

# ***Into the Deep***

Issue 32

Newsletter of the Confraternity of St Michael, Gippsland

May 2005

## *"Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum: habemus papam"* **I announce to you news of great joy. We have a pope!**

On 19 April 2005, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected as Supreme Pontiff, the 264th successor of Peter, and chose the name Benedict XVI. At 6:48p.m. the Holy Father, preceded by the Cross, appeared on the balcony of St Peter's to greet the people and to impart the Apostolic Blessing "Urbi et Orbi" (to the city and to the world). Prior to the blessing, the new Pontiff addressed the faithful with the following words:

"Dear Brothers and Sisters, After our great Pope, John Paul II, the Cardinals have elected me, a simple, humble worker in the Lord's vineyard. I am consoled by the fact that the Lord knows how to work and how to act, even with insufficient tools, and I especially trust in your prayers.

In the joy of the resurrected Lord, trustful of his permanent help, we go ahead, sure that God will help. And Mary, his most beloved Mother, stands at our side. Thank you."

### **When the Bells Rang, Rome Ran**

"...Then on the afternoon of April 19 the crowds were gathering in the piazza. The evening before we had had to wait until almost 8p.m. so people were taking their time arriving in the square.

Yet a little before 6p.m. smoke began to emerge from the chimney. It appeared white, or at least lighter than usual, yet there were no bells as promised to announce a new pope.

Most of the crowd began to cheer then roar, while many kept looking, puzzled at the bells. Was there a pope? The smoke continued - surely white? - until the din of the people was finally drowned out by the clanging of the bells. We had a pope!

The entire city leaped into action. Suddenly people poured into the streets. Stores were closed and all the roads were filled with people sprinting, in skirts, suits or cassocks, toward St Peter's Square.

Some Romans, frustrated by the traffic in the tiny streets off the square, simply abandoned their cars in the road and hurried toward the piazza. The people on foot, undeterred by the parked vehicles blocking their path, just clambered over the hoods and trunks to get to St Peter's on time. It was well worth the effort.

As Pope Benedict XVI, the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, stepped out on the balcony of St Peter's and stood under the statue of Jesus which crowns the facade, they saw that the Church had a new Vicar of Christ, Rome had a new bishop and Catholics everywhere had a new father."

*Elizabeth Lev, Zenit columnist [www.zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)*

### **Serving Christ Alone**

*From the message of Pope Benedict XVI delivered at the end of Mass with members of the College of Cardinals 20 April 2005*

"In my soul there are two contrasting sentiments in these hours. On the one hand, a sense of inadequacy and human turmoil for the responsibility entrusted to me yesterday as the Successor of the Apostle Peter in this See of Rome, with regard to the Universal Church. On the other hand I sense within me profound gratitude to God Who does not abandon His flock, but leads it throughout time, under the guidance of those whom He has chosen as vicars of His Son, and made pastors.

...I consider this a grace obtained for me by my venerated predecessor, John Paul II. It seems I can feel his strong hand squeezing mine; I seem to see his smiling eyes and listen to his words, addressed to me especially at this moment: 'Do not be afraid!' ...

If the weight of the responsibility that now lies on my poor shoulders is enormous, the divine power on which I can count is surely immeasurable: 'You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church'. Electing me as the Bishop of Rome, the Lord wanted me as his Vicar, he wished me to be the 'rock' upon which everyone may rest with confidence. I ask him to make up for the poverty of my strength, that I may be a courageous and faithful pastor of His flock, always docile to the inspirations of His Spirit. ...

Like Peter, I too renew to Him my unconditional promise of faithfulness. He alone I intend to serve as I dedicate myself totally to the service of His Church.

*Vatican Information Service*

## Dissent

A recent letter to *Online Catholics* by Fr Eric Hodgens (see also March AD2000) has been disturbing me for the last few weeks. Some points he makes I agree with, some I would question, others constitute downright dissent from authentic and authoritative Catholic teaching and I think Fr Hodgens should withdraw those statements and apologise for them.

But there is a deeper level of disturbance in me which only this weekend (at the time of writing) was resolved by the Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent.

I had been asking myself "How does a Catholic priest get to the point where he is able to so angrily and so, let us hope, sincerely, utter such dissenting views publicly? What has to happen within a priest before he can come to such an extreme?"

I believe for a priest, or even a bishop, to get to such a point he has to forget something.

Fr Hodgens, claiming to speak on behalf of other priests, says the leadership of the Church (the Pope and his bishops) is "out of tune with the attitudes, hopes and desires of the priests and lay people whom they serve." Later in the article he says "...they [and presumably he] would resign from the priesthood except for their loyalty to their parishioners whom they love, and their parish which they wish to serve".

Fr Hodgens professes loyalty to his parishioners and expects the leadership of the Church to profess loyalty to the priests. I believe it is precisely here that Fr Hodgens makes his fatal error. He has turned loyalty on its head and at the same time the hierarchical structure of his own commission to serve.

In the aforementioned Gospel, (Jn 4:34), Jesus said: "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me ...". He did not say "My food is to do the will of the ones to whom I have been sent ...".

Fr Hodgens seems to have forgotten these words of the Master. He, like many others, has transferred his loyalty from those who sent him to those to whom he has been sent. No wonder he sounds frustrated and angry. He has set himself a pastoral charge he has no hope of realising.

Christ was sent to do the will of the Father, the Church is sent to do the will of Christ, and Fr Hodgens is sent (like all priests) to do the will of the Church.

Everywhere one looks one sees the same inversion which finds perhaps its ugliest expression in the constant call to laity and priests to "shape the Church of the future" whereas, in actuality, we should be allowing ourselves to be shaped by the Church of the present.

*FR JOHN SPEEKMAN Morwell, Vic  
Reprinted from AD2000, April 2005*

## Hail Mary, Full of Grace!

"It is in the heart, that is, in the very depth and substance of the Christian soul, that sanctifying grace resides and exercises its powerful influence. There grace establishes the throne of its power, extending to the memory, the intellect and the will, affecting all the higher and lower faculties, and all the internal and external senses.

Granting this, I say that the admirable Heart of Mary is an ocean of grace. Yet it is not I who make this statement, it is the Archangel Gabriel, sent by God from Heaven to announce to the Queen of Angels that the divine Majesty had chosen her to be the Mother of His Divine Son. The Archangel greets Mary by telling her first of all that she is "full of grace" (Lk 1:28). Notice that he does not say she will be, but that she is full of grace.

Would you know how it is that Mary was full of grace even before the Son of God became Incarnate in her womb? You must consider two truths taught by several distinguished theologians.

The first is that Mary was filled with such eminent grace at the moment of her Immaculate Conception that, according to many learned divines, she already surpassed the chief of Seraphim and the greatest of Saints. From the beginning of her existence she possessed more grace than they enjoyed at the time of their greatest perfection.

The second truth is that the heavenly Virgin was never idle, but remained constantly turned towards God, ever exercising her love for His divine Majesty. She loved Him with her whole Heart, her whole soul and all her strength, according to the full extent of the grace that was in her, so that grace was doubled in her soul, if not from moment to moment, at least from hour to hour, and perhaps more often. She had therefore attained to an inconceivable and unutterable degree of grace when the Archangel Gabriel saluted her as being full of grace."

*St. John Eudes, Admirable Heart of Mary, Part 8 Chapter II*

## Cardinal Pell on Pope John Paul II:

"He has been a genuine man of the spirit, a true priest. His example and teaching have encouraged orthodox Catholics everywhere to persevere. I personally can vouch for that. He has inspired thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, into the priesthood and religious life.

Even in the West he has steadied the ship. If many were still resolved to be irresolute, solid only for drift, there has been no doubt about where he is heading. He has never lacked courage and courage is contagious. History will know him as John Paul the Great. He has earned that distinction."

*Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney*

## Address Cause of the Problem

The article by Dr Jim D'Orsa in March Catholic Life is very true – there is an acute shortage of priests in Australia, and our heart goes out to those older priests who are valiantly shouldering the heavy burden.

But this situation didn't arise overnight. Catholic administrators were very aware of it 20 or more years ago. Many priests left after Vatican II and vocations gradually diminished. It is good that some solutions are being sought to spread the existing priests to as many parishes as possible, but these are only band-aid solutions and will not solve the problem long-term.

One wonders why the real cause of the shortage of priests is totally ignored and never mentioned. The problem is that only 5 out of every 100 Catholic school-leavers in Australia attend Sunday Mass, presumably 2 males and 3 females. It would be presumptuous to imagine we would get many vocations from this minute number.

My suggestion is to only allow very spiritual and knowledgeable religious teachers to teach religion in Catholic schools, because it is obvious there has been a complete breakdown in passing on the richness and beauty of the Catholic traditions to our young.

Secondly, I don't think obtaining priests from other countries is as complex as Dr D'Orsa states. I recently spoke with a nun who had just returned from India and she told me there were so many priests in her parish that they had 5 or 6 Masses at the Church on a weekday, and that some of the priests she spoke with had said they would love to come to Australia. I have read that in Poland they cannot accommodate all those desiring to become priests in their seminaries – perhaps we could train some of them in Australia.

One wonders why over the last 50 years a once strong vibrant Catholic faith in Australia has diminished to its present state, empty convents, some seminaries closed down, half-empty pews filled mostly with the grey-haired and a smattering of other ages.

Urgent attention must not only be focussed on spreading the few available priests - a stop-gap measure - but also on the cause of the problem which is never mentioned except maybe behind closed doors.

*Mary Tudor, Moe*

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***See [www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com)  
for all previous issues of  
Into the Deep***

## Diocesan Marian Conference

The Diocese of Sale Marian Conference will be at St Michael's Church, Traralgon on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May, commencing at 9am with the Holy Rosary in different languages. This year's Conference features International speaker Fr Tim Deeter, and Fr Tony Fox OFMConv. The theme for the Conference is, "Mary Queen of the Eucharist."

Fr Deeter was born and reared in Chicago, Illinois USA. He taught for 14 years in Catholic Schools in Chicago, Tulsa, and Beaumont and was Parish Priest for 14 years in Texas. In 1997 he came to Perth at the invitation of Archbishop Hickey and is presently serving as Director of Casa Frassati Vocations Discernment Centre, Director of Cathedral Liturgy and Music, and on many other committees. Fr Deeter has led many pilgrimages to apparition sites of Our Lady.

Fr Fox was born in Melbourne and joined the Conventual Franciscans in August 1974. He currently lives in Kellyville NSW and is the Australian National Director for the Militia of Mary Immaculate, founded by St Maximilian Kolbe OFMConv. He is part time Prison Chaplain, National Spiritual Assistant for the Secular Franciscan Order in Australia, and Spiritual Advisor of the Missionaries of Love and Peace Community.

This year represents the 9<sup>th</sup> Marian Conference held in the Diocese of Sale to promote devotion to Mary as the Mother of God. After the 9am rosary, there will be a talk, followed by the Crowning of Our Lady's statue and Holy Mass. Lunch will be at 1pm (bring your own), followed by two more talks. The day will close at 3.30pm after Benediction and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. There is no cost to attend the day.

Let the Mother of Mercy lead us all to a greater love of her Son in the Eucharist.

## The Fullness of Truth

In response to the homily given by Fr Tom Cleary on Tuesday the 5th of April: There is a big difference between oneness in truth and oneness in falsehood, likewise there is a big difference between the fullness of truth and a watered-down version of the truth.

God is the one who makes the rules so it is not for us to try and dilute them in any way. The one true faith must be defended; if this means having to oppose our very own priests and bishops then sadly that is the way it must be.

Moving on to Father Speekman, I just want to note that in the entire time I have known him I have never heard him utter a single negative or disloyal word against the Church or its teachings. Now this is the kind of truth and oneness that we should be looking towards, and not the kind that panders to the whims of the society around us.

*Michael Prater, Morwell*

## Celibacy Is Freely Chosen

Let's remember that when men enter the priesthood they FREELY CHOOSE! Celibacy is not some wicked surprise after they've committed themselves to the priesthood, something thrust upon them when it's too late for them to change their minds, a trap set up by the Church to destroy their lives.

Some pathetic new book is on the market about priests in love – the poor, dejected, bitter and unfulfilled men who struggle to balance the “demands of the church and their need for close, sexual companionship” (*CathNews 01-04-2005*). The book is apparently based on interviews with priests who believe the Church should drop the unfair and mean celibacy requirement for priesthood. Many of these priests have broken their vow of celibacy.

What an example. Yes! Let's *change* the rules for those who *break* the rules! That's an intelligent, grown-up, logical sort of thing to do.

Whoever would think of interviewing men who understand and love their priesthood, who live it faithfully and joyfully despite the struggles, and who accept that this is a commitment that they *freely chose* for love of Christ and His Church.

## Women's Ordination

*From an interview by Zenit with Jutta Burggraf, professor of theology at the University of Navarre and specialist on women and the Church, regarding the “feminine genius” that John Paul II so admired.*

*Zenit:* Despite Pope John Paul II's efforts to promote women, his pontificate has been accused of not fully recognising the rights of women in the Church. What are these criticisms about and why do you think they are not correct?

*Burggraf:* The criticisms refer to priestly ordination, to which women do not have access by an ineffable divine will. But this is not a feminine question that can be posed in the realm of natural rights. It is a strictly theological question that I can only consider in the light of faith.

John Paul II undoubtedly did not consider women “unfit” for the priesthood. But even though he was Pope, he could not change the essence of this sacrament. The Lord could have called women to the priesthood, but he did not, though in his treatment of women he often acted against the customs of Israel.

He chose a woman, Mary, among all men; but he did not confer the ministerial priesthood on women, but only on men.

The Apostles followed his example, and the Church must preserve, also today, this way of proceeding. This is not stagnation, but a manifestation of fidelity.

## Society for Eucharistic Adoration

Dear good people responsible for *Into the Deep*, Congratulations and God's blessings on your great work! Thank you for sending me the back issues. Keep up the good work.

*Christine McCarthy, National Convenor,  
Society for Eucharistic Adoration*

In July 1993, a group of Sydney people formed the **Society for Eucharistic Adoration**:

- to promote and encourage all forms of Eucharistic adoration and particularly perpetual adoration where feasible,
- to provide a resource centre for advice and information on the promotion of Eucharistic devotion.

The Society for Eucharistic Adoration currently has 2000 members in Australia and overseas. Our members undertake to make a weekly holy hour in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in any church or chapel, preferably in their own parish church. Our members pray for the Holy Father, for priests, for vocations, for their families, the holy souls in purgatory, the sanctification of our nation and for the members of the Society for Eucharistic Adoration.

Members can have their names registered by contacting: The Convenor, Society for Eucharistic Adoration, 142 Victoria Street, Ashfield, NSW 2131. Telephone: 02 9798 3056, Fax: 02 9797 2273

Email: [contact@seadoration.org](mailto:contact@seadoration.org)

Website: [www.seadoration.org](http://www.seadoration.org)

Members share in the spiritual benefits of the Society for Eucharistic Adoration. A Mass is offered each month for their spiritual and temporal welfare. Membership is free, but those who pay a subscription of AUD\$5 per year are sent regular newsletters.

The Holy Father has blessed our apostolate and we have the support of our Cardinal and Archbishops. We number amongst our members cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, religious and laity, but most of our members are ordinary lay people who witness to our belief in the greatest miracle God has given us - the gift of His Divine Son in the Most Holy Eucharist and abiding with us until the end of time.

## A Different Code

Clearly, Canon Law does not run in the Diocese of Sale while Bishop Coffey is the Ordinary.

Does it not follow that the Rev. Father Speekman would be well advised to seek redress for unfair dismissal under another code – Industrial Law?

If he did, would he not earn the gratitude of all Catholics throughout Victoria suffering under the arrogance of Catholic Education Office employees?

*Molly Brennan, Bendigo*

## Laying Down His Life

*Excerpts from the English translation of the homily by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger at the funeral Mass for Pope John Paul II, 8 April 2005:*

“... How often, in his letters to priests and in his autobiographical books has he spoken to us about his priesthood, to which he was ordained on 1 November 1946. In these texts he interprets his priesthood with particular reference to three sayings of the Lord. First: 'You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last' (Jn 15:16). The second saying is: 'The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep' (Jn 10:11). And then: 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love' (Jn 15:9). In these three sayings we see the heart and soul of our Holy Father. He really went everywhere, untiringly, in order to bear fruit, fruit that lasts.

... The Holy Father was a priest to the last, for he offered his life to God for his flock and for the entire human family, in a daily self-oblation for the service of the Church, especially amid the sufferings of his final months. And in this way he became one with Christ, the Good Shepherd who loves his sheep. Finally, 'abide in my love:' the Pope who tried to meet everyone, who had an ability to forgive and to open his heart to all, tells us once again today, with these words of the Lord, that by abiding in the love of Christ we learn, at the school of Christ, the art of true love.

... The love of Christ was the dominant force in the life of our beloved Holy Father. Anyone who ever saw him pray, who ever heard him preach, knows that. Thanks to his being profoundly rooted in Christ, he was able to bear a burden which transcends merely human abilities: that of being the shepherd of Christ's flock, his universal Church.

... Divine Mercy: the Holy Father found the purest reflection of God's mercy in the Mother of God. He, who at an early age had lost his own mother, loved his divine mother all the more. He heard the words of the crucified Lord as addressed personally to him: 'Behold your Mother.' And so he did as the beloved disciple did: he took her into his own home (Jn 19:27) – 'Totus tuus.' And from the mother he learned to conform himself to Christ.

None of us can ever forget how in that last Easter Sunday of his life, the Holy Father, marked by suffering, came once more to the window of the Apostolic Palace and one last time gave his blessing 'urbi et orbi.' We can be sure that our beloved Pope is standing today at the window of the Father's house, that he sees us and blesses us. Yes, bless us, Holy Father. We entrust your dear soul to the Mother of God, your Mother, who guided you each day and who will guide you now to the eternal glory of her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

*Vatican Information Service*

## Invited Under False Pretences

In early March Bishop Coffey wrote to 4 Morwell parishioners – staunch supporters of Fr John Speekman's – saying he was “required to undertake an investigation in relation to the question of the removal or transfer of Father John Speekman from the Morwell Parish.” He invited them individually to “arrange to attend with me and a facilitator retained by me for the purposes of discussing with me...” and referred later to an “interview with me”.

Bishop Coffey did not respond to written requests for clarification regarding who required him to investigate exactly what, and why. The people involved attended in good faith, willing to speak in Fr John's defence in spite of not knowing what their statements would be used for.

The meetings, held mid April, turned out to be neither an interview with the Bishop nor a discussion with the Bishop. It was a questioning by his facilitator, a solicitor.

Bishop Coffey read a suitably vague statement at the beginning of the interview, saying he was conducting “an investigation” into Fr Speekman, but gave no further detail. He indicated that this time the investigation would ensure that Fr Speekman had the ability to defend himself. He had employed the solicitor to assist him in preparing “acta of the case.” He did not specify what “case” he was preparing acta for. It was not explained what process these people were involved in. It was not made clear why a civil lawyer was involved (assuming it's a canonical process).

It has been 8 months since the Bishop informed Fr John that he intended to “start the removal process again,” and he has heard not a word since then. Surely this can't be another removal process now, after all this time?! Does he have no regard for Fr John at all – or for justice? How can he proceed on his own terms, at the expense of all others? Father has not been advised of this current process, nor has he been advised of any charges or allegations against which he can defend himself. It is hard to imagine how interviewing his supporters ensures that he has the full ability to defend himself.

The questions asked of those interviewed seemed to be always geared towards questioning Fr John's rightful authority as Parish Priest, yet the ‘authority’ of others who apparently complained against him was accepted, respected and defended. The fact that the Decree from the Congregation for the Clergy confirms that his actions were “entirely within his competence as Parish Priest” seemed to be overlooked.

Those interviewed were given opportunity to address the Bishop at the end, however, it was made clear that he would be unable to respond as this would “compromise the process.” Hardly a discussion!

Where on earth is the justice? Surely Bishop Coffey will soon see that he must reinstate Fr Speekman as Parish Priest of Morwell without further delay. There is no future in a new ‘case’. The Bishop cannot create evidence where none exists.

## Priests' Focus Must Be Eucharist

“Priests are engaged in a wide variety of pastoral activities. If we also consider the social and cultural conditions of the modern world it is easy to understand how priests face the very real *risk of losing their focus* amid such a great number of different tasks.

The Second Vatican Council saw in pastoral charity the bond which gives unity to the priest's life and work. This, the Council adds, “flows mainly from the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is therefore the centre and root of the whole priestly life.”

We can understand, then, how important it is for the spiritual life of the priest, as well as for the good of the Church and the world, that priests follow the Council's recommendation to celebrate the Eucharist daily: “for even if the faithful are unable to be present, it is an act of Christ and the Church”.

In this way priests will be able to counteract the daily tensions which lead to a lack of focus and they will find in the Eucharistic Sacrifice - the true centre of their lives and ministry - the spiritual strength needed to deal with their different pastoral responsibilities. Their daily activity will thus become truly Eucharistic.

The centrality of the Eucharist in the life and ministry of priests is the basis of its centrality in the *pastoral promotion of priestly vocations*.

It is in the Eucharist that prayer for vocations is most closely united to the prayer of Christ the Eternal High Priest. At the same time the diligence of priests in carrying out their Eucharistic ministry, together with the conscious, active and fruitful participation of the faithful in the Eucharist, provides young men with a powerful example and incentive for responding generously to God's call.” (n.31)

*Ecclesia De Eucharistia*, Pope John Paul II

## A Note For Queensland Readers

Raymond de Souza is back in Brisbane! He will be speaking at Banyo on 20<sup>th</sup> May, Fortitude Valley on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and Bray Park on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. His talks will include topics such as “The Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist” “The Sacrificial Nature of the Mass” and “Rediscovering the Sense of the Sacred.”

Raymond is the Founder and Director of *St Gabriel Communications*, Australia's first international outreach to promote Catholic Apologetics. From their office at the Cathedral Parish Centre in Perth, they expand the Catholic Educational programs of the Marian Eucharist Alliance and the New Apologetics by Mail, which reaches hundreds of lay Catholics in all Australian states.

Blessed Trinity Apologetics warmly encourages people of any denomination to attend these talks to find out the Mind of the Catholic Church on these subjects. Enquiries: Vince - 07 3267 0265.

## John Paul II The Great

When Karol Wojtyla was elected to replace Pope John Paul I after the latter's sudden and unexpected death only one month after election, both Catholics and the world wondered what this unknown Polish Pope would bring to the office. It did not take long for him to make his mark.

I was then a full-time official of the National Civic Council and the late Bob Santamaria informed us that he was a man of great strength and capacity. Able to speak eleven languages, Bob related that at a conference in Washington, Cardinal Wojtyla, as he was then, was able to not only interpret for several people of different languages, but to several at the same time. It also emerged that he was a key figure in the real work of renewal at the second Vatican Council, not the phony so-called ‘spirit of Vatican II’ which the Church and the world heard so much about from liberal elements determined to turn the Church into a talk shop with few fixed beliefs or doctrines. Ever since his election, Pope John Paul II emphatically defended the true teachings of the Church established by Jesus Christ. He was particularly devoted to the Virgin Mary.

Everywhere he went he inspired people to faith and hope. His impact on young people was dramatic and a constant reminder to liberals in the Church that truth and faith will always inspire the young. The millions of young people attending the Pope's World Youth Days gives testimony to this fact. The U.S. hierarchy argued against one in the U.S. on the grounds that young people would not attend. Yet in 1993 over 800 000 young people flocked to Denver to meet the Pope and accept his message.

Sadly, many Bishops in the affluent west have ignored this reality and continued to treat young people as unthinking blobs who have accepted what the Pope called ‘a culture of death’. Here in Australia such a belief has led to declining Church attendance, doctrinally illiterate school leavers, and a Church ignored by society. Hopefully the death of Pope John Paul II will open many eyes to his message that truth and faith will renew the Church and the world.

With a legacy of a Catechism of the Catholic Church, 14 encyclicals, 15 apostolic exhortations, 11 apostolic constitutions, 45 apostolic letters, 5 books and 15 assemblies of the Synod of Bishops, as well as catecheses from his general audiences, Pope John Paul II will long have an impact on the world. The response from world leaders and millions of people to his death gives testimony to the fact that he was arguably the greatest world figure of the past 100 years.

To the orthodox Catholic, Pope John Paul II will long remain an inspiration and model of what a Catholic should be - fearless, well-informed and faithful to the teachings of our Saviour Jesus Christ. To us he is already John Paul II the Great. *Pat O'Brien, Sale*

## JPII's Spiritual Testament

The following is an entry from 1980 in Pope John Paul II's spiritual testament, released by Vatican Information Service. His testament was written in Polish, and had a number of entries from 1979 to 2000.

"Once again, I wish to entrust myself totally to the Lord's grace. He Himself will decide when and how I must end my earthly life and pastoral ministry. In life and in death, Totus Tuus in Mary Immaculate.

Accepting that death, even now, I hope that Christ will give me the grace for the final passage, in other words (my) Easter. I also hope that He makes (that death) useful for this more important cause that I seek to serve: the salvation of men and women, the safeguarding of the human family and, in that, of all nations and all peoples (among them, I particularly address my earthly Homeland), and useful for the people with whom He particularly entrusted me, for the question of the Church, for the glory of God Himself."

Pope John Paul II also asked for Masses and prayers after his death.

### *George Weigel on Pope John Paul II*

"He's been appreciated as a man of culture, a man of great human sympathies, a man of great courage and integrity and compassion. I wonder, though, if he's been appreciated for what he in fact was - the greatest Christian witness of the past century?

Everything else the Pope accomplished flowed from that one supreme fact: This was a man who believed with every fibre of his being that Jesus Christ is the answer to the question that is every human life."

*George Weigel, Author*

## The Meaning of Life

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.' These words understandably give rise to fear, even more so for us, men and women of our time who tend to see suffering only as something useless and harmful. Yet, precisely this is our mistake, preventing us from understanding not only the meaning of suffering, but also the meaning of life."

*Cardinal Camillo Ruini, vicar general for the diocese of Rome*

## Thought for the Month

Why do the dissenting 'liberals' in the Catholic Church try to make *their* personal problems, the *Church's* problems?

The Church doesn't "owe them", and doesn't need to create or change any of her laws to accommodate the whims and sins of those who don't believe in them.

## Half-Truths and Heresies

I was uneasy after reading Bishop Coffey's "Reflections" (ITD April 2005) so I enquired of someone more knowledgeable than myself.

What is said there is true – up to a point, I was told. It is the kind of half-truth that is dangerous because it aims to promote a particular kind of agenda.

One cannot argue with the value of self-giving love, but there are other truths. Because we are limited human beings we don't have direct experience or knowledge of God. Ordinarily God reveals Himself to us and communicates with us sacramentally! The most obvious example of this is the person of Christ Himself.

The Church also is sacramental in nature, apart from the seven sacraments designed to take account of our human nature. To disparage one truth by emphasising another truth out of proportion is what the history of heresies is all about.

What is the underlying agenda? To denigrate 'church goers' in comparison with 'social workers'. The truth of the gospel leads, in some way, to social change for betterment, but the Church was not founded as a humanitarian organisation. It was founded to help the spread of the Kingdom of God by offering the priestly sacrifice and preaching the Word, which it does sacramentally.

With all due respect to Fr Michael Downey, the Church DOES celebrate the liturgy for itself, the community of believers. The hope is that they will then take the message, by word and example, to the world of unbelievers. That is how the Church's mission is realised.

*S.C., Melbourne*

## More Praying, Less Pointing

Let us put an end to all the 'priest bashing' that has been going on in the diocese of Sale for the last three years - whether it is from your newsletter or otherwise - and allow me to keep my wonderful memories of all the priests I have known in the last twenty eight years in Cranbourne.

I agree with what you say about Catholic Education. I have put six children through Catholic schools. The last two who passed out of St Francis Xavier College, Beaconsfield in the 80s, tell me I wasted my money because I did not know what goes on in Catholic schools.

However, I still feel strongly that we should do more praying for all our clergy instead of pointing fingers at them. I also feel that if we stopped haranguing the bishop and those who stand with him, then some semblance of calm will prevail when good decisions can be made.

*Yolanda Shedden, Cranbourne*

# Disturbed by Misplaced Loyalty

The letters by Fr Herman Hengel to ITD have been disturbing me. It is the second time in five months that he has lashed out at lay people who publicly defend the faith.

He has again vigorously defended ex-priest Thomas Groome (Sharing Faith and “Shared Christian Praxis”), who is clearly hostile and suspicious in his approach to the doctrinal element in Catholicism. It is unfair of Fr Hengel to lash out at Eamonn Keane’s books, and other sincere lay Catholics who are highly regarded in their parishes and who are defenders of the faith and are loyal to the Church teaching.

Would Fr Hengel publicly defend his brother priest Fr Speekman - who is a priest, who has done no wrong, whose reputation has been violated, and who has been denied justice - with the same vigour? What has become of Fr Hengel’s loyalty to his brother priest, and his faithfulness to what the Pope states in *Catechesi Tradendae*?

I wrote to Fr Hengel and the parish council and expressed my concern about “Shared Christian Praxis”, which I believe is a direct spiritual assault on the souls of Catholic children. In his reply he defended it, as he did in ITD. I thank Mr Eamonn Keane for writing his response in ITD, and disclosing the many erroneous assertions and contradictions in Fr Hengel’s letter.

In reply to one of my letters Fr Hengel said, “Thank you for your correspondence. The article from ITD is interesting. I am a friend of Fr Speekman and have worked with him in Cranbourne. Unfortunately, he has caused divisions in the Morwell parish and has been forceful in dealing with people. But it is not my place to judge his removal from the parish. I do not have any time for ITD. It is a group of self righteous people who seem to be running it. They show total disloyalty to the bishop and use terrorist tactics. And you never negotiate with terrorists.”

Catholic Education has not only failed in carrying out the mission of the Church, but it has harmed and led astray generations of souls. 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 (ITD Feb 2005).

The new Groome curriculum that has entered in our diocese this year leads young people out of the Catholic Church. There is no time to waste. I have wasted thousands of dollars on Catholic education of my nine children. I can no longer support the corruption in Catholic education and have withdrawn my financial support from the Catholic schools in my parish. This can be an issue for other Catholics to reflect on.

I remember Fr Hengel and our bishop and all our priests of our diocese in my daily prayers. May the

Lord give us holy priests and bishops, and enlighten, guide, strengthen., protect and bless all our bishops and priests.

*On Sin - Catechism of the Catholic Church:*

**1868** Sin is a personal act. Moreover, we have a responsibility for the sins committed by others when *we co-operate in them*

- by participating directly and voluntarily in them;
- by ordering, advising, praising, or approving them;
- by not disclosing or not hindering them when we have an obligation to do so;
- by protecting evil-doers.

**1872** Sin is an act contrary to reason. It wounds man’s nature and injures human solidarity.

*Leo Willems, Warragul*

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## *Cardinal Murphy-O’Connor on JP II:*

“We have lost a great leader of our modern world. John Paul II was an extraordinary man, one of the greatest popes in the Church’s 2000-year history. We will remember him for his tireless witness to hope, to freedom, and to the dignity of human life. We will remember him for his courage in reaching across the boundaries of race, religion and ideology; we will remember him for his energy, as well as for his courageous endurance of physical suffering right until the end.

John Paul II was always conscious of the drama of human salvation; he reminded us, tirelessly, of our eternal destiny. He showed, in his own life, how human beings are at their greatest and most free when they are most obedient to God’s will. His was a light that burned most strongly wherever the darkness was deepest. The Church will miss him. The world will miss him. I will miss him.”

*Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor, archbishop of Westminster*

## **Profound Love**

“Those who were able to follow the Pope’s daily activity most closely, witnessed his profound love for the Eucharist. Before taking important decisions, he would spend a long time before the Most Holy Sacrament, taking the dossiers to be studied with him into his private chapel, and setting aside a time for reflection and prayer before the Tabernacle. Each choice would thus always and exclusively arise from the search for God’s will and for the true good of the Church.”

*Archbishop Leonardo Sandri,  
at a Mass for the repose of the soul of John Paul II*



## With friends like these...

Fr Hengel freely makes assertions about Fr Speekman's apparent wrong-doings to others (to Leo Willems alongside, and to at least two other people that ITD knows of) without feeling the need to back up his judgements with evidence (strangely enough, the same trap that the Bishop falls into). How can he claim to be Fr Speekman's friend, and yet blithely accuse him of "causing division" and being "forceful in dealing with people." The accusations he made to the other two people were even stronger. What is he basing these accusations on, and has he given Fr Speekman opportunity to defend himself, or is he simply spreading rumour or gossip?

It seems he has jumped on the bandwagon where people can accuse Fr Speekman of anything they like with impunity, and at the same time attack vigorously anyone who defends him, defends the Faith, or reports on factual cases of dissent or abuse involving other priests or bishops. Why is Fr Speekman always 'fair game' for abuse or gossip? When Fr Hengel last visited Morwell Catholic Parish (for the Planned Giving campaign shortly before Fr Speekman was removed) he himself commented how impressed he was with state of the parish (not to mention the 10% increase in Planned Giving that Fr Speekman inspired).

At the same time, Fr Hengel comforts himself by saying that it is not for him to judge. Has he not already judged, by spreading rumours about what Fr Speekman has or has not done? Fortunately however, it is not his judgement that counts. Rome has already judged the matter and found Fr Speekman's ministry *effective*, and the Bishop to have *no* valid reason or argument for removing him as parish priest of Morwell. Why is he still accused and (mis)judged?

As for Fr Speekman causing division, perhaps Fr Hengel should re-read the Decree from the Congregation for the Clergy again, where it states that, "In fact, any confusion or disturbance at Morwell which the Most Reverend Ordinary has ascertained might well be attributed more to the actions of the Most Reverend Ordinary than to those of Father Speekman."

Let's face facts here – Fr Speekman did much to build Morwell Catholic Parish in holiness and faithfulness to the Truth of Catholic teaching. The truth is too strong for some and they didn't like it. They blamed Fr Speekman's "way" instead of admitting it was the message they resented because it didn't suit their lifestyle. The Bishop in his case for removal, also had to blame Fr Speekman's "way" because he couldn't blame the message that he himself should be preaching and living.

Those who don't or won't defend the Truth, feel uncomfortable being shown up for their weakness, so the easiest is to point fingers.

## Don't Judge

Talking of fair game, we have had reports of a priest in Melbourne, and one in Queensland (neither of whom know Fr Speekman, and they admitted this), asserting that Fr Speekman is unpastoral, and even insinuating misconduct.

It's incredible how the catch-phrase for liberals is "Don't judge" – and yet they hold nothing back in judging orthodox Catholics, even if they know nothing of the facts.

## Way-of-the-Cross Meditations

The meditations and prayers for the Way of the Cross on Good Friday this year were written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, [former] prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. They were focused on Christ's self-giving in the Eucharist.

In a petition to Christ, the cardinal said: "Help us grow in love and veneration for your Eucharistic mystery - to make you, the Bread of heaven, the source of our life."

Some of the passages were examinations of conscience for the whole Church, as in the ninth station, with this question:

"Should we not also think of how much Christ suffers in his own Church? How often is the holy sacrament of his Presence abused, how often must he enter empty and evil hearts! What little faith is present behind so many theories, so many empty words!

"How much filth there is in the Church, and even among those who, in the priesthood, ought to belong entirely to him! How much pride, how much self-complacency! What little respect we pay to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where he waits for us, ready to raise us up whenever we fall! All this is present in his Passion."

In the seventh station, commenting on Christianity, Cardinal Ratzinger said: "But we can also think, in more recent times, of how a Christianity which has grown weary of faith has abandoned the Lord: the great ideologies, and the banal existence of those who no longer believe in anything, who simply drift through life, have built a new and worse paganism, which in its attempt to do away with God once and for all, have ended up doing away with man. And so man lies fallen in the dust."

One understands, the cardinal said in the third station, how our "arrogance that makes us think that we ourselves can create human beings, has turned man into a kind of merchandise, to be bought and sold, or stored to provide parts for experimentation. In doing this, we hope to conquer death by our own efforts, yet in reality we are profoundly debasing human dignity."

Zenit News [www.zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)

## An Adult Faith

“In the Letter to the Ephesians, St Paul mentions “the measure of the fullness of Christ” to which “we are called in order to truly become adults in the faith. We must not remain children in the faith, without coming of age.

What does it mean to be children in faith? St Paul says that it means being ‘tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.’ A very pertinent description! How many winds of doctrine have we known over the last few decades! How many ideological currents! How many schools of thought!

The little ship bearing the thoughts of many Christians has frequently been shaken by these waves, thrown from one extreme to the other: from Marxism to liberalism, even to libertarianism; from collectivism to radical individualism; from atheism to a vague religious mysticism; from agnosticism to syncretism, and so on. Every day new sects arise, and St Paul’s words concerning the deception of men and the cunning that leads into error come true.

Having a clear faith, according to the Creed of the Church, is often labelled as fundamentalism. While relativism, in other words allowing oneself to be ‘tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine,’ appears as the only attitude appropriate to modern times, a dictatorship of relativism is being formed, one that recognises nothing as definitive and that has as its measure only the self and its desires.

We, nonetheless, do have another measure: the Son of God, true man. He is the measure of true humanism. An ‘adult’ faith does not follow the waves of fashion and the latest novelties; an adult and mature faith is profoundly rooted in friendship with Christ.”

*From Cardinal Ratzinger’s homily at Mass prior to the conclave  
18-04-2005 Vatican Information Service*

## Woman of the Eucharist

At the Annunciation Mary conceived the Son of God in the physical reality of his body and blood, thus anticipating within herself what to some degree happens sacramentally in every believer who receives, under the signs of bread and wine, the Lord’s body and blood.

As a result, there is a profound analogy between the *Fiat* which Mary said in reply to the angel, and the *Amen* which every believer says when receiving the body of the Lord. Mary was asked to believe that the One whom she conceived “through the Holy Spirit” was “the Son of God” (Lk 1:30-35). In continuity with the Virgin’s faith, in the Eucharistic mystery we are asked to believe that the same Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary, becomes present in his full humanity and divinity under the signs of bread and wine.

*Pope John Paul II*

## Fr Speekman Update

Unfortunately, over 9 months after the Decree from the Congregation for the Clergy in his favour, Fr Speekman is still not back in his parish of Morwell, and had heard nothing further from Bishop Coffey regarding his situation.

Fr Speekman is currently working in Sydney Archdiocese, after Cardinal Pell accepted his offer to work there until the resolution of his ‘case’.

This is a temporary situation only. Fr Speekman has not requested incardination in the Archdiocese, and is eager to return to his diocese. Please continue to pray for him.

## Act of Contrition

*Answered by Zenit’s liturgical columnist Father Edward McNamara*

**Q:** A lay person from Canberra in Australia comments: “A priest who hears confessions at my Church does not ask penitents to make an act of contrition during the confession itself. Instead, he asks the penitent to make an act of contrition privately, after the confession is over, when doing the penance. Having given the penance and having told the penitent to make the act of contrition, he then pronounces the words of absolution. Does this practice invalidate the sacrament?”

**A:** Of course, one should be grateful for having a priest who so readily makes himself available for hearing confessions even though he may have picked up an odd foible. Perhaps he has passed some time in territories where confession lines are still long and he acquired the habit of shortening the rite so as to confess as many people as possible.

In principle he should not only wait for the act of contrition but actually invite the penitent to manifest his contrition through an act of prayer. The ritual for reconciliation allows the penitent to make a traditional act of contrition or recite a short Scriptural phrase such as “Lord, have mercy on me a sinner.” Our reader could adopt this solution if he fails to persuade his priest to change his habits.

Although the practice is incorrect it does not invalidate the sacrament because the act of contrition is not an essential or indispensable element of reconciliation. It is important, however, as it manifests externally the essential interior attitudes for a valid confession.

Those attitudes are repentance, purpose of amendment, and acceptance of the penance. The essential exterior elements are confession of one’s sins and the priest’s absolution.

## Priests' Dilemma

I showed the item from ITD 'Rare and Exceptional Cases' (April 2005, p. 9) to a priest, who explained to me just how tempting it is to just sit in the pews instead of concelebrating Mass. I asked why?

Well, he said, you have to consider the concelebrants.

There are some who want to hold hands, as if singing Auld Lang Syne. Then there are places like the Melbourne parish presided over by the outspoken critic whose recent negatives about John Paul II and the Church in general smacked of frustration in not seeing one of his own get the top job.

In that parish visiting clergy are told by parishioners that they don't say the Creed because most of them don't believe in most of it anyhow. Then the priest finds himself presented with LEAVENED bread (printed on the cellophane wrapping) for mass! If he can cope with that, after mass he finds in the sacristy a sign telling all and sundry that any of the Precious Blood left over is to be tipped down the sink!

Aghast, I asked, "Don't the authorities know what is going on there?" His answer floored me. "How can they not know! A relative of one of the bishops lives there."

I learned that day something of the burden good priests must carry.

*S.C., Melbourne*

## Bishops for Married Clergy

"A subtle campaign by influential Australian Catholics is under way for major policy changes under a new Pope." This was the opening sentence to an article by Bryan Patterson in the Sunday Herald Sun of April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

He went on to say that three months prior, "Australian Catholic priests suddenly urged the Vatican to drop the centuries-long ban on married priests." This proposition was presented by the National Council of Priests (see March ITD for more of the NCP's proposals.)

If as stated in the Herald Sun article, this organisation represents "40 bishops and half of Australia's 1649 priests," then no wonder the Church in Australia is in crisis.

The Catholic Church is not a democracy, thank God. The Church was instituted by Christ and is a divine institution. We should do well to remember that Christ Himself gave to Peter the keys of the Kingdom. Wherever Peter (the Pope) is, there is the Church.

To show their loyalty to the Pope, those 40 bishops should immediately resign from the NCP. They should also publicly disassociate themselves from the agenda being pushed by this liberal organisation.

*John Henderson, Morwell*

## Shock! New Pope a Catholic

*by Gerard Baker, The Times Online Uk - April 21, 2005*

What has been most enjoyable about the stunned reaction of the bulk of the media to the election of Pope Benedict XVI has been the simple incredulousness at the very idea that a man such as Joseph Ratzinger could possibly have become leader of the universal Church.

Journalists and pundits for whom the Catholic Church has long been an object of anthropological curiosity fringed with patronising ridicule have really let themselves go since the new pontiff emerged. Indeed most of the coverage I have seen or read could be neatly summarised as: "Cardinals elect Catholic Pope. World in Shock."

As headlines, I'll grant you, it's hard to beat God's Rottweiler, The Enforcer, or Cardinal No. They all play beautifully into the anti-Catholic sentiment in intellectual European and American circles that is, in this politically correct era, the only form of religious bigotry legitimised and sanctioned in public life. But I ask you, in all honesty, what were they expecting?

Did the likes of The Guardian, the BBC or The New York Times think there was someone in the Church's leadership who was going to pop up out on the balcony of St Peter's and with a cheery wave, tell the faithful that everything they'd heard for the past 26 — no, make that 726 — years was rubbish and that they should all rush out and load up with condoms and abortifacients like teenagers off for a smutty weekend? [...]

Sure, he is doctrinally a traditionalist, but this is misunderstood too. If you, as the papacy does, claim direct authority, through your 264 predecessors from the ministry of St Peter, who, the Gospels tell us was inaugurated into that ministry by the Son of God while he was present on earth, is it really possible to take anything other than a bit of a traditionalist view when it comes to doctrinal matters?

[...] the Church's mission is to bear witness to the truth. The truth is not something that needs redefining each time a pope dies.

# Conclave?

From the Latin

# With key!

## Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Cranbourne	Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by swipe card.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Fridays 7.30pm – midnight (alternating months, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9am – 12noon 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday 10am – 11am 11 <sup>th</sup> 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

Sale Saturday 9am

## Intensify Love and Devotion

“In a very significant way, my pontificate starts as the Church is living the special year dedicated to the Eucharist. How can I not see in this providential coincidence an element that must mark the ministry to which I have been called?”

The Eucharist, the heart of Christian life and the source of the evangelising mission of the Church, cannot but be the permanent centre and the source of the Petrine service entrusted to me. [...]

I ask everyone to intensify in coming months love and devotion to the Eucharistic Jesus and to express in a courageous and clear way the real presence of the Lord, above all through the solemnity and the correctness of the celebrations.

I ask this in a special way of priests, about whom I am thinking in this moment with great affection.”

*Pope Benedict XVI*

## Charity without truth would be blind

*Pope Benedict XVI*

*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

[www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com)

E-mail [stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au](mailto:stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au)

Or **PO Box 446, Traralgon, Vic 3844**

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

*There is no subscription fee but donations towards 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.

### 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 we reserve the right to edit letters.

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 sufficient reason, anonymity will be preserved when publishing.

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