

Into the Deep

Issue 23

Newsletter of the Confraternity of St Michael, Gippsland

August 2004

Eamonn Keane Coming to Gippsland

Into the Deep is delighted to announce that Mr Eamonn Keane will be speaking in the Latrobe Valley on Saturday 2nd October 2004.

Eamonn is a Catholic teacher and author. His books include 'A Generation Betrayed: The Deconstruction of Catholic Education in the English-Speaking World', and 'Crisis in Religious Education'. He has recently written a paper on the new Religious Education curriculum based on dissenter Thomas Groome's theories (parts of which have been published in ITD over the past few months).

There will be two sessions of talks. The morning will include a talk on Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body, and on the Eucharist and Ministerial Priesthood. The afternoon session will be on Catholic Education.

Everyone is invited to all talks. We extend a particular welcome to all priests, teachers, and home-schoolers. Students and young people will be particularly interested in the Theology of the Body presentation, but it will be appropriate for parents, teachers and priests as well. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion. Eamonn Keane has much to offer and we are privileged that he will be visiting us.

Mark the 2nd of October in your diaries now, and more details regarding the venue and times will be in next month's Into the Deep. There will be no cost, but donations will be welcomed. You are welcome to attend all day or only some sessions.

Please contact John Henderson on 5134 1742 to register your interest so that we can gauge numbers in the meantime and confirm the venue.

Fr Speekman Wins Appeal!

The Congregation for the Clergy has upheld Fr John Speekman's recourse against the Decree of Removal issued by Bishop Jeremiah Coffey in July last year!

Bishop Coffey's decree removed Fr Speekman as parish priest of Morwell in July 2003, citing ineffective ministry as the cause. The Decree of Removal gave no evidence of what Fr Speekman had done wrong, or why it was deemed his ministry was ineffective, apart from the vague accusation that it was due to his "manner of acting and speaking". Fr Speekman himself had begged the Bishop to tell him what he had done wrong, but the Bishop had refused.

After almost a year, the Congregation has issued its decision in a detailed 7-page Decree which has found heavily in Fr Speekman's favour.

Our prayers have been answered and justice and truth have prevailed! Praise the Lord!

*See page 4 for more detail on the decree.
See www.stoneswillshout.com for updates on
the situation and what you can do.*

Bishop Has No Grace

In spite of Fr Speekman's clear and decisive result from the Congregation for the Clergy, Bishop Coffey has decided to appeal the Decree to the higher court, or the Signatura.

So much for accepting the decision with dignity.

This from a man who, reflecting on his 15 years as Bishop in the July issue of Catholic Life, commented that being a bishop was about relationships, including with his priests and people of the diocese.

What contempt he has shown his priest Fr Speekman, the parishioners of Morwell, and indeed the faithful of the entire diocese – not to mention the Congregation for the Clergy!

In the same Catholic Life article, the Bishop is reported to have said that division in the diocese caused him pain and suffering and that, "We should be unified as one under Christ Jesus."

Bishop Coffey continues to expose himself for his contradictions and his stubborn refusal to heal divisions he has created.

He brings disgrace on this diocese and it is time for him to resign. The Church has greater issues to deal with than his petty game-playing.

Abuses in Cathedral Parish

In the June edition of *Catholic Life*, Bishop Coffey wrote an article commenting on *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, the recent instruction “on certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the Most Holy Eucharist.” He wrote, “Mass is celebrated in all our churches - the norms of celebration are followed carefully.”

Sale parishioners were surprised by this claim that the norms were being followed carefully. Each week, they see abuses occurring in the Bishop’s own parish.

For instance, the instruction proclaims the following:

“Only out of true necessity is there to be recourse to the assistance of extraordinary ministers in the celebration of the Liturgy” (para 151). Here in Sale, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are always used whether they are needed or not, often receiving Communion with the Priest, contrary to the norm that extraordinary ministers are not to receive Communion apart from the other faithful as though concelebrants.

“The communicant must not be permitted to intinct the host himself in the chalice” (para 104). Yet in Sale we see this happening every Sunday.

The priest must always wear a “chasuble, worn over the alb and stole” (para 123). In Sale, the Administrator never wears a chasuble at weekday Mass. He also changes words in the liturgy in the name of ‘inclusive language’, another forbidden practice.

Lay people, even religious, seminarians and pastoral assistants, are not to read the Gospel or preach the homily at Mass (para 63–66). Here in Sale, we have had two Sundays since *Redemptionis Sacramentum* was introduced, where a seminarian and lay people have replaced the priest for the homily.

When presenting the instruction Archbishop Sorrentino, the secretary for Divine worship, said “the Instruction does none other than reiterate existing norms.” But still no one listens.

Pat O’Brien, Sale

Pray For God’s Will

Into the Deep is most informative, but I am so disappointed with the goings-on in the Diocese of Sale. Please keep up the good work of making people aware of what is taking place within our beloved Church. It is times like this that we have to earnestly pray to the Holy Spirit to enlighten these people to do God’s Will and not their own – with its hidden agenda.

Brenda Bath

Let’s Hold a Siege of Jericho!

In preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress this October, 400 seminarians in Guadalajara, Mexico, are visiting families in the archdiocese to promote and renew faith in the Blessed Sacrament.

“Every morning, in groups of about 20 to 40, the seminarians set off to different parishes,” Father Francisco González, prefect of studies at San José Seminary, told the Vatican agency Fides.

“From there, in smaller groups, they go to visit homes to pray and reflect with the family members according to a program worked out previously with the parish priest,” the priest said.

“In the afternoons the seminarians animate meetings in the parish for children, married couples, young people: catechesis, games, moments of prayer and reflection on a particular aspect of the Eucharist, following indications issued by the congress’s Central Organising Committee with the help of handbooks and other especially prepared material,” he added.

Father Antonio González Cornejo, canon at the Guadalajara cathedral, said there is growing enthusiasm as the Eucharistic Congress approaches.

“There are many initiatives and activities at both parish and diocesan level,” he said. “Small Eucharistic Congresses are being organised all over Mexico for parishes or special groups like students, university teachers, catechists, married couples, etc.”

At the parish level, another initiative to encourage devotion to the Eucharist is “The Siege of Jericho.”

The initiative is based on the Bible story of the seven-day siege on Jericho which ends when the walls of the city fall. A parish holds seven days and nights of perpetual adoration during which the people are asked to pray that the Lord will break down the walls which prevent each person from living a truly Christian life.

www.zenit.org

“An error which is not resisted,
is approved.

A truth which is not defended,
is suppressed.”

Pope St Felix III

See www.stoneswillshout.com for all previous issues of Into the Deep

Job Loss Via Parish Bulletin

Gregory Kingman, pastoral associate at Morwell Catholic Parish, was given 3 months' notice in the parish bulletin of July 17th. I subsequently learnt that no notice of the decision had been conveyed to Gregory prior to the public statement made in the bulletin.

Parish Administrator Fr Tom Cleary had earlier asked him for a copy of his contract, fuelling suspicion that he would finally be told to leave. Over the past months, his duties had systematically been removed from him by Fr Cleary, and delegated to others in the parish without his knowledge, leaving him virtually redundant. The final blow was not unexpected, but it is hard to imagine how it could've been dealt through a public notice.

The bulletin notice read:

"Mr Gregory Kingman's three year contract as Pastoral Associate in Morwell Catholic Parish expired on June 20th 2004. The agreement stated that a renewal of the contract can be for a "period of no less than two years." The Parish Administrator, in consultation with the Parish Finance Committee, has decided that Morwell Catholic Parish cannot make another two year commitment while it is still to hear from Rome in relation to Fr John Speekman's appeal. Under the present circumstances, and in the spirit of the contract, the required three months notice to conclude his employment in the Parish by 15th October 2004 has been extended to Mr Kingman. At some future date, when Parish circumstances become clear, a new contract may, or may not, be negotiated. However, during the next three months Mr Kingman is on salary and is entitled to receive annual holidays and all other benefits afforded him by his contract."

Surely if such action is to be taken, common decency dictates that Gregory should have been notified prior to a public announcement. Not to do so could be construed as a contemptible act.

In a discussion with Fr Cleary later, I ascertained that he had written to Gregory on 11th July but had incorrectly addressed the envelope. I pointed out that surely it was Fr Cleary's responsibility to ensure that Gregory was aware of what was to be published in the bulletin regarding his contract. After all, they work in the same building! Fr Cleary said he would write a personal letter of apology, but did not consider the need for a public apology.

I pointed out that under Canon Law, Fr Cleary had no authority to deal in such a way with parish employees while Fr Speekman's appeal was being heard. But of course, contempt for Canon Law has been all too prevalent since Fr Cleary's appointment as Parish Administrator.

John Henderson, Morwell

Strange Seminary Stuff

Do you ever wonder how we come to hear some of the strange stuff we hear from modern priests? Recently someone from the seminary scene in Melbourne, where Sale seminarians are taught, gave me some clues.

The priest teaching about the Sacraments, particularly the Sacrament of Penance, did not miss any opportunity in every lecture to bemoan the loss of the Third Rite. Whatever the rights or wrongs of how this ritual of penance was used in places, it has been 'out' for some years now. That is, normally, it is officially unlawful, and has been for some six or eight years. How come it is being promoted 'through the back door' in our seminary? No wonder we have problems! Is there no teaching authority for the normal thing anymore?

The students in the seminary have to study some history – a good thing too. But would you employ a Protestant to teach our seminarians about the Reformation? Apparently we do.

The practical guidance that we all have the right to expect from our priests is a combination of many things I suppose, but moral theology must figure in there somewhere. There must also be some kind of special preparation, one would think, for hearing confessions. Well, it seems that our seminarians are taught this by the now-mandatory nun, who has to feature everywhere. No nun that I have ever heard of has had any experience of hearing confessions, nor is likely to I don't think, but in our set-up she is one of those who has a determining say in this part of the training. Surely priests of long and wide experience are available, and would be better. Or are we turning into an anti-priestly Church, just like an anti-priestly society!

S.C., Melbourne

Powerful People

"Power, like wealth, can be used for good purposes or bad.

The powerful person can manipulate people to his own advantage, exploiting them in order to gain some privilege for himself. Most dangerous of all is when a powerful person enjoys exercising power for its own sake, taking pleasure in seeing people bend to his will.

Equally a powerful person may guide and direct people onto the path of righteousness. He may make decisions which benefit others, materially and spiritually, without thought for himself.

The powerful person who puts the needs of others before himself is a true hero of our faith."

St John Chrysostom, The Golden Voice of Protest 39

From The Decree Of The Congregation For The Clergy

The Decree issued by the Congregation for the Clergy containing the outcome of Fr John Speekman's appeal to Rome, makes for very interesting reading indeed! It is wonderfully reassuring to see how clearly the Congregation has understood the heart of the issues in question, without being fooled by the politics.

The Decree begins by acknowledging that Fr Speekman had been correcting a number of pastoral and sacramental abuses in Morwell parish that he had encountered when he first arrived at the parish, and that in doing this he met with resistance from some parish staff and teachers at the parish school (St Vincent's).

In relation to a parish sacramental team meeting where Fr Speekman was alleged to have raised his voice - and into which Bishop Coffey launched a formal investigation - the Congregation notes, "The five page formal report of the investigation reveals very little of the substance of the disagreement between Father Speekman and Mrs Swenson other than to say that it was a 'difference of opinion'. The thrust of the report concerns the mental and emotional states of the participants rather than the reason for the disagreement."

The Congregation saw fit to quote in its Decree a summary of the event from Fr Speekman himself: "...it is my duty to teach the faith in its entirety, not just the bits and pieces the teachers or the parishioners find palatable. I do not see myself as giving the Church's 'point of view', nor do I see myself as giving my 'point of view' about Church teaching. When the teachers questioned my declaration of Church teaching *they* were giving *their* points of view. ... The 'verbal aggression' was really *ideological differences* - the confrontation that happens when an orthodox priest with clear directions and goals for the reform of the pastoral problem areas under his authority meets a primary school Principal firmly committed to the status quo and to having *her* agenda prevail."

In relation to the Bishop's Decree removing the schools from the parish, the Congregation writes, "Although Father Speekman disagreed with this decision, as well as the manner in which it was executed, he obeyed it."

In considering the reasons for the Bishop's Decree of Removal, the Congregation notes: "The allegations against Fr Speekman do not concern his ministry *per se*, but his relationship with a small number of employees of the Parish. It is clear that the meeting of 14 November 2001 [mentioned above], which commenced the series of events leading to Fr Speekman's removal, is the consequence of a divergence in fundamental questions of Christian life and discipline of the Church. It concerns areas that are entirely in the competence of the Parish Priest."

"The letters from the parishioners as well as the testimony of the Bishop and the priests that he consulted in the removal process indicate that Father Speekman is an orthodox priest, faithful to the Magisterium and dedicated to the Parish. A minority of the parishioners, with help from the teachers and employees of the Diocese, has convinced the Most Reverend Ordinary to remove Father Speekman because they disagree with his Catholic leadership. However, no evidence produced by a single parishioner of Morwell sustaining the claim of the ineffectiveness or harmfulness of Father Speekman's ministry has been included in the *acta*. In fact, the *acta* reveal quite the opposite." [The 'Ordinary' is the Bishop; the *acta* are what the Bishop put forward as facts of the case]

"By not indicating sufficient reasons and by omitting to include arguments, the [Bishop] deprived Fr Speekman of his ability to defend himself against the charge that his ministry had become harmful or ineffective."

The conclusion speaks for itself: "In the end, the reasons for Father Speekman's removal are generic, and it is difficult to know in what specific way Father Speekman is responsible for confusion or disturbance at Morwell. In fact, any confusion or disturbance at Morwell which the Most Reverend Ordinary has ascertained might well be attributed more to the actions of the Most Reverend Ordinary than to those of Father Speekman.

By conducting a formal investigation into a minor incident, by receiving complaints about a priest for over eleven months without ever bringing them to his attention, by taking the side of a school principal over the canonically designated Parish Priest in opposition to relevant canon and civil law governing their relationship, by removing the competence of the Parish Priest from the parish school prior to informing the Parish Priest and while the Parish Priest was on vacation, the Most Reverend Ordinary has done much to diminish Father Speekman's status in the eyes of the parishioners of Morwell.

Now, therefore, after having examined the *acta* of the case, the Congregation for the Clergy hereby decrees,

that the recourse against the Most Reverend Ordinary's removal of Rev. John Speekman as Parish Priest of Morwell Catholic Parish is upheld since the law has been violated *in procedendo* because the letter by the Most Reverend Ordinary to Fr Speekman dated 13 May 2003 did not contain valid causes or arguments for the removal of Fr Speekman, which causes and arguments are required for validity under canon 1742; and, furthermore

that the law has been violated *in decernendo* because (1) the Most Reverend Ordinary has not demonstrated that the ministry of the Rev. John Speekman has "become harmful or at least ineffective" as required by canon 1740, (2) the causes for the removal are deemed insufficient under cann. 1741 and 1742, and (3) the rights to due process under law (can. 221) have been denied Rev. John Speekman in the exercise of his role as Parish Priest of a parochial school subject to his authority."

“This is the Lamb of God...”

Answered by Father Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy at the Regina Apostolorum Pontifical University.

Q: It is common in my diocese for priests, after the Lamb of God, when the Missal reads “This is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world ...” to substitute a different (but still true) title or description of Christ - usually related to the Gospel of the day. For example, “This is Jesus, who today calls us to take up our cross and follow him ...” Is this permitted?

C.S., Hamilton, New Zealand

A: The short answer to this, and to other similar questions regarding priests altering prescribed texts or composing new ones, is no.

But - and there is a but - in some countries and religious congregations, small additions have been made to these prayers with proper authorisation from the Holy See.

The general principles involved are those announced in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

No. 24 states...“the priest must remember that he is the servant of the Sacred Liturgy and that he himself is not permitted, on his own initiative, to add, to remove, or to change anything in the celebration of Mass.”

The recent instruction ‘Redemptionis Sacramentum’ has also weighed in on the topic of unauthorised alterations, such as in No. 59:

“The reprobated practice by which Priests, Deacons or the faithful here and there alter or vary at will the texts of the Sacred Liturgy that they are charged to pronounce, must cease. For in doing thus, they render the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy unstable, and not infrequently distort the authentic meaning of the Liturgy.”

What is important to consider in the case presented is not so much whether the additions involved are theologically correct - they might well be - but the fact that an individual priest takes upon himself the role of changing what the Church has established.

Such acts are probably often done with the best of intentions and even spring from pastoral motives. But they are objectively acts of theological egotism that transform the common patrimony into an individual’s private domain.

Zenit News

“...It is contrary to reason that error and truth should have equal rights.”

Pope Leo XIII, Libertas, 1888 (Para 34)

Choose Your Own Rules

As a member of the Morwell Catholic Parish, like many others I have had to endure many months of doubt since Bishop Coffey removed Fr John Speekman as our Parish Priest. At the time the Bishop undertook this extraordinary action, he resisted giving precise and specific reasons to parishioners for doing so.

An administrator (Fr Tom Cleary) was appointed to the parish and given authority that was denied the Parish Priest. In the meantime Fr John had appealed to Rome to adjudicate on his dismissal.

Assuming that the appropriate authority of the Roman Catholic Church would bring down its judgement in favour of Bishop Coffey, Fr Cleary asked that the decision from Rome be accepted by parishioners when announced.

At the 10.30am Mass at Sacred Heart Church on 25th July we long-suffering parishioners learnt that on the 19th July the Congregation for the Clergy had released its verdict in favour of the Appeal lodged by Fr John Speekman against his dismissal by Bishop Coffey.

Fr Tom Cleary wrote in the Parish Bulletin that it (the verdict) “weighs heavily in Fr John’s favour.” At the conclusion of Mass Fr Cleary said that the Bishop had three options – to accept the authority of Rome and its decision; to instigate yet another appeal to Rome; or finally he (the Bishop) could “ignore the decision from Rome, and do nothing”.

I arranged to meet with Fr Cleary on the morning of the 26th July to give him the opportunity to explain to me what this third option meant and its implications for the welfare of the Parish community. I learnt from my hour-long discussion with Tom Cleary that the decision of the Congregation of the Clergy in Rome “is not a decision of the Church”, that it is “a committee of small people making small decisions.” That such decisions are for us to discuss and consider, and that the Bishop did not have to comply.

I then asked Father his advice: if I confessed that I had deliberately missed Sunday Mass would I be in a state of sin and could I receive the Eucharist when I resumed attending Mass?

I was stunned to learn that Father was “not capable of advising” me as to my “state of sinfulness” and that receiving the Eucharist was a matter for me alone to decide, and that it was okay if I felt within myself that my relationship with Christ was a good one.

So I am left to ask the question of Fr Cleary, do we accept the teaching of the Church and its authority? Or only when it suits us?

Being a good and faithful Catholic Priest should not be about popularity but about teaching and living the word of God, without exception.

Peter Kelly, Morwell

Heresy Lawsuit Filed By Lay Canon Lawyer

It is well-known that U.S. Senator John Kerry proudly claims to be Catholic and publicly receives Holy Communion, yet publicly supports abortion. In the absence of clear action against him by the Church, a lay canon lawyer has formally filed a heresy lawsuit against John Kerry.

Mr Marc Balestrieri, J.C.L., Director of the international non-profit association, De Fide (“of the Faith”) filed the lawsuit before the Ecclesiastical Court of the Archdiocese of Boston on 14th June 2004. The Archdiocese, or the Vatican, has an obligation in justice and at Canon Law to decide the case.

Five other criminal counts are alleged: Diabolical Scandal Leading to Heresy; Formal and Immediate Cooperation in Heresy; Sacrilegious Abjection of the Holy Eucharist; Diabolical Scandal Leading to Murder; and Grave Harm to Public Morals and Contempt for the Faith and Ecclesiastical Authority. The charges alleged are extremely grave, account taken of the fact that the Code of Canon Law provides for automatic excommunication in the case of two of the six crimes alleged.

The alleged Heresy is the “Right-to-Murder” doctrine directly contained in the “pro-choice” position supporting abortion rights. The Catholic Church considers all direct and voluntary abortions as simply another form of murder, condemned by the Fifth Commandment.

The case is unprecedented in the history of the American Roman Catholic Church in three ways:

First, it is a lawsuit for Heresy, a public Ecclesiastical crime. Second, it is a Class-Action Criminal lawsuit. Never has a complaint been filed specifically alleging an aggrieved class. The Code of Canon Law permits an unlimited number of third-party aggrieved joinders to attach themselves to the complaint. Third, it is a Dual-Denunciation for Heresy and Criminal Complaint for Heresy, not just a denunciation, which has never been done before, to the knowledge of experts, anywhere in the world, in living memory, in a vertical movement proceeding from the laity. The Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith is usually the entity which investigates and tries suspected heretics.

Mr Balestrieri is a graduate of the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome, fluent in five languages, and has practiced Canon Law for ten years. He decided to risk his career and reputation for the sake of doing what he thought was an obligation and duty in conscience to defend the Faith and the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist from attack and sacrilege, no matter what the cost. The full Complaint can be downloaded at www.defide.com, where there is also an option to register as a third-party joinder in the case.

Only An Empty Understanding Leads To An Empty Church

Fr Peter Collins seems to have lost his way in the Catholic Church. His writings in the newsletter of St Francis’ Church Melbourne (Blessed Sacrament Congregation) show a disdain for Catholic teaching, a weak understanding of the Catholic Church, and an obvious longing for the apparent ‘freedom’ of Protestant churches. Why doesn’t he jump ship, instead of abusing his priestly authority to write nonsense?

In his July effort, he states that the Church can’t decide on the rights and duties of lay people. He spends two pages criticising Vatican documents, Church teaching, and Magisterial authority. He implies for example, that because there are many people who find *Humanae Vitae* “of no theological significance whatever” the Church should reconsider its stance on the issue if it is to be responsible.

He concludes, “The greatest challenge facing the hierarchy today is the management of change. It can either try to impose change or welcome the people into collaboration and subsequent partnership. Thinking people are not sitting passively waiting for instructions. They are eyeing the door already. Across our world, less and less is political power seen as something that flows downwards from the top, more and more is it seen to flow upwards from the bottom.”

Fr Collins laments the empty pews and expects the Church to bend “otherwise it will break”. I propose that he has never been to a parish where the Church’s teachings are taught in their fullness (by a priest who *believes* them!) and Her laws followed faithfully. He has never seen the fruits of such a parish – spiritually nourished people, faithful youth, vocations, growing numbers, families, converts and ‘reverts’. The real thing! Catholics in communion with Christ, with the Church, with one another - not just a ‘community’ as empty as a club!

Why can’t our priests see that what we want and need is the fullness of Truth, not a watered-down, accommodating, apologising sort of approach. Fr Collins says he is utterly convinced that “we the Church need to lay ourselves open to the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit and the truth of the word of God.” If he can’t accept that the teachings of the Catholic Church are the very truth of the Holy Spirit, then where does he expect to find it? Flowing up from the bottom?

This public dissent cannot go unchecked by Archbishop Hart. Faithful Catholics must write to him and demand more!

Giving Up On Catholic Schools

Christian Brothers Congregational Leader Br Philip Pinto has told the order's Western Australian head that the most urgent need for Brothers is no longer in schools, and the time has come to consider more missionary work among the poor in Asia.

In a letter to Holy Spirit Congregational Leader Br Kevin Ryan, he said: "The need that saw us setting up our schools in many of our current ministry sites is now being adequately met by others, in many instances by the State itself."

The WA-based *Edmund Rice Network News* is describing the directive as the "single most significant announcement in the life of the Christian Brothers since they came to Oceania over a century ago".

The Holy Spirit Province covers Christian Brothers' works in Western Australia and South Australia.

Br Pinto said the challenge for Brothers today is to focus their energies in "new and greater areas of need". Specifically he was referring to Asia.

He said: "I now invite you, Kevin, with the other Province and Region Leaders in Oceania to consider opening a new mission site in Asia. It is to this, the largest of the continents, that now we need to move into... I suggest that we look at the Philippines."

Br Pinto was frank in his assessment that the Brothers' schools ministry has ceased to be effective. "This is not to take away from the efforts of our Brothers who give so generously of themselves," he said. "But it is to say that it is generally not the type of ministry that fires the imagination and attracts the idealism and commitment of today's young people. The challenge for us today is to focus our energies in new and greater areas of need." *CathNews 08-07-04*

Here is an admission that Catholic education is no longer about the faith - the State can achieve the Brothers' educational aims just as well!

And an admission that teaching our youth the Catholic faith is uninspiring and unattractive anyway. There are greater needs than passing on the Catholic faith to new generations of Australians. Ed.

The truth hurts.
You would too, if you were
stretched as much as it is.

After all is said and done,
There's a whole lot said
And not much done.

New ITD Distributor Asks ~

I will be distributing ITD in the Diocese of Sandhurst. As I shall not see everyone with the opportunity to explain the origin of *Into the Deep*, it would help, I think, if in the next edition there was a brief paragraph giving a summary.

Molly Brennan, Bendigo

~ How Did *Into the Deep* Begin?

See ITD December 2002, or October 2003:

When the April 2002 edition of *Catholic Life* arrived in Church porches, Catholics throughout Gippsland were outraged by editorial advice to "become more grey" and "join the silent majority" on the great issues of the day.

Insult was added to injury with the unbelievable advice that "there is nothing apathetic about being undecided, it may even be a virtue."

But the real sting in the tail of the editorial came when we were advised that *Catholic Life* would no longer publish Letters to the Editor.

Reaction was both vocal and strong. An interim group of 50 people was formed to blow away the indifference advocated by *Catholic Life*. We began a committee to co-ordinate our efforts, and embarked on *Into the Deep*.

Our aim is to be loyal to the Holy Father and the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and to promote and uphold its teachings ~ not the false teachings of so-called 'experts' who will lead us into the wilderness.

Rather than indifference, we believe that the Church needs people with faith and courage to speak out on the great issues of the day, to fight the battle going on in the Church, to put the "Catholic" back into our schools, and to defend and support those who faithfully adhere to and promote those teachings.

Rome Authority is Optional

While Fr Tom Cleary admits in the Morwell parish bulletin of 25th July that the verdict "weighs heavily in Fr John's favour", he notes that the Bishop has to decide "whether he considers the appeal process to have been legal and unbiased."

He also proposes that "Fr John Speekman may return to Morwell Catholic Parish as Parish Priest only with Bishop Coffey's approval."

In typical modernist style, the implication is that there is no obligation to follow what Rome decrees. It's all optional and dependent on more important people.

Bishop Coffey must be proud of Fr Tom!

Dissenters Welcomed and Supported by Australian Catholic Dioceses

Many Catholic dioceses in Australia have been notorious for promoting public dissenters.

The most recent case is that of Dr Linda Hogan from Trinity College Dublin. Advertised as a distinguished moral theologian, Hogan gave public lectures on the formation of conscience in various Australian dioceses.

In a book titled 'Confronting the Truth: Conscience in the Catholic Tradition' which she had published in 2000, Hogan asserted that the central teaching of Pope John Paul II's encyclical 'Veritatis Splendor' (VS) was wrong. The central theme of 'Veritatis Splendor' is that there are "moral absolutes" or "exceptionless moral norms" valid always and everywhere, corresponding to which are "intrinsically evil acts" such as contraception and procured abortion (cf. VS, nn. 47, 80). In consequence of this, says Pope John Paul II, "circumstances or intentions can never transform an act intrinsically evil by virtue of its object, into an act 'subjectively' good or defensible as a choice" (VS, n. 81).

Contrary to the teaching of Veritatis Splendor, Hogan in her book, holds that the moral nature of "acts like contraception and abortion cannot be evaluated in isolation" from "the context in which the person makes a decision, the intention, the effects on relationships, together with the consequences each contribute to the moral significance of the act." (p. 109). She therefore rejects the Church's teaching on the existence of intrinsically evil acts, and goes on to assert that "certain moral teachings, such as those relating to contraception, homosexuality, or divorce and remarriage, are invested with an unwarranted degree of certainty and inflexibility" (p 182-83).

In the January 2004 edition of the British Homosexual and Lesbian magazine *Quest Digest*, Dr. Hogan had an essay published titled 'Questions of Conscience - Living with Contradictions: Disagreement and Dialogue in the Church.' In this essay, Hogan said:

"So these general points ground my belief, that all sexual relationships, homosexual and heterosexual, whether they are brief or long term, have the capacity to reflect the best of our humanity, to embody those aspects of our existence that make it truly valuable. Having said this however I don't want to be trapped by the theological idealisation of sexuality that is sometimes evident in Catholic thinking – the kind of idealisation that really bears very little relation to reality..."

"I also want to affirm that I regard heterosexual and homosexual sex as having the same potential and value. I don't want to say they are identical in terms of experience, but that they are identical in terms of their ethical/moral potential or quality. So for me the most pressing thing for Catholic sexual ethics is the need to hear the voices of women and men who are involved in gay and lesbian relationships, so that discussions of the ethics of sex would take account of the diversity of sexual desire.

"But how does one live in a church that refuses to accept that homosexual desire and sex is a good and valuable expression of sexuality? ... I disagree fundamentally with Church teaching on this issue. In my view it reflects an institutionalised homophobia that is evident in many aspects of culture and society."

Here, Hogan is promoting an almost unrestricted personal individualism in moral choice. In effect, she is saying that we should equate a one-night stand (homosexual or heterosexual, paid-for etc) with the marital act that occurs within a life-long loving and faithful marriage.

On Friday July 16, Hogan gave two lectures in the Sandhurst Diocese: one for teachers on 'Forming Our Moral Conscience', and one for the public on 'Finding Our Values in a Complex World'. Parish bulletins of the Sandhurst diocese referred to Hogan's visit as a "Coup For Sandhurst."

In the days leading up to Hogan's lectures, Catholics in the diocese of Sandhurst provided church authorities with copies of Hogan's writings and petitioned them to cancel her talks, but they refused to do so.

Another dissenter from Catholic doctrine who has fostered dissent in Catholic education circles is Kevin Treston. [see article in the July issue of ITD for more on him]

The Diocese of Sandhurst has hired Treston to conduct two seminars at its August 2004 Combined Diocesan Secondary Conference, one of which is on 'How Spirituality May Be Nurtured' in a Catholic School. In a book published in 2000, Treston publicly dissented from the Church's doctrine on the impossibility of ordaining women to the ministerial priesthood. In doing so, he is placing himself outside of full communion with the Catholic Church. By thus spreading dissent from the definitive teaching of the Church, Treston is objectively involved in actions that are scandalous.

Concerned Catholics in the diocese of Sandhurst have made representations to the diocesan authorities petitioning them to cancel Treston's appearance at the Conference. Alas, they have refused to do so. As many parents agonise over the tragic state of Catholic education, diocesan authorities are once again intent on extending glory treatment to dissenters as they grant them a public platform in our diocese.

Mary Lou Corboy, Glenrowan

Will of God Is Strength And Peace

Fulfilling the will of God is the strength of the believer, says John Paul II. "On this path he will find peace of soul and will succeed in going through the dark tangle of trials, attaining true joy," the Pope said on 21st July 2004 during his address at the general audience.

He focused his reflection on the 14th strophe of lengthy Psalm 118(119), which begins with the phrase 'Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path.'

"Man penetrates the often-dark path of life, but all of a sudden the darkness is rent by the splendour of the Word of God," the Pope said.

"Christ himself will present his person as the definitive revelation precisely with the same image: 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life,'" the Holy Father continued.

The Psalm goes on to evoke the sufferings and dangers of life, which leave the man at prayer with a dark sensation when he says, 'The wicked have set snares for me.'

"The faithful one knows that he journeys through the roads of the world in the midst of dangers, anxieties and persecutions; he knows that trials always lie in ambush. For his part, the Christian knows that he must carry the cross every day and ascend to Calvary," the Holy Father emphasised.

"Yet, the just man keeps his faithfulness intact," he explained. "Peace of mind is the strength of the believer, his constancy, in obedience to the divine commandments, is the source of his serenity."

Zenit News

The Umpire's Decision

Since Father Cleary has been Administrator in Morwell he has on occasions asked members of the Parish Advisory Council, "Will you accept the decision from Rome?" OF COURSE WE WOULD.

I guess that only applied if the decision was not in Father John's favour, as it is now quite obvious that neither he nor the Bishop accepts the result. Fr Cleary stated at two Masses that the bishop had an option to IGNORE the Decree.

When will they finally realise that the Catholic Church is a hierarchy with the Pope as the appointed Head? If they cannot accept this, maybe there is some other church they could join.

The majority of parishioners in Morwell have been praying tirelessly for just this outcome - Father John should never have been removed from his parish. We believe that the Holy Spirit answered our prayers and will continue to guide us and help us until the final outcome - whenever that may be.

Helen Palma, Chairperson, Morwell Catholic Parish Advisory Council

Schools To Be Genuinely Catholic

John Paul II says that Catholic educational and charitable works must be "Catholic in their own understanding and Catholic in their identity."

The Pope emphasised this recently in an address to U.S. bishops.

The educational and charitable institutions of the Church "exist for only one reason: to proclaim the Gospel," the Holy Father said.

"Their testimony must always be...from the authentic heart of the Church," he continued. "It is of utmost importance, therefore, that the institutions of the Church be genuinely Catholic in their own understanding and Catholic in their identity."

Regarding the educational institutions in particular, he emphasised that "they will only be able to contribute effectively to the new evangelisation if they defend and foster clearly their Catholic identity."

"This implies that the principles of education they impart must make reference constantly to Jesus Christ and his message, exactly as the Church presents it in her dogmatic and moral teaching," the Pope said.

www.zenit.org

Hearts Are Best In Vestment

In his Religious Affairs column in The Australian newspaper on July 17, James Murray discussed the wearing of religious habits.

"That some of them [habits] are absurd never seems to strike the wearers, however incongruous they may be. Or impractical. ... Christians wishing to abandon distinctive dress for their clergy believe it acts as an obstacle to contact and communication. A turn-off. Those defending it believe it establishes identity: an entry to meeting people. Certainly in emergencies, being able to recognise a pastor can be important, sometimes even lifesaving. I know of incidents when recognition averted the tragedy of suicide, and despite the moral failures of so many of the clergy, was an announcement of compassion and accessibility. ... Yet from an aesthetic point of view, the wearing of vestments in church may be defended as a cancellation of individualism. As someone put it, when the priest puts on all the symbolic robes, he is 'all wrapped up in Christ'. He takes on a new identity. ... Even the frugal salvos are proud of their uniforms."

Indeed Murray is right! The salvos would lose much of their effectiveness if they abandoned their distinctive uniform, just as Catholic priests and religious have lost credibility. When they abandoned their habit they also abandoned the recognition of what they did and what they represented.

What are they ashamed of?

Pat O'Brien, Sale

Do You Know What Your Children Are Being Taught?

Mr Eamonn Keane, President of the Association for the Renewal of Religious Education and author of *A Generation Betrayed* and *Crisis In Religious Education* has recently written a critique of RE materials produced by the Canberra Catholic Education Office. His paper is titled “A Well-Groomed Curriculum?”

In the introduction, Mr Keane explains how the Director of the Catholic Education Office (CEO) of the Diocese of Sale published a document regarding the production of new RE curricula for the dioceses of Sale, Ballarat, Sandhurst and Archdiocese of Hobart. It is to be based on the curriculum of the Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn, which in turn is based on the Parramatta curriculum. Both of these are heavily based on Thomas Groome’s *Shared Christian Praxis*. RE curricula for the dioceses of Wagga and Wilcannia-Forbes are also based on the Parramatta curriculum, indicating that the adoption of his philosophy is wide-spread in Australia.

The director of the Sale CEO calls it “A Well-Groomed Curriculum.” Keane writes, “Groome’s methodology calls for the relativisation of the doctrinal, moral, liturgical and juridical tradition of the Catholic Church. Given this fact, it is not surprising that **contradictions of Catholic teaching appear in curriculum materials** produced by the Canberra CEO” (Titled *Treasures New and Old*).

The following are more excerpts from Keane’s paper (see also June and July issues of ITD), which systematically exposes and refutes the errors being paraded in the RE curricula:

Well-Groomed Indeed!

The problems in *Treasures New and Old* begin with its Core Document and Syllabus Statement. The only time the Holy Trinity is designated as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in these two documents is in an appendix to the Core Document. In every other instance, wherever the Holy Trinity is referred to, it is always as: **“God: Communion of Love, Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.”**

This studied avoidance of the revealed proper name of the First Person of the Holy Trinity can lead to an inaccurate understanding of the divine nature of the Persons of the Holy Trinity as well as their unity with each other and their proper relations. This de-facto suppression of references to “the Father” when talking about the first Person of the Holy Trinity is not surprising given Groome’s advocacy for the reconfiguration of the language of Catholic faith. Suggesting how the community can be conditioned to adopt inclusive language, he says: “Engaging people to pray and participate at liturgy with inclusive language will clearly take some educational efforts...” (Thomas H. Groome, *Language for a Catholic Faith*, 1995). After calling on religious educators to “help end sexism in the Church” by teaching inclusive language, he goes on to say:

“An issue of particular concern for catechists is the strong tradition in primary catechesis of referring to God exclusively as ‘Father’. (This is often occasioned by the teaching of the Lord’s Prayer, the Sign of the Cross, and the ‘Glory Be’)...if ‘Father’ is the only image used of God, and especially in early catechesis, it may no longer teach what Jesus intended to teach with this analogy”

Suggesting a solution to this perceived pedagogical problem, Groome adds:

“One possible solution (which for this author has seemed successful with younger children) is to interchange the terms ‘father,’ ‘mother,’ and ‘loving parent’ for God.”

Suggesting how we might address the Persons of the Holy Trinity in order to avoid exclusivist terms, Groome says:

“A formula that might more adequately represent our faith in the triune relationship within the Godhead...is suggested by an inclusive language breviary text which prays ‘Glory to you, Source of all Being, Eternal Word, and Holy Spirit’.”

In *Catechesi Tradendae* (n. 30), Pope John Paul II stated that those receiving religious education “have the right to receive ‘the word of faith’ not in a mutilated, falsified or diminished form but whole and entire, in all its rigour and vigour.” The Holy Father went on to stress how important it is not to give young people the idea that the doctrine of the faith is based on “fallible opinions or in uncertainty,” but rather that that we must “show them” how it is based on the “immovable rock” of the Word of God “who cannot deceive or be deceived.”

In his book *Sharing Faith*, Groome presents an approach to religious education that is positively hostile to the doctrinal element in Catholicism. He states that “Religious educators should approach the faith tradition with a healthy suspicion and, as educators, help people to recognise that ‘much that has been proudly told must be confessed as sin; and much that has been obscured and silenced must be given voice’” (p. 233).

Continued on page 11

(Do You Know What Your Children Are Being Taught?...continued from page 10)

In another of his books titled *Educating for Life*, he asserts that the cultivation of such a sceptical approach to the teaching of the Church is justified on the basis that “Such a ‘critical consciousness’ seems theologically appropriate to Catholic tradition, given how much untruth is in every statement of faith.” (p. 142).

Here are some examples from *Sharing Faith* where Groome distorts or contradicts various Catholic teachings:

- That “we cannot presume a line of direct succession between pope and Peter,” since “the function of bishop as we might recognise it today did not begin until the second century” (p. 314).
- That the Church’s doctrine on reserving the ordained priesthood to men alone “is the result of a patriarchal mind-set and is not of Christian faith” (p.328).
- That “the injustice of excluding women from the priesthood debilitates the church’s sacramentality in the world” (p. 328), and it “is a countersign to God’s reign” thus “doing spiritual and moral harm to society” (p. 518).
- “It is to be hoped, however, that the theological challenge to mandatory celibacy will be equally compelling [referring to Leonardo Boff’s arguments favouring the ordination of women] when the requirement is finally changed...In addition, feminist critique has heightened consciousness that such a requirement reflects a sexist mentality...” (p. 517).
- As an example of how to effectively deploy *Shared Christian Praxis* against Catholic doctrine, Groome tells of how he used the method in a parish-based adult education course to turn people away from a position of acceptance of the Church’s teaching on the non-ordination of women, to one of active opposition to it (pp. 247-48, 282).
- That we “do not know” how one got the right to preside over the Eucharist in the early Church, a function which he says was sometimes performed by women (p. 310)
- In regard to what he calls “the traditional Catholic notion that the apostles were commissioned at the Last Supper to preside at Eucharist,” Groome quotes with apparent approval Kenan B. Osborne where he says: “In spite of the long tradition of this view, contemporary scholars find no basis for such an interpretation. In other words, Jesus did not ordain the apostles (disciples) at this final supper to be ‘priests,’ giving them thereby the power to celebrate the eucharist” (p. 314, 512n. 27).

Conclusion

One of the greatest defects of *Treasures New and Old* is the way its Unit Outlines frequently give references to or reproduce material from the works of dissenters. While such material is given in the main body of the texts, references to the CCC meanwhile appears only in the margins. Just as diocesan bookshops act scandalously by disseminating materials hostile to Catholic teaching, so too do Catholic education authorities when they propagate the ideas of dissenters or promote their books.

No one is permitted to place in jeopardy the integrity of Catholic doctrine as it is to be communicated to children in Catholic schools. After recounting in her autobiography her experiences in teaching Catholic doctrine to children, St. Therese of Lisieux goes on to say:

“Those innocent souls were like soft wax on which any imprint could be stamped - of evil, alas, as well as of good. I understood the words of Jesus: ‘If anyone hurts the conscience of one of these little ones, he had better have been drowned in the depths of the sea.’ Many, many souls would become most holy if they had been properly guided from the very start.” (*Story of a Soul*, ch.5)

Catholic parents must act decisively to safeguard their children’s right to be taught the faith with integrity. They must confront Catholic education authorities that are failing to carry out their duty in this regard. They should note the attitude of St Catherine of Sienna who, when the salvation of souls were in danger, branded any undue tolerance of mediocrity as a concession to cowardice. “*Enough of this soft soap!*,” she exclaimed. “*All it does is cause the members of Christ’s Spouse to stink!*.”

While there are very many other problems that could be identified in the *Treasures New and Old* Unit Outlines, I think sufficient material has been produced here to alert parents to the clear and present danger they represent to the faith formation of their children.

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Eamonn Keane will be speaking in the Latrobe Valley on 2nd October 2004. See page 1 of this issue of ITD.

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 st Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Cranbourne	Tuesday (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Wednesday (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Friday (9.30 Mass) 10am – 10pm Saturday (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Fridays 7.30pm – midnight (alternating months, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9am – 12noon 2 nd Thursday 10am – 11am 11 th of the month 1 Hour after Mass
Morwell	Thursday 9pm – Friday 9pm
Orbost	Friday 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10.30am – 11.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
Trafalgar	Tuesdays 10am – 11am First Saturdays 10am – 11am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon, & 7pm - 8pm
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Fridays 7.30pm – midnight (alternating months, January onwards)

Please contact us to update and extend this list with hours of Adoration throughout Gippsland.

Call to Holiness as a Priest

“How can we fail to reflect on...the essential role that the Holy Spirit carries out in this particular call to holiness which is proper to the priestly ministry?”

Let us remember the words of the rite of priestly ordination which are considered to be central in the sacramental formula:

‘Almighty Father, give these your sons the dignity of the priesthood. Renew in them the outpouring of your Spirit of holiness. O Lord, may they fulfill the ministry of the second degree of priesthood received from you, and by their example may they lead all to upright conduct of life.’

“Beloved, through ordination, you have received the same Spirit of Christ, who makes you like him, so that you can act in his name and so that his very mind and heart might live in you. This intimate communion with the Spirit of Christ - while guaranteeing the efficacy of the sacramental actions which you perform *in persona Christi* - seeks to be expressed in fervent prayer, in integrity of life, in the pastoral charity of a ministry tirelessly spending itself for the salvation of the brethren. In a word, it calls for your personal sanctification.”

JP II, Pastores Dabo Vobis (para 33)

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!

John Paul II

Clergy?

From the Greek

Rank!

Contact Into the Deep

E-mail stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au
Into the Deep, PO Box 446, Traralgon, Vic 3844
www.stoneswillshout.com

Please notify by e-mail if you would like to be added to the regular e-mailing list.

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

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

Letters to the Editor

Readers are encouraged to contribute letters or articles. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and some will be edited due to space. Please keep letters factual, and report only first-hand information.

The purpose of sharing letters is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for making positive changes, that is, in line with the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

We live in joyful hope that the diocese we love can be faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church. As such, Into the Deep aims to be a messenger of hope and not of doom.

Name, address and phone number must accompany letters. However, if there is a reasonable request, anonymity will be preserved when publishing.

Letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of ITD.