

Into the Deep

Issue 42

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Through the Eyes of Jesus

Benedict XVI is exhorting Christians to live this Lent as a period to learn to see the world, especially the suffering of men and women, through the eyes of Jesus.

The Pope has chosen as the theme of his first Lenten message a phrase from Matthew 9:36, "Jesus, at the sight of the crowds, was moved with pity."

"Even now, the compassionate 'gaze' of Christ continues to fall upon individuals and peoples," the Holy Father writes. "He watches them, knowing that the divine 'plan' includes their call to salvation.

"Jesus knows the perils that put this plan at risk, and He is moved with pity for the crowds. He chooses to defend them from the wolves even at the cost of His own life. The gaze of Jesus embraces individuals and multitudes, and He brings them all before the Father, offering Himself as a sacrifice of expiation."

Benedict XVI continues: "In the face of the terrible challenge of poverty afflicting so much of the world's population, indifference and self-centred isolation stand in stark contrast to the 'gaze' of Christ."

"Fasting and almsgiving, which, together with prayer, the Church proposes in a special way during the Lenten Season, are suitable means for us to become conformed to this 'gaze,'" he notes.

The Bishop of Rome points out: "Those who act according to the logic of the Gospel live the faith as friendship with God Incarnate and, like Him, bear the burden of the material and spiritual needs of their neighbours. They see it as an inexhaustible mystery, worthy of infinite care and attention."

In this context, Benedict XVI notes: "They know that he who does not give God gives too little; as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta frequently observed, the worst poverty is not to know Christ. Therefore, we must help others to find God in the merciful face of Christ."

"It is this integral salvation that Lent puts before us, pointing towards the victory of Christ over every evil that oppresses us," the Holy Father writes. "In turning to the Divine Master, in being converted to Him, in experiencing His mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we will discover a 'gaze' that searches us profoundly and gives new life to the crowds and to each one of us.

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"Lent is a privileged time of interior pilgrimage towards Him Who is the fount of mercy. It is a pilgrimage in which He Himself accompanies us through the desert of our poverty, sustaining us on our way towards the intense joy of Easter."

Pope Benedict XVI

Overriding Justice & Truth

Recently on SBS-TV there occurred an event that encapsulated a problem of the Church in Australia and Sale. A police detective found his investigations futile so he approached a priest busy in the good of the town, a friend, and asked: "Father, if a priest tells a lie, is it a sin?" The reply was illuminating. The priest said: "Not if it is for a good cause."

We were always taught, even when we didn't understand it, that 'the end does not justify the means.' In adult life that came to mean that we cannot justify doing evil to obtain some good.

This came home to me recently when I met a bishop with liberal views, whom I asked about Sale. He asked what I meant. I said "The Speekman affair." His reply was that there's a lot more to that behind the scene. I replied: "Hold on; Rome has investigated the matter, and because of the facts, has found in Fr Speekman's favour, assigned responsibility for the situation to the bishop and those of his persuasion, and decreed what justice requires - the full and immediate restoration of Fr Speekman to his rightful position". All this, I said, Rome has put in an official public decree, which all the bishops of Australia must know about. No answer was the stern reply.

It seems they all still operate with a certain mentality - that secrecy can override justice and truth. They cannot challenge the truth of Rome's decree, and they haven't got the guts to confront those in Sale really responsible for this fracas. It is a sad day for the Church generally, but specially for Sale. While they talk about charity, love and vocations, who would want to be a priest in Sale in the years to come - or anywhere else in Australia - if this is what it is like?

S.C., Melbourne

All issues of Into the Deep are at
www.stoneswillshout.com

Genuflection is Good Enough

Mrs Wilma Byrne, of Moe, contacted Fr Tom Cleary in January regarding his impromptu decision to stop exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in Morwell parish. Wilma was an adorer at Morwell. Fr Cleary told her that he had stopped adoration to 'clean up his parish and get rid of the rebels' (see ITD Feb '06). She wrote to Bishop Coffey "with a heavy heart," explaining her conversation with Fr Cleary, and asking that Bishop Coffey intervene so that exposition may resume. She included a Statutory Declaration detailing her conversation with Fr Cleary.

Mrs Byrne received this reply from Bishop Coffey:

Dear Mrs Byrne

Thank you for your letter of January 5. I have noted the facts but they do not coincide with Fr Cleary's description. There are innumerable ways for adoration. Every time I genuflect or receive Holy Communion, I presume adoration.

Exposition is an excellent form of adoration.

Yours sincerely

+ Jeremiah Coffey, Bishop of Sale

Wilma replied to Bishop Coffey, saying, "My Lord, I find your response to my letter and statutory declaration insulting, since you are questioning my integrity and that of my statutory declaration." She noted that by Bishop Coffey supporting Fr Cleary's decision to stop exposition, he has deprived the 70-plus people who attended each week of the spiritual goods of the church. Wilma forwarded a copy of her correspondence with the Bishop to *Into the Deep* and to the Congregation for the Clergy and the Congregation for Bishops.

It is hard to believe that a priest, let alone a bishop, could so steadfastly believe that 24-hour exposition of the Blessed Sacrament – already successfully running, long-standing and well-supported in the parish – could be harmful to the spiritual health of a parish. What clearer admission could Bishop Coffey give that he thinks a healthy parish has more to do with smiling political correctness and less with Eucharistic devotion? We need bishops and priests who will encourage and promote and engage in adoration in front of the exposed Blessed Sacrament. Pope John Paul II stated in *Ecclesia De Eucharistia* (n.25): "It is the responsibility of Pastors to encourage, also by their personal witness, the practice of Eucharistic adoration, and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in particular, as well as prayer of adoration before Christ present under the Eucharistic species."

There must be so many parishes in the world longing for the support and resources to begin adoration like Morwell had; so many faithful around the world longing for the opportunity to go to a church with exposition – but unable to. And here in our diocese of Sale, we have a bishop who would rather agree with *stopping* adoration than take a step in the direction of orthodoxy.

Could You Not Watch One Hour With Me?

It is disappointing and disheartening to read in the January 2006 issue of *Into The Deep* of the termination of Eucharistic adoration in the Morwell Parish. Let us ask the Most Holy Trinity to remove any mark of indifference and complacency that may creep into our lives at times, and give us instead a desire for truth, trust, love, peace and salvation.

Jesus asked his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane to watch one hour with him. Eucharistic adoration is an opportunity to respond to Jesus' request. The devotion of the "holy hour" before the Blessed Sacrament has through the centuries been a privileged time for Christians to pray and meditate in the Real Presence of Jesus.

The Second Vatican Council teaches that the celebration of the Eucharist is at the centre of the process of the Church's growth. John Paul II said, "The worship of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church."

There is a widespread breakdown of Eucharistic faith in many countries throughout the world and unfortunately Australia is among them. There must be a massive, monumental, momentous revival of faith in the Eucharist to overcome this crisis in the Catholic Church.

We know the whole Church lives from the Eucharist; there is no Eucharist without priesthood, just as there can be no priesthood without Eucharist. It is the responsibility of priests and bishops to encourage, promote and foster the practice of Eucharistic adoration and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

We pray for our priests and bishops, who represent Christ, so that they may clearly understand their mission and be worthy ministers of Jesus who has entrusted them with the care of the Catholic Church. We also pray for continuous reparation for the errors and disobedience of clerics and religious and for the good they leave undone because of this.

The primary objective of the Catholic Church is to prepare souls for eternity, and this is inclusive of all its church services, organisations and religious educators. We learn from the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima: "If men knew what eternity is they would do everything to change their lives." At the end of the day the Church exists for the adoration of God and to gain salvation.

We implore the Patroness of Australia, Our Lady Help of Christians, for the grace to assist us to rediscover in all its richness the profound relationship between the Church and the Eucharist, and to awaken and guide us more reverently towards this Most Holy and Blessed Sacrament – Amen – Fiat.

James A. Leonard, Bendigo

Member: World Apostolate of Our Lady of Fatima

Letting the Wolves Loose on the Lambs

Thomas Groome's methodology 'shared Christian praxis' has been employed as the preferred method in religious education curricula in many dioceses in Australia for many years now. Recently the diocese of Sale became another victim of Groome's method when Bishop Jeremiah Coffey mandated 'Journeying Together in Hope' as the new RE curriculum.

It confounds me that bishops entrusted with the authority to teach, govern and sanctify, have for many years persisted in employing RE curricula that are underpinned by Groome's method, when empirical evidence clearly shows that something is seriously amiss in our Catholic schools. Their current form of catechesis appears to be emptying our parishes and leading our young people to seek alternative religions and spiritualities. The latest research done by Marist Brother Luke Saker, who lectures at Edith Cowan University in Perth confirms yet again the fact that young people, after 12 years of education in the Catholic faith, hardly know the basics of their faith. They seem to have very little idea of what it means to be Catholic, of what the Catholic Church is or where it came from, or what sets it apart from all the rest.

After 12 years of having developed a 'critical consciousness' and being provided at various stages of their 'faith formation' with a 'critical framework' to reflect critically on Church doctrines in relation to their own experiences, our young people have concluded that the Catholic Church and faith is "largely irrelevant and too restrictive" (reported by Barney Zwartz in *The Age* 09/01/06). By the time they embark on further education they have become easy prey, Catholics-at-risk, to all sorts of gurus, fundamentalists, sects, religious cults and New Age ideas.

The irony of this lamentable reality is that Groome's methodology is steeped in process philosophy and Neo-Marxist Critical Theory which holds that the primary objective of religious education is the development of a 'critical consciousness'; yet diocesan bishops are reluctant to subject Thomas Groome and his 'shared Christian praxis' to the same critical approach which his methodology espouses. Bishops more than anyone else, should have a well-developed critical consciousness, given that theirs is the duty of vigilantly warding off errors that threaten divine and Catholic truth, to which they are primary witnesses.

Any person who publicly repudiates the Magisterium and its teachings, and who proposes a method for teaching the faith, should be subjected to a thorough investigation and examination. It is highly irresponsible and negligent of our bishops to uncritically pursue and employ the failed catechetical experiments of other dioceses, in the knowledge that it will only produce the same disastrous results. This is tantamount to giving

the wolves free access to the lambs under the auspices of the Catholic Church. They should be held accountable.

After all, as representatives of Christ, as teachers of the faith and as leaders of the Church, it is their failure to act responsibly that has primarily contributed to the current crisis that has led Pope Benedict to conclude that the faith in Australia is dying.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Thought for the Month:

If Groome's methodology is so effective in teaching religious education, why is it not employed to teach any other subjects?

The Mass

*Extract from a homily by Most Rev. Julian Porteous,
Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney
30/1/2006 www.sydney.catholic.org.au*

The Mass, each Mass, engages our lives with the mystery and grace of God. Each Mass is a transcendental moment – earth and heaven unite. Christ, Son of God, Word made flesh, who suffered, died and rose again, becomes truly present amongst us, according to his own words. "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in him".

Our lives become engaged with God "who did not cling to his equality with God, but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave and became as men are", as St Paul puts it in his letter to the Philippians (2, 6-7).

Thus we Catholics from the very beginnings of the Church celebrated the mystery of Christ each Sunday, or the Lord's Day. Through the Mass our lives, lived week by week, are brought into the mystery of Christ. Each Mass is an act of worship on our part – we acknowledge God as the author and sustainer of our being. We humbly recognize that all is from him, and he deserves our praise and thanksgiving. We join the angels in acknowledging the greatness and wonder of God – "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might".

Each Mass is an offering of ourselves and a placing of our lives before Almighty God. And knowing the poverty and frailty of our human condition we come seeking from the Father of All the grace of strength, guidance, peace. Amidst the trials and strains of life we take an opportunity for refreshment to our spirits, for encouragement to faithfully fulfill our tasks, and at times for healing of hearts damaged by the pains of life.

Each Mass is a moment to bring ourselves in our humanity, full of the struggles and weaknesses, into the crucible of redemption – the mystery of the death and resurrection of the Lord.

In Defence of Lifeteen

I am one of the Youth Leaders who attended the Sydney Lifeteen conference in September 2005 and have been involved in youth ministry for the last 12 years (including the last 6 years with St Michael's, Traralgon). Lifeteen is a program for youth that is centred on the Eucharist. A program which will continue to bring young people back to Christ (through Holy Mass – the foundation of all our Catholic beliefs) and will build up the Church for the future.

A weekly youth Mass is only one part of the program (but is the most important part!). It is a Mass which is geared for youth but is welcoming to all. Gathering youth before the altar (it has recently changed from 'around the altar') is one part of a Lifeteen Mass as it brings them up close to Jesus.

After the Mass we hold "Lifeneights" for Years 9-12 (each fortnight). These consist of carefully planned nights based around a theme – using Scripture, the Catechism, Lives of the Saints and other relevant Catholic resources to teach, share and nurture the faith. These nights contain the truth – we do not 'sugar coat' it, and we make sure that we know exactly what the Church's teaching is before we present it to the youth. So far we have presented nights about Prayer, Social Justice (Corporal and Spiritual works of Mercy), The Our Father (and what it means) and The Apostles (Evangelisation). In 2006 we will be tackling issues such as contraception, abortion, human dignity and we hope to take part in the Life Walk (just to name a few).

As part of Lifeteen we also run a Junior Youth Group – Years 6 & over. This caters for more social-based activities but we do include some catechesis and look at social justice, including reaching out and helping in the local community. We encourage and welcome both youth groups to the Lifeteen Masses.

There are only 7 parishes Australia-wide that run the program. Lifeteen is the most comprehensive, catechetical and Catholic youth program that I have come across. It is disappointing to hear of people who are quick to put it down as another 'passing phase.'

I challenge you all to be a part of Youth Ministry – to welcome young people. Don't look down on them, don't turn them away by your words or actions and don't judge them! But love them, embrace them and pray for them!

We are in the early stages of the program and it is a lot of work – nothing is perfect, in fact we would love to have some orthodox Catholics to help us out with the program so that we don't make any errors, but as yet we haven't had anyone willing to commit and help make a difference.

Unfortunately all talk and no action doesn't do any good either – at least we are out there having a go and trying to make a difference.

Louise Varsaci, Traralgon

Laws on Life

Catechism of the Catholic Church para. 2273

The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation:

"The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death." (CDF, *Donum vitae* III)

"The moment a positive law deprives a category of human beings of the protection which civil legislation ought to accord them, the state is denying the equality of all before the law. When the state does not place its power at the service of the rights of each citizen, and in particular of the more vulnerable, the very foundations of a state based on law are undermined. ... As a consequence of the respect and protection which must be ensured for the unborn child from the moment of conception, the law must provide appropriate penal sanctions for every deliberate violation of the child's rights." (ibid)

Thanks to Fr Tim McInnes of Heyfield parish, for his strong homilies on the Church's teaching against abortion and for providing his parishioners with written information from the Catechism (including the quote above).

The Magisterium of the Church

Catechism of the Catholic Church (85 – 87)

"The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ." This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

"Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it. At the divine command and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it listens to this devotedly, guards it with dedication and expounds it faithfully. All that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed is drawn from this single deposit of faith."⁴⁸

Mindful of Christ's words to his apostles: "He who hears you, hears me," the faithful receive with docility the teachings and directives that their pastors give them in different forms.

Rocking the Boat

I welcome Fr Slater's reply (ITD Feb 06) to my observations on the state of Morwell parish when Fr Speekman arrived (ITD Nov 05). Fr Slater has admitted his approval of non-Catholic altar servers. He has also admitted giving Communion to non-Catholic residents in nursing homes.

Fr Slater asks why I did not approach him about my concerns at the time. My answer: these issues did not come to light until after Fr Speekman's arrival. (Given my openness on such issues – notwithstanding the vilification it attracts – surely Fr Slater is not suggesting that I would not raise such matters with him if I was aware of them.)

When Fr Speekman was faced with these irregular practices, he began to quietly go about putting a stop to them, giving careful explanations to all involved. However, this exercise of his priestly authority and duty to the Church caused strong reactions. He received verbal abuse from parents and staff. When he reminded the “well-functioning parish council” that they functioned only in an advisory capacity and were not deliberative, some threatened to resign.

As for the religious pastoral associate prior to and during Fr Slater's appointment – Father may have been unaware of her leadership of the parish, but she was under no such illusion. One only had to observe the performance when she ‘inducted’ Fr Speekman into the parish. It was embarrassing.

Members of the RCIA team of which Fr Slater speaks proudly, went out of their way to advise an unmarried couple that they could ignore Fr Speekman's advice and continue living together while one was preparing to become a Catholic.

Had Fr Speekman chosen not to rock the boat, and allowed all these practices to continue, no doubt the Bishop and priests like Fr Slater would have considered the parish of Morwell to have ‘remained’ ‘peaceful’ and ‘united.’ Standing up for the truth often causes division. But avoiding this creates a false unity. One wonders how many other parishes in the diocese tolerate similar irregularities for the sake of this false ‘peace’. Fr Speekman has paid a high price.

How many priests of the diocese are aware of the details of Fr Speekman's removal, how many have spoken with Father about it? Or do they prefer to listen to the gossip and allow his good name to be damaged? How many have urged the Bishop to obey the Decree from Rome? The first removal of Fr Speekman was an abuse of episcopal power; the second removal a mockery of the whole judicial process of the Church.

The division in the parish of Morwell (and the diocese) cannot be resolved until Fr Speekman is returned to his parish. Only then will the healing process begin.

John Henderson, Morwell

Prayer and Support

A friend supplies me with ITD on a regular basis and I am surprised how similar your problems are to those in Tasmania. Be happy though that you have hours of Eucharistic Adoration.

The same friend gave me a booklet on dissenting priests, dated 1972, but it reads like from yesterday. It makes you realise that writing to or about them doesn't alter them. Praying for them and supporting each other works. Please don't lose heart, and realise that suffering for and with Christ is a good way to be. Ask Padre Pio.

Thanks for your magazine. Good job, well done!

Bert van Galen, Mowbray, Tasmania

Lector in an Irregular Relationship

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

Q: Is it liturgically permissible for a person who has married outside the Church to be appointed as a reader at Sunday Mass? This is a sensitive pastoral issue; it is understood that readers should be in good standing. Does the parish priest have some discretion in such a matter? - K.O., Christchurch, New Zealand

A: We must take several things into account. A person who has married outside the Church with a proper dispensation is not impeded from acting as a reader or any similar ministry.

Acting as a minister, however, is also a sign of communion and fidelity. And so, the person who carries out this ministry should be in good standing with the Church.

Therefore a general rule of thumb could be that a person whose personal state impedes his or her habitual reception of Communion should not act in any public role in the liturgical assembly.

Given the public nature of the ministry, however, there may be cases when it is not prudent for a person to act in a ministry even if not impeded from receiving Communion.

Thus we may apply to readers and servers what the 1973 instruction *Immensae Caritatis* says regarding the choice of an extraordinary minister: The choice “should never fall upon a person whose designation could cause astonishment to the faithful.”

The priest does have certain discretion, not regarding the accession to a ministry of a person who is impeded from receiving Communion, but with respect to the prudent admission of a non-impeded person whose designation may cause perplexity for publicly known reasons.

Zenit

A Real Hoot!

A group of dissenters, reported by Linda Morris in the Sydney Morning Herald (20/02/2006) as “prominent Australian Catholics”, has provided some light relief for the orthodox among us.

They have written to Archbishop William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, accusing Cardinal George Pell of giving an explanation of Catholic doctrine that is “inaccurate, misleading, and not true to the Catholic tradition”!

They claim that the Church gives priority to the primacy of individual conscience in moral decisions, and that Pell’s teaching against this places his ‘views’ “outside the mainstream” of Catholic doctrine. They call on the Congregation to insist that Pell confine his remarks to church teaching!

According to the Sydney Morning Herald, signatories to the complaint included Sr Veronica Brady, senior research fellow at the University of Western Australia; Professor Max Charlesworth, Melbourne Catholic philosopher; Chris Geraghty, NSW district court judge; Fr Frank Martin, pioneer of state aid to Catholic schools; and Paul Collins, commentator on papal issues.

True to form, Cardinal Pell dismissed the complaints as a “real hoot”!

“There has never been a traditional Catholic teaching of the primacy of conscience,” he said. “This was one of the great issues at the Reformation, and the word of God remains supreme no matter how uncomfortable this is for the loyal opposition, for Catholic dissenters. A watch or clock is always useful, especially when it is telling the correct time.”

Dissenters to Catholic teaching claim that Catholics have an ultimate right to make moral judgements based on their individual conscience, even if their conscience is in opposition to Church teaching, for example on issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and contraception.

This group of Catholic dissenters sent their letter to the Congregation in November and although they have not yet received an acknowledgment, according to the Sydney Morning Herald they say this is no indication that the Vatican is not taking the complaint seriously.

Let’s hope the Congregation does indeed take this matter seriously, and issues some stern warnings to prominent Catholics who continue to sprout dissenting views as if they were Church teaching.

More Than Lip-Service

“As the tree is known by its fruits, so they who claim to belong to Christ are known by their actions; for this work of ours does not consist in just making professions, but in a faith that is both practical and lasting.”

St Ignatius of Antioch

Rediscover Frequent Confession

In my early days, we as a family went to Saturday morning confession. The lines for the confessional were long, and it gave us enough time for a proper examination of conscience. We realised that we were sinners, slaves to sin, and that it was better to confess venial sin than to wait until we got into serious sin.

The extraordinary infinite mercy and healing power of this Sacrament is not fully taught or explained anymore by most priests in our churches or in Catholic schools. In the last ten years I have not heard a sermon on the divine mercy offered by God in the confessional. A sincere confession is the best preparation for receiving the Lord in Holy Communion.

It was delightful to see around 2000 people at our Christmas Masses in our three parishes last year – that is about 700 more than we usually get on Sundays. More than 90% of the people came up and received the Lord in Holy Communion. In surveys, 50% of people attending Mass state that they have not been to confession in the last 12 months, and 5% once a month.

At school Masses more than 80% of the students come up and receive the Lord in Holy Communion, while they do not regularly attend Sunday Mass, ignoring their Sunday obligation, and many would not confess their deliberate failures in this regard in reconciliation before receiving Holy Communion.

“So then, everyone should examine himself first, and then eat the bread and drink from the cup. For if he does not recognise the meaning of the Lord’s body when he eats the bread and drinks from the cup, he brings judgement on himself as he eats and drinks. That is why many of you are sick and weak, and several have died” (1Cor.11:28-30).

Pope John Paul II said, “Many people have lost the sense of sin. Frequent confession strengthens the awareness of sin, and dries out the roots of sins. Individuals today make themselves the arbiters of what is right and wrong.”

Monthly confession is for me the school of self-knowledge and humility, it knocks the pride out of me and it gives me peace of mind, makes me realise that through God’s infinite mercy I exist, and only by His grace can obtain eternal life. To be reconciled means starting to follow Christ, and doing His Will.

“Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church. Indeed regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit.” (Catechism 1458)

Leo Willems, Warragul

Better Laugh Than Cry!

Father X from Queensland shares his satirical insights on the state of the Church in Australia today. He notes that his contributions are not specifically directed at any one person or event.

Bishops' Conference - New Award

The Bishops' Conference has created a prestigious new award for its members called *The Annual Busy Work Award*. Members qualify for this award by submitting a "Busy Book" filled out over a six month period. Points are awarded for the following conferences in 2006:

1. Saving the Miki whales and/or Patagonian Lung Fish
2. Freeing dolphins from entertainment parks
3. Aromatherapy and spiritual enlightenment
4. Water quality in the Upper Zambesi River
5. Integrating aboriginal smoking ceremonies into weekend liturgies
6. The modern nun and her townhouse – a spiritual awakening
7. Feeling good about myself while the Church crashes down
8. Pastoral Councils – a communion of like spirits in protracted shared thought
9. Adapting the negativity of the ten commandments to the modern child.

Points will be subtracted for the following:

1. Not travelling to the conference by plane
2. Not travelling business class
3. Speaking during breaks about vocations, foreign priests, or dropping church attendance
4. Wearing a clerical collar during a TV interview.

Idiots

“There are a few ways we can understand sin. One is to say that everything is to sin, and there is no way of getting rid of it. That is the pessimist's viewpoint and to some degree it has infiltrated forms of Christianity. The second is the optimist's solution: there is no sin, there is nothing to even be concerned about. That of course, is the monster of our present time, to a large degree. But, the pessimist and the optimist are both wrong. As Mr Chesterton said, “A pessimist is an unhappy idiot and an optimist is a happy idiot.” But they are both idiots. ‘Idiotes’ – an idiot is one totally wrapped up in himself. And again, the old saying is that a man wrapped up in himself becomes a very small package.”

Fr George Rutler, on EWTN

Divorced Persons Who Have Remarried, and the Eucharist

Proposition 40 – Synod of Bishops

In keeping with numerous pronouncements of the Magisterium of the Church, and sharing the painful concern expressed by many Fathers, the Synod of Bishops reaffirms the importance of a pastoral position and action of care and acceptance of divorced faithful who have remarried.

According to the Tradition of the Catholic Church, they may not be admitted to Holy Communion, being in a condition of objective contrast with the Word of the Lord who restored to marriage the original value of indissolubility (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1640), attested by his spousal surrender on the cross and communicated to the baptised through the grace of the sacrament.

Divorced persons who have remarried however belong to the Church, which receives them and looks after them with special care so that they will cultivate a Christian style of life through participation in the Holy Mass – even if they do not receive Holy Communion – listening to the Word of God, Eucharistic Adoration, prayer, participation in community life, confidential dialogue with a priest or a master of the spiritual life, dedication to lived charity, works of penance, and the commitment to educate their children.

If subsequently the nullity of the marital bond is not recognised, and there are objective conditions that in fact make living together irreversible, the Church encourages them to be committed to live their relationship according to the exigencies of the law of God, transforming it into a loyal and solidaristic friendship; so they will again be able to approach the Eucharistic banquet, with the care provided by the proven ecclesial practice. The blessing of these relationships, however, must be avoided so that confusion will not arise among the faithful on the value of marriage. [...]

The Synod considers...that great care must be taken to ensure the formation of engaged couples and to prior proof that they share effectively the convictions and commitments which cannot be given up for the validity of the sacrament of marriage. It asks Bishops and parish priests to have the courage to make a serious discernment, in order to avoid emotional impulses or superficial reasons leading engaged couples to assume a great responsibility with themselves, with the Church and with society, to which later they will be unable to respond.

www.zenit.org 03-11-2005

“A sure way to avoid division is faithfulness to the existing discipline of the Church.”

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican Secretary of State

EWTN In Your Home

The Italian Television Network (ITN) has brought two satellite Catholic TV channels to Australia – the very popular EWTN (run by the well-known Mother Angelica), and Telepace (Italian Catholic Television Channel).

EWTN is an American-owned Catholic television network, which carries live broadcasts from the Vatican (in English), plus family programming, documentaries, and Church current affairs. Telepace has similar programming in Italian.

EWTN has become the largest religious media network in the world, transmitting programming 24 hours a day to more than 105 million homes in 110 countries and 16 territories. Mother Angelica's programmes are excellent and inspirational viewing for the whole family, promoting traditional Catholic family values!

ITN will fully install the service in your home for a fee of \$649 that includes the first year's subscription pre-paid. Subsequent years have an ongoing fee of \$100 to keep the service on the air. A small satellite dish (approx 70cm) will be installed on your roof and a satellite receiver (about the size of a small VCR) near your television.

To arrange an installation, call one of the friendly ITN staff on 1300 659 022.

Quiz Challenge

Read the following and then answer the questions below. Good luck! (Answers on page 11)

“EarthSong ... ancient wisdom for new times.”

The EarthSong website explains that EarthSong seeks “to raise awareness around the emerging new cosmology,” “to develop new ways of honouring and celebrating the sacredness of all creation,” and “to promote a new ethical structure that recognizes and protects the integrity of all life forms on planet Earth.”

One of the many strange courses they offer is called “Earth’s Imagination” which promises to “explore the potential within the human for developing mutually enhancing relationships with the natural world”; another called Powers of the Universe, presented by a mathematical cosmologist; another about the “triple spiral in the seasonal wheel” which “explores an eco-spirituality grounded in indigenous Western religious celebration of the Earth-Sun annual cycle”.

An apparently pagan website, there is no mention of Catholic, Christian, Church, Christ, or God. Among numerous books and resources, there is nothing Catholic. Their vision statement places their “creativity at the service of Earth”.

Question 1: Who sponsors EarthSong?

Question 2: Who advertised EarthSong?

Cardinal Pell on RU486

The following points were made in a media release by the Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal George Pell on 14/02/2006 regarding the abortifacient drug RU486:

1. In 1996 members of the newly elected Howard Government and the Beazley led Labor Opposition voted for an amendment to the TGA Act to require Ministerial responsibility and Parliamentary scrutiny of approvals to import and use RU486 for abortions.
2. In 1996 it was accepted that RU486 is not the same as other pills because it is destructive, causing abortions even into the second trimester. Pills generally are used to heal, are therapeutic. Pregnancy is not a disease. Little has changed since 1996 except that the dangers from RU486 are better known.
3. In a democracy like Australia's, parliaments are elected to govern. The Westminster system means ministerial decision-making and parliamentary supervision; not shifting law-making on important moral issues to courts, much less to an unelected board partly funded by the pharmaceutical industry.
4. Majority opinion in Australia, except in the Senate, disapproves of the 80,000 a year government funded abortions in Australia and is looking for ways to reduce this death-toll, not risk increasing it.
5. The health risks to women of RU486 cannot be airbrushed out of existence. Already significant numbers of women have died after taking the drug. Hundreds in the U.S. have suffered ill effects. RU486 will increase the danger of women suffering home alone miscarriages and will further trivialise the destruction of human lives. The plight of women and the unborn will be worsened also by the likelihood of a thriving black market in the drug. Already RU486 is sold over the internet, with no checks or controls.
6. The sectarian anti-Catholic attacks on the Minister for Health by parliamentarians and cartoonists are cheap and nasty, revealing a poverty of argumentation and a fear the tide is turning.
7. Future generations will look back on today's encouragement of abortion the way we now look at owning slaves. It is a sad irony that the first cross-party alliance of women in parliament should use its power to increase the opportunities for abortion, to attack life, rather than defend it. These senators are out of touch with young women where 60% want to delay the introduction of the drug until there is more information on the health risks.

Cardinal Pell called on parliaments and governments to encourage births, to encourage free personal choices for life, and to give women the support and resources they need to give birth to their children.

Can We Love Difficult People?

Benedict XVI says that he wanted to answer two fundamental questions with his first encyclical. These are: "Is it possible to love God?" and "Can we really love our neighbour when he is strange or even disagreeable?"

The Pope explained this in a letter to the readers of *Famiglia Cristiana*, a weekly published by St Paul's in Italy, with a circulation of more than 1 million. The document, written in a familiar tone, was published in the Feb. 5 issue, which included a copy of the encyclical, "Deus Caritas Est."

"Initially, in fact, the text might seem a bit difficult and theoretical," Benedict XVI acknowledges in his letter. "However, when one begins to read it, it becomes evident that I only wished to respond to a couple of very concrete questions for a Christian life."

In regard to the first question on the possibility of loving God, the Pope responded: "Yes, we can love God, given that he has not remained at an unreachable distance but has entered and enters into our lives.

"Not only has he offered us love, above all he lived it first and knocks on the door of our hearts in many ways to elicit our response of love."

In regard to the second question on the possibility of loving one's neighbour, in particular "when he is strange or even disagreeable," the Pontiff also responded affirmatively.

"Yes, we can, if we are God's friends, if we are Christ's friends and, in this way, it becomes ever clearer that he has loved and loves us, though we often turn our gaze from him and live according to other criteria," the Holy Father stated. [...]

www.zenit.org

To Consecrated Persons:

"Do not be afraid to present yourselves, even visibly, as consecrated persons, and try with all means to manifest your belonging to Christ, the hidden treasure for which you left everything."

Pope Benedict XVI

Not an Alien

Many thanks for your regular posting of *Into the Deep*. I look forward to it each month and find the articles interesting and inspiring, and also encouraging that I share many of the views published. It is good to know that one is not completely an alien and out on a limb for one's orthodox views.

I am enclosing a donation to help with postage. It's interesting to see your paper travels through all states in Australia, and I pray that you will be able to continue publishing it regularly. May God bless you all.

Mary Ross, Seymour

Why Do Your Disciples Not Fast?

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher to the Pontifical Household

"And Jesus said to them, 'Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.'"

Thus, Jesus does not deny the practice of fasting, but renews it in its forms, times and contents. Fasting has become an ambiguous practice. In antiquity, only religious fasting was known; today, political and social fasting exists (hunger strikes!), health and ideological fasting (vegetarians), pathological fasting (anorexia), aesthetic fasting (to be thin). There is, above all, a fast imposed by necessity: that of millions of human beings who lack the indispensable minimum and die of hunger.

In themselves, these fasts have nothing to do with religious or aesthetic reasons. In aesthetic fasting at times (not always) one even 'mortifies' the vice of gluttony only to obey another capital vice, that of pride or vanity. It is important, therefore, to discover the genuine biblical teaching on fasting. In regard to fasting, we find in the Bible the attitude of 'yes, but', of approval and of critical reservation.

Fasting, in itself, is something good and recommendable; it translates some fundamental religious attitudes: reverence before God, acknowledgment of one's sins, resistance to the desires of the flesh, concern for and solidarity with the poor. ... As with all human things, however, it can fall into 'presumption of the flesh.' Suffice it to think of the words of the Pharisee in the temple: "I fast twice a week" (Luke 18:12).

If Jesus was to speak to us his disciples of today, what would he stress most, the 'yes' or the 'but'? At present we are very sensitive to the reasons of the 'but' and of critical reservation. We regard as more important the need to 'share bread with the hungry and clothe the naked'; we are in fact ashamed to call ours a 'fast', when what would be for us the height of austerity - to be on bread and water - for millions of people would already be an extraordinary luxury, especially if it is fresh bread and clean water.

What we should discover instead are the reasons for the 'yes.' ... We live in a culture dominated by materialism and unbridled consumerism. Fasting helps us not to be reduced to pure 'consumers'; it helps us to acquire the precious 'fruit of the Spirit,' which is 'self-control,' it predisposes us to the encounter with God who is spirit, and it makes us more attentive to the needs of the poor.

But we must not forget that there are alternative forms of fasting and abstinence from food. We can practice fasting from tobacco, alcohol, fasting from violent and sexual pictures that television, shows, magazines and Internet bombard us with daily. Likewise, these kinds of modern "demons" are not defeated except "with fasting and prayer."

www.zenit.org

How To Establish More Eucharistic Adoration in a Parish

By Fr Doug Harris, Promoter of Perpetual Adoration, St Bernadette's Glendalough, Western Australia

The question today is: "Do we adore Him whom we receive into our heart in Holy Communion?"

The clear, specific, and unmistakable way in which Christ has consistently and repeatedly pleaded with humanity to adore Him is through appreciation of the gift of His total presence among us in the Blessed Sacrament. Are we willing to spend time with Him in prayer who is really, truly, bodily and personally present in the Blessed Sacrament?

The Spiritual Centre

At the height of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI wrote a prophetic encyclical entitled *Mysterium Fidei*. In the encyclical the Pope states that the Eucharist is reserved in our Church as the "spiritual centre" of the parish. In this encyclical he also writes: "Anyone, therefore, who approaches this august Sacrament with special devotion and endeavours to return generous love for Christ's own infinite love, experiences and fully understands ... how great is the value of converse with Christ, for there is nothing more consoling on earth, nothing more efficacious for advancing along the road to holiness." Pope Paul pleaded with pastors and bishops to "tirelessly" promote devotion to the Blessed Sacrament so that a new era of eucharistic piety pervade the whole Church.

Pope John Paul II, in his letter *On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*, (1980), wrote: "The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic adoration. Jesus waits for us in this sacrament of His love. Let us be generous with our time of going to meet Him in adoration and contemplation that is full of faith and ready to make reparation for the great faults and crimes of the world. May our adoration never cease."

The Holy Father put his words into action by beginning perpetual adoration, with the Blessed Sacrament exposed, on December 2nd 1981. Since that day there has been uninterrupted, continuous adoration in the little chapel at St Peter's in the Vatican. In the prayer to open this chapel, the Pope prayed for every parish in the world to have perpetual adoration. Over 2,500 parishes around the world now have perpetual adoration. [...]

Responding to the Invitation

There are only 168 hours in a week. The vast majority of parishes have two, three or four times more people than there are hours in the week. The practical advantage of perpetual adoration is that it

opens up all 168 hours of the week. This makes it very easy for anyone to choose one of the hours during the week to make a holy-hour of prayer.

When each hour is covered it also makes the Blessed Sacrament available to anyone at anytime. When people know that they have an opportunity to visit Our Blessed Lord any time they desire, it is extraordinary how many people respond to this opportunity.

Everyone today experiences a deep need for personal prayer. The hunger for prayer increases with the many trials and heartaches which many encounter in family life or the business world.

A Room in the Inn

Many wonderful pastors have found ways to make our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament completely available to the people, even though they lock the church doors. Some of these pastors make a Blessed Sacrament chapel somewhere in the body of the church, while keeping the rest of the church locked. This is done by converting a baptistry in the back, or a sacristy in the front into a perpetual adoration chapel. Some pastors have even built a new chapel when no place could be found for perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. God bless them a hundredfold! We spend so much money on so many things for the parish that it is tragic not to spend whatever it takes to provide a little place where the People of God can come to adore Our Lord and receive the "living waters" of His grace and love.

Vocations

There is a direct connection between the sharp decline in Eucharistic adoration during the last 25 years, and the sharp decline in vocations and church attendance. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the answer to all the ills in the Church and human society. From the Lamb flows the river, crystal clear, which provides the healing and the medicine for all the nations (Rev. 22:1-3).

A priest who comes to the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament "knows" Him personally with a living faith. To know Him is to love Him and want everyone else to love Him also. A priest who makes a daily holy-hour is a priest who wants Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to be adored perpetually. [...]

When asked "What will save the world?" Mother Teresa replied: "My answer is prayer. What we need is for every parish to come before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in Holy-Hours of prayer."

A crisis is when you can't say: "Let's just forget the whole thing."

Talking in Church

Assuming that what is being said is not itself sinful, it is morally neutral to talk. However, Catholic moral teaching tells us that “circumstances” change the moral character of actions.

Talking in Church when not demanded by necessity is at least venially sinful for the following reasons:

1) It is the Lord’s House, which Jesus taught was “a house of prayer” (Mt 21:13) and thus should be used according to its purpose. This is a violation of justice against God, for whom we should have reverence.

2) It is a violation of justice against actual neighbours who are trying to pray. Again, necessity permits talking, just as it permits practicing the music before Mass and so on. However, most conversations are trivial and could go on elsewhere at another time. This puts them in the category of unnecessary. The truth of this is shown by the strict guard for silence maintained in the chapels of the Roman basilicas where people are praying. Even in the areas where the tourists are viewing the architecture and art, talking above a whisper is not permitted. This is an accurate reflection of the Catholic respect for the church and for others.

3) Finally, it is a violation of charity, since as Christians we should be going “out of ourselves” to look after others first. If a person crassly and knowingly disregarded others trying to pray, or worst of all did so with malice or contempt, it could even be a mortal sin against charity.

These are basic principles of Catholic moral theology and need no other authority than that.

*Answered by Colin B. Donovan, STL
Eternal Word Network Television, Expert Answers www.ewtn.com*

On Conscience

Veritatis Splendor, Pope John Paul II (no. 32)

Certain currents of modern thought have gone so far as to exalt freedom to such an extent that it becomes an absolute, which would then be the source of values. This is the direction taken by doctrines which have lost the sense of the transcendent or which are explicitly atheist. The individual conscience is accorded the status of a supreme tribunal of moral judgment which hands down categorical and infallible decisions about good and evil. To the affirmation that one has a duty to follow one’s conscience is unduly added the affirmation that one’s moral judgment is true merely by the fact that it has its origin in the conscience. But in this way the inescapable claims of truth disappear, yielding their place to a criterion of sincerity, authenticity and “being at peace with oneself”, so much so that some have come to adopt a radically subjectivistic conception of moral judgment.

The Obedience Test

From an article by John Mallon, Contributing Editor, Inside the Vatican www.insidethevatican.com, January 2006

Wherever human beings gather, there one finds error, mistakes, even abuses, as the history of the Church attests. [...]

It is unwise to mistake one’s liturgical “tastes” for what is valid or invalid. How often history shows that those who attempt to be “more Catholic than the Pope” soon enough find themselves no longer Catholic at all. To be running after conspiracy theories and the spiritual lust, paranoia and arrogance they inspire, not trusting in Christ’s promised protection of the *Depositum Fidei*, is to be deceived.

Protestantism ushered in a new form of Christianity wherein each believer was a magisterium unto himself. Catholics are free of that burden. It is a pastoral tragedy when people of no theological training, or even very little formal education, start declaring themselves right and the Pope wrong, and that includes rejecting an ecumenical council, one of the highest levels of Magisterial authority.

Every Catholic has the right to be indignant, even angry, about the abuses introduced into the Church by dissent after the Council, often in the name of the Council, but there is a huge difference between saying that many problems emerged after Vatican II and saying the problems emerged as a result of Vatican II. There is always some vertigo and a period of adjustment after an ecumenical council, and the Church tends to think in centuries, not decades. Every Catholic needs to remember that *abusus non tollit usum*—the abuse does not remove the use. [...]

For almost 40 years now dissenters have been putting forth the idea that dissent was somehow an expression of “adult faith” or “thinking for oneself.” The exact opposite is true. In fact, dissent is an adolescent act. Religious obedience, on the other hand, is a matter of great spiritual maturity. Obedience to God is the pinnacle of wisdom. There is no greater expression of maturity than obedience to God. When it comes to faith and morals, the Magisterium is our divine guarantee of freedom from error. There is no other.

John Mallon also has regular columns on the website Catholic.Org. An archive of his work appears at <http://www.johnmallon.net>. You can reach Mr Mallon at johnmallon@insidethevatican.com.

Answers to Quiz Challenge

See Quiz on page 8

1. The Brigidine Sisters, Christian Brothers, FCJ Sisters, Loreto Sisters, Presentations Sisters, and Mercy Sisters are listed on the website as proud “co-sponsors of EarthSong”.
2. CathNews, the internet news service sponsored by the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference, had EarthSong as their featured website.

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 st Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
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	<i>CANCELLED</i>
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

It is Faith We Want

Ah! if we had the eyes of angels with which to see Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is here present on this altar, and who is looking at us, how we should love Him! We should never more wish to part from Him. We should wish to remain always at His feet; it would be a foretaste of Heaven: all else would become insipid to us. But see, it is faith we want. We are poor blind people; we have a mist before our eyes. Faith alone can dispel this mist. [...]

When we are before the Blessed Sacrament, instead of looking about, let us shut our eyes and our mouth; let us open our heart: our good God will open His; we shall go to Him, He will come to us, the one to ask, the other to receive; it will be like a breath from one to the other. What sweetness do we not find in forgetting ourselves in order to seek God! The saints lost sight of themselves that they might see nothing but God, and labour for Him alone; they forgot all created objects in order to find Him alone. This is the way to reach Heaven.

Saint John Vianney

Mary,

our mother

and mother of the Redeemer,

Gate of heaven and Star of the sea,

Come to the aid of your people,

who have sinned,

yet also yearn to rise again!

Come to the Church's aid,

Enlighten your devoted children,

Strengthen the faithful throughout the world,

Let those who have drifted

hear your call,

And may they who live as prisoners of evil

Be converted!

Pope John Paul II

Contact Into the Deep

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- *Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.*
- *There is no subscription fee.*
- *Donations are welcome! (Cheques made out to John Henderson please.)*

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

Editor - Janet Kingman

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.