

# *Into the Deep*

Issue 157

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

January/February 2016

## No Magic Wand

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 01-01-2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning and happy new year! It's lovely to exchange good wishes at the beginning of the year. Thus we renew to one another, the hope that what we await will be somewhat better. It is, fundamentally, *a sign of the hope* that animates and invites us to believe in life.

We know, however, that everything will not change with the new year, and that so many of yesterday's problems will remain also tomorrow.

So I would like to express to you a wish sustained by a *real hope*, which I draw from today's Liturgy.

They are the words with which the Lord Himself asks for the blessing of His people: "The Lord make His face shine upon you [...] The Lord lift up His countenance upon you" (Num 6:25-26).

I also wish you this: may the Lord look upon you and enable you to rejoice, knowing that every day His merciful face, more radiant than the sun, will shine on you and never set!

To discover God's face renews life. Because He is a Father enamoured of man, who never tires to start over again with us to renew us. But what patience the Lord has with us! He does not tire to begin over again every time we fall.

However, the Lord does not promise magical changes; He does not use a magic wand. He likes to change the reality from within, with patience and love. He asks to enter our life with delicacy, as the rain on the earth, to then bear fruit. And He always awaits us and looks on us with tenderness.

Every morning, when we awake, we can say: "May the Lord make His face shine upon me" – a beautiful prayer, which is a reality.

Zenit.org 05-01-2016

**“Lent** - this time runs the risk of being marked by sadness, by the darkness of life. Instead, it is a precious gift of God; it is an intense time full of meaning in the journey of the Church; it is the itinerary to the Lord's Easter.”

Pope Benedict XVI, 09-03-2011

## Brave The Blows

Pope Francis, Central African Republic, 29-11-2015

The salvation proclaimed by God has an invincible power which will make it ultimately prevail.

After announcing to His disciples the terrible signs that will precede His coming, Jesus concludes: 'When these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near'.

... It is amid unprecedented devastation that Jesus wishes to show His great power, His incomparable glory and the power of that love which stops at nothing, even before the falling of the heavens, the conflagration of the world or the tumult of the seas. God is stronger, more powerful, than all else. This conviction gives to the believer serenity, courage and the strength to persevere in good amid the greatest hardships.

Even when the powers of Hell are unleashed, Christians must rise to the summons, their heads held high, and be ready to brave blows in this battle over which God will have the last word. And that word will be one of love and peace!

Vatican Information Service, 30-11-2015

## God Doesn't Owe Us

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, Philadelphia

We are wise to remember that God does not owe us forgiveness or redemption – or anything else.

Nor does God's mercy license us to continue in sin. It demands a response to "go, and do not sin again."

To borrow a thought from Augustine: We must not despair, one of the thieves was saved; we must not presume, one of the thieves was damned.

First Things, December 2015

All issues of *Into the Deep* are at [www.stoneswillshout.com/wp](http://www.stoneswillshout.com/wp)

## Immensely More

**Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, Major Penitentiary of the Apostolic Penitentiary, in an interview with Zenit**

Widespread today, in fact, is a certain tendency to “measure” Mercy “on sin,” almost as if sin has the power, or worse yet the right, to arouse Divine Mercy; almost as if Mercy can be reduced to mere “forgiveness” of fault.

Divine Mercy certainly also means forgiveness of the sinner but, at the same time, it is immensely more.

It is God’s “irrupting” in man’s history; it is His revealing Himself to us, revealing the Mystery of His divine intimacy; it is His sharing of our human condition itself, to the end, to the experience of death, to render us entirely participants of His own Divine Life; it is our participating in such Divine Life through the Sacrament of Baptism, which changes our being radically, drawing it to the Being itself of Christ, in His Being Son of the Eternal Father, and admitting us in the great communion of the Baptized, which embraces heaven and earth, which is the Communion of the Church; it is giving His Real Presence in the Most Holy Eucharist, which unites us ever more perfectly to Him and draws us in His salvific Offer to the Father.

Mercy, understood as forgiveness of individual fault, comes only “after” in this sense. First there is the immense gift of the Life of Christ and then the wonderful “removal” of that which in us has obfuscated or compromised it.

Zenit.org 09-12-2015

## Extreme Remarks

I have been receiving Into the Deep for a number of years and have considered it an excellent Catholic orthodox medium.

Regretfully, I was disappointed with the article by John Schmid in last issue in relation to the hymn “Come as you are.” I considered it radical comment.

A hymn such as “Come as you are” is not just an everyday run-of-the-mill song, but rather a beautiful prayer.

Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross to free sinners, not just Christians, but people of all faiths, even those with none.

There are people throughout society who have contributed much for the betterment of humanity, believing in God and practising good, knowing little or nothing about confession or sacraments as we Catholics do. Surely they are not lost souls.

Jesus did indeed give his life on the cross to save sinners, no matter how bad.

The gentle persuasion of Jesus comes over very strong in this hymn. It is a beautiful invitation to all, just to come as we are.

The parody that was written by Bruce Dawes was at the least most shameful.

There are extremes in all areas of our society even in the Catholic Church. Extremism creates many problems and can cause good people to fall away rather than embrace the faith.

I earnestly pray that the extreme remarks about “Come as you are” will not be repeated.

**Brian Dillon, Bendigo, Victoria**

## Other Forms of Fasting

**Fr Raneiro Cantalamessa, preacher of the Pontifical Household, First Lenten homily 2014.** Zenit.org 14-03-2014

Fasting from food still keeps its vitality and is highly recommended, when, of course, its motivation is religious and not only hygienic and aesthetic, but it is not the only kind of fasting or the most necessary.

Today the most necessary and meaningful form of fasting is called sobriety. To willingly deprive oneself from little and great comforts, of what is useless, and sometimes also damaging to one’s health. ... to renounce the superfluous, to be able to do without something, to stop oneself from taking recourse to the most comfortable solution, from choosing the easiest thing, the object of greater luxury – to live, in sum with sobriety – is more effective than imposing on oneself artificial penances. ...

More necessary than fasting from food today is fasting from images. We live in a civilization of images; we have become devourers of images. Through television, internet, the press, advertising, we let a flood of images enter us. Many of them are unhealthy, they engender violence and malice, they do nothing other than incite the worst instincts we bear within us. ... If we do not create a filter, a barricade, we quickly reduce our imagination and our spirit to a rubbish dump. ...

Another of these alternative fasts which we can do during Lent is that of evil words. ... Evil words are not only bad language; they are also cutting, negative words that systematically bring to light a brother’s weak side, words that sow discord and suspicions. ...

## Greatest Legacy

### **Pope Francis, to parents of babies being Baptised**

You have asked for faith. The Church, when she gives you the lighted candle, will tell you to safeguard the faith in these children.

And, in the end, do not forget that the greatest legacy you can give your children is faith. Take care that it is not lost, to make it grow and to leave it as a legacy.

This I wish to you today, on this day that is joyful for you: I hope that you will be able to raise these children in faith and that the greatest legacy they will receive from you will be faith.

Vatican Information Service 10-01-2016

## Good News from Tasmania

Thank you for your most interesting publication over the past year. I read it from cover to cover. I enclose a donation to help keep the print version going.

My husband and I have moved from Queensland to Tasmania. It is a very pretty place. We are blessed with a traditional parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea. We have a very welcoming resident priest Fr Edward Zamett who is a Franciscan Friar on loan from Malta. He celebrates 50 years of priesthood this year.

We are blessed with Holy Mass every day although just a small and elderly community. We pray for the young families to return.

Wendy Harrap, George Town, Tasmania

## Disgust

I am writing to you to express my disgust at your reference to girl altar servers as serviettes (Dec ITD, p.5, Richard Stokes).

This demeaning description does the author and your publication no credit whatsoever and the only item to be "cleaned up" is your reputation.

I expect to see a full retraction and apology in the next issue.

Michael Maguire, Tintinhull, New South Wales

I'm sorry, I thought it was very funny and clever! I'm sure no disrespect was meant to the girls themselves. Ed.

## Before It's Too Late!

Once again our 40Days For Life will start Ash Wednesday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of February.

It will once again be held at that "Fertility control clinic" for 40 days between the hours of 7am and 7pm. 118 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne. Tram 75 from Flinders Street Station, Stop 13 and then walk back 50 metres.

The exclusion zone has not been gazetted and very likely will not be enforced until 1-07-16.

We and our family and friends could, ought to, should, or I like to say, **must** pull out all stops to be there as often as we possibly are able, to defend the defenceless by our peaceful presence and pray silently for mum, baby, and the abortion personnel.

Please fill in hour(s) suitable to you and/or family, friends on the website, or ring me on 0406 322 694 or send an e-mail to fonsforlife@skymesh.com.au.

And, God willing, we may, by our peaceful presence, convert one or more of those people, assist mums and save babies.

Oh Lord my God! How great thou art.

Fons Janssen, Organiser, 40DFL Melbourne  
www.40daysforlife/melbourne

## Parish Holy Doors

As a friend so astutely observed... shouldn't the "Door of Mercy" being highlighted on and from 8<sup>th</sup> December even in parish churches, be the door to the Confessional (apart from St Peter's Basilica where there IS a ceremonial "Holy Door")?

Monica Vaughan, Rockhampton, Queensland

## Courage To Go In!

Pope Francis, General Audience, 18-11-2015

Before us is the door, but not only the Holy Door, the other – the great door of God's Mercy, and it is a beautiful door! – which receives our repentance, offering the grace of His forgiveness. The door is generously open; a bit of courage is needed on our part to cross the threshold. Each one of us has within himself things that burden him. All of us. We are all sinners! Let us take advantage of this moment and cross the threshold of this mercy of God, who never tires of forgiving, never tires of waiting for us! He looks at us, He is always beside us. Courage! Let us go in through this door! ...

Zenit.org 18-11-2015

# Surely You Jest!

When I was in the Sandhurst Diocese recently, I heard they were going to review Catholic Education. At last a bishop with courage to tackle the parlous state of Religious Education (RE) in our Catholic schools, I thought. But the let-down comes when you look at the review committee: Chair Dr (Fr) Brian Boyle, Episcopal Vicar for Education in the diocese; Mr Paul Desmond, Director of the CEO Sandhurst; Ms Maria Kirkwood, Director of the CEO Sale (Ms Kirkwood has publicly stated you don't have to go to Mass to be a good Catholic); Fr Peter Taylor, Parish Priest Diocese of Sandhurst; Sr Helen Monkivitch RSM, Mercy Health Australia; Mr Mike Byrne, former Executive Director Queensland Catholic Education Commission. One could argue that most of this review committee are or have been responsible for the disastrous state of RE in our Catholic schools. What would be the outcry if a drug addict was put in charge of a pharmacy!

In a piece titled "Catholic Ed Renews Itself" (Sandpiper, Sept 2015), Fr Boyle writes among other things, "Catholic education in the Sandhurst diocese is one of the great evangelising works of the Church." Surely you jest, Father! Do you not realise, for example, the failure rate for students leaving our schools knowing the faith is 90%+ and this after 12-13 years in the Catholic system? Is he unaware that 50% or more of the Catholic school population are non-Catholics? Of the remaining 50% God alone knows how many are from practising families – maybe 10%.

In another excerpt, Fr Boyle writes: "I invite you to read the terms of reference of the review carefully. The focus of the review is on the CEO itself, and not for example on RE in our schools." Surely any review of Catholic education must focus on the teaching of authentic Catholic values in our schools? If it does not, the review is a waste of time and money.

In his article, Fr Boyle advises that all stakeholders are to be consulted, including primary and secondary principals, parents, and the parish priests as the canonical administrators of the schools among others.

In view of what happened to Fr John Speekman, what parish priest is going to be critical of the CEO or about the lack of authentic Catholic teaching in the RE curriculum? The same could be said of any principal or teacher who raises concerns about the content of RE in our schools – just ask Greg Kingman. As for the parents, it has been my experience that while some may privately hold concerns, they will not raise them publicly.

Until our bishops and priests begin preaching true Catholic doctrine, nothing is going to change. As it stands too many of our Catholic teachers do not practise the faith. How on earth can anyone who is not serious about the faith, pass it on? We even have non-Catholics involved in teaching RE in some of our schools. The RE being taught in our schools is not Catholic but merely generic.

To renew Catholic education, one has to first focus on the importance of teaching true Catholic doctrine. This is not going to happen while we have teachers who do not know what those doctrines are.

Where does the responsibility of this monstrous failure of Catholic education lie? One could argue that it involves all of us. But those mainly responsible are our bishops past and present. These successors of the apostles are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the faith. With all due respect, they have failed dismally. They have been totally negligent in carrying out their God-given right to safeguard the faith.

The CEO Directors and staff need to have their power curtailed. From the Director down, they need to be re-educated. The same applies to school principals and teachers. The non-Catholic population in our schools needs to be radically reduced. The philosophy of our Catholic universities and teaching institutions needs to be carefully examined. Our parish priests, as canonical administrators of the schools, need to be encouraged to exercise their authority without interference from the CEO and they must be backed by their bishop. With all due respect, I could assemble a review committee that would impartially investigate what has gone wrong and implement steps to address the most important task of rectifying the teaching of RE in our schools. I could also recommend a group whose task would be to teach true Catholic doctrine to RE teachers who would have to pass a rigorous examination before they would be accredited to teach RE.

As like all of us one day when we stand before the judgment seat of God, each bishop will have to give an account of his stewardship. Pray for our bishops and priests and all responsible for the teaching of the true faith, that they will examine their consciences and endeavour to rectify this very sad situation. Pray a rosary each week asking the Mother of God to guide them.

John Henderson, Morwell, Victoria

# Christ-Centred Buddhism

Sunday attendance is down to less than 4%, so the parish of St Eugene de Mazenod in Burpengary is now promoting Buddhism.

A “mindfulness retreat” is being advertised, where you can “become aware of your own abundance, discover happiness and joy through creativity, find out what it’s like to be in FLOW... and unleash your potential to be, do and have all that you dream.”

I have heard the claim that it’s ‘Christ-centred’ Buddhism. I suppose it’s possible to have Christ-centred Islam, or even Christ-centred Satanism.

But the Ascended Masters of Buddhism, conjured during the emptying of the mind in yoga, are demons. New Age mysticism is an offence against the First Commandment.

Instead of pushing non-Christian religions, I believe the parish could more profitably make a start on teaching the Catholic faith.

In this parish I have never heard a homily which mentioned the evils of abortion, contraception, homosexual practices, or anything about the four Last Things. Perhaps our clergy believe that these things no longer exist.

Instead, things like social justice, global warming, and illegal immigration seem to have taken the place of the teachings of the Church. The new sins are sexism, racism and writing to the Pope.

The parish priest is Indian, but he seems unaware of the evils of the New Age movement.

**Richard Stokes, Burpengary, Queensland**

## No Normal Priests

**Pope Francis to seminarians, 25-01-2016**

However, a temptation appears on the way that must be rejected: that of “normality,” of a Pastor for whom a “normal” life is enough.

Thus this priest begins to be contented with some attention received, he judges the ministry on the basis of his successes and he abandons himself to research of what pleases him, becoming tepid and without a real interest in others.

Instead, for us “normality” is pastoral holiness, the gift of life. If a priest chooses to be only a normal person, he will be a mediocre priest or worse.

Zenit.org 25-01-2016

# Desperate Creatures

**Pope Francis, Homily for the opening of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, 08-12-2015**

The beginning of the history of sin in the Garden of Eden yields to a plan of saving love.

The words of Genesis reflect our own daily experience: we are constantly tempted to disobedience, a disobedience expressed in wanting to go about our lives without regard for God’s will.

This is the enmity which keeps striking at people’s lives, setting them in opposition to God’s plan.

Yet the history of sin can only be understood in the light of God’s love and forgiveness. Sin can only be understood in this light.

Were sin the only thing that mattered, we would be the most desperate of creatures. But the promised triumph of Christ’s love enfolds everything in the Father’s mercy.

Zenit.org 08-12-2015

## Notice

Fr John Speekman has, at his own request, been incardinated into the Wagga Wagga diocese. This means he is no longer a priest of the Sale diocese, but ‘belongs’ to Wagga diocese. He remains administrator at St Brigid’s parish in Howlong.

## Beginning of Lent

**Pope Benedict XVI, 04-03-2012**

From Tabor, the mountain of the Transfiguration, the Lenten journey leads us to Golgotha, the mountain of supreme sacrifice of love of the one Priest of the new and eternal covenant. In that sacrifice is contained the greatest force for transformation in human history. Taking upon himself every consequence of evil and sin, Jesus rose on the third day as conqueror of death and the Evil One.

Lent prepares us to personally participate in this great mystery of faith, which we will celebrate in the Triduum of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

Let us entrust our Lenten journey and that of the whole Church to the Virgin Mary. May she who followed her Son Jesus to the cross, help us to be faithful disciples of Christ, mature Christians, to be able to participate together with her in the fullness of Easter joy. Amen!

Zenit.org 05-03-2012

## Grey

The overall feeling I have when I read Catholic Life (Sale's diocesan newspaper), is that it has little to do with the Catholic faith. It's like they've admitted defeat, that schools are not Catholic, that people don't come to Mass anymore, and so they've 'moved the goalposts' in their heads, and they subtly or not-so-subtly try to plant the idea that being Catholic is not all about the Mass, not all about Truth.

There's a regular nudge to readers to be more grey. This was actually the editor's stated aim many years ago, that he wanted people to be "more grey", and I think he's achieving it. But it's a team effort, including Catholic Education officials, priests, and regular column-writers like Jim Quillinan (his latest column, for example, challenges regular church-goers not to think that coming to Mass only once a year e.g. at Christmas, is not enough). We see priests unwilling to dress like priests, desperate to look just like any other old bloke. We find Catholic donations proudly going to places like Gippsland Women's Health, a pro-abortion, pro-contraception, anti-Catholic organisation.

It's tough reading Catholic Life. It's demoralising. Grey is very bland. There's nothing to teach, inspire courage, challenge. A challenge to be more grey just falls flat. Ed.

## Empty Words

It's sickening to read the same old jargon from one Catholic education bureaucrat to the next.

In the November 2015 issue of Catholic Life (p.9), Debra Punton, whose title is "Deputy Director Catholic Identity Learning and Teaching", concludes her glowing summary of Catholic education in the Sale diocese by saying: "I am confident ...that we are on the right path to achieving high quality outcomes for each and every one of our children and youth in schools in our diocese."

What a meaningless statement to make with such unfounded confidence. Right path? High quality outcomes? Each and every child?

It's the "high quality outcomes" that I find the most nebulous. For someone who has "Catholic Identity" in her strange title, you'd think you could assume that the "outcomes" she refers to would involve something to do with the Catholic faith. But I can't even begin to explain how unlikely I think that is.

Perhaps one day Ms Punton will explain what she means by "high quality outcomes" so that Catholics can have a look at "each and every" Catholic school graduate and see if they agree. Ed.

## Hoverboard Priest

At the risk of harping on about the Fr Speekman saga long after it's over (officially at least), I was struck by a recent news item regarding a priest in the Philippines, disciplined by his bishop. The priest had cruised around his church on a hoverboard (like a battery-operated skateboard), singing to his congregation towards the end of Christmas Eve Mass.

What struck me was how his bishop dealt with this: He told him what he'd done wrong, why it was wrong, and what was expected of him. Simple, straight-forward, just. Fair. Honest. Dealt with. Within a few days. Publicly. Done. No need for gossip, no need for wondering, no need for guessing motives.

The Fr Speekman saga began in 2001 when Bishop Coffey threatened to remove him from his parish. He would not say what he had supposedly done wrong. In 2003 he removed him. Still no evidence, no opportunity to change, or defend, or understand. This dragged on, to Rome and back numerous times, for years. By the time the final decree closed the case in 2011, although it was in the Bishop's favour, still there was no clear indication of what Fr Speekman had actually done wrong, and therefore in all the years there was no opportunity for him to learn how he could have changed, what he could have done, what was expected of him. That has to be a form of torture.

That priest in the Philippines may have felt embarrassed by his Bishop's swift and public action, but he can be grateful that he was treated fairly and honestly. I would think that being humiliated by a public mistake you've made, is better than being humiliated by gossip and innuendo for ten years and beyond. In the hoverboard case, people can have their opinions on whether what he did was right or wrong, whether the punishment was appropriate or not – but at least they know the facts of the matter. In Fr Speekman's case, everyone had an opinion on his guilt or innocence, yet no one knew what he was actually being accused of having done. It was the very least that Bishop Coffey could have done, God rest his soul. Ed.

# We Are Not Alright

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 06-12-2015

... John the Baptist...preached a “baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” And perhaps we ask ourselves, “Why do we have to convert? Conversion is for an atheist who becomes a believer or a sinner who becomes just. But we don’t need it. We are already Christian.”

We can ask ourselves this and in this regard say, “We’re ok.” But that’s not true. Thinking like this, we don’t realize that it is precisely because of this presumption – that we are Christians, good in every way, that we’re doing the right thing – precisely because of this presumption we must convert: from the supposition that, overall, things are going well like they are and we don’t need any conversion.

But let us ask: Is it true that in the various situations and circumstances of life, we have in us the same sentiments that Jesus had? Is it true that we feel as Christ felt? For example, when we suffer some evil or some affront, can we react without animosity and forgive from the heart those who ask us for forgiveness? How difficult it is to forgive, eh? How difficult! ... Or when we are called to share joys and sadnesses, do we know how to truly cry with the one who cries and rejoice with the one who rejoices? Or when we should share our faith, do we know how to do it with courage and simplicity, without being ashamed of the Gospel? And in this way, we can ask ourselves so many questions. We’re not alright. We should always convert, to have the sentiments that Jesus had. ...

And salvation is offered to every man, and every people, without excluding anyone, to each one of us. None of us can say, “I’m a saint; I’m perfect; I’m already saved.” No. We should always accept this offer of salvation, and that’s what the Year of Mercy is for: to advance farther in this journey of salvation, this path that Jesus has taught us. God wants all mankind to be saved through the mediation of Jesus, the only mediator.

Therefore, each one of us is called to make Jesus known to those who still do not know him. But this is not to proselytize. No. It is to open a door. “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” St Paul declared. If Our Lord Jesus has changed our lives, and he changes it every time we draw close to him, how can we not feel a passion to make him known to those we find at work, at school, in our communities, in the hospital, in meeting places? If we look around us, we find people who would be disposed to beginning – or beginning again – a journey of faith if they were to find Christians who are in love with Jesus. Shouldn’t we be and couldn’t we be these Christians?

I leave you with this question: Am I truly in love with Jesus? Am I convinced that Jesus offers me and gives me salvation? ...

Zenit.org 06-12-2015

## Why Has This Happened to Me?

**Pope Francis, in his message for World Day of the Sick, 2016. The World Day of the Sick is celebrated annually on 11 February, the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes.**

Illness, above all grave illness, always places human existence in crisis and brings with it questions that dig deep. Our first response may at times be one of rebellion: Why has this happened to me? We can feel desperate, thinking that all is lost, that things no longer have meaning...

In these situations, faith in God is on the one hand tested, yet at the same time can reveal all of its positive resources. Not because faith makes illness, pain, or the questions which they raise, disappear, but because it offers a key by which we can discover the deepest meaning of what we are experiencing; a key that helps us to see how illness can be the way to draw nearer to Jesus who walks at our side, weighed down by the Cross. And this key is given to us by Mary, our Mother, who has known this way at first hand. ...

If we can learn to obey the words of Mary, who says: “Do whatever he tells you”, Jesus will always change the water of our lives into precious wine. ...

Let us entrust to the Virgin Mary our trials and tribulations, together with our joys and consolations. Let us beg her to turn her eyes of mercy towards us, especially in times of pain, and make us worthy of beholding, today and always, the merciful face of her Son Jesus!

## On The Brink

From the Opening Address by Archbishop Julian Porteous, at the Life & Family Conference, Albury, New South Wales, January 2016

In our modern world which is often hostile to religion, Christian families are extremely important centres of living faith. As such Pope Francis recently reminded us that they are under not only physical but also spiritual attack. At a recent event he noted that:

“Families are the domestic Church, where Jesus grows; he grows in the love of spouses, he grows in the lives of children. That is why the enemy so often attacks the family. The devil does not want the family; he tries to destroy it, to make sure that there is no love there. Married couples are sinners, like us all, but they want to go forward in faith, in fruitfulness, in their children and their children’s faith. May the Lord bless families and strengthen them in this time of crisis when the devil is seeking to destroy them.”  
(Address of Pope Francis to participants in the 37<sup>th</sup> National Convocation of the Renewal in the Holy Spirit, 1 June 2014)

In these words the Pope is reminding us of something very important: that marriage today is under spiritual assault. If the devil is successful in destroying family life, he will have achieved a greater success, he will have caused the breakdown of human society.

Our battle for family life is an intense spiritual battle. I fear the devil senses he is on the brink of success. We, however, know that marriage and family is God’s wise plan for human life and that marriage and family are blessed and made holy in the Sacrament of Matrimony. As families embrace the grace of the Sacrament then family life can flourish as places of genuine love and the nurturing of full human life.

**Following his address, Archbishop Porteous made the following comments (from my notes). Ed.**

“Humanae Vitae was right, it was true. Once we separated love from procreation, there was no turning back. But we can go forward. We must teach the Church’s full teaching on marriage and sexuality. We have the resources. The task is to do it.”

Sr Yvonne Berecny added from the floor that “if we don’t have prayer with it then all the human effort won’t work.”

Archbishop Porteous discouraged us from using the term “gay marriage” and encouraged us instead to refer to “changing the definition of marriage.”

## Good Liturgy, Bad Liturgy

From notes I took at the address by Fr Terence Mary Naughtin, at the Life & Family Conference, Albury, New South Wales, January 2016 – Ed.

There is a deeper foundational problem to the crisis of marriage and family – the lack of the sense of God in our world. And in our Church. God is not the focus in many of our parishes. We need to put our own house back in order.

Deficiencies in the liturgy will lead to deficiencies elsewhere. If God is absent or obscured in the liturgy then it is likely he will be absent or obscured in the lives of the faithful.

The further society moves away from God, the more it worships itself.

Celebrating Mass *ad orientem* allows us to fix our gaze on the One who will return from the East. The Liturgy is God’s action, not ours – we direct our gaze towards Him. Pope Benedict XVI said that if the centrality of Christ doesn’t come out in the Mass, then it’s not a Christian liturgy. God acts through Christ, and we can only act through Him, with Him, in Him.

Vatican II called for Latin to be used and known for parts of the Mass, and Gregorian chant to be known by all the faithful – this is something that is not spoken about as part of Vatican II.

Bad liturgy makes bad Catholics.

Liturgy “pushes ajar the doors of Heaven.”

It is through the liturgy, and not through study or talks, that the faithful are ultimately led closer to God.

Modern banalities try to adapt religion to man, instead of man to religion.

## Our Father

Re “Lead us not into temptation” (Dec ITD, p.9):

In my Bible, Good News, Catholic Study Edition, (Imprimatur by Archbishop John Whealon 1979, Thomas Nelson publishers), Matthew Ch 6 v.13 reads, “Do not bring us to hard testing but keep us safe from the Evil One.”

Luke 11 v.46, “And do not bring us to hard testing.”

For what it is worth.

Irene Kelly, Glen Waverley, Victoria



# Mass Celebrated Toward the Altar

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

**Q:** I am aware of a group of priests in a local institution who are celebrating the ordinary form of the Mass, oriented toward the tabernacle, in the local language. ... I've heard a handful of mixed reactions from the faithful. A few approve, and many reacting with anger, feeling alienated. Some even say that they will never attend Mass at that institution. I was wondering, what do the documents say about the orientation of the priest during Mass? ... - A.G., New York

**A:** The General Instruction of the Roman Missal says the following in No. 299:

“The altar should be built apart from the wall, in such a way that it is possible to walk around it easily and that Mass can be celebrated at it facing the people, which is desirable wherever possible. The altar should, moreover, be so placed as to be truly the centre toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns. The altar is usually fixed and is dedicated.”

The expression “desirable wherever possible” led some to think that Mass facing the altar was somehow forbidden or declared undesirable by the new edition of the missal. A prominent cardinal requested a clarification to the Congregation for Divine Worship, which replied on September 25, 2000, ... [making] clear that the possibility of celebrating toward the altar is a legitimate one. The rubrics of the Roman Missal foresee this possibility by indicating the moments when the priest should turn toward the people, such as for the greetings and the “Behold the Lamb of God.”

In St Peter's Basilica almost every altar, including the tomb of St John Paul II, require this orientation when celebrating Mass. Both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have adopted this orientation when celebrating in the Sistine Chapel. Some other bishops have also done so in their cathedrals.

We could say that, unless this form of celebration is used or is proposed as somehow more orthodox than Mass facing the people, there is no theological objection. This was also stated by the Congregation for Divine Worship in the year 2000, in response to an American bishop who was concerned about some who asserted that there was something wrong with Mass facing the people. ...

Unfortunately, some members of the faithful have developed the idea that facing the altar is to turn one's back to the people. This idea was non-existent in all the centuries that Mass was celebrated facing the altar and is non-existent in practically all the Eastern Catholic Churches which continue to do so.

The fundamental idea, as mentioned in the first letter above, is that all together face God. When the priest turned toward the altar, it meant that all together, priest and people, turned toward the Lord. For this reason, during the Eucharistic Prayer, even when celebrating facing toward the assembly, the priest does not usually make eye contact with the people because he is not speaking directly to them but speaking to the heavenly Father on their behalf.

However, given that this reality is often misunderstood, it is necessary to explain to the faithful why the decision to face the altar has been taken, so as to avoid anybody feeling alienated due to a lack of formation regarding the spiritual sense behind either option of liturgical orientation.

Zenit.org 12-01-2016

## Holy Thursday Footwashing Rite

The Holy Father has decreed that the washing of the feet at the Mass of the Lord's Supper may include women: “pastors may choose a group of faithful representing the variety and unity of every part of the People of God. This group may consist of men and women, and ideally of the young and the old, healthy and sick, clerics, consecrated persons and laypeople.” Pope Francis relates the meaning of the rite to Christ's humility, service and love for all mankind, thereby broadening the meaning that it previously had.

The footwashing rite was introduced as an option in 1955, and until now was only to be performed on twelve men. It remains an optional rite.

This is a change that has been officially made, and the liturgical books of the Roman Rite have been modified to reflect the change. It does not mean that it was wrong to insist on only men before now, but it does mean that it would be wrong to insist on only men from now on.

Ed.

# Days of Penance

## Code of Canon Law

**Can. 1249** The divine law binds all the Christian faithful to do penance each in his or her own way.

In order for all to be united among themselves by some common observance of penance, however, penitential days are prescribed on which the Christian faithful devote themselves in a special way to prayer, perform works of piety and charity, and deny themselves by fulfilling their own obligations more faithfully and especially by observing fast and abstinence, according to the norm of the following canons.

**Can. 1250** The penitential days and times in the universal Church are every Friday of the whole year and the season of Lent.

**Can. 1251** Abstinence from meat, or from some other food as determined by the Episcopal Conference, is to be observed on all Fridays, unless a solemnity should fall on a Friday. Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

**Can. 1252** The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. The law of fasting binds those who have attained their majority, until the beginning of their sixtieth year. Pastors of souls and parents are to ensure that even those who by reason of their age are not bound by the law of fasting and abstinence, are taught the true meaning of penance.

**Can. 1253** The conference of bishops can determine more precisely the observance of fast and abstinence as well as substitute other forms of penance, especially works of charity and exercises of piety, in whole or in part, for abstinence and fast.

## Did you know?

Updates from the Ordinariate parish of the Most Holy Family, Gippsland

By Fr Ken Clark, OLSC

- We will be celebrating First Saturday devotions from February onwards. St Bridgid's, Cowwarr, 9.30am Confession, 10am Mass, followed by meditation/rosary/adoration. All welcome!
- The Ordinariate Rite maintains the tradition of Septuagesima Sunday (9<sup>th</sup> before Easter), Sexagesima Sunday (8<sup>th</sup> before Easter) and Quinquagesima Sunday (7<sup>th</sup> before). It is a period of preparation for Lent. Sunday Mass is 10am at St Michael's, Heyfield. All welcome!

# Great Opportunity

Pope Francis announced this Holy year of Mercy to highlight the Church's mission to be a sacrament of God's loving mercy and salvation in the world. He exhorted us all to be credible and effective witnesses of mercy.

If this Extraordinary Jubilee is to bear fruit, then resolving to return to the practice of regular sacramental Confession should be central to our lives this upcoming year. This sacrament is the ordinary and unique way of encountering Christ's grace and mercy, of obtaining forgiveness and the remission of mortal sin committed after Baptism.

For too long now the crisis in the sacrament of Penance, and the loss of the sense of sin in the Church that has resulted from it, has been allowed to continue unabated. This crisis was primarily brought about by bishops and priests who, in their need to appear pastoral, cancelled the Church's doctrines and zealously administered the Third Rite of Confession at every opportunity. Some of these misguided spiritual fathers, in their efforts to appear non-judgmental and compassionate, are even too afraid to mention the word sin in the penitential rite at Mass.

This crisis screams out to our bishops and priests to show leadership in appreciation of this precious sacrament of the merciful love which God the Father has bestowed on his Church in Christ. It shouts out for the pastoral courage to confront head-on the loss of the sense of sin in and out of the Church, and for sincerely renewed efforts in giving people the right and true understanding of sin and its effects, and of grace and divine mercy.

Once again holy Mother Church invites all her children to start afresh from Christ through the sacrament of his loving mercy. She presents Catholics with the opportunity to renew their interior life, to engage in spiritual combat, to order and heal their souls, and earnestly pursue a life of holiness. She calls us all to, "put out into the deep" of Christ's eternal mercy, trusting in his forgiveness which is far more powerful than our worst sin.

And as always, the Church provides a great opportunity of reconciliation for those Catholics who for one reason or another severed their relationship with this great family, the home of truth, and do what the Prodigal Son did – "come to his senses" and repentantly return to the Father's house to feast on its grace and spiritual riches.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

# Being Stared At By Truth

From a homily by Fr John Speekman, 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Year B, [homiliesfromaustralia.blogspot.com.au](http://homiliesfromaustralia.blogspot.com.au)

Last week in the Gospel Jesus told of his passion and how his followers, too, must be prepared to suffer and even to lose their life. Peter's reaction is typical of ours when real suffering comes. No, Lord! No! Jesus told Peter his thinking was all wrong, that he needed to stop thinking like a man and start thinking like God. That incident was valuable because it underlines for us that we have *radically* to reverse our values, to change our way of thinking, when it comes to the wisdom of God.

Today Jesus again predicts his passion in a kind of rerun of last week. This time the apostles say nothing. Very wise. They didn't understand and they were afraid to ask. That's a crucially important thing for them, and for us, to know. God's revelation is totally other. It overturns our way of thinking. It turns our perspectives upside down.

When they reach the house Jesus asks "What were you arguing about?" They didn't answer. They said nothing. This silence of theirs is a special silence. It's the silence of shame, of the guilty. We have all experienced this silence. It's the silence of a young child when dad asks "Did you hit your sister?" Of a teenager when mum asks "Did you smoke again after you promised you wouldn't?" Of a guilty shop assistant who is asked "Did I see you take money from the till? Did you steal?" SILENCE. The silence which comes when we are stared at by truth.

This was such a moment for the disciples. "Did I hear you right? Were you grown men arguing about which one of you was the greatest?" And it would not have been just the question: What were you arguing about on the road? that startled the apostles. It would have been the instant awareness that nothing is hidden from the Lord and that the very question itself was already a conviction of guilt.

This, indeed, is a very interesting and essential insight which we need to make our own and bring to mind when we are considering our last judgment. The mere presence of the Lord Jesus makes us immediately aware of wrong. At that moment all the wrong in our lives will acquire its true character and accuse us. Our eyes will suddenly be wide open as though we are seeing ourselves through his eyes. No sin will then escape us. We will see it all.

It is the presence of God which does this. The saints tell us that any authentic experience of God is at the same time an experience of our sinfulness. Like ultra violet light that shows all the stains in our white clothing, or the horrible realisation we are dressed too casually when we walk into a formal do.

In the presence of God we become CONSCIOUS; we wake up. All our fantasies evaporate, our pretences disappear and we are left with nothing but – ourselves – standing in the truth of who we are.

For many this could be quite an embarrassing moment to say the least; for some a flash of anguish and profound remorse; for some an explosion of utter joy.

Immediately I wonder how it will be for me? Do you wonder how it will be for you? There is, of course, a way to find out. Do you know what it is? Prayer.

Prayer is like a mini-judgment. Every time we pray, at least every time we pray well, we enter into the presence of God. And every time we enter into the presence of God we become more and more conscious, more and more awake. Then we rub the sleep from our eyes, they begin to focus, and we begin to see what we will see when we are judged – but with one difference – we will still have time and grace to change things.

What I have learned in prayer is that sin is not just doing bad things, sin is also refusing to become as good as God desires me to be. In other words, living my life for me instead of for God. ...

So that is why we pray. By continually placing ourselves in God's presence we learn who we are and how we are in his sight.

The apostles were arguing about who was the greatest. How silly they must have felt when the eyes of the Master turned on them. Instant awkwardness.

So Jesus sat down, called the Twelve to him and began to teach them. You see? This is the beauty of prayer. What we learn there is never fatal – it is always redeemable – with the grace of the merciful Lord.

In prayer he will sit with us and teach us, over and over again, until the lesson sinks in. Then we become the little children he loves so much, and we avoid any possibility of embarrassment when he comes for us that last time.

## Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

### in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30pm Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Cowwarr Ord.	Wednesday (Low Mass 10am) 10.30 – 11am
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Cranbourne	Fri&Sat in church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Fri 4pm–8pm (every 2 <sup>nd</sup> month, Dec on)
Heyfield Ord.	4 <sup>th</sup> 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	Wed & First Sat: (9.30am Mass) –10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Fri 4pm–8pm (every 2 <sup>nd</sup> month, Jan on)
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

“Lord, help me to be always aware of those around me, those who are worried or dismayed, those suffering in silence, and those who feel alone and abandoned”.

Saint Vincent de Paul

## Contact *Into the Deep*

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

**Editor:** Janet Kingman

**Subscription is free. We rely on donations.**

ITD's bank details for **Direct Deposits:**

Account name: Janet Kingman

BSB: 013-745 (ANZ)

Account number: 2901-63632

**Cheques** to be made out to Janet Kingman

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

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

**Letters to the Editor:**

Readers are encouraged to contribute letters. There is no guarantee that every letter will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. Name and contact details must accompany letters, however, if there is sufficient reason, anonymity will be preserved when publishing. Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of ITD.

## A New Heart

Pope Benedict XVI, 09-03-2011

The Lenten period proposes to us... a journey of forty days where we can experience in an effective way the merciful love of God. Today the call resounds for us: “Return to me with all your heart”; today we are the ones called to convert our hearts to God, conscious that we cannot carry out our conversion by ourselves, with our own efforts, because it is God who converts us. He offers us once again his forgiveness, inviting us to return to Him to give us a new heart, purified from the evil that oppresses it, to have us take part in his joy. Our world needs to be converted to God; it needs his forgiveness, his love; it needs a new heart.