

Into the Deep

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Put Faith Back in the Centre

Pope Benedict XVI to Swiss Bishops, 07-11-2006

...In all the anguish of our time, faith must truly have priority. Two generations ago, it might still have been presumed natural: one grew up in the faith; in a certain way, faith was simply present as part of life and did not need any special seeking. It needed to be formed and deepened, but seemed something perfectly obvious.

Today, the opposite seems natural: in other words, that it is basically impossible to believe, and that God is actually absent. The faith of the Church, in any case, seems something that belongs to the distant past.

Thus, even practicing Christians are of the opinion that it is right to choose for oneself, from the overall faith of the Church, those things one considers still sustainable today. And especially, people also set about fulfilling their proper duty to God through their commitment to human beings, so to speak, at the same time. This, however, is the beginning of a sort of "justification through works": the human being justifies himself and the world, in which he does what clearly seems necessary yet completely lacks the inner light and spirit.

Consequently, I believe it is important to acquire a fresh awareness of the fact that faith is the centre of all things - "*Fides tua te salvum fecit*", the Lord said over and over again to those he healed. It was not the physical touch, it was not the external gesture that was operative, but the fact that those sick people believed. And we too can only serve the Lord energetically if our faith thrives and is present in abundance. In this context, I want to emphasize two crucial points.

First: faith is above all faith in God. ... He exists and he is alive; we believe in him; we live before him, in his sight, in being with him and from him. And in Jesus Christ, he is, as it were, with us bodily. ...

The other thing concerns the fact that we ourselves cannot invent faith...but we believe together with the Church. We cannot understand all that the Church teaches, nor must all of it be present in every life. Yet, it is important that we are co-believers in the great "I" of the Church, in her living "We", and thereby find ourselves in the great community of faith, in that great subject in which the "You" of God and the "I" of man truly touch each other; in which the past of the words of Scripture becomes the present, times flow into one another, the past is present and, opening itself to the future, allows into time the brightness of eternity, of the Eternal One.

This complete form of faith, expressed in the Creed, a faith in and with the Church as a living subject in which the Lord works: it is this form of faith that we must seek to put truly at the heart of our endeavours.

Zenit.org 11-12-2006

"It was a great miracle that was wrought, dearly beloved, for five thousand men to be filled with five loaves and two fishes, and the remnants of the fragments to fill twelve baskets. A great miracle: but we shall not wonder much at what was done if we give heed to Him That did it." **St Augustine**

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Nothing Else Matters

It was after Adoration recently that a friend explained to me that she had arrived for her Holy Hour weighed down by a particular problem in her life. But she said when she entered the chapel and saw only one person there in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, she said: "Lord, I came here thinking I had a big problem. But my problem is nothing compared to this problem: that we have you right here and hardly anyone to adore you." Where are all the people, she said to me; how can we leave the Lord like this?

A week later, assistant priest at Morwell, Fr Edwin Ogbuka, gave a short reflection before Benediction. He commented on the Gospel of the day, about working on the Sabbath and the Lord being Master of the Sabbath. He noted how we have so many people who want to work for the Lord, who want to be on committees or in groups to work for the Lord. He said: "They all want to work for the Lord, and this is good"; then pointing to the Blessed Lord exposed on the altar he added, "But they forget the Lord of the work. The Lord who is right here. And where are they?"

Not long after that, I went to Mass in nearby Churchill and was astounded at the noise in the church before Mass. It sounded like a marketplace! People wandering around and holding loud social conversations with no regard for the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in front of us.

These three incidents in a short space of time, all had a profound impact on me: the comment that 'this is a much bigger problem than mine, that we have so few at adoration'; the comment that 'we want to work for the Lord but we forget the Lord of the work'; and the disrespectful noise in a Catholic church.

All come down to the fact that there are many Catholics who don't really believe that the Lord is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. And if we don't truly believe in that, then there's really no point being Catholic. Rather, we need all our bishops and all our priests to make a concerted effort, day after day, week after week, in every avenue available to them, to remind us, to teach us, to urge us, to lead us, to insist, that we recognise the Lord truly present in the Blessed Sacrament – to believe it, to live it, and to love him and to sacrifice for him. Nothing else matters as much in our Catholic faith, because from this belief stems all others, and from this understanding everything else follows.

Ed.

Help My Unbelief

Pope Francis to recently confirmed, 15-01-2017

Q: How have you been able to not lose the faith between the highs and lows of life?

A: ...faith can be lost... The highs and lows of life also have a first moment, a shock that moves you and makes one lose faith to a degree, but then with time one finds it again. There is a word in the Gospel, when Jesus says: "Everything is possible for one who has faith," everything. And the father of that sick child, the father brought the child so that Jesus would cure it, what did he say to Jesus? "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief" (cf. Mk 9:23-24).

Faith is not always [great] ... There are days of darkness, everything dark ... I have also walked in my life with days like that. But one must not [get] frightened: pray and have patience, and then the Lord makes Himself seen, makes us grow in faith and makes us go forward.

[Original text: Italian] [Translation by ZENIT] 16-01-2017

Absolute Certainty

Pope John Paul II to pilgrims, 14-11-1981

Given the agnostic society – a sadly hedonistic and permissive one – in which we live, it is essential to deepen our teaching on the august Mystery of the Eucharist, in such a way as to acquire and maintain absolute certainty over the nature and purpose of the Sacrament which is rightly called the core of the Christian message and of the life of the Church. ... Today this certainty is necessary before all else, in order to restore the Eucharist and priesthood to their absolutely central position, to have a proper sense of the importance of Holy Mass and Holy Communion ... Today is a time for reflection, for meditation and for prayer for Christians to recover their sense of worship, their fervour. Only from the Eucharist profoundly known, loved and lived can we hope for that unity in truth and charity which is willed by Christ and urged on all by the Second Vatican Council.

Agenda for the Third millennium, p.76

The Most Important Time For Each of Us

Pope Benedict XVI, on St Lawrence of Brindisi, Doctor of the Church, General Audience 23-03-2011

[Every priest] can avoid the danger of activism, that is, of acting while forgetting the profound motivations of the ministry, only if he takes care of his interior life. ...

The time he spends in prayer is the most important time in a priest's life, in which divine grace acts with greater effectiveness, making his ministry fruitful. The first service to render to the community is prayer. And therefore, time for prayer must be given a true priority in our life. If we are not interiorly in communion with God we cannot even give anything to others. Therefore, God is the first priority. We must always reserve the time necessary to be in communion of prayer with our Lord.

With the unmistakable ardour of his style, [St] Lawrence [of Brindisi] moreover exhorted everyone, not just priests, to cultivate the life of prayer because through it we speak to God and God speaks to us.

"O, if we only considered this reality!" he exclaimed. "Namely that God is really present to us when we speak to him by praying; that he really listens to our prayer, even if we only pray with the heart and mind. And that not only is he present and listens to us, but that he can and desires to willingly comply, and with the greatest pleasure, to our requests."

Zenit.org 23-03-2011

Missionary Task of ITD

If the bishops or the diocesan priests cannot educate the Victorian Catholic Education Office and administrators of Catholic universities, Catholic teachers' colleges, Catholic colleges and Catholic church schools, then it becomes the missionary task of those bishops, priests, other Catholics with true deep faith in their hearts to help the likes of Into the Deep to be spread to all Catholic learning colleges in Australia and thus negate the actions and the will of a godless government.

John Bohan, Geelong, Victoria

\$2 Market

Everything \$2! There will be a \$2 Market in Heyfield on Saturday 22nd September. Everything you can purchase on the day will be only \$2 – sausage sizzle, cold drinks, hot drinks, morning tea, books, clothing, music, magazines, tools, kitchenware, household goods, plants, toys, preserves, fresh produce and more!

The \$2 Market will be held in the St Michael's school hall in Temple Street, Heyfield, from 9am-2pm. The market is a fundraising event for the Ordinariate Parish of the Most Holy Family, Gippsland.

Please come and support the \$2 Market on the day – browse the tables, grab yourself some great bargains, treat yourself to morning tea or lunch, and have a fun day!

If you have any goods you wish to donate for the market, we would be most grateful. Why not take the opportunity to clear out your cupboards and garage for a good spring clean! You can deliver donated goods to the house at St Brigid's, Church Street, Cowwarr, in the weeks prior to the event. All items will be sold for only \$2.

Mark your diaries now, and we'll see you in Heyfield at the \$2 Market!

**Laurence Martin, Maffra, Victoria
Ph 0427 846 032**

First Do, Then Explain

Pope Francis to recently confirmed, 15-01-2017

Q: How can one explain, to one who doesn't believe, that faith is important?

A: ...if you have a friend who doesn't believe, you must not say: "You must believe because of this, or that, or this other" and then explain everything to him. This mustn't be done! This is called proselytism, and we Christians must not engage in proselytism. What must be done? ... Live in such a way that he or she asks me: "Why do you live this way? Why have you done this?" And then, yes, explain. But never explain first, to convince someone. Faith is a grace of God and one needs restlessness [interior seeking] of the Holy Spirit to have faith, and the restlessness of the Holy Spirit comes also from our testimony. ... First do, then explain. And the Holy Spirit enters the heart, makes the heart restless with the testimony of Christians.

[Original text: Italian] [Translation by ZENIT] 16-01-2017

Morphing into Protestants

How can our bishops and priests stand by and see our Church tumbling around our ears? The true Catholic faith began to be dismantled in 1960 and has continued on its descent until the present day. No altar rails, little or no priests, almost no nuns, almost no Confession, the whole congregation going up to receive Communion. One is hardly game enough to go to Mass and not go up to Communion, in case people think it strange. So they all go up regardless! This happens frequently at funerals, when people who have not attended Mass for years, go up for Communion. When Communion is being given by the priest, the whole church usually sings at the top of their voices. As a child we were taught to maintain silence after Communion so we can speak to Jesus in our hearts and commune with him whilst taking the Host. In those days, we had to examine our conscience and if we had any sin on our soul, we were told to forego Communion, remain kneeling in our pew and get to Confession as soon as possible after Mass. The Examination of Conscience was very important then. I doubt whether children know anything about it at all now. We knew our prayers; we knew our Catechism no matter what country we lived in. We all knew the Ten Commandments and could recite them when asked. We knew our Holy Faith and it was the same all around the world. Men, women and children sang all holy hymns at Mass.

We loved our holy faith. Where has it all gone? We are morphing into Protestants at high speed now. How can the bishops believe that by bringing all Christian faiths together it will please God? There is only one truth. The teachings of the old Catholic Church were the absolute truth. There can be no other truth. The faith does not change with the times. The Bible tells us, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

At least three generations now, maybe more, have lost the true Catholic Faith since the 1960's. I cannot see how on earth we can get it all back now. They have thrown the baby out with the bath water if you ask me. But God is merciful. If we all make an effort, bring back the monks and the nuns, and find someone who can train up good Catholic priests, we might make a go of it. Please God it is not too late. There must be a remnant out there willing to rescue the true Holy Catholic Church. What we need now is the truth.

Mrs D. Smyth, Nanango, Queensland

World Rosary!

Countries around the world are joining to hold Rosary Rallies across the world on 7th October, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The formation of the New Holy League of Nations declares a united front in worldwide spiritual battle, defending the Dignity of the Human person – Life, Marriage, Family, as well as Religious Liberty. This "declaration of war" is *"not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and power, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places."* (Eph 6:12). Together we are calling upon God, through the powerful intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary, to heal our countries and return them to Holiness.

The World Rosary will start with a '54-day Novena' on 15th August (Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary) until the feast of the Holy Rosary on the 7th October. Each nation has been asked to pray for its own intentions on the day.

We are 15 hours ahead of the USA so we will start first on the Sunday and 'light the match'! Countries involved so far are USA, Poland, UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Lebanon, India, Mexico, Panama – with more expected to join in the weeks to come.

Our intentions for the world rosary will be family, rekindling of faith and continued Godly protection.

We are hoping that bishops from each diocese might be involved. Already groups are endeavouring to seek their involvement.

The website to register your involvement for the world rosary is holyleagueofnations.com.

Jane Chifley, OzRosary, 0476 535 595

Why No Renewal of Wedding Vows

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

Q: In the Order of Celebrating Matrimony there is a “Blessing of a Married Couple within Mass on the Anniversary of Marriage.” That blessing invites the couple to renew their commitment quietly, but also allows for a public commitment, but does not allow for the renewal of the wedding vows themselves. Many couples ask for a renewal of vows – why is this not permitted? Why would that be any different than those in religious or monastic vows celebrating jubilees who often renew their vows? Why then would not wedding vows be allowed to be renewed? Likewise, in the Roman Missal there is a renewal of priestly promises at the Chrism Mass. - L.P., Tampa, Florida

A: The *Ordo Celebrandi Matrimonium, editio typica altera* (1991), includes in Appendix III the Rite of blessing the spouses during Mass on occasion of the anniversary of marriage. This appendix allows for a special remembrance of marriage to be held on the principal anniversaries of the celebration such as the 25th, 50th or 60th. In this ritual the universal Church has proposed a renewal of commitment to married life, though the terms “renewal of vows” is avoided.

Even before the publication of this universal rite, however, several bishops’ conferences had included in the Ritual for Marriage a rite for the renewal of marriage commitment for use on special anniversaries. It is probably possible to use these texts on other anniversaries, for good pastoral reasons. The Book of Blessings also provides texts that are suitable for other circumstances, such as retreats, especially geared for married couples.

All of these rites make a slight but significant distinction between the original vows and the renewal of the ongoing marriage commitment. ... The reason for these slight but significant changes is because in an essential way there is no such thing as the “renewal of the marriage vows.” The exchange of vows is seen as the sacramental form and is thus essentially unique for the same couple. Through their consent the spouses mutually give and accept each other through an irrevocable and perpetual covenant in order to establish marriage (see Canon 1057.2 of the Code of Canon Law and the Catechism, No. 1638). [see below – Ed.]

It is precisely the strength of the indissoluble bond created by the celebration of marriage that makes the Church somewhat hesitant to permit a simple renewal of the marriage vows. One cannot renew a valid marriage in the sense of restart or resume. However, the ongoing commitment of marriage may be celebrated, blessed and renewed in the sense of revitalized or reinvigorated.

It is true that Catholics annually renew their baptismal promises, priests their ordination commitments and many religious their vows. But these promises, unlike the marriage vows, are complementary to the sacrament and do not constitute the sacramental form itself.

Thus, although we all renew our baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil and priests renew their promises on Holy Thursday, the actual baptismal or ordination formula is never repeated. Likewise, religious profession is a sacramental and not a sacrament. [...]

Zenit.org 24-10-2017

The Sacrament of Matrimony

Code of Canon Law: Can. 1057 §2.

Matrimonial consent is an act of the will by which a man and a woman mutually give and accept each other through an irrevocable covenant in order to establish marriage.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1638

“From a valid marriage arises a bond between the spouses which by its very nature is perpetual and exclusive; furthermore, in a Christian marriage the spouses are strengthened and, as it were, consecrated for the duties and the dignity of their state by a special sacrament.” (Code of Canon Law, can.1134)

Bringing An Immense Gift

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 15-08-2017

Today, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Gospel introduces us to the young woman of Nazareth who, having received the Angel's Annunciation, leaves in haste to be closer to Elizabeth, in the final months of her prodigious pregnancy. Arriving at Elizabeth's home, Mary hears her utter the words that have come to form the "Hail Mary" prayer: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk 1:42). In fact, the greatest gift Mary brings to Elizabeth – and to the whole world – is Jesus, who already lives within her; and he lives not only through faith and through expectation, as in many women of the Old Testament: from the Virgin, Jesus took on human flesh for his mission of salvation.

In the home of Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah, where sadness once reigned for lack of children, there is now the joy of a child on the way: a child who will become the great John the Baptist, the precursor of the Messiah. And when Mary arrives, joy overflows and gushes from their hearts, because the invisible but real presence of Jesus fills everything with meaning: life, family, the salvation of the people. Everything! ...

Here is the exclamation of Elizabeth: "Blessed is she who believed" (Lk 1:45). In that house, the coming of Jesus through Mary created not only a climate of joy and fraternal communion, but also a climate of faith that leads to hope, prayer, and praise.

We would like to have all of this happen today in our homes too. Celebrating Mary Most Holy Assumed into Heaven, we would once again wish her to bring to us, to our families, to our communities, this immense gift, that unique Grace that we must always seek first and above all the other graces that we also have at heart: the grace that is Jesus Christ!

By bearing Jesus, Our Lady also brings to us a new joy full of meaning; she brings us a new ability to traverse with faith the most painful and difficult moments; she brings us the capacity of mercy, in order to forgive each other, to understand each other and to support each other.

Mary is the model of virtue and of faith. Today, in contemplating her Assumption into Heaven, the final fulfillment of her earthly journey, we thank her because she always precedes us in the pilgrimage of life and faith. She is the first Disciple. And we ask her to keep us and support us; that we may have a strong, joyful and merciful faith; that she may help us to be saints, to meet with her, one day, in Heaven.

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The Obedience of Faith

Catechism of the Catholic Church

142 By his Revelation, "the invisible God, from the fullness of his love, addresses men as his friends, and moves among them, in order to invite and receive them into his own company." The adequate response to this invitation is faith.

143 By faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God. With his whole being man gives his assent to God the revealer. Sacred Scripture calls this human response to God, the author of revelation, "the obedience of faith".

144 To obey (from the Latin *ob-audire*, to "hear or listen to") in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself. Abraham is the model of such obedience offered us by Sacred Scripture. The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment.

IN MEMORIAM

Pray for the soul of Maureen Whyte, late of Templestowe, who passed away in May this year; she was a long-time subscriber to Into the Deep.

May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

A Global Scandal

Amnesty International, under the heading "My Body My Rights" considers it a "global scandal" that abortion is still banned in some countries, and that there are millions of women in the world not using contraception.

No Catholic should be supporting Amnesty International.

Ed.

Why Catholics Cannot Be Like Everyone Else

Through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, Catholics have been initiated into the life of Christ and his mystery. Through Baptism we have put on a new self, a new humanity which is created in the image of God and the likeness of Christ, and reveals itself in a life that is upright and holy. Through these sacraments we have received a new divine life, the very supernatural graces of Christ's own divine sonship, and have been initiated into a life that is fundamentally sacramental. Primarily, this is the nature of our relationship with Christ in his Church.

The living Christ, our Eucharistic Lord, is not only the source and summit of this life of grace but also the measure of everything in it. Put simply, he is all in all. This means our thoughts, words and deeds must have their source in Christ and flow from and out of him.

In contemplation we have to draw from him the thoughts in our minds and the inclinations of our hearts so that our words and deeds will show a likeness to Christ, our source, origin and destiny. Through the Church we are called to serve the Father, through, with and in Christ, as his child, in holiness and justice all the days of our life.

As Catholics, we have lost sight of this great life that is ours through Baptism. Being a child of God in this world is a vocation from God from which we cannot take a break. Our new existence is not our own. We are not our own masters, and neither do we live for ourselves. Our time belongs to God.

The whole Church, that is, from the Pope to the newest, tiniest Catholic, is commanded to be a living and loving sign of God's presence, power and salvation in His world. As such, we cannot allow our daily living to be wrapped up in compromise and the darkness of error or lies. Daily we should stand in the bright light of Truth.

We should look at ourselves, examine our hearts, minds and souls and ask ourselves as Catholics if this is truly who we are daily. We are the Lord's chosen. He anointed us as a priestly, kingly and prophetic people. We are a people set apart for the Lord's purpose to be a light to the nations, to be salt to the earth.

To do justice to this anointing and gift we are commanded and instructed by the Lord through his Church to live holy lives, and to keep and honour the new and everlasting covenant we have entered into with God through Jesus Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit. This is why it is a contradiction to be a Catholic and not pray the holy Mass every Sunday on the Lord's Day.

The Church, as mother and teacher, is charged with the duty to catechise, form and shape us into who Christ is. By virtue of Christ's sacraments, every member of his Body is called to renew the world and is charged with the duty to convert it and make it holy. We have not been initiated into the life of Christ and his sacred mysteries to disguise, distort and relativise his teachings or to dissent from them. Why do Catholics who disagree with the Church and hate her doctrines continue to consider themselves Catholics? Why continue to be such if you reject what she orders, teaches and commissions you to do?

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

What We Believe and What We Do

Pope John Paul II, Homily, Dublin, 29-09-1979

There must always be consistency between what we believe and what we do. ... Our union with Christ in the Eucharist must be manifest in the truth of our lives today: in our actions, in our sense of values, in our life-style, in our relationships with others.

For each of us the Eucharist is a summons to make an ever greater effort to live as true followers of Christ: truthful in what we say, generous in what we do, caring for and respectful of the dignity and rights of all, whatever their class or their income may be; ready to make personal sacrifices, loyal and just, generous, prudent, compassionate and self-disciplined; aiming at the good of our families, of our young people, of our country, of the world.

Agenda for the Third Millennium, p.75

It is the Lord Who is Speaking to Us

Pope Francis, General Audience, 07-02-2018

Catechesis on the Mass: Gospel and Homily

The Gospel

The dialogue between God and his people, developed in the Liturgy of the Word of the Mass, culminates in the proclamation of the Gospel.

...[T]he Gospel constitutes the light for understanding the meaning of the biblical texts which precede it, both of the Old and the New Testaments. Indeed, "Christ himself is the centre and fullness of the whole of Scripture". Jesus Christ is always at the centre, always.

Therefore the liturgy itself distinguishes the Gospel from the other readings, and surrounds it with particular honour and veneration. Indeed, its reading is reserved to the ordained minister, who concludes by kissing the Book; it calls us to stand up to listen and to make the sign of the Cross on our forehead, our mouth and our breast; the candles and incense honour Christ, who, through the Gospel reading, makes his effective Word resonate. From these signs, the assembly recognizes the presence of Christ who gives them the "Good News" which converts and transforms.

What occurs is a direct discourse... We stand up to listen to the Gospel: but it is Christ who is speaking to us, there. And this is why we are attentive, because it is a direct conversation. It is the Lord who is speaking to us.

Thus, in the Mass we do not read the Gospel in order to know how things happened, but rather, we listen to the Gospel in order to realize what Jesus once did and said; and that Word is living, the Word of Jesus that is in the Gospel is alive and touches my heart.

Therefore, listening to the Gospel is very important, with an open heart, because it is the living Word.

Saint Augustine writes: "The Gospel is the mouth of Christ. He is seated in heaven, but he has not stopped speaking on earth".

If it is true that in the liturgy "Christ is still proclaiming His Gospel", it follows that, by participating in the Mass, we must give him a response. We listen to the Gospel and we must give a response in our life.

The Homily

In order to get his message across, Christ also makes use of the words of the priest who, after the Gospel, gives the homily.

Strongly recommended by the Second Vatican Council as part of the liturgy itself, the homily is not a trite discourse – nor a catechesis like the one I am giving now – nor is it a conference nor a lesson. The homily is something else.

What is the homily? It is taking up "once more the dialogue which the Lord has already established with his people", so it may find fulfilment in life. The authentic exegesis of the Gospel is our holy life! The Word of the Lord concludes its journey by becoming flesh in us, being translated into works, as happened in Mary and in the Saints.

Remember what I told you last time: the Word of the Lord enters through the ears, goes to the heart and passes to the hands, to good deeds. And the homily also follows the Word of the Lord and also follows this path in order to help us so that the Word of the Lord may go to the hands, by passing through the heart. ...

The homilist – the one who preaches, the priest or the deacon or the bishop – must carry out his ministry well, by offering a real service to all those who participate in the Mass; but those who listen to it must also do their part. Firstly by paying proper attention, that is, assuming the right interior disposition, without subjective pretexts, knowing that every preacher has merits and limitations. If at times there is reason for boredom because a homily is long or unfocused or unintelligible, at other times, however, prejudice creates the obstacle.

And the homilist must be aware that he is not doing something of his own, but is preaching, giving voice to Jesus; he is preaching the Word of Jesus. And the homily must be prepared well; it must be brief, short! ...please, make the homily brief, but prepare it well. ... How should it be prepared? With prayer, by studying the Word of God and by making a clear and brief summary; it should not last more than 10 minutes, please.

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It's Not Easy to Forgive

Pope Francis, Homily in Geneva, 21-06-2018

Forgiveness. It is not easy to forgive. We always retain a dram of bitterness or resentment, and whenever those we have forgiven annoy us, it rises to the surface once again. Yet the Lord wants our forgiveness to be a gift. It is significant that the only really original commentary on the *Our Father* is Jesus' own. He tells us simply: "If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt 6:14-15). Forgiveness is the catchphrase of the *Our Father*. God frees our hearts of all sin, he forgives every last thing. Yet he asks only one thing of us: that we in turn never tire of forgiving. He wants us to issue a general amnesty for the sins of others. We should take a good x-ray of our heart, to find out if there are blockages within us, obstacles to forgiveness, stones needing to be removed. Then we can say to the Father: "You see this stone? I hand it over to you and I pray for this person, for that situation; even if I struggle to forgive, I ask you for the strength to do it".

Forgiveness *renews*, it *works miracles*. Peter experienced Jesus' forgiveness and became the shepherd of his flock. Saul became Paul after the forgiveness he received from Stephen. Forgiven by our Father, each of us is born again as a new creation when we love our brothers and sisters. Only then do we bring true newness to our world, for there is no greater novelty than forgiveness, which *turns evil into good*. We see it in the history of Christianity. Forgiving one another, rediscovering after centuries of disagreements and conflicts that we are brothers and sisters, how much good this has done us and continues to do! The Father is pleased when we love one another and we forgive each other from the heart (cf. Mt 18:35). Then, he gives us his Spirit. Let us ask for the grace not to be entrenched and hard of heart, constantly demanding things of others. Instead, let us take the first step, in prayer, in fraternal encounter, in concrete charity. In this way, we will be more like the Father, who loves without counting the cost. And he will pour out upon us the Spirit of unity.

Zenit.org 21-06-2018

Quack Quack

If it looks like a duck, and walks like a duck, and says quack, then guess what? It's a duck.

And why should I say that? Because all these parish assembly discussions for the Plenary Council 2020 are a re-run of Renew and Journeying Together, which both ended in disaster. We've had bishops' conferences in the past discussing saving the Barrier Reef, saving the Murray River, and recently climate change. What nonsense. We're becoming more Anglicised all the time. This is what the plenary councils, the clergy and lay people of the Anglican church do. That's where they come up with all their wacky (or quacky?) ideas.

Jesus didn't send his apostles out to discuss things. He sent them out to teach. And I would suggest that the bishops take note of what Jesus said.

The church is collapsing everywhere in this country and we have bishops that just want to sit down and discuss issues with their flock. A bishop's primary task is to save his own soul and the souls of those entrusted to his care.

We all think we know the faith when in fact we don't. The bishops should be teaching us about the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and how important it is, the sacraments, regular Confession, daily rosary, daily prayer, the Divine Mercy devotion, and the importance of adoration.

What do you think would happen to a priest if he was courageous enough to preach on sin and Confession? And you don't need two guesses. God forbid if he ever preached on the Four Last Things: Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell.

I would respectfully suggest to the bishops that they go away and have a long retreat and meditate on what their functions as a bishop are. They are not only treading a very dangerous path and putting their salvation in jeopardy but they are also endangering the souls of those who follow them.

And a last suggestion. Discard the Catholic schools. In my view they are nothing but private state schools, when you have over half the school population being non-Catholic, the other half non-practising (bar maybe a few) and teachers who don't know the faith or don't practise it. Pray for them that they will come to their senses and experience an Augustinian conversion.

John Henderson, Morwell, Victoria

Silence in Church

I have been going through old articles that I have cut out and saved over the years. There is one on silence in church from 1990 but is still so relevant today. There is so much noise in our churches and so little reverence for our Lord in the Tabernacle. It makes me feel unwelcome in my own church, because you can't kneel quietly in prayer, but you always have people talking and making noise around you. There is no respect for our Lord or for others who want to pray to Him. No respect.

Here is a story from the article by Fr Franklyn McAfee [Soul Magazine, (World Apostolate of Fatima), Sept-Oct 1990, p.19]:

Dorothy Day, the late anti-war activist and proponent of the rights of the poor and foundress of the Catholic Worker Movement, in describing her conversion to the Catholic Faith as an adult, recalls a time as a young girl when she attended Mass for the first time with a friend who was Catholic. That one experience stayed with her and laid the foundation for her future embrace of the Faith.

What most impressed her that day at Mass was the complete silence that filled the church as the congregation awaited the start of the Holy Sacrifice. She looked about her and saw everyone in prayer, this silence joining them together in worship of the God whom they believed to be present in the golden tabernacle on the altar. Dorothy Day left church that morning knowing nothing about the teaching of the Church on the Holy Eucharist but she claimed she knew one thing, that Catholics actually do believe that Jesus Christ is in the tabernacle because they behaved as if He were.

If Dorothy Day were a small girl today and attended Mass at one of our churches, might she get that same impression or would the ease and informality of the congregation, the lack of reverence and silence, tell her the opposite? Would she leave the church after Mass wondering, "If Catholics really believe God lives in that box in the church, why aren't they overcome with attentive silence?"

Father McAfee ends with:

The traditional silence of our churches speaks powerfully that Someone is there, Greater and Other than we, Someone whom we must adore. If we really believed God was actually present, would we carry on conversations, laugh and walk about ignoring his august Presence? ... Talking and conversing have their place, but that place is not the House of God.

It is true that we are a community and that we are especially one during Mass. But we are united to each other as a community not directly, but through Christ. Because, and only because, we are grafted onto Him are we associated with others so grafted. Silence in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, a primary and reverent focus on the Lord Jesus during Mass is not only not an obstacle to forming a caring community, it is the only way in which we become one.

I couldn't say it better myself.

Martha Hall, Morwell, Victoria

Just for a Laugh

In the article submitted above, Fr McAfee refers to liturgical "experts" who decide that parishioners should be speaking to one another and paying attention to one another in the church for "Eucharist to really take place". He adds: "It is well to remember William F. Buckley's definition of a liturgist as "a plague sent upon the Church in times of nonpersecution so that the faithful may have a chance to suffer for the Faith."!

Ed.

Answering

I don't know if I have understood Mr Bohan correctly (July ITD, p.5), but if he is referring to AA-1025: The Memoirs of an Anti-Apostle, the presumed name of the woman is Marie Carré. Marie Carré was a French Protestant nurse who later in life converted to Catholicism and became a nun. I have an electronic copy of AA1025 which can be forwarded to Mr Bohan if this is what he is looking for.

Richard Stokes, Burpengary, Queensland

A Proud Nothing

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the Pontifical Household, 3rd Lenten homily 2018

Some of [St Paul's] concise statements...have the power to remove every "foothold" from us and to make us really get to the bottom of things to discover the truth. One such text asks, "What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?" (1Cor 4:7). There is only one thing that I have not received, one thing that is completely mine, and that is sin. I know and experience that it comes from me, that it finds its source in me, or in any case in human nature and in the world, not in God. On the other hand, everything else – including the fact of recognizing that sin comes from me – is from God. Another verse says, "If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself" (Gal 6:3).

The "true estimation" of ourselves is therefore for us to recognize our nothingness! This is the solid ground at which humility aims! It is precisely the sincere and peaceful conviction that by ourselves, we are nothing, we can think nothing, we can do nothing. "Apart from me you can do nothing," says Jesus (Jn 15:5), and the apostle adds, "we are [not] sufficient in ourselves to *think* anything ..." (see 2 Cor 3:5). We can use either of these sayings, depending on the circumstance, as a real "sword of the Spirit" to cut off a temptation, a thought, any self-satisfaction. "What do you have that you did not receive?" ...

In this way we begin to discover the real nature of our nothingness, which is not a pure and simple nothingness, an "innocent nothingness." We can glimpse the ultimate goal to which the word of God wants to lead us, which is to recognize what we truly are: a proud nothing! I am that person who "believes he is something" while I am nothing; I am the person who has nothing that I did not receive but who always boasts – or is tempted to boast – of something as though I had not received it. This is not the situation just for some people but a misfortune for all of us. This is the very definition of the "old self," a non-entity who thinks he or she is something, a proud nothing. ...

At the end of our journey of interior descent, then, we do not discover humility in ourselves but pride. However, the very discovery that we are radically proud – and that it is our fault, not God's, because we became proud by misusing our freedom – is in itself humility because it is the truth. Having discovered what lies at the end of this journey, or even only having glimpsed it from afar through the word of God, is a great grace. It brings us a new peace, like a person in wartime who discovers that under his home, without even having to leave it, there is a secure shelter that is absolutely impregnable to bombings. ...

The virtue of humility has an altogether special status: people who have it do not believe they have it, and the people who think they have it do not. Only Jesus can declare himself to be "humble of heart" and truly be so. This is the unique and unrepeatable characteristic of humility in the man-God.

Did Mary, then, not have the virtue of humility? Of course she had it, and she had it to the highest degree, but only God knew it, not Mary. Precisely this, in fact, constitutes the unparalleled value of true humility: its perfume is perceived only by God, not by the one who emits it. Mary's soul, free from every real and sinful concupiscence, facing the new situation created by her divine maternity, quickly and naturally came to the point of truth – her nothingness – and nothing and no one could have dissuaded her from that. ...

We should not deceive ourselves into thinking that we have attained humility just because the word of God and Mary's example have led us to discover our nothingness. Our degree of humility is seen when the initiative moves from us to others, that is, when we are not the only ones to recognize our weaknesses and faults but when others do – when we are able not only to tell ourselves the truth but are also willing to allow others to tell it to us. In other words, our humility is real when we accept reproofs, corrections, criticism, and humiliations. The author of *The Imitation of Christ* says, "Many a time it is to our benefit if others know our defects and even reproach us because of them for they thus help us remain humble." ...

The pursuit of humility is a battle that lasts all our lives and touches every area of life. Pride is capable of being nourished by either evil or good and is therefore able to survive in every situation and every "climate." In fact, in contrast to every other vice, good, rather than evil, is the preferred breeding ground for this terrible "virus." ...

English Translation by Marsha Daigle Williamson, Zenit.org 10-03-2018

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 2pm - 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

You, Lord

If I want my wounds treated, you're the doctor.
If I burn with fever, you are the refreshing spring.
If I am overwhelmed with guilt, you are the forgiveness.
If I need help, you are the strength.
If I fear death, you are the eternal life.
If I want heaven, you are life.
If I flee darkness, you are the light.
If I look for food, you are the nourishment.

St Ambrose of Milan

Best Time on Earth

St Teresa of Calcutta

The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time that you will spend on earth. Each moment that you spend with Jesus will deepen your union with Him and make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in heaven, and will help bring about an everlasting peace on earth.

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

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

Letters to the Editor:

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

Mary, our Mother

And Mother of the Redeemer,
Gate of heaven and Star of the sea,
Come to the aid of your people,
Who have sinned, yet also yearn to rise again!
Come to the Church's aid,
Enlighten your devoted children,
Strengthen the faithful throughout the world,
Let those who have drifted hear your call,
And may they who live as prisoners of evil
Be converted!

Pope John Paul II