through that door is to set out on a journey that lasts a lifetime. It begins with baptism, through which we can address God as Father, and it ends with the passage through death to eternal life, fruit of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, whose will it was, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, to draw those who believe in him into his own glory. To profess faith in the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is to believe in one God who is Love: the Father, who in the fullness of time sent his Son for our salvation; Jesus Christ, who in the mystery of his death and resurrection redeemed the world; the Holy Spirit, who leads the Church across the centuries as we await the Lord’s glorious return.

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

Receiving Holy Communion

Pope Benedict XVI to children in Benin, 19-11-2011

God our Father has gathered us around his Son and our brother, Jesus Christ, who is present in the host consecrated during the Mass. This is a great mystery before which we worship and we believe.

Jesus, who loves us very much, is truly present in the tabernacles of all the churches around the world, in the tabernacles of the churches in your neighbourhoods and in your parishes. I ask you to visit him often to tell him of your love for him.

Some of you have already made your First Holy Communion, and others are preparing for it.

The day of my First Holy Communion was one of the most beautiful days of my life. It is the same for you, isn't it? And why is that? It's not only because of our nice clothes or the gifts we receive, nor even because of the parties! It is above all because, that day, we receive Jesus Christ for the first time!

When I receive Communion, Jesus comes to live in me. I should welcome him with love and listen closely to him. In the depths of my heart, I can tell him, for example: "Jesus, I know that you love me. Give me your love so that I can love you in return and love others with your love. I give you all my joys, my troubles and my future."

Do not hesitate, dear children, to speak of Jesus to others. He is a treasure whom you should share generously.

www.zenit.org 20-11-2011

Year of Faith

Pope Benedict XVI, 16-10-2011

I have decided to convoke a special "Year of Faith," which will begin October 11, 2012 - the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council - and will conclude November 24, 2013, Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe.

I have explained the motives, goals and guidelines of this year in an apostolic letter [*Porta Fidei*]... The Servant of God Paul VI convoked a similar "Year of Faith" in 1967, on the occasion of the 19th centenary of the martyrdom of the Apostles Peter and Paul, during a period of great cultural changes. I believe that, now that a half century has passed since the opening of the Council, and linked to the happy memory of Blessed John XXIII, it would be opportune to remember the beauty and the centrality of the faith, the need to strengthen and deepen it, both at the personal and the community level, and to do this in a perspective that is not so much celebratory, but rather, missionary – precisely in the perspective of the mission *ad gentes* and the new evangelization.

www.zenit.org 17-10-2011

Free Compendium

ITD recently received the following letter:

"As a means of interest in ITD and of spreading the faith, we have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (approved and recommended by Pope Benedict for believers and non-believers alike on the concise teachings of the Catholic faith) as a Christmas gift to one of your readers. Naturally we wish the donation to remain anonymous. May we suggest that the gift be passed on to a person who contacts ITD expressing a desire to add the precious book to their collection."

Thank you to the generous donors! We will certainly pass on the Compendium to a reader who contacts ITD expressing their wish to receive the book. Contact details for ITD are on page 12.

- Ed.

Healing the Wounds

Morwell Catholic Parish had a visit from Bishop Prowse a few weeks after the official announcement was made relating to the Signatura's decision. He had celebrated the weekend's Masses. His message to us the parishioners was to let the past go, not to take sides (as in the Bishop's or Fr Speekman's), to let the hurt heal, be humble and forgiving. Basically, to me his message meant – simply just get over it.

Then to my amazement an article appeared in the local paper dated 14/11/2011 on the new appointment of Fr Hugh Brown as Parish Priest in Morwell, headlined "Priest ready to 'heal the wounds'".

What was strange to me at first is why does a Catholic issue as this need to appear in a secular newspaper? Only to find as I read on, Fr Speekman's name and reputation continuing to be scandalised, and furthermore the article glorifying the decision of the Signatura upholding the Bishop's actions. In my opinion it leaves the reader wondering, 'Wow, what did the previous priest do to have wounded a parish?'

If we as parishioners were asked to be humble, forgiving and let go of the past, why couldn't the announcement of Fr Hugh's appointment simply be made known through the parish bulletin or the Catholic Life newspaper as other previous appointments are announced, without the callous and underhanded accusations hidden in weasel words in a public newspaper. There is no humility shown here.

I also wonder how this 'healing process' will take place, because once again I feel really gutted, that previous administrators, and lay people continue to damage the reputation of a good priest. I can only imagine the hurt and anguish he must be feeling.

Josie Vitale, Morwell

Five Words

By Father Thomas Rosica, CSB

During my graduate studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome in the late 1980s, I had the privilege of teaching Scripture on several occasions to the Missionaries of Charity at their formation house on the outskirts of Rome.

Several times when I was with the sisters, Mother Teresa of Calcutta was visiting the formation community. I will never forget that little, bent-over, Albanian-born woman sitting on the floor of the chapel as I led the sisters in biblical reflections. It was a daunting experience for me to be expounding on sacred Scripture to someone many considered even back then a living saint; one who, without exegetical skills and ancient biblical languages in her repertoire, understood far better the meaning of God's Word than I ever would.

One evening after I had finished the lecture and was gathering my books together to begin the trip back to the Canadian College in Rome, Mother came over to speak with me. At the end of the conversation, I asked her: "How do you do it day in and day out? How do you deal with the crowds of people trying to see you when you are out in public." She raised her hand before my face and shook her five fingers at me. "Five words," she said; "five words: You did it to me." ...

The image of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta standing before me and raising those five fingers before my face is engraved on my memory, especially when I listen to [the] Gospel of the last judgment. "You did it to me."

www.zenit.org 15-11-2011

Choosing the Right Side

Pope Benedict XVI, 26-12-2009

The One lying in the manger is the Son of God made man, Who asks us to bear courageous witness to His Gospel, like St Stephen who, filled with the Holy Spirit, did not hesitate to give his life for love of his Lord. He, like his Master, died forgiving his persecutors and helps us understand how the entry of the Son of God into the world gave rise to a new civilisation, the civilisation of love which does not cave in before evil and violence but breaks down barriers between men, making them brothers in the great family of the children of God.

Stephen's witness, like that of the Christian martyrs, shows our fellow men and women, so often distracted and disoriented, in whom they must place their trust in order to give meaning to life. The martyr is, in fact, the person who dies in the certainty of being loved by God and, placing nothing before love for Christ, knows he has chosen the right side.

Vatican Information Service 26-12-2009

Disconcerting and Extraordinary

Fr Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican press office

Advent is a time of expectation and conversion to prepare ourselves to celebrate once again the disconcerting and extraordinary event of the birth of the Son of God among us – God, who becomes flesh, God in the womb of a mother, God the child, God who is near.

How can it be said with greater force that our dignity is so great? That we must be loved and respected and protected from the moment that we begin to be knit together in our mother's womb?

We were never merely 'a lump of biological material'. We have always been from the very beginning a concrete project that developed toward intelligence, freedom and love, open to the true, the beautiful, the good, the infinite. A project that cannot but be born from a mysteriously great source, capable of being our origin and to call us to a concrete relationship of love.

The smile of children, from the moment they are born, allows us to intuit this. It is a contagious smile, which invites us to love and to thank in wonder over a gift that is greater than us.

www.zenit.org 05-12-2010

Enemies of Fr Speekman

Reading your publication gives rise to this question, concerning Fr John Speekman: With friends like Into the Deep, who needs enemies?

Into the Deep may be drawing attention to itself and Fr Speekman. However have you ever asked yourself the question: Is this what Fr Speekman needs or what I need? Please give it some thought and feel free to reply if you have the need although I don't intend to enter into a slanging match with Into the Deep. All I am saying is, give Fr Speekman a go and let him get on with ministering to people who have need of his abilities and gifts as a priest.

Bill Smolenaars, Sale

It's always hard to see an innocent man found guilty; harder still when there is no actual incident he's been accused of and no evidence to support the accusation. Why didn't Bishop Coffey give him a go and let him get on with ministering to his people in Morwell who had need of his gifts and abilities and the vast majority of whom gave him their full support? That's the crux of the matter. Any liberal priest would be left well alone (regardless of ineffective ministry or how many complaints from orthodox parishioners). There are faithful Catholics who grieve the injustice done to Fr Speekman by his Bishops, and who support him and pray for him; but I'm not sure how that makes them his enemies.

- Ed.

Holiday Reading

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 03-08-2011

When we have a break from our activities, especially during vacation time, we often take up a book we want to read. It is this very aspect that I would like to reflect upon today.

Each of us needs time and space for recollection, meditation, and calm ... Thanks be to God that this is so! In fact, this need tells us that we are not made for work alone, but also for thought, for reflection, or simply for following with our minds and hearts a tale in which we can immerse ourselves, "losing ourselves" in some sense to find ourselves subsequently enriched.

Naturally, many of the books we take up during our vacation are for the most part an escape, and this is normal. However, some people, particularly if they are able to take a more extended time of rest and relaxation, devote themselves to reading something more demanding.

I would therefore like to make a suggestion: why not discover a few of the books of the Bible that are not commonly known? Or perhaps from which we have heard an occasional passage during the Liturgy but which we have never read in their entirety? Indeed, many Christians never read the Bible, and have a very limited and superficial knowledge of it.

The Bible – as the name suggests – is a collection of books, a little "library" [*biblioteca*] that came to be over the course of a millennium. Some of these "little books" that make up the Bible remain virtually unknown to the vast majority of people, even to good Christians.

Some are very short, like the *Book of Tobias*, a tale that contains a lofty sense of family and marriage; or the *Book of Esther*, in which the Hebrew Queen saves her people from destruction through her faith and prayer; or even shorter, the *Book of Ruth*, a foreigner

who comes to know God and to experience His providence. These little books can be read in their entirety in an hour.

More demanding and true masterpieces are the *Book of Job*, which confronts the great problem of innocent suffering; *Ecclesiastes*, which is striking for the baffling modernity with which it challenges the meaning of life and the world; the *Canticle of Canticles*, a stupendous symbolic poem on human love.

As you see, these are all books from the Old Testament. And the New? The New Testament is of course better known and its literary genre is less diversified. But the beauty of reading a Gospel in one sitting is worth discovering, as I also recommend for the *Acts of the Apostles*, or one of the *Letters*.

To conclude, dear friends, today I would like to suggest that you keep the holy Bible close at hand during the summer months and in moments of rest, so that you might enjoy it in a new way by reading some of its Books straight through, those that are less well known as well as those that are more familiar, such as the Gospels, but without putting them down.

In this way, moments of relaxation can become not only a time of cultural enrichment, but beyond this, also a source of spiritual nourishment, capable of nourishing our knowledge of God and conversation with Him; that is, prayer. And this seems to be a beautiful occupation during the summer holidays: to take a book of the Bible in order to have a little relaxation, and at the same time, to enter into the great realm of God's Word and to deepen our contact with the Eternal One, as the goal of the free time given to us by the Lord.

[Translation by Diane Montagna] www.zenit.org 13-08-2011

Choose Now

Thank you for your contribution to the Faith by sending ITD. After reading many articles in ITD, I will contribute the following, because my heart is bleeding.

Lord we pray that we (I) may become aware that You will save us; but that we must ask you to forgive us while we are alive in this life.

That we may remember that it is our choice – Heaven or Hell.

That we choose while still alive on this earth.

Because we won't be able to do this when we pass over into the next life.

Bert Van Galen, Mowbray, TAS

Christmas Wishes, from ITD to You

*In the words of Pope Benedict XVI
(Urbi et Orbi message 2007):*

"Brothers and sisters from every continent, allow the light of this Christmas day to spread everywhere: may it enter our hearts, may it brighten and warm our homes, may it bring serenity and hope to our cities, and may it give peace to the world. This is my earnest wish for you who are listening. A wish that grows into a humble and trustful prayer to the Child Jesus, that His light will dispel all darkness from your lives and fill you with love and peace."

Why Peace Doesn't Happen

Pope Benedict XVI answering questions from journalists en route to Benin, 18-11-2011

Q: Holiness, in recent decades there have been many operations of 'peacekeeping' on African soil, conferences for national reconstruction, commissions of truth and reconciliation, with results which are sometimes good and sometimes disappointing. During the Synod for Africa, the bishops had strong words on the responsibility of political leaders on the continent. What message do you plan to address to the political leaders of Africa? What's the specific contribution the church can give to the construction of a durable peace on the continent?

A: The message is contained in the text I'll present to the church in Africa, and I can't repeat it right now in just a few words. However, it's true there have been many international conferences, many for Africa, for universal fraternity. They say nice things, and sometimes they really do good things. We have to recognize that. Yet certainly the words, the desires and good intentions, are greater than what's been accomplished. We have to ask ourselves why the reality doesn't match these words and good intentions. A fundamental factor, it seems to me, is that a renewal in the direction of universal fraternity demands renunciation. It demands going beyond egoism, to be for the other. That's easy to say but hard to accomplish. The human person, after original sin, wants to possess himself – to have life, not to give life. I want to keep whatever I have. Naturally with this mentality, that I don't want to give but to have, things don't work. It's only with love, and the awareness of a God who loves us and gives to us, that we can arrive at a capacity to give ourselves away. We know, of course, that it's precisely in giving away that we actually gain anything. Thus beyond the details contained in the document from the synod, I would just say that this is a fundamental position – that loving God and being in friendship with this God who gives himself to us, we too can dare and learn to give and not simply to have, to renounce ourselves for the other, and to give up our lives in the certainty that this is precisely how we'll gain them.

www.zenit.org 18-11-2011

Living Together in Harmony

Pope Benedict XVI, 04-11-2011

It will only be possible to live together harmoniously by striving after truth and justice, ...and by recognizing and respecting the sacred nature of all human life.

Each life comes from God and is sacred by virtue of its divine origin. Thus the loss of a human life – whether great or small, rich or poor – is always a tragedy, and especially when man is responsible.

Children, Ask Your Parents to Pray With You

Pope Benedict XVI, to children in Benin, 19-11-2011

What, then, is prayer? It is a cry of love directed to God our Father, with the will to imitate Jesus our brother.

Jesus often went off by himself to pray. Like Jesus, I too can find a calm place to pray where I can quietly stand before a Cross or a holy picture in order to speak to Jesus and to listen to him. I can also use the Gospels. That way, I keep within my heart a passage which has touched me and which will guide me throughout the day. To stay with Jesus like this for a little while lets him fill me with his love, light and life!

This love, which I receive in prayer, calls me in turn to give it to my parents, to my friends, to everyone with whom I live, even with those who do not like me, and those whom I do not appreciate enough.

Dear young people, Jesus loves you. Ask your parents to pray with you! Sometimes you may even have to push them a little. But do not hesitate to do so. God is that important!

May the Virgin Mary, his Mother, teach you to love more and more through prayer, forgiveness and charity. I entrust you to her, together with your families and teachers.

Look! I have this rosary in my pocket. The rosary is like a tool that we can use to pray. It is easy to pray the rosary. Maybe you know how already; if not, ask your parents to help you to learn how. At the end of this meeting, each one of you will receive a rosary. When you hold it in your hand, I would ask you to pray for the Pope, for the Church and for every important intention.

And now, before I bless you all with great affection, let us pray together a Hail Mary for children throughout the world, especially for those who are sick, who are hungry and in places of war. Let us pray together: Hail Mary...

www.zenit.org 20-11-2011

Lack of Obedience

*Cardinal Raymond Burke, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura
31-10-2011 at Rockford, Illinois*

A most tragic example of the lack of obedience of faith, also on the part of certain Bishops, was the response of many to the Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae*. If the shepherd is not obedient, the flock easily gives way to confusion and error.

The shepherd must be especially attentive to the assaults of Satan who knows that, if he can strike the shepherd, the work of scattering the flock will be made easy.

LifeSiteNews.com 19-11-2011

Shame on ITD

Cannot believe that there wasn't a mention of the life and work of Fr John Dunlea OMI who served the Diocese and the Parish of Moe for many years. A wonderful pastoral priest always available to everyone. A simple In Memoriam notice would be appropriate or read Catholic Life and Kairos about his life and ministry. Shame on your publication by ignoring a priest who served the Church for 54 years as a dedicated priest and long time Parish Priest of St Kieran's Moe. He will be missed by many in the Sale Diocese.

Have never contacted you before because you are unkind to so many who put their views forward. Hopefully you will be kind to this memo.

Rita Elswyk, Moe

Ed's note:

ITD is not a diocesan publication. Catholic Life is the appropriate place to publish obituaries of priests in the diocese. ITD has not done this in the past for each priest of the diocese who has died, and so omitting to mention Fr Dunlea's death was not intended to offend. However, readers of ITD are always welcome to write such letters to ask for prayers for the deceased.

An 'Adult' Church

The Sandhurst Diocesan newspaper, Sandpiper, advertised in its October 2011 issue an evening with Bishop Geoffrey Robinson. The large invitation describes the dissenting retired bishop as "one of the most engaging speakers on matters of the Catholic Church in Australia today" and claims that "many find his voice a source of hope and clarity".

How can a dissenter be lauded like this in a diocesan newspaper? His book on sex and power in the Catholic church is praised as offering "nothing less than a vision for a church of the third millennium – a church that wants to see its members take the responsibility appropriate to adults." This book was recognised by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference as being doctrinally wrong – and they wouldn't criticise one of their own lightly. "The book's questioning of the authority of the Church is connected to Bishop Robinson's uncertainty about the knowledge and authority of Christ himself", the statement said back in 2008. And the Diocese of Sandhurst supports him and his "adult church"? (and it's interesting that there are five contact people listed on the ad and they're all women).

- Ed.

As a Woman to be Despised

St Louis de Montfort

The life of Blessed Hermann (of the Premonstratensian Fathers) tells us that at one time when he used to say the Rosary attentively and devoutly while meditating upon the mysteries, Our Lady used to appear to him resplendent in breathtaking majesty and beauty. But as time went on his fervour cooled and he fell into the way of saying his Rosary hurriedly and without giving it his full attention. Then one day Our Lady appeared to him again – only this time she was far from beautiful and her face was furrowed and drawn with sadness. Blessed Hermann was appalled at the change in her, and then Our Lady explained:

"This is how I look to you, Hermann, because in your soul this is how you are treating me; as a woman to be despised and of no importance. Why do you no longer greet me with respect and attention meditating on my mysteries and praising my privileges?" ...

It is really pathetic to see how most people say the Holy Rosary – they say it astonishingly fast and mumble so that the words are not properly pronounced at all. We could not possibly expect anyone, even the most unimportant person, to think that a slipshod address of this kind was a compliment and yet we expect Jesus and Mary to be pleased with it! Small wonder then that the most sacred prayers of our holy religion seem to bear no fruit, and that, after saying thousands of Rosaries, we are still no better than we were before! ...

I beg of you to temper the speed which comes all too easily to you and pause briefly several times as you say the Our Father and Hail Mary. I have placed a cross at each pause, as you will see:

Our Father Who art in Heaven, + hallowed be Thy name, + Thy kingdom come, + Thy will be done + on earth as it is in Heaven. + Give us this day + our daily bread + and forgive us our trespasses + as we forgive those who trespass against us, + and lead us not into temptation + but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, + the Lord is with Thee, + blessed art thou among women + and blessed is the Fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. +

Holy Mary, Mother of God, + pray for us sinners, now + and at the hour of our death. Amen.

At first, you may find it difficult to make these pauses because of your bad habit of saying prayers in a hurry; but a decade that you say recollectedly in this way will be worth more than thousands of Rosaries said all in a rush – without any pauses or reflection.

Secret of the Rosary, Part II

"Today's world needs persons who speak to God to be able to speak of God."

Pope Benedict XVI

Don't Think – Just Do

Recently I read a letter from Archbishop Phillip Wilson, the President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. He, together with his brother Bishops, is calling Catholics to a “Year of Grace” from Pentecost 2012 to Pentecost 2013, after they have been “reflecting deeply on the life of the Church in Australia” for several years.

“As Bishops we asked ourselves where we can turn with so many issues confronting us. Our response is to start afresh from Christ.” He quotes from Blessed John Paul’s Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, stating, “We are resolved to contemplate the face of Christ.” Now it has taken some time for the penny to drop for the Bishops. That Apostolic letter was written some ten years ago.

The Archbishop’s letter *sounds* good. I liken it to the jargon used by sophists, fancy words with no substance.

You don’t have to be Einstein to realise that the Catholic Church is in a mess in this country simply because our bishops have failed to be true shepherds. Mass attendance is around 10%, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is all but extinct, our schools are non-Catholic, our teaching institutions are anything but Catholic, for a number of years young candidates for the priesthood were being malformed. The Church under the watch of the Bishops has become Protestantised and feminised.

But in Archbishop Wilson’s letter, the “many issues” that the Bishops were confronted with were none of the above. They were: healing the wounds of abuse, defending the dignity of the first Australians, migrants and refugees, extending the hand of friendship to those of other faiths, and being good stewards of creation.

The Bishops commit themselves to pray daily – that’s a good start, but you’d think they already do that – and ask us to do the same, to contemplate the face of Christ.

What we need is the new evangelisation based on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and Eucharistic adoration. That is where we contemplate the face of Christ. We obtain grace from the Mass, the Sacraments, Eucharistic adoration, the rosary and our personal prayer.

My message to the Bishops is very simple. Take time out for a good retreat, get on your knees before the Blessed Sacrament for at least an hour a day, and then evangelise your priests who can in turn evangelise the rest of us. Cease being consumer-friendly – just state it the way Christ and his Holy Church has taught.

In December 2008 Cardinal Hummes, the then prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, wrote to you and your brother bishops asking that you promote perpetual adoration. To date I have seen no evidence of this being done. In the words of a famous football coach: “Don’t think – just do.”

John Henderson, Morwell

Beautiful Things From The Lord

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 12-10-2011

Dear brothers and sisters, in our prayer we should look more often at how, in the events of our own lives, the Lord has protected, guided and helped us, and we should praise Him for all He has done and does for us. We should be more attentive to the good things the Lord gives to us. We are always attentive to problems and to difficulties, and we are almost unwilling to perceive that there are beautiful things that come from the Lord. This attention, which becomes gratitude, is very important for us; it creates in us a memory for the good and it helps us also in times of darkness. God accomplishes great things, and whoever experiences this – attentive to the Lord’s goodness with an attentiveness of heart – is filled with joy.

www.zenit.org 12-10-2011

Seek Good Candidates

The practice of our Catholic faith is being threatened. Our elected politicians are allowed to question Catholic teaching under the guise of Parliamentary privilege. Perhaps we deserve to be questioned for electing the wrong people to represent us in Parliament.

Ancient and old principles, practices, rules and ways are at risk as powerful leaders in the community push for changes that lower our standards. Sacred Sundays are replaced by sport runs and worse.

Senator Nick Xenophon has called on the Australian government to force priests to break the seal of Confession when sex abuses are disclosed in the confessional by a penitent (similar to an Irish proposal). By doing so he is intruding on matters of the Church not government. Clearly it is his own view, not one that he was elected on, or that which all his constituents would agree with. The Catholic Bishops Conference rejects the push by the Senator. We must fully support the Bishops on this matter by lodging a strong objection to the proposal. The aged seal of Confession (subject to immediate excommunication) has never been broken. That Church law must be protected as being sacrosanct.

It’s time now to seek good candidates for the next election to replace the present members of Parliament whose aim it seems is to support the lowering of moral standards and religious freedom. Why not contact and join the National Civic Council [Gabrielle Walsh (03) 9816 0800] to assist them to secure proper social justice in the Parliamentary system?

At the end of Mass the priest commands us to love and serve the Lord. Let us serve Him by our actions.

Leo Morrissey, Sandringham, Vic

Fulfilled Priests

Pope Benedict XVI, 04-11-2011

God the Father sent the eternal Son into the world to accomplish His plan of salvation.

Christ Jesus founded the Church so that the beneficial effects of redemption would be extended over time.

The vocation of priests has its roots in this action of the Father, which was accomplished by Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The minister of the Gospel, then, is a person who allows himself to be seized by Christ, who knows how 'to abide' in Him, who enters into harmony and intimate friendship with Him, so that everything occurs 'as God would have it', according to His will of love, with great inner freedom and profound joy of heart.

We must never forget that we enter the priesthood through the Sacrament of Ordination. This means opening ourselves to the action of God by daily choosing to give ourselves for Him and for our fellow man. ...

The Lord's call to the ministry is not the fruit of any particular merit, it is a gift we must accept and to which we must respond by generously and disinterestedly dedicating ourselves, not to our own project but to that of God, that He may dispose of us according to His will, even though this may not correspond to our own desire for self-fulfilment. ... As priests, we must never forget that the only legitimate ascension towards the ministry of pastor is not that of success but that of the Cross.

From this point of view, to be a priest means to serve, also by leading an exemplary life. Priests dispense the means of salvation, the Sacraments, especially those of the Eucharist and Penance. They cannot dispose of them as they please, but humbly dispense them for the good of the People of God. Their lives are profoundly marked by this service – from tending the flock to faithfully celebrating the liturgy – and by readiness to serve all their brothers and sisters, especially the poorest and those most in need. By implementing this 'pastoral charity', on the model of Christ and with Christ, wherever the Lord may call, each priest fulfils both himself and his vocation.

Vatican Information Service 05-11-2011

Highlights

Thank you for Into the Deep and for your faithful endeavours on behalf of Father Speekman. The puzzling outcome of this case would appear to have implications for any sound priest. The wisdom of the Holy Father and Father Speekman's homilies are always highlights.

Laurel Smith, Sandringham, Vic

Routine Sacraments

The stark fact that most of our parishes are devoid of children, young people and families should not surprise us in the least. Over the last 40 years many bishops and parish priests have been routinely giving the sacraments to children of parents who have not been evangelized. Many of these parents have given the faith away as a lost cause and no longer see the Church as being relevant in their lives. Some claim to have seen it all, done it all, and no longer believe any of it.

Baptism, the Eucharist and Confirmation are the sacraments which initiate a child or adult into the life of Christ. This initiation is a total immersion into a life of grace in the Church, of which Christ is Head. Belief in Christ as our God and Saviour is expressed in and through faith in the Church's sacraments of which the Holy Mass is the source and summit.

Since time immemorial the Church has taught us that the seven sacraments are the actions of Christ, who administers them through and in the Church for the bestowal of grace on those who accept Him in faith. This grace is absolutely necessary to shape and transform all the baptised until they bear the image of Christ and show his true likeness to the world. Hence, the primary concern of every Catholic should be to live the new life of grace which Christ has brought to us, to be united with Him to the point of being configured with Him.

Unevangelized parents have forsaken the Church and have made a decision to stop practising the faith. They no longer believe in the living presence of Christ as the head of the Church. In some instances these parents have indicated to parish priests that they have no intention of practising the faith even after the sacraments of initiation have been conferred on their children.

Yet this has not deterred bishops and priests from pushing the same old failed sacramental policies and tired liberal pastoral practices. They have become so intoxicated with positivism that time and time again they have refused to reflect critically and objectively on their ailing sacramental policies, preparation programmes and pastoral structures. Consequently, their dioceses and parishes are physically and spiritually on death watch.

Every time bishops and priests confer the sacraments of initiation on children of unevangelized parents they are creating Catholics who do not have a living, intimate relationship with Christ in His Church. They are producing Catholics who do not want to pray, because they do not believe in prayer, especially Christ's prayer in the heart of the Church on Sundays. And, by continuing the practice of giving sacraments away to the unevangelized, they are sending these families a message which simply says that God's gift of grace, communion and salvation which was brought to us by his Son, Jesus Christ is not of primary importance for their souls.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

High Expectations

Pope Benedict XVI, Benin, 18-11-2011

“God trusts in man and desires his good. It is our task to respond, in honesty and justice, to his high expectations.”

Redirected

Pope Benedict XVI, Benin, 18-11-2011

As we praise God for the marvels which he never ceases to bestow upon humanity, I invite you to meditate for a moment on his infinite mercy.

The history of salvation, which culminates in the incarnation of Jesus and finds its fulfilment in the Paschal Mystery, is a radiant revelation of the mercy of God. In the Son, the “Father of mercies” (2 Cor 1:3) is made visible; ever faithful to his fatherhood, he “leans down to each prodigal child, to each human misery, and above all to their moral misery, to their sins” (John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia*, 6).

Divine mercy consists not only in the remission of our sins; it also consists in the fact that God, our Father, redirects us, sometimes not without pain, affliction or fear on our part, to the path of truth and light, for he does not wish us to be lost. This double expression of divine mercy shows how faithful God is to the covenant sealed with each Christian in his or her baptism. ...

The Virgin Mary experienced to the highest degree the mystery of divine love: “His mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation”, she exclaimed in her Magnificat. By her yes to the call of God, she contributed to the manifestation of divine love in the midst of humanity. In this sense, she is the Mother of Mercy by her participation in the mission of her Son: she has received the privilege of being our helper always and everywhere. “By her manifold intercession, she continues to procure the gifts which assure our eternal salvation. By her motherly love, she cares for her Son’s sisters and brothers who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home” (*Lumen Gentium*, 62). Under the shelter of her mercy, deadened hearts are healed, the snares of the devil are thwarted and enemies are reconciled.

In Mary, we have not only a model of perfection, but also one who helps us to realize communion with God and with our brothers and sisters. As Mother of Mercy, she is a sure guide to the disciples of her son who wish to be of service to justice, to reconciliation and to peace. She shows us, with simplicity and with a mother’s heart, the one Light and Truth: her Son, Jesus Christ who leads humanity to its full realization in the Father. Let us not be afraid to invoke, with confidence, her who ceaselessly dispenses to her children abundant divine graces.

www.zenit.org 18-11-2011

Moving Beyond Obligation

CathNews regularly features Josephite Sister Carmel Pilcher’s articles on her opinions on Catholic teaching.

On 04-10-2011 CathNews published one of her articles where she suggests that Sunday Mass would be better as a choice rather than an obligation. At the same time she makes disparaging remarks about the Mass at World Youth Day where those who were unable to receive Holy Communion due to a lack of sufficient Hosts, were encouraged to make a spiritual communion. So, on the one hand she doesn’t seem to think that as Catholics we have an *obligation* to go to Sunday Mass, and on the other, she thinks that there is an *obligation* to receive Holy Communion when you do go to Mass. Shouldn’t a grown Catholic woman, a religious sister, a liturgical consultant, know better?

Here are excerpts from her article:

“Most young Catholics have moved beyond the Sunday obligation mindset that it is deeply embedded in our Catholic psyche and when they participate it is a deliberate choice to do so. It seems to me that rather than lament that younger generations of Catholics are absent from Sunday Eucharist we could rejoice when they do join us at Christmas and Easter, and for sacramental and occasional celebrations.”

“... ‘spiritual communion’, a devotion that surely belongs to another era of the church’s history when full, conscious and active participation was not possible.”

“And ‘school and class’ Masses that are carefully prepared are preferred by parents and their children to the regular parish Sunday Mass.”

In another article featured in CathNews (16-11-2011), Sr Pilcher talks about the importance of marriage. Good! But to her, the Church should find “creative ways to support married couples”. By this she means couples “serving” Holy Communion to the people at Mass as a couple (or “ministering the consecrated bread and cup at the same ceremony” – she doesn’t even use Catholic terminology) or “robing in albs and assisting at the altar together”, or married deacons ministering with their wives – “Imagine the powerful witness of the wife of a deacon processing beside him and positioned with him near the altar.” Imagine, yes. Sounds to me like setting the stage for married priests.

- Ed.

Immense Grandeur!

Blessed John Paul II, 13-10-1979

“The world looks to the priest, because it looks to Jesus! No one can see Christ; but everyone sees the priest, and through him they wish to catch a glimpse of the Lord! Immense is the grandeur of the Lord! Immense is the grandeur and dignity of the priest!”

Yobbo Priests

You might wonder why we have a conference of Catholic Bishops in Australia, and what it does. Well, we know what it does *not* do; it does not exercise any role of guidance, supervision or control over any individual diocese! To believe this one only has to note the words of the President of the Conference himself: "The Bishops Conference does not have any jurisdiction with respect to an individual Bishop or his leadership of the Diocese."

What *does* the Conference do? Well, it gives attention to ratbag ideas such as hoping for or agitating for changes in Church belief and discipline. How else can we explain the fact that its committee agreed to raise the issue of women priests when the bishops went to Rome in October, and how Bishop Morris was dealt with in his removal from the diocese of Toowoomba?

These matters are no secret; they are now public in religious journals. Furthermore, there has been a group of yobbo priests around for years that publishes a rag known as *The Swag*. It is a platform for liberalism (meaning 'no control') within the clergy and the Church. Then there is a deputation of pro-feminist nuns. As well there are weak swinging religious, not knowing what they should be about. These people are given a hearing each year, so that is something of what the Conference does. For the rest it must be vague and useless talk of the bishops among themselves, for there seems little of benefit to the Church coming out of it.

Many of these yobbo priests have publicly declared that they will not use the newly translated form of the Mass. Were they not ordained as public officers of the Church? They certainly weren't ordained to be private individuals. What about the rights of their people to have the Mass as the Church – not their individual consciences – proclaims it? Try that on with any large corporation which pays your salary. If you don't like the job or are not prepared to do what is asked of you, real integrity suggests that your place is elsewhere. Don't hang around white-anting the show while taking the money.

These priests have forgotten who and what they are. Their obstinacy reflects the attitude of Martin Luther who made up his own mind and said, "Here I stand", and look what came of that! Much more than Luther anticipated.

S.C., Melbourne

A Haven of Repose

St John Chrysostom

"Nothing so becomes a church as silence and good order. Noise belongs to theatres...and market-places: but [in church]...there should be stillness, and quiet and calm reflection, and a haven of much repose."

Unwrapping Christmas

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 05-01-2011

The nativity scene, as an image of the incarnation of the Word, in the light of the Gospel account, already alludes to Easter.

Incarnation and Easter are not adjacent to one another, yet they are the two key inseparable points of the one faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God Incarnate and Redeemer. The Cross and the Resurrection presuppose the Incarnation. ... In this unitary vision of the Mystery of Christ, visiting the nativity scene leads us to visiting the Eucharist where we encounter the real presence of the crucified and risen Christ, the living Christ.

The liturgical celebration of Christmas, then, is not just a recollection, but above all a mystery; it is not just a memory but also a presence. To understand the meaning of these two inseparable aspects, it is important to live the Christmas period intensely, as the Church presents it.

It is necessary to liberate this Christmas period from an overly moralistic and sentimental wrapping. The celebration of Christmas does not only present us with examples to imitate, such as the humility and poverty of the Lord, His benevolence and love for mankind; rather it is an invitation to let oneself be transformed totally by the One Who entered our flesh.

The aim of God becoming manifest was that we might participate in divine life, and that the mystery of His incarnation might be realised in us. This mystery is the fulfilment of man's vocation.

...Live this Christmas period with intensity. After having adored the Son of God made man lying in the manger, we are called to move on to the altar of the sacrifice where Christ, the living Bread Who descended from heaven, offers Himself to us as true nourishment for eternal life. We have seen this with our own eyes, at the table of the Word and the Bread of Life, we have contemplated it and touched it with our hands: the Word made flesh. Let us announce it joyfully to the world and bear generous witness to it with all our lives.

Vatican Information Service 05-01-2011

Forthcoming Retreats

We will be holding the following retreats at The Ark in Marlo, Victoria in coming months:

10-13 February 2012:

"The Little Way" – Fr Emmanuel Adami.

5-10 May 2012:

Fathers of Mercy – Fr Wade Menezes (for this five day Retreat we require a non-refundable deposit of \$50 per person).

For further details and booking ring (03) 5154 8419.

Richard and Kate Earle, Marlo

What Was He Thinking?

The following is from a Zenit article (11-10-2011) reporting on a Vatican Radio interview in Rome with Archbishop Philip Wilson, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference:

Archbishop Wilson said that the majority of Australian Catholics are committed to and want to live out their faith. ... "The big challenge is to help them to rediscover the truth and the beauty of what they've already learned," he said.

Can he be serious? Does he really think that the majority of Catholics in Australia know their faith and are committed to their faith?

The article states that Catholics represent about 25% of the population of Australia, or around 5 million people. The majority of that would mean a lot of people who don't seem to come to Sunday Mass in spite of knowing their faith and being committed to it.

- Ed.

The Liturgy of the Hours

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

Q: Are priests and transitional deacons obliged to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours?

A: ...The Congregation for Divine Worship on Nov. 15, 2000, issued a formal response to a doubt on this topic. This unofficial English translation was published by the liturgy office of the U.S. bishops' conference. ...

"The integral and daily celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours is, for priests and deacons on the way to the priesthood, a substantial part of their ecclesial ministry. Only an impoverished vision would look at this responsibility as a mere fulfilling of a canonical obligation, even though it is such...

"Those who have been ordained are morally bound, in virtue of the same ordination they have received, to the celebration or the entire and daily recitation of the Divine Office such as is canonically established in canon 276, § 2, n. 3 of the [Code of Canon Law]. This recitation does not have for its part the nature of a private devotion or of a pious exercise realized by the personal will alone of the cleric but rather is an act proper to the sacred ministry and pastoral office."

www.zenit.org 22-11-2011

No Right to Do Wrong

Remember Shadrach, Mesach and Abednego? In the bad old days they told Nebuchadnezzar, "O King, we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image you have set up." So the tyrant despatched them to the fiery furnace and what a stunning outcome he saw (Dan.3).

Right now many governments in the West and in Australia are setting themselves up as oracles and idols by restricting our expressions of religious beliefs, just like Nebuchadnezzar did. They should fear too.

People are being sacrificed to the new idols of states whose creed is secularism (each decides his own belief and morality) and political correctness (toleration of everything – almost). This is supposed to protect Muslims and certain others from hurt feelings and "hate speech". In fact it is depriving good citizens of religious freedom, making a class of "victimhood" by imposing the values of an inhuman secular humanism on society as a state ideology (religion).

Christianity has brought us modern free societies with civil liberties, a vast improvement on the former atheism and superstition. The Christian noble message of meaning and morality does not oppress others for expressing their worship or opinions as they see fit. You can't do that in Saudi Arabia.

It was not cultural imperialism that caused the British in India to prohibit the burning alive of widows at their husbands' cremations. Rather it was the freedom to follow natural morality, which good Cicero had upheld against unnatural man-made laws and customs in pagan Rome in the 1st century before Christ (BC). Rightly has he been described as a man "Christian by nature". We could do with many more of the same today.

There is no human right to do wrong – no right to kill off unwanted people such as pre-born babies, the aged, the unfit, or the useless. They are not aggressors. Do we want to be like the ancient pagan Spartans who dumped many of their baby girls to die in the cold and brought up boys to have the mindset of killers?

Our governments through a compliant media and failed education system are whittling away our freedoms by legal stealth, verbal contortions and social engineering. We must uphold our free, natural-law based society where only slander (defamation) restricts freedom of speech.

Fr Bernard McGrath, Bendigo

Great Poverty

When a poor person dies of hunger it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed.

Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat.

Blessed Mother Teresa

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

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

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

Your Angel Will Help

St John Eudes

“Unable to adore your sacramental Jesus as He deserves, call upon your Guardian Angel, your faithful companion through life, to help you. He will be so happy to do with you here below what he must continue doing eternally with you in Heaven.”

Contact *Into the Deep*

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- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
- We rely on donations (cheques made out to John Henderson please).
- Donate to ITD via Ritchies Supermarkets Community Benefit program by nominating Into the Deep as your group, with CB number 81799, and shopping at your local Ritchies Supermarket (56 supermarkets throughout Eastern Australian) with your Community Benefit Card.

ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email and on the website; printed copies about a week later. Deadline for contributions is one week before the end of the month (but preferably by the 15th of the month).

Editor - Janet Kingman

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

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

Letters to the Editor

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

Pray the Psalms

Pope Benedict XVI, 16-11-2011

“I would like to renew my call to everyone to pray the Psalms, to become accustomed to using the Liturgy of the Hours, Lauds, Vespers, and Compline. Our relationship with God can only be enriched by our journeying towards Him day after day.”