

Into the Deep

Issue 30

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Detained Without Charge

There is a constant cry for justice when it comes to terror suspects detained without charge, or mentally ill people incarcerated, or asylum seekers held in detention centres. Society demands that the 'innocent until proven guilty' rule be respected and implemented. Even when someone is found guilty, there are expectations that their rights will be respected.

But in our diocese, we have a priest who has been *proven innocent*, and yet is still wilfully being deprived of justice or his rights. He is being treated worse than a guilty man!

Fr John Speekman should *long* be back in his parish of Morwell! Bishop Coffey is refusing to obey the judge's decision – or to appeal it. He is simply ignoring the situation. And orthodox Catholics across the diocese are repulsed by the injustice!

The accusation was made - ineffective ministry. The Bishop produced no evidence and offered no trial, but found Fr Speekman guilty anyway, and removed him from his parish (July 2003).

Fr Speekman appealed to the Congregation for Clergy in Rome for justice. Both he and the Bishop presented their case. Fr Speekman was found *not guilty*. The Bishop, on the other hand, was found at fault on *several* counts. The appeal was upheld and Fr Speekman was to be returned to his parish (July 2004).

The Bishop refused to comply. He appealed to the Congregation to review its decision. They rejected his appeal within weeks. Bishop Coffey announced he would appeal to the higher court, the Signatura. Then he said instead that he would "start the removal process again", while keeping Fr Speekman out of his parish.

Now we find that *after all this time, no further case has been submitted to Rome yet!* What is the Bishop trying to do? Pretend that the Vatican, Fr Speekman, Morwell Parish just don't exist? Where is the justice? The goodwill? The pastoral concern? The obedience?

The time has long gone for the Bishop to make his move! He must release Fr Speekman from the prison he has put him in by denying him his parish and his good reputation. He is detaining him without charge.

This has already gone too far. Bishop Coffey, prove that you are a man of integrity and justice! Reinstate Fr Speekman to his rightful place as parish priest of Morwell without further delay!

Pope's Message for Lent

~ Care for the elderly

John Paul II in his Message for Lent exhorted the faithful to express their affection and respect for the elderly, in the face of proposals to introduce euthanasia.

In the text, whose title is a phrase from the Book of Deuteronomy "Loving the Lord ... Means Life to You, and Length of Days", the Holy Father expresses the hope that this Lent will help "to deepen the awareness of the role that the elderly are called to play in society and in the Church."

"The care of the elderly, above all when they pass through difficult moments, must be of great concern to all the faithful, especially in the ecclesial communities of Western societies, where the problem is particularly present," said the 84-year-old Pope.

The commandment "You shall not kill" "applies even in the presence of illness and when physical weakness reduces the person's ability to be self-reliant," he said.

"It is necessary to raise the awareness in public opinion that the elderly represent, in any case, a resource to be valued," the Holy Father added.

Therefore, the papal message appeals for "economic support and legislative initiatives, which allow them [the elderly] not to be excluded from social life."

John Paul II believes that the elderly can carry out their role in society, as their "wisdom" and "experience" can "illuminate" the path "toward an ever more complete form of civilisation."

"What would happen if the People of God yielded to a certain current mentality that considers" the elderly "as almost useless when they are reduced in their capacities due to the difficulties of age or sickness?" he asked.

Zenit News www.zenit.org

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

Marian Talk at Nar Nar Goon

I was privileged to be at a talk given by Fr Michael Gaughran at Nar Nar Goon in February. Fr Gaughran is an associate of Father Stefano Gobbi of the Marian Movement of Priests, and visited many other venues in Australia. Many people travelled miles from surrounding towns to hear his talk in Nar Nar Goon. Father Speekman concelebrated Mass with Father Gaughran.

Nar Nar Goon parishioners were delighted that their priest Father Michael Willemsen was able to be present for a short time, and that he has given his permission for them to have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every week at St James Church.

The following are some snippets from Fr Gaughran's talk:

Father Gaughran said that it is Our Lady's job to bring the Church back, and restore its holiness. The Triumph of the Immaculate Heart is not for herself but for her Son.

He said that following Vatican II in a hit and miss effort to renew religious life, some authorised and many unauthorised changes took place. In the 25 years following Vatican II, 100 000 priests and 500 000 religious left their orders worldwide.

Father said that if we are aware of false teaching in the Church, we have a right to speak to those concerned, but always with respect.

He said in some places Mass has turned into a remembrance of what Jesus did and not a Sacrifice. This is a Protestant doctrine.

For many years Father Gaughran and Father Gobbi have been travelling the world forming a cohort of priests (the Marian Movement of Priests) loyal to the Magisterium of the Church to combat the great apostasy that is spreading.

He gave great hope that with much prayer and suffering the Church will return to her former glory, and love, justice, joy and peace will prevail.

Mary Tudor, Moe

Marian Movement of Priests

The Marian Movement of Priests consists in a spirituality of prayer and penance, a deep conversion from the heart, a life according to the gospel, the daily recitation of the Holy Rosary, detachment from materialism, trust in the teachings of the Magisterium of the Church, prayer and support for the Holy Father, bishops and priests, and devotion to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Injustice must be overcome with justice, lies with truth, revenge with forgiveness, hatred with love.

Pope John Paul II

A Question on Stem Cells

First, congratulations on your tenacity. We read things in ITD which we should be hearing in our churches. I have just received and read your latest edition and have enjoyed it as usual.

I would like to ask about embryonic cells. We have in our Church, academics and theologians who should be able to tell us whether or not the cell has a soul. If it does, then we know what we have to do. If not, the layman doesn't have a problem. At least we are entitled to hear from our leaders what the position is.

Would you happen to have an opinion on this matter?

Tom O'Keefe, Lakes Entrance

Fr Frank Pavone, National Director of *Priests for Life* talks about stem cells (www.priestsforlife.org):

"A "stem cell" is a cell which is capable of growing into any type of cell in the body. Such cells may be helpful in treating disease.

The problem, however, is that in one method of obtaining these cells, human lives, in their earliest stages, are being destroyed in the process." [These are *embryonic* stem cells – from embryos. *Adult* stem cells, on the other hand, can be taken from adults with no loss of life involved, and are, in fact, producing significant benefits in research. Ed.]

"This is *not* a debate about whether or not we should do research to assist the perennial fight against disease. The Church does not oppose research. But the task of research, the efforts to cure disease, and the ability to manipulate nature has certain moral parameters. Consider some history."

Referring to World War II War Crimes Trials, Fr Pavone continues,

"This philosophy, that we can kill to advance medical progress, led to numerous experiments on innocent people. In the portion of the war crime trials dealing with the medical experiments, the prosecution stated, "The defendants in this case are charged with murders, tortures, and other atrocities committed in the name of medical science." ... In one example, the subject's legs had to be deliberately crippled to obtain the medical data."

"Some say that the embryos destroyed in today's research aren't human. That simply contradicts scientific fact. [...]

Ultimately, however, the debate here goes beyond the fate of the embryos themselves. It involves the very meaning of human life, and whether some humans may be destroyed for the sake of others. And the world has gone down that painful road before."

“I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.” (Mt.10:34)

The text of Luke 12:51-52 appears to contain the same difficulty: “Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.”

It is certain that Christ loves peace and does not want division among people. But because of Him, Simeon prophesied to Mary that people will be divided into two camps, those who accept His peace (His will), and those who reject His peace (His will). “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed” (Lk.2:34).

Yet Christ never produces any slander or hatred in the hearts of those who know Him. Yes, Christ is the Prince of Peace. He is the Lord whose greatest command is love, love for one’s enemies.

Christ did not come to bring to earth “false peace”. False peace is built on our cooperation with evil: to welcome him (the person who brings a different doctrine) “is to participate in the evil deeds of such a person” (2Jn.1:11).

False peace consists at times in either doing evil or not opposing it, in order not to have trouble with evildoers so they do not get angry, do not become our enemies and thus do not harm us, leaving us “in peace”.

In the Scripture, such false peace of the sinners’ accomplices has been severely criticised. False peace comes when we keep silence in the face of evil and give up our principles out of fear that people may harm us. St Paul declares that he never sought to please the evildoers and never silenced his conscience (Gal.1:10).

Christ brings real peace. It is peace which the wicked ignore and never experience - no peace for the wicked, but “great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble.” (Ps119:165)

True peace is the result - or fruit - of a quiet conscience, a life lived in harmony with God’s will (commandments) in spite of the enemy’s anger.

Here are the very words of the Lord about the real peace He is bringing. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.” (Jn.14:27). “I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!” (Jn.16:33)

According to the will of God, good must be done, and evil must be avoided, before we can experience world peace. Mother Teresa the Nobel Peace Prize winner of 1979, described abortion in the world as the greatest disturbance and violent crime against world peace, and the greatest destroyer of human life and peace. Globally the number of abortions reaches billions, far more than all the lives lost in world wars.

Our world is ruled by false peace and bad conscience,

has lost God’s Natural Law, and by losing His Law, is losing itself and heading for self-destruction and chastisement. The era of peace that God has promised, will come “in God’s time” upon the earth.

We understand that Christ brings real peace when He saves us from sin and all other sorts of evil which derive from sin and destroys false peace, based on undisturbed evil or complicity with evil.

Leo Willems, Warragul

What’s Wrong With *New Age*?

From *Jesus Christ The Bearer Of The Water Of Life - a Christian Reflection on the “New Age”*

Pontifical Council For Culture

Pontifical Council For Interreligious Dialogue:

“Even if it can be admitted that *New Age* religiosity in some way responds to the legitimate spiritual longing of human nature, it must be acknowledged that its attempts to do so run counter to Christian revelation” (para 1.4). “Many people are particularly attracted to what is known – correctly or otherwise – as “Celtic” spirituality...” (para 1.4).

“John Paul II warns with regard to the “return of ancient gnostic ideas under the guise of the so-called *New Age*: We cannot delude ourselves that this will lead toward a renewal of religion. It is only a new way of practising gnosticism – that attitude of the spirit that, in the name of a profound knowledge of God, results in distorting His Word and replacing it with purely human words.” (para 1.4)

“Some of the traditions which flow into *New Age* are: ancient Egyptian occult practices, Cabbalism, early Christian gnosticism, Sufism, the lore of the Druids, Celtic Christianity, mediaeval alchemy, Renaissance hermeticism, Zen Buddhism, Yoga and so on.” (para 2.1)

“It is difficult to separate the individual elements of *New Age* religiosity – innocent though they may appear – from the overarching framework which permeates the whole thought-world on the *New Age* movement. The gnostic nature of this movement calls us to judge it in its entirety. From the point of view of Christian faith, it is not possible to isolate some elements of *New Age* religiosity as acceptable to Christians, while rejecting others. Since the *New Age* movement makes much of a communication with nature, of cosmic knowledge of a universal good – thereby negating the revealed contents of Christian faith – it cannot be viewed as positive or innocuous. In a cultural environment, marked by religious relativism, it is necessary to signal a warning against the attempt to place *New Age* religiosity on the same level as Christian faith, making the difference between faith and belief seem relative, thus creating greater confusion for the unwary” (para 4).

NCP Suggests Its Own Rules

Australia's National Council of Priests (NCP) has sent a "reflection" and list of requests to the General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops regarding the Synod's document on the Eucharist. Signed by the Chairman of the NCP, Fr Hal Ranger, it claims to be based on "extensive knowledge of the life and practice of Australian Priests".

Maintaining that the vast majority of priests in Australia do not introduce liturgical abuses, the letter tells the Synod Fathers that "Rather than more rubrics or detailed instructions, we would welcome encouragement and affirmation."

They note their 'surprise and concern' that the Synod did not address the shortage of priests. While affirming their "fidelity to the authentic Catholic Tradition," the NCP adds they are "scandalised when the gnat of abuse is so carefully strained out while the camel of dying communities is being swallowed."

On the subject of liturgical language, they suggest that 'clothing' the Mystery of the Eucharist in "obscure, foreign words and signs seems inconsistent with the truth and wonderful ordinariness of the incarnation."

Emphasising the importance of the gathered community of worshippers, the letter states that the "foundational Eucharistic character of every community of faith, with or without a resident ordained Priest, needs to be explored and affirmed."

They ask the Synod to earnestly discuss their requests:

- that the rights and authority of each diocesan bishop be reaffirmed;
- "that earnest and serious consideration be given at the Synod of Bishops to extending the possibility of ordination to single men of good character (*virii probati*) who would preside at the Eucharist within their own community."
- that the opportunity of ordination be extended to married men;
- that the Synod Fathers "examine honestly the appropriateness of insisting upon a priesthood that is, with very few exceptions, obliged to be celibate."
- that "consideration be given to the re-instatement of priests who have continued to be loyal members of the Church, have married with the Church's permission and are willing to resume ministry as Priests."

What an embarrassing insight into the state of the (modernist) priesthood in Australia today!

Thankfully, orthodox Australian priests have spoken out against the NCP's opinion – see alongside.

ACCC's Orthodox Response

The Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy (ACCC) found the NCP reflection "worrying" and a response by their chairman was given to reassure people that the opinions expressed by the NCP were "most certainly not the opinions of the ACCC members". According to the ACCC, it has about 300 members throughout Australia, composed mostly of senior clergy and those ordained in the last 20 years.

Following are parts of the ACCC's response:

"We are one with our brother priests in the NCP in recognising the crisis that we face in the Church in Australia regarding the shortage of priests. We differ very significantly, however in our analysis of the why of this crisis and the way forward out of this crisis."

"The question of the celibacy of the clergy has been debated for almost four decades now. There have been debates and discussions at the highest levels that have had the various opinions of various groupings fed into it. The result has been the clear decision from the Church's teaching office that the mandatory celibacy of the clergy of the Latin Rite is to remain our discipline because the benefits that it offers the Church both spiritually and practically far outweigh the difficulties and drawbacks that ensue."

"The ACCC supports the continued practice of mandatory celibacy because it stands as a unique witness to total service of Christ and a witness to the life to come. In a world that struggles with commitment, chastity and discipline the witness of celibacy is powerful and godly. In a society such as our own Australia, a counter-cultural witness to something completely spiritual is more important than ever."

"The ACCC would hold the opinion that lack of vocations to the priestly life is a sign of struggles in faith in a particular Church. Once strong Churches have to be humble enough to ask the help of stronger Churches. This may necessitate clergy from outside one's own culture being called upon to assist. We would proffer the view that in Australia today in dioceses where the priestly vocation is strongly promoted and the teaching and discipline of the Church is promoted boldly, vocations are increasing."

"The other point is that when an analysis is made of the number of vocations to the priesthood against the percentage of practicing Catholics, we are holding our own or even doing slightly better than previous days. We cannot expect vocations to emerge out of the members of the faith who are not actively involved. The crisis we face then is one of faith! ... When we are doing what we should be doing in fidelity and unity, the shortage of clergy will be a topic for historical discussion!"

Embracing the Church's Wisdom

Fr Paul Stuart, who has just completed two terms as Melbourne's Vocations Director and Dean of Studies of Corpus Christi Seminary, was asked by some journalists for a response to Fr Eric Hodgens' attack on young priests who Hodgens asserts are "cultic" and not "pastoral" (*The Age* 01/02/2005, and *Online Catholics* 26/01/2005).

A few years ago anonymous Melbourne priests contacted journalists to say that all young priests who wore clerical uniform were homosexuals and nicknamed "spice girls".

Responding to this attack on young priests and the issue of abolishing priestly celibacy, Fr Stuart said,

"The majority of Catholic priests who want to abolish celibacy, bless same sex unions, approve pre-marital co-habitation, dislike Pope John Paul II and whose other views are represented by Fr Eric Hodgens' articles for *Online Catholics* and *The Age* newspaper, were ordained in the 1960s and '70s. Many of that Flower Power generation reflect the thinking and activism of those times and tend to be anti-establishment, anti-tradition and anti-authority. I don't think they ever really embraced or fully understood the Church's wisdom on doctrine, morals, liturgy and celibacy. Why this is so and whether this is good or bad can be debated and disputed.

What is undeniable is that today's new and younger priests and student priests are pro-tradition and pro-authority in the Church, and they fully embrace the Church's wisdom on doctrine, morals, liturgy and celibacy. They are both orthodox and pastoral. They care about people and want to serve them and they are also positive and faithful towards the Church's teachings.

The Church's radicals of the 1960s and '70s who once worshipped radical change, are now the very ones resisting the change in thinking held by a growing number of new and younger priests. This is poetic justice."

Australia In Perspective

The 2005 Pontifical Yearbook (on 2003 data) tells us that there are 1.086 billion Catholics in the world (15 million more than 2002), and 405 450 priests (392 more than 2002).

America has 49.8% of Catholics worldwide, Europe has 25.8%, Africa 13.2%, Asia 10.4%, and the whole of Oceania has a meagre 0.8%.

That means Australia's Catholics count for about half a percent of the Universal Church.

Funny that we should think the Church should change on our recommendations and to suit us.

Vocations Crisis is Bishop's Fault

The following letter was published in the Sydney Morning Herald on January 27, 2005:

"It is surprising that Father Hal Ranger considers liturgical abuse to have so little relevance to the vocations crisis in the Catholic Church. It is surely one of the causes of the crisis. Any parish in which liturgical abuse is routine, and in which the priest and others impose their own personalities on the liturgy, will be a parish whose members have little idea of their faith, and it will produce few vocations to the priesthood. In the same way, those dioceses that permit widespread liturgical abuse will find themselves with empty seminaries." Lance Eccies, Haberfield.

His message will strike a chord in this liberal diocese where there are widespread abuses. Some years ago the Bishop reported that the Holy Father poked him in the chest and told him that if he had no vocations then it was his fault! What prophesy!

P. O'Brien, Sale

Awaiting Easter Good News

With Easter almost upon us we are reminded through the Bible readings that Jesus was handed over by Pontius Pilate. The film "The Passion of Christ" shows us in detail how Jesus was unfairly condemned. The pressure on Pontius Pilate was so intense that he took the diabolical decision to condemn Jesus to be crucified even though Jesus had done no wrong.

There is a similarity in the dilemma our Bishop of Sale Jeremiah Coffey finds himself in. The pressure on our Bishop from the Catholic Education Office, Teachers Union and perhaps some parishioners is so extreme that our respected Parish Priest Reverend Fr John Speakman had to pay the price even though he had done no wrong! He was sacked from his parish in Morwell and forced to vacate his residence leaving him without a roof over his head. He now finds himself in limbo without a parish awaiting a decision from His Lordship our Bishop who was instructed, over six months ago by the Congregation of the Clergy from the Vatican, to reinstate him.

Here we have an innocent Roman Catholic Priest being punished by his Bishop for having done no more than being faithful to his calling.

So this Easter we will again be reminded of the influence by Satan on Pontius Pilate and the pressure our Bishop is under.

On Easter Sunday we will celebrate the good news – Jesus' victory, His resurrection. May Fr John also receive news this Easter giving him reason to celebrate.

Bert Vanderzalm, Morwell

How Catholic Teachers Can Destroy Catholic Faith

From its very beginnings to now, Christianity has always preached a crucial view of its own very nature - it is a *revealed* religion. St John (1:18) tells us, "No one has ever seen God, ...it is the only Son who has made him known". This is the crux of the matter, and the gospel and New Testament epistles keep reminding us that it is not a philosophy of our age but a unique gift of God (see 1Cor2:1-13), not a man-made social construct that we can alter at will, since, in its essentials, it is decreed by God himself.

This does not suit the modern mind which thinks that all things are up for grabs, to be determined by majority vote, the loudest protester, or some other means of social process. Unfortunately, however, this is the very mentality that has been injected into our teachers at the academic teaching level of apparently Catholic institutions, so that, even though they don't understand the philosophical errors of this approach, or that they themselves have been infected by this disease, or the consequences of it, they are spreading a message destructive of the very reality they claim to teach.

There are plenty of good teachers, of course, but how do we explain the conspicuous failure of the system to produce the results for which it was founded and paid for? There must be many who are undiscerning 'carriers of the infection', even if this is not their own fault. The fault lies at the highest levels of academia and authority. Academics tend to be infatuated with the novelty of theory, and authority has shown itself to be remiss in correcting this because it is itself uneducated in these theories and too busy with other 'business'. This responsibility has been taken over - and subverted - by academics with an axe to grind.

They mistake theology for faith. The former is an intellectual-academic-salaried pursuit, while the latter is commitment to a belief and its morality. This latter is traditional because it wishes to conserve the truth, of which the structures of religion are the carriers. The former can be an attempt to be free, to 'do its own thing', irrespective of revelation.

Each new academic seems out to make a name for himself - and herself - with a new theology. The old truths, we are told, are now old hat. Buy the new snake oil, which is better! In most cases it is claimed that this has been researched and proven by experience. But whose experience? Was it genuine? Was it properly understood? What does it lead to? This is the field of 'new theology' and 'new catechetics'. But is it kosher?

Revelation means that there is a certain 'given' character that cannot be denied or ignored, but in the world of new catechetics the word that pops up often is 'praxis'. We know what 'practice' is, but 'praxis'? What is that?

Although it was around before his time, Marx gave the word 'praxis' a particular meaning which underlies most modern usage, even when not realised by many who use it. Put simply, it means part of the revolutionary process by which one wants to change (overturn?) society. It denotes applying theory to practice, but then using the results or effects to change the theory. In this way, the original starting point can be altered; and each subsequent 'end result' can be altered again, if it doesn't 'work'.

That, fundamentally, is why a catechetics based on praxis is damaging to religion based on revelation. It assumes that God's revelation of himself in terms of faith and morality can be adjusted to suit ourselves and the whim of society of the day, because there are no constants or absolutes. In his book, *Christian Religious Education*, Thomas Groome has told us explicitly and often what his approach is: shared praxis. And a whole Religious Education curriculum based on his work is being proudly used in dioceses around Australia, including Sale! What would motivate a Catholic Education Office *anywhere* to use this sort of approach?

It is not difficult today to meet students of a Catholic school of a few years ago who, when something is fully explained to them, will reply: "But we were never told about that!" Why? Could it be that many otherwise good teachers have been subjected to the formula of Marxist praxis theory at the level of their teacher training, and so don't know any better? Sadly, this is probably true, for it does not seem right to impute wrong motives to so many.

Why has this formula achieved currency? It is a complex matter, but there is one aspect of it that is easy to understand - it appeals to our lower nature. When one has to measure up to certain standards and goals, discipline is required; one cannot just please one's self. On the other hand, if the rules of the game can be re-written, then the prospect looms of a great measure of personal freedom.

While this seems attractive, we must ask ourselves is there a difference between genuine freedom, which all hope to gain from, and licence or licentiousness, which is an abuse of freedom. Parents try to instil in their children a sense of honesty; they cannot do that by saying '...if it works'. A sense of honour requires some sacrifice from us, not only when things are easy but specially when the going is tough. Catholic faith and its standards are not something we can reformulate just to suit ourselves or our theories. It is something to live by and die for!

Special Correspondent, Melbourne

Lay Initiative to Celebrate the Year of the Eucharist

In these days of crisis in the Church, to be the bearer of good news is always a welcome change. Here is one: The Marian Eucharistic Alliance!

Since October last year, when the Year of the Eucharist started, lay Catholics throughout Australia have been making a commitment to Our Lord in the Eucharist, Our Lady, and the Holy Father, to become Apostles in proclaiming the knowledge, love and worship of Jesus in the Eucharist and to offer reparation for the “insults, sacrileges and indifferences with which He is offended”.

The Alliance is a positive response to the Holy Father’s Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, the Holy See’s document *Redemptionis Sacramentum* and the Australian Bishops’ Conference Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist. It is a dynamic lay initiative to celebrate the Year of the Eucharist by revitalising the belief in the Real Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament and rediscovering the sense of the sacred in the Liturgy. Alliance members stand for God and for His Glory!

St Paul’s exhorts us to “Preach the word. Be constant in season and out of season...for there shall be a time when they shall not endure sound doctrine.” (2 Tim 4:1-3).

The fact is that all lay Catholics who are faithful to the Church must understand, proclaim and defend the sound doctrine on the Real Presence. And the Year of the Eucharist is just the right season to do so through the Marian Eucharistic Alliance.

To receive an information package about this exciting project, send us your name and postal address to:

Marian Eucharistic Alliance
PO Box 111, Forrestfield WA 6058
or email Alliance@SaintGabriel.com.au

In the information package you’ll receive a free colour prayer card designed specifically for the Alliance, a copy of the newsletter *Adoro Te*, and a letter from Rev. Fr Douglas Harris, Parish Priest of Saint Bernadette’s Parish, Glendalough, Archdiocese of Perth, WA, who will explain everything to you. Fr Harris is a Missionary of the Blessed Sacrament and Member of the Priests’ Advisory Board to St Gabriel Communications.

Theresa de Souza, Perth

Take Them to Court

Fr Speekman continues to be treated unjustly, unfairly, and deprived of his due position and livelihood. A case in the Industrial Court would win hands down, since such issues are judged according to the rules of the organisation (the Church). The present decree from Rome in Fr Speekman’s favour would speak volumes, loud and clear, since the truth (about the role of the CEO, the Bishop and the Teachers’ Union) would be shown irrefutably in public.

S.C., Melbourne

The Lord Will Not be Outdone

Thank you for your magazine. I’m finding it very interesting and it reflects the views of so many orthodox Catholics battling in this present atmosphere of lukewarmness and lethargy.

I’m sorry to say from reports from various states and dioceses we are not endowed with many strong and courageous bishops who try to correct the many current abuses. If Eucharistic adoration was promoted and encouraged more, I’m sure we’d see great changes in parishes, greater unity and love and respect amongst parishioners, and an increase in vocations. Sadly many of our priests don’t seem anxious to follow the Pope’s request even though the indulgence is offered.

I remember reading in either AD2000 or Fidelity some time ago about a holy priest who was relegated to an out-of-the-way place in America. The parish was sadly run-down and neglected and very low attendance. However, he wasn’t daunted, but decided to commence Adoration of the Eucharist. He spent many hours himself in front of the Blessed Sacrament and eventually parishioners started to come in greater and greater numbers. The upshot was that people were coming to his parish for Mass and Adoration from far and wide, and the vocations started to come also. Our Lord will not be outdone in generosity.

I have been handing the copies of Into the Deep you send me around to different people who’ve been impressed. May God bless you and your courageous staff and supporters to continue your good work. I am praying for Fr Speekman – Fr Cleary and the bishops also that God will enlighten them and help them to be true pastors.

Mary Ross, Seymour

Pell Appointed to Congregation

Pope John Paul II has appointed Cardinal George Pell as one of the new members of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments.

Cardinal Francis Arinze is currently the prefect of the Congregation.

Congratulations to Cardinal Pell on such an esteemed appointment! We are proud and grateful to have an Australian Cardinal working so closely with Rome. May it lead us to be more aware of and more faithful to the Universal Church.

Cardinal Pell on True and False Conscience

*From an address by Cardinal George Pell delivered to members of the Lumen Christi Institute at the University of Chicago
2004 published in Zenit News www.zenit.org*

Cardinal John Newman's view of conscience is far from that usually held by those who speak of "primacy of conscience" today. Newman believes a good Catholic conscience can never accept a position of dissent against central Church teaching. Moral truth is the key to conscience, and this is very difficult to deny coherently. [...]

People from across the theological spectrum would agree with Newman that conscience is "a connecting principle between the creature and his Creator" ("Grammar of Assent," Chapter 5). But while some see conscience as God's invitation to embrace his law as free subjects, others see it as a radical call to personal freedom. For many people today, conscience suggests freedom to judge God's law by our own personal resources and the right to reject the notion or reformulate this law as we think best.

I imagine that to non-Christians this must seem rather odd: If moral and religious teachings bind only to the extent that one's individual mind and will enthuse about them, then pretty clearly the teachings do not bind at all. What "binds" is simply the autonomous self, with all the limitations that our selves are prey to. And to say "I am bound by me" is hardly to make a meaningful moral utterance. Rather, it is to reject the need for morality and creed and to claim that I should be allowed to live as I choose within the constraints imposed by family, friends and society.

Of course, this theory is often dressed up with the claim that conscience is a special faculty that speaks to us, rather like an oracle. The theory may also be elevated to the status of a doctrine - the "primacy of conscience."

But announcing grand titles does not change moral reality. Conscience is simply the mind thinking practically, thinking morally; the mind thinks well when we understand moral principles and apply them in clear and reasonable ways; the mind thinks badly when we ignore or reinvent moral principles, or apply them in ambiguous and unreasonable ways. [...]

When we receive messages, we listen to them. We do not make them up and reword them to reflect what we wish had been said. If we disagree with the Church's message so seriously that we cannot follow its terms, then we cannot reinvent it to make it easier or more palatable.

Rather, we enter into a period of prayer, study and inquiry to try to understand the message and to understand why we find ourselves opposed to it. And we should realise that if the matter that puzzles us is one of a binding Church teaching or a central moral teaching, then prayer and study of this may be a lifetime's work.

A Catholic conscience cannot accept a settled position against the Church, at least on a central moral teaching. Any difficulties with Church teaching should be not the end of the matter but the beginning of a process of conversion, education and quite possibly repentance. Where a Catholic disagrees with the Church on some serious matter, the response should not be "that's that; I can't follow the Church here"; instead we should kneel and pray that God will lead our weak steps and enlighten our fragile minds, as Newman recommends in Sermon 17 - "The Testimony of Conscience." [...]

Much of the debate over conscience in Catholic circles focuses on the possibility of a conscience against the Church's teaching. This seems to me a peculiar notion. For a start, it would mean that dissenters believed that following the Church on, for example, contraception or same-sex relationships, would actually give them a guilty conscience, not just frustrated wishes. Yet it seems clear that most dissenters do not fear guilt if they obey the Church: What they fear is precisely the frustration of their unsatisfied wishes. [...]

Nonetheless, a false notion of conscience has helped to carry many away from Catholic practice and indeed from Catholic faith. [...]

A debased notion of conscience, a barely concealed enthusiasm for autonomy disguised as an appeal to the primacy of conscience, weakens our sense of obligation, damages our purity of heart, and makes it harder and harder to see God.

A Dog Tied To a Pole

Today the devil, Satanism, and other related phenomena, are gaining momentum and this is very disturbing. Our technological and industrialised world is overrun with wizards, witches, occultism, spiritualism, voluble fortune tellers, vendors of spells and amulets, as well as authentic Satanic sects.

Thrown out the door, the devil has come back in through the window. That is, expelled from faith he has returned with superstition.

With Christ, we have nothing to fear. Nothing and no one can harm us, if we ourselves don't will it. Satan, said an early Father of the Church, after the coming of Christ, is like a dog tied to a pole: he can bark and hurl himself as much as he likes, but if we don't get close to him, he cannot bite.

*Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa
Preacher of the Pontifical Household*

Prayer for Vocations

Jesus, Son of God,
in whom the fullness of the Divinity dwells,
You call all the baptised to "put out into the deep",
taking the path that leads to holiness.

Waken in the hearts of young people the desire
to be witnesses in the world of today
to the power of your love.

Fill them with your Spirit of fortitude and prudence,
so that they may be able to discover the full truth
about themselves and their own vocation.

Our Saviour,
sent by the Father to reveal His merciful love,
give to your Church the gift
of young people who are ready to put out into the deep,
to be the sign among their brothers
of Your presence which renews and saves.

Holy Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer,
sure guide on the way towards God and towards neighbour,
You who pondered his word in the depth of your heart,
sustain with your motherly intercession
our families and our ecclesial communities,
so that they may help adolescents and young people
to answer generously the call of the Lord.

Amen.

Pope John Paul II

For World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 17 April 2005

Sanctuary is not a Stage

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

Q: A statement, on behalf of our parish priest, supporting the removal of the altar rails, states that "removal of the altar rails is consistent with the changes of the Vatican Council's 1963 Constitution of the Liturgy. To the writer's knowledge, altar rails no longer separate the congregation and the celebration of the Mass in churches throughout Sydney. ...[R]emoval of altar rails was undertaken 'to make the layout more suitable for the modern liturgy and particularly the involvement of school children coming onto the altar [sanctuary] at several times during various liturgies [to perform liturgical dance] and due to concerns raised by the Principal of the school about safety issues arising from the restrictions imposed by the altar rail during children's liturgies.'" Is this statement correct? - S.R., Bondi Beach, Australia

A: The decision in whether to remove altar rails falls basically upon the pastor although, as with any major renovation, it should be done in consultation with the local bishop and often requires his explicit approval.

Before the liturgical reform the Communion rail, or balustrade, was required in most churches. It served both to set off the sanctuary from the rest of the church and to facilitate the administration of Communion, which generally was received kneeling, while the priest moved from one communicant to the next.

Since after the reform, Communion is frequently received standing and in processional form, the people approaching the priest while he remains in one spot. Hence, the Communion rail has often lost one of its principal functions. Likewise, where Communion is often distributed under both species and by more than one minister the rail can sometimes be an obstacle.

In this sense your parish priest's comment that the removal of the rail is consistent with the liturgical changes is broadly correct. Yet, no document explicitly mandates or even suggests that the removal of altar rails is required by the liturgical reform.

The other reasons offered for the removal of the altar rails are really not pertinent.

The fact that no other church in the city has altar rails makes no difference if there were a good reason for preserving them in this particular church, or even if there were no good reason for removing them.

Even less weighty is the third reason that was cited. The children's activities that are described have no place in the sanctuary in the first place, at least not during the celebration of the liturgy.

The sanctuary should not be confused with a stage and should not be used as such.

Hell Hath No Fury

Elderly lady to a liberal priest who had finished giving a talk in which he suggested that Hell and Purgatory don't exist: "So you don't believe in Hell, Father?"

The priest maintained his view. The lady responded, "Well, you will when you get there!"

(As reported by Fr Carapi in a talk on EWTN)

New Age All Hallows

Remember how proudly CEO staff and teachers once beamed in Catholic Life about going to the great *All Hallows College* in Ireland? It all sounded so traditional and so enriching.

Sad to see that All Hallows includes in its "Renewal for Ministry" course ("sabbatical programmes for men and women"), the following new age units:

Celtic Spirituality; Social Analysis and Integrity of the Earth; Psychosynthesis - A Way of Perceiving Life; Towards a Feminist Theology; Lifestyle-Key to Wellness; and Aspects of Healing.

Not much Catholic to be found in the course material.

Defying Tactics

You say the Bishop is using delaying tactics. Wouldn't a more accurate description be "defying tactics"? He is enjoying the exercise of power, possibly in proportion to your pain.

In past times, when the holy monks of old found themselves encumbered with a bishop who was a heretic, they appealed to Rome to ratify their choice of a new bishop. When the incumbent refused to leave, the Emperor was obliged to intervene.

In Sale you have a case that has potential. Illegal occupiers who are not actual adherents of the identifiable Catholic faith, repel the people from the faith. The souls of whole generations are being lost.

Do we have a duty to obey such bishops? Do we have a right to stand back and say that there is nothing we can do?

Fraser Morrow, Ballarat

So Close to Jesus

Once I met a lady who had a terrible cancer. She was suffering so much. I told her, "Now you come so close to Jesus on the cross that he is kissing you."

Then she joined her hands and said, "Mother Teresa, please tell Jesus to stop kissing me."

Mother Teresa

Wasted Energy

Brisbane's Catholic Justice and Peace Commission has acclaimed the Kyoto protocol about global warming, and has urged the Australian government to sign the agreement "for the sake of our children and God's Earth."

They have produced a booklet of tips for householders to become more energy efficient, as part of their "commitment to promoting action on global warming and climate change."

The Commission has spent two years working with the Queensland Conservation Council presenting workshops on energy efficiency across large areas of the state, and has worked with an Anglican and Uniting Church community.

Commission Executive Officer Peter Arndt claims, "We have helped many households in Catholic parishes and schools to become more energy efficient."

If only our Catholic commissions could help many households and parishes to know and love their faith!

Justice and Peace. I wonder if the Commission would be interested in supporting and representing priests and lay Catholics who are unjustly persecuted for their faith. Now there's a cause for justice and peace worth expending energy on!

Time To Overhaul Catholic Ed

Over the last twenty or more years, and with the decline in numbers of nuns and brothers in our school system, it appears to me that the basis of our Catholic religion has been seriously diminished in some quarters.

This in particular seems to be in Catholic schools where there is a large number of students who are not Catholics and sadly, in many cases, students who are baptised Catholics but neither they nor their parents are practising Catholics in our parishes. The teaching of our faith, which many of us received from the nuns and brothers, is all but non-existent or altered to suit the political correctness of the liberals.

The banning of parish priests by Bishops, particularly here in Morwell with Father John Speekman, from entering schools in their parishes and teaching our religion to them borders on being heretical and destructive to our Catholic ideals and beliefs.

I have a relative who teaches in a Catholic school in our diocese, and things that he says he believes in, and what he believes the children should be taught in Catholic schools, makes me shudder for the future. But in many ways it explains to me the reasons our faith is in such a perilous state among the youth and young Catholic parents, many of whom were schooled in the 1960's, 1970's or 1980's under poor leadership of our Bishops here in Australia.

The powerful control now by the Teachers' Union and Catholic Education Offices is alarming and these need a good rat out. All staff employed to teach in our Catholic schools and employed in our Catholic Education Offices need to sign a contract whereby they state that they are practising Catholics, and will maintain the ideals and teach the Commandments and Laws of the Catholic Church. Other Independent Religious schools do this.

Also maybe it is time to look at reducing the number of non-Catholic students we have in our schools and colleges. The percentage of non-Catholic students should be minimal and not increased just to employ more teachers. We need good Catholic schools and colleges and most importantly good Catholic teachers true to our faith.

Mal Bugg, Morwell

Advice From Hospital

Shortly after John Paul II's hospitalisation late Tuesday, his private secretary, Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz, said that he did not find the Pope "too preoccupied." He added that the Holy Father said, "*Pray, and be at peace.*"

www.zenit.org

Priesthood Is Not Up For Grabs

Catholic Life has relentlessly kept us informed of the “intense” process the diocese of Sale is supposed to be going through, of exploring and reflecting on the priesthood. Apparently in May the priests will have a week-long in-service where their role will finally be explained to them (by whom, one wonders?). “The aim is to develop...a common understanding of the role of the priest...” (Catholic Life February 2005)

One cannot help but notice the experimental nature of the process, when the Bishop and priests have already publicly and solemnly sworn to “undertake the priestly office” as defined by the Catholic Church and to “discharge without fail” this office. Ordination presupposes that Bishops and priests have solemnly promised to firmly embrace and accept all the Church’s doctrines on faith and morals as they have been declared by its Magisterium.

It is almost a waste of resources and an exercise in futility to get the priests and laity in the diocese to now explore and reflect on the role of the priest as though the nature of the priesthood has changed and some aspects of it could be discarded. It is a betrayal when a Bishop, staunchly committed to his liberal agenda, decides that the priesthood which he solemnly swore to embrace is an outdated model which needs to evolve.

The Bishop, together with his diocesan bureaucracy and the CEO, has already through Journeying Together (JT) embarked on a ‘pastoral’ plan that is ordered to redefining the ordained ministry and promoting a lay-led Church.

Rather than come up with solutions to the dire shortage of priests and vocations to the priesthood, the Bishop and the pastoral council used the vocational crisis to justify radical changes to the role of the priest, and to promote a “new model of Church” in which the laity can take their “rightful place”. Hence the overemphasis in JT on the formation of lay leadership and “faith communities”, when there is barely anything in the pastoral plan promoting vocations to the priesthood as defined by the Magisterium.

Lay “ministry” is endorsed as the answer to the dearth of priestly vocations, as if this were a permanent solution to the “changing” Church which the Bishop often refers to. No wonder the Bishop can get rid of good priests without a qualm. In the “new model” of Church, the priests are reduced to sacramental ministers, their ministry defined alongside the music ministers, youth ministers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and any other minister, as “one among equals, in the name of Jesus Christ and in the service of his Kingdom. Our Church celebrates the richness and diversity of ministries, gifts and talents...” (JT p.19)

In the “new” Church the priest’s ministry is defined by what he does rather than by what he is - other Christ.

This remodelling of the priesthood and a lay-led Church run counter to the priesthood as the Church defines the ordained ministry and the hierarchical nature of the Church. The Bishop, the priests and diocesan bureaucrats have duped the laity into learning to live without priests and believing that the Church in the future would be run primarily by lay people. We have seen the chaos and devastation that this Protestant experiment of the priesthood has had on Christianity.

Catholic priesthood is not a human creation but a gift from God. It would be more worthwhile for the bishop and his priests to spend time meditating on the great mystery and gift that is the Church with Her priesthood, than to spend time, money and all their efforts trying to change it.

Neither the signs of the time, the prevailing culture, the “faith community” or a vocational crisis would serve as a platform to stampede Rome into dialoguing about the nature and role of the priest. It is devious of a bishop and priests to prepare the diocese for ‘priest-less parishes’.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Divine Mercy Sunday

The first Sunday after Easter – this year 3rd April – is Divine Mercy Sunday. In 2002 Pope John Paul II established that it would be enriched by a plenary indulgence. The preparation for the Feast is to be a novena consisting of the recitation of the Divine Mercy chaplet for 9 days, beginning on Good Friday.

To observe the feast of Mercy we should:

- Celebrate the Feast of the Sunday after Easter
- Sincerely repent all our sins
- Place our complete trust in Jesus
- Go to Confession, preferably before that Sunday
- Receive Holy Communion on the day of the Feast
- Venerate the image of the Divine Mercy
- Be merciful to others, through our actions, words, and prayers on their behalf.

In Saint Faustina’s Diary (Divine Mercy in My Soul) she quotes Jesus:

"On that day [Feast of Mercy] the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which grace flow are opened." (Diary 699) "Souls perish in spite of My bitter Passion. I am giving them the last hope of salvation; that is, the Feast of My Mercy." (Diary 965)

Of the novena, Jesus says, *"By this novena, I will grant every possible grace to souls." (Diary 796)*

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.

Mass for Vocations

Fr Brian O'Connor, Chancellor of the Diocese of Sale, will be celebrating Mass every Saturday at 9am at the Cathedral in Sale for vocations.

We encourage people to make an effort to attend this Mass as a practical way of addressing the vocations problem in our diocese.

We also encourage you to approach your own parish priest to request that he dedicate a weekly Mass – and Adoration – for vocations.

We Must Believe

“We must firmly believe and declare openly that the same body that was born of the Virgin, which was hung on the cross, lay in the tomb, rose on the third day and ascended to the right hand of the Father, was given in food to the Apostles, and now the Church truly consecrates and distributes it to the faithful.”

St Anthony of Padua

“We call this food “Eucharist”, of which no one should partake who does not believe in the truth of our doctrine, who has not been cleansed by the regeneration and remission of his sins, and whose life is not in conformity with the precepts of Jesus Christ.”

St Justin

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

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Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.

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

ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email, printed copies later. Deadline for contributions is one week before the end of the month.

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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.