

Into the Deep

Issue 27

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The Greatest Gift

When I am asked what the Church means to me, I answer that it is the Temple of Life in which I am a living stone; it is the Tree of Eternal Fruit of which I am a branch; it is the Mystical Body of Christ on earth of which I am a member. The Church is, therefore, more to me than I am to myself; her life is more abundant than mine, for I live by union with her. She could live without me, for I am only a cell in her body; but I could not normally live without her. I live only as a part of her, as my arm lives only as a part of my body. So absorbing does she become that her thoughts are my thoughts; her loves are my loves; her ideals are my ideals. I consider sharing her life to be the greatest gift God has ever given to me, as I should consider losing her life the greatest evil that could befall me.

Fulton J. Sheen, In the Fullness of Time (page 33)

Christ is Coming!

"The season of Advent is a time of spiritual renewal in preparation for Christmas. The voices of prophets resound in the liturgy, who announce the Messiah, inviting us to conversion of heart and to prayer. John the Baptist, the last and greatest of them all, cries out: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight!" (Lk 3:4), because he "will come to visit his people in peace."

Christ is coming, the Prince of peace! To prepare for his Nativity means to reawaken in ourselves and in the world the hope for peace. First of all, peace in hearts, which is built by putting down the weapons of rancour, of revenge and of every form of egoism. The world is in great need of this peace!

In this Advent season of waiting and hope, the ecclesial community identifies more than ever with the Most Holy Virgin. May she, the expectant Virgin, help us to open our hearts to him who brings, with his coming among us, the priceless gift of peace to the whole of humanity."

From Pope John Paul II's Advent message 2003

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

Meditate on Death

According to John Paul II, a "realistic and severe" meditation on death, the "inescapable end of human existence," can be of great help for all, in a society that tries "in every way to ignore this reality, removing it from the horizon of our thought."

The Holy Father was commenting on the second part of Psalm 48(49).

To reflect on death "relativises so many secondary realities which, unfortunately, we have absolutised, as is precisely the case of wealth, success, power," he continued, quoting the biblical Book of Sirach: 'In whatever you do, remember your last days, and you will never sin.'

"If money does not succeed in ransoming us from death, there is one" - God - "who can redeem us from that dark and tragic horizon," the Pope said.

"Thus, a horizon of hope and immortality opens for the just man," he added. "The just man, poor and humiliated in history, when he reaches the last frontier of life, is without goods, has nothing to give as ransom to stop death and remove himself from its cold embrace.

"But then the great surprise comes: God himself offers the ransom and snatches his faithful one from the hands of death, as he is the only one who can conquer death."

The Holy Father concluded the meditation quoting Jesus' words in the Gospel according to St Matthew, when he says, 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal,' adding 'where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.'

www.zenit.org

All Genders Welcome

In our 'old Church', only males and females were welcomed and included. The 'new church' proposed by Journeying Together will welcome and include *all* genders! This is one of the catch-phrases of the diocesan pastoral plan Journeying Together and other modernist 'new church' agendas.

Is this '*all* genders' business really pure stupidity, or is it 'code' for wanting practising homosexuals to be allowed to receive Holy Communion, and wanting to clear the path for women priests? No wonder they have to rely on ambiguity in their language.

Morwell Parish Lost

It was pleasing to read in the November ITD a letter by the Rev. Fr H. Hengel, even though I cannot agree with his critique regarding the three correspondents mentioned. For some time now I have had the personal conviction that all priests must have been gagged, preventing any expression of opinion. Fr Hengel's letter proved me wrong.

Expressions of opinion and support by priests, in particular regarding the unjust treatment of the Rev. Fr John Speekman by Bishop Jeremiah Coffey, have unfortunately not been forthcoming. Why is this?

I keep remembering the words used by our Bishop when he issued the decree removing Fr Speekman from any involvement with the schools – “for the good of souls.” I question how many souls are now in danger of being lost, for many people go elsewhere to Mass or do not practise at all as a result of the Bishop's decision. The demise of the Morwell parish income and empty seats at Mass is clear evidence of this. Is this the outcome the Bishop wants?

I would like to thank ITD for honest expressions. How sad it is that we can rely only on lay people to be the defenders of the faith and to expose injustice.

Fr Hengel may well ask what right do I have to criticise our Bishop, after all it is only my parish priest who is victimised, and my soul, my relationship with parishioners, and my love of the parish and church (I can go on) that is gradually being destroyed by the ongoing upheaval the Bishop has created. It is my belief that the example set by our Bishop contradicts everything that our faith stands for.

May God bless and protect us all.

Bert Van der Zalm, Morwell

Christmas Mystery

“O marvellous exchange!

*Man's Creator has become man,
born of the Virgin.*

*We have been made sharers in
the divinity of Christ, who
humbled himself to share our
humanity.”*

Liturgy of the Hours

*Into the Deep wishes all our readers
a holy and joyful Christmas!*

Neutrality Not An Option

Not long ago I listed some of the ‘weasel’ words in use to stifle any search for truth. Now I find (October ITD) the Administrator of Sale says that telling the truth of the failure of the Catholic education system is ‘divisive’! Gwen Thomas accuses us of ‘racism’. How sad that she doesn't grasp the role of humour and satire in debate, particularly when it comes from one of Irish origin!

ITD is to be congratulated for its honesty and courage in lasting thus far. The exposé on the union's role in this debacle is worthy of a journalism award. Action should be taken against the union in the Industrial Court, but who will do it?

ITD's report, “Priests' Blind Loyalty” (also October) is very worrying. Priests do owe obedience and loyalty to the Bishop, *when he acts properly, within his powers as set out in law*. Outside this they do not, and might even be obliged to say so publicly. Hitler succeeded by the ruse of an oath of personal loyalty; beware such blindness!

Some priests have managed to expose what Bishops do to their priests, but the Sale case is very clear-cut: reinstate Fr Speekman! Rome is as clear and definite and simple as that. As nice as it would be to be ‘neutral’, Rome has removed neutrality as an option. The senior Bishop of Victoria has to act now. After all, he is supposed to be vigilant that ecclesiastical discipline be preserved (*Canon 436 – see below*), otherwise it is just a farce. Could we have any clearer example of why *we* don't have to obey the laws of the Church?

S.C., Melbourne

Code of Canon Law, Canon 436

§1. In the suffragan dioceses, a metropolitan is competent:

1/ to exercise vigilance so that the faith and ecclesiastical discipline are observed carefully and to inform the Roman Pontiff of abuses, if there are any.

Give Freely!

Into the Deep is free. There is no subscription fee, so remember that what you receive freely, *give* freely!

Make copies of Into the Deep, or order extra copies from us, and pass them on to your family, friends, neighbours, fellow parishioners or colleagues. Let us awaken the slumbering orthodox among us and stand together!

Donations to Into the Deep are welcome. We are most grateful to those who have donated so generously already. May God bless you all.

Some Might Call it Heresy

Inviting all priests and deacons to a reflection day on 16 November to “reflect on who the priest is and what role he plays in our Catholic communities,” Bishop Coffey included some points by Fr Richard Lennan, who spoke at a priests’ in-service last May.

Fr Lennan is from the Catholic Institute of Sydney and is editor of the book “Redefining the Church” which presents arguments for a liberal church (that would appear not to be Catholic in the end).

The Fr Lennan ideas were astounding to say the least, and some would say heretical. Describing a situation of moving *from* one situation *to* another, he put forward the following for the clergy to consider:

- moving *from* religion *to* spirituality: *from* collective *to* personal experience: *from* the objective *to* the subjective – resulting in the ‘decentring’ of the Church and, therefore the ordained;

- *from* an appreciation of sacramentality and mediation *to* a desire for a relationship with God not mediated through the Church or the priest;

- *from* the Church as the (static) perfect society *to* the (dynamic) pilgrim People of God – bishops and priests express the static (control), not the dynamic (change);

- *from* a primarily hierarchical ecclesiology *to* a primarily communal one;

- *from* an appreciation of the richness of ‘tradition’ *to* a sense that ‘tradition’ – including the ordained priesthood - is a brake on changing and modernising the Church;

- *from* the baptised as people who are sanctified, taught, and led *to* people who not only sanctify, teach and lead, but who seek greater autonomy in matters of faith;

- *from* a focus on the ‘lay apostolate’, which was dependent on the hierarchy, *to* a focus on ‘ministry’, understood as the right of all the baptised;

- *from* the acceptance of priesthood as part of God’s will for the Church *to* priesthood seen as historically-conditioned reality that might be at an end;

- *from* the priest as the one trusted implicitly by ‘his’ people *to* the one whom ‘anonymous’ people will report for words/actions they consider ‘unorthodox’;

With reflections such as these it is little wonder that Bishop Coffey proclaimed in his invitation to his priests: “Historically, these reflections are important for our diocese because under the providence of God, we have been unable to foster and nourish vocations to religious and priestly life in sufficient numbers for the life of the diocese.” Fr Lennan solves the problem by proposing a church that doesn’t need or want priests.

This seems to be in conflict with Pope John Paul II’s encyclical *Pastores Dabo Vobis* which says: “... to surmount these difficulties we have at our disposal our hope, our faith in the unfailing love of Christ, and our certainty that the priestly ministry in the life of the Church and in the world knows no substitute.”

Pat O’Brien, Sale

The Question of Hell

I attended a gathering of the Parish of Sale Education Committee on 4 November 2004 where Fr Christopher Gleeson S.J. was the guest speaker. During his presentation he stated that he doubts that hell exists. When I questioned him later on what he based his statement, he replied that the Bible references were “apocryphal”.

The Macquarie dictionary defines apocryphal as: of doubtful authorship or authenticity, false, spurious, fabulous, fictitious, mythical.

I suggested to him that he read Saint Faustina Kowalska’s diary, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*. On page 296 (no. 741) she gives a vivid description of the torments of hell. Towards the end she writes “that most of the souls there are those who disbelieve there is a hell”.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states very clearly that hell does exist. For example in paragraph 1033 it says, “To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God’s merciful love means remaining separated from him forever by our own free choice. This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed is called “hell”.”

This teaching is “de fide.” That our parish administrator did not correct Fr Gleeson was disappointing.

It seems ironic that 4 November was the feast day of Saint Charles Borromeo, the patron Saint of those who teach catechetics and their pupils.

Peter Callahan, Sale

Resolve Issues Peacefully, Quickly, Justly

Code of Canon Law Canon 1446

§1. All the Christian faithful, and especially bishops, are to strive diligently to avoid litigation among the people of God as much as possible, without prejudice to justice, and to resolve litigation peacefully as soon as possible.

§2. Whenever the judge perceives some hope of a favourable outcome at the start of litigation or even at any other time, the judge is not to neglect to encourage and assist the parties to collaborate in seeking an equitable solution to the controversy and to indicate to them suitable means to this end, even by using reputable persons for mediation.

§3. If the litigation concerns the private good of the parties, the judge is to discern whether the controversy can be concluded advantageously by an agreement or the judgment of arbitrators according to the norm of cann. 1713-1716.

Sale Diocesan Manifesto

“Encyclical shows way for the Diocese” writes Bishop Coffey in Catholic Life (October 2004). It is true Pope Paul VI wrote *Ecclesiam Suam* in 1964 as Bishop Coffey says. The Bishop however, translates *Ecclesiam Suam* to mean Your Church and goes on to say that it “has been the pattern and model of my work as Bishop of the Diocese” and that it is “a manifesto for a Church in transition from monologue to dialogue.”

So – now we know why we have had a ‘bishop in grey’ for 15 years who, rather than affirm us in the faith of the Catechism (monologue?) has decided to implement his pastoral plan Journeying Together (dialogue? – after all it is our Church isn’t it?). We have been encouraged to be tolerant, welcoming and loving – provided of course that we do not ‘rock the boat’ or uphold fundamental teachings and dogmas of our Catholic faith. Those of us who have tried, have not been tolerated, welcomed, or loved. It reminds me of Henry Ford who told people that they could have any colour car they wanted as long as it was black (perhaps grey in our case)!

On the same page of Catholic Life under the heading “Time for reflection on priesthood” our Bishop, obviously encouraged by his translation of *Ecclesiam Suam* - his ‘dialoguing manifesto’ (democratic church?) and his own appraisal of Bishop Corbett (who only had 4 priests on horseback for far-flung Gippsland communities), solves the problem of our rapidly decreasing number of priests. His solution – to remove remaining priests from their parishes for

yet another 3 weeks of the year (in Advent, Lent and May) so they can get together to “reflect on the role of the priest in Gippsland.” What did they learn in the seminary for 7 years?

In conclusion of his article on the encyclical, Bishop Coffey says that it is the dream of *Ecclesiam Suam* and of this diocese “to make Catholics virtuous, wise, unfettered, fair-minded and strong.” Considering the writings of this page of Catholic Life, his disobedience towards the Congregation for the Clergy, his treatment of orthodox clergy and laity etc., I can’t help but be reminded of the dream-turned-nightmare of the Communists who also had a ‘manifesto’, and the French Revolutionaries who cried: Liberty, Equality and Fraternity! (which turned into repression, inequality and fratricide).

In conclusion I must tell you the good news. Just after reading this troubling page I was reading an article by Msgr Reilly (founder of the Helpers of God’s Precious Infants) entitled “A Culture transfigured in Christ”. He also quotes Pope Paul VI’s *Ecclesiam Suam* but unlike our Bishop, correctly translates the Latin title as His Church (that is, Christ’s Church – we are only the members, Christ is the head of a hierarchical not democratic Church!) In this encyclical Pope Paul VI stresses that because Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, as it goes into the future the Church must maintain the roots from the past or we will have left the Church of Christ.

Our Bishop needs more prayers.

Richard Earle, Marlo

Like Sheep Without a Shepherd

How can our diocesan priests still support the Bishop who has obviously embarked on a campaign of unjust treatment of his own accord (or because of union pressure from the CEO) of a fellow priest who is doing his job according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Did the priests read the decree from Rome which came out so strongly in Father Speekman’s favour and was critical of the Bishop’s actions? How can they be silent when one of their own is treated so badly? Are they feeling guilty because they know that Father Speekman takes his role as Priest of the Catholic Church seriously, and they do not? How can they stand and preach on God’s love and compassion for us all, when they show no love or compassion to their brother priest and in some cases their parishioners.

Father Cleary (Administrator in Morwell Parish) is a classic example of this. By calling a meeting and allowing people who oppose orthodoxy to vent hatred toward Father Speekman and others, by sacking the pastoral associate, removing Rosary beads from the wall in the Church (breaking them in the process), and still refusing to acknowledge the validity of the elected members of the Parish Advisory Council, even after being shown the evidence and results of the elections, he has shown contempt for his role as caretaker of the parish, lack of brotherly love for a fellow priest, and disregard for the feelings of the majority of parishioners of Morwell Parish. He seems to have a total inability to understand Father Speekman’s dedication to the teaching of Jesus Christ and to the parishioners of Morwell.

No wonder there are fewer and fewer people attending Masses in Morwell. One has to wonder what all this is doing for “the good of souls”.

Helen Palma, Morwell

Duty to Defend the Faith

Fr Hengel's correspondence (November ITD) regarding a letter sent to Bishop Coffey on the appointments of ex-priests to public positions in the Sale diocese, is surprisingly melodramatic using such words as terror tactics, arrogance, self-righteousness, self-appointed defenders of the faith, judges, juries, executors.

The laity do have the right to question the status of any individual, be they ex-priests or otherwise, appointed to public positions in the diocese. Every Catholic at the time of Confirmation became a defender of the faith. Fr Hengel at the time of his ordination assumed an even greater responsibility as a defender of the faith.

If the appointments we questioned were all legitimate, why did the Bishop not quietly reply to our request and put the matter to rest without any publicity? We will have to trust Fr Hengel's claim that the rescript of Jim Quillinan's laicisation gives him the appropriate dispensation to perform the duties he currently takes on. But there is still no explanation why Fr Brown was first employed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO) as Mr Brown. Did the Bishop allow the CEO to employ both gentlemen? No one has been able to explain the other irregular situations of ex-priests in the diocese either.

Fr Hengel vigorously defends these ex-priests. Would that he would defend his brother priest Fr Speekman with the same vigour (he prays the Rosary every day too). There is not a priest in the diocese who has come out publicly in his defence.

Fr Hengel (along with Frs Bickley, O'Bryan and Mahony) was one of the consultors the Bishop met with in the process of removing Fr Speekman as administrator of the schools in the Morwell parish. Did he (and they) vigorously oppose the Bishop's plan of action? Were they aware that the Victorian Independent Education Union (VIEU) had threatened legal action? Was Fr Speekman asked for his side of the story?

Is it not a fact that the CEO not only brought the charge against Fr Speekman but also investigated it in the person of the deputy director Mr Bill McMahon? In other words, the CEO was the accuser, investigator, prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner. No reason has as yet been given (over two years have passed) as to why Fr Speekman was removed as administrator of the parish schools. Surely there's a more worthy reason for Fr Hengel to get hot under the collar about, instead of 'accusing' us of defending the faith.

Has Fr Hengel or any of his brother priests questioned the Bishop as to why he has not complied with the Decree issued by the Congregation for the Clergy and reinstated Fr Speekman to his parish in Morwell? After reading the report of the meeting of the priests of the diocese in the October issue of Catholic Life it would appear not. Let them ask the Bishop to reinstate Fr Speekman so that reconciliation can take place.

What of the letter sent to the Bishop by Mr Keenan of the VIEU, requesting the Bishop not to reinstate Father Speekman? Who is in charge of the diocese, the Bishop, the CEO or the Union?

We all have a duty to defend the faith. We do not choose the battleground – that is chosen for us. If that, sad as it may be, happens to be within the Church, then that is where the battle must be fought and won.

One of the battlegrounds today happens to be in the field of Catholic education. Will Fr Hengel and his brother priests join with us to ensure that authentic Catholic teaching be taught in our Catholic schools? We could begin by demanding that the curriculum based on Thomas Groome's shared Christian praxis be withdrawn by the CEO.

I will continue to pray for our Bishop and all our priests that they save their souls and the souls of those entrusted to their care.

John Henderson, Morwell

Rights and Responsibilities of the Laity

Code of Canon Law

Canon 212

§1. Conscious of their own responsibility, the Christian faithful are bound to follow with Christian obedience those things which the sacred pastors, inasmuch as they represent Christ, declare as teachers of the faith or establish as rulers of the Church.

§2. The Christian faithful are free to make known to the pastors of the Church their needs, especially spiritual ones, and their desires.

§3. According to the knowledge, competence, and prestige which they possess, they have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful, without prejudice to the integrity of faith and morals, with reverence toward their pastors, and attentive to common advantage and the dignity of persons.

[§3 also quoted in the Catechism of the Catholic Church para 907]

January Issue

The January issue of ITD will be emailed out as usual and will be on the website by 1st January.

Printed copies, however, will be delayed due to our printer closing for the first week of January. Our apologies.

Recorded Music at Mass

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal states (no. 40): “Great importance should therefore be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass, with due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly. Although it is not always necessary (e.g., in weekday Masses) to sing all the texts that are of themselves meant to be sung, every care should be taken that singing by the ministers and the people is not absent in celebrations that occur on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.”

Later the same document (no. 312) it states: “The choir should be positioned with respect to the design of each church so as to make clearly evident its character as a part of the gathered community of the faithful fulfilling a specific function.”

The reason for this is that the use of music in the liturgy is always to enhance the quality of liturgical prayer and can never be considered as entertainment. It is practically impossible for recorded music to serve the same function.

Fr Edward McNamara, Zenit News

Dialogue

In the October issue of Catholic Life Bishop Coffey proclaimed dialogue as the means of evangelization and he made an effort to convey the message that dialogue is what characterises his leadership in the Sale diocese.

He found it necessary to point out that, “Some people in the diocese have difficulty with the word dialogue”.

ITD has noticed that to the Bishop nearly all matters of faith and morals are explained in terms of “dialogue”. In the December 2003 issue of Catholic Life the Bishop even reduced the great mystery of the Incarnation (Christmas) to a matter of “connections, dialogue and solidarity”.

While he fervently extols the virtues of dialogue, his actions demonstrate that the Bishop is a poor communicator who has difficulty holding dialogue with anyone who has ideas that threaten his.

Many orthodox Catholics have tried to communicate with the Bishop on matters of faith and morals and he has unceremoniously turned them away. Many people have written to him seeking clarification, raising questions about dissent and error, or simply stating an orthodox position and he has not been courteous enough to reply. All of this from a pastoral leader who espouses dialogue and who claims that “charity is the key to everything”.

Orthodox Catholics are fast learning that the Bishop’s appeals for dialogue only apply to those who hold similar liberal views as he does.

Welcoming and Inclusive

Victorian dioceses have welcomed three priests from Queensland with shouts of joy and trumpet blast, so to speak. A brief look into their backgrounds and areas of interest reveals the following:

Fr John Dobson, who spoke in Melbourne and Sandhurst, is one who emphasises lay-led liturgies in ‘preparation’ for ‘priestless parishes’ (a preparation our Bishop Coffey relishes, yet our Pope decries as a “fatal mistake”). Fr Dobson thinks the crucifix should never have become the symbol of Christianity because it’s too negative. He says, “If Christianity means life it is the resurrection that is our real symbol. But maybe the crucifix is the appropriate symbol for such negative, confining thinkers who are terrified to think in a more lateral, open way. These people love to debate what other people should or shouldn’t be thinking or doing and whether they belong in the Christian tradition or not.”

Fr Frank Anderson, invited to Warragul, wrote a book on the Eucharist that questions the Church’s teaching on the Real Presence. In it he writes [quoted from AD2000]: “Catholics, introduced to such terms as ‘flesh’ and ‘blood’ when young, can read them almost literally and as if the Gospel is supporting a virtually physical presence of Jesus in the bread and wine. This is certainly not what John means,” and “In the Church’s mind such a physical presence is not intended”.

Fr Tom Elich of Brisbane’s Liturgical Commission was welcomed in Traralgon. He questions the Vatican document on Liturgy suggesting it is a betrayal. He has radical views on sacred art, regularly uses new-age words and symbols, and eagerly refurbishes Cathedrals to be less like a church and more like a “worship space”. He believes that priest and people celebrate Mass equally and so a priest is unable to consecrate alone. He is currently promoting a computer program that “helps you” in liturgy preparation, and includes homilies, Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, and the Presbyterian hymnal.

One wonders if orthodox priests would receive the same welcome to speak in our dioceses.

On a more regular basis, we still have Fr Peter Collins of St Francis Church in Melbourne writing open dissent in his monthly newsletter. In his September offering Fr Collins states that “Not every aspect of Catholicism is right or good.” He strongly supports the Third Rite of Reconciliation, saying the ban was a result of “woeful ignorance.” And he laments the Vatican’s imposition of their “views” on the Australian church, and how only “the most courageous bishops” have been able to stand up against this. It is sad to see that Archbishop Hart has not taken action as a result of the complaints he has received.

Real Reflection Priesthood

A book by Opus Dei priest Fr Thomas McGovern called "Priestly Identity: A study in the theology of the priesthood" (2002) receives thorough praise in various reviews at www.christendom-awake.org. It bears an interesting link to the debate currently in the Sale diocese about priestly celibacy and "redefining" the role of the priest.

Father John McCallion explains on the web-page:

"Dr McGovern identifies a radical shift in the understanding of the sacerdotal image since the [Second Vatican] Council. The shift was not intended by the Council, but rather by figures such as Küng and Schillebeeckx who, in "the spirit of the Council", tended to strip the priesthood of its true nature. Such thinking ignited the crisis which culminated in defections from the ministry and the drying up of vocations. Not since the Lutheran revolt of the 16th century has such a serious problem arisen in the Church.

The author offers a three-fold framework for dealing with the problem: theological, spiritual and pastoral.

Theologically, the priest must be identified totally with the salvific mission of Christ, the One High Priest, and daily dedication to the Mass helps him achieve this.

Spiritually, he must see Christ as the sole master, and this will be accomplished by the practice of the virtues such as humility, poverty and compassion.

Pastorally, the effective living out of Church teaching by word and example, and solid apologetics, will lead first to the holiness of the priest himself and then to that of his flock."

This book, along with relevant Church documents, would seem a much more appropriate foundation for real reflection on the identity of the priest than the strange ideas of various dissenters promoted by Bishop Coffey. Or worse, the proposals of the Journeying Together team to redefine the priesthood to suit their own needs.

"Priestly Identity" sounds like the perfect Christmas gift for your parish priest, parish group, or parish library.

The book is available from The Mustard Seed Bookshop (of the Catholic Adult Education Centre, Sydney) for \$50. Phone 02 9643 3670 or visit www.caec.com.au.

How Thoughtful!

It has come to our attention that it was suggested at a Diocese of Sale Council of Priests meeting early this year, that anyone who is "attacked" in *Into the Deep* receive a letter of support from the diocese!

Speaking on Priestly Celibacy

Fr George Rutler, well-known preacher and author and EWTN presenter, reviews the book, *Priestly Identity*:

Fr Rutler notes that priestly celibacy "reflects who – and whose – we are."

He writes, "A priest was recently asked about priestly celibacy on a network television program. Sad to say, he responded by nonchalantly stating that the celibacy requirement for priests was only instituted about 800 years ago - "to keep property out of the hands of family heirs." If that were true, celibacy would be worse than wrong. Why a cleric with virtually no critical competence should have been called on as a "spokesman" for the Church can only be explained by the network. The man himself made things worse by his off-handedness.

The history of celibacy, as it has been subject to intense scholarly review in recent years, does not deserve glib treatment. Rather, it deserves the kind of thoughtful reflection it receives in *Priestly Identity: A Study in the Theology of Priesthood* by Opus Dei Father Thomas McGovern.

A close reading of the new work will do much to enlighten the faithful on the true nature of priestly identity - an understanding of which is essential for any who would speak out on priestly celibacy. [...]

Recent crises in the Catholic priesthood have provoked hostile demands for restructuring. Many of these calls are notable only for their lack of understanding about what a priest is and why Christ instituted the priesthood the way he did. Father McGovern explains the big picture in clear language, paying close attention to detail. [...]

Soul-numbing mistakes have been made in the liturgy and seminary formation. Even earnest churchmen invested so much of themselves in those miscalculations that, in their sunset years, they cannot admit the essential defects in their dated enthusiasms."

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Family at the Centre of Battle

"The family is at the centre of the decisive battle for humanity [...], at the centre of the great battle between good and evil, between life and death, and to the family is entrusted the task to fight first of all to liberate the forces of good, whose source is found in Christ, redeemer of man."

*Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo,
President of the Pontifical Council for the Family*

Let the Angels Guide You

At the general audience on the feast of the Archangels, Pope John Paul II recommended to believers that they allow their lives to be guided by angels.

The feast of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, which the Church celebrates on 29 September, and that of the Guardian Angels, on October 2, are opportunities to “think of the diligence with which God is concerned with each human person,” the Holy Father said.

“Experience the presence of the angels next to you and allow yourselves to be guided by them,” he recommended.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the existence of angels is a “truth of faith”, based on Scripture and the Tradition of the Church.

“The angels are servants and messengers of God, because they ‘always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven’ (Mt 18:10), ‘they are the mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word’ (Ps 103:20),” adds this explanation of the creed of the Church (no. 329).

“Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life,” the Catechism states, quoting St Basil.

www.zenit.org

Strange Kind of Absolution

Ego te absolvo...

I willingly forgive Jeremias Wijeyeratne for his letter in the November issue of *Into the Deep*. Even though I consider his action to be low class, devoid of etiquette, uncouth and unchristian, I forgive him for publishing selective excerpts from a private letter without permission and for a base purpose.

I forgive him for making the false accusation that I have said “missing Sunday Mass deliberately is not necessarily a sin, and contraception is not an important issue.”

I forgive him for idiotically accepting as true a description of a meeting from a hostile witness who did not even attend that meeting.

I forgive him for accusing me of encouraging “dissent in the diocese” by a foolish comment he imagines I made and published in our Morwell Catholic Parish bulletin.

I forgive him for his rejection of elementary facts and declaring that the Morwell Parish Advisory Council is an elected body.

I forgive him for accusing Bishop Coffey and his advisors and myself of “duplicity”.

I forgive him his interference, his unhelpfulness, his wrong choices and his implying that I have implied that the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome is corrupt.

Some types of people are easier than others to forgive.

Fr Tom Cleary, Morwell

[ITD has received numerous reports from a variety of people verifying the issues raised by Jeremias, as well as Fr Cleary’s own writing. The only error was that the “foolish comment” referred to above was made verbally and not published in the bulletin. Ed.]

Prayer to St Augustine

When receiving the relics of St. Augustine recently, John Paul II prayed:

“Great Augustine, our father and teacher, knowledgeable in the luminous ways of God and also in the tortuous paths of men; we admire the wonders that divine grace wrought in you, making you a passionate witness of truth and goodness, at the service of brothers. ...

May the profound doctrine, that with loving and patient study you drew from the ever living sources of Scripture, enlighten all those tempted today by alienating illusions.

Give them the courage to undertake the path toward that ‘interior man’ where the One awaits who alone can give peace to our restless hearts.

Many of our contemporaries seem to have lost the hope of being able to reach - amid the numerous opposing ideologies - the truth, of which their innermost being still keeps a burning nostalgia.

Teach them to never cease in their search, in the certainty that, in the end, their effort will be rewarded by the satisfying encounter with the supreme Truth who is source of all created truth.

Finally, St. Augustine, transmit to us also a spark of that ardent love for the Church, the Catholic Mother of the Saints, which sustained and animated the toils of your long ministry.

Have us, walking together under the guidance of legitimate Pastors, reach the glory of the heavenly Homeland, where, with all the Saints, we will be able to join the new canticle of the everlasting alleluia.

Amen.”

Fraction Before Consecration

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

Q: The pastor of my parish breaks the bread into two pieces prior to consecrating the bread into the precious Body of Christ. ... I always understood that the bread is not to be broken till after the Lamb of God is announced. This is a source of concern and very disturbing to some of the members of our parish.

E.F., Arizona

A: This theme is succinctly addressed in the instruction "Redemptionis Sacramentum," No. 55:

"In some places there has existed an abuse by which the Priest breaks the host at the time of the consecration in the Holy Mass. This abuse is contrary to the tradition of the Church. It is reprobated and is to be corrected with haste."

It is hard to be much clearer than that.

This abuse seems to have arisen from a literal and somewhat dramatic interpretation of the words of the institution narrative of the consecration "He took the bread, broke it ..."

This might be a symptom related to our televised society where the visual image predominates over the deeper meaning. And so, some priests, often in good faith, have been led to adopt in a more dramatic or even theatrical mode while celebrating the Mass.

Thus, some see themselves almost as acting out the role of Christ by imitating his words and gestures.

This phenomenon, however, may also be indicative of a lack of formation and of a defective understanding of the priest's ministerial role as acting "in persona Christi" and the theological content of the words of consecration as form of the sacrament.

Of course, if one were to be totally consistent with this view, then Communion would logically have to be distributed immediately after pronouncing the words "gave it to his disciples," etc.

... unless the Eucharistic Prayer is complete, the full meaning of the gesture involved in breaking and giving is truncated and not fully grasped.

The gesture is not the breaking and giving of a piece of bread but of the Lord's Body sacrificed yet risen and ascended into glory.

It is not partaking of a simple meal, but of Christ's eternal sacrifice from which springs our salvation.

www.zenit.org

"Dialogue presupposes partners who have their own identity."

Cardinal Walter Kasper

Defending the Faith

June 1985

At the Consistory in Rome in May 1985, Archbishop Gagnon was made a Cardinal by Pope John Paul II.

As an Archbishop, he showed consistent fidelity to the Pope and is known for his forthright utterances. He made this statement back in 1983.

"Even in Rome itself things are often not done as the Holy Father would like and, whenever the bishops come to Rome, he tells them what he wants on morality and catechetics and so on. But he doesn't have prisons to put them in, so many go back and don't obey.

Oftentimes, I think some would like to obey except they are surrounded by people who implement things contrary to the will of the Church, and perhaps such bishops are afraid to discipline or make the necessary changes."

In answer to a question as to whether it was within the laity's competence to insist that bishops obey the Pope, Archbishop Gagnon said:

"Oh yes. And they have the means of doing that too. At one time a great number of bishops fell into Arianism and it was the lay people who brought them back, and through the centuries it has been like that ... local fights have mainly to be fought at the local level, and I encourage associations of parents and other groups to fight and be ready to work at the parish and diocesan level."

He went on to say that if, for example, a new document on sex education was promulgated by Rome: "...whatever is in the document will not be implemented unless the Catholic community demands it. They can say we are not going to give one more cent to the parish or to the Church unless you obey.

And then they give their money to other places that are genuinely Catholic, genuinely obedient to the teachings of the Holy See."

(Original source unknown)

Incomparable Treasure

"The Holy Father prays that this Year of the Eucharist will be for everyone a precious occasion for a renewed awareness of the incomparable treasure that Christ has entrusted to His Church. ...

The Holy Father does not ask for anything extraordinary, but rather that all initiatives be marked by great spiritual intensity.

Priority must be given to Sunday Masses and to Eucharistic adoration outside of Mass."

Cardinal Francis Arinze

Parents' Suffering is Real

From Eamonn Keane's talk on Catholic Education, Morwell 02-10-2004

"The deepest longing in the heart of parents for their child, is that they truly have a Catholic heart, that their children would embrace the fullness of the faith and try to live it out and to find their whole meaning for life in that faith, and that they will die in that faith.

It is a source of great suffering, interior suffering, to parents when they see their children begin to break away from that faith, to put aside that faith, when they begin to live in situations that are not compatible with the Church's moral teaching etc – that is a source of great suffering.

That suffering can be offered to God.

And it gives you a little glimpse into the suffering that goes on in the heart of Christ. 'My soul is troubled to death.'

It gives you a little window into what Our Lady experienced, not only at the sight of her Son being crucified so brutally on the cross – *that* pierced her heart, but *every* wound to the Body of her Son, the Body of Christ, was a stab in the heart of Our Lady.

And all her children who turn away from Christ and fall into sin, all that too brings pain to the heart of Our Lady, because she is the Mother of all.

That pain, that agonising, that interior suffering parents can experience to see their children going away from the faith, falling into a way of life that is contrary to the moral law, that is sinful – that suffering can be handed over to God.

And He will bring good out of that awful suffering."

Year of Eucharist Launched

Sale launched the Year of the Eucharist in Orbost on Sunday 17 October.

Bishop Coffey's noon Mass at St Colman's Church was the only Mass in the area. Many arrived well before Mass started, while 4 regulars who tried to pray the rosary (as is our custom on Sundays) were drowned out by the many conversations going on in the church.

The Bishop arrived in his open-necked shirt and nodded his head towards the Tabernacle as he entered the sacristy. There were hymns and liturgical dances centred on the theme of water, which was then brought in bottles from various communities, poured together, blessed and sprinkled on us. Some reference was made to Baptism.

The Bishop had previously requested that people write what 'Eucharist' meant to them. A selection of these were read out by their authors after the Bishop told his own story. Like the Bishop's, they were largely pleasant memories of people's First Holy Communion.

'We come to share our story' was sung. I was reminded of Thomas Groome, the dissident ex-priest whose heretical methodology of shared Christian praxis is currently being welcomed into many of our schools and churches. Many years ago Catholics were taught that God is Truth, and that His truth of creation, redemption and sanctification is the greatest Story ever told!

Sadly nothing was said about Christ's sacrifice of love to give us Himself; nothing was said about His Real Presence in the Tabernacle and the crying need to respect Him, love Him and adore Him.

Richard Earle, Orbost

On Faith

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2087 Our moral life has its source in faith in God who reveals his love to us. St. Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith" as our first obligation. He shows that "ignorance of God" is the principle and explanation of all moral deviations. Our duty toward God is to believe in him and to bear witness to him.

2088 The first commandment requires us to nourish and protect our faith with prudence and vigilance, and to reject everything that is opposed to it. There are various ways of sinning against faith:

Voluntary doubt about the faith disregards or refuses to hold as true what God has revealed and the Church proposes for belief. *Involuntary doubt* refers to hesitation in believing, difficulty in overcoming objections connected with the faith, or also anxiety aroused by its obscurity. If deliberately cultivated doubt can lead to spiritual blindness.

2089 *Incredulity* is the neglect of revealed truth or the willful refusal to assent to it. "*Heresy* is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same; *apostasy* is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; *schism* is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him."

Priestly Celibacy

In the last copy of *Into the Deep* there was an inaccurate article and to priests an insulting article entitled "Priests against Celibacy".

It stated that some survey indicated that "the majority of priests in Australia have a negative view of obligatory priestly celibacy." *Into the Deep* states "this means that the vast majority of our priests do not understand the meaning and essence of the ordained priesthood."

Celibacy is obligatory for the priesthood in the Latin Rite or Western Catholic Church. It took some centuries before this was made law in the Western Church and many more centuries before it was enforced.

It is Church law, not a law from God. The Church can change this law, but also the Church can and does dispense from it, e.g. former Anglican clergymen. It is not a law for priests in parishes in the Eastern Orthodox Churches or in the Catholic Eastern of Uniat Churches, like Ukrainian, Coptic and Maronite. Do all these priests, who belong to the Catholic Church or whose priesthood we recognise as valid, not understand the meaning and essence of the ordained priesthood? Are they a lower form of priest? Are they ignorant of their vocation?

Because some survey indicates that there are priests in Australia who may question whether celibacy should be obligatory for diocesan priests, this does not mean that they do not value or respect the vow of celibacy.

Celibacy is an important gift, but obviously it is not essential to the sacrament of ordination. There are priests in the Catholic Church and many more in the Eastern Churches who have not taken a vow of celibacy and have received the Sacrament of Marriage.

Rev. Fr H. P. Hengel, Parish Priest, Warragul

As Fr Hengel notes, the survey was regarding Australian priests, not the Eastern Rite churches, and priestly celibacy here is indeed Church law and obligatory (notwithstanding the situations requiring dispensation).

ITD can't help concluding that objecting to obligatory celibacy, "voting" against it, seeing it as a hindrance to priests' vocations (as the survey noted), arguing for alternatives, all seem to play into the hands of the modernists who want to see the priesthood "evolve" to a more "natural", "inclusive" state of life that is open to marriage, women priests, homosexuality etc.

Absolve?

From the Latin

Loosen!

The Truth Must be Told

It is sad, unfair and uncharitable that Pat O'Brien, Pat Crozier and John Henderson of *Into the Deep* have been described by Rev. Fr H. Hengel in the November issue of ITD as "judges, juries and executors", with "absolute arrogance and self-righteousness and with no charity". Those people of ITD are sincere people and highly regarded by many in their parishes and the Sale diocese.

It was ITD that had the courage to publish the truth of the sad and divided state of the Sale diocese and the ineffective system of Catholic education. They also had the courage to challenge the Bishop and the Catholic Education Office (CEO) regarding their unjust removal of Fr Speakman from his parish and authority of his parish schools.

The people of ITD were found right all along by the Congregation for the Clergy. The Congregation's Decree notes, for example, that "In fact, any confusion or disturbance at Morwell which the Bishop has ascertained might well be attributed more to the actions of the Bishop than to those of Father Speakman."

Is there not one priest in the Sale diocese who has the courage to publicly support his brother priest who has done no wrong, who has been violated and denied justice, and whose reputation has been harmed? Is it not the Bishop's and priests' privilege and duty to act justly, proclaim the whole truth, and to give some credit and support to lay people who proclaim the truth and act justly? The people of ITD deserve some credit for their perseverance in their work and prayers.

"Blessed are you when people insult and persecute you and speak all kind of evil against you because you are my followers, be happy and glad for a great reward is kept for you in heaven." (Mt5:11)

Name and address supplied

"Numbers, or lack of numbers in **VOCATIONS**, point only to a vibrant **faith** or lack of it."

Bishop Luc Matthys

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.

Project for Year of Eucharist

“The Eucharist is a great mystery! And it is one which above all must be well celebrated.

Holy Mass needs to be set at the centre of the Christian life and celebrated in a dignified manner by every community, in accordance with established norms, with the participation of the assembly, with the presence of ministers who carry out their assigned tasks, and with a serious concern that singing and liturgical music be suitably “sacred”.

One specific project of this *Year of the Eucharist* might be for each parish community to **study the General Instruction of the Roman Missal**.

The best way to enter into the mystery of salvation made present in the sacred “signs” remains that of following faithfully the unfolding of the liturgical year.

Pastors should be committed to that “mystagogical” catechesis so dear to the Fathers of the Church, by which the faithful are helped to understand the meaning of the liturgy’s words and actions, to pass from its signs to the mystery which they contain, and to enter into that mystery in every aspect of their lives.”

Mane Nobiscum Domine (n.17)

Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Letter for the Year of the Eucharist

Mary, our mother

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

Pope John Paul II

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

Editorial Committee:

Pat O’Brien, Sale
John Henderson, Morwell
Mary Tudor, Moe
Janet Kingman, Internet

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.

“To find the Cross is to find Christ.”

St Josemaria Escriva