

Into the Deep

Issue 169

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

March 2017

Return to God With All Your Heart

Pope Benedict XVI, Ash Wednesday Mass 2013

Today, Ash Wednesday, we begin a new Lenten journey, a journey that extends for forty days and leads us to the joy of Easter, the victory of Life over death. ...

The Church proposes to us, first, the strong appeal that the prophet Joel addressed to the people of Israel, "Thus says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning" (2:12). Please note the phrase "with all my heart," which means from the centre of our thoughts and feelings, from the roots of our decisions, choices and actions, with a gesture of total and radical freedom.

But is this return to God possible? Yes, because there is a force that does not reside in our hearts, but that emanates from the heart of God. It is the power of his mercy. ...

But this return to God becomes a reality in our lives only when the grace of God penetrates to our inmost being and shakes it, giving us the power to "rend our hearts." The same prophet causes these words from God to resonate: "Rend your hearts and not your garments" (v. 13). In fact, even today, many are ready to "rend their garments" before scandals and injustices - of course, made by others - but few seem willing to act on their own "heart", on their own conscience and their own intentions, letting the Lord transform, renew and convert. ...

"Behold, now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation" (2Cor6:2). The words of the Apostle Paul to the Christians of Corinth resonate for us, too, with an urgency that does not allow omission or inaction. The word "now" repeated several times says that we cannot let this time pass us by, it is offered to us as a unique opportunity. ...

The "return to God with all your heart" in our Lenten journey passes through the cross, following Christ on the road to Calvary, the total gift of self. It is a way on which to learn every day to come out more and more from our selfishness and our closures, to make room for God who opens and transforms the heart. ...

Dear brothers and sisters, we begin our Lenten journey, trusting and joyful. May the invitation to conversion resonate strongly in us, to "return to God with all your heart", accepting His grace that makes us new men, with the surprising novelty that is sharing in the very life of Jesus. Let none of us, therefore, be deaf to this appeal, that is addressed to us also in the austere rite, so simple and yet so beautiful, of the imposition of ashes... May the Virgin Mary accompany us in this time, the Mother of the Church and model of every true disciple of the Lord. Amen!

[Translation by Peter Waymel] Zenit.org 13-02-2013

"There is nothing so great as the Eucharist.
If God had something more precious, He would have given it to us."

Saint John Vianney

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

ITD and Its Sick Followers

How interesting – and totally unsurprising! The very dioceses that boast of being the only places where priests and people are truly orthodox and who denigrate other dioceses for not conforming to their particular criteria of orthodoxy (which, by the way have nothing to do with Christ!) are the very places exposed by the Royal Commission as havens for child-abusing clergy.

Only those who deliberately chose to ignore the obvious would have been unaware of this and hence are implicit in the abuse and the huge damage it has caused.

My family left Sale around 40 years ago partly because we could no longer tolerate the creepy, self-righteous, hypocritical clergy who seemed to abound and partly because of my work. The warnings that were heaped on our head about what damage liberal, sinful Brisbane would do to our faith were unbelievable.

But unlike back home, in 40 years here we have never encountered anyone who experienced abuse from clergy personally or knows anyone who did. We find the clergy to be pastoral, sincere men and far from losing our faith, our faith has grown and our children like us are now very involved in their parishes and the mission of the Catholic Church.

You and your sick followers extol men who outwardly comply with your rigid standards but whose hearts are hard and souls rotten to the core. At the same time you deride and pillory good and faithful men simply because they don't always follow your rigid rubrics.

Hang your heads in shame!

I would not want to be in your shoes come Judgement Day!!

David Wilkinson, Auchenflower, Queensland

Thank you for your contribution, David. I am intrigued as to how a reader of ITD could ever come to the conclusion that we think the Diocese of Sale is orthodox!? No doubt many in the diocese would find that quite amusing! I would be very interested if you could direct me towards some writing of mine, or even of regular contributors, which has led you to that conclusion.

ITD seeks to understand and defend teachings of the Catholic Church, which we as Catholics are *all* bound to believe and strive to live by. It is only against the Church's teachings that we compare activities happening in various parishes and dioceses, and certainly not against our own opinions or personal wishes (and no, we don't make up our own rubrics either).

As for your claim that we extol men whose hearts are hard and souls are rotten, would you be able to supply further information please? Which men exactly, and on what basis have you judged that their souls are rotten?

Come Judgement Day, I think we each have only our own souls to account for. God help us all.

- Ed.

Not Like Hoping For Good Weather

Pope Francis, General Audience, 01-02-2017

When there is talk of hope, we can be led to understand it according to the ordinary meaning of the term, namely, in reference to something good that we desire, but which can or cannot be realized. We hope it will happen; it is like a desire. One says, for example: "I hope the weather will be good tomorrow!"; but we know that, instead, the weather could be bad the next day.

Christian hope is not like this. Christian hope is the expectation of something that has already been accomplished; the door is there, and I hope to arrive at the door. What must I do? I must walk to the door! I am certain I will arrive at the door. Christian hope is like this: to have the certainty that I am on the way to something that is, not that I wish it to be.

Zenit.org 01-02-2017

Trust God

Pope Francis, General Audience, 25-01-2017

Dear brothers and sisters, let us never put conditions to God and, instead, let hope conquer our fears.

To trust God means to enter in His designs without pretending anything, accepting also that His salvation and His help may reach us in a different way from our expectations.

We ask the Lord for life, health, affections, happiness, and it is right to do so, but in the awareness that God is able to draw life also from death, that peace can be experienced also in sickness, and that there can be serenity also in solitude and blessedness also in weeping.

It is not we who can teach God what He must do, what we are in need of. He knows it better than us, and we must trust Him, because His ways and His thoughts are different from ours.

Zenit.org 25-01-2017

Lenten 40 Days for Life

Our next 40 Days for Life campaign starts Wednesday 1st of March (Ash Wednesday) and concludes on 9th of April (Palm Sunday).

The times for our peaceful prayerful witnesses are between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm every day.

Please join us at the edge of the blue line marking the 150m exclusion zone at our very visible position on Wellington Parade, East Melbourne outside Jolimont station. Please consider a regular time that you and a friend or friends can be present during the week to help us fill up our schedule.

If you can let us know the regular times that suit you best we can endeavour to have a prayer supporter with you if you are attending alone.

Innocent lives depend on your presence.

Fons Janssen, Willung South, Victoria
Coordinator www.40daysforlife.com/melbourne
Ph 0407350948, fonsforlife@skymesh.com.au

We Cannot Be Afraid of Persecution

Bishop James Conley of Lincoln, Nebraska, to the Catholic Answers Evangelization Conference, 29-10-2016

My final point is that we should expect, as we become evangelists to our modern culture, to face opposition and obstacles. We face threats to religious liberty in this country because our prophetic voice makes sin uncomfortable. The confidence of believers in the truth of the Gospel is an affront to tyrants. Our witness to charity, even, when juxtaposed with greed and evil in this world, is a threat to those who advance themselves by immorality or selfishness.

Believers live in this world, but we do not live like the world lives. For that, since the first days of the Church's life, we face trials and challenges.

Pope Francis says that we're called to be missionaries of mercy. And part of being merciful means telling the truth. Truth without mercy can be cold and harsh, and mercy without truth is a counterfeit. Last week, my friend Archbishop Charles Chaput said that "mercy means nothing – it's just an exercise in sentimentality – without clarity about moral truth." We have an obligation to tell the truth, in love. And we should expect that telling the truth will lead to persecution. ...

We are not immune from the persecution the Church has faced for 2,000 years.

My friends, we cannot be afraid of that persecution. We live for eternity. And we know that because of Christ's cross, when the Church is persecuted, grace abounds. In that grace is the spread of the Gospel. ...

God has called us to a mission. He has called us to become the saints of our time. He has called us to proclaim the Gospel, to a world longing for the Lord's love and his truth. He has called us to be joyful, faithful, holy signs of contradiction, signs of the mercy of God. We are necessary for the Lord's purposes. May we do the Lord's work. May we make disciples of this nation.

Zenit.org 31-10-2016

"In temptation, you don't dialogue, you pray. 'Help me, Lord, I am weak. I don't want to hide from you.'"

Pope Francis, Morning Mass 10-02-2017

A Journey of Conversion

Pope Francis, in his Message for Lent 2017

Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain goal of Easter, Christ's victory over death. This season urgently calls us to conversion.

Christians are asked to return to God "with all their hearts" (Joel 2:12), to refuse to settle for mediocrity and to grow in friendship with the Lord. Jesus is the faithful friend who never abandons us. Even when we sin, he patiently awaits our return; by that patient expectation, he shows us his readiness to forgive.

Lent is a favourable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. At the basis of everything is the word of God, which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply.

I would now like to consider the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (cf. Lk 16:19-31). Let us find inspiration in this meaningful story, for it provides a key to understanding what we need to do in order to attain true happiness and eternal life. It exhorts us to sincere conversion. [...]

The Gospel of the rich man and Lazarus helps us to make a good preparation for the approach of Easter. The liturgy of Ash Wednesday invites us to an experience quite similar to that of the rich man. When the priest imposes the ashes on our heads, he repeats the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return". As it turned out, the rich man and the poor man both died, and the greater part of the parable takes place in the afterlife. The two characters suddenly discover that "we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it" (1 Tim 6:7).

We too see what happens in the afterlife. There the rich man speaks at length with Abraham, whom he calls "father", as a sign that he belongs to God's people. This detail makes his life appear all the more contradictory, for until this moment there had been no mention of his relation to God. In fact, there was no place for God in his life. His only god was himself.

The rich man recognizes Lazarus only amid the torments of the afterlife. He wants the poor man to alleviate his suffering with a drop of water. What he asks of Lazarus is similar to what he could have done but never did. Abraham tells him: "During your life you had your fill of good things, just as Lazarus had his fill of bad. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony". In the afterlife, a kind of fairness is restored and life's evils are balanced by good.

The parable goes on to offer a message for all Christians. The rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers, who are still alive. But Abraham answers: "They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them". Countering the rich man's objections, he adds: "If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead".

The rich man's real problem thus comes to the fore. At the root of all his ills was the failure to heed God's word. As a result, he no longer loved God and grew to despise his neighbour.

The word of God is alive and powerful, capable of converting hearts and leading them back to God. When we close our heart to the gift of God's word, we end up closing our heart to the gift of our brothers and sisters.

Dear friends, Lent is the favourable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbour. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take.

May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need.

I encourage all the faithful to express this spiritual renewal also by sharing in the Lenten Campaigns promoted by many Church organizations in different parts of the world, and thus to favour the culture of encounter in our one human family.

Let us pray for one another so that, by sharing in the victory of Christ, we may open our doors to the weak and poor. Then we will be able to experience and share to the full the joy of Easter.

Lent in the Ordinariate

The following are our Lent and Easter celebration times for the Ordinariate Parish of the Most Holy Family, Gippsland. Everyone is welcome. All celebrations are traditional. They are held either at St Brigid's in Cowwarr or St Michael's in Heyfield.

Stations of the Cross: Fridays during Lent
6.30pm Heyfield

Maundy Thursday: 13th April
12 hr adoration Cowwarr: starts 12.00pm (noon)
7.30pm Cowwarr: Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday: 14th April
12 hr prayer vigil of Good Friday starts 12.00am (midnight Thursday)
10.00am Cowwarr: Stations of the Cross
1.00pm Cowwarr: Good Friday Liturgy: The Celebration of the Passion and Death of our Lord
3.00pm Prayer vigil ceases

Easter: 16th April
5.00am Cowwarr: Solemn Vigil of Easter: Dawn Mass. Community breakfast after Mass
10.00am Heyfield: Mass of the Resurrection

Divine Mercy Sunday: 23rd April
2.30-3.30pm Heyfield: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Adoration, Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm, Confession throughout the Hour, Closing with Benediction and blessing of Divine Mercy images.

Fr Ken Clark OLSC

Parish of the Most Holy Family, Ph 0403 383 873

<http://gippslandordinariate.wordpress.com>

<http://www.gippsland-ordinariate.com>

Save Yourself!

Pope Francis, Homily, 20-11-2016

"Save yourself!"... This temptation is a direct attack on love: "save *yourself*"; not others, but yourself. Claim triumph for yourself with your power, with your glory, with your victory. It is the most terrible temptation, the first and the last of the Gospel.

When confronted with this attack on his very way of being, Jesus does not speak, he does not react. He does not defend himself, he does not try to convince them, he does not mount a defence of his kingship. He continues rather to love; he forgives, he lives this moment of trial according to the Father's will, certain that love will bear fruit.

Zenit.org 20-11-2016

Christian Unity

Pope Francis, Homily at Vespers for the conclusion of the 50th Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Let us allow him, who makes all things new, to unveil before our eyes a new future, open to the hope that does not disappoint, a future in which divisions can be overcome and believers, renewed in love, will be fully and visibly one.

This year, in our journey on the road to unity, we recall in a special way the fifth centenary of the Protestant Reformation. The fact that Catholics and Lutherans can nowadays join in commemorating an event that divided Christians, and can do so with hope, placing the emphasis on Jesus and his work of atonement, is a remarkable achievement, thanks to God and prayer, and the result of fifty years of growing mutual knowledge and ecumenical dialogue. ...

Dear brothers and sisters, our prayer for Christian unity is a sharing in Jesus' own prayer to the Father, on the eve of his passion, "that they may all be one". May we never tire of asking God for this gift. With patient and trusting hope that the Father will grant all Christians the gift of full visible communion, let us press forward in our journey of reconciliation and dialogue, encouraged by the heroic witness of our many brothers and sisters, past and present, who were one in suffering for the name of Jesus.

Zenit.org 25-01-2017

He Gazes Back at Me

Pope Francis, Morning Homily, 31-01-2017

He sought people. And the people sought Him. The people had their gaze fixed on Him and he had his fixed on them. 'Yes, yes, on the people, on the multitude' – 'No, on each individual!' ...

The gaze of Jesus falls on both the big and the small. That's how Jesus sees us all. He sees all things, but looks at each of us. He sees our big problems, our greatest joys, and also looks at the little things about us. Because he is close.

I go forward, looking at Jesus. I walk ahead, keeping my gaze fixed on Jesus, and what do I find? That he has his gaze fixed on me! And that makes me feel this great astonishment. This is the astonishment of the encounter with Jesus. ... Jesus himself has his gaze fixed on me.

Zenit.org 31-01-2017

Catholic Youth Deserve More

Seen in a parish bulletin while on holiday in Queensland recently (Proserpine):

"The 2017 Sacramental Programme will begin on Wednesday May 10th 2017 between 6.00pm – 7.00pm at the Parish Hall. This will be a nine-week programme followed by the Confirmation Eucharist on Sunday 13th August, 2017. Children must be 9 years of age, have been baptised and must attend a Mass during the period of the Sacramental programme. If you would like to enrol your child, please let the office know... The cost will be \$60.00."

I was stunned by the requirement of this Sacramental programme. "Attend a Mass"? Can you believe that? Attend one Mass in nine weeks? This is a requirement for children about to be confirmed! What are we doing? What are we creating? What are we expecting from these children, other than for them to not come to Mass again after Confirmation, perhaps until they want a child baptised? How can we pretend to be concerned about the spiritual health of youth when we refuse to feed them? These children are going to be confirmed in a faith they don't know and are not required to practise.

On a parallel note, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference have declared 2018 a national "Year of Youth". They include priorities of 'being present' to young people and 'accompanying' them. Archbishop Hart says "we want to journey with you." What does this mean? Journey where? Who's following who? Who's teaching who? Surely we are meant to guide youth, teach them and help them, not follow them.

What are the chances that during the Year of the Youth the bishops will do anything to ensure that parishes are diligent in preparing young Catholics for the Sacraments properly, instead of simply persisting with the Great Pretence? We can only pray.

The majority of bishops and priests seem to be afraid of youth, afraid of upsetting them or challenging them or telling them any truth. I think they're really afraid of losing numbers and they don't care about losing the faith. Either that, or they don't understand or believe the Catholic faith enough themselves to be able to credibly present it to anyone else. It sends a shudder down the spine to contemplate it. But we see its effects in nearly every parish around us.

Ed.

That Person is Jesus

Pope Francis, to parish Caritas assistants, Rome 19-02-2017

Thank you for what you do. Your work consists of being close to those who are in need, and also not simply giving something, but listening: the 'apostolate of the ear'. At times, one might think, 'but that is a bit boring, how boring it is, listening to so much pain, when they do not have what they need to buy medicines, when there is nothing to eat. ...

Keep going! But do not argue between yourselves. Think of this: when a person comes to ask for help, a woman, a man, whoever, that person is Jesus. Because Jesus too had to ask for help when he was in exile in Egypt. It is Jesus Who is in need in that person. "But this is a person who speaks badly of others, who does not go to Church, who does not believe in God". But it is Jesus. It is your prayer that expands the heart and the faith: it is Jesus, He is with me, Jesus is with me today. And I will give this package to Jesus. And I give this smile to Jesus. This is your road to holiness. If you do this, you will become holy. All of you! It is easy. But do not forget: it is Jesus Who knocks on the door. ...

And remember, every person who comes is Jesus. That good person is Jesus? Yes. That person who isn't so good is Jesus? Yes. For me, it is Jesus. I must receive him as Jesus. That woman, who has a snake's tongue, is Jesus? Yes. And I must, with my tenderness and my love, ensure that her tongue loses its poison and she does not speak badly any more. But it is always tenderness, love, because every person in need is Jesus, Who knocks at the door of my heart. And pray for me: I too knock at the door of your heart and ask for prayers. I do not ask for a package, but I ask for prayers, for a rosary. Thank you!

vatican.va 19-02-2017

Divine Will – Luisa Piccarreta

Just had the inspiration to let all know that The Divine Will is a must for all who are fighting this battle against all that is pulling the Church apart. There is such great joy in the knowledge conveyed to Luisa Piccarreta, who is up for Beatification, that to know all that God intends for His creatures while on earth is beyond telling of the love of God for us all. Luisa's writings and the Divine Will can and will broaden the horizon of our love for God and encourage us to give Him the "I love You" that He has given us and that we must return to Him in gratitude for His life in us. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is what we have said in the Our Father for centuries and now it is happening for those desiring the great gift of living in The Divine and Adorable Will.

Bernadette Maguire, Tamworth, New South Wales

Luisa Piccarreta - Status of her Cause

By Colin B. Donovan, STL (EWTN), 15-10-2015

The Communique of the Archbishop of Trani of 1 November 2012 remains his most recent statement regarding the status of Luisa's Cause. In order not to prejudice the Cause and scandalize others, the Archbishop reiterates that all things be done in communion with the local Ordinaries (e.g. prayer groups, reading of the writings etc.), that unauthorized translations not be promoted by any means, that explanations inconsistent with the teaching of the Church not be promulgated, that the critical edition of the writings with theological explanations be awaited... At this time there are still NO official English translations of any of the volumes. ... As previously stated to EWTN by the Postulation, the complexity of translating from the dialect used by the author into Italian, and then from Italian into other languages, and doing so consistent with the doctrine of the faith, makes it absolutely necessary that this prohibition be observed. ...

From EWTN's original clarification, 15-10-2003: (https://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/luisa_piccarreta.htm)

- Luisa Piccarreta lived a holy life of prayer and suffering, attested to by her contemporaries and with a fame of holiness to this day. She was always obedient and submissive to the Church in everything.
- On October 29, 2005 Archbishop Pichierri declared the diocesan process of the Cause for the Beatification of the Servant of God completed, and he committed the documentation to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints for its Roman phase.
- As for the status of the writings with the Holy See, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith affirmed the following in a letter to EWTN of 4 October 2003: "The writings of Luisa Piccarreta have not been judged by this Dicastery: as such they enjoy neither the official approbation, nor the official condemnation, of this Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In fact, they are currently being studied, by reason of competence, by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints..."
- The current Archbishop can only directly authorize priests under his authority, such as Fr. Bucci, to speak on Luisa and her spirituality. However, priests who have a letter from their own Bishop permitting them to speak on Luisa, and who are conversant with both her writings and Catholic theology, can have their Bishop request a letter from the Archbishop of Trani which authorizes them to speak officially.
- Lay persons will no longer be permitted to teach publicly, either about the spirituality of the Divine Will, or regarding her life and virtues.
- While the Postulation does not have the authority to prohibit the reading of Luisa's writings that are in circulation, no one is permitted to publish her Diary of 36 volumes. Exceptions have been made for the following writings of Luisa: *The 24 Hours of the Passion*, *The Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of the Divine Will*, and her Letters, as well as for the works of Padre Bernardino Bucci about Luisa. Prayer groups are encouraged to study these approved books until such time as the official typical edition is published in conformity with the doctrine of the Church and the approval of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.
- The Postulation encourages prayer groups in the various dioceses of the world, in order to spread Luisa's fame of holiness. It especially desires that her great devotion to the Mother of God be imitated. It urges, whenever possible, that groups be conducted under the guidance of a prudent priest of proven orthodoxy. The supervision of prayer groups falls under the competence of each diocesan bishop.

Poetic Justice

On 6 February it was reported by the Herald Sun that "Victoria was the centre of the Catholic Church's child sexual abuse crisis across six decades."

The Herald Sun article continued: "A report released today by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found Victoria harboured a proportionally higher number of paedophile priests than any other state. While Ballarat has long been considered Australia's child sexual abuse centre, the new data revealed the Diocese of Sale, covering Victoria's southeast, was the nation's worst. It found proportionally 15.1 per cent of its priests were alleged perpetrators of abuse between 1950 and 2010."

Yes, the Diocese of Sale was the nation's worst. Wow, what an incredible revelation! Even though the Herald Sun failed to point out that the statistics recorded all allegations rather than only proven cases, and that it referred to the period when allegations were reported and not the period when alleged crimes of sexual abuse took place, what stunned me was that the Diocese of Sale was the nation's worst.

I mean, here was an extremely liberal diocese which in a tribal fashion maligned an orthodox priest, damaged his reputation and good name by acting canonically to remove him from his parish for 'allegedly' raising his voice at a meeting, while doing absolutely nothing about any of the sexual abuse allegations that insidiously pervaded it.

Can you bear it, for nearly 20 years while Bishop Jeremiah Coffey was at the helm, the diocese failed to pursue canonical action against a single priest sexual abuser, yet doggedly pursued canonical action against Fr Speekman for alleged 'bullying'. Talk about criminal negligence of the highest order, not to mention the gross injustice toward Fr Speekman and the parishioners who supported him. And to give you some idea of how corrupt and left-wing the Church in this country is, both Bishop Coffey and his successor Bishop Christopher Prowse had the unequivocal support of the majority of the clergy in the diocese, as well as the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, in their malicious actions.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

Give Us Today Our Daily Love

Pope Francis to engaged couples, 14-02-2014

Q: Holiness, so many today think that to promise faithfulness for the whole of life is too difficult an enterprise; many feel that the challenge to live together forever is beautiful, fascinating, but too demanding, almost impossible. We ask you for your word to enlighten us on this.

A: So, how is this fear of "forever" cured? It's cured day by day by entrusting oneself to the Lord Jesus in a life that becomes a daily spiritual journey, made up of steps – small steps, steps of joint growth – made up of the commitment to become mature women and men in the faith. Because, dear fiancés, "forever" is not solely a question of duration! A marriage hasn't succeeded just because it has lasted – its quality is important. The challenge of Christian spouses is to be together and to be able to love each other forever. There comes to mind the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves: for you also, the Lord can multiply love and give it to you fresh and good every day. He has an infinite supply! He gives you the love that is the foundation of your union and He renews it every day, He reinforces it. And He renders it even greater when the family grows with children. On this journey, prayer is important and necessary always. He for you and you for him and all and the two together. Ask Jesus to multiply your love. In the prayer of the Our Father we say: "Give us this day our daily bread." Spouses can also learn to pray thus: "Lord, give us today our daily love," because the daily love of spouses is the bread, the true bread of the soul, that which sustains them to go forward. ... Teach us to love one another, to will the good for each other! The more you entrust yourselves to Him the more your love will be "forever," capable of being renewed and it will overcome every difficulty.

Zenit.org 14-02-2014

Why Abstinence From Meat

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

Q: What is the reason behind not eating of meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday? Is there any historical background for this? ... - F. A., Ibadan, Nigeria

A: ... The law of abstinence prohibits eating the flesh, marrow and blood products of such animals and birds as constitute flesh meat. In earlier times the law of abstinence also forbade such foods that originated from such animals, such as milk, butter, cheese, eggs, lard and sauces made from animal fat. This restriction is no longer in force in the Roman rite. Vegetables as well as fish and similar cold-blooded animals (frogs, clams, turtles, etc.) may be eaten. ...

Abstinence was technically stricter in former times and applied to every day of Lent. Yet, the actual observance of the law was, and is, confined to such circumstances as carry no insupportable burden. This is why people who are sick, very poor or engaged in heavy labour (or who have difficulty in procuring fish) are not bound to observe the law so long as such conditions prevail. Diversity in customs, climate and food prices also modified the law of abstinence. ...

Canon 1251: "Abstinence from eating meat or some other food according to the prescripts of the conference of bishops is to be observed on every Friday of the year unless a Friday occurs on a day listed as a solemnity. Abstinence and fasting however are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday."

The bishops' conference may substitute abstinence from other foods for meat in those countries where eating meat is uncommon, or for some other just reason. They also enjoy broad authority, in the light of Canon 1253, to "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." ... Abstinence is obligatory after reaching the age of 14 ...

Most Eastern Churches, both Catholic and Orthodox, have more demanding laws of fasting and abstinence and retain the prohibition of milk and poultry products. ...

The purpose of these laws of abstinence is to educate us in the higher spiritual law of charity and self-mastery. This spiritual purpose can also help us to understand the reasons for excluding flesh meat on penitential days. There was a once-widespread belief that flesh meat provoked and excited the baser human passions. Renouncing these foodstuffs was considered an excellent means of conquering the wayward self and orienting one's life toward God.

The ascetic and spiritual purpose of fasting and abstinence can also help us to understand why it has always been tied to almsgiving. In this way, it makes little sense to give up steak so as to gorge on lobster and caviar. The idea of abstinence is to prefer a simpler, less sumptuous diet than normal. We thus have something extra to give to those less fortunate than ourselves and also train ourselves in freedom from slavery to material pleasures. Even a Catholic vegetarian can practice abstinence by substituting a typical, yet more expensive, element of the diet for something simpler. ...

However, while being faithful to these laws we must always strive to penetrate the inner reasons for fast and abstinence and not just stay on the superficial plane of rules for rules' sake.

The spiritual motives for practicing abstinence are admirably expressed by St. Augustine in his Sermon on Prayer and Fasting: Abstinence purifies the soul, elevates the mind, subordinates the flesh to the spirit, begets a humble and contrite heart, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, extinguishes the fire of lust, and enkindles the true light of chastity.

This is summarized in the IV Preface of Lent: "For through bodily fasting you restrain our faults, raise up our minds, and bestow both virtue and its rewards."

In short, the Church mandates fast and abstinence in order to help free us from the chains of slavery to sin. Rather than an onerous obligation it is a cry of freedom from all that binds us to ourselves and to our passions.

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Martin Luther Stamp

Report in Sydney's "The Catholic Weekly" (29 Jan 2017): "The Vatican will issue a stamp to honour Martin Luther."

From "Church History" by Fr John Laux, information on Martin Luther:

- Luther said – "I am not sure whether the Pope is anti-Christ himself, or only one of his apostles."
- He contemptuously called the Epistle of Saint James "a straw Epistle" because it teaches that "faith without works is dead."
- He attacked the Divine foundations of the constitution of the Church.
- He declared that the priesthood and the episcopal office must be done away with.
- Against the Pope, Luther vented his rage to the last. In 1545 he wrote the coarsest of his pamphlets, "Against the papacy founded by the devil".
- Luther "married" the ex-Cistercian nun Catherine Bora – and urged all monks, nuns and priests to follow his example.

Notwithstanding Luther's attacks on the Church and the harm he has done, the Vatican will issue a stamp to honour Luther. I would be interested to know who in the Vatican came up with the idea of a stamp to honour Luther, and who has given approval for it.

John Schmid, Boronia, Victoria

Reverse Path

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the pontifical household, First Advent sermon 2016

In today's creed one begins with God the Father and Creator and moves on from him to the Son and his redemptive work, and finally to the Holy Spirit operating in the Church. In reality, the faith followed a reverse path. It was the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit that brought the Church to discover who Jesus was and what his teaching was. With Paul and above all with John we reach the point of ascending from Jesus to the Father. It is the Paraclete who, according to Jesus' promise (see Jn 16:13), leads the disciples into "all the truth" about himself and the Father. ...

In other words, on the level of creation and being, everything comes from the Father, goes through the Son, and reaches us through the Spirit. However, in the order of redemption and conscious awareness, everything begins with the Holy Spirit, goes through the Son Jesus Christ, and returns to the Father. ... In the Western tradition this is expressed concisely in the final stanza of the hymn "Veni creator." Addressing the Holy Spirit, the Church prays,

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow
the Father and the Son to know;
and Thee, through endless times confessed,
of both the eternal Spirit blest.

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Taming the Tongue

Saint Augustine of Hippo, Sermon V

Yet "the tongue can no man tame." (James 3:8)

Man tames the wild beast, yet he tames not his tongue; he tames the lion, yet he bridles not his own speech; he tames all else, yet he tames not himself; ...

What shall we do then, my brethren? ...

Dearly beloved, that if no man can tame the tongue, we must have recourse to God, that He may tame it. For if thou shouldest wish to tame it, thou canst not, because thou art a man. "The tongue can no man tame." ...

Why then, brethren, should we doubt that the Lord will make us gentle, if we give up ourselves to be tamed by him? Thou hast tamed the lion which thou madest not; shall not He tame thee, who made thee? ...

In Him is our hope; let us submit ourselves to Him, and entreat His mercy. In Him let us place our hope, and until we are tamed, and tamed thoroughly, that is, are perfected, let us bear our Tamer. For oftentimes does our Tamer bring forth His scourge too. ...

Whereas when thou art tamed, God reserveth for thee an inheritance, which is God Himself, and though dead for a little time, He will raise thee to life again. ...

Irresistible Invitation to Cross the Bridge

By Fr John Speekman, St Brigid's Parish bulletin, 05-02-2017

"*In Sinu Jesu. When Heart Speaks to Heart - The Journal of a Priest at Prayer*" is a book by "A Benedictine Monk" (Angelico Press USA 2016). The words – *in sinu Jesu* – are Latin. They mean – *on the breast of Jesus*. They recall the Last Supper and John the Beloved disciple who leaned over and placed his head on Jesus' breast. What a delightful image of intimacy, trust, love and maturity. Yes, maturity! A maturity capable of intimacy. John was able to place his head – *in sinu Jesu* – because he had matured in his relationship with the Lord ... a relationship to be admired, and envied.

Our presence at Mass today is a sign that we have entered a relationship with Jesus. For some this relationship will be strong and deep; for others it may still be weak and tenuous.

To approach Jesus we have to pass through many thickets, a little like entering into the heart of a forest, we must walk through much brush and undergrowth.

What is this undergrowth? What are these thickets? They are the external structures and forms of our Church through which we must pass in order to reach Jesus. (Notice, I did not say we have to *bypass* them but *pass through* them.) This is not easy, in fact, there are not many of us who succeed. The external structures and forms are sometimes very, very attractive and, like Little Red Riding Hood, we can end up picking flowers instead of reaching Grandma's house.

Take, for instance, 'going to Mass on Sunday'. This is undoubtedly the biggest and most significant 'structure' in our Faith. Everyone knows that. No one, not even non-Catholics, will dispute that Catholics are obliged to attend Mass every Sunday.

And so we go, every single Sunday - religiously, faithfully, dutifully - and tell ourselves: *I'm ok, I'm doing what the Church tells me to do. I go to Mass every Sunday and so I'm ok.*

But unfortunately, annoyingly it's not quite as simple as that. 'Going to Mass' can be a *barrier* just as easily as it can be a *bridge*. It can be the flowers along the path as easily as it can be Grandma's house. It can be a pleasant place to meet friends, to exercise one's 'ministry', to be seen in the community as a 'churchgoer', an unshakeable habit or just a time of quiet and relaxation. In all of these cases Mass would be a barrier, a temptation to selfish concerns and ego, whereas it really should be a bridge - a bridge (should we have the courage and the faith to cross it) which would lead us to Jesus.

I can't help thinking that a Catholic who gives up going to Mass is a Catholic who has not yet crossed that bridge; who has not yet had the experience of placing his head *in sinu Jesu*, and entering into that relationship with him which alone gives meaning to all Catholic forms and structures. Once we have had this experience no one - no priest, no bishop, no Pope, no parishioner - could ever make us give up the Mass. To do so would be like Red Riding Hood declaring she is not going to visit Grandma anymore because the flowers along the path are not nice enough. What a shame that would be!

The strength of the book *In Sinu Jesu* lies precisely in its gentle yet irresistible invitation to the reader to cross over the bridge, to take the first steps in passing through the externals, to the living reality of the Lord who waits for us on the other side.

Excerpts from the book:

"It is enough for Me that you are here. I do not ask anything else of you. It is your adoring, loving presence that My Heart wants from you. In this way you will console Me and make reparation for so much coldness, ingratitude, and indifference. I am here for you. Be here for Me. Seek My Eucharistic Face. Know that My Eucharistic Heart is open to receive you, to comfort you, to strengthen you, and to purify you in the Blood and in the Water that ever flow from my pierced side."

"Your sleepiness in no way impedes My action in your soul. If My action depended on your state of attention, I would be limited indeed. My action in your soul is deeper than your outward states of attention or sleepiness, deeper too than your thoughts and imaginings. You have only to come before Me intending to adore Me and to offer yourself to My Heart, and I will do all the rest."

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

in Gippsland

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

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

Bound

"Lord Jesus, if out of love I bind myself to You, who will tear me away from You? If I am united to You in mercy, who will separate me from You? May my soul adhere to You; may your most clement right arm receive me. May the most unworthy member also adhere to his Head, and this small particle suffer with the entire suffering Holy Body."

St Stanislaw of Jesus and Mary, canonized 2016

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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.

"To adore Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament is first of all to acknowledge him truly, really and substantially present therein by the humble sentiment of a lively and spontaneous faith: humbly surrendering our feeble reason to the divinity of this sublime Mystery; asking neither to see or touch, like the unbelieving Apostle, before accepting the truth of Jesus-Host; merely waiting, to prostrate ourselves at His feet, for the infallible and gentle word of the Church telling us like St John the Baptist: 'Look, this is the Lamb of God; look, this is he who takes away the sin of the world.'"

St Peter Julian Eymard