

Into the Deep

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The Final Word!

“There are times when life seems like a long and dreary Holy Saturday. Everything seems over, the wicked seem to triumph, and evil appears more powerful than good.

But faith enables us to see afar, it makes us glimpse the break of a new day on the other side of this day. Faith promises us that the final word belongs to God: to God alone!”

From the Way of the Cross, by Archbishop Angelo Comastri, Vicar General of His Holiness for Vatican City, 2006

“We know that evil does not have the last word, as he who triumphs is Christ crucified and risen, and his victory is manifested with the force of merciful love.

His resurrection gives us this certainty: Despite all the darkness in the world, evil does not have the last word.

Supported by this truth, we will be able to commit ourselves with greater courage and enthusiasm to make a more just world come into being.”

Pope Benedict XVI

To Know God

From Pope Benedict XVI's answer to a priest's question on what is important to focus on when guiding young people:

It is important to know God ... The subject “God” is essential. It is necessary to return to God the Creator, to the God who is creative reason, and then to find Christ, who is the living Face of God. Let us say that here there is a reciprocity. On the one hand, we have the encounter with Jesus, with this human, historical and real figure; little by little, he helps me to become acquainted with God; and on the other, knowing God helps me understand the grandeur of Christ's Mystery which is the Face of God.

Only if we manage to grasp that Jesus is not a great prophet or a world religious figure but that he is the Face of God, that he is God, have we discovered Christ's greatness and found out who God is. God is not only a distant shadow, the ‘primary Cause’, but he has a Face. His is the Face of mercy, the Face of pardon and love, the Face of the encounter with us. As a result, these two topics penetrate each other and must always go together.

Then of course, we have to realize that the Church is our vital travelling companion on our journey. In her, the Word of God lives on and Christ is not only a figure of the past but is present. We must therefore rediscover sacramental life, sacramental forgiveness, the Eucharist and Baptism as a new birth.

Chrism Mass Symbolism

The Chrism Mass, usually held Holy Thursday morning, is the Mass where the priests gather from across the diocese to concelebrate with their bishop, renew their commitment to their priestly service, and at which the bishop blesses the oils that they then take back with them to their parishes. The General Instruction on the Roman Missal (no.157) refers to the Chrism Mass as one “to be held in high regard” because of the sign of unity of the priesthood and of the Church itself. It goes without saying that this Mass would be held at the Cathedral.

In Sale diocese this year, Bishop Coffey determined that the Chrism Mass would be better held in Traralgon, in a school hall, with school children and their family and friends present. Hard to fathom a reason for this. Although the symbolism is perhaps more appropriate to our diocese, when you come to think of it – schools determine the bishop's moves, a hall preferred to the cathedral, an audience rather than a congregation, priests gather in unity around a school, take their oils back from the school hall ... Maybe it does make sense after all. In a tragically empty kind of way.

Ed.

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

Effective Response to Evil

From an Angelus address by Pope Benedict, 11-03-2007

...According to the mentality of the time, the people tended to think that the misfortune fell on the victims because of their grave fault. Jesus, on the contrary, says: "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered thus? ... Or those 18 upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who dwelt in Jerusalem?" (Lk13:2,4). In both cases, he ends saying: "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will likewise perish" (13:3,5).

This is, therefore, the point to which Jesus wished to lead those who were listening to him: the need for conversion. He does not present it in moralistic, but rather in realistic terms, as the only appropriate response to events that put human certainties in crisis.

In the face of certain misfortunes, he advises, it is no good to blame the victims. What is truly wise, rather, consists in allowing oneself to be questioned by the precariousness of existence and to adopt an attitude of responsibility: to do penance and improve our lives.

This is wisdom, this is the most effective response to evil, at all levels, interpersonal, social and international. Christ invites us to respond to evil first of all through a serious examination of conscience and with the commitment to purify our lives. Otherwise, we will perish, he says, we will perish in the same way. In fact, people and societies that live without questioning themselves have ruin as their only final end. Conversion, on the contrary, despite the fact it does not preserve us from problems and adversities, enables us to address them in a different "way."

Above all it helps to prevent evil, and to neutralize some of its threats. And, in any case, it enables us to overcome evil with good, though not always at the level of events, which at times are independent of our will, certainly always at the spiritual level.

In short, conversion overcomes evil at its root, which is sin, though it cannot always avoid its consequences.

www.zenit.org

The Source of Our Joy

"Where do we find the source of Christian joy if not in the Eucharist, which Christ has left us as spiritual food while we are pilgrims on earth? In every age the Eucharist nourishes that profound joy in believers that makes us all one with love and with peace. This joy has its origin in our communion with God and with our brothers."

Pope Benedict XVI

Prayer and Action!

As reported in March ITD (letter by Jane Munro, p.11), the Sandhurst Diocese held an education conference for all teachers on 15-16 March. Among the speakers, there was: Margaret Wheatley from the U.S., who believes that the goddess Gaia created the world and all life and speaks through many women today; Fr Sean McDonagh from Ireland, who believes the Church's most important role is to deal with environmental issues; Dr Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, who promotes school education programs on same-sex issues, including providing information on gay support groups; and Bishop Pat Power, who opposes Church teaching on sexuality and on the male priesthood.

Thankfully, some Catholics of the diocese decided to take action.

One group held a special devotion in Rochester, gathering to pray for Sandhurst's Bishop Joe Grech, while the conference was on.

Another group gathered at the conference venue in Shepparton, to protest as the teachers and speakers arrived for the conference.

The spokesman for the protest group, Mr Phonse Corboy (20) stated in a press release, "We Catholic youth are fed up with Bishop Joe Grech and his staff of the Sandhurst Catholic Education Office teaching dissent in the name of Catholicism. All we ask of Bishop Grech is strong solid Catholic leadership, and God knows the world needs it right now...but when we ask for a fish he passes us a snake. This conference is a melting-pot of watered-down faith, dissent and outright disobedience."

Phonse Corboy entered the conference venue twice during the protest. On one occasion he was injured while being forcibly removed by a number of men attending the conference. He is apparently considering legal action against the diocese regarding this incident. He disrupted the keynote speaker Margaret Wheatley, saying afterwards, "She just shouldn't be there on Church property. So I went in to tell her just that, I saw it as my duty."

The conference, held at Notre Dame College in Shepparton, was attended by about 1700 teachers and priests including Bishop Joe Grech of Sandhurst and Bishop Pat Power of Canberra-Goulburn.

The protest received much local media coverage, and apparently rattled the organisers, bishops and priests considerably. Let's hope that they finally realise where they are leading young souls in Catholic schools. And let's keep up the prayer and action in opposing anti-Catholic influences in our schools and parishes!

Ed.

Real Catholic Education

Parents are primarily responsible for forming and educating their children in the doctrines of the Catholic faith. Catholic schools exist to help the bishop carry out his teaching mission, and to support parents in fulfilling their responsibility. This is how the Catholic school participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church: which is to serve humanity until it reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ, and to proclaim the Good News of salvation to all. This entire evangelizing mission of the Church flows out of the Eucharist, the source and summit of our Faith, and is rooted in communion with Christ.

By virtue of the Bishop's teaching authority, Catholic schools are fundamentally Church schools and as such they have distinctive characteristics. Their distinctive characteristics are their faith tradition, their worship, their scriptural tradition and Catholic heritage. The vision of reality which they present is found in the Good News as preached by Jesus Christ and handed down through the Apostolic Tradition in the Church. Hence Jesus Christ is the centre of the whole educational enterprise in the Church. His life alone gives meaning, purpose and direction to our lives. He reveals to us our true dignity and meaning, and his life uncovers our deepest potential.

The purpose of instruction at a Catholic school is education – true education and not schooling. It is not about amassing vast quantities of information, nor is it solely concerned with the acquisition of skills and techniques. Rather, Catholic education is about the Christian formation of the whole person in the doctrines of the faith, allowing him to grow to maturity in his baptismal vocation.

A Catholic school must therefore have an integral, autonomous curriculum which is centred on the person of Jesus Christ and enlivened by the teachings of the Gospel. This curriculum, of which the Religious Education program forms an integral part, must demonstrate and highlight the relevance of the Catholic faith to life, and the importance of the integration of that faith into every aspect of life.

No Catholic school can adequately fulfil its education objectives on its own. The curriculum must continually be fed, stimulated and challenged by its source of life – the saving word of Christ as it is expressed in the sacred scriptures, in tradition, especially liturgical and sacramental tradition, and in the lives of people past and present, who bear witness to that word.

Considering that the mission of the school flows from the mission of the Church, it follows that the Catholic school is more than an educational institution. Thus, Catholic leaders and teachers in the school are more than employees. By living the Gospel and persevering in the teachings of the Church faithfully and joyfully,

they are living what they believe and contributing to the evangelizing mission of the Church.

All leaders and teachers in a Catholic school, particularly the Principal and the RE staff, must lead integrated lives, be appropriately qualified and competent, and be committed to the Catholic faith and the goals of Catholic education as prescribed by the Church. It is their commitment that ensures the identity of the school is maintained. They should actively contribute to the religious life of the school and the spiritual formation of students. This is what makes a school truly integrated, as opposed to a school in which religion is regarded as an academic subject like any other.

By witnessing to their faith they exert a significant multiplier effect on the school community that is so important if the daily conduct of the school is to be animated by the Gospel. Through this witnessing and leadership, any practices or structures which are incompatible with the mission of the Church and the purpose of Catholic education, will be prevented from developing or remaining in the school.

If by their witness and behaviour, leaders and teachers contribute to the distinctive character of the Catholic school, then it is essential that they be provided with continuing formation. This formation should give the staff a clear understanding of the purpose of Catholic education and provide an environment which will nourish and develop the faith of the teachers themselves.

Through regular involvement in the sacramental life of the Church and ongoing personal development, the lives of the teachers become more integrated. Their faith is thus personalized and becomes part of their daily living. In this way the true purpose, mission and vision of Catholic education becomes embodied.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Exclusive

Following the ban on my being a member of the Sale branch of the Legion of Mary by Monsignor Dan McCartan [see Jan '07 ITD, p.2], it has now emerged that things have not changed under the new spiritual director, parish administrator Fr Bernard Buckley.

I recently asked the president of the Legion what the situation was regarding the possibility of me becoming a member, given that Mons McCartan had retired. He said he would ask Fr Buckley and get back to me. He later informed me that Fr Buckley had stated that the situation had not changed. When the president asked Fr Buckley what reason he could offer me, he replied, "That's my problem, not yours." Surely justice demands that a reason be given?

Pat O'Brien, Sale

Speaking at Funerals

The following are excerpts from Guidelines for Speaking in Remembrance of the Dead, recently issued by Cardinal George Pell for the Sydney Archdiocese (but useful for all!). The full Guidelines can be found at www.liturgy.sydney.catholic.org.au

What is the difference between a ‘eulogy’ and ‘speaking in remembrance of the dead?’

A eulogy recounts some or all of the significant events in the life of the deceased.

Words of remembrance do not attempt to give a biography, but to share some insight into the faith and values of the deceased as seen in one or two examples from his/her life. A eulogy by its very nature tends to be lengthy, while words of remembrance are brief.

Do the new Guidelines mean that all eulogies are forbidden at Catholic funerals?

No. A eulogy is only forbidden at the funeral Mass, in accord with no. 141 in the Order of Christian Funerals (OCF), which states: “A brief homily based on the readings should always be given at the funeral liturgy, but never any kind of eulogy.”

However, no. 170 of the OCF does permit ‘words of remembrance’ at the end of Mass: “A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins.”

Both eulogies and words of remembrance may be offered at a vigil service on the eve of the funeral, or at the cemetery or crematorium. These are also the appropriate places/times for playing favourite secular tunes or showing slides or PowerPoint displays of photos of the deceased.

Why are the Guidelines necessary?

For several reasons [including]: some Catholic funerals are losing their essential nature as an act of worship of God and prayer for the soul of the deceased, and becoming settings for a series of eulogies; [...]

The proper time for a layperson to speak is:

- Vigil Service: after the Concluding Prayer, before the Blessing and Dismissal
- Funeral Mass: after the Prayer after Communion, before the Final Commendation
- Funeral outside Mass: after the Lord’s Prayer, before the Final Commendation
- Committal Service: after the Prayer of Committal, before the Intercessions

The words of remembrance:

- are delivered after the Prayer after Communion and before the Final Commendation;
- are to be brief – no more than 3 to 5 minutes;
- are to be prepared in advance and given to the priest for review in advance;
- are limited to one person.

Guidelines for Homilists

Funerals are important moments when the homilist can proclaim the Good News and focus the attention of the mourners on the person of Jesus Christ, Who is the Resurrection and the Life. Thus the Church exhorts its preachers:

“Attentive to the grief of those present, the homilist should dwell on God’s compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord, as proclaimed in the Scripture readings. The homilist should also help the members of the assembly to understand that the mystery of God’s love and the mystery of Jesus’ victorious death and resurrection were present in the life and death of the deceased, and that these mysteries are active in their own lives as well. Through the homily, members of the family and community should receive consolation and strength to face the death of one of their members with a hope nourished by the saving word of God. Laypersons who preside at the funeral rites give an instruction on the readings” (OCF 27).

Focus of a Funeral Mass

“The funeral Mass, like any other Mass, is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered to the Father through the priest in praise and thanksgiving, petition and atonement. It is an act of the worship of God, in this case offered especially for the eternal repose of the deceased person. The focus is on Jesus Christ, who offers himself to the Father, not on the deceased person.”

Fr John Flader, in The Catholic Weekly 10-09-2006

Hungry for Orthodoxy

I received your newsletter from a friend and I was very impressed to know that there are many of us who keep the holy Catholic faith and are hungry to read such orthodox articles as there are not many around.

I recently installed a dish to receive the Catholic TV station EWTN and it is a treasure which I would recommend to any orthodox Catholic, or rather to any Catholic for conversion.

I am enclosing a small donation in the hope you could please send me *Into the Deep* when it is published. May God bless you for such good work.

Joseph Vanjek, Geelong

Priesthood an Elitist Sect

An article was recently sent to ITD that exposes more of Thomas Groome's anti-Catholic teaching. He was giving an interview to Ted Schmidt in the Catholic New Times (16-11-2003). The article was titled, "Thomas Groome: the demise of clericalism and breaking open of priesthood."

In the interview, Groome discussed what he saw as the problem of clericalism, which he was about to address at a local teachers' conference. In describing clericalism, he said there is "a whole elitist, pedestalized ideology of preference, deference, accepting that there is a real ontological difference between the ordained and the baptized."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, on the other hand, teaches that the ministerial priesthood does, in fact, differ *in essence* from the common priesthood of the faithful "because it confers a sacred power" (para 1592); and ordination "confers an *indelible spiritual character* and cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily" (1582).

Groome proceeded to blame Pope John Paul II for elevating the priesthood. "Read his Holy Thursday statements on priesthood. They all champion clericalism. It is an exaggerated and inflated sense of priesthood," Groome stated. "Too often it has become an elitist sect, clique or club that is imposed on the Christian community. It militates against the authentic priesthood of the ordained which I deeply value and the priesthood of all believers. It kills both. A structural change is needed to help the demise of clericalism but also we need a change of ideology, a change of outlook, a change of consciousness.

"The [sex abuse] scandal in the Boston area is one of the best examples of debunking clericalism that we've had in a long time. However, it is sad to see it come that way. In a sense the pope's exaggerated and inflated clericalist ideas are part of this scandal."

Later Groome shared his views on celibacy: "To make celibacy a pre-condition is wrong"; and on women priests: "How can any role, any function be excluded or closed to a woman [...] Can this massive denial continue, given that 50 per cent of the world's parishes have no priest?"

Yet again we have Groome's own admission that he holds and teaches anti-Catholic beliefs. Why do so many of our Bishops, priests and Catholic Education Offices refuse to look at the facts, and obstinately insist that he is good for our religious education curricula?

Ed.

Did You Know?

From an article by Elizabeth Lev, Zenit News, 22-03-2007

Arsene Heitz, the Strasbourg artist who designed the flag of the European Union, gave an interview in which he stated that the idea for the stars came to him from the apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Rue du Bac in Paris and the Miraculous Medal. The 12 stars that crowned Mary of the Immaculate Conception would be placed on a blue ground which throughout the history of Western art has been the colour of grace.

Furthermore, the flag was adopted on Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, in 1955. Although hundreds of sites have cropped up over the years to debunk this fact, given that the artists' own words confirm this story, it appears that some people just want to negate their own history and origins.

The signing date of the European treaty also seems pretty providential: March 25, the feast of the Annunciation, which until the mid-20th century was a holy day of obligation in Rome. Robert Schuman and Konrad Adenauer, two of the founders of the European Union, were devout Catholics, so the significance of the incarnation of a new union of European countries on the same day as the incarnation of God's Word would not have been lost on them.

Although the European Union has drifted far from its Christian roots, ignoring the pleas of Pope John Paul II to recognize their common bond in Christianity while drafting the constitution, there is always reason to hope.

In any case, the fact that the founders invoked the Blessed Virgin in their symbol and on the date of signing, means that she will be watching over Europe, whether it likes it or not.

Priesthood

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1591 The whole Church is a priestly people. Through Baptism all the faithful share in the priesthood of Christ. This participation is called the "common priesthood of the faithful" ...

1547 [T]he common priesthood of the faithful is exercised by the unfolding of baptismal grace – a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit.

1592 The ministerial priesthood differs in essence from the common priesthood of the faithful because it confers a sacred power for the service of the faithful. The ordained ministers exercise their service for the People of God by teaching, divine worship and pastoral governance.

"It is better to be Christians without saying so than to say so without being so."

St Ignatius of Antioch

Victorian Government Discusses Life and Death

Victorian Premier Steve Bracks, in spite of being Catholic, is supporting a bill which would allow the cloning of human embryos for medical research. Fortunately, other Catholics have been courageous in opposing this move publicly.

Melbourne's Archbishop Denis Hart gave a strong, clear and immediate response, saying in a press release (see alongside): "To allow human embryos to be deliberately created and then destroyed for scientific research is always unethical."

Labor MP Ms Christine Campbell, said: "I want Victoria to be one of the top five biotech sites internationally, but you should never create human life for its deliberate destruction." (in *The Age* 14-03-2007)

Bishop Christopher Prowse of Melbourne said, "I would have thought that the people in the rank and file of the community, in our streets and neighbourhoods and our parishes, would be appalled to think that the Government was moving in that direction." (ABC Online 13-03-2007)

Mr Bracks said that "the opportunity to cure some of the intractable diseases around the world ... is an opportunity we should not pass up or miss." (*The Age* 14-03-2007)

Strange for a man in his position not to know that:

- 1) being a Catholic means he is *obliged* to believe and act according to what the Church teaches on the sanctity of human life, and
- 2) research on adult stem cells is already providing some of these "opportunities" he refers to, that embryonic stem cell research has so far not even come close to.

If Mr Bracks really wanted Victoria to be on the forefront of international medical research, and if he wanted to be consistent with his Catholic faith, he could easily choose the ethical and fruitful path of putting his support behind adult stem cell research. But he must be motivated by something else. Ed.

Brazen

Sacred Heart Primary School, Morwell, recently placed a half-page full-colour advert in a local magazine. The ad told of refurbished classrooms, interactive whiteboards, affordable prices, and pastoral care amongst other things – even a reference to Jesus. But in a total of over 330 words in the ad, the word "Catholic" was *nowhere* to be seen. One of the 3 photos depicted school children using the sanctuary of Sacred Heart Church as a stage, with a banner spelling "learning". It seems Catholic schools are not even ashamed to advertise their dissociation with Catholicism anymore. Ed.

Catholic Concern Over Cloning in Victoria

*From the Melbourne Archdiocese website,
www.melbourne.catholic.org.au
Tuesday 13 March 2007*

Archbishop Denis Hart, the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, today called on the Victorian Government to resist strongly any moves to legislate in favour of creating cloned human embryos.

Responding to media reports that the Health Minister, Bronwyn Pike, is about to introduce legislation that will allow therapeutic cloning, Archbishop Hart said: "If such reports are true, then a very serious ethical debate would need to be conducted in the community. "There are issues of enormous importance at stake here. To allow human embryos to be deliberately created and then destroyed for scientific research is always unethical."

The Catholic Church's total opposition to cloning embryos for research is well known. Our arguments are based on good ethics, and not simply religious arguments.

In short, these arguments are centred upon the following:

Therapeutic cloning is an assault upon the dignity of the human person in its most vulnerable and earliest moments of existence.

Alleviating the suffering of some people by creating and then destroying human life is always totally unethical.

It creates two types of human life: those destined for life and those destined for death. Protection of human life cannot permit this.

The science of therapeutic cloning to help those suffering certain illnesses has not produced the results intended. The Catholic Church is a strong supporter of research based on adult stem cells, as well as those derived from umbilical cord blood. Our Catholic healthcare research institutes support this ethical stem cell research.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne will be monitoring developments on this matter very carefully in the times ahead. The Archbishop will communicate his concerns and perspectives to the Premier, Mr Bracks, in the days ahead once further details are known of the State Government's intentions.

"The Rosary is a contemplative and Christocentric prayer, inseparable from the Holy Scriptures. It is the prayer of the Christian advancing in his pilgrimage of faith, in the following of Jesus, preceded by Mary."
Pope Benedict XVI

Oddities

A very brief statement made on Channel 10 news recently referred to a non-registered private detective being employed by the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Although I watched the later news, no other mention of this was made. The reason for the man's employment was not given. The natural conclusion is that the Archdiocese believes it has current need for his services of detection – 'registered' or not.

I think the matter requires an explanation from the administration to the Catholic people, at least. If even approximate to the truth, the news, being incomplete, allows for concern within the Catholic community.

Regarding other church matters on TV, the Archbishop of Hobart recently appeared on the ABC lamenting the shortage of priests. I know of a priest who phoned to offer his services and is welcome in other dioceses, but a month has passed and he has had no reply. Further, since it is his second application, he does not expect one.

Name and address supplied

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

Into the Deep wishes all its readers a happy and holy Easter! Let us rejoice in the new life that the risen Christ has given us! Thank God for his mercy and love!
Alleluia!

Minor Incident

In its Decree of July 2004 upholding Fr Speekman's appeal against his removal as Parish Priest of Morwell, the Congregation for the Clergy refers to, among other things, the Bishop "conducting a formal investigation into a minor incident."

The fruits of this "minor incident" are many – Fr Speekman's removal, damage to his character, division in the parish and diocese, involvement of a senior Congregation of the Church, a second removal by the Bishop involving a civil lawyer, two successful appeals by Fr Speekman, and finally an appeal by the Bishop to the Signatura.

God help any priest who is involved in a major incident! Maybe the penalty would be banishment to Siberia.

It is to be hoped that the Signatura finally puts an end to this diabolical and farcical case and that Fr Speekman is back in his parish in the very near future.

John Henderson, Morwell

Raymond de Souza in New Television Series

Every Monday at 5.30pm and Thursday at 6.00am (U.S. Eastern Standard Time) during March, April and May, EWTN Global Catholic network broadcasts Raymond de Souza's new television series, "Jesus Christ: True God and True Man."

The lay Australian apologist masterly refutes the ill-famed Da Vinci Code and provides argumentation to strengthen the true faith in the divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ against secularism, agnosticism and Islam.

To watch the series, visit www.ewtn.com/index.asp. Click on the button 'Television', scroll down to 'Live TV English' - Real video, and choose your speed. It is advisable to do this a few minutes prior to the program, in order to ensure that the connection is working.

EWTN has over 100 million viewers in the English-speaking world. If you enjoy the series, please forward this information to your contacts on the net. Your views on the program are invited and welcome. After viewing a couple of episodes, please send an email to viewer@ewtn.com with your comments.

*Kenneth Skuba, Harleigh, PA, USA
Lay Catholics supporting EWTN International*

Confession a Pastoral Priority

Bishop Robert Finn, Diocese of Kansas City-St Joseph

An important pastoral priority has to be the renewal of the "lost sacrament": confession. We priests must use it frequently along with daily examination of conscience if we are to grow in the spiritual life. There is no way to be holy men without confession. If we begin to do this more, then we will know how to preach about it – and about sin – and we will be more determined to make time to hear confessions.

We will figure out when people will come and we will be more generous in being available. We are short of priests to hear all the confessions that should be heard, but without this sacrament, a large percentage of our parishioners are probably not even living in sanctifying grace. Consider the widespread use of pornography, of contraception, and the falloff in attending Sunday Mass. These are serious/mortal sins. If people are also not using the sacrament of confession, then the "good works" they are trying to do have no supernatural or meritorious content.

A few parishes that have many confessional times available, and the priests are dependably there when people come, still have long lines. We must make this a reality in all our parishes.

www.zenit.org 20-03-2007

Liturgical Beauty

Father Edward McNamara on Pope Benedict XVI's Postsynodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*

Fr McNamara, professor of liturgy at the Regina Apostolorum university in Rome, writes the liturgy column for Zenit. Zenit interviewed him about *Sacramentum Caritatis*, which gathers the conclusions of the October 2005 Synod of Bishops. Fr McNamara served as a "peritus," or expert, in that synod.

In No. 35 the Pope writes: "Like the rest of Christian Revelation, the liturgy is inherently linked to beauty: it is 'veritatis splendor.'" Is it too much to say that beautiful liturgy is a *sine qua non* of a vibrant Catholic community?

As the Holy Father says, beauty is inherent to liturgy, it is intimately bound up with authentic liturgy.

Beauty however does not only mean splendid sacred buildings and sublime music. The primary beauty in liturgy is that of a community united heart and soul in prayerful celebration of Christ's sacrifice. It is the beauty of priest and people engaged in full, active and pious participation in the mystery.

This beauty is achieved, in spite of a possible lack of external splendour, whenever the sacred ministers and each member of the faithful strive to live the liturgy to the full.

Other forms of beauty: music, art, poetry, and a sober solemnity in the ritual derive naturally from this inner beauty because the deeper a community lives and comprehends the beauty of the liturgical mystery the more it strives to express it in wonderful outer forms. It is the natural understanding that only the very best we can offer is truly worthy of the Lord.

Thus there is strong historical evidence that even before the end of the era of persecutions; Christians sought to celebrate the Eucharist with the finest materials available. This explains why the construction boom in imposing basilicas, as soon as the persecutions were over, along with the more solemn ritual forms required by these new buildings, was perceived as a natural development and not a rupture with earlier practice.

It is this same understanding which led generations of poor immigrants to the United States to sacrifice so much in order to endow their parishes with majestic churches replete with fine arts and crafts.

Ugliness, blandness, banality and bad taste on the other hand diminish the liturgy and betray a lack of appreciation of the mystery and sometimes, alas, a certain lack of faith.

In No. 37 the Holy Father writes: "Since the eucharistic liturgy is essentially an 'actio Dei' which draws us into Christ through the Holy Spirit, its basic structure is not something within our power to change, nor can it be held hostage by the latest trends." Is this statement aimed at the clergy?

It is certainly aimed at the clergy but not only. First of all it addresses the fundamental structure of the liturgy, and not just the rubrics, saying that the liturgy is primarily God's action counters all those who attempt to reduce it to a mere sociological expression that can be freely adapted as societies change.

The danger of holding the liturgy hostage to the latest trends not only concerns the clergy but to all those engaged in liturgical preparation. There are certainly priests who arbitrarily change the liturgy at their own whim but there are also readers who spontaneously adjust readings for ideological purposes and music directors who subject the liturgy to the demands of music and not vice versa, or who introduce inappropriate musical forms in the name of relevance.

I think the point the Holy Father is trying to make is that we relearn to receive the liturgy as a precious heirloom to be treasured and less as a toy to play around with.

Benedict XVI says bluntly in No. 47 that "Given the importance of the word of God, the quality of homilies needs to be improved." What is the best way priests can improve in this area?

There are many excellent resources available in books and on the Internet but I think there is no substitution for the three P's in improving the qualities of homilies: prayer, preparation and practice. First and foremost the homily must be the fruit of prayer, of a genuine conversation with God regarding the text. It may sound harsh but a priest or deacon whose homily is not the fruit of meditation really has nothing worth saying because he can only give himself. [...]

In No. 6 of the exhortation the Pope writes: "Every great reform has in some way been linked to the rediscovery of belief in the Lord's Eucharistic presence among his people." Would this emphasis on the Eucharist have to precede other priorities such as ecumenism, restoring family life, and reaching out to Islam?

I believe that it is more a question of the quality of these endeavours than a chronological priority. Unless we Catholics are deeply rooted in the central tenets of our faith and practice then engaging in these other priorities such as ecumenism or reaching out to Islam will be shallow and hollow affairs based on false irenics and empty rhetoric. [...]

Continued on page 9...

The Shroud

From a sermon by Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher to the Pontifical Household

The exhortation encourages a wider use of Latin when celebrating the Eucharist. What are some of the advantages that could come from a more frequent use of Latin and how can this be done in a world that has largely lost familiarity with Latin?

The advantages are manifold. Think what a difference it could make to next year's World Youth Day in Sydney if 500,000 young voices were able to sing "Sanctus, Sanctus" or the Lord's Prayer in unison, and not just listen to the choir. The sense of belonging to one Church could be greatly enhanced.

From other perspectives the occasional or even frequent celebration of Mass in Latin as well as the use of Latin Gregorian chant in vernacular Masses would help recover the sense of the sacred in the liturgy as many of these chants do a far better job of transforming text into musical prayer than most vernacular adaptations.

It is true that there is far less familiarity with Latin than before, but counterintuitively, the fact that the vernacular translations are already impressed on the memory could actually facilitate the occasional use of Latin. Most people would know by heart the meaning of the text in their native language and are able to appreciate the beauty of the Latin texts, especially the chants. [...]

A section of the document deals with the social implications of the Eucharist. How is our Eucharistic life related to a greater concern for justice and charity?

As No. 37 quoted above says, the Eucharistic liturgy draws us into Christ through the Holy Spirit. The more a soul is drawn into Christ the more it becomes identified with him and seeks to imitate him.

Being drawn into Christ leads us to recognize him in others, especially in the hungry, thirsty, naked, ignorant, sick and imprisoned. Being drawn into Christ, means being drawn into his supreme act of self-offering on Calvary, a self-offering that culminates his teaching of the beatitudes. In this way there can be no genuine Eucharistic piety that does not bear fruit in concern for justice and charity.

For some, this concern will mean engaging in specific activities promoting justice and charity as a fruit of Eucharistic participation, for others, their genuine concern will be expressed through prayer and sacrifice for those in need. For all, it means practicing justice and charity in their daily lives and dealings with others.

www.zenit.org 19-03-2007

No artistic representation of the Passion...has exercised and still exercises a fascination like that of the shroud. It matters not, from our point of view, to know whether or not the shroud is "authentic," if the image was formed naturally or artificially, if it is only an icon or also a relic. What is certain is that it is the most solemn and sublime representation of death that the human eye has ever contemplated. If a God can die, this is the least inadequate way to represent his death to us.

The closed eyelids, the lips together, the composed features of the face: More than a dead person, it all makes one think of a man immersed in profound and silent meditation. It seems like the translation in images of the ancient antiphon of Holy Saturday: *Caro mea requiescet in spe*, "my body too will rest secure."

Even the former homily on Holy Saturday that is read in the office of readings acquires a particular force before the shroud: "What happened? Today on earth, there is great silence, great silence and solitude. Great silence because the King sleeps..."

Theology tells us that at his death Christ's soul separated from his body as it does in every man who dies, but his divinity remained united both to his soul as well as to his body. The shroud is the most perfect representation of this Christological mystery. That body was separated from the soul, but not from the divinity. There is something divine that moves over the martyred face, full of majesty, of the Christ of the shroud. [...]

Christ's face of the shroud is like a boundary, a wall that separates two worlds: the world of men full of agitation, violence and sin and the world of God inaccessible to evil. It is a shore on which all waves break. As if, in Christ, God says to the force of evil what the book of Job says to the ocean: "Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed" (Job 38:11).

Before the shroud we can pray like this: "Lord, make me your shroud. When, again descending from the cross, you come to me in the sacrament of your body and blood, may I wrap you with my faith and love as in a shroud, so that your features are imprinted on my soul and also leave on it an indelible trace. Lord, make of the coarse and crude cloth of my humanity our shroud!"

www.zenit.org 07-04-2006

"We Christians must not be afraid of spiritual confrontation with a society that, behind the intellectual superiority it displays, conceals indecision in the face of questions about the ultimate meaning of life."

Pope Benedict XVI

What Are We To Do? No. 2

Don Gaffney of Queensland asked in the last *Into the Deep*, “What are we to do?” We have a choice. We can go on doing what we have been doing – *to no avail* – for about thirty years; or we can try something different. This is what happened in the Diocese of Sandhurst when just one man did do something different – he went to the secular press with our problem.

During the last 12 months there have been rumours that His Lordship, the Bishop of Sandhurst [Joe Grech] was planning to alter the interior structure of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Bendigo – to get rid of the marble communion rails, and to shift the altar from the marble-floored sanctuary to the area of the pews.

As there is no established way for the laity to communicate with their Bishop, the man went to a secular newspaper without sharing the idea with anyone. The editor published the story after contacting the Cathedral spokesman Mons John Duffus who confirmed that in fact, such discussions were taking place, and who accused the layman of “being out of order” in speaking about the matter before a decision had been made – in other words, for letting the cat out of the bag.

There was a flood of opposition on the website and in Letters to the Editor. A poll resulted in 86% against the changes, 14% for them. No one actually attempted to show that it was an idea with merit.

There was, unfortunately, no response from His Lordship to allay – or to confirm – his people’s fears. The immediate response came from the Diocesan Liturgist. In a Letter to the Editor, she assured us that “as the Diocesan Liturgist I can say with certainty that there is no special liturgical committee assigned to look at permanent changes to the Cathedral interior” and “that the Bishop ... has not come personally to any decision regarding the placement of the sanctuary or its furnishings.”

To some, the chief interest of this letter was its revelation that the Bishop is not, as they have always believed, the ‘diocesan liturgist’. This position is now held by a paid woman employee who is a member of some inner circle which allows her to know “with certainty” the mind of the Bishop on matters about which his people cannot even comment without being “out of order.” It also suggests that complaints about the many irregularities in the chief liturgical celebrations, the Mass, are sent to the wrong address if they go to the Bishop.

In the following days, His Lordship did apparently make a decision. Though he did not make an announcement to his people, he did agree to an interview with the Bendigo

Weekly (19-01-2007). Reporter Nicole Strahan was then able to report to Catholics that the internal layout of the Sacred Heart Cathedral will not be changed. The Bishop’s own quoted words in the article were “but the structure itself of the Cathedral is what we have *at the moment* we will work with that.” (emphasis added) ... leaving one to wonder “for how long will it stay?”

A more hope-inspiring statement by the Bishop was, “If there were plans I would have presented it to the people for debate, firstly, for discussion.” As far as I know, there never has been such a debate, such a discussion, about anything. The last advertised “forum” took the form of a tightly controlled information night at which a number of paid employees told us about their plans for us in the coming year.

Let us hope that His Lordship is really giving thought to overcoming the difficulties that he would encounter in replacing the cult of secrecy with transparency; in finding a way of knowing his people better through hearing from them without their having recourse to the secular press; in establishing a reasonable balance of influence between the representative laity and the unrepresentative paid employees through an open, permanent, easily accessible channel of communication.

Who knows what the results might be? Bishops might rule as well as reign. Catholic Education Offices might cease to be powerful enough to muzzle a Parish Priest, to cause one Bishop to defy Rome and another to employ Margaret Wheatley, Fr Sean McDonagh and Dr Pallotta-Chiarolli (ITD March ’07) to wean the teachers in Catholic schools from Catholic dogma and moral theology. The ghost of Protestant architect, Edward Sovik of the 1970’s, recently haunting the Sacred Heart Cathedral, might be laid to rest and find no disciples employed in the Catholic Church to resurrect his out-worn theories with which to frighten lovers of beautiful cathedrals, with threats of altars among pews, and jackhammers among the fragments of Sicilian marble.

Molly Brennan, Bendigo

Why Does He Want It?

Here is perhaps an insight into Bishop Grech’s understanding of the liturgy (in *The Bendigo Weekly* 19-01-2007): “At the cathedral parish, we are always looking at how we can do things a bit better, how we can involve people in what we do. We said maybe we need to do something about the altar because it still feels as if there’s a gap between the people and the sanctuary. You talk about these things, part of our mission is how to get closer.”

“I don’t think you can turn a Catholic cathedral into a community hall. You can only turn it into a vandalised cathedral.”

Molly Brennan, in the Bendigo Weekly, 12-01-2007

Battle for Life and Prayer

Most of us have heard of the importance of the First Friday and First Saturday Devotions to be offered in reparation for our sins against the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts of Jesus and Mary and for the all important consecration (and consequent conversion and promised world peace) of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Although I live in the largest, geographically speaking, parish in the Diocese of Sale, it is ironically no longer a parish, and we haven't had any kind of Mass on a Saturday for over 8 years. Consequently for me to practise these devotions I have to travel at least 80km.

From time to time I visit Melbourne for various reasons and because of the 5 hour travel time, need to spend at least a night or two away from home. On several occasions when I have been in Melbourne on the First Friday I have gone to Holy Mass and spent a couple of hours with Jesus exposed at St John Vianney's Church, 23 Police Road, Mulgrave. I got to hear that Sandra Johnson organised this All Night First Friday/First Saturday Vigil over 17 years ago, and dedicates the prayers said to put an end to the culture of death. Most of the time is spent in silent adoration but each hour Sandra hands out prayer sheets which we pray together for all sorts of pro-Life intentions including the conversion of the perpetrators of abortion and for the healing and forgiveness of the parents.

Recently I heard the sad news that the parish priest intended to put an end to these devotions. I thought about the Curé of Ars who, because of academic difficulties, had a huge struggle to become the priest that God had called him to be. France in the early 19th century was a very materialistic and atheistic society, so when St John Vianney was assigned to his first and only church it was empty and derelict. What could he do? He led by prayer and example. He offered Holy Mass and prayed for hours on end before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Towards the end of his life his church was packed and he was spending up to 16 hours a day in the confessional!

Without prayer there is no life and without life there is no prayer. If it were not for all these prayers at the Vigils, and those of the Helpers in the streets, prayed earnestly and often with discomfort, inconvenience and sacrifice, then the culture of death would I am sure be much worse than it is. Many lives and souls have been and are being saved by the co-redemptive prayer of God's little helpers and pray-ers. Australia needs more prayer and more life. Only the laissez-faire would say that Christians are 'over the top' when they try to take seriously what Our Lord asked when He told us that 'all life is sacred' and 'to pray without ceasing'. Who said more things are wrought by prayer than man has ever dreamed of?

Richard Earle, Marlo

Lonely Priests

In a recent (2007) issue of *The Sandpiper* (Bendigo) the Liturgist, Denise Braddon, wrote about how "lonely" it must be for the priest, way up there on the Sanctuary.

This may have been intimating that the altar rails should be removed, or it may have been suggesting that he needs helpers. Either way it does not appear to be a very sensible comment.

Ms Braddon then went on to say that old-time sermons were long and boring. Nowadays, she believes, they are short and interesting (probably because they're not about doctrine, commandments, or morals anymore).

The aim of her article, she said, was to encourage people to come on time and to not leave Mass early, but, to my mind, some other strange ideas were intertwined.

Anne Buchan, Killawarra, Vic

Internet Tutoring

For years the late Fr John Doyle SJ advocated the 'voucher system' as a way to preserve parents' right to choice in education, and as a way to improve the quality of a school and its teachers. Not surprisingly, the educational bureaucracy killed the idea, which would have released parents from its clutches.

Enormous numbers of parents have taken the step to accept responsibility for their children's education, particularly in the matter of Catholic faith. As a result, home-schooling is now widespread. It is cheap by comparison with the schools, and not all that difficult. The school money and transport costs saved, can support a parent at home. Although Victoria has very little to offer such parents, the state of NSW has good and cheap courses on offer by correspondence.

But now there is another dimension to this matter. Home tutoring is one aspect of it, usually very effective, but costly. But that cost can be reduced very much by the internet.

The reality and power of the internet can achieve even more than the voucher system envisaged. It allows your child to study at home – with the tutor of your choice. The interactive process of learning advertised by tutors in newspapers is now available from all over the world! You can pick the best in all fields, even religion. No need of an extensive library of science or religion. There are those willing to help – the way you want. You are the arbiter, not the Catholic Education Office, or some poorly trained teacher with no classroom experience. Technology can now underpin the Church's view of the true priority of parents in education.

S.C., Melbourne

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 PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Fridays 4pm – 8pm (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 4pm – 8pm (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

Renewal

“I am very grateful because Eucharistic Adoration is being increasingly renewed. During the Synod on the Eucharist, the Bishops talked a great deal about their experiences, of how new life is being restored to communities with this adoration, and also with nocturnal adoration, and how, precisely in this way, new vocations are also born.”

Pope Benedict XVI

Intimacy With Christ

“When we contemplate Him present in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, Christ draws near to us and becomes more intimate to us than we are to ourselves. Remaining in silence before the Blessed Sacrament, it is Christ totally and really present whom we discover, whom we adore and with whom we are content.”

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

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Australia**

- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
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ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email and on the website; printed copies up to a week later. Deadline for contributions is one week before the end of the month (but preferably by the 15th 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 and contact details 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.