

Into the Deep

Issue 190

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

Jan/Feb 2019

Be Cleansed

From a sermon by Saint Gregory Nazianzen,
on the Baptism of Christ

Today let us do honour to Christ's baptism and celebrate this feast in holiness.

Be cleansed entirely and continue to be cleansed.

Nothing gives such pleasure to God as the conversion and salvation of men, for whom his every word and every revelation exist.

He wants you to become a living force for all mankind, lights shining in the world.

You are to be radiant lights as you stand beside Christ, the great light, bathed in the glory of him who is the light of heaven.

You are to enjoy more and more the pure and dazzling light of the Trinity, as now you have received – though not in its fullness – a ray of its splendour, proceeding from the one God, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Roots

Pope Francis, after the Angelus, 13-01-2019

I renew to all the invitation to keep always alive and present the memory of their Baptism. The roots of our life in God are there, the roots of our eternal life, which Jesus Christ has given us with His Incarnation, Passion, Death, and Resurrection. The roots are in Baptism! And let us never forget the date of our Baptism.

Zenit.org 13-01-2019

"The heavens open and multitudes of angels come to assist in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass."

St Gregory the Great

Advice for New School Year

Pope Francis, after the General Audience 05-09-2018, greeting Polish-speaking pilgrims:

To the children and young people, who begin a new school year, as well as to their parents and educators:

- May this return be a time to learn knowledge, wisdom and acquire an experience of life.
- Don't forget to pray every day and to take part in Sunday Mass.
- May the Virgin Mary help you to tend to holiness.

Zenit.org 06-09-2018

Holy Mass

St Leonard of Port Maurice

What graces, virtues and gifts Holy Mass calls down! ... it calls down all spiritual graces, all the goods appertaining to the soul, such as repentance for sins, and victory over temptations ... it calls down the aid of grace, so necessary for enabling us to rise up, to stand upon our feet and to walk forward in the ways of God. It calls down many good and holy inspirations and many internal impulses, which dispose us to shake off tepidity and spur us on to work our best with greater fervour ... and these, again, bring with them an inestimable treasure, being the most effectual means for obtaining from God the grace of final perseverance, on which depends our eternal salvation, and the grace of as much moral certainty of eternal bliss as is ever permitted here below ... it calls down temporal blessings, such as health, abundance, peace ... here may we find liberation from all evils, here may we find enrichment by every sort of benefit.

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

Passing It On

I also had the Death Survey photocopied and have given many copies to people I know (November ITD, p.2) – hope that's ok. Will you keep it open or close next month?

We had our Bishop Paul Bird here one Saturday afternoon, available for 10 half-hour appointments. My friend and I saw him. Needed information on a personal matter, and then also how to get our children back to Mass. And gave him a book, written by a priest on his priesthood and how precious his daily Mass is. So good! I felt urged to give it to the Bishop. It's called "*In Sinu Jesu*, When Heart Speaks to Heart". I think every priest needs one.

Cynthia Lourey, Warrnambool, Victoria

- Yes, the Death Survey will remain open and readers are free to pass it on. It is printed in the October 2018 issue of ITD, p.10-11, and is on the ITD website and Facebook page.
- Fr John Speekman wrote a reflection on the book "*In Sinu Jesu*", published in the March 2017 issue of ITD, p.11, for those interested in more about it.

Ed.

This is Your Task

**Pope Francis, to parents of babies baptised
13-01-2019**

At the beginning of the ceremony, you were all posed a question: what do you ask for your children? And you all responded: the faith. You ask of the Church, the faith, for your children. And today, they will receive the Holy Spirit, the gift of the faith in their heart, in their spirit.

And this faith must develop. It must grow. Someone could say: yes, yes, they need to study it. Yes. When they go to catechesis, they will study well the faith. They will learn the faith. But before studying the faith, the faith must be transmitted, and this is a task that falls on you... This is your task: the transmission of the faith. ...

The important thing is to transmit the faith with your life of faith, that they see the love of the spouses, the peace of the home, that they see that Jesus is there. ...

Zenit.org 13-01-2019

Another Morwell Priest Moved On

The poisonous culture of Morwell parish has struck again! Each time an orthodox priest is sent to Morwell, the schools and some parishioners drive them away. Are these people so blind they can't see Truth, in a priest who is obedient, dedicated to the priesthood and the Eucharist?

I'm just appalled at the way a priest is treated, there is no respect anymore, it's just a reflection of how some parishioners treat Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, such ignorance.

I hope, Fr Edwin, you are treated with the respect and dignity you deserve as a servant of Christ, in your new post. May the Holy Spirit give you the strength and wisdom to continue carrying your cross and save souls. God bless you always.

Josie Vitale, Morwell, Victoria

Thanks

Enclosed my contribution to Into the Deep. Always great reading and very informative. Keep up the good work.

Clarice Giacomini, Narre Warren, Victoria

Enclosed donation to help cover costs. When I am finished with Into the Deep, I pass it on. Well done.

Rita Gee, Jerry's Plains, New South Wales

Thanks to all who have donated over the Christmas break, including a few who have not given their names. All your support – financial, written, verbal, or prayerful – is much appreciated and keeps ITD going.

Ed.

Reading Back-Issues

Since God gave me the opportunity to read all the Into the Deep issues I have saved over many years, I have thanked Him for the fall in Bath Lane, Bendigo, which broke my jaw and curtailed my activities.

So that your priceless newsletter can continue to be published, I enclose a cheque. May God reward you for helping those privileged to receive it to deepen their faith and spread the good news of the Gospel.

Audrey Drechsler, Sedgwick, Victoria

From Christmas to Easter

Pope Francis, Christmas Eve homily 2018

In Bethlehem, we discover that the life of God can enter into our hearts and dwell there. If we welcome that gift, history changes, starting with each of us. For once Jesus dwells in our heart, the centre of life is no longer my ravenous and selfish ego, but the One who is born and lives for love.

Tonight, as we hear the summons to go up to Bethlehem, the house of bread, let us ask ourselves: What is the bread of my life, what is it that I cannot do without? Is it the Lord, or something else? Then, as we enter the stable, sensing in the tender poverty of the newborn Child a new fragrance of life, the odour of simplicity, let us ask ourselves: Do I really need all these material objects and complicated recipes for living? Can I manage without all these unnecessary extras and live a life of greater simplicity? ...

After Bethlehem as the house of bread, let us reflect on Bethlehem as the city of David. There the young David was a shepherd, and as such was chosen by God to be the shepherd and leader of his people. At Christmas, in the city of David, it was the shepherds who welcomed Jesus into the world. On that night, the Gospel tells us, "they were filled with fear", but the angel said to them "Be not afraid". How many times do we hear this phrase in the Gospels: "Be not afraid"? It seems that God is constantly repeating it as he seeks us out. Because we, from the beginning, because of our sin, have been afraid of God; after sinning, Adam says: "I was afraid and so I hid".

Bethlehem is the remedy for this fear, because despite man's repeated "no", God constantly says "yes". He will always be God-with-us. And lest his presence inspire fear, he makes himself a tender Child. Be not afraid: these words were not spoken to saints but to shepherds, simple people who in those days were certainly not known for their refined manners and piety. The Son of David was born among shepherds in order to tell us that never again will anyone be alone and abandoned; we have a Shepherd who conquers our every fear and loves us all, without exception. ...

The Good Shepherd, who at Christmas comes to give his life to the sheep, will later, at Easter, ask Peter and, through him all of us, the ultimate question: "Do you love me?" The future of the flock will depend on how that question is answered. Tonight we too are asked to respond to Jesus with the words: "I love you". The answer given by each is essential for the whole flock.

Zenit.org 24-12-2018

Sacred Silence

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n.45

Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times. Its nature, however, depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration. For in the Penitential Act and again after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves; whereas after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what they have heard; then after Communion, they praise God in their hearts and pray to him.

Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner.

When You Are Mocked

St John Chrysostom, Homily 84

But let us not merely read of these things, but bear them in our mind; the crown of thorns, the robe, the reed, the blows, the smiting on the cheek, the spittings, the irony. These things, if continually meditated on, are sufficient to take down all anger; and if we be mocked at, if we suffer injustice, let us still say, "The servant is not greater than his Lord" ...

When a man insults thee, look not to him, but to the devil who moves him, and against him empty all thy wrath, but pity the man who is moved by him. For if lying is from the devil, to be angry without a cause is much more so. When thou seest one turning another into ridicule, consider that it is the devil who moves him, for mockings belong not to Christians. ...

Restore Baptism

After Christmas, the Church celebrated the feast of the Epiphany (the visitation of the Magi to the Christ Child) followed by the Baptism of the Lord. While all three feasts are liturgically connected and theologically significant in the life of the Church, it is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord that I would like to focus on.

Why? Because baptism as a sacrament of rebirth and recreation, the gateway to the life of grace, and salvation, is rapidly disappearing from the life of the Church and from our spiritual lives. Over many years it has slowly but steadily become more and more absent and disconnected from Sunday Mass.

Liturgically in the Church as a whole, Baptism was always a paschal celebration at the Easter Vigil; now Baptism has become a private family celebration performed outside of Sunday Mass in the baptistery.

And even though the Easter Vigil is primarily and truly a baptismal liturgy, nowadays many parishes rarely have any candidates to be baptised and initiated into the life of Christ in his Church. Let's face it, one can be a regular churchgoer for years without having attended one baptism, without even knowing how it is performed. Many of the current generation know they have been 'done' because it has been recorded on a certificate, but through a basic lack of catechesis, very little, if anything, about Baptism has been inscribed in their hearts and minds.

In the past the majority of Catholics knew that Easter each year was the celebration of their own Baptism, of their own entrance into and participation in the new life of the Risen Christ. They knew it was the time to once again renew their baptismal promises and appreciation of the Sacrament of Baptism as the basis of their Catholic living.

But today's Catholics would barely know and understand the meaning of their own baptism, let alone the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, and how it relates to theirs. Many aren't even aware that Baptism is necessary for salvation, and a condition for membership in the Church. Their piety and spiritual lives have long ceased to be Baptismal. It has all become a matter of out of sight and out of mind. They no longer experience Easter, Pentecost, Christmas, Epiphany, and indeed regular Sunday Mass, in their direct relationship to Baptism, their own in particular.

As a result, Baptism has ceased to be a permanent reality and experience that gives light, direction and meaning to their lives, and has lost its power to shape their Catholic world view. It has failed to shape and inform their basic attitudes, motivations and decisions.

This is why today more than ever, a coherent, effective and systematic Baptismal catechesis is needed in order to re-establish the liturgical and spiritual link between the Sacrament of Baptism and Sunday Mass; between the sacrament of entrance into the Church, and the sacrament of the Church, that makes her and expresses and reveals her divine nature.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

A Prayer for Good Humour

St Thomas More, Martyr
(7 February 1477 - 6 July 1535)

Lord, give me a good digestion, and something to digest.

Give me health, with the good humour necessary to maintain it.

Give me, Lord, a holy soul that makes treasure of what is good and pure,

Not to be frightened at the sight of evil, but to see in your presence the way to put things right.

Give me a soul that doesn't know boredom, grunts, sighs and moans.

Do not allow me to grieve excessively for that too intrusive thing which is called "I".

Lord, give me the sense of ridiculous and allow me the grace to understand jokes

So that in life I may experience joy and share it with others. Amen.

When to Feel Anxious

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 30-12-2018

See why the family of Nazareth is holy: because it was *centred on Jesus*; all Mary's and Joseph's attentions and solitudes were directed to Him.

That anxiety they felt during the three days that Jesus was lost, should also be our anxiety when we are *far from Him*, when we are far from Jesus.

We should feel anxious when we forget Jesus for more than three days, without praying, without reading the Gospel, without feeling the need of His presence and of His consoling friendship. ...

Mary and Joseph looked for Him and found Him in the Temple while He was teaching. We too, especially in the house of God, can encounter the divine Teacher and receive His message of salvation. In the Eucharistic celebration, we have a living experience of Christ. He speaks to us, He offers us His Word, He illumines us, He illumines our path; He gives us his Body in the Eucharist from which we draw vigour to face the difficulties of every day.

Zenit.org 30-12-2018

Faith in Pakistan

Archbishop Joseph Arshad of Islamabad-Rawalpindi, Pakistan, in an interview with Aid to the Church in Need

Q: How would you define the life of faith of the Christians in Pakistan?

A: Our people have a very simple but very strong faith. Despite the problems of access to education and the lack of opportunities, the people are faithful to the Gospel, and our churches are full. 90 percent of Catholic Christians attend Mass every Sunday, and many also during the week. I should also add that many people simply cannot attend Mass every Sunday owing to the lack of churches and of priests to minister to them.

Zenit.org 20-12-2018

"God has united all waters and called them sea; he has united all graces and called them Mary".

St Louis de Montfort

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

St John Vianney

In The House of Prayer

St Pio of Pietrelcina

In order to avoid irreverence and imperfections in the house of God, in church – which the Divine Master calls the "house of prayer" – I exhort you in the Lord to practice the following:

Enter the church in silence and with great respect, considering yourself unworthy to appear before the Lord's Majesty. ... Then take Holy Water and make the Sign of the Cross carefully and slowly.

As soon as you are before God in the Blessed Sacrament, devoutly genuflect. Once you have found your place, kneel down and render the tribute of your presence and devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Confide all your needs to Him along with those of others. Speak to Him with filial abandonment, give free rein to your heart, and give Him complete freedom to work in you as He thinks best. ... Be modest in your glances; don't turn your head here and there to see who enters and leaves. Don't laugh, out of reverence for this holy place and also out of respect for those who are near you. Try not to speak to anybody, except when charity or strict necessity requests this. ...

On leaving the church, you should be recollected and calm. Firstly take your leave of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament; ask his forgiveness for the shortcomings committed in his Divine presence and do not leave him without asking for and having received his paternal blessing.

Our Most Important Work

Bishop Thomas Olmstead, in his Introduction of "Complete My Joy: An Apostolic Exhortation to the Husbands and Wives, Mothers and Fathers of the Diocese of Phoenix"

When I consider the blessings that God has bestowed on me in my life, second only to my Baptism into Christ's family is the blessing of being raised in a faithful and united Catholic family. My parents, Patrick and Helen, committed themselves to God in the vocation to Holy Matrimony, and this provided a stability for me to grow as their son and as a son of God. I, and my brothers and sisters, never worried about their commitment to God, to each other or to us. For this I am eternally grateful. Their motherly and fatherly acceptance of my life, that of my 5 siblings and the common, simple home life that we lived allowed God to form us and prepared us to follow His will.

Likewise, throughout my life as a priest, I can say that some of the most meaningful moments are those when God sent me to walk with and minister to families amidst the ups and downs of life. Family is likely where we feel the deepest joys as well as the deepest pain. This is because of the deep love that comes with family; it echoes our deep human need for love. In fact, I am convinced that the priestly work that we spiritual fathers do for the upbuilding of the family is our most important work. I think this more today than ever.

The full Exhortation can be found at dphx.org

Selling Wrong Ideas

Reflection of a priest at parish Eucharistic adoration:

In Luke 19:45-48, we read of Jesus driving out those who were selling things in the temple.

Do you think people are selling things in our church today? And what are those things they could be selling? And if Christ is to come into our church today, will he drive people out?

Yes, people are selling things. Not like those selling pigeons, goats, cows and changing money, but they are selling wrong ideas that are not in the same thought patterns of Christ, to the vulnerable in the church – ideas that are not in step with the Church's teaching, turning everything upside down and making the church a place of show. Christ has said that my house is a house of prayer, but in our church we see the church turned into a house of show.

For those of you here seated, what you need to do is to remain in prayer, to pray for those who are selling and marketing wrong ideas that they will change for the better, that they may be humbled and listen to that owner of the church and pray.

For there is nothing we can do about it but to pray, for it is only in prayer that we can find the solution to the ongoing problem. A musician once said that "there is no problem without a solution". And so for us prayer is the key and it is the solution, so let us continue in our struggle to pray and moreso by sacrificing your time before Christ truly present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Name and address supplied

Building Communion

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, 10-10-2010

The Church was established to be a sign and an instrument of the unique and universal saving project of God among men; She fulfils this mission simply by being herself, that is, "Communion and witness"...

Without communion there can be no witness: the life of communion is truly the great witness. Jesus said it clearly: "It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognize you as my disciples" (Jn 13:35).

This communion is the same life of God which is communicated in the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ. It is thus a gift, not something which we ourselves must build through our own efforts. And it is precisely because of this that it calls upon our freedom and waits for our response: communion always requires conversion, just as a gift is better if it is welcomed and utilized.

In Jerusalem the first Christians were few. Nobody could have imagined what was going to take place. And the Church continues to live on that same strength which enabled it to begin and to grow.

Zenit.org 10-10-2010

Searching for Signs

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher of the Pontifical Household, First Advent Sermon 2018

In the Church we are so pressed with tasks to perform, problems to confront, and challenges to respond to that we risk losing sight of, or leaving in the background, the "one thing that is necessary" of the gospel (Lk 10:42), which is our personal relationship with God. Moreover, we know from experience that an authentic personal relationship with God is the first requirement in dealing with all the situations and problems that come up without us losing our peace and patience.

... Let us try to do what St Angela of Foligno recommended to her spiritual children: let us "recollect ourselves in God and [plunge] our whole soul in the divine infinity." Let us take a bath of faith each morning before beginning the day's work.

... People today are passionate in searching for signs of the existence of intelligent beings on other planets. It is a legitimate and understandable search. Few, however, search for and study the signs of the Living Being who has created the universe, who entered into its history, and who lives in it. "In him, we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). We have the real Living One in our midst, and we overlook him to search for hypothetical beings who, in the best of cases, could do very little for us and certainly could not save us from death.

How many times are we forced to say to God, with St Augustine, "You were with me, but I was not with you." Unlike us, the living God, in fact, seeks for us and has done nothing other than that since the creation of the world. He continues to call out, "Adam, where are you?" (see Gen 3:9). Let us decide to attend to the signs of this living God, to respond to his call, to "knock on his door," to enter into new and lively contact with him.

We rely on Jesus' saying: "Seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Mt 7:7). When we read these words, we immediately think that Jesus promises to give us all the things we ask for, and we are perplexed because we see this rarely happens. However, he did intend to say one thing above all: "Seek me and you will find me; knock and I will open the door." He promises to give *himself*, above and beyond the small things we ask of him, and this promise is always infallibly kept. Whoever seeks him finds him; he will open to whoever knocks, and once someone has found him, everything else is secondary.

The soul that thirsts for the living God is guaranteed to find him and with him will find everything else in him, as the words of St Teresa of Avila remind us:

"Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things pass away: God never changes. Patience obtains all things. He who has God finds he lacks nothing; God alone suffices."

Zenit.org 07-12-2018

Loss of Credibility

Pope Francis, in a letter to the US bishops, 01-01-2019

Loss of credibility calls for a specific approach, since it cannot be regained by issuing stern decrees or by simply creating new committees or improving flow charts, as if we were in charge of a department of human resources. That kind of vision ends up reducing the mission of the bishop and that of the Church to a mere administrative or organizational function in the "evangelization business". Let us be clear: many of those things are necessary yet insufficient... ultimately, they risk reducing everything to an organizational problem. ...

In a word, a new ecclesial season needs bishops who can teach others how to discern God's presence in the history of his people, and not mere administrators. ... What is being asked of us today is a new presence in the world, conformed to the cross of Christ, one that takes concrete shape in service to the men and women of our time. ... Amid the tempest, we must never lose faith in the quiet, daily and effective power of the Holy Spirit at work in human hearts and in all of history. ...

With the words of the Eucharistic Prayer, let us ask the Lord that, "in a world torn by strife, your people may shine forth as a prophetic sign of unity and concord" (Masses for Various Needs, I).

The Mystery of the Lord's Baptism

St Maximus of Turin

The Gospel tells us that the Lord went to the Jordan River to be baptized and that he wished to consecrate himself in the river by signs from heaven.

Reason demands that this feast of the Lord's baptism, which I think could be called the feast of his birthday, should follow soon after the Lord's birthday, during the same season, even though many years intervened between the two events.

At Christmas he was born a man; today he is reborn sacramentally. Then he was born from the Virgin; today he is born in mystery. When he was born a man, his mother Mary held him close to her heart; when he is born in mystery, God the Father embraces him with his voice when he says: *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: listen to him.* The mother caresses the tender baby on her lap; the Father serves his Son by his loving testimony. The mother holds the child for the Magi to adore; the Father reveals that his Son is to be worshipped by all the nations.

That is why the Lord Jesus went to the river for baptism; that is why he wanted his holy body to be washed with Jordan's water.

Someone might ask, "Why would a holy man desire baptism?" Listen to the answer: Christ is baptized, not to be made holy by the water, but to make the water holy, and by his cleansing to purify the waters which he touched. For the consecration of Christ involves a more significant consecration of the water.

For when the Saviour is washed, all water for our baptism is made clean, purified at its source for the dispensing of baptismal grace to the people of future ages. Christ is the first to be baptized, then, so that Christians will follow after him with confidence.

Office of Readings, 11-01-2019

An Individual With Legal Rights

In the September issue of ITD (p.9) was a Zenit report on the house arrest of Archbishop Phillip Wilson of Adelaide, who was convicted of not reporting abuses by Fr James Fletcher. Archbishop Wilson has subsequently won an appeal. The following report is from CNA/EWTN (06-12-2018):

Newcastle District Court Judge Roy Ellis said Dec. 6 that the Crown had failed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Archbishop Wilson did not report abuse committed by Fr. James Fletcher, when Fletcher was charged in 2004 with child abuse which occurred between 1989 and 1991. ...

The judge also noted the possibility of undue media influence on the case.

"This is not a criticism of media, but intended or not, the mere presence of large amounts of media from all around Australia and the world carries with it a certain amount of pressure on the court," Ellis stated.

The heavy media presence "may amount to perceived pressure for a court to reach a conclusion which seems to be consistent with the direction of public opinion, rather than being consistent with the rule of law that requires a court to hand down individual justice in its decision-making processes." ...

He added that Archbishop Wilson could not be convicted merely because the "Catholic Church has a lot to answer for in terms of its historical self-protective approach" to clerical sex abuse. "Philip Wilson when he appears before this court is simply an individual who has the same legal rights as every other person in our community."

"It is not for me to punish the Catholic Church for its institutional moral deficits, or to punish Philip Wilson for the sins of the now deceased James Fletcher by finding Philip Wilson guilty, simply on the basis that he is a Catholic priest." ...

The Crown has said it will appeal Ellis' decision.

Like a Child in the Arms of his Dad

Pope Francis, General Audience, 16-01-2019

After meeting Jesus and hearing his preaching, a Christian no longer considers God as a tyrant to be feared; he is no longer afraid but feels trust in Him expand in his heart: he can speak with the Creator by calling him 'Father'. The expression is so important for Christians that it is often preserved intact, in its original form: 'Abba'. In the New Testament it is rare for Aramaic expressions to be translated into Greek. We have to imagine that the voice of Jesus himself has remained in these Aramaic words as if 'recorded'...

Saying 'Abba' is something much more intimate, more moving than simply calling God 'Father'. This is why someone has proposed translating this original Aramaic word 'Abba' with 'Dad' or 'Papa'. ... We shall continue to say 'our Father' but with the heart we are invited to say 'Dad', to have a relationship with God like that of a child with his dad, who says 'dad' and says 'papa'. Indeed, these expressions evoke affection, they evoke warmth, something that casts us into the context of childhood: the image of a child completely enveloped in the embrace of a father who feels infinite tenderness for him. And for this reason, dear brothers and sisters, in order to pray properly, one must come to have a child's heart. Not a self-sufficient heart: one cannot pray properly this way. Like a child in the arms of his father, of his dad, of his papa.

But of course the Gospels better explain the meaning of this word. What does this word mean to Jesus? The 'Our Father' takes on meaning and colour if we learn to pray it after having read, for example, the Parable of the Merciful Father, in Chapter 15 of Luke. Let us imagine this prayer recited by the prodigal son, after having experienced the embrace of his father who had long awaited him, a father who does not remember the offensive words the son had said to him, a father who now simply makes him understand how much he has been missed. Thus we discover how those words become vibrant, receive strength. ...

It is enough to evoke this single expression — *Abba* — for Christian prayer to develop. ...

God seeks you, even if you do not seek him. God loves you, even if you have forgotten about him. God glimpses beauty in you, even if you think you have squandered all your talents in vain. ...

It may be that we too happen to walk on paths far from God, as happened to the prodigal son; or to sink into a loneliness that makes us feel abandoned in the world; or, even to make mistakes and be paralyzed by a sense of guilt. In those difficult moments, we can still find the strength to pray, to begin again with the word 'Abba', but said with the tender feeling of a child: 'Abba', 'Dad'. He does not hide his face from us. Remember well: perhaps one has bad things within, things he does not know how to resolve, much bitterness for having done this and that. He does not hide His face. He does not close himself off in silence. Say 'Father' to Him and He will answer you. You have a father. 'Yes, but I am a delinquent...'. But you have a father who loves you! Say 'Father' to him, start to pray in this way, and in the silence he will tell us that he has never lost sight of us. 'But Father, I have done this...'. - 'I have never lost sight of you; I have seen everything. But I have always been there, close to you, faithful to my love for you'. That will be his answer. Never forget to say 'Father'.

Vatican.va

The Life of Priests

Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, 15-01-2010 Letter to Priests, as prefect of the Congregation for Clergy

The dignity of the priesthood, bestowed by the Almighty Father, must be evident in the life of priests: in their sanctity, in their welcoming humanity full of humility and pastoral charity, in the clarity of their faithfulness to the Gospel and the doctrine of the Church, in the sobriety and solemnity of their celebration of the divine mysteries, in their ecclesiastical garb.

What's the Temperature in Your Diocese?

Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, 2011, when he was prefect of the Congregation for Clergy

The number [of vocations] decreases when there the temperature of the faith is lowered, since vocations are a divine "affair" and not a human one, and they follow the Divine logic, which is foolishness from a human point of view. Faith is called for!

Zenit.org 27-01-2011

Anti-Catholic Times

I remember someone once saying that "Jesus has so few friends today, He has to ask those faithful friends to help Him carry His cross". I believe Cardinal Pell is one of those chosen friends. We need Cardinal Pell and other faithful apostles to make reparation for the sins of the clergy and us the laity. In Europe, if a bishop is average, he is regarded as a success.

Let me tell you a story. When I talk to some of my Irish friends, I boast about how I once insulted Oliver Cromwell. Some years ago I visited Ely Cathedral in Cambridgeshire, which stands next door to the old family home of "the most hated man in Ireland." One could pay to enter the dwelling, but I refused to tour the building. I had hoped by so doing I would wishfully insult him for his reign of terror in Ireland.

He was a terrible man, whose history is well known. Suffice it to say over 600,000 men, women and children had perished during his time and 850,000 were left in dire poverty when the cry went out, "To hell or to Connaught". The peace that remained was the peace of desolation. That was a terrible period in our history.

As we enter 2019 things will only get worse. "A terrible beauty is born." Ireland will have sanctioned "the culture of death". Abortion will be legalised. Ireland has entered an era when more unborn children will be murdered in the various dioceses throughout the land than Cromwell had ever dreamt possible.

This disaster did not happen in a vacuum. It is my personal belief that the bishops across these islands felt too secure, they were too contented and complacent. They did not put their lives on the line but sought security as members of a very comfortable club. They have lost touch with their suffering parishioners. They lack empathy with those in need. I think it is fair to say that the hierarchy of these islands (many of whom have come from humble dwellings) have lost touch with their humble parishioners. You will see them at the "top tables." I do not think you would find a Saint John Fisher in Ireland. (I believe George Pell is your substitute to John Fisher. Both faced crooked governments.)

We desperately need good and holy bishops. Many are so busy doing the "work of the Lord" that they do not have sufficient time for "the Lord of the work" (August ITD, p.2).

Yes, we need Cardinal Pell and similar good and holy men to follow Our Lord. "Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven".

Pat Ryan, London, U.K.

We Have No Wine

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 20-01-2019

Our Lady says to us all: "Do whatever He tells you." These words are a precious heritage that our Mother has left us. ... To serve the Lord means to listen to His word and to put it into practice. It's the simple and essential recommendation of Jesus' Mother, it's the Christian's program of life. ...

When we are in difficult situations when problems come that we don't know how to resolve when we often feel anxiety and anguish, when we lack joy, we should go to Our Lady and say: "We don't have wine. The wine is finished: look how I am, look at my heart, look at my soul." We must say it to <our> Mother. And She will go to Jesus to say: "Look at him, look at her: he/she doesn't have wine." And then She will turn to us and say: "Do whatever He tells you."

To draw from the jars is, for each one of us, to entrust ourselves to the Word and to the Sacraments to experience God's grace in our life. So we also, as the steward who tasted the water that had become wine, can exclaim: "You have kept the good wine until now". Jesus always surprises us. Let us speak to <our> Mother so that She will speak to <her> Son, and He will surprise us.

May She, the Holy Virgin help us to follow her invitation: "Do whatever He tells you," so that we can open ourselves fully to Jesus, recognizing in our everyday life the signs of His vivifying presence.

[ZENIT's translation by Virginia M. Forrester] Zenit.org 20-01-2019

Do Not Be Disturbed, Little Man

I recently received an email from a reader saying: "Thanks for another wonderful issue", then adding, "Doesn't Pope Francis worry you?"

My immediate reply, in my head, what "No, he doesn't. He's not my responsibility."

I know there are many who disagree. Some strenuously. But I just can't feel the same degree of angst that they do. I see Pope Francis as the Pope. He is way beyond my realm of responsibility. It is not my job to vet him, to decide if he's fit for the job, to topple him or depose him. If he's a bad pope, the Lord and history will deal with it. It's not my problem. I'm Catholic and I'm led by the Pope. That's the way the Catholic Church works and I'm happy with that. God can fix any problems that need fixing.

A week or so later I read the following excerpt from an Advent sermon by Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, and I thought – "There! My sentiments exactly!" I hadn't replied to the reader who emailed me, as my immediate response seemed too simple and abrupt, and any longer response would no doubt lead to fruitless back-and-forth arguing. But when I read this, about St Francis of Assisi, I thought it was worth writing up:

The first biographer of St. Francis of Assisi, Thomas Celano, describes a moment of darkness and discomfort that the saint experienced at the end of his life as he saw around him deviations from the original lifestyle of his brothers. He writes,

Once when he was disturbed over bad examples and, thus distressed, gave himself over to prayer, he brought back this rebuke from the Lord: "Why are you disturbed, little man? Did I not place you over my order as its shepherd, and now you do not know that I am its chief protector? . . . Do not be disturbed, therefore, but work out your salvation, for though the order was reduced to the number of three, it will by my grace remain unshaken."

I am just a "little man" in the scheme of things, and the Lord is my Shepherd. It helps to remember that. My advice to others: Do not be disturbed by Pope Francis. It's not up to you. The Lord is the chief protector, and by His grace, the Church will remain unshaken.

Ed.

Be Like the Star

St Leo the Great

"The Lord has made his salvation known to the whole world" . . . This came to be fulfilled, as we know, from the time when the star beckoned the three wise men out of their distant country and led them to recognize and adore the King of heaven and earth.

The obedience of the star calls us to imitate its humble service: to be servants, as best we can, of the grace that invites all men to find Christ.

Dear friends, you must have the same zeal to be of help to one another; then, in the kingdom of God, to which faith and good works are the way, you will shine as children of the light.

Permission to Give

Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher to the Pontifical Household, 06-01-2006

A question people often ask themselves about baptism is: Why baptize small children? Why not wait until they are older and can decide freely for themselves? It is a serious question, but it can conceal a deceit. In procreating a child and giving him life, do parents first ask for his permission? Convinced that life is an immense gift, they rightly assume that one day the child will be grateful for it. A person is not asked for permission to be given a gift, and baptism is essentially this: the gift of life given to man by the merits of Christ.

Zenit.org 06-01-2006

"Sunday Mass is at the heart of the Church's life. There we encounter the Risen Lord, we listen to His Word, we are nourished at His table and thus we become Church."

Pope Francis, Tweet @Pontifex, 04-11-2018

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

Let the World Tremble

St Francis of Assisi

Let the entire man be seized with fear; let the whole world tremble; let heaven exult when Christ, the Son of the Living God, is on the altar in the hands of the priest. O admirable height and stupendous condescension! O humble sublimity! O sublime humility! that the Lord of the universe, God and the Son of God, so humbles Himself that for our salvation He hides Himself under a morsel of bread.

Immeasurable

St Lawrence Justinian

No human tongue can enumerate the favours that trace back to the Sacrifice of the Mass. The sinner is reconciled with God; the just man becomes more upright; sins are wiped away; vices are uprooted; virtue and merit increases; and the devil's schemes are frustrated.

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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