

Into the Deep

Issue 156

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

December 2015

“Peace on Earth – which man throughout the ages has so longed for and sought after – can never be established, never guaranteed, except by the diligent observance of the divinely established order.”

Pope St John XXIII

Defend the Defenceless

With the recent sickening Victorian law banning any pro-lifer from being within 150m of an abortion clinic – whether praying publicly or offering help to pregnant women in distress – there is greater urgency than ever for us to firm our resolve to effectively defend life.

Come to the Family Life International conference in Albury, New South Wales, in January to learn more, be inspired, and mix with others who are facing the same battles as you are. The persecution against those who defend the sanctity of life will continue – we need to be strong and ready to face whatever challenges lie ahead!

The conference runs from 21-24 January. There are many and varied speakers and topics, no doubt all will be inspirational and educational. For example, Archbishop Julian Porteous, Bishop Cesare Bonivento from PNG, Former Australian Army Major Bernard Gaynor, well-known author and teacher Eamonn Keane, moral theology lecturer and local parish priest Rev Dr Peter Murphy, Mr Steve Mosher from the U.S., to name a few.

For more information and to register, go to Events at www.fli.org.au. Or phone the FLI office in Sydney and they'll send you some written information: (02) 9519 9111.

As the FLI website says: “Defending the sanctity of life is the defining struggle of our times.”

Make use of this local opportunity to attend an international conference, in holiday resort surrounds! Hope to see you there!

- Ed.

Wishing Merry Christmas

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 21-12-2011

During these days, the greeting on everyone's lips is “Merry Christmas! Season's Greetings!” Let us ensure that, even in today's society, the exchange of greetings not lose its deep religious significance, and that the exterior aspects that play upon our heartstrings not absorb the feast. Certainly, external signs are beautiful and important, so long as they do not distract us, but rather help us to experience Christmas in its truest sense – the sacred and Christian sense – and cause our joy to be not superficial, but deep.

With the Christmas liturgy, the Church introduces us to the great Mystery of the Incarnation. Christmas, in fact, is not a mere anniversary of Jesus' birth – it is also this, but it is more – it is the celebration of a mystery that has marked and continues to mark mankind's history – God Himself came to dwell among us, He made Himself one of us; a mystery that concerns our faith and our very lives; a mystery that we experience concretely in the liturgical celebrations, especially in the Holy Mass.

Zenit.org 21-12-2011

Jan/Feb Issue

I have decided to take a break over Christmas and New Year again, so there will be no January issue of *Into the Deep*. I hope to release a combined January/February issue sometime in mid-January.

Wishing all readers of ITD and their families a blessed Christmas! - Ed.

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

What is Mercy?

Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, Major Penitentiary of the Tribunal of the Apostolic Penitentiary, interviewed by Zenit

What, in fact, is Mercy, and, on the other hand, what is it not?

Well, as Saint Thomas does, we begin by saying what Mercy “is not.” Mercy isn’t blind tolerance, it isn’t justification of sin and, above all, it isn’t a right.

Mercy isn’t tolerance, in as much as it does not limit itself to “endure” the sinner, leaving him to continue to sin; rather, it denounces sin openly, and, precisely in this way, it loves the sinner: it recognizes that the sinner doesn’t consist of his sin, but is more; it leads his actions to the light of truth, the whole truth: and thus offers him salvation.

Hence, Mercy doesn’t justify sin, in virtue of the socio-cultural, political-economic or personal circumstances that exist, but it so esteems man as to ask him to give an account of all his actions, thus recognizing him to be “responsible” before God.

Finally, Mercy isn’t a right; it cannot be presumed either in relations with God or in relations with the Church, Minister of Divine Mercy.

Now we come to what Mercy properly is.

Mercy is first of all a reality, living and true, immutable and forever, which comes to meet human misery, by a mystery of absolute and divine liberty, and “saves” this human misery, not by cancelling or ignoring it and even less so by forgetting it, but taking charge of it “personally.”

In the splendid celebrations of Holy Week that take place in the South of Spain, as well as in many other places where popular piety is fervent, when the dead Christ is led in procession outside the church, from the people recollected in prayer, a moving voice of profound piety often rises that cries: “Mercy!”

See, Mercy is a Person; it is Christ! – Incarnated, Dead and Risen. He wishes to weave with each man a personal relation of truth and love, and all this, which from our perspective of poor sinners, astonishes and marvels us, is called “Mercy.”

Zenit.org 26-10-2015

Thank You Too!

Please find enclosed a donation towards the printing and postage of Into the Deep. It is a great and informative newsletter. I enjoy it very much and pass it on to others. - *J. Crowe, Huntly, Victoria*

Thank you for sending copies of ITD each month. It is good to read an orthodox Catholic periodical and I look forward to receiving it. I have just sent a donation to you via online banking. Keep up the great work that you are doing. - *B. Bath, Balmoral, Victoria*

Mission Statements

Morwell Catholic Parish now has a large banner in the sanctuary of Sacred Heart Church, with the following:

Morwell Catholic Parish
Believing Giving Serving
Together

A Welcoming, caring inclusive community,
witnessing to Christ, supporting each other,
sharing our Faith with all, and affirming the
dignity of Human Life.

[random capital Letters as per the banner]

There seems to be a trend in Catholic parishes to devise ‘mission statements’ (or whatever) for themselves. What a strange thing to do. How many times has the Pope pointed out that the Church is not a business, not an NGO. It is a mystery, a communion, a family. How many families do you know that have a ‘mission statement’? It is not the stuff of families.

Aside from that, what is this particular one actually supposed to mean? Believing what? Giving what, to whom? Serving whom, and why? The “welcoming, caring inclusive” bit certainly doesn’t apply to orthodox Catholics, as many of us know from bitter experience (priests and parishioners alike), so it must apply to specific others – but who exactly? “Sharing our Faith with all” mustn’t apply to the actual Catholic faith as the Catechism teaches, as that’s the faith that Fr Speekman was hounded out of the parish for – so what faith exactly? And where’s the mission? Or is this just a self-congratulatory statement of what the parish claims to be, rather than stating any sort of mission?

Either way, trendy little statements are no replacement for the real business of striving to live the Catholic faith. The rest will follow.

- Ed.

Today

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 21-12-2011

For believers, the celebration of Christmas renews our certainty that God is really present with us, still “flesh” and not only far away: though also with the Father, He is close to us. In that Child born in Bethlehem, God drew near to man: we can encounter Him now – in a “today” whose sun knows no setting. ...

The liturgical texts of Christmas help us to understand that the events of salvation wrought by Christ are always actual – the interest of every man and of all mankind. When, within liturgical celebrations, we hear or proclaim this “Today a Saviour is born for us”, we are not employing an empty, conventional expression; rather, we mean that God offers us “today”, now, to me, to each one of us, the possibility of acknowledging and receiving Him like the shepherds in Bethlehem, so that He might be born in our lives and renew them, illumine them, transform them by His grace, by His Presence.

Zenit.org 21-12-2011

Three Things We Know

One of the ailments of Catholics today is confusion, for various reasons. And confusion breeds uncertainty.

But three things we know for certain – that Our Lord will be with His Church until He comes again; that the Holy Spirit protects the Pope from error in proclaiming faith or morals; and that we must resist the attacks of the Devil.

For example, having been accustomed all our lives to a particular style of papacy, it has perhaps been difficult to reconcile ourselves to a different style, but we should not let ourselves be overly disturbed by what we read in the media, especially the secular media.

One certainty is that the Church is currently under diabolical attack on two age-old fronts, both linked to the ancient heresy of Arianism.

One is secularism, or the elevation of man into the place of God, which has developed under various forms throughout the West in recent centuries and has led to a loss of the supernatural within the Church, or Modernism.

The other is Islam, which sprang from a mingling of Arianism with Arab paganism and has as its root tenet a denial of the Trinity.

Both are non-Christian religions which fundamentally seek to dominate the world and destroy the Church.

Both also have broad effects on the daily life of modern societies, from the sexual revolution to the atrocities of the Islamic State.

The 21st century Catholic has no option but to oppose these heresies and proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. St John laid it out plainly in his first letter – “He who denies that Jesus is the Christ is a liar and the Antichrist.”

Proclaiming this to the world requires declaring our faith not just as a “belief”, something we happen to believe, as others might say they believe in “global warming”, but as the truth. Fact, in other words.

We should not just say we believe that Jesus Christ is God – we should declare that He is God.

Our attitude in the present crisis should therefore be one of confidence (sure hope) and boldness (unyielding fortitude), wrapped together in love.

Paul MacLeod, Geelong, Victoria

Take The Trouble

Vatican II, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n.5

Priests should go to the trouble of properly cultivating their liturgical knowledge and ability, so that through their liturgical ministry, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will be praised in an ever more excellent manner by the Christian communities entrusted to them.

Readings at Mass: Advent and Christmas

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

Q: ... What are the theological criteria and motivations behind the readings assigned? ... - D.Z., Beijing

A: The introduction to the lectionary gives ample explanations as to the criteria used in making the selection. The overall idea is to present to the faithful, over the two-year cycle, a broad selection of most parts of the Bible. The two-year cycle is independent of the Sunday three-year cycle, which is why occasionally the same readings occur on Sunday and during the week. ...

From the introduction to the lectionary:

60. The present Order of Readings for Mass, then, is an arrangement of biblical readings that provides the faithful with a knowledge of the whole of God’s word, in a pattern suited to the purpose. Throughout the liturgical year, but above all during the seasons of Easter, Lent, and Advent, the choice and sequence of readings are aimed at giving Christ’s faithful an ever-deepening perception of the faith they profess and of the history of salvation. ...

Advent

94. There are two series of readings: one to be used from the beginning of Advent until 16 December; the other from 17 to 24 December.

In the first part of Advent there are readings from the Book of Isaiah, distributed in accord with the sequence of the book itself and including the more important texts that are also read on the Sundays. For the choice of the weekday Gospel the first reading has been taken into consideration. On Thursday of the second week the readings from the Gospel concerning John the Baptist begin. The first reading is either a continuation of Isaiah or a text chosen in view of the Gospel.

In the last week before Christmas the events that immediately prepared for the Lord’s birth are presented from the Gospel of Matthew (ch. 1) and Luke (ch. 1). The texts in the first reading, chosen in view of the Gospel reading, are from different Old Testament books and include important Messianic prophecies.

The Christmas Season

96. From 29 December on, there is a continuous reading of the whole of the First Letter of John, which actually begins earlier, on 27 December, the Feast of St. John the Evangelist, and on 28 December, the Feast of the Holy Innocents.

The Gospels relate manifestations of the Lord: events of Jesus’ childhood from the Gospel of Luke (29-30 Dec); passages from the first chapter of the Gospel of John (31 Dec-5 Jan); other manifestations of the Lord from the four Gospels (7-12 Jan).

Go to Confession First

I do not sing the following:

“Come as you are
That’s how I want you”

If someone is in mortal sin, that’s not how God wants them. Especially, God does not want them to come to Holy Communion if they are in mortal sin.

God does not want them to be in mortal sin – but He wants them to repent – go to Confession, confess their mortal sins, say their penance, and then go to Holy Communion.

Having said that, only Our Lady was exactly as God wanted Her to be – the rest of us even in the state of grace still have our imperfections and/or venial sins.

These first words give the “green light” to go to Holy Communion in mortal sin or not. Confession! Not many appear to go nowadays.

I wonder what influence this so-called hymn has to do with everybody going to Holy Communion and few going to Confession.

As I am not a theologian, perhaps I should shut up and keep my opinions to myself. Perhaps you could ask a priest to comment on the “song” and my comments if they are not “spot on”.

“Come as you are” – a “song” made out to be a hymn in Australia. Here are the words:

Come as you are, that’s how I want you
Come as you are, feel quite at home
Close to my heart, loved and forgiven
Come as you are, why stand alone?

No need to fear, love sets no limits
No need to fear, love never ends
Don’t run away, shamed and disheartened
Rest in My love, trust me again.

I agree with Bruce Dawe’s parody of it published in AD2000 in May 2004:

Come as you are, come with bare midriff,
Neckline that plunges, rings in your nose,
Here you’re on home-ground, nothing here’s
special,
Remember: in New Church, anything goes!

Come as you are, we’ve all gone folksy,
Can’t you just tell it? - look at our clothes ...
Who needs old hymn-books? When we like
hymns mawky,
Doctrine and symbol, each of us loathes ...

Come as you are, you’ll find us singing
Pop-songs to Jesus, marshmallow words ...
Traditional reverence? That’s out-of-fashion.
Transcendent worship? That’s for the birds!

John Schmid, Melbourne, Victoria

Boarding House

Pope Francis, General Audience, 11-11-2015

Today we will reflect on a characteristic quality of family life, which is learned from the first years of life: fellowship, that is, the attitude of sharing the goods of life and of being happy to be able to do so.

To share and to be able to share is a valuable virtue! Its symbol, its “icon” is the family gathered around the domestic table.

The sharing of a meal – and, therefore, in addition to food, also affections, the recounting of events – is a fundamental experience. When there is a celebration, a birthday, an anniversary, it finds us around the table. In some cultures it is typical to do this also when mourning, to be close to one in sorrow because of the loss of a relative.

Fellowship is a sure thermometer to measure the health of relations: if there is in the family something that is not well, or some hidden wound, at the table it is immediately understood. A family that almost never eats together, or that does not speak at the table, but watches television, or looks at smartphones, is a family that is “very little a family.” When children are attached to their computers at the table, to mobile phones, and do not listen to one another, this is not a family, it is a boarding house.

Zenit.org 11-11-2015

Has Already Happened

Re your Thought Warp item in the November issue of Into the Deep (p.11), it has already happened. The gender-bending ideologues have already prescribed that when an obstetrician delivers a baby, he should not say to the happy mother, “You have a boy”, or “You have a girl”. This is regarded as “heterosexist” and imprisoning the baby to a gender identity the baby might want to reject in later life. Presumably all he is allowed to say is, “You have a baby”. (See my article on “The Deconstruction of Gender” on our website: www.endeavourforum.org.au)

*Babette Francis, National & Overseas Co-ordinator
Endeavour Forum Inc.*

Marlo Retreats

Please note a change of dates for the next retreat at The Ark in Marlo:

- Fr Ken Clark (Ordinariate): Wed 10th February p.m. (incl. Ash Wednesday Mass) to Saturday lunchtime, 13th February. Theme: The Holy Name of Jesus.

Payment is by anonymous donation. Everything is provided: home cooking, talks, Holy Mass, rosary, Stations of the Cross walks, beach walks, shrines, adoration, prayer and daily Benediction.

Richard Earle, Marlo, Victoria. Ph 5154 8419

Expanding on Loopholes

Many years ago, at an altar-boys meeting, I remember asking the priest why Mass could not be in English. He told me that the Church had entrenched Latin for all time, and it could not be changed. A year later, Pius XII permitted the use of the vernacular.

Both the old and the new Masses are Latin Masses. Both are permitted in English. The use of Latin is required in at least part of the Mass. The disappearance of Latin demonstrates that care is needed in liturgical design, as the enemies of the Church who remain within its fold will spare no effort to find and expand on any loopholes they find. Here are some examples:

The sign of peace. This is intended to be shared by immediate neighbours, and since it occurs at a most serious time in the Mass, it should be carried out with a minimum of fuss. Instead, we have people wandering about shaking hands and making lots of noise. Even priests join in, and some don't think their job is done until they have declared peace to everyone in the church. I have been at Masses where the priest required everyone to physically embrace everyone about. I am sure this was not intended by the designers of the Mass, but it should have been foreseen. All this would not be so bad if this particular activity could have been restricted to a less solemn part of the Mass.

Extraordinary ministers. These are for emergencies, but it's not uncommon to see hordes of laity handling the host, with an unoccupied priest wandering at the back of the church, or 50m away in the presbytery. In one Mass not so long ago we had six celebrants, including a bishop, but still we had these unnecessary ministers doing the work while priests sat down.

The ablutions. Once upon a time these were performed by the priest. These days it is mostly a task of the laity. The fewer people who handle the Blessed Sacrament, the less is the likely of sacrilege.

Translations. Until recently we had a translation of the Mass which in some areas bore little or no relation to the original Latin. But even though this has been corrected, we still get Agnus Dei translated as 'Prince of Peace' or some other silliness which has nothing to do with the original text. When the Mass was in Latin, this sort of nonsense was impossible.

Facing the people. The old Mass looked strange to Protestants, with the priest's back turned to the people. No longer. The priest has learned to make it a show, where Christ is lost, and it becomes his own performance, to the extent that the congregation calls out 'Thank you Father' at the end of Mass.

Silence. It is not forbidden to talk in the church, not even during Mass. But chatting is out. These days we have lost our sense of the sacred, and people are chatting and laughing through the consecration. This never happened in the days when the priest led the people, facing God.

Prayers of the faithful. Now this is one which should have been flagged by the designers. How could they not know that these would be used to push things like social justice, global warming etc?

Editing the Gospel. Priests are not allowed to edit the readings. But on occasion they may not want to give the full text. Some go as far as avoiding the use of 'He' for God. Men wonder if this avoidance of the masculine has anything to do with being surrounded by women, the feminisation of the clergy.

Music. The Church wants more music in the Mass. Well, they should have anticipated this one. The professional Catholics got down and wrote lots of puerile ditties which they passed off as hymns. No longer do we hear the wonderful music of Fr Faber. We have to go overseas to hear the real music of the Church.

Serviettes (altar girls). In the old Mass no female set foot behind the altar rails, without a good reason. Today the altar boys have gone, and with them vocations to the priesthood.

Homily. Priests are intended to use the homily to teach the readings. Somehow the intent of the readings disappears under a cover of social justice.

The Blessed Sacrament. It has been said that you can tell a marginal Catholic as he enters the church. Those who believe that Christ is present in the Blessed Sacrament will perform an act of reverence in the direction of the tabernacle (which today might well be hard to find). I have not seen an extraordinary minister recognise the Real Presence on entering the church. And very few priests. Such reverence is shown by perhaps half a dozen in a large parish. Does this mean that the rest no longer believe?

All this is not a criticism of the Mass itself. The problem lies with poor design, in not anticipating dangers and sabotage. There were indeed problems with the old Mass too, but these were comparatively minor and capable of being repaired.

Unfortunately, Rome has left it to bishops to make sure that the Mass is said according to the Missal. It would appear that Rome's optimism has not been rewarded.

Richard Stokes, Burpengary, Queensland

Good Old Saint Nick

*A legend about Bishop Nicholas of Myra
(later identified with Santa Claus or Father Christmas)
Feast Day 6 December*

In AD 325, Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea, the very first ecumenical council. More than 300 bishops came from all over the Christian world to debate the nature of the Holy Trinity. It was one of the early church's most intense theological questions. Arius, from Egypt, was teaching that Jesus the Son was not equal to God the Father. Arius forcefully argued his position at length. The bishops listened respectfully.

As Arius vigorously continued, Nicholas became more and more agitated. Finally, he could no longer bear what he believed was essential being attacked. The outraged Nicholas got up, crossed the room, and slapped Arius across the face! The bishops were shocked. It was unbelievable that a bishop would lose control and be so hot-headed in such a solemn assembly. They brought Nicholas to Constantine. Constantine said even though it was illegal for anyone to strike another in his presence, in this case, the bishops themselves must determine the punishment.

The bishops stripped Nicholas of his bishop's garments, chained him, and threw him into jail. That would keep Nicholas away from the meeting. When the Council ended a final decision would be made about his future.

Nicholas was ashamed and prayed for forgiveness, though he did not waver in his belief. During the night, Jesus and Mary his Mother, appeared,* asking, "Why are you in jail?" "Because of my love for you," Nicholas replied. Jesus then gave the Book of the Gospels to Nicholas. Mary gave him an omophorion [distinguishing stole-like vestment of an Eastern bishop, similar to the pallium - Ed.], so Nicholas would again be dressed as a bishop. Now at peace, Nicholas studied the Scriptures for the rest of the night.

When the jailer came in the morning, he found the chains loose on the floor and Nicholas dressed in bishop's robes, quietly reading the Scriptures. When Constantine was told of this, the emperor asked that Nicholas be freed. Nicholas was then fully reinstated as the Bishop of Myra.

The Council of Nicaea agreed with Nicholas' views, deciding the question against Arius. The work of the Council produced the Nicene Creed which to this day many Christians repeat weekly when they stand to say what they believe.

* Other versions of the story have Jesus and Mary with Nicholas appearing in a dream to Constantine or, even, to all the bishops. In the dream, they give the Book of the Gospels and an omophorion to Nicholas, convincing Constantine and the bishops that Nicholas should be reinstated as Bishop of Myra.

www.stnicholascenter.org

Common Name for Boys

In some circles it is fashionable to brand Europeans who fear that the continent is undergoing a process of Islamisation as "Islamophobes". But is it not a manifestation of Islamisation when, in some European countries, the name chosen most often for newborn boys is Muhammad? The most popular boys name in Amsterdam these days is not Jan or Piet or Henk, but Muhammad; it is also the favourite one for boys born in Belgium and Sweden.

In France, boys names such as Jean and Guillaume are becoming rare, and have been overtaken by Muhammad. This is not surprising, of course, in view of the fact that pre-adult Muslims make up 30% of the population while the total number of French Muslims is around 10%. In some major urban centres of France, as many as 45% of the youths are Muslims.

Anyone visiting the Netherlands of today may be confronted by many of the almost 500 mosques in a country that once was an integral part of Christendom. Considering that the Netherlands is, geographically, very much smaller than Tasmania (26,875 sq.km smaller), some of today's visitors to Holland may well think, when becoming aware of the relatively very large number of mosques and a dearth of churches, that they have landed in a nation that is overwhelmingly Islamic.

Would it be an exaggeration to describe tiny Holland's super-abundance of mosques as being indicative of "Islamisation"?

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill, New South Wales

Sickened and Saddened

Your November issue of Into the Deep was good as usual. Full of wisdom and helpful articles. I agree with what has been said, and continually spoken of, about dear Father Speekman.

One thing is certain – no one in this world can beat "the Truth". When Jesus said to Pontius Pilate about Truth, he would've shaken in his boots.

Having been in the Legion of Mary for a long period of time, I decided to leave, for a number of reasons. One thing for example, the Hail Mary is differently said, and I felt uncomfortable with it. Other matters also happened, which are better left unsaid.

The abuses of the sacred continually happen. I spoke to a priest recently, on ladies giving Holy Communion to the elderly – simply said, do they know the state of a person's soul? Came across an elderly man and he saddened me no end really, a bit like a Gospel scene, he yelled, "I want to go to Confession!" How on earth can any lady be of help towards that person, for the life of me, I ask?

I am really sickened and fed up at these grave abuses.

Peter Duyndam, Newborough, Victoria

The Day Will Come

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 15-11-2015

[The] preaching that Jesus gave in Jerusalem before his last Passover...has certain apocalyptic elements, such as wars, famine, cosmic catastrophes. "The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken."

Still, these segments are not the essential part of the message. The central nucleus around which the words of Jesus turn, is he himself, the mystery of his person, and of his death and resurrection, and his return at the end of time. Our final goal is an encounter with the Risen Lord.

I would like to ask how many of you think about this: "There will be a day in which I encounter the Lord face to face." And this is our goal, our encounter.

We do not await a time or a place; rather we are going to encounter a person: Jesus.

Thus the problem is not "when" these premonitory signs of the last days will occur, but rather that we find ourselves prepared.

It's also not about knowing "how" these things will happen, but instead "how" we have to act today, in awaiting these things. ...

The Lord Jesus is not only the destination point of our earthly pilgrimage, but also a constant presence in our lives. ...

He counters the false prophets, the fortune-tellers who predict that the end of the world is near; he counters fatalism. He is at our side; he walks with us; he loves us so much.

He wants to direct his disciples of every age away from curiosity about dates, predictions, horoscopes, and concentrate their attention on the today of history.

...How many are there among us who read the horoscope every day? ...When you feel like reading your horoscope, look to Jesus who is with us. That is better and will serve us better.

This presence of Jesus calls us, yes, to anticipation and vigilance, that excludes both impatience and lethargy, [both] the escaping to the future and the becoming prisoners of the current moment and worldliness.

In our days, too, there is no lack of natural and moral disasters, nor of adversities and difficulties of every type. Everything passes, the Lord reminds us. His word alone remains as light that looks upon and steadies our journey. He always forgives us because he is at our side. We only have to look at him and he changes our hearts.

May the Virgin Mary help us to trust in Jesus, the firm foundation of our lives, and persevere with joy in his love.

Zenit.org 15-11-2015

Sin in The Church

The more I read about the various crises, perversions and scandals of abuse sexual or otherwise that beset the Church, the more I realise that the sin of Adam, which is at the root of all the evil in the history of mankind, is very much part of the mystery of the Church in this world.

This fact was brought home to me once again more recently by the Synod on the Family. The bishops in favour of Holy Communion for the divorced and remarried, and of the recognition homosexual unions, did not particularly strike me as servants of divinely revealed Truth, obeying the doctrines of their Master. When they spoke publicly, you would never have guessed that these successors of the Apostles were stewards of the sacred mysteries of the faith.

It was even harder to conclude that the lives of these anointed servants of the Church were truly based on her doctrines. And while I can understand that all the members of the Body of Christ are sinful, I do sometimes wonder what these bishops think of when approaching the altar to offer the Holy Sacrifice or when they go to Confession? It really perplexes me how these bishops, and priests for that matter, who celebrate Christ's Holy Mass, read the Gospel, pray the Divine Office, administer the Sacraments and who are exposed daily to their grace, can become so horribly lost and can lead an entire diocese or parish completely over the edge of the cliff.

It confounds me that these men who have chosen Christ as the only meaning of their lives, who have pledged themselves to all that is holy, can lose it so completely that they no longer know their origins, identity and purpose.

The only consolation I find in all of this consternation and perplexity is that the waywardness of these bishops and priests is living proof that Christ founded and upholds the Church, that He is the head of this divine reality in the world. For this fact I thank God daily, especially at Mass every Sunday.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

Priests' Personal Opinions

Sacramentum Caritatis, n.23

Priests should be conscious of the fact that in their ministry they must never put themselves or their personal opinions in first place, but Jesus Christ. ... The priest is above all a servant of others, and he must continually work at being a sign pointing to Christ, a docile instrument in the Lord's hands. This is seen particularly in his humility in leading the liturgical assembly, in obedience to the rite, uniting himself to it in mind and heart, and avoiding anything that might give the impression of an inordinate emphasis on his own personality.

Do Not Let Him Pass By

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 21-12-2014

Today, the fourth and last Sunday of Advent, the liturgy wants to prepare us for Christmas, which is “already at the gates,” inviting us to meditate on the passage of the Annunciation of the angel to Mary.

The Archangel Gabriel reveals to the Virgin the will of God that she become the mother of his only begotten Son. “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.”

We fix our gaze upon this simple young woman of Nazareth in the moment in which she makes herself available to the divine message with her “yes.” We take in two essential aspects of her attitude, which is for us a model of how to prepare for Christmas.

Above all, her faith, her attitude of faith, which consists in listening to the Word of God to abandon herself to this Word with complete availability of mind and heart. Responding to the Angel, Mary said, “I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”

In her “here I am” full of faith, Mary does not know which paths she will have to tread, which sorrows she will have to suffer, which risks she will face. But she knows that it is the Lord who is asking, and she trusts totally in Him and abandons herself to His love. This is Mary’s faith.

The other aspect is the capacity of the Mother of Christ to recognize the time of God. Mary is the one who has made possible the incarnation of the Son of God, the “revelation of the mystery kept secret for long ages.”

She has made possible the incarnation of the Word, thanks to her humble and courageous “yes.” Mary teaches us to welcome the favourable moment in which Jesus comes into our lives and asks for a generous and prepared response. And Jesus comes.

In fact, the mystery of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, which occurred historically more than 2,000 years ago, is implemented as a spiritual event in the “today of the liturgy.” The Word, who dwelled in the virginal womb of Mary, in the celebration of Christmas, comes to call anew the heart of each Christian. He comes by and calls.

Each one of us is called to respond, as Mary did, with a personal and sincere “yes,” placing ourselves fully at the disposal of God and his mercy. How many times Jesus comes in our lives and how many times he sends us an angel. And how many times we don’t realize it because we are very busy, submerged in our thoughts, in our activities, and in these days, in the preparation for Christmas, and we don’t realize the one who is passing by and knocking at the door of our hearts asking to be welcomed, asking for a “yes” like that of Mary. ...

When we feel in our hearts, “I would like to be better. I repent of this thing I’ve done,” there is the Lord who calls, who makes us feel this, the desire to be better, the desire to be closer to others, to God. If you feel this, stop. The Lord is there. Go to pray, and maybe go to confession to clean up the dwelling a bit. This is good. But remember well, if you feel this desire to improve, it is He who is calling. Do not let him pass by.

In the mystery of Christmas, beside Mary, in silence, is the presence of St Joseph, as is represented in all the nativity scenes... The example of Mary and of Joseph is for all of us an invitation to welcome Jesus with an entirely open soul, Jesus who out of love has made himself our brother. He comes to bring to the world the gift of peace. “Peace to those on whom his favour rests,” as the choir of angels announced to the shepherds. The precious gift of Christmas is peace and Christ is our true peace. And Christ calls to our hearts to give us peace. Peace of the soul. Let us open the gates to Christ.

We entrust ourselves to the intercession of our Mother and of St Joseph, to live a Christmas that is truly Christian, free of all worldliness, prepared to welcome the Saviour, the God-with-us.

Zenit.org 21-12-2014

Morning, Noon and Night

Blessed John Henry Newman

A man who is religious, is religious morning, noon and night; his religion is a certain character, a mould in which his thought, words and actions are cast, all forming parts of one and the same whole. He sees God in all things; every course of action he directs towards those spiritual objects which God has revealed to him; every occurrence of the day, every event, every person met with, all news which he hears, he measures by the standards of God’s will. And a person who does this may be said almost literally to pray without ceasing; for, knowing himself to be in God’s presence, he is continually led to address him reverently, whom he sets always before him in the inward language of prayer and praise, of humble and joyful trust.

Lead Us Not Into Temptation

This is something that has been bothering me for quite a while now (approximately 20 years) and I wonder if anyone can help me?

In the “Our Father” taken from the Bible, the words of Jesus are, “Do not put us to the test, but deliver us from the evil one”. And yet these words of Our Lord have been changed to, “Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil.”

I’ve asked many parishioners from other countries, how they pray this particular line and not one of them said that they say, “Do not lead us into temptation.” It seems that this is only happening in the English language.

Monique Onezime, Melbourne, Victoria

Thanks for your letter and question. I am not in a position to be able to answer myself [if anyone can help, please do], but can offer the excerpts below from Pope Benedict XVI (including St Cyprian) and St Augustine. While they do not address the actual question of translation, they do refer to the common English translation of the “Our Father”.

There are also many English translations of the Bible. The Revised Standard Version – Catholic Edition, for example, reads in Matthew 6:13 “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

- Ed.

God Does Not Tempt Us

Pope Benedict XVI, in Jesus of Nazareth (p.160-163)

“And Lead Us Not Into Temptation”

The way this petition is phrased is shocking for many people: God certainly does not lead us into temptation. In fact, as Saint James tells us: “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one” (Jas 1:13).

We are helped a further step along when we recall the words of the Gospel: “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (Mt 4:5). Temptation comes from the devil, but part of Jesus’ messianic task is to withstand the great temptations that have led man away from God and continue to do so. ...

Now we are in a position to interpret the sixth petition of the Our Father in a more practical way.

When we pray it, we are saying to God: “I know that I need trials so that my nature can be purified. When you decide to send me these trials, when you give evil some room to maneuver, as you did with Job, then please remember that my strength goes only so far. Don’t overestimate my capacity. Don’t set too wide the boundaries within which I may be tempted, and be close to me with your protecting hand when it becomes too much for me.”

It was in this sense that Saint Cyprian interpreted the sixth petition.

He says that when we pray, “And lead us not into temptation,” we are expressing our awareness “that the enemy can do nothing against us unless God has allowed it beforehand, so that our fear, our devotion and our worship may be directed to God – because the Evil One is not permitted to do anything unless he is given authorization”.

The Lord’s Prayer

St Augustine

When we say, ‘Hallowed be Thy Name,’ we are counselling ourselves to desire that His Name, which is always holy, may be held holy also among men; that is, that it may not be treated with contempt: and this for the benefit not of God but of men.

When we say, ‘Thy Kingdom come,’ which will certainly come whether we wish it or not, we arouse our desire for that Kingdom, that it may come for us, and that we may be worthy to reign therein.

When we say, ‘Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven,’ we are asking Him for obedience for ourselves, that His Will may be done in us as it is done in Heaven by his angels.

When we say, ‘Give us this day our daily bread,’ we mean by ‘today’ this present time. We are asking either for sufficiency, by expressing its principal part, signifying the whole by the name ‘bread’; or for the sacrament of believers, which is necessary at the present time in order to obtain the happiness not of this present time but of eternity.

When we say, ‘Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,’ we are advising ourselves both as to what we should ask for, and what we should do to be worthy to receive it.

When we say, ‘Lead us not into temptation,’ we counsel ourselves to make this petition lest we be abandoned by His help, and either be deceived into consenting to some temptation or be so downcast as to give in to it.

When we say, ‘Deliver us from evil,’ we bring ourselves to reflect that we are not yet in that happy state where we shall suffer no evil. This last petition in the Lord’s prayer has such a wide scope that a Christian may in any trouble express his pain by it, pour forth his tears, begin from it, linger over it, and end his prayer at this point.

The Chocolate Christmas Story

Joseph and Mary travelled to Bethlehem along a Rocky Road.

They became tired on the journey and needed a Boost.

So Joseph decided it was time to stop for a Picnic.

When they arrived at Bethlehem the only place to stay was a stable with some Dairy Milk cows and some Furry Friends, where the Baby Jesus was born.

That night in a field near Bethlehem some shepherds were minding their sheep. It was so cold that the grass was Crunchie.

As they were watching their sheep they got a Surprise when some angels appeared and told them to go to Bethlehem and see this newborn King.

Meanwhile, in the east there were three Smarties, or wise men.

They were studying the stars of the Milky Way when they saw a huge star.

They first thought it might have been the planet Mars, but it wasn't.

They followed the star. When they arrived at Bethlehem they entered the stable and presented their Bounty of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

That night, the three wise men had a Dream in which God gave them a warning:

God warned them that King Herod was up to his old Twix, so they returned home without telling him about Jesus.

You see, Christmas is more than Santa, reindeer and snow-Flakes.

It is more than having lots of food to Chomp on.

We can get into so much of a Twirl in organizing Christmas that we forget what it is really about.

This Christmas we need to take some Time Out and remember that the best thing about Christmas is Jesus Christ.

Anonymous, circulated on the internet

The Right of the Faithful

Redemptionis Sacramentum, n.12

It is the right of all of Christ's faithful that the Liturgy, and in particular the celebration of Holy Mass, should truly be as the Church wishes, according to her stipulations as prescribed in the liturgical books and in the other laws and norms.

History of Jubilee Years

Fr Thomas Rosica, Zenit.org 18-11-2015

This "Jubilee of Mercy" will commence with the opening of the Holy Door in St Peter's on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, 2015, and will conclude on 20 November 2016 with the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

In the ancient Hebrew tradition, the Jubilee Year, which was celebrated every 50 years, was meant to restore equality among all of the children of Israel, offering new possibilities to families which had lost their property and even their personal freedom. In addition, the Jubilee Year was a reminder to the rich that a time would come when their Israelite slaves would once again become their equals and would be able to reclaim their rights. ...

The Catholic tradition of the Holy Year began with Pope Boniface VIII in 1300. Boniface VIII had envisioned a Jubilee every century. From 1475 onwards – in order to allow each generation to experience at least one Holy Year – the ordinary Jubilee was to be celebrated every 25 years. However, an extraordinary Jubilee may be announced on the occasion of an event of particular importance.

Until present, there have been 26 ordinary Holy Year celebrations, the last of which was the Jubilee of 2000. The custom of calling extraordinary Jubilees dates back to the XVI century. The last extraordinary Holy Years, which were celebrated during the previous century, were those in 1933, proclaimed by Pius XI to celebrate 1900 years of Redemption and in 1983, proclaimed by John Paul II on the occasion of the 1950 years of Redemption.

The Catholic Church has given to the Hebrew Jubilee a more spiritual significance. It consists in a general pardon, an indulgence open to all, and the possibility to renew one's relationship with God and neighbour. Thus, the Holy Year is always an opportunity to deepen one's faith and to live with a renewed commitment to Christian witness.

With the Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis focuses attention upon the merciful God who invites all men and women to return to Him. The encounter with God inspires in one the virtue of mercy.

The initial rite of the Jubilee is the opening of the Holy Door. This door is one which is only opened during the Holy Year and which remains closed during all other years. Each of the four major basilicas of Rome has a Holy Door: Saint Peter's, St John Lateran, St Paul Outside the Walls and St Mary Major. This rite of the opening of the Holy Door illustrates symbolically the idea that, during the Jubilee, the faithful are offered an "extraordinary pathway" towards salvation.

The Holy Doors of the other Basilicas will be opened after the opening of the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica.

The Right to the Liturgy as the Church Wishes

I recently went to Mass in Melbourne. I felt like I was held hostage by the priest. He made up his own version of the Mass, leaving out whole sections, adding things, changing words, disregarding liturgical norms. I was angry that my rights had been violated. I am a Catholic. I have a right to attend Mass in any Catholic parish and expect a Catholic Mass. I should not have to be subjected to the raving disobedience of any priest.

Assuming others have the same experience, and now especially as the holidays are upon us, here is a letter you can give to any priest you come across on your travels who denies you your rights as a Catholic. Just tick the relevant boxes, fill in his name, and your name, and deliver it to him. You could send a copy to his Bishop as well – just add the parish name, and date and time you went to Mass. - Ed.

Dear Father

I am a baptised Catholic. I am a member of the Universal Church. I have a right to the Mass as it is prescribed by the Catholic Church – not according to your own personal interpretations. Please respect my rights. Please do not impose your disobedience on me.

- Please do not invite everyone to Holy Communion. Non-Catholics, and Catholics not in a state of grace, are not free to receive Holy Communion and by encouraging them to, you are encouraging them to commit a grave sin (Redemptionis Sacramentum (R.S.) n.84). You are also perpetuating misunderstandings about the nature of Holy Communion and the nature of the Catholic Church, which I then have to deal with in everyday life.
- Please do not insist on everyone greeting one another at the beginning of Mass. We are all there to worship God and participate in the Sacrifice of the Mass; we are not there for a social occasion. Your invitation forces people to either do what they are not required by the Church to do or appear to be unfriendly and unkind, all the while missing a much greater calling to be aware of our humble presence before Almighty God.
- Please don't come down from the sanctuary to offer individuals a sign of peace (R.S. 72). You have already offered us Christ's peace from the altar. Coming down to shake hands only shows that you don't believe what you have just said.
- Please don't make up your own words and pretend that's part of the Mass (R.S. 59). Please just read what the Church asks you to read, and do what the Church asks you to do. That's what I came for. That's what you were ordained for.
- Please don't hand out Holy Communion to everyone on the sanctuary as if they were all concelebrating priests (GIRM 162). The Church clearly states that you must complete the Sacrifice yourself (consuming both Body and Blood) before distributing Holy Communion to others.
- Please use proper sacred vessels, not common crockery I can find in my kitchen, which is unworthy of so great a Sacrifice. (R.S. 117)
- Please vest properly. (R.S. 123) The least I can expect is that you look like a Catholic priest celebrating Mass. A stole is not enough. You are required to wear a chasuble, and to respect the liturgical calendar with the proper colour.
- Please do not hand over your duty of distributing Holy Communion to lay people, while you sit back (R.S. 88, 157). It is your job. Lay people are not allowed to unless there are extraordinary circumstances (R.S. 151). Your personal desires and preferences are not extraordinary circumstances.
- Please pray the Eucharistic Prayer by yourself. You do not need our help. It is not a prayer of the faithful, but is reserved for you, by virtue of your ordination. (R.S. 52).
- Please don't talk jovially inside the church. The church is a house of worship, a place of silence and reverence for our Almighty God who resides there. You should know this better than others and set a good example. We can socialise outside.
- Only ordained men are ordinary "ministers of the Eucharist". Please don't use this term for lay people. They are "extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion" if they are needed (R.S. 155).
- Please purify the sacred vessels yourself after Holy Communion (R.S. 119). Don't leave them for the 'women to do the dishes afterwards'.

Signed: (name and address)

"Let Bishops, Priests and Deacons, in the exercise of the sacred ministry, examine their consciences as regards the authenticity and fidelity of the actions they have performed in the name of Christ and the Church in the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy. Let each one of the sacred ministers ask himself, even with severity, whether he has respected the rights of the lay members of Christ's faithful, who confidently entrust themselves and their children to him, relying on him to fulfill for the faithful those sacred functions that the Church intends to carry out in celebrating the sacred Liturgy at Christ's command. For each one should always remember that he is a servant of the Sacred Liturgy." (R.S. n.186)

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–8.30pm Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Cowwarr Ord'te	Wednesday (Low Mass 10am) 10.30 – 11am
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)
Heyfield Ord'te	4 th Sunday 4pm Evensong & Benediction
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Maffra	Wednesday (5pm Mass) – 6pm
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday 10am – 6pm (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 12pm First Friday 11.30am – 4pm
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

*“I will go anywhere and do anything
in order to communicate the love of
Jesus to those who do not know Him
or have forgotten Him.”*

St Frances Xavier Cabrini, Virgin and Foundress

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- Contact ITD if you would like to be added to the monthly mailing list (email or hard copy).
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Editor - Janet Kingman

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

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

Letters to the Editor

Readers are encouraged to contribute letters or articles. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. The purpose of sharing letters is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for making positive changes, that is, in line with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We live in joyful hope that the diocese we love can be faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church. As such, Into the Deep aims to be a messenger of hope and not of doom.

Name and contact details must accompany letters. However, if there is sufficient reason, anonymity will be preserved when publishing. Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of ITD.

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For those who are on Facebook, find Into the Deep at www.facebook.com/stoneswillshout or search for “Into the Deep” or “stoneswillshout” and you’ll find us. Stay connected by liking the page and sharing and commenting on posts. We look forward to seeing you there!

- Ed.