

Into the Deep

Issue 6

Newsletter of the Confraternity of St Michael, Gippsland

March 2003

Pope's Lenten Message ~ More Blessed to Give

Lent is a season of intense prayer, fasting, and concern for those in need. It offers all Christians an opportunity to prepare for Easter by serious discernment about their lives, with particular attention to the word of God, which enlightens the daily journey of all who believe.

This year, as a guide for our Lenten meditation, I would offer a phrase taken from the Acts of the Apostles: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

I would like to reaffirm a principle which is self-evident yet often ignored: our goal should not be the benefit of a privileged few, but rather the improvement of the living conditions of all.

Believers are called to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, true God and true man, who, in perfect obedience to the will of the Father, emptied himself and humbly gave himself to us in selfless and total love, even unto death on a cross.

Lent offers us the practical and effective weapons of fasting and almsgiving as a means of combating an excessive attachment to money. Giving not only from our abundance, but sacrificing something more in order to give to the needy, fosters that self-denial which is essential to authentic Christian living. Strengthened by constant prayer, the baptised reveal the priority that they have given to God in their lives.

The love of God poured into our hearts ought to inspire and transform who we are and what we do. Christians must not think that they can seek the true good of their brothers and sisters without embodying the charity of Christ.

From Message from His Holiness John Paul II for Lent 2003

Christ Must Not Remain Alone

At the Eucharistic Congress in Seville, Spain, in June 1993, the Holy Father prayed that "the fruit of the Congress be the establishment of perpetual adoration in every parish and Christian community throughout the world."

On Holy Thursday 1994, the Congregation for the Clergy published the Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests. This document gives new impetus to perpetual adoration when it proclaims "faith and love for the Eucharist will not allow Christ to remain alone in His presence," and challenges each priest to be a model for the faithful in Eucharistic adoration.

From 'Letters to a Brother Priest' by Mons Ramirez

Catholic Lite No Good

Some argue that turning around the poor (Mass) attendance rates must involve better, more welcoming Church communities and offering ever-more modern 'relevant' liturgies and upbeat music that 'speaks to young people'.

George Pell and others of his ilk see the problem primarily as a deep crisis of faith, one that can't and won't be solved by gimmickry, peddling counterfeit compassion or caving in to the prevailing mores of society in a quest for relevance. 'Catholic lite has been advertised and sold in some places for years now,' Pell says. 'It has been a failure. Young Catholics won't buy it.'

From 'George Pell' by Tess Livingstone (p314)

"You must accept your cross; if you bear it courageously it will carry you to heaven."

Cure of Ars

Communion under both species

As from next Sunday 1st December, Communion under both Species will be offered at the 9am Mass. The Bishop has asked that the Host should be received on the hand—NOT ON the Tongue. Eucharistic Ministers should come forward at the Lords Prayer ("Our Father") and form a line in front of the Altar, make a reverent genuflect or bow before moving to the side of the Altar to purify fingers and putting on the crosses.

Communicants on the sides will be expected to come to the front to receive the body and blood of Christ. The choir will come first and then the next section of the side.

Please be patient while this new system becomes established. I do hope that all will remain reverent at all times. Children are NOT to receive from the Chalice. Intinction (dipping of Host) is NOT allowed.

MEETINGS

SUNDAY— Card Evening —

PARISH COLLECTIONS:

Planned Giving: \$ 2703.00

Open Plate: \$ 655.35

ON SALE NOW!!

Call into the St. Vincent de Paul Centre or at the Piety

Warragul Communion Concern

Somebody handed me a copy of your February issue with a short article: "Holy Communion on the Tongue" which makes reference to the parish of Warragul.

I have only been here a very short time as Parish Priest, but in the weekend and weekday Masses that I have celebrated, I have given Communion on the tongue. Either your article is inaccurate or there are some very disobedient parishioners here.

The Bishop did send out some recommendations about receiving Communion. They were basically the ones used by the Archbishop of Hobart. They were recommendations, and in the light of hygiene issues that keep cropping up regularly, they are very sound.

They did not forbid people from receiving Communion on the tongue.

Interestingly enough, the Bishop of Hippo, St Augustine (354-430), giving some recommendations about receiving Communion, states that one hand should be cupped over the other, so making a throne to receive the Lord.

Fr H. Hengel, Warragul

A copy of the Warragul bulletin (partly scanned above) from which we quoted last month has been mailed to Fr Hengel. We remain unsure about where the directive came from if not from the Bishop, but are encouraged that Fr Hengel will not be upholding it. Ed.

Saturday Mass Returns to Sale

It is always heartening to hear good news! Just on two years ago, the parish of Sale discontinued the Saturday morning Mass because a priest or the Bishop was frequently unavailable.

The Mass was referred to as a Serran Mass when the priest and congregation prayed for vocations to the priesthood. The members of the Serra Club led the Rosary before each Mass and usually upwards of sixty people attended.

But now, after a two-year break, Saturday morning Masses have begun again. Fr O'Connor, the Chancellor of the diocese who resides within the parish, will offer the 9am Mass each Saturday.

We are grateful to Fr O'Connor for generously offering to step into the breach and provide the Sale people with a Mass on a Saturday. Thank you Father! And thank you to Fr Godridge for arranging it.

M. Goss, Sale

Journeying Together is Heavy on Rhetoric, Light on Substance

The first words of our Pope's first encyclical were "The Redeemer of man, Jesus Christ, is the centre of the universe and of history."

A look at the pastoral plan of the diocese of Sale would show that Jesus is not at the centre.

For instance in Mission Direction 5, "Diocesan Renewal – shaping the Church of the future."

One could ask what Church? In the creed we state we believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Is that the Church referred to?

Direction 5.3 refers to "developing the leadership of parish communities" – leadership for what?

Lay-led liturgies for priestless parishes? A contradiction in terms – no priest no parish.

Mission Direction 2 is about "connecting" with young people and young families. How do we get young people and parents to appreciate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass when they have no knowledge of what the Mass or the Faith is?

A starting point I would suggest is the teaching of the Catholic Catechism, and the Theology of the Body promulgated by Pope John Paul II.

In Journeying Together we have a glossy presentation that is heavy on rhetoric light on substance. Consultation seems to be the main priority. But we do not need facilitators of discussion groups. We need strong bishops who are going to teach the holy Catholic faith and exhort his priests and religious to do the same.

What would have been the outcome if Pope Paul VI had consulted the laity before the publication

of *Humanae Vitae*? I think we all know the answer.

Journeying Together will only lead us into a spiritual desert. There is no argument against the truth. Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Light." That Way, Truth and Light is the same today as it was 2000 years ago and will be as long as mankind exists. No one can change the Church or her teachings – we all need to change to *conform* to those teachings. Where Peter is, there is the Church – follow and be loyal to our Pope.

Look at the disastrous state of our Catholic schools. Authentic Catholic religious education is non-existent, and all of this under the stewardship of our Catholic Education Office. Yet we have the ludicrous situation of the CEO being a major player in this program.

The loyal laity do have a sense of the faith. If we buy this latest offering of renewal we are fools. Authentic renewal should be based on a faithfulness to the Sunday celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, a faithfulness to the frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, daily recitation of the Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration, and daily prayer. Only then will the faith flourish in our families, parishes and diocese.

We have already lost two generations and well on the way to losing a third. We should pray earnestly that this trend will be reversed.

J. Henderson, Morwell

Beliefs of Catholic Teachers

Professor Denis McLaughlin of the Australian Catholic University McAuley campus in Brisbane, made a number of revealing observations about the beliefs and practices of teachers in Catholic schools during his address to the second national conference of the Association of Principals of Catholic Secondary Schools in October 2002.

He said that most student teachers did not accept church teachings in areas such as abortion, contraception, the Eucharist and women's ordination.

"I believe," he said "the vast majority of teachers have reservations about the contemporary Catholic Church, their employers." He said these teachers constituted a "parallel church" which largely disregarded the teachings of the institutional Catholic Church, the Vatican, and the Magisterium.

No wonder 95% of students leave the Church before they graduate from Catholic schools.

Perhaps it is time to conduct a survey of the beliefs and practices of the teachers in Catholic schools in the Sale diocese. I have sent a letter to the director of our Catholic Education Office suggesting this, and await her reply.

P. O'Brien, Sale

Canon?

From the Greek

Rule, or Standard

Teacher Fired Over Abortion

A religion and arts teacher at a Catholic school in the USA was fired after school officials saw her name in a newspaper advert in support of abortion. The teacher said she was surprised and humiliated when the school took issue with her name being in the ad. "Nothing I did publicly ever had anything to do with the classroom." But a school spokesman said, "The Catholic Church is very much pro-life. There is no grey area here."

The teacher's lawyer said there was no specific contract or documentation compelling her to abide by the teachings of the Catholic Church. The school responded, "They all know from the point of hiring that this is a Catholic school. The school's obligation is to follow teachings of the Catholic Church."

Imagine such authority here in Australia? Ed.

New Independent Catholic School

A new, independent Catholic school for both primary and secondary students in Perth, to be called Marian College, is in the planning stages. It is intended to be thoroughly orthodox and accountable directly to Perth's Archbishop Barry Hickey.

It is a project of members of the Cathedral Branch of the Knights of the Southern Cross in Perth, who will constitute the future school board. Their initiative in the field of Catholic education was prompted by the small percentage of Catholic students who practise the Faith after leaving school.

The proposed Marian College will receive Catholic children whose families wish to keep them Catholic during and after their school years. A set of criteria will be put into place to choose the right teachers, who will work with the Cathedral Knights towards both religious and academic excellence.

From AD2000, February 2003

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!

John Paul II

Letters to the Editor

Readers are welcome to contribute letters or articles. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and some will be edited due to space.

Please keep letters factual, and report only first-hand information. It will be easy to slip into bitterness or gossip, which we need to avoid.

The purpose of sharing letters is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for making positive changes, that is, in line with the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

We live in joyful hope that the diocese we love can be faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church. As such, *Into the Deep* aims to be a messenger of hope and not of doom.

Name, address and phone number must accompany letters. However, if there is a reasonable request, anonymity will be preserved when publishing.

Contact Us

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Or mail to Mr Pat O'Brien, RMB 5165 Gibson's Road, Sale 3850.

Please notify by e-mail if you would like to be added to the regular e-mailing list.

Into the Deep

The purpose of *Into the Deep* 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.