

Into the Deep

Issue 24

Newsletter of the Confraternity of St Michael, Gippsland

September 2004

Directory For Bishops

The Vatican Congregation for Bishops published a "Pastoral Directory for Bishops", (*Apostolorum Successores*) earlier this year.

The directory, which runs about 300 pages, is essentially pastoral and practical.

It seeks, according to the Vatican press office statement, "to help bishops to carry out their complex ecclesial service in response to the needs of the Church and of today's society, at the beginning of the third millennium, characterised by new challenges and problems, by great progress and sudden changes."

"The bishop is a father who lives for his children and is at one with his Church and with his priests, spending himself to form consciences and to make the faith grow," the statement explains.

One of the great novelties is the chapter dedicated to the bishop's spirituality, which presents as the goal "holiness in pastoral charity," the statement continues.

"The theological virtues and human talents are listed that must support the bishop in the pastoral ministry: pastoral prudence, rich humanity, humility, chastity, goodness, sincerity, ability to listen and to dialogue, a heart open to all. No one is excluded from the bishop's heart," the Vatican note states.

The fourth chapter of the directory illustrates some principles that must guide the bishop's pastoral governance: "the principle of truth, of collaboration, of respect for competencies, of the right person for the right post, of justice and legality."

The text dedicates much space to the three essential tasks of the bishop: "teacher of the faith and announcer of the Word," "Sanctifier of the Christian People," and "father and pastor of the diocese," says the press statement.

Zenit News www.zenit.org

Always Be Charitable

I look forward to future issues of *Into the Deep*.

My heart goes out to faithful and faith-filled Catholics who are often made to feel that they alone are "out of sync with the Church" and must be reformed. On the other hand those who posit outright heresy and ambivalent and subjectivistic theology are praised as foresighted reformers.

Persevere, but I would strongly admonish (as difficult as it is) we must always both respect and obey our lawful superiors (unless what is ordered is clearly sinful or absolutely in opposition to the Holy See) and we must always, without exception be charitable.

I am certain that you like me have been the target of some uncharitable remarks by our opposition and in this, as followers of Jesus, we are to turn the other cheek.

+ Bishop RF Vasa, Diocese of Baker, Oregon USA

"What is the most fascinating thing about being Catholic for you personally?"

"The fascinating thing is this great living history into which we enter. Looked at in purely human terms, it is something extraordinary. That an institution with so many human weaknesses and failures is nonetheless preserved in its continuity and that I, living within this great communion, can know that I am in communion with all the living and the dead; and that I also find in it a certainty about the essence of my life – namely, God who has turned to me – on which I can found my life, with which I can live and die."

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

Salt of the Earth - An interview with Peter Seewald (p20)

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

Bishop Coffey Refuses To Accept Vatican Rulings

Bishop's Appeal to the Congregation for Clergy Promptly Rejected

Bishop Coffey's refusal to accept the decision handed down by the Congregation for the Clergy has generated much hype in the world media. Sections of the media – and even a number of local priests – have been at pains to show that the Bishop lost the case on the grounds of a 'defective petition' or to show that Fr John Speckman was removed because he 'refuses to say school Masses'.

The Bishop and the media overlook the real reasons – given in the Congregation's Decree – as to why Fr John's appeal was upheld, namely: that Bishop Coffey violated church law, violated civil law, and violated the rights of his priest and denied him justice.

And he continues to deny Fr John justice. When all should have been said and done, and Fr John reinstated in his parish of Morwell following the outcome from Rome, the Bishop dug his heels in. He stated how he felt "compelled" to appeal the Congregation's decision.

The Congregation wasted no time in rejecting the Bishop's appeal. But still he would not reinstate Fr John. Instead he met with the priests of the diocese to ask for their advice on what to do.

This raises two interesting points:

1. The Bishop made it abundantly, publicly and repeatedly clear after the Congregation for the Clergy first ruled in Fr John's favour, that he would appeal to the Congregation to review their decision, and if they refused, he would then appeal to the Signatura. He was intent on using all his 'rights' of appeal to get rid of Fr John. Now after the Congregation rejects his appeal, he is consulting with others as to what he should do. What of the "strong advice" from his "Consultors and others" about appealing to the Signatura come what may? Could it be that the Congregation indicated it would not be worth the Bishop's while appealing to a higher court?
2. How credible is it to ask the advice of priests in the diocese on an issue they have little or no grasp of? Have they all read the Decree, do they know and understand the details of the case, heard Father John's defence, read the Congregation's letters and instructions to the Bishop? I suspect not. As it stands, one wonders if they are simply puppets of the Bishop. In the end, the Bishop should have no need of advice – all he has to do is follow the Vatican's instructions.

For justice to be done, Bishop Coffey must obey the Congregation's ruling and reinstate Fr John to his parish of Morwell.

Bishop Coffey has harmed Fr John's reputation by insisting that his ministry is ineffective in spite of the Congregation's confirmation that Fr John is an effective priest and was removed from his parish for no valid reason. How awful to be condemned by your own Bishop regardless of evidence of your innocence.

It seems the Bishop will stop at nothing to rid his diocese of an orthodox priest. By refusing to accept directives from Rome, Bishop Coffey is doing much damage to the diocese of Sale and to the Church. He must seriously reassess his position.

Janet Kingman, Morwell

Marian Conference Cancelled

Bishop Coffey has advised Marian Conference organiser Mr Pat Crozier, that "there will be no Marian Devotion this year."

The Bishop earlier cancelled the conference scheduled for May, giving no reason. After discussion with the Bishop, the conference was rescheduled for October 16.

Pat was recently notified by Bishop Coffey that he was unhappy about the progress of preparations for the Conference.

In order to discuss this and save the Conference, a meeting with the Bishop was requested. The Bishop has not replied to Pat's request.

Two speakers had already been confirmed for the second time.

Papal Titles

- ✘ His Holiness The Pope;
- ✘ Bishop of Rome and Vicar of Jesus Christ;
- ✘ Successor of St Peter, Prince of the Apostles;
- ✘ Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church;
- ✘ Patriarch of the West;
- ✘ Servant of the Servants Of God;
- ✘ Primate of Italy;
- ✘ Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province;
- ✘ Sovereign of Vatican City State.

Seminary Is Orthodox

In the August edition of "Into The Deep", a letter writer, S.C. of Melbourne, complained about Corpus Christi College, the regional seminary for Victoria and Tasmania.

The complainant listed three vexations against the seminary regarding the content of seminarians' lectures or the qualification of some lecturers at the seminary. It may be a moot point but the examples given actually relate to an institution other than Corpus Christi.

I write not to defend the lecturers or lectures cited. Rather I simply write to assure readers of your publication that the seminary and its students have benefited from the orthodox reforms instituted by its previous Chairman, Cardinal George Pell, and which are being continued by the current staff and Trustees of the seminary chaired by Archbishop Denis Hart.

Whatever possible heterodoxy seminarians are exposed to elsewhere, beyond the control of their formators, I assure S.C. of Melbourne that Corpus Christi seminary is enthusiastically faithful to the Magisterium. I write as one who wears more battle scars than most from combat with doctrinal dissidents.

*Father Paul Stuart
Director of Vocations, Archdiocese of Melbourne
Dean of Studies, Corpus Christi College*

Live Gospel Without Concessions

John Paul II made an appeal for the "full solidarity of the whole ecclesial community" with the faithful who "continue to be subjected to harsh tests because of their adherence to Christ and his Church."

In his address, the Holy Father recalled the martyrdom of St John the Baptist, which Christian tradition observes on August 29.

St John the Baptist "rendered to God the supreme testimony of blood by immolating his life for truth and justice" when he was decapitated "by order of Herod, to whom he dared to say that it was not lawful that he should have his brother's wife," the Holy Father said.

Speaking with clear diction, the Pope explained to the pilgrims that martyrdom is "a sign of the holiness of the Church" and the "culminating testimony of moral truth."

Though few are called to this sacrifice, all Christians "must be ready to give every day" the "testimony of coherence" even "at the price of suffering and great sacrifices," the Holy Father stressed.

In fact, "a truly heroic determination" is needed, "also in daily life," to live the Gospel without concessions.

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Misleading Information in CathNews Article

On the 25th August *CathNews* (internet news service) ran an article under the heading, "Bishop considers options on Rome support for "bullying" priest", which had many irregularities. It was quoting from an article published in *Online Catholics*.

I contacted the editor concerned and informed him of the corrections. He asked me to email the correct information to him and when asked if it would be printed, he replied that it probably would not be. The reason given was that this group is funded by the Australian Bishops and they would not go against them! I thought "Wow" where is the justice in that.

I now write to Into The Deep to correct these errors, in the hope that people who may have seen the article, will know the truth of this matter.

- 1) The Principal of one school (not "school employees") made complaints against Fr Speekman. She has now left the area.
- 2) Fr Speekman never spoke to *Online Catholics*. The information regarding school Masses was published in AD 2000 and is readily available on the internet (not "Fr Speekman indicated to Online Catholics that...").
- 3) The petition mentioned was circulated and sponsored by the Parish Council and not Confraternity of Saint Michael (as the article states).
- 4) We have many parishioners from Traralgon, Churchill, Hazelwood North who attend Mass in Morwell and contribute to our planned giving program, so why wouldn't they sign a petition in support of their Parish Priest? (The article says that "unnamed sources" suggest that the Bishop has concerns about people who signed the petition not being residents of Morwell, some handwriting looking the same, and some people not being fluent in English).
- 5) On looking carefully at the petition we cannot see signatures which look the same. This one is just clutching at straws.
- 6) We have many Italian parishioners and these were contacted by Italian speaking parishioners.

Once again, misleading information is being used to confuse and unsettle the average Catholic. Those who do this, and who do not seek out the truth before publishing articles should ponder just where they stand as a Christian and as a Catholic.

Helen Palma, Morwell

Eamonn Keane Comes to Gippsland!

The Truth And Beauty Of Catholic Teaching

1. On Marriage

10am-11am, questions to 11.30

The lecture will focus on how Pope John Paul II has done the Church and humanity a great service by re-articulating in a most persuasive manner the Catholic Church's teaching on the dignity and holiness of marital love. Titled *Theology of the Body*, this corpus of papal teaching shows once again how the Gospel of Christ is truly "Good News" for all of humanity, including married couples.

There is a mountain of data indicating that the contraception-laden sexual ethic is harmful to marriage and the common good of society. Signs of this include: falling fertility rates and difficulties providing for an aging population, soaring divorce rates, spread of sexually transmitted diseases, abortion and cloning etc.

This lecture will deal with the love-affirming and life-giving nature of the Catholic Church's teaching on marriage. This body of teaching is foundational to building a 'culture of life,' and will be set off in stark contrast to the secular and hedonistic sexual ethic which is at the heart of the 'culture of death.'

2. On The Priesthood

12pm-1pm, questions to 1.30

The Second Vatican Council teaches that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. The lecture will deal with how the life that is authentically Catholic is also decidedly Eucharistic. Such a life will overflow with love for the Holy Mass, love for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and the determination to build a world more in harmony with God's plan.

The lecture will begin with the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper and how Christ bound it inextricably to the ministerial (ordained) priesthood. The lecture will be presented in the context of Pope John Paul II's encyclical on the Eucharist titled *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*.

Finally, the lecture will illustrate how love for the Eucharist entails defending all the doctrines pertaining to it, such as that which holds that according to God's plan for his Church, the Sacrament of Holy Orders cannot be conferred on women.

3. On Catholic Education

2.30-3.30pm, questions to 4pm

As primary educators, Catholic parents must seek to provide their children with every opportunity possible for them to advance in knowledge and love of Catholic doctrine. The Catholic school exists to help parents fulfill their responsibilities in this regard. As such, it must create an atmosphere and curriculum that will allow students to grow in virtue and in knowledge of the Church's teaching on faith and morals. If it could be reproached for negligence or duplicity in this regard, then the word 'Catholic' should be removed from its title.

The lecture will examine principles of religious (faith) education in Catholic schools and the rights of parents when these principles are violated.

When? Saturday 2nd October 9.30am – 4.00pm

Where? Latrobe Country Credit office, Morwell (cnr Hazelwood Rd and Ann St)

Cost? Donations welcome. Bring lunch to share. Tea/coffee provided.

Contact John Henderson 5134 1742

- Eamonn Keane is married with 5 children. He is a graduate in Commerce and Education from the National University of Ireland, and in Religious Education from the Sydney Catholic Teachers Training College. He has been teaching for 28 years in Catholic high schools in Ireland, New Zealand and Australia. Currently he teaches at Redfield College, Sydney.
- Eamonn has had many years of involvement in adult education in the areas of Catholic social teaching and marriage preparation. In 2003 he conducted a course on Pope John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* at the Catholic Adult Education Centre in Sydney, where in 2004 he will conduct a course on the Social Teaching of the Church. He has lectured on theological and social questions in various countries, and his articles have appeared in newspaper and journals both in Australia and overseas. His material appears on various websites, including EWTN.
- Books by Keane: *Population Control* (1994), launched by Cardinal Trujillo, President Pontifical Council for the Family; *Population and Development* (1994), foreword by Bishop George Pell; *The Ordained Priesthood: The Real Issues!* (1996); *Humanae Vitae: Wisdom For All Ages* (1998); *The Brave New World of Therapeutic Cloning* (2002); *A Generation Betrayed: The Deconstruction of Catholic Education in the English-Speaking World*; *Crisis in Religious Education* (2004).

Keep The Faith

I'm delighted to learn of the judgment from Rome in Fr Speekman's case - the truth has (almost) set him free!

It must be difficult at times to carry out your apostolate when there are so many who don't hesitate to criticise and condemn you. Be not afraid - know that you are surrounded by the prayers of many who are so grateful for your work.

The word is now that the bishop will appeal - oh that instead of spending hours on a useless appeal, he would instead spend that time on his knees before Our Eucharistic Lord praying for vocations!

Clare Ryan, Vic

God in Classroom is a Turn-off

In the Sydney Morning Herald of 10 August 2004, there is an article under the heading, "The great school debate." "Go private? Not even if it were free, say loyal parents."

The article states in part "...In many cases, they choose public schools for the reason outlined in 1879 by Sir Henry Parkes, for children to sit "side by side" in free, compulsory public schools, regardless of their religion, family wealth or status. Having God in the classroom is a turn-off for many public school parents."

After reading many wonderful articles in your newsletter, it appears to me that many parents of children in the Diocese of Sale, and more importantly the Catholic Education Office, have the same beliefs.

Sandra Quinlan, NSW

Write to the Archbishop

Fr Peter Collins of Melbourne's St Francis Church is at it again, promoting anti-Catholic opinion in the church's newsletter.

In the August edition, he tries to address the problem the shortage of priests - not by ways of promoting vocations though.

No, Fr Collins reluctantly accepts that parishes in partnership, shared priests or merged parishes will have to do in the meantime. It is "probably the only possible response to the inflexibility of Rome in its disinclination to modify its criteria for ordination."

Orthodox Catholics must write to him, his order (the Blessed Sacrament Congregation), and to Archbishop Hart and insist that his personal "wisdom sharing" - as he calls it - stop! Let him replace it with sharing of the true wisdom of the Church that he has given his life to love and serve.

Different Experience

I feel compelled to respond to two articles in the August ITD. However I will give a little of my own background.

I am nearly 70 and am one of those Catholics who 'all received excellent Catechetics' as I hear *ad nauseam*. Definitely not so! Otherwise why did so many leave the Church (and never return)? By the grace of God I became a re-vert early in my 30's. This was achieved as I studied only official Church documents and Papal encyclicals. In my study I was deeply moved and enlightened by the beauty and the truth of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Now to address my concern regarding the two articles in the August issue of ITD:

1) "Bishop Has No Grace". Bishop Coffey is definitely owed an apology for such a heading. No matter what you meant to say, the fact remains - what you have written you have written! I see both sides of the case very clearly. If you wish to aid Father Speekman's cause, as I do, please write and behave with Christ-like charity. If Bishop Coffey does not respond in a Christ-like manner, then please arrange for example prayer groups (for prayer only) but do not stoop to the level of such a heading.

2) Your other article "Only An Empty Understanding Leads To An Empty Church". Remember that the major exodus from the Church occurred in the 1960-1970's.

Mrs Moira O'Callaghan, Cranbourne

Interesting to hear that you see both sides of the case very clearly. Perhaps you could explain what no one else so far has been able to explain (even to Rome) - what Fr Speekman has actually done wrong in this case. The Bishop has no excuse for his behaviour. ITD of course respects the office of Bishop and the hierarchy of the Church. But the office does not make the man.

As for the major exodus from the Church - it's hardly safe to assume that it ended in the 1970's. Otherwise we should all be seeing in every parish, all the babies who have been Baptised, all the children who have received their First Holy Communion and Confirmation while at Catholic schools, taking their places in the pews every Sunday at Mass with their families. Ed.

Injustice Demands Action

"It is one thing to suffer injustices committed against oneself, following Christ's injunction to turn the other cheek. It is quite another to do nothing while other people suffer injustice."

St Thomas Aquinas

Hung Up On Rules

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

Q: “If one is focused on what one THINKS is right rather than pure and simple worship of Our Lord, then something is horribly wrong. While our priests and liturgists are poring over the details of Mass in an exacting process, the parishioners are becoming more and more divided. ... We have become like the biblical Sadducees and Pharisees. So in love with our rules, we forget who we’re worshipping.”

An unidentified reader who took issue with this column

A: Although I believe that our correspondent is sincere in her belief and in her desire to seek the “pure worship of God,” I beg to differ with her on one or two points.

First, I believe that most people who seek fidelity to liturgical laws do so out of an equally sincere love of God and the Church, and not out of pride or a pharisaic mentality.

Second, I beg to differ with my present reader on the importance of fidelity to liturgical norms.

If I interpret her correctly - and I apologise if I am wrong - she seems to be moving from a rather subjective presupposition that liturgical worship is above all something that *we do* rather than something we *enter into* and *receive* as a gift.

She desires the pure worship of God. Yet in reality that pure worship can only be attained through an act of submission to and participation in the forms that God has established, either directly by Christ or through his Church, as the means of offering him genuine worship in spirit and truth.

Much acrimony regarding liturgical law would have been avoided if there had been greater fidelity from the beginning.

Texan Encouragement

Kudos to you mates down under! We have the same problem here in the States – Bishops who willingly give out Holy Communion to known pro-abortion politicians who have aided and abetted the killing of innocent children in the womb with their votes in Congress, priests who do stand-up comedy during the sermon and tell jokes from the altar, and all kinds of liturgical abuses.

It’s going to take people like yourselves and like minded Catholics to remove all of these abuses from God’s church. KEEP IT UP!

Ray Ranzau, San Antonio, Texas

Time For a Fresh Start in Sale

Did you ever hear how the Irish got the potato and the Arabs got the oil? The Irish had first choice!

There seems no end to the stupidity in Sale. Not only that, I read in the Catholic Life paper an official notice advertising this stupidity! Advisors or Consultors, who are supposed to be conciliators, are meant to provide a wiser, broader view of any matter. To suggest what the Bishop tells us they did, makes them worse than irrelevant.

In the real world, no courts “review their decision” just because someone doesn’t like it – there have to be proper reasons, legal or factual. For the Bishop to act on this advice tells us that the blind are indeed leading the blind.

And if the Signatura also rules against the Bishop’s actions, which in the circumstances is most likely, what then?

The days are numbered, come what may; there is no going back from here. It would be best for the Church and all concerned if these people just quietly went off now to digging spuds, since their lamps have no oil. They are obviously now beyond enlightening the way for anyone.

The final plea of the notice for all this totally unnecessary and disturbing lack of any practical common sense is sickening in its hypocrisy.

We all know what the answer is, without consulting Rome any further – just go, please, and let the diocese make a fresh start.

S.C., Melbourne

Bishop Coffey’s Official Notice

Catholic Life August 2004

On Tuesday, July 27, The Congregation for the Clergy wrote to me indicating that they upheld Fr John Speekman’s appeal against my action in removing him from the parish of Morwell.

I have sought advice from the College of Consultors and others. They have strongly suggested that I write to the Congregation for the Clergy, asking them to review their decision.

I have decided to take their advice.

In the event that they should refuse to do this, I will make an appeal to the Apostolic Signatura (the supreme court of the Church).

This of necessity will prolong the difficulties in Morwell and in the diocese. I do not do this lightly, but with a heavy heart.

I ask your prayers for Fr Speekman and myself, and especially for the people of Morwell.

+Jeremiah Coffey, Bishop of Sale

JT to Redefine Role of Priest

Who needs Vatican documents, Papal encyclicals, Canon Law or the Catechism, when you have Journeying Together (JT) – the diocesan pastoral plan of Sale diocese?

In the August issue of diocesan newspaper *Catholic Life*, we are informed that JT will soon be redefining the role of the priest.

This is the “final significant initiative for 2004-05”. It conveniently allows us to address the shortage of priests issue by developing parishes in partnership and allowing more lay leadership.

“The issue of governance of schools is relevant here as well, and is a correspondingly pressing issue.

Many of these ministry issues cannot be resolved without some clear and practical understanding of what is essential to the priest’s role, what can be shared, and what needs to be considered now as the proper role of lay people.

Resolving such matters has an important bearing on how people are prepared for the ministries needed in combined parishes, including the function of Parish Councils.”

Smell a rat here? It seems that priests are set to be brainwashed.

While this little plot of JT is potentially destructive to the Church, their other “initiatives” mentioned in the article appear to be simply a fairy-floss of words – like making parishes “inclusive”, and “connecting and re-connecting” with people. As yet, no one has been able to talk plainly about what exactly this means. Yet we keep throwing the words around and feeling all warm and fuzzy about them. I suspect JT refuses to spell things out, for fear their ignorance will be exposed – or worse still, their true motives uncovered.

More Non Catholics in Schools

In a note sent to the Fides agency, the Brisbane Archdiocese reported an annual growth of 22.5% in the number of non-Catholic pupils enrolled at Catholic schools.

Families like the quality of the instruction offered at the institutions as well as the education in moral values, the archdiocese said.

Joe MacCorley, head of the Commission for Catholic Education in Queensland, said that some poorer Catholic families cannot afford the private school education.

The Church, however, cannot lower the school fees because government contributions to Catholic schools are the same as they were 10 years ago, officials said.

Zenit News

Compliments of Fr Cleary

The Morwell Catholic Parish Bulletin of 1st August 2004 states:

“With strong support from his advisors, Bishop Coffey feels compelled to launch a protest and appeal against the verdict handed down against him by the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome.

He has only a few more days to give legal reasons and supporting evidence to justify his decision. Within a reasonable period of time (about one to three months) the Congregation will respond by either remaining firm in its verdict or changing it.

Should the Congregation refuse to change its verdict, then Bishop Coffey will appeal to a higher court – the Signatura.

The whole process may take years rather than weeks or months. Sadly, in this particularly litigious age our ecclesiastical courts are overcrowded and as seemingly ineffective as are our Civil Courts.”

Rather than be humbled into accepting the decision of the Congregation, the Bishop appears to have adopted the strategy of himself appealing to the Congregation. Not only that, but if the Parish Bulletin is to be believed, he will only accept their decision on ‘his’ appeal if it suits him.

The Parish Bulletin column states that Bishop Coffey will appeal to the Signatura and the process may take years. How convenient that the Bishop will go to such lengths to deny Fr Speekman and Rome.

My guess is that the Bishop will want the process to take years so that he can do nothing. When the Signatura does look likely to rule in the Parish Priest’s favour, Bishop Coffey will hope that he is able to announce his retirement.

Come to think of it, that is quite a good strategy if you were vindictive and lacking credibility.

Incidentally, in the same bulletin is a notice saying,

“We congratulate Father John Speekman on the 20th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood on Saturday 7th August. We say “Ad Multos Annos” which is the traditional celebratory greeting for a priest on such occasions. We wish him good health and many more years joyfully serving our Good Shepherd and His flock.”

Peter Kelly, Morwell

Getting Serious About Orthodoxy In A Diocese

In a bold move - and an example for other bishops on how to get serious about orthodoxy - Bishop Robert F. Vasa of Baker, Oregon, directed earlier this year that all those in his diocese serving in official capacities should formally declare their adherence to specific Church teachings.

The Church already requires the making of a Profession of Faith by various persons when they undertake specific duties related to Church administration and teaching (cf. Canon 833). In the Diocese of Baker this has been expanded to include those who take on the ecclesial duties of catechist, liturgical reader, cantor, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and other Church positions which entail a presumption of orthodoxy.

Explaining his initiative, Bishop Vasa said he connected the scandal of clerical child abuse with the widespread legitimisation of dissent from Catholic teaching: "I have become increasingly convinced that there may be another much more subtle form of episcopal negligence which also has the potential to harm children, not only emotionally and physically, but primarily spiritually." This could occur when "those commissioned by the Church to be witnesses to and examples for them give witness to values or beliefs incompatible with the authentic teachings of the Church."

Bishop Vasa sent to those involved in official responsibilities a covering letter, a document titled, "Giving Testimony to the Truth" and an "Affirmation of Personal Faith".

He explains in his covering letter that as it is his "responsibility before God to be a shepherd and a teacher" he must ensure that those entrusted with important church tasks are worthy of their roles: "A failure on my part to verify a person's suitability for ministry would be judged as seriously negligent".

An assurance was needed that those commissioned to teach and act in some official capacity "hold interior dispositions consistent with Church teachings". This could not be taken for granted: "The only way I can verify this is to ask, and so I am asking." This meant establishing "clear qualifying or disqualifying criteria" and exercising "an oversight role by verifying that the established criteria are being observed".

General phrases such as being a "practising Catholic" or "of outstanding moral character" can be subject to broad interpretation, he pointed out. Many pro-choice politicians, for example, have claimed to be in full communion with the Catholic Church and would subjectively apply such phrases to themselves.

For this reason, he said, "the diocesan criteria need to be more clearly enunciated". Being of "outstanding moral character" involved more than having a good reputation in the community - it "necessarily entails a clear knowledge and proper understanding of the teachings of the Church and a firm adherence to those teachings."

These teachings, said the Bishop, are to be found "clearly enunciated" in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, papal encyclicals and documents, liturgical rubrics and the Code of Canon Law, "to name a few of the authentic sources".

The Affirmation of Personal Faith asks candidates for ministry to state unequivocally: "I believe and profess all that the Holy Catholic Church teaches, believes and proclaims to be revealed by God." This carries with it an affirmation of specific teachings of the Catholic Church.

These include statements on the inviolability of human life, the sinfulness of contraception, the evil of extra-marital sexual relationships, the unacceptability of homosexual relationships, the wrongness of cohabitation before marriage, the significance of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the uniqueness of the Catholic Church, the legitimacy of the Holy Father's claim to infallibility, and the moral teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

Within one year of the publication of the Bishop's letter all former temporary commissions will have expired and all serving in these official capacities in future will have assented to the Affirmation of Personal Faith. "Only those officially commissioned by way of a document from this office," said Bishop Vasa, "will be authorised to serve in these capacities".

From an article by Michael Gilchrist in AD2000 Vol 17 No 7 (August 2004), p. 6

"Once I was at lunch with the Pope and someone suggested that his popularity was due only to his personality and not to the Church, and John Paul II said, 'This is not the charisma of the Pope, it is the charisma of Peter.'"

Cardinal Paul Poupard, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture

Sample Letters to Write in Protest Against Fr Speekman

(Just so you don't think we're biased...)

- I want Fr Speekman to stay out of my parish because I feel bullied when he tells me I must attend Sunday Mass every week.
- I don't like Fr Speekman because he wants to create a chapel for Perpetual Adoration in my Church.
- I think Fr Speekman is a monster because he asked me not to come to Holy Communion just because I'm living with my boyfriend.
- Fr Speekman is unfair. He had the hide to suggest that my marriage is not valid, just because I didn't have my first marriage annulled. My conscience is clear and that's all that matters.
- I'm glad Fr Speekman has gone. He made me feel hurt when I brought my baby for Baptism and he asked us if we intend bringing her up in the faith and coming to Mass on Sundays. I was Baptised Catholic and have a right to have my baby Baptised, even if I don't come to church. He shouldn't pry.
- I support the removal of Fr Speekman. He always talks about sin and it makes me feel uncomfortable. I know Vatican II changed all that stuff about sin, but he still harps on it.
- I think it's awful what Fr Speekman is doing. I don't know him personally, but I know he's a bully and he should be stopped.
- Fr Speekman thinks Catholic teachers should go to Mass on weekends. Our personal lives have nothing to do with him and he should keep to his parish work.
- I'm a teacher and I love the bishop and support him in everything he does. He is very understanding and never interferes in what we do. He knows the church has changed.
- My grandchild was upset when Fr Speekman talked about Confession. She's too young to commit sin and it'll put her off the church if he expects her to go to Confession.
- Fr Speekman has no right to suggest that my son shouldn't receive Holy Communion at school Masses just because he doesn't go to Sunday Mass. He's old enough to decide for himself and at least if he is willing to receive Communion sometimes it's better than nothing.
- Fr Speekman is exclusive. He won't let my son be an altar server just because he isn't Catholic.

Independent Catholic Orthodox News Needed

I believe you are performing valuable and much-needed work by publishing the monthly news sheet *Into the Deep* and I look forward to each issue.

The May issue of *Christian Order*, an English orthodox monthly currently edited by an Australian, had an article that turned my thoughts to ITD. I'm sure you will find it resonates with the work you are doing.

J. Gerald Wilson, Strathfield NSW

The following from the Editorial of May 2004 *Christian Order*:

“We know well that the very first actions of any totalitarian regime include a bloody purge of the intellectuals and seizure of the press and other organs of mass communication. The goal being to enslave the people – intellectually, emotionally, psychologically – through relentless, unquestioned party line propaganda. Brainwashing, no less.

In the same way, the postconciliar Modernist revolutionaries have long purged the halls of Catholic academia of orthodox intellectuals and taken control of local and national media instruments. The

resultant ecclesiastical tyranny – no less real for being bloodless – is manifested in smug diocesan and national weeklies spewing out the official liberal line on RCIA, Alpha, Renew, the latest Synod, programme, process etc. etc. without the least fear of serious contestation, orthodox ‘letters to the editor’ notwithstanding.

What a relief and a godsend *Christian Order* is before this corrupt and stifling closed-shop which flies heavily in the face of liberal mantras about ‘tolerance’, ‘diversity’ and ‘pluralism’.

In this climate of creeping tyranny and constant liberal propaganda on all sides, *Christian Order*, independent and beholden to God alone, has never been more urgently required.

Like beholding graphic images of victims of the abortion holocaust, we believe that facing uncomfortable facts about the Church (and churchmen) is the starting point for personal conversion and the collective action necessary to challenge the liberal status quo. The ecclesiastical Establishment knows this, hence its aversion to our plain speaking.”

How Little Has Changed

The following is a letter written to The Australian newspaper on 2 March 1995 by Father John O'Neill of Doonside NSW:

“The Australian Catholic Bishops are researching as to why so many young Catholics, even products of our own schools, are not practising their religion. Your Eminences, Your Graces, my Lords, save your time (and, presumably, your money). The answer is twofold:

- 1) The same old problem: unaided human nature is more attracted to the world than to things spiritual.
- 2) They do not know their religion in the first place, because:
 - a) Their parents (mostly) have not taught them;
 - b) The version of the Catholic Faith presented in schools, state and Catholic, is not the Catholic Faith at all, and having no substance, bores them;
 - c) The Sacred Liturgy in many places is more like a laid-back entertainment, and does not inspire the young hearts that are looking for genuine fulfilment;
 - d) Many of your clergy are preaching fairy floss instead of solid food for thought and action;
 - e) The general disorder in the Church (and in the churches) makes their religion appear irrelevant;
 - f) The disappearance of priests and religious (through departure and disguise) and the behaviour of some has shocked them;
 - g) Our un-Catholic seminaries (except that little one in the country) are frightening away those who might want to be the future preachers of the real Gospel;
 - h) The shameful surrender to feminism in so many ways;
 - i) Etc, etc, etc.

Now, having wasted half an hour or so in writing this – and wasted it I have, because no bishop is going to take any notice or believe any word of this, even though some of us have been shouting it at them for years – I shall go cast the Gospel pearls before those who will not trample them.”

Meaning of Suffering

“Jesus, who was able to do everything, did all that the Father asked him to do, scandalising everyone by the apparent uselessness of that gesture.

When offered, everything becomes useful.”

Father Vincent Nagle, U.S. chaplain to the sick; author

Narrow and Wide Gates

Matthew’s text [7:13-14] contrasts two ways and two gates, one narrow and the other wide.

Why does he call these two ways, respectively, “wide” and “narrow”? Is the way of evil always easy and pleasing, and that of good hard and exhausting?

We must be careful here, not to fall into the typical temptation of believing that everything goes magnificently well here for the wicked while, on the contrary, everything goes wrong for the good.

The way of the impious is wide, yes, but only at the beginning. The more they progress on it, the more it becomes narrow and bitter. In any case, it is extremely narrow at the end, as it leads to a dead end. The happiness experienced in it goes diminishing as it is experienced, until it becomes nauseous and sad.

There can be a certain kind of inebriation, as with drugs, alcohol and sex. An ever-stronger dosage is necessary to produce the same intense pleasure until the organism ceases to respond, and then comes the collapse, emotional and also physical.

The way of the just, on the contrary, is narrow at the beginning, but then becomes wide, as they find hope, joy, and peace of heart on it.

It leads to life, not death.

*Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Papal Household preacher
www.zenit.org*

Who Speaks For Our Parish?

Fr Cleary, Parish Administrator of Morwell, has made it clear that he is unhappy about who is speaking on behalf of the parish. I assume he is referring to me.

I would like to make it clear that at no stage have I ever said I was speaking on behalf of the parish. I did not contact The Age newspaper. The reporter contacted me. I asked where he obtained my phone number and he said from Colin Coomber (editor of Catholic Life newspaper).

I made it clear to Barney Zwartz of The Age that I was not speaking on behalf of the Confraternity of St Michael, but simply as one who has been a parishioner of Morwell for 45 years.

Fr Cleary is quick to criticise and condemn any orthodox person or belief. It doesn’t fit with his continual emphasis on being ‘non-judgemental’.

John Henderson, Morwell

We Need Fidelity

Our Bishops have to face the fact that those they hire and pay as educators are doing something disastrous to the genuine Catholic faith of many, especially the young, for whom parents pay school fees to reinforce faith in *the* Faith, not destroy it.

Some years ago a priest showed me the Melbourne Guidelines. The beginning was a list of what they called “assumptions”. I was aghast. Truths of faith that I had been taught were now ‘assumed’, not accepted. In a secular or agnostic context I could understand that what we accepted would be questioned, but in a manual of catechetics? What does this say to teachers?

The Guidelines also had a reading list recommended for teachers. The priest told me that McBrien’s *Catholicism* was a theology book, meant for those who could handle the issues. It was not a book of faith, nor meant as one, nor a book for catechesis. Then he referred me to some books on Christ by Edward Schillebeeckx, a Dutch Dominican. These, he said, were highly speculative stuff, understandable by very few.

Who lists this stuff? The salaried professional who have forgotten that theology, which has its place, is not faith. Faith is about commitment, trust, security, rootedness, and loyalty to the tradition of the Church. But there is no money or professional kudos in that. The jobs are in the ‘brain game’, the more obscure the better. That way Bishops can be conned into thinking they need it, and will be persuaded to think that we need it!

It is not knowledge that we should be seeking in this matter, but fidelity.

Are we going to find bishops with the insight and courage to eventually cry: enough is enough! Or shall we suffer shame because of our deviousness and weakness.

S.C., Melbourne

Both McBrien and Schillebeeckx are dissenters. For example, McBrien believes that Jesus did not establish the Catholic Church, he questions the virginal conception of Jesus and the perpetual virginity of Our Lady; Schillebeeckx questions the Real Presence and the Resurrection of Christ.

And we see the same thing happening with the new Religious Education curriculum being introduced across dioceses in Australia now – based on dissenter Thomas Groome’s theories, and with lists of dissenting authors as references for teachers.

Come and listen to Eamonn Keane tell more in Morwell on Saturday 2 October – see page 4 of this ITD.

Ed.

Hiding Sin Reveals Sin

See what happens when priests are afraid to preach on sin? We lose all sense of what sin really is.

In Morwell parish (in the limelight again, thanks to administrator Fr Tom Cleary), it is not sinful to miss Sunday Mass on purpose, nor to practise contraception, nor to hold a public forum where liberals can vent their vitriol against Fr Speekman and (ex?) pastoral associate Gregory Kingman, nor to lie about what constitutes liturgical abuse. All this is done with a clear conscience, in the name of Christian charity.

However, it is in fact sinful not to give money to the collection (told to Grade 2’s at Mass), it is unacceptable to put “the paltry sum of one dollar” in the collection plate (notice in parish bulletin), and it is highly un-Christian of Gregory Kingman to seek legal advice about the termination of his contract and equally un-Christian of Fr Speekman to write to Fr Cleary asking him to please refrain from changing the way the parish operates (as Canon Law obliges him).

In the wider Church, we have rampant paganism in some Queensland Catholic parishes, and then the Queensland bishops issue a statement claiming it is a sin to pour oil on the Barrier Reef. When Tony Abbott spoke out against abortion in Australia, where was the vocal support of all our Bishops?

When Into the Deep representatives met with two priests from the Council of Priests, neither priest would state that what the Catechism determines is sinful, is actually sin. Yet Into the Deep itself has been called sinful and evil by some.

How Satan rebels against truth!

Empty Promises

“With regard to your comments regarding the loss of yet another Parish Priest, I have never mentioned to Fr Speekman or anyone else that I wished to remove him. I am aware that there are rumours in Morwell to that effect. These are coming from people who are ill-informed and should be dealt with in a manner that allows for truth and justice to prevail. I can also say that Mrs Marie Swenson has not asked for Fr Speekman to be removed, nor has the Catholic Education Office.

I would appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that the parish council at least is aware that I wish to resolve this in a manner that does justice to your Parish Priest, the Principal of St Vincent de Paul school, and the parish as a whole.”

Bishop Coffey

in a letter to Mrs Helen Palma, chair of Morwell Parish Council on 18 December 2001

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
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.

Gift of Moral Discernment

Look at those who rule your city or your nation. Some seem to have no qualities which mark them out for such a task; they hold a position of power through an accident of birth, or through ingratiating themselves with their superiors.

Some have natural authority, so that they inspire confidence and respect in others. Some possess natural wisdom, so they handle easily the task the complex affairs of state.

But whether or not they have natural gifts, there is another type of gift which surpasses all others: the gift of knowing right from wrong and the courage to choose what is right. This moral gift is not something which is given at birth, and which some people possess and others do not.

The potential of moral discernment is like a seed sown in every human heart; and this seed grows only if it is nurtured through reflection, education, prayer and practise.

It would be better that our leaders were poor in natural gifts, but rich in this moral gift, than they exuded authority and wisdom, but used these natural gifts for their own ends.

St John Chrysostom - the Golden Voice of Protest 40

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

Orthodoxy?

From the Greek

Right Doctrine!

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.