

Into the Deep

Issue 33

Newsletter of the Confraternity of St Michael, Gippsland

June 2005

Bishops Not To Avoid Conflict

“The Church must address the vices and perils of the time; she must appeal to the consciences of the powerful and of the intellectuals, not to mention of those who want to live narrow-minded, comfortable lives while ignoring the needs of the time, and so forth.

As a bishop I felt obliged to face this task. Moreover, the deficits were too obvious: exhaustion of the faith, decline in vocations, lowering of moral standards even among men of the Church, an increasing tendency toward violence, and much else.

The words of the Bible and of the Church Fathers rang in my ears, those sharp condemnations of shepherds who are like mute dogs; in order to avoid conflict they let the poison spread.

Peace is not the first civic duty, and a bishop whose only concern is not to have any problems and to gloss over as many conflicts as possible is an image I find repulsive. ... Letting things drift...is the worst kind of administration I can imagine.”

*Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger,
Salt of the Earth – an interview with Peter Seewald, 1997*

Looking For Something Better?

Are you unhappy with the quality of Catholic education your children are currently receiving? Have you been unsuccessful in getting your school to listen to - and act on - your legitimate concerns? Do you wish there was a better alternative?

We are looking for expressions of interest from Catholic parents who would send their children to a new, independent, private school in Gippsland that would teach the Catholic faith in its fullness.

Contact us by email or write to our PO Box if you are interested, letting us know how many children, what ages they are, and what your contact details are.

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

Why do Christians believe in the Trinity?

“Isn’t it difficult enough to believe that God exists, that we must also have added to it the enigma that he is ‘one and triune’? There are some today who would not be unhappy to leave the Trinity to one side, to be able to dialogue better with Jews and Muslims, who profess faith in a God who is rigidly one.

Christians believe that God is triune because they believe that God is love! It is the revelation of God as love, made by Jesus, which obliges us to admit the Trinity. It is not a human invention. There is no love for the void, no love that is not directed to someone. So we must ask: who does God love to be defined as love?

A first answer might be: He loves mankind. But we have existed for some millions of years, no more. And before then, who did God love? He could not in fact have begun to be love at a certain point in time, because God cannot change.

Second answer: Before then he loved the cosmos, the universe. But the universe has existed for some thousands of millions of years. Before then, who did God love to be able to define himself as love? We cannot say that he loved himself because to love oneself is not love, but egoism or, as psychologists say, narcissism.

Here is the answer of Christian revelation. God is love in himself, before time, because he has always had in himself a Son, the word, whom he loves with an infinite love, that is, in the Holy Spirit. In all love there are always three realities or subjects: one who loves, one who is loved, and the love that unites them.

The God of Christian revelation is one and triune because he is communion of love. Theology has made use of the term ‘nature’ or ‘substance’ to indicate unity in God, and of the term ‘person’ to indicate the distinction. Because of this we say that our God is one God in three persons. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is not a regression, a compromise between monotheism and polytheism. It is a step further that only God himself could make the human mind take.”

*Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, the preacher of the
Pontifical Household*
www.zenit.org

Faith or Fundamentalism

Our new pope in his homily to the Cardinals before the conclave said: "Simple faith is not fundamentalism".

This should be taken to heart by those bishops who think that people who have been practising their faith for forty years or more now need to 'get with it' – whatever 'it' is!

Fundamentalism, as I understand it, describes an attitude that is basically Protestant. It claims to adhere to a literal understanding of every word of the Bible (which it doesn't), but in recent times it has been applied to Catholics as a 'put down' word, implying that those who are conservative in their faith are ignorant and backward, and now need a new approach to some form of social gospel.

This is not true, of course, but it lets those who wish to tweak the ear of a bishop to sell him a 'program' (and get one of their 'sisters' appointed to run it), or worse, attempt to change the nature of the Church and society to suit their own present persuasions, argue a case for the need of a 'new' pastoral approach.

All this is just social engineering in a religious context, and decent people hate it because they can see through it. It presumes to program people down a particular track preconceived by some narrow minded organiser, whereas Jesus said: "Follow me."

S.C., Melbourne

Blind Spot

A letter by Bernie McKenna, on behalf of the parish council, to fellow parishioners of Traralgon parish, suggests that weekend Masses will need to be reduced in order to reduce the workload of parish priest Fr Peter Bickley.

"Fr Peter's workload has increased significantly since Fr's Michael and Mark have left us and, with no replacement available, this workload cannot be sustained by 1 priest," he writes.

Now, let us not forget that Fr John Speekman has been available as a supply priest for nearly two years since being removed from his parish. For much of this time he has actually been *living in Traralgon* parish. This was never secret knowledge. Had he been offered regular priestly supply work while waiting for the resolution of his case, there is no doubt he would not have moved out of the diocese to work.

What better example can there be of the diocese closing ranks against Fr Speekman, in spite of saying he is free to minister and is available as a supply priest in the diocese? Who could have believed that in these days of 'increased workloads' and fewer priests, a 'spare priest' can be so resolutely overlooked!

Believers Are Never Alone

From the homily delivered by Benedict XVI during the Mass to inaugurate his pontificate on 24 April 2005

During these days of great intensity, we have chanted the litany of the saints on three different occasions: at the funeral of our Holy Father John Paul II; as the Cardinals entered the Conclave; and again today, when we sang it with the response: "Tu illum adiuva" – sustain the new Successor of Saint Peter.

On each occasion, in a particular way, I found great consolation in listening to this prayerful chant. How alone we all felt after the passing of John Paul II – the Pope who for over twenty-six years had been our shepherd and guide on our journey through life! He crossed the threshold of the next life, entering into the mystery of God. But he did not take this step alone. Those who believe are never alone – neither in life nor in death. At that moment, we could call upon the Saints from every age – his friends, his brothers and sisters in the faith – knowing that they would form a living procession to accompany him into the next world, into the glory of God. We knew that his arrival was awaited. Now we know that he is among his own and is truly at home.

We were also consoled as we made our solemn entrance into Conclave, to elect the one whom the Lord had chosen. How would we be able to discern his name? How could 115 Bishops, from every culture and every country, discover the one on whom the Lord wished to confer the mission of binding and loosing?

Once again, we knew that we were not alone, we knew that we were surrounded, led and guided by the friends of God. And now, at this moment, weak servant of God that I am, I must assume this enormous task, which truly exceeds all human capacity. How can I do this? How will I be able to do it? All of you, my dear friends, have just invoked the entire host of Saints, represented by some of the great names in the history of God's dealings with mankind.

In this way, I too can say with renewed conviction: I am not alone. I do not have to carry alone what in truth I could never carry alone. All the Saints of God are there to protect me, to sustain me and to carry me. And your prayers, my dear friends, your indulgence, your love, your faith and your hope accompany me.

Indeed, the communion of Saints consists not only of the great men and women who went before us and whose names we know. All of us belong to the communion of Saints, we who have been baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we who draw life from the gift of Christ's Body and Blood, through which he transforms us and makes us like himself.

Zenit News

Guarantee of Obedience to Christ

Pope Benedict XVI, on the occasion of his taking possession of the Cathedra of the Bishop of Rome at St John Lateran Basilica:

“The bishop of Rome sits in his cathedra to bear witness to Christ,” said the Pope. “Thus the cathedra is the symbol of the ‘potestas docendi,’ that authority to teach which is an essential part of the mandate to bind and to loosen conferred by the Lord on Peter and, after him, on the Twelve.” On this subject, the Pope affirmed that “where Holy Scripture is disjoined from the living voice of the Church, it falls prey to the disputes of experts.”

“This authority to teach frightens many people, both within and outside the Church. They ask themselves whether it does not threaten freedom of belief, whether it is not a presumption that goes against freedom of thought. It is not so. ... The Pope is not an absolute sovereign whose thoughts and will are law. Quite the contrary, the ministry of the Pope is a guarantee of obedience to Christ and to His Word. He must not proclaim his own ideas, but constantly bind himself and the Church in obedience to God’s Word in the face of all attempts to adapt that Word or to water it down, and in the face of all forms of opportunism.” [...]

“The Pope is aware of being bound - in his important decisions - to the great community of the faith of all times, to the binding interpretations that have developed during the Church’s pilgrim journey.” He has the responsibility to ensure that the Word of God “continues to be present in its greatness and to sound forth in its purity, so that it is not dismembered by constant changes in fashion.”

Vatican Information Service

Sniping at John Paul II

In an article in *Catholic Life* May 2005 entitled, “New pope promises return to collegiality,” the writer maintains that “The collegiality of bishops was a key outcome of Vatican 2 but was severely watered down by the return of power to the Vatican curia under Pope John Paul 2.”

The writer obviously doesn’t realise that collegiality presupposes communion with the Pope – it is not a free reign for bishops to ‘do what they think is best’ regardless of Church teaching. And Pope Benedict has confirmed that he will “continue on this path on which my venerated Predecessors advanced.” Nothing new here. Remember also that both Pope John Paul II played a key role in Vatican II and was entirely committed to it – as is Pope Benedict XVI. But they are committed to the REAL Vatican II, not the watered-down “spirit of Vatican II” the modernists would have us believe.

Profound Ignorance

The success of Dan Brown’s bestseller *The Da Vinci Code* reveals a lot about the outlook of many people.

Although a novel, Brown claims it has a factual basis and that there is real evidence Jesus Christ had children by Mary Magdalene, and that he intended her (not Peter) to be the leader of the Apostles. Jesus was merely a good man, and was proclaimed as God 300 years later by the Emperor Constantine. [...]

The novel contains much more in the same vein, building up a picture of a secret movement preserving the truth about the real origin and nature of Christianity, while a powerful and corrupt Catholic Church prevents the truth becoming known - for once it became known the Church would be finished.

Brown’s contentions are so silly that no reasonably unbiased and reasonably informed person could take them seriously. Yet reactions to the book, including some of the reviews it has received, show that many readers are taking it seriously. *The Chicago Tribune* claimed the book contains “several doctorates’ worth of fascinating history and learned speculation”.

One thing reactions to *The Da Vinci Code* have made clear is the profound ignorance of so many about the past, and particularly about Christianity. They simply haven’t got the background to separate fact from fiction. Also, some who think of themselves as Christian lack belief in even fundamental doctrines, and consequently are open to ideas incompatible with their professed faith. [...]

From an article by John Young, a Melbourne-based Catholic author, writer and lecturer. Reprinted from AD2000 Vol 18 No 4 (May 2005), p. 8

Aiming Low

Diocesan Spirituality Team chairman Jim Quillinan now has a regular column in *Catholic Life* on ‘Family Prayer.’

He continues to aim low. In May 2005 he calls on parents to pray by example. Very good. But how? Not by going to Mass, or to Adoration, or a daily family rosary, or meditation on the Scriptures, but by “our regular times of prayer – bedtime, mealtime, on birthdays or special times like Anzac day or Christmas or Easter.”

In March ’05, he kept reminding us that prayer need not take up much time. In April he suggested a brief moment of prayer helps us to realise we are each unique and special. There is nothing specifically Catholic about what Mr Quillinan proposes, and his suggestions are certainly minimalistic. I bet our Protestant brothers and sisters have more substantial challenges for family prayer that make prayer a priority, rather than a thoughtful little add-on in the day.

Cardinal Pell Hails New Pope

From Cardinal George Pell's sermon at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, on 1 May 2005:

"...I want to begin by asking you all to pray for and support the new Pope. I am sure you will because the office of the papacy is vital to the life of the Catholic Church.

The election of Pope Benedict XVI is a clear affirmation of Catholic identity. As I claimed to the press on a couple of occasions the Cardinals were always going to elect a Catholic! The choice also reflects a general endorsement of the policies of John Paul II. [...]

Time will tell what will happen in this next pontificate, but the proponents of radical doctrinal change have no reason for optimism in Pope Benedict XVI. Please God this will mean that we shall be able to get on with the difficult task of practising what we preach, handing this on to the next generation and offering the person and message of Christ in a comprehensible and attractive manner to the non-Catholics around us."

From Cardinal Pell's Sunday Telegraph column on 1 May 2005:

"Many still believe that the Church must modernise and soften her doctrines to win new followers and hold on to present members. There are some problems with this point of view, not the least of which is that the evidence contradicts this claim.

The evidence throughout the Western world shows that the more radically a Christian Church conforms to the pagan standards of the surrounding society the quicker the decline. Some such communities are going out of business.

Benedict XVI will not make this mistake. He is wise and clever as well as being genuinely spiritual; a good priest.

All Christians and many others admire Jesus Christ, but some Christians act and sometimes talk as though his teachings need to be updated and improved. Others, a larger number, often talk as though the Church community is more of a hindrance than a help to faith and right living.

Like his predecessor John Paul, Pope Benedict will call us clearly to Jesus Christ, away from the spiritual deserts of modern life to the truth and love of Christian living. The Pope also loves his Church; he has no black armband view of Catholic history. He will be a good pope and a standard-bearer for all Christians."

To Listen to the Lord

"My real program of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen, together with the whole Church, to the word and will of the Lord, to be guided by him, so that he himself will lead the Church at this hour of our history."

Pope Benedict XVI, in his homily at his inaugural Mass

Not "Contradictions" but "Misrepresentations"

I have read with interest Michael Ryan's comment on His Lordship the Most Reverend Jeremiah Coffey, Bishop of Sale, in connection with the re-instatement of Rev Fr John Speekman (April ITD). Bishop Coffey's "Reflections" of inspirational pieces quoting Fr Michael Downey (also in April ITD) is perhaps a manifestation of his Catholicity, and giving credence to the Scriptural quote "by their fruits you shall know them."

The bishop is apparently paralysed with an impotence that reveals an inability to justify his irrational decision to get rid of an orthodox priest. The perception that he is circumscribed by monomania and driven to be incommunicative and monosyllabic in his correspondence discloses his irresolution, and makes a mockery of his semi-judicial Episcopal responsibility. His stubborn attitude has dealt a deathly body-blow to the Church that he has sworn to serve, and only disciplinary action or recourse to civil law remains a salutary remedy. Being a committed Catholic I would not resort to the latter.

That the reverend Ordinary is oblivious to the hurt he has inflicted on many a Catholic in his diocese and outside cannot be denied. Whether Bishop Coffey has an allegiance other than to the Church remains a 64 000 dollar question.

Jeremias Wijeyeratne, Noble Park

Decline in Planned Giving

In a renewal of the Planned Giving program at the Cathedral Parish in Sale in 2002, parishioners pledged \$4700 per week to the running and upkeep of the parish.

Comments have been made that the crisis involving the removal of Fr Speekman from the parish of Morwell, and the careless attitude to sacramental abuses in the parish and diocese, have contributed largely to a severe decline in the weekly amount contributed to the parish in the Planned Giving.

Weekly contributions published in the St Mary's Parish bulletin show an alarming decline of 37%. In a twelve week period from January to May 2005, a total of \$35443.80 was received. This is an average of \$2953.65 per week, more than \$1700 per week less than the amount pledged.

In Morwell Parish, pledges were up 10% when Fr Speekman ran the Planned Giving renewal campaign shortly before he was removed from his parish in mid 2003. Since his removal, contributions have declined by approximately 30%.

Readers will make up their own mind as to the cause of this severe decline but ITD has no doubts!

Terror Tactics Accusation is Offensive

Dear Fr Hengel,

I wish to register the strongest possible objection to your comments in May 2005 ITD, that “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 terror tactics. And you never negotiate with terrorists.”

Firstly, let me say that your charge of total disloyalty to the bishop is offensive and wrong. Speaking personally, the bishop has my total loyalty when he speaks and acts as a bishop should. It is only when his actions deviate from that course that those actions can and should be criticised.

It was not “the self righteous group” that permitted an editorial to be published in Catholic Life urging Catholics “to become more grey” and to refuse access to letters to the editor. Nor did they admit that the appalling results in our Catholic schools, less than 5% practising the faith after graduation, was true but it may “take years and years” to turn the tide, when we called for and suggested immediate action to stop the rot. It was not the “self righteous group” who removed Fr Speekman from the parish of Morwell without just cause, and refuse to reinstate him, when the proper authority found him not guilty and said the bishop was responsible for any disturbance in the parish of Morwell. It is not the “self righteous group” that permits widespread sacramental abuses in our diocese in contravention of instructions in ‘Redemptionis Sacramentum’, which only reiterated existing church instructions anyhow. Appeals to the bishop on these matters fall on deaf ears.

Your claim that we use terror tactics is most offensive. Because we have been ignored and treated

with contempt we feel we have no alternative but to inform others of what is happening in our diocese. This has been done openly and as honestly as possible, with those disagreeing having their views published in ITD.

“Terrorists” are neither open nor honest. They use blackmail to achieve their objectives. We are Catholics who deplore the current situation of decline in our diocese and are prepared to act to redress the situation. Others are free to agree or disagree with us but are not entitled to denigrate us. I would strongly suggest that it would be wise to be more temperate in your language and to honestly examine the truth of what we publish. Should you do so you may find that our criticisms are valid and justified.

Yours faithfully, Pat O’Brien

Fr Hengel’s reply:

“Thank you for a copy of your letter to ITD. Please note that what you wrote in the first paragraph, I never wrote to ITD. That is taken from Leo Willems’ letter. You do not know who made that statement in the first place.”

Fr Hengel also wrote to ITD in response to the last issue of ITD. However, in submitting his letter he (again) directed us as follows:

ITD can only print the following without alteration and editorial comment or quotes from other sources as a type of editorial comment.

ITD will not be bullied into publishing letters on such terms. However, we refer readers to a previous letter of Fr Hengel’s published in ITD November 2004 (Issue 26) to clarify the matter.

Slow the Bleeding

As a Catholic that has been around for a while, I have seen changes in our Church. With every change I have seen Catholics fall away.

At one time we honoured our obligation, but no longer. We need priests like Fr John Speekman and the new Pope, to try and slow the bleeding of our chosen religion.

I think we all need something stable in our lives, with so much change. The Church stood for stability, and now priests, nuns and some lay people wish to make it more like a protestant church. The Church has stated we wish our fallen-away brothers and religions would come back to the fold. But why would they if we are becoming like them? We could go to their services.

Skip Duffie, Nova Scotia, Canada

Authority in the Early Church

“As people pondered the faith their knowledge of it increased and differences of opinion in its explanation appeared. One thing is most important to consider. Whenever the early Christians had to settle a question of doctrine, they never asked the sort of questions that sometimes occur to us – “What is the most convenient thing to believe?” “What do most people want?” “What will unite the warring factions most effectively, or is there a compromising form of words that will paper over a real difference?”

On the contrary, the only question that was ever asked was, “What did our fathers believe?” In other words, “What has the Church believed from the beginning?” Recourse was always made to precedent and tradition.”

From *Inform* by Catholic Adult Education Centre, Sydney No.95 “The Early Church” by Fr Anthony Robbie

Abuse of Power

Suspensions and canonical decrees are public acts which automatically not only convey impropriety, wrongdoing and canonical penal offence but also cause damage to a priest's reputation and good name.

Before a bishop suspends a priest or issues a decree against him, the charge has to be thoroughly investigated by a lawfully competent authority. Care is to be taken in this investigation so as not to call into question anyone's good name (Code of Canon Law, Canon 1717 §2).

In relation to Fr Speekman's situation, the Vicar General of the Sale diocese Monsignor MacCartan, threatened Fr Speekman with suspension without officially warning him, and Bishop Coffey issued *three* canonical decrees against Fr Speekman.

The first decree was issued to remove from his competence the two parish primary schools. This was done without discussing it with Fr Speekman or informing him, and while he was away on holiday. The Bishop failed to give either an explanation of the decree or a copy of the decree to him (he had to read it from the back wall of his parish church). The Bishop failed to protect Fr Speekman's good name by not explaining his motives for the decree to the parishioners. Instead of the decree being notarised by a priest – as required by canon law, because the decree concerned the reputation of a priest (Can. 483 §2) – the Bishop's secretary, Deacon Jim Erskine, notarised it.

The second decree was issued to remove Fr Speekman from his parish. The third decree was issued when the Bishop refused Fr Speekman's formal request that he revoke the Decree of Removal. (This Decree Refusing Revocation officially allowed Fr Speekman to file a petition for recourse against the Decree of Removal.)

These public acts have done enormous damage to Fr Speekman's reputation and good name in the diocese and the country.

As if this damage is not bad enough, since the Decree was issued by the Congregation for the Clergy in July 2004 upholding Fr Speekman's appeal, his reputation has further been impaired by subsequent actions of the Bishop and Fr Cleary, administrator of Morwell Parish.

What the Decree from the Congregation has shown – especially when one looks at the number of canonical and civil laws the Bishop violated by conducting a formal investigation into a minor incident – is that it is unacceptable that a bishop should choose the abuse of power to deal with an orthodox priest who would not comply with the liberal agenda of the Catholic Education Office.

It is a further abuse of power by the bishop to indefinitely prolong Fr Speekman's reinstatement without giving valid canonical reason. How can the faithful be expected to obey and respect a bishop who treats one of his own priests like this?

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Denial of Justice

Canon law 1608 §1 states, "To give any judgement, the judge must have in his mind moral certainty about the matter to be decided in the judgement."

Canon 1608 §2 states that the judge "must derive this certainty from the acts of the case and from the proofs."

With regards to Fr Speekman's case, the question is: How did Bishop Jeremiah Coffey arrive at the necessary moral certainty to make a judgement that Fr Speekman's ministry was ineffective?

The Decree from the Congregation for the Clergy upholding Fr Speekman's appeal makes it very clear that, "the letter required by canon 1742, §1 must indicate *ad validitatem*, valid reasons and arguments. By not indicating sufficient reasons and by omitting to include arguments, the Most Reverend Ordinary deprived Father Speekman of his ability to defend himself against the charge that his ministry had become harmful or ineffective."

What canon 1608 also makes clear is that a priest should not be formally accused unless his culpability for the offence is certain. It would appear that the bishop acted on unsubstantiated complaints.

Fr Speekman was not informed of any allegations against him. Hence he was given no opportunity to give his side of the story, or even, if he was in error, to 'mend his ways'. He only became aware of the alleged complaints when he was allowed to inspect the 'acts'/evidence of the Bishop's case, and even then there was no written record of the complaints. He was totally helpless in defending himself. This is a denial of natural justice and a failure in fraternal charity.

The Catholic Education Office (CEO) wanted Fr Speekman moved from Morwell and the Bishop, against all good advice, gave in to their demands.

As the decree from the Congregation for the Clergy upholding Fr Speekman's appeal indicates, "A minority of the parishioners, with the help from the teachers and employees of the Diocese, has convinced the Most Reverend Ordinary to remove Father Speekman because they disagree with his Catholic leadership." The CEO employees who effectively influenced and convinced the Bishop to remove Fr Speekman were Mr Vincent Carr and Dr Therese D'Orsa, with the help of primary school principal Mrs Maree Swenson. Because they *disagreed with his Catholic leadership*.

This sordid saga has already produced publicity and wonderment throughout the country. However, Bishop Coffey's resolve to continue to deny Fr Speekman justice by delaying his reinstatement will most certainly ensure that this matter degenerates into grave scandal.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Gay 'Marriage' Is Like Counterfeit Money

The Spanish bishops consider the legal recognition of homosexual "marriage" immoral, and urge Catholics to be conscientious objectors.

The bishops released a statement on 6 May 2005 entitled "On Conscientious Objection to a Radically Unjust Law that Corrupts the Institution of Marriage," reminding Catholic parliamentarians that they may not vote for the proposal, or officiate at weddings between homosexuals.

Supporting statements made recently by Cardinal Alfonso López Trujillo, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, the bishops urge officials to invoke conscientious objection. Spanish Minister of Justice Juan Fernando López Aguilar said the cardinal's proposal was an "incitement to civil disobedience."

Spain's lower house of parliament approved the proposal that extends the right to contract matrimony and adopt children to same-sex couples. The text will be sent to the Senate, where approval is expected.

The Spanish bishops insist that the law will have, as a consequence, "the corruption of the institution of marriage." "That [same-sex] union is in reality a legal falsification of marriage, so damaging to the common good, as is counterfeit money for the country's economy," explains the statement.

The bishops maintain that, if the law is approved, "it would, in fact, lack the character of a true law, as it would be in contradiction to right reason and the moral norm. The function of civil law is undoubtedly more limited than that of the moral law, but it cannot be in contradiction to right reason without losing the force to oblige in conscience." www.zenit.org

Where is Catholic Teaching?

Reader R. Roodenrys of Morwell wrote in the April issue of ITD of his dismay that Grade 6 children from a Catholic school could still be unaware of the need for reverence in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

A letter to the Herald Sun (2 May 2005) by six students of Marist-Sion College Warragul, shows that Catholic teaching doesn't get any better in secondary school.

These children give their opinion on why women should be able to be Catholic priests or Pope. They show an embarrassing lack of *basic* knowledge of the Catholic Church in their 'argument'. "How can this be?" asked R. Roodenrys. How can this be indeed!

Forgive these poor children for their misguided opinions and beliefs. All they do is bring into sharp focus the disastrous incompetence of their teachers in the faith – their principals, their Religious Education teachers, their other teachers, their parish priests, their parents. Why do we insist on still calling our schools Catholic?

Virtue in Dissenting

CathNews.com (09/05/05) reported on the resignation of the editor of the US Jesuit magazine called *America*. CathNews referred to the magazine as "prestigious" and "often relevant to CathNews stories", in spite of noting that it had a practice of giving "space to the expression and evaluation of views dissenting from the Magisterium." It is this practice that has led CathNews to speculate that the editor's resignation was as a result of pressure from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

CathNews went on to refer readers to two articles from *America* that express "contrasting views on how the Universal Church relates to the Local Church." One is by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, and the other by Cardinal Walter Kasper.

Cardinal Kasper says his pastoral experience as bishop has shown him that there is a "gap" between "norms promulgated in Rome for the universal church and the needs and practices of our local church." He suggests that many people, including priests, do not understand the reason behind the regulations from Rome (eg. "highly restrictive rules for eucharistic hospitality"), and therefore tend to ignore them. He does not see this as dissenting, but as responding to the expectations of the people. Sounds much like the inverted loyalty that Fr Speekman wrote about in AD2000 (reprinted in ITD May 2005).

If the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith did indeed have a hand in curbing this sort of "expression and evaluation of views dissenting from the Magisterium," then three cheers for them! And let's see some more of it! We're tired of this silly belief that dissenting views are as valid as Church teaching itself and deserve to be given equal consideration.

That's like saying someone who thinks the colour blue should actually be called red, should be given a genuine opportunity to present his case. Such debate should be taken seriously by all informed, mature adults, and anyone who puts a stop to it is a narrow-minded authoritarian bully with no understanding.

Carry this far enough and you reach the situation we're already in, where even the simple, irrefutable, biological characteristics that make us – and have always made us – male and female, are being questioned as not necessarily determinative of our gender.

False Teaching

Confirmation candidates and the congregation at St Mary's Cathedral, Sale, were informed by the Administrator on Pentecost Sunday that there was no Pope and there were no Priests in the early Church!

Perhaps we will be next told that the Last Supper was just a meal among friends.

Fr Deeter's Talk on the Eucharist a Feast for the Soul!

Guest speaker at the Diocesan Marian Conference, Fr Tim Deeter from Perth, spoke on the Eucharist, following the theme of the Year of the Eucharist. His talk was like food for the soul, music to the ears – good, solid, straight-talking, simple, honest Catholic stuff! His talk followed an Hour of Adoration at St Michael's church in Traralgon.

Explaining Transubstantiation

Fr Deeter noted that we haven't done a particularly good job teaching children about transubstantiation. He has found that, given the chance, children are willing to learn and are able to gain a sufficient understanding of transubstantiation to allow them to grow in the faith. He recently taught a Year 11 class about transubstantiation and then led them in a half-hour's Adoration, and they relished it, thanking him afterwards for the opportunity.

Fr Deeter explained that the key to transubstantiation is *substance*. We don't pretend that the consecrated Host – the Body of Christ – has arms and legs and hair etc. It is about the *substance* of life. After all, being fully human does not depend on having all limbs and all senses. Father pointed out the fact that people who are blind, or deaf, or missing limbs are still complete human beings, because they possess the substance of human life – a brain and a heart. Human life is about the *interior substance*, not just the externals.

Fr Deeter also gave the example of a radioactive chamber. If we see a big bold sign warning "Do Not Enter! Danger! Radioactive!" we believe it, even though we don't know what's inside the chamber. If we enter, we become radioactive, we become substantially changed, internally, even though from the outside we look and sound and feel the same as we did when we walked in. We know that the change in us will only gradually become visible.

In the same way, the Word of God tells us that the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ – bread and wine that have been substantially changed, not in their externals of appearance, taste or texture but in their inner essence. Once we begin to grasp the distinction between *substance* and *externals* (what theologians call accidentals), we can understand what *transubstantiation* means. And, just as we look past a person's facial imperfections or physical disabilities once we get to know their true 'inner self', so Catholics 'look beyond the bread they eat and the cup they drink' (to paraphrase a modern hymn) and 'see their Saviour and their God'.

Leading Us Into Mystery

The Eucharist leads us into a mystery, and beyond the externals. The word mystery, Fr Deeter explained, comes from the Greek meaning 'seeing through the eyelashes', i.e., squinting. In other words, we can *see*, but not clearly. The longer we spend in Adoration of the Blessed Eucharist, the more we realise that we are in the presence of someone.

Bringing people back to the Church does not require a lot of programs or meetings, said Fr Deeter, but simply *more time before the Blessed Sacrament*. At Adoration there is a silent change that gradually becomes more perceptible, and that change brings peace. Many good things happen in the quiet of the Blessed Sacrament. You don't need to be active, or saying prayers or reading all the time – Adoration is passive. People who really love one another are comfortable in one another's presence and don't always need to be saying something.

The fact that we need to be in a state of grace to receive Holy Communion seems to have been forgotten. Fr Deeter compares receiving Holy Communion when not in a state of grace, to pouring water down a clogged drain. Youth who say they "get nothing" out of the Eucharist can not expect to, if they have no relationship with Christ and are not in a state of grace. Fr Deeter urged us to observe the practices of preparing physically for Holy Communion, such as fasting, preferably for longer than the minimum hour.

Why Catholics Return

Fr Deeter has questioned many Catholics who return to the Catholic Church after going to Protestant churches, about why they returned. He says the most common reason is the Eucharist. When they go to Protestant Churches they enjoy the great sense of fellowship and worship and community, but note that when the community leaves the church or hall, there is nothing left. It is only good to be there when the group is there. Otherwise it is empty.

They came back to the Catholic Church because they missed the Eucharist, knowing that in any Catholic church at any time, they could go in to pray and be in the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament (and often in the presence of others also there to pray). Realising the absence of Jesus' Real Presence in these non-Catholic communities draws them to hunger for the true Bread of Life. We who are practising Catholics, sadly often take for granted the fact that Jesus remains with us always in our churches and chapels.

Catholic Meditation

Fr Deeter was horrified at the growing interest in 'meditation classes' among Catholics. He referred to yoga, and people learning relaxation by "breathing in, breathing out". In Adoration we can "breathe Jesus in, breathe Jesus out" – why would we want less?! As for Zen meditation, Fr Deeter was incredulous that people would pay money to "focus on a flower" for half an hour, and yet not be able to make sense of focussing on Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for half an hour!

He quoted a French farmer in St John Vianney's time, who, when asked what he was doing at Adoration said, "I'm looking at the good God, and the good God is looking at me."

(MORE ON MARIAN CONFERENCE TALKS IN JULY ITD)

Honour Vow of Obedience

I am not sure whether this is the correct forum to ask my question but shall do so in the hope you would either pass it on for me or advise as to whom the question should be directed.

Q: With all that Father Speekman has been/is going through, has any contact been made with our Melbourne Archbishop by writers to ITD with the view to making one of his charges honouring his vow of Obedience?

Surely if this situation arose in "private enterprise", the Bishop would be "paid out" or, at the least, made to tow the corporate line.

Thank you too for the small segment entitled "Quaint 'Demands' of Dissenters". I had a personal interest in that situation at the Mary McKillop Centre and had a discussion with a Bishop from New South Wales about the same. A Brown Josephite Nun and I also had discussions about the way she believed the Hierarchy should be "chosen" - one "quaint" suggestion was that "Popes should be 'in the chair' for only 3 years or so." As is said in your segment - "how sad for Blessed Mary McKillop."

Sorry to go on but as with Mr Michael Ryan, I am so frustrated with the lack of action/direction from the Bishop of Sale in proclaiming the Gospel in an orthodox manner. I understand he is due to retire - perhaps the Archbishop might invite Bishop Jeremiah to "go" a little earlier and make way for an orthodox replacement.

Keep up the good work.

Name and Address supplied

Vatican II on Collegiality

"But the college or body of bishops has no authority unless it is understood together with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter as its head. The pope's power of primacy over all, both pastors and faithful, remains whole and intact. In virtue of his office, that is as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church. And he is always free to exercise this power. The order of bishops, which succeeds to the college of apostles and gives this apostolic body continued existence, is also the subject of supreme and full power over the universal Church, provided we understand this body together with its head the Roman Pontiff and never without this head. This power can be exercised only with the consent of the Roman Pontiff." *Lumen Gentium, n.22*

'Jesuit Not Happy With Conclave Result'

From an article by Peter Rosengren, in The Australian, 28 April 2005

The danger of predicting papacies was aptly demonstrated by Australian priest Frank Brennan in *The Australian* (April 21) when he assessed the new Pope Benedict XVI in a very cool light.

The story was headed "Prefect takes up the reins", and by the end readers might have been forgiven for wondering whether a more apt heading may not have been "Jesuit not happy with conclave result".

But one wondered why. Among the serious problems with Brennan's assessment were his admission that he had not seen Benedict's "all too human side" until the funeral of John Paul II - inviting the rather obvious question as to how he had managed to reassess the new Pope so rapidly since then. This, in itself, appeared to leave very little basis for any other observations the author might make.

Despite this, Brennan went on to cast doubts on all sorts of aspects of Ratzinger the man as reported over the previous two decades by media who do not understand him. The line of argument was not convincing. [...]

Brennan's readers discovered, for instance, that not all believers in the world today are as convinced as the new Pope that the Catholic message can readily be expressed through precise philosophical terms. Another warning note. Another reservation. [...]

And one might wonder aloud in any case how some philosophically precise language - as opposed to, say, easily swallowed generalisations - could possibly harm the church's understanding of itself and its mission to the world and within history? [...]

But even those who doubt Pope Benedict's credentials as a philosopher and theologian would not make the mistake of thinking that he is minus the full quota of (Brennan again) "political savvy, pastoral solicitude and common sense".

The real truth is quite simple: the new Pope Benedict undoubtedly has a towering intellect. But as for faults, an incapacity to love while dealing with the law is not one of them. Time is likely to reveal a pontiff of far greater originality, common sense, pastoral solicitude, political savvy and, dare I say, vision, than any of his detractors dare admit.

Peter Rosengren is the editor of The Record, the archdiocesan weekly Catholic newspaper of Perth

"Even a single lost child is a tragedy. Ninety thousand a year is a national tragedy. Abortion is like a tsunami that hits Australia every year."

Bishop Fisher, the Episcopal Vicar for Life and Health

Pope's Reminders to Priests

"It is indispensable to return ever anew to the solid root of our priesthood. This root, as we well know, is one: Jesus Christ our Lord. It is he whom the Father sent, he is the cornerstone (cf. 1 Peter 2:7). Through him, through the mystery of his death and Resurrection, the Kingdom of God is established and the salvation of the human race brought about.

This Jesus, however, possesses nothing of his own; everything he has is from the Father and for the Father. So he says that his doctrine is not his own but comes from the One who sent him (cf. John 7:16): and that he, the Son, cannot do anything by himself (cf. John 5:19,30).

Dear friends, this is also the true nature of our priesthood. In fact, all that constitutes our priestly ministry cannot be the product of our personal abilities. This is true for the administration of the Sacraments, but it is also true for the service of the Word: we are not sent to proclaim ourselves or our personal opinions, but the mystery of Christ and, in him, the measure of true humanism. We are not charged to utter many words, but to echo and bear the message of a single "Word", the Word of God made flesh for our salvation. Consequently, these words of Jesus also apply to us: "My doctrine is not my own; it comes from him who sent me" (John 7:16)." [...]

"I repeat with you, dear brothers in the priesthood, the unforgettable words of John Paul II: "Holy Mass is the absolute centre of my life and of every day of my life." And each one of us should be able to say these words are his own: Holy Mass is the absolute centre of my life and of my every day.

Likewise, obedience to Christ, who made amends for Adam's disobedience, is in practice expressed in ecclesial obedience, which for the priest in daily life means first and foremost obedience to his Bishop. In the Church, however, obedience is not something formalistic; it is obedience to the one who, in turn, obeys and personifies the obedient Christ." [...]

"Spending time in God's presence in prayer is a real pastoral priority; it is not an addition to pastoral work: being before the Lord is a pastoral priority and in the final analysis, the most important. John Paul II showed this to us in the most practical and enlightened way in every circumstance of his life and ministry.

Dear priests, we can never sufficiently emphasise how fundamental and crucial our personal response to the call to holiness is. It is not only the condition for our personal apostolate to be fruitful but also, and more generally, for the face of the Church to reflect the light of Christ (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 1), thereby inducing people to recognise and adore the Lord."

*From an address of Pope Benedict XVI to the clergy of Rome
www.zenit.org*

That Someone Else Be Elected

Benedict XVI says that he prayed during the conclave for the cardinals to elect someone stronger than he to the papacy. The new Pope added, however, that after he was elected, he accepted it with an inevitable "yes."

"I prayed to the Lord that they would elect someone stronger than I, but in that prayer he obviously did not listen to me," the Holy Father said during a meeting in Paul VI Hall with some 5,000 Germans who came to Rome to support him at the start of his pontificate.

"I want to tell you something about the conclave without violating the secrecy," the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said. "I never thought I would be elected, nor did I do anything to make it happen, but when slowly the unfolding of the votes led me to understand that the 'guillotine' was coming closer and looking at me, I asked God to spare me this fate."

He said he then remembered a letter that he had with him from a German cardinal. That cardinal reminded his countryman what he said at Pope John Paul II's funeral Mass, quoting Jesus' words to Peter, and encouraged him that "if the Lord addressed that 'follow me' to me, I could not refuse the call."

"The Lord's ways are not easy, but we are not made for ease; therefore, I could only say 'yes' to the election," Benedict XVI said in German in his impromptu address to his compatriots.

"I thought that my work in this life had ended and that years of tranquility awaited me," he added.

Zenit News www.zenit.org

Funeral Mass, Requiem Mass

A "funeral Mass" refers to the Mass in which the remains of the deceased are present and at which the rites of aspersion, incensing and final commendation may be celebrated.

Every funeral Mass is by definition also a requiem, a term which derives from the entrance antiphon "Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine" - Eternal rest grant to them, oh Lord.

Unlike a funeral, which is usually only celebrated once, a requiem Mass may be celebrated several times - for example, according to local custom, on the ninth or 30th day after death, or on the first anniversary and other such recurrences. On such occasions the Mass for the dead may be celebrated and the deceased's name is mentioned in the prayers.

This is a different situation from the custom of offering up the Mass intention for a deceased person. In this case the liturgy of the day is celebrated and the deceased's name is mentioned before Mass, during the prayers of the faithful, or at some other opportune moment.

Father Edward McNamara, www.zenit.org

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We are also introducing Ut Unum Sintrum for children since your children are never too young to start off with proper spiritual growth. Parents will be pleased to know that our Humanae Vitaemins are not sugar coated, just like everything else we offer with B16 in it. Guaranteed not to cause truth decay or any form of spiritual rot. The children's tablets come in fun shapes like German Shepherds and Rottweilers.

*Ratzinger Daily Allowance

Disclaimer: B16 is not a miracle drug and will not remove any crosses you might bear. Though clinical trials have shown that a steady diet of truth supplemented with B16 will enable you to better embrace your cross and to carry it daily. For best results please use B16 with plenty of prayer and thanks be to God.

Caution: B16 has been known to cause allergies, shrill behaviour, and coughing fits to some theologians, clergy, religious, and laity. Especially those who have had Spirit of Vatican Flu in the past.

Tell your health care provider if you are dissident and they can help you overcome your deficient diet and prepare you for true health with full dosages of B16. Or contact your local Orthodoxopedic surgeon for further information.

By Jeff Miller, www.splendoroftruth.com/curtjester

Solve Scandal or Step Down

It is now almost two years since Bishop Coffey put a blight on the parish of Morwell by the sacking of our respected parish priest Fr John Speekman without a justifiable reason. I recently heard that the bishop is looking for non-existent evidence to invent a new reason to try and justify having sacked Fr John - a shameful attempt to try and justify the diabolical error he committed.

Can things get any worse? Yes it seems so. For His Lordship will go to any lengths, no matter what or how many people he is hurting, to vindicate his erroneous judgment. Having disobeyed the ruling of the Congregation of the Clergy in Rome to reinstate Fr John, the Bishop has become adamant that he cannot be wrong. That people are no longer practising the faith, that the parish of Morwell has lost its heart and is dying seems to be of no concern to His Lordship. His silence speaks loudly to prove this.

Many people who were once enthusiastically active in the parish are in real pain and confused and are no longer involved. It is their Christian conscience and loyalty to our loved and respected parish priest that tells them that one cannot support injustice and untruths, both physically and financially.

The appointed administrator Fr Tom with a few misguided people are trying to somehow run the parish, prepared to overlook the grave injustice inflicted on us all. This is like saying forget your Christian principles, ignore Jesus' teaching and get on with it. Their efforts will be like seed scattered on rocky ground or a house built on a foundation of sand.

This issue will never go away unless justice is done by reinstating Fr John and restoring his good name. If the Bishop cannot curtail his abuse of power and solve this scandal he should stand down or resign before it is forced on him and before even more damage is done.

Bert Vanderzalm, Morwell

Women Leaders in the Church

The Diocese of Cairns and the Bishops' Commission for Australian Catholic Women recently organised a "Conference for Women leaders of Catholic Church Agencies".

The *Director of Catholic Education* in Cairns Diocese (also involved in the Commission for Australian Catholic Women) referred to herself as "a female leader in the Catholic Church" at one of the main conference addresses. Now there's a precedent. No wonder they consider themselves of equal authority to the 'male leaders in the Catholic church', our priests.

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	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 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

Sale Saturday 9am

Jesus, I Trust in You

“We raise together our eyes to Jesus the Eucharist. ... Jesus, we adore You hidden in the host! In a time marked by hatred, egoism, the desire for false happiness, decadent behaviour, the absence of paternal and maternal figures, instability in so many young families and the fragility and uneasiness of which young people are victims, we look to You, Jesus Eucharist with renewed hope. Notwithstanding our sins, we trust in Your Divine Mercy.”

Pope John Paul II to young people preparing for the 20th World Youth Day in Cologne in August 2005

Heart of the Mystery

“In this year of the Eucharist - which helps us to discover the beauty, power and centrality of the Eucharist - the words of the Encyclical *Ecclesia De Eucharistia* resound with particular eloquence in our minds and our hearts: ‘the Church draws her life from the Eucharist;’ the Eucharist is ‘the heart of the mystery of the Church;’ it must also be ‘the heart of the mystery of priestly ministry’.”

Pope John Paul II

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

E-mail 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.

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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.