

Into the Deep

Issue 29

Newsletter of the Confraternity of St Michael, Gippsland

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Catechesis on Baptism

The following is an address John Paul II gave on 9 January 2005 when praying the Angelus with those gathered in St. Peter's Square. [Translation by Zenit]

"We celebrate today the feast of the Baptism of Jesus, an event that the Evangelists consider the beginning of his messianic ministry. Christ's mission, thus inaugurated, will be fulfilled in the paschal mystery in which, with his death and resurrection, he will take away the sin of the world (see John 1:29).

The mission of the Christian also begins with baptism. The rediscovery of baptism, through opportune courses of catechesis in adulthood, is therefore a relevant aspect of the new evangelization. To renew in a more mature manner one's own adherence to the faith is the condition for true and full participation in the Eucharistic celebration, which constitutes the culmination of ecclesial life.

May Mary Most Holy help those who are reborn "of water and the Spirit" with baptism to make their own life a constant oblation to God in the daily exercise of the commandment of love, thus exercising the common priesthood that is proper to every baptised person."

[After praying the Angelus, the Holy Father pronounced the following greeting:]

"In this Sunday of the Lord's baptism, my thoughts go to the children who were baptised in the course of this year. I embrace and bless them. I also bless the godfathers and godmothers and, in particular, the parents of the newly baptised, exhorting all to cultivate in them, by word and example, the seed of divine life arising from the sacrament of baptism."

Cardinals as Great as Pope

After interviewing 111 of the cardinals who could vote for a new pope in a conclave, the Vatican correspondent for Italian Radio and Television had words of praise.

"The cardinals are a monument to John Paul II's greatness," said RAI journalist Giuseppe De Carli.

"Country by country, continent by continent, we have realised that the cardinals are as great as the Pope," he said. "This is the amazing discovery we have made."

Zenit News www.zenit.org

The Gospel of Nice

Too often, both clergy and laypeople have reduced the Christian faith to a smattering of happy-face platitudes - the tepid exhortation, in one form or another, to "be nice." For these people, the essence of the gospel seems to be that we should go along to get along, live and let live, never offend anyone, and show "tolerance" to the point of avoiding moral evaluations of any kind. References to heresy, sin, and especially hell are taboo.

Behind this parody of the Christian message - a caricature of the gospel that is inevitably fatal to authentic Catholic faith and practice - lies the assumption that all religions are basically alike, and of equal worth. One belief is as "true" as another, one moral standard as "right" as another. If truth and righteousness are relative categories - mere private opinions, subjective human creations rather than objective, universal realities - then who are we to make demands of anyone's intellect or will? A pragmatic "niceness" is all we have left if we want to keep the peace.

Venerable Cardinal John Newman once wisely observed: "No one is a martyr for an opinion; it is faith that makes martyrs."

Not surprisingly, then, whenever indulgent pseudo-Christianity replaces faith as the faulty foundation of thinking, preaching, and writing, compromise replaces martyrdom, and genuine martyrs receive scant attention.

The martyrs simply don't fit into the "nice" box. They bleed all over it. People with their eyes gouged out and their fingernails torn off aren't "nice". In fact, their heroic sufferings and witness rip the mask of pretense right off the Gospel of Nice.

From 'Blood of the Martyrs, Seed of the Church' by Paul Thigpen

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

Perseverance and Courage!

I am a faithful wife, mother of three young children (with the hope of more!) and orthodox Catholic. Unfortunately these descriptions of myself and our families are synonymous with descriptions like “uneducated”, “minority”, “left-wing”, “out of date”, “trouble maker”, and “the freak”. They are the names that I have been witness to! And unfortunately spoken from the mouths of other Catholics.

At the moment we have one girl at primary school, one at kindy, our youngest is at home. I have stopped my daughter from going to church with her class or school. She also does not attend the “Family life Education” class at school. It feels like I am frequently having talks with the teacher and principal. That’s just the school scene. I know I will be doing this for our other children as well (if we are still there). We do what we can at home e.g. preparation for the sacraments and much more.

This sounds like a challenging, exhausting and daunting way of life and we know we are not alone, BUT, amidst all of this is a lot of satisfaction, peace, joy and absolute wonder at the omnipotence of God’s gift - our faith. God always strengthens and revives those who ask for the blessings and virtues needed in EVERY aspect of our lives.

As a once wayward Catholic myself, I have a lot to be thankful for. My thanks to God is shown in my vocation, as a wife to my husband, a mother to our children and a voice to those God puts in my life. If I fall, I know He is there encouraging me to get up, pick up my cross (no matter how small) and get on with it.

All of you are in our prayers, I have learnt much from your website, thank you. So let’s keep getting up, embrace our crosses, don’t forget to put a smile on your face and get on with it! Believe me people always wonder what you have to smile about!

Jenny Kayal, Adelaide

Vocations on the Increase

Corpus Christi seminary in Melbourne has announced that it has 10 new seminarians for 2005. Although the Arch/dioceses attached to Corpus Christi include Melbourne, Hobart, Sale, Sandhurst and Ballarat, all the new seminarians this year are for Melbourne.

The Sydney seminary has enrolled 14 new seminarians for 2005.

Let us continue to pray for vocations, for seminarians new and old, and for any priests in vocational crisis, that they may all learn to fall deeply and forever in love with their beautiful and spotless Bride the Church.

Called to Put Out into the Deep

In his message for the next World Day of Prayer for Vocations, John Paul II encourages young people to respond to Christ’s call to follow him without hesitation.

The Pope in his message reminds youth that the world today needs “holy priests” and “persons wholly consecrated to the service of God.”

“Dear adolescents and young people, it is to you in a particular way that I renew the invitation of Christ to ‘put out into the deep,’” the Holy Father says in the message, published by the Vatican press office. The Day of Prayer takes place April 17.

“You find yourselves having to make important decisions for your future,” he writes. “I still hold in my heart the memory of the many opportunities I have had over the years to meet with young people, who have now become adults, some of them your own parents, perhaps, or priests or religious, your teachers in the faith.”

“I saw them, happy as young people should be, but also thoughtful, because they were conscious of a desire to give full ‘meaning’ to their lives,” the Pope states in the message entitled “Called to Put Out into the Deep.”

“I came to recognise more and more how strong is the attraction in young people to the values of the spirit, and how sincere is their desire for holiness. Young people need Christ, but they also know that Christ chose to be in need of them,” John Paul II continues.

“Dear young men and women! Trust Christ; listen attentively to his teachings, fix your eyes on his face, persevere in listening to his Word. Allow Him to focus your search and your aspirations, all your ideals and the desires of your heart,” the Pope writes.

The papal message then addresses parents and Christian educators, priests, consecrated persons and catechists to remind them of their “peculiar task of guiding young people on the path to holiness.”

“Be an example to them of generous fidelity to Christ. Encourage them to ‘put out into the deep’ without hesitation, responding eagerly to the invitation of the Lord. Some he calls to family life, others to consecrated life or to the ministerial priesthood,” the Holy Father states.

“When adult Christians show themselves capable of revealing the face of Christ through their own words and example, young people are more ready to welcome His demanding message, stamped as it is with the mystery of the Cross,” he adds.

Pope Paul VI instituted the World Day of Prayer for Vocations in 1964.

www.zenit.org

Who is Accountable for the State of Catholic Education?

From Br Marcellin Flynn's book in 1979, *Catholic Education and the Communication of Faith*, to Eamonn Keane's *Crisis in Religious Education* in 2003, it has been clearly documented that Catholic Education has not only failed in carrying out the mission of the Church, but it has harmed and led astray generations of souls.

That there are so many Bishops who are able to disregard the evidence of destruction and decay and still use the term 'Catholic Education,' is dismaying to say the least. The evidence is irrefutable and Bishops and Directors of Catholic Education are in a chronic state of denial. They should be held accountable.

How is it that a bureaucratic organisation such as a Catholic Education Office (CEO), employed by the Church to carry out the mission of the Church, is now in such a powerful position as to lay down the terms and conditions upon which the Church will be accepted in the faith education of young people and their teachers?

These CEOs have an agenda that fundamentally diverges from the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church. Their ideologies destroy the hearts and souls of our young people and drive them off to assorted gurus, fortune-tellers and sects to satisfy the hunger that Catholic schools were founded to fill. It is a scandal that CEOs - with no teaching authority whatsoever - can prescribe and implement a religious education curriculum that leads young people out of the Catholic Church. It is an even greater scandal that such a curriculum can be endorsed by Bishops.

How is it that lay organisations such as CEOs and teachers' unions can not only hand down roles for parish priests, but can determine the effectiveness of their ministry in schools and parishes? It may sound far-fetched and absurd. But this madness is being played out in the local parish and its schools. Morwell parish in our diocese of Sale is a tragic example. Fr John Speekman had the two Catholic primary schools removed from his authority and eventually he himself was removed from his parish. The CEO knew that they had no authority over a parish priest who did not comply with their liberal agenda or the role they prescribed for priests. They employed the muscle of the union and stampeded the Bishop into a decision to have Fr Speekman removed.

There are plans afoot by Bishops and CEOs to remove the schools completely from the authority of parish priests and place them under the management and direction of CEOs in various dioceses in Australia.

Thomas Groome's 'Shared Christian Praxis' which forms the basis of the new RE curriculum is a direct spiritual assault on the souls of Catholic children. With the Bishops' approval it is being carried out

under the auspices of the Catholic Church.

Bishops are endangering the faith of the people entrusted to their care by allowing CEOs a free reign in experimenting with catechetical material that subverts and perverts the Catholic faith.

The power of CEOs must be curtailed. The buck stops with each Bishop, under whose authority the CEOs are supposed to function. However, we all play a role. Priests, teachers and parents who fail to object, challenge or protest against what is happening in Catholic schools have neglected their duty to safeguard the education of our Catholic children. With the new Thomas Groome curriculum entering our diocese this year, there is no time to waste. Act now. We have been silent too long.

Why No Action?

Because ITD is sent interstate and is on the internet, the state of affairs in the diocese of Sale – that the local bishop simply refuses to acknowledge higher authority (the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome) – must now be very well known. Why then, we ask, is there no further action? Where are the rest of the Australian bishops, who might be expected to have some influence for good?

Well, most people realise, especially people in authority, that when the unpleasant truth has to be laid out in the open, personal closeness can be a problem. It takes courage to face the truth, but being too close to a situation or person makes it that much harder. When all are members of 'The Club', it is not too hard to see why there is a stunning silence.

The local clergy too have shown that they have a distorted notion of loyalty. In his play 'A Man for All Seasons', Robert Bolt has a member of St Thomas More's family often asking him why he won't sign the Act approving Henry VIII's actions in regard to his marriage and the Church. Thomas, well noted for his silence on the topic, replies: "And if I tell you, will you keep it secret?" "Yes," he says. "What then," says Thomas, "has become of your oath of loyalty to the King?"

This illustrates well how easily we can be sucked into foolish situations which compromise us in our higher duties. All political scandals reveal such stupidities. When disgrace is finally revealed people naturally ask: but how could they have been so silly, or so weak, or so blind?

Ultimately such things are judged according to the basics: what SHOULD we have done? Why did we NOT?

S.C., Melbourne

What Has Happened to Prayer and Respect?

In my travelling through Gippsland, Canberra and Queensland attending Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament where it is held (rarely), I never ever see the Parish Priests or Associates joining in with the faithful few parishioners who join ranks to pray to Our Blessed Lady and to God through Our Lord Jesus Christ. It seems that the Holy Rosary and Prayers have been left well behind by the liberalists and reformists in our Parishes. Even the Holy Father's plea to have 2003/2004 the year of the Holy Rosary fell on deaf ears like the corn that was planted on stony ground.

I travelled to St Coleman's parish in Orbost recently and a few parishioners (approx 4 in total) say the Rosary before each Mass, and after Mass on the Friday the same few remain for a one hour of Adoration. It was interesting to see (and the same happens in other Parishes here and in Canberra and Queensland) that the other parishioners arrive nearly to the second once the Rosary is finished, or bolt once Adoration starts.

On the Friday I asked the four parishioners could I lead saying the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, a lovely prayer initiated by St Faustina, and they were that grateful. I wonder how many parishioners have said or know the Chaplet. It is not promoted by Bishop Coffey or the Parish Priests except Fr John Speekman and maybe one or two others. With the world in so much turmoil we need prayer today as never before. Let alone our faith is under challenge and destruction, but the world teeters on a knife's edge. Read the warnings in the Bible, they are there for all to read. Don't say you were not warned as Our Lady at

Fatima and other places has stressed the need for prayer and our salvation.

On the issue of respect, and this relates to the activities in our Churches, the house of God. What has happened to the teaching of our children by their parents from an early age to genuflect when crossing in front of the Tabernacle as a sign of true respect. Most laity (readers & Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion) including altar servers (boys & girls) just bend from the waist down and then it seems in some cases with an effort. Don't blame the teachers as this should start with the parents in the home but the majority of those would not know anyway. Priests, with the exception of those who are aged, should set the example for all to follow.

Another issue that disgusts me is that before, during and after Mass, large numbers stand around talking in the Church as if it were a meeting hall, with many laughing aloud and carrying on. It was no wonder Our Lord scattered the Jews in the Temple when he saw them treating God's house with total disrespect. These same people will talk while the Rosary is being said and in churches in our diocese the musicians totally ignore the recitation of the Rosary.

If Bishop Coffey wants to share the Faith and build it up he should immediately announce his support and direction for respect of God's House and encourage meaningful prayers to be said, with the Rosary and Chaplet of the Divine Mercy to start with.

Editor or someone, please tell me am I expecting too much or am I out of touch with the Pope's teachings and directions?

Mal Bugg, Morwell

Church's Position is Clear

"The Church is called to proclaim 'the Gospel of Life'. And the State has as its primary task precisely the safeguarding and promotion of human life. [...] Conflicting views have been put forward regarding abortion, assisted procreation, the use of human embryonic stem cells for scientific research, and cloning.

The Church's position, supported by reason and science, is clear: the human embryo is a subject identical to the human being which will be born at the term of its development. Consequently whatever violates the integrity and the dignity of the embryo is ethically inadmissible. Similarly, any form of scientific research which treats the embryo merely as a laboratory specimen is unworthy of man."

Pope John Paul II addressing diplomats to the Holy See

Give Your Time

"The only thing that the Holy Spirit asks of us is that we give him our time, even if at the beginning it might seem like lost time.

I will never forget the lesson that was given to me one day in this regard. I said to God: "Lord, give me fervour and I will give you all the time you desire in prayer."

I found the answer in my heart: "Raniero, give me your time and I will give you all the fervour you want in prayer." I mention it, in case it might help someone else, besides me."

Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Pontifical Household preacher

Quiz Question

What are the 7 Deadly Sins? See p.8 for the answer.

Novo Millennio a Smokescreen for Journeying Together

Bishop Coffey, Liz Hanney, and Jim D’Orsa led us to believe that the diocesan pastoral plan, Journeying Together (JT), was based on the Holy Father’s Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (NMI).

In the JT document (p.2) Bishop Coffey claims, “...Our Holy Father published an apostolic letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (At the Beginning of the New Millennium) advocating all local Churches (Dioceses) draw up an itinerary, which seemed to have all the characteristics of a profound change. It was a programmatic letter with detail on how renewal could be achieved. Subsequently, Our Holy Father gathered and reflected on the Synod material and highlighted various areas in which the Church of Oceania listening to the Holy Spirit could be revitalised. This has been the source of Journeying Together – towards a Pastoral Plan”.

NMI is indeed a programmatic pastoral letter with specific detail on how renewal can be achieved. It begins by exhorting us to first contemplate the face of Christ, because “our witness...would be hopelessly inadequate if we ourselves had not first *contemplated his face*.” (NMI para 16).

Then, under the heading *Starting afresh from Christ*, the Holy Father puts forward certain pastoral priorities: holiness, prayer, the Sunday celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Penance, the primacy of grace, and listening to and proclaiming the Word.

Contrast this with **JT** - “A People Process” (JT p.4) - “grounded in local consultation and shared wisdom from across the diocese – combining views of young and old, clergy and laity, diocesan personnel etc. It seems more appropriate to continue in this vein rather than with a model which could be perceived as being hierarchical.” (Letter by L. Hanney, 2002). Bishop Coffey says (JT p.2), “The material gathered has been overwhelming. Seven thousand people expressed their hopes and dreams.” He notes that the JT team then “laid out the priorities in which the Diocese of Sale should move”, which has become “a compass for the future way of the Church.”

The JT priorities for the diocese are: Parish Renewal - building welcoming and inclusive faith communities. Young People - connecting and reconnecting with youth and young families. Spirituality - enriching prayer, liturgy and life. Formation - nurturing the life and leadership of faith communities. Diocesan Renewal - shaping the Church of the future.

In deciding to set the pastoral priorities in relation to the hopes and dreams of the people rather than in relation to holiness, it appears that the Bishop and his JT consultants have based the pastoral plan on one of

the chief principles of modernism. It is called ‘vital immanence’ – the collective feelings, hopes, dreams and wisdom of the people.

In modernist thought, the Church originated not as a visible hierarchical society founded by Christ, but simply as a product of the collective conscience of His followers. All doctrines of faith and morality are a product of the collective conscience of the faithful. According to the modernists, the Church can change from a hierarchy to a democracy, to whatever the collective hopes and dreams want it to be - a church where we can celebrate ourselves, our gifts and our talents.

Subsequently, we have a plan which has abandoned the “universal call to holiness”, and is riddled with doctrinal errors and modernist philosophies, considering the hierarchy a structure we could do without, and promoting lay leadership in anticipation of so-called priestless parishes. No wonder JT has been an abject failure, and it seems the only priests and people still promoting it are those who were responsible for its planning.

The Pope strongly encouraged local churches to contemplate the face of Christ before embarking on any pastoral planning. Instead, we contemplated ourselves, and we have a pastoral plan that proves it.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Pastoral Promotion of Holiness

“A truly pastoral promotion of the holiness of our parish communities implies an authentic pedagogy [schooling] on prayer, a renewed, persuasive and effective catechesis on the importance of the Sunday and daily celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist, on community and personal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, on the frequent and individual practice of the Sacrament of Penance, on spiritual direction, on Marian devotion, on the imitation of the Saints, as well as on a renewed apostolic commitment to live the daily duties of the community and of individuals, proper pastoral care of the family, and on a consistent political and social engagement.

The Priest, Pastor and Leader of the Parish Community (para 27)

Fall in Love

“Yes, dear brothers and sisters, our Christian communities must become *genuine "schools" of prayer*, where the meeting with Christ is expressed not just in imploring help but also in thanksgiving, praise, adoration, contemplation, listening and ardent devotion, until the heart truly “falls in love”.”

Novo Millennio Ineunte, n.33

Miracle of the Eucharist Explained to Children

Antonia Salzano, creator and promoter of the “Small Eucharistic Catechism”, a publication written for children about the Eucharist, talks with Zenit News Agency:

Q: What was your specific concern about the perception of the Eucharist?

Salzano: Many controversial points. For example, in some theological faculties, I have heard it said that the Eucharist is a subjective event: if you believe Jesus is present, he is, and if you don't believe he is, he is not.

I have also heard it said that transubstantiation is an erroneous word because what matters is the assembly. In this connection, one could not speak of real presence because what is important is that the assembly be gathered, so that Eucharistic adoration, outside of the assembly, is meaningless.

Moreover, there are many who hold that Jesus is present in Sacred Scripture in the same way as he is in the Eucharist. In many cases, for example, the Eucharist is presented to children as a supper, in which the sacrificial aspect and real presence of Christ is denied, so that communion becomes an event of the assembled community. In a word, a series of confused ideas carried to the extreme.

Because of this, the idea arose to clarify matters, insisting on the fundamental truths in regard to God and Jesus' divinity, emphasising the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

Q: Essentially, it is a book written especially to educate children.

Salzano: The objective was to produce an easy book for adults and children. Children are far sharper than we think. All ask why the piece of bread becomes the Body of Christ and this small book, with many pictures, makes it easier for them and helps them.

For adults it is important to know how it is possible to explain the mystery of the Eucharist to children.

Q: The principal Eucharistic miracles have been included in an appendix of the volume. Why?

Salzano: We have published those which have been recognised by the Church. The reason is simple. Many do not know what a Eucharistic miracle means, they can't even imagine it. Just the fact of knowing about these miracles obliges them to think seriously about the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Many people are fascinated by real or alleged apparitions, but the Eucharist is God who is present among us every day; therefore, it is more important than other apparitions. Sadly, many people don't know this, because if they knew it they would queue to go into churches, the same as they queue to go to shrines.

Q: Which Eucharistic miracles would you point out as the most astonishing?

Salzano: The Eucharistic mystery of Lanciano, Italy, is awesome. It is the oldest, and dates back to the 8th century. The Sacred Species are seen to be transformed into flesh and blood. A miracle before which modern science has bowed. Analysis of the host transformed into flesh has demonstrated that it is tissue of the myocardium [heart muscle].

The miracle of Sienna is also awesome. The consecrated hosts of simple unleavened wheat flour, stolen and then found in August 1730, have not altered in time. Only the consecrated hosts have remained intact, while those that were not consecrated have deteriorated in time. Modern science has tried every possible means to explain the phenomenon, but has had to admit that it is a miracle. For us, believers, it is a real permanent presence, with forms that are conserved intact for 300 years.

Excerpts from the interview published at www.zenit.org

Sacred Order of the Church

Upon reading the January issue I had occasion to agree with the understanding of two of the contributors to ITD. One wrote, “From childhood we have had it impressed on us that the Catholic Church is hierarchical in nature...it must involve some kind of command structure, and an order of authority, without which there is chaos, or simply force” (farce?). The second obviously recognising this, on commenting on the Congregation for the Clergy, referred to it as “an august body of the Catholic Church”.

This is in stark contrast to your avid subscriber and contributor, Fr Tom Cleary! Fr Cleary either has forgotten, or chooses to ignore the hierarchy and order of authority of the Holy Catholic Church! He variously refers (disrespectfully and with obvious contempt) to the Congregation for the Clergy as, “small men making small decisions” (26/07/04), and as “that crowd” and “the original crowd” (29/08/04).

In this and so many other ways the Reverend Father has contributed greatly to the chaos and farce that exists in the parish that he administers. God help us.

Peter Kelly, Morwell

Indulgence for Year of Eucharist

John Paul II has approved a special plenary indulgence to mark the Year of the Eucharist.

According to a decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, during the Year of the Eucharist a plenary indulgence may be gained by participating in acts of worship and veneration of the Most Holy Sacrament, as well as by praying vespers and compline of the Divine Office before the tabernacle.

The objective of the papal disposition, the document indicates, is to "exhort the faithful in the course of this year, to a more profound knowledge and more intense love of the ineffable 'mystery of faith,' so that they will reap ever more abundant spiritual fruits."

The decree reminds the faithful that to obtain a plenary indulgence it is necessary to observe the "usual conditions": "sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion, and prayer in keeping with the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff, with the soul completely removed from attachment to any form of sin."

The plenary indulgence may be obtained in two ways.

In the first place, according to the decree, "each time the faithful participate attentively and piously in a sacred function or a devotional exercise undertaken in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, solemnly exposed or conserved in the tabernacle."

In the second place, it is granted "to the clergy, to members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, and to other faithful who are by law obliged to recite the Liturgy of the Hours, as well as to those who customarily recite the Divine Office out of pure devotion, each and every time they recite...vespers and night prayers before the Lord present in the tabernacle."

The decree also provides the granting of the plenary indulgence to those persons who, due to illness or other just cause, cannot participate in an act of worship of the sacrament of the Eucharist in a church or oratory. These persons will obtain the plenary indulgence "if they make the visit spiritually and with the heart's desire, with a spirit of faith in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar, and pray the Our Father and Creed, adding a pious invocation to Jesus in the Sacrament (for example, "May the Most Holy Sacrament be blessed and praised forever").

Obviously, in all cases, the conditions established to receive a plenary indulgence must be respected.

The decree calls on priests...to inform the faithful on these dispositions, to prepare "with generous and ready spirit" to hear confessions and...to lead them "in solemn public recitation of prayers to Jesus in the Sacrament."

Finally, the decree exhorts the faithful "to give open witness of faith and veneration for the Blessed Sacrament."

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About Indulgences

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

1471 The doctrine and practice of indulgences in the Church are closely linked to the effects of the sacrament of Penance.

What is an indulgence?

"An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints."

"An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin." The faithful can gain indulgences for themselves or apply them to the dead.

The punishments of sin

1472 To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a *double consequence*. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the "eternal punishment" of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory. This purification frees one from what is called the "temporal punishment" of sin. These two punishments must not be conceived of as a kind of vengeance inflicted by God from without, but as following from the very nature of sin. [...]

1473 The forgiveness of sin and restoration of communion with God entail the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, but temporal punishment of sin remains. While patiently bearing sufferings and trials of all kinds and, when the day comes, serenely facing death, the Christian must strive to accept this temporal punishment of sin as a grace. He should strive by works of mercy and charity, as well as by prayer and the various practices of penance, to put off completely the "old man" and to put on the "new man."

Sunday Catholics

"If we fail to attend Sunday Mass, we cannot call ourselves Catholics because, little by little we will be lacking Christ. We encounter Christ at Mass, living and present in the mystery of his body and blood, who offers himself for us."

Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re

Catholic Newspaper Fails

I was living in the Dallas diocese in Texas a few years ago. The diocese has an official newspaper for the Church and it has all kinds of liberal and heretical articles on a constant basis, most of these coming in the form of editorial columns from people that are so far removed from the Church it is frightening. Anyway, they encourage people to correspond with the paper via email, so I did. I voiced my concern and sited where their articles were outside Church teaching and heretical.

I received an email from the Senior Editor of the paper who told me how wrong I was about their articles, and then he launched into a diatribe on how the first apostles were not in fact priests etc. I emailed him back and told him that what he was reporting was wrong, and I sent a copy of the paper and our emails to the Bishop, the Apostolic Nuncio, and to Rome.

I did not hear anything for a week or so until I had to sign for a letter I received in the mail from the Senior Editor. He said that the paper was going to sue me for slander and that I had no right to make my complaints.

It never went anywhere. From a diocese that silences its orthodox priests regularly, I guess I was small potatoes. Interestingly though, the (then) Senior Editor (and the one who threatened me) has now achieved the title “official spokesperson for the Dallas diocese”. Funny, I always thought that was the job of the bishop. Anyway, this man has actually been ordained a deacon since then.

Right now I personally know of four priests who have been forced out of the priesthood or banished to small parishes in the middle of nowhere, or forcibly retired. The common denominator is that they are all good priests who are 1) Marian, and 2) Loyal to Rome.

People need to understand that we need to love, pray for, and be obedient to our bishops. But they also need to understand that there is a battle being waged, not just outside the Church, but within her walls as well. It is important to know what we are dealing with as Catholics today, so that we can truly walk in the light and not stumble around in the darkness.

May the Lord bless you in your good fight.

Name and Address supplied

Daily News from the Vatican

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Power and Limits of Authority

A friend of mine sometimes passes on to me a Catholic paper, *The Universe*, sent from overseas. It records that a priest wrongly accused on two counts was, after investigation, cleared of both charges. During all this he was ‘sidelined’ for 14 months, but once cleared the bishop announced that he was “very pleased that finally we have come to this stage and that he (the priest) can put this difficult time in his life behind him.”

In the same issue we are told that work practices must reflect Gospel values, for Catholic social teaching has much to say about the duties of employers, but the Church as an employer has not always set the best example.

Furthermore, it tells us that having power over another can do strange things to people and the temptation to abuse it can be strong. However, authority carries grave responsibilities, and a person who holds it has to be accountable for what is done ‘under his watch’; that is, God does not want the authority of domination, but of compassion. The Lord made it clear that he came to serve, not to be served, and so it should be with all who are in authority – especially in the Church, and not as in secular society.

These sentiments are familiar to all normal Christian people. Even non-Christian people have that sense of fair play which says, once exonerated, one should be restored to one’s former position.

Will the diocese of Sale match the practice of the Catholic and non-Catholic world in accepting the power – and limits – of authority by reinstating Fr Speakman, now that he has been cleared by a higher authority, or must the haemorrhaging continue?

S.C., Melbourne

Thought for the Month

Why do people who maintain that God doesn’t exist, blame Him for the awful things that happen in the world? How often do you hear, “How could Buddha let this happen?”

Quiz Answer

(First see page 4 for the Question!)

- Pride – the unrestrained appreciation of our own worth.
- Lust – the desire for impure pleasures.
- Gluttony – the unrestrained use of food or drink.
- Sloth – laziness in keeping the Faith and the practice of virtue when required.
- Greed (Covetousness) – to eagerly desire what belongs to another.
- Anger (Wrath) – unrestrained rage.
- Envy – sorrow over another’s good fortune.

Rhythm of the Readings

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

Q: How and by what process is the daily Scripture reading determined?
J.M., Texas

A: In the early Church the readings were usually organised on a simple basis of continuity; that is, they took off from where they had finished the previous Sunday. As the liturgical year developed, certain readings began to be reserved for certain feast days and seasons and so a thematic cycle developed. When the Second Vatican Council asked for the selection of readings used at Mass to be increased, the experts took inspiration from the two ancient methods of continuity and thematic readings.

For **SUNDAYS** they developed a three-year cycle, one for each synoptic Gospel: A for Matthew, B for Mark (with five readings from John Chapter 6, inserted after the 16th Sunday), and C for Luke. So during Ordinary time each Sunday Gospel continues on from the previous week.

The New Testament readings also follow this continual system, the Letters of St Paul and St James being read during Ordinary time because those of John and Peter are read during Christmas and Easter. This continuous system is why they do not always seem to fit in well with the Gospel.

The Old Testament reading (or the Acts of the Apostles during Eastertide) and the responsorial psalm are chosen so as to somehow relate to the Gospel text.

During Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter and on solemnities all three readings are chosen so as to highlight the particular spiritual message of the season.

With respect to the **DAILY READINGS**: during Ordinary time all four Gospels are read using a semi-continual system during the course of the year. John's Gospel, above all, during part of Lent and almost all of Eastertide on both Sundays and weekdays. Thus almost all of Mark 1-12 is read, then the texts of Matthew and Luke that are not found in Mark.

The first daily reading, taken from either Testament, also uses a semi-continuous system organised in a two-year cycle for odd and even numbered years. The New Testament readings offer the substance of almost all the letters whereas the Old Testament readings offer a selection of the most important elements of each book. Almost all of the books are represented.

Unlike the readings for ordinary time the daily readings of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter have been chosen to relate to each other and to reflect the liturgical season. A special characteristic of Eastertide is the reading from the Acts of the Apostles as first reading every day. They also repeat the same readings each year and are not divided into an even-odd cycle.

Funerals To Be More Liturgical

Looks like a great proposal coming from the National Liturgical Commission regarding Catholic funerals.

According to a Sydney Morning Herald report (19 January 2005, 'Church considers rites and wrongs of funerals', by Linda Morris), the Commission will be making a submission to the Bishops' Conference that Catholic funerals return to their proper form, away from the trend of personalising them.

Placing personal mementos on the coffin, playing pop music and giving long eulogies will be discouraged at funerals, with recommendations that these be kept for more appropriate times such as before the funeral, at the graveside, or at the wake.

Parish priests have apparently been complaining about the growing trend of inappropriate and irreverent behaviour at funerals.

We have seen it ourselves in our dioceses, especially as it is becoming more common that families of deceased Catholics are no longer practising Catholics, and have little understanding of the meaning of the Mass or the Catholic funeral.

The National Liturgical Commission's executive officer, Father Peter Williams, explained in the Herald: "The funeral liturgy of the Catholic Church is itself an act of worship, it is ostensibly a liturgy of praise and thanks for God ... it's about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in whom this person was incorporated through their baptism." He said that funerals that end up being a celebration of the person's life, sidelined this message.

Priests Need Not Apply

Recently Fr Cleary announced that two priests would be retiring mid-year. He went on to say that the Morwell Parish could be in the position of only having one weekend Mass. In saying that, has Fr Cleary begun the process of softening us up for the lay-led church as advocated in the diocesan pastoral plan?

We have the ludicrous position in the diocese where priests are retiring, ex-priests are employed, and an orthodox priest is in limbo waiting to be re-instated in the Morwell parish. The Congregation for the Clergy has upheld Fr Speekman's appeal against his removal yet the bishop fails to obey. His defiance of the decision of the Congregation beggars belief. Has he taken leave of his senses? Talk about Nero fiddling while Rome burns!

We have an ex-priest employed by the diocese whose function appears to be showing the laity in 'priest-less parishes' how to conduct Communion services instead of attending Mass at a nearby parish. We wait on further developments. When will the laity wake up to what is going on?

John Henderson, Morwell

Don't Be Fooled

If one did not know the Reverend Father Tom Cleary, one could be excused for thinking that he was badly done by in view of the comments in ITD of December 2004, but don't be fooled by his denial of the many accusations of his priestly conduct.

I received a letter from Fr Tom last month that included an apology (of sorts) in case I thought he had called me a liar. Father wrote that he had heard a rumour that I had said I would not attend Mass in Morwell as long he remained there because he had called me a liar.

To explain, it becomes necessary to go back to early last year. I had contacted a member of our, officially elected, Parish Council and informed her that I had again decided to walk from Albury to Melbourne in support of the protection of the unborn child. At the next council meeting could a request be put to Fr Tom, on my behalf, that he would inform our parishioners at the Sunday Mass that I was looking for sponsors? (This being a normal function for the council). Fr Tom refused to speak on my behalf. One week later I contacted the parish secretary and asked her if a small space could be available in the next Sunday bulletin to advertise the Walk and request sponsorship from our parishioners. I was informed that she would ask Fr Tom. After a few days I received a telephone call from the secretary advising me that Fr Tom had again refused my request. (No explanation as to why).

It needs to be understood that all money raised goes towards the on-going fight against abortion, a cause that most Roman Catholics and Priests (I thought) would support. Even though I was on the brink of giving up I then became determined and would not be discouraged, so I spent a whole week and walked all over Morwell and outlying districts to deliver 180 leaflets to parishioner's letterboxes requesting support (parishioners were very generous and \$2,500 was raised matching the amount of the previous year, no thanks to Fr Tom).

A fellow parishioner took up the issue and asked Fr Tom his reason for his refusal to support my efforts. Fr Tom denied having refused me and said of me, "He is a liar."

Later Fr Tom decided to print a small three liner in

the parish bulletin over two or three consecutive weeks informing that the Walk for Life was on and if anyone had any interest to contact a Melbourne phone number. Fr Tom had deliberately not included me in these notices yet he had full knowledge of my involvement.

I see this as a vindictive rebuke and found it hard to accept his apology. In his letter to me he calls into question the truthfulness of the report to me by the parishioner who spoke to him. Fr Tom claims that he said I was a liar IF I had claimed that I had asked him to publish the notice in the bulletin. He therefore denies that he refused me, because he did not speak to me directly.

It has become extremely difficult for me to attend Mass in Morwell whilst Fr Tom remains the pernicious administrator. My reason is not only because of the above but because when Fr Tom was appointed to Morwell Parish, instead of trying to keep the parishioners united, he immediately involved himself in the Bishop's controversy, criticising Fr John's supporters and taking sides with the Bishop when endearment for His Lordship was at an all time low after he had sacked Fr John. Instead of keeping his personal feelings to himself he expressed them openly from the pulpit, creating further unnecessary division in our parish (which he continues to do to date).

Then to add insult to injury Fr Tom presented \$1000 to the Bishop on behalf of parishioners out of parish funds for merely doing his duty (Confirmation), and crowned him with the title of "Prince of the Church". The Bishop's lack of judgment in accepting such a gift needs to be questioned. Particularly as most of us continue to grieve the absence of our respected Parish Priest Rev. Father John Speekman who is the scapegoat for the Bishop's weaknesses in giving in to evil forces threatening the very essence of the Roman Catholic Church.

As Christians who are trying to remain faithful to the Roman Catholic faith both my wife and myself are utterly confused and dismayed with the contradictions taking place within our Church. May the Bishop overcome his pride and humbly re-instate Fr John as instructed by Rome. Only then will a healing process begin in Morwell.

Bert Van Der Zalm, Morwell

St Michael Defend Us

God bless your work. God bless Reverend Father Speekman, what a courageous priest! And good Saint Michael keep defending us from evil, especially that guised as Christian.

Mrs A Cattana, Cairns

Safeguard the Faith

"Your first concern is to be diligent guardians of the integrity of the faith and of the unity of the Church."

"Bishops must promote tirelessly an authentic pastoral program and a pedagogy of holiness."

Pope John Paul II, speaking to new Bishops, September 2004

Confusion and Disturbance

The decree upholding Fr Speekman's appeal stated that "any confusion or disturbance at Morwell which the [Bishop] has ascertained might well be attributed more to the actions of the [Bishop] rather than to those of Fr Speekman". In the time Fr Tom Cleary has been administrator of the parish in Morwell, he has done a great deal to deepen this confusion and disturbance.

He has systematically destroyed every pastoral reform Fr Speekman had put in place. One of the last that he has lashed out at has been Adoration – which he describes as "gawking". He has removed reading material from the assortment available for those who attend Adoration, choosing mainly those books relating to Eucharistic miracles, Divine Mercy and Purgatory. When approached regarding why he had removed these books, he explained that they would frighten people off!

He has also shown he has a problem with miraculous medals of Our Lady and the scapular, withdrawing a large number of them from distribution and questioning belief in them.

I was amazed at his lack of interest in the Year of the Eucharist. When I asked him what the parish was doing about the Year of the Eucharist, he intimated that we had the Mass and the Sacraments. When I reminded him that it was the Pope who promulgated this Year, he clapped his hands slowly in mock applause and sighed condescendingly, "Ah, the Pope."

He has used the pulpit and twisted the Word of God to his advantage to target those who support Fr Speekman. At a recent weekend Mass he referred to those who didn't like the Bishop or the pastoral plan as belonging to some sect.

He seems to have appointed himself the Bishop's minder. After all, his advice on the Decree issued by the Congregation for the Clergy was that the Bishop should ignore it. He would do us all a service if he advised the Bishop not to abandon his priests, but to abandon the disastrous pastoral plan.

Since his arrival in Morwell there has been a decline in Mass attendance and a rapid deterioration of parish finances. I and other ordinary, concerned Catholics in the parish, call on Fr Cleary to give up the game-playing and try instead to build unity in Christ and His Church.

John Henderson, Morwell

"Genuine trust always sees God as love, even if at times it is difficult to understand his actions."

Pope John Paul II

Rediscover The Lord's Day

Pope John Paul II, speaking to members and counsellors of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America:

"Participation in Sunday Mass," said the Pope, "is not only an important obligation, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church (no.1389) makes quite clear, but above all a profound need of each individual faithful. It is not possible to experience faith without participating regularly in Sunday Mass: the sacrifice of redemption, the shared banquet of the Word of God and of the Bread of the Eucharist, heart of Christian life."

John Paul II underlined the "renewed efforts" by pastors of the Church to "raise awareness of the centrality of Sunday in the ecclesial and social life of the men and women of today. ... To this end it is necessary to concentrate efforts on a better and more careful education and catechesis of the faithful about the Eucharist, and to ensure that the celebration is dignified and decorous, so that it inspires true respect and authentic piety in the face of the greatness of the Eucharistic mystery."

"Sunday Mass," he went on, "must be correctly prepared by the celebrant, with a spiritual disposition which is then revealed in his words and gestures, just as the homily must be prepared in an appropriate way." On this subject, the Pope referred to the importance of choosing and preparing "the hymns, symbols and other elements that enrich the liturgy, always showing due respect for established norms, taking advantage of all the spiritual and pastoral richness of the Roman Missal and the directives proposed by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments."

The Holy Father concluded by asking the bishops, in collaboration with priests, religious and faithful, to give "the maximum commitment to reflecting on and deepening this essential dimension of the sacramental life of the Church," and to work "to awaken an ever greater love for the Mystery of the Eucharist in their dioceses."

Vatican Information Service

One-Word Answer

If our schools, from the viewpoint of imparting knowledge and practice of the faith (their reason for existence) have a failure rate of 97%, why don't we privatise them? Just remove the word 'Catholic' from anything to do with them, run them as a secular educational business, charge rent for the use of existing Church land and buildings, and let teachers be answerable to parents, who can sue them when they don't fulfil their educational obligations.

S.C., Melbourne

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
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
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.

Taking the Eucharist Seriously

The Lord made use of a non-believing woman to make me understand what one should prove who takes the Eucharist seriously.

I gave her a book to read on this argument, seeing her interested in the religious problem, although she was an atheist. After a week, she returned the book to me saying: “You have not put a book in my hands but a bomb ... do you realise the enormity of the thing? Absorbing what is written here, it would be enough to open one’s eyes to discover that there is altogether another world around us; that the blood of a man who died 2000 years ago saves all of us. Do you know that, when I read it, my legs were trembling and every now and then I had to stop reading and get up. If it is true, it changes everything.”

In listening to her, along with the joy of seeing that the seed had not been sown in vain, I felt a great sense of humiliation and shame. I had received Communion a few minutes before, but my legs were not trembling.

That atheist was not all wrong who said one day to a believing friend: “If I could believe that the Son of God is really in that host, as you say, I think I would fall down on my knees and never get up.”

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher for the Pontifical Household

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

Contact Into the Deep

E-mail stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au

Or **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.

There is no subscription fee but donations towards printing and postage are most welcome.

Editorial Committee:

Janet Kingman, Editor

Pat O’Brien, Sale

John Henderson, Morwell

Mary Tudor, Moe

Bernadette Horner, Traralgon

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.

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.

Don’t say: “That person gets on my nerves.”
Think: “That person sanctifies me.”

St Josemaria Escriva