

Into the Deep

Issue 75

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

December 2008

Preparing for Christmas

Pope Benedict XVI, December 2007

Dear friends, in these days of preparation leading up to Christmas the prayer of the Church intensifies, so that the hopes for peace, salvation, justice, and all that the world urgently needs, be made a reality. We ask God that violence be defeated by the power of love, that opposition be replaced by reconciliation, that the desire to dominate be transformed into desires for forgiveness, justice and peace.

May the wishes of kindness and love that we exchange in these days reach all sectors of our daily lives. May peace be in our hearts, so that we can be open to the action of God's mercy. May peace live in all families and may they spend Christmas united before the crib and the tree decorated with lights. May the Christmas message of solidarity and welcome contribute to create a deeper sensibility toward old and new types of poverty, and toward the common good that we are all called to share.

May all family members, especially the children and the elderly – the weakest ones – feel the warmth of this feast, and may that warmth spread out through every day of the year. May Christmas be a celebration of peace and joy: joy for the birth of the Saviour, Prince of peace. Like the shepherds, we hasten our steps toward Bethlehem. In the heart of the Holy Night we will be able to contemplate the “infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger,” together with Mary and Joseph.

We ask the Lord to open our soul, so that we can enter the mystery of his birth. May Mary, who gave her virginal womb to the Word of God, who contemplated the child between her arms, and who offers him to everyone as the Redeemer of the world, help us make Christmas a moment of growth in the knowledge and love of Christ. This is the wish that I warmly extend to you all, to your families and your dear ones.

On Christ's Nativity

St Ephrem

The Lord came to her
to make himself a servant.

The Word came to her
to keep silence in her womb.

The lightning came to her
to not make any noise.

The shepherd came to her
and the Lamb is born, who humbly cries.

Because Mary's womb
has reversed the roles:

The one who created all things
wasn't born rich, but poor.

The Almighty came to her (Mary),
but he came humbly.

Splendour came to her,
but dressed in humble clothes.

The One who gives us all things
met hunger.

The One who gives water to everyone
met thirst.

Naked and unclothed he came from her,
he who dresses all things (with beauty).

Hymn "De Nativitate" 11, 6-8

(quoted in Pope Benedict XVI's general audience 28-11-07)

A Priceless Gift to Share

Pope Benedict XVI, 2007

To be touched by the presence of God, Who draws close to us at Christmas, is a priceless gift. ...

There is nothing more beautiful, urgent and important than freely to pass on to mankind what we have freely received from God. Nothing can excuse or relieve us from this difficult but fascinating task. The joy of Christmas, ... while filling us with hope, at the same time prompts us to announce to everyone the presence of God among us.

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

January ITD

ITD wishes all readers a fruitful Advent season and a happy and holy Christmas!

The January issue of ITD will be posted on the website and emailed out by the first of the month, as usual. However, please be aware that the printed version will be delayed due to our printer being closed until later in January. If you normally have ITD mailed to you, and you're missing it, ask a friend, neighbour, family member, or library staff member to print out a copy from the website to keep you happy!

- Ed.

Oops...

After inviting readers to "Test Your ITD knowledge" in the October issue of ITD (p.2), I forgot to provide the answers in the November issue!

The challenge was to match the listed articles to the past issues of ITD in which they appeared.

Here are the answers:

1. Admissions of a Vicar General = February 06
2. Always be charitable = September 04
3. Catholic Education Conference = March 07
4. Disturbed by misplaced loyalty = May 05
5. How to change the world = August 07
6. Jesus – Follow me! = January 08
7. Liturgy – Creative or Repetitive? = November 2002
8. Servant or Master? = October 07
9. Sign of Peace is brief = December 03
10. Strange kind of absolution = December 04
11. Thankful = April 08
12. 'The Father Speekman Saga' = December 06
13. The Gospel of Nice = May 08
14. The lost half a sheep = November 05
15. What about angels? = August 06
16. Who's Bullying Who? = Special Issue August 03

Book Nook

This month's 'thank you book' goes to the couple who donated a portion of their planned giving money to ITD rather than to their liberal parish. They will receive Cardinal George Pell's book *God and Caesar* (kindly donated by Connor Court Publishing).

Next month's 'thank you book' will be *Redeeming Grief* (kindly donated by author Anne Lastman). If the book donations keep coming in, we'll keep giving one away each month to an ITD donor. Thank you to everyone for their support that keeps us going.

- Ed.

Christianity in a Nutshell

An excerpt from the address Benedict XVI gave upon receiving in audience participants from the first meeting of the Catholic-Muslim Forum:

The Christian tradition proclaims that God is Love. It was out of love that he created the whole universe, and by his love he becomes present in human history. The love of God became visible, manifested fully and definitively in Jesus Christ. He thus came down to meet man and, while remaining God, took on our nature. He gave himself in order to restore full dignity to each person and to bring us salvation. How could we ever explain the mystery of the incarnation and the redemption except by Love? This infinite and eternal love enables us to respond by giving all our love in return: love for God and love for neighbour. This truth, which we consider foundational, was what I wished to emphasize in my first Encyclical, "Deus Caritas Est", since this is a central teaching of the Christian faith. Our calling and mission is to share freely with others the love which God lavishes upon us without any merit of our own.

www.zenit.org 06-11-2008

Responsibility in Celebrating the Eucharist

Sacramentum Caritatis n.39

While it is true that the whole People of God participates in the eucharistic liturgy, a correct *ars celebrandi* [art of celebration] necessarily entails a specific responsibility on the part of those who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders. Bishops, priests, and deacons, each according to his proper rank, must consider the celebration of the liturgy as their principal duty. Above all, this is true of the Diocesan Bishop: as "the chief steward of the mysteries of God in the particular Church entrusted to his care, he is the moderator, promoter, and guardian of the whole of its liturgical life". This is essential for the life of the particular Church, not only because communion with the Bishop is required for the lawfulness of every celebration within his territory, but also because he himself is the celebrant par excellence within his Diocese. It is his responsibility to ensure unity and harmony in the celebrations taking place in his territory. Consequently the Bishop must be "determined that the priests, the deacons, and the lay Christian faithful grasp ever more deeply the genuine meaning of the rites and liturgical texts, and thereby be led to an active and fruitful celebration of the Eucharist". I would ask that every effort be made to ensure that the liturgies which the Bishop celebrates in his Cathedral are carried out with complete respect for the *ars celebrandi*, so that they can be considered an example for the entire Diocese.

Consequences of Defending the Faith

When I arrived for Sunday Mass at St Eugene's, Burpengary a few weeks ago, I was subjected to several minutes of hectoring by Fr Paul Smithers, the assistant priest. I tried to find out what his complaint was, but was rarely able to get a word in. I gathered from his harangue that my 'offence' was 'writing to the archbishop'. The only other words I could follow were 'stupid letter', 'nonsense', 'ridiculous', 'rubbish' and so on. But when I finally managed to ask him to address the issues, he waved his hands and walked away. Before he left, he told me that I am not allowed to come to the church any more.

We have a strange phenomenon. A man whose main purpose in life is to administer the sacraments has decided that I may not go to Mass at his church. That is, he is banning me from the sacraments in my own parish.

Now there are circumstances where Catholics should not receive the sacraments. Canon 915 says: "Those who have been excommunicated or ... who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Communion." I have been unable to find 'writing to the archbishop' listed anywhere among sins which incur such a penalty. But according to this canon, I must be living in manifest grave sin, or worse.

Indeed, Rome (and therefore Christ) insists on the right of the laity to bring matters to the attention of the bishop. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* says: "[184.] Any Catholic, whether Priest or Deacon or lay member of Christ's faithful, has the right to lodge a complaint regarding a liturgical abuse to the diocesan Bishop, ... or to the Apostolic See ... It is fitting, however, insofar as possible, that the report or complaint be submitted first to the diocesan Bishop. This is naturally to be done in truth and charity."

I find it ironic that no one ever seems to be banned from receiving the sacraments for reasons of living in sin (for example, many Catholics go to Mass only at Easter and Christmas, but I've never seen any of these refused the Blessed Sacrament). Yet I have been banned for 'writing to the archbishop'.

During Sunday Mass, Fr Paul Smithers had launched a bitter attack on orthodox Catholics. He called them 'spies' and 'extremists', while accusing them of the 'offence' of writing to Rome. As we know, spies are agents who work against the regime, pretending to be something they are not. Now those who write to Rome are hardly deceiving anyone. But is it possible that those who try to prevent Rome from finding out about abuses would more closely fit this description they apply to others?

Fr Smithers, during his homily, told us that the Archbishop was in the habit of throwing 'into the bin' (his words) those complaints from orthodox Catholics who write on abuses. Where Fr Smithers got his

information, I don't know.

The priests at Burpengary have not answered emails I have sent to them. I have brought these matters to the attention of Archbishop Bathersby and trust they receive his attention.

You will recall that at St Mary's South Brisbane the visiting Melkite priest who used to say daily Mass (which I used to attend) was stopped last month. I have been advised by a parishioner of St Mary's that Fr Kennedy said that he would allow daily Mass to resume only if I did not attend. Now I am not welcome at my local parish for Sunday Mass either.

If the media are to be believed, on 1 December we'll know if the long-running horrors at St Mary's South Brisbane will come to an end; if there is no assurance of return to Catholic discipline and teaching, they say the archbishop will begin formal proceedings to place those concerned outside the Church.

What is the situation as it stands? Canon 751 says that "Heresy is the obstinate denial or doubt, after baptism, of a truth which must be believed by divine and catholic faith. Apostasy is the total repudiation of the christian faith. Schism is the withdrawal of submission to the Supreme Pontiff or from communion with the members of the Church subject to him."

So a heretic obstinately denies any truth which must be believed. Canon 1364 §1 says: "an apostate from the faith, a heretic, or a schismatic incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication."

The phrase *latae sententiae* means a judgment or sentence which has already been brought, in other words, a sentence or judgment which does not need a future additional judgment from someone in authority; it refers to a type of excommunication which is automatic. Such a sentence of excommunication is incurred "by the very commission of the offense" (CCC 2272) and does not require the future particular judgment of a case by competent authority.

Given the facts we know about the situations at St Mary's, it would be hard to defend the Catholicity of those who run the parish. It would seem that they have automatically excommunicated themselves, leaving the archbishop the task of making it formal.

And given the rampant disobedience at St Mary's in matters which are quite serious, we have the continuing problem that those who receive the Blessed Sacrament in the state of mortal sin are committing further sacrilege each time they receive (as Canon 915 says, quoted earlier).

This is surely not a situation which should continue. If those who participate in sacrilege are not charitably admonished, they will be left in their sin.

Richard Stokes, Caboolture QLD

Admiration for Sth Brisbane

Bishop Pat Power, of Canberra-Goulburn Diocese, shows his colours. In a media release published on 01-11-2008 he refers to the situation at St Mary's South Brisbane as "a very complex and difficult arena." He praises Archbishop Bathersby as "Australia's most open and accommodating archbishop."

And, believe it or not, he expresses his "admiration for parishes, such as St Mary's South Brisbane, for their reaching out to homosexual people and other groups of people who often feel marginalised by the Church and mainstream society."

"I think that all would agree that many people who find a haven in St Mary's are close to the heart of Jesus," he continued. "Trying to find a balance in such matters means walking a fine line."

What does Bishop Power not "get" about the fact that St Mary's South Brisbane is no longer Catholic? And what sort of leadership can a man like this give in the Catholic Church?

- Ed.

Vigilantes and Bullies

An article by Andrew Fraser (The Australian, 03-11-2008) quotes Fr Peter Kennedy from St Mary's South Brisbane as saying: "There are vigilantes who've come into our church and written to Rome, and Rome has put pressure on John Bathersby. Bullies never have enough of bullying, and the Vatican is a bully." And, "The archbishop has known what we've been doing for all these years."

Fraser writes that "Father Kennedy...said he was making a stand on behalf of what he called "recovering Catholics". "They walked away from the church because they can no longer abide this institution which is so oppressive of women, of gay and lesbian people. We are one church community that is prepared to say enough is enough." "

From Beginning to End

From the concluding message of the 12th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, on the Word of God:

Dear brothers and sisters, guard the Bible in your houses, fully read, study and understand its pages, transform them into prayer and witness of life, listen to it with love and faith in the liturgy. Create the silence to effectively hear the Word of the Lord and hold a silence after the listening, because it will continue to dwell, live and speak to you. Make it resound at the beginning of your day so that God will have the first word and let it echo in you in the evenings so that the last word will be God's.

And Even More Horror

Refer to the "And More Horror" article on page 10 of the September 2008 issue of ITD. We now know that the author of these writings is Fr Peter Dresser, of Coonamble NSW. He has actually been selling his writings as a booklet.

In a letter to the media, Fr Dresser defends his writings as "a refreshing and invigorating document" and he apologises for having "unwittingly scandalised so many people."

Of course! How could he ever have imagined that it would scandalize some Catholics for a Catholic priest to suggest that the resurrection of Christ mustn't be taken literally, that transubstantiation is cannibalistic, that Jesus was not God, that there is no original sin and no redemption (etc...).

He wrote this nonsense "prayerfully and reflectively over many years." He was trying to "go beyond doctrine and dogma" and "personalise and retheologise" his Catholic faith. It was a "very worthwhile and meaningful experience".

His "sole intention was to make our beautiful Catholic religion and its beliefs more meaningful"! Imagine that! And here we are getting all hysterical (as he calls it) instead of just being grateful.

- Ed.

Supreme Court Power

For some decades now, the U.S. has been morphing into a pseudo democracy: more and more power has been passing from the legislative branch to the judiciary. Power has been transferred from its original location in Congress where it had traditionally been reflected through representation and the will of the people who voted, to a group of nine judges who are not elected by voters. As ultimate power has been diverted to the Supreme Court, the nine Supreme Court judges can be said to resemble nine absolute rulers - or, rather, five, since only a majority of one is required for any decision.

Congress can pass laws but ultimately it's the U.S. Supreme Court which decides whether laws passed by Congress will live or wither. Likewise, the President can make promises, but with each election the importance of the presidency is shrinking. Incidentally, it's the President who appoints Supreme Court judges. These days, it is America's Supreme Court judges who are the *de facto* rulers of America. That's hardly indicative of a robust democracy.

In 1973, the Supreme Court decreed that citizens have an absolute right to have their unborn children aborted; the result has been a veritable genocide: 48,000,000 - and counting.

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill NSW

Little Patients to be Cared For With Love

Benedict XVI appealed for a careful balance between “insisting and desisting” in therapies administered to seriously ill children, but above all, he said, these little patients need special amounts of love.

The Pope affirmed this on 15 November when he received participants in the international conference sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry. The event focused on “Pastoral Care in the Treatment of Sick Children.”

“At times medical research is faced with difficult choices when it is a question of, for example, achieving a correct balance between insisting and desisting in therapy to ensure treatments that are appropriate to the real needs of the little patients, without giving into the temptation of carrying out experiments with them,” the Holy Father said. “It is not superfluous to recall that the reason for every medical intervention must be the consequent true good of the child, considering his dignity as a human individual with full rights.”

The Pontiff said a child patient “must always be cared for with love to help him cope with suffering and sickness, including before birth, in the measure appropriate to his situation.”

And, he added, special concern must be given to the child’s family, ensuring that there is constant communication with them, given “the emotional impact, due to the illness and the treatments to which the child is subjected, which are often particularly invasive.”

“If health agents, doctors and nurses, feel the weight of the little patients’ sufferings, it is impossible to imagine how great is the suffering felt by the parents,” affirmed the Bishop of Rome. Hence, “health and human aspects must never be separated,” he stressed.

“Every health and care institution, especially if it is animated by a genuine Christian spirit, has the duty to offer [children] the maximum of its competence and humanity,” the Pope noted. “The sick person, especially a child, particularly understands the language of tenderness and love, expressed through patient and generous service, full of care, fostered in believers by the desire to manifest the same predilection that Jesus felt for little ones.”

www.zenit.org 17-11-2008

Not To Us

“Let us also intercede for those who are involved in some transgression, that forbearance and humility may be given them, so that they may submit, not to us but to the will of God.”

St Clement I, c.95

New Critique on Groome

Contradictions of the Church’s teaching and its liturgical norms lead to bad outcomes for both individuals and communities. For several years going back to at least 2004, people have been baptized in one Catholic parish in Brisbane without use of the words ‘Father, Son and Holy Spirit.’ Instead, so-called ‘inclusive’ terms were used including, “I baptise you in the name of the Creator, and of the Redeemer, and of the Sanctifier.”

On February 1, 2008, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a ruling approved by Pope Benedict XVI to the effect that all baptisms conferred with inclusive terminology are invalid and that any subsequent sacraments received after such invalid baptisms are also invalid. It ruled also that all such persons would have to be unconditionally re-baptised with the correct and traditional formula.

For several decades Thomas Groome has been a leading protagonist for the cause of radically altering the language used by the Catholic Church in its prayer and worship.

Suggesting how we might use inclusive language to address the Persons of the Holy Trinity, Groome says:

“Terms like ‘Creator, Savior and Sanctifier’ seem worthy candidates, at least when speaking of the Trinity’s relationship to us... A formula that might more adequately represent our faith in the triune relationship within the Godhead...is suggested by an inclusive language breviary text which prays ‘Glory to you, Source of all Being, Eternal Word, and Holy Spirit’.” (*Language for a Catholic Church*, p. 53).

Groome’s programme for the reconstruction of the language of Catholic faith along inclusivist lines has influenced various religious education curricula in Australia that based themselves on his *Shared Christian Praxis* methodology.

His theological and pedagogical project is directed to the politicization and deconstruction of the Catholic tradition, i.e. the dissolution of the historical Church, whose existence across time is rooted in its liturgical history going back to Christ himself. All of this is present in Groome’s continuing assault upon Catholic sacramental realism, something that is evidenced in his continuing propaganda against the Catholic Church’s doctrine on the ministerial priesthood.

I have asked the editor of *Into the Deep* to host on the website a critique I have recently completed of Groome’s book *What Makes Us Catholic*. While the review was written to address a situation in Ireland, it has application also to Australia.

Eamonn Keane, Sydney

[Eamonn Keane’s paper can be found on the ‘Documents’ page of www.stoneswillshout.com – Ed.]

Losing God

*From a homily by Bishop Samuel Aquila,
Diocese of Fargo, USA:*

We live in a country where the national religion has truly become atheism, whether it is in the actual denial of belief in God, or in the existence of practical atheism, living as if God did not exist.

We know that our forefathers [recognised] that all rights come from God, not from a monarch or the state. Our Declaration of Independence states in no uncertain terms, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." ... They knew that God, not man, is the source of life and society. [...]

Today, Catholic politicians and individual voters on both sides of the aisle have lost the sense of this fundamental principle that underlies every just and enduring society. Most especially, they have lost the sense of the inalienable right to life for the unborn child. Even without considering God in the equation, human life, for every human being, begins at the moment of conception. That is when human life begins. That is when your life began. ... Sadly, the dignity of human life from the moment of conception is lost today. The truth nonetheless exists. Our forefathers recognized it but present day politicians and voters do not.

Furthermore, we have lost too this fundamental principle in what it means to pursue happiness. We see the attempted pursuit of happiness without God and the collapse of this pursuit in Wall Street and the economics of today. Greed has guided the hearts of men and women, in which a 40 million dollar bonus is not enough in one year. When you take God out of the equation and life is lived as if he did not exist, the only thing left to pursue is materialism, because there is no life after death, there is no judgment. And so greed guides the hearts of men and women when we lose that basic essential understanding of the presence of God.

We see that abandonment of God's presence, too, in the area of human sexuality. Fifty percent of marriages end in divorce. Women are treated as sexual toys and objects. People proclaim a "good" in same sex unions, living promiscuously, and moving from one intimate relationship to the next.

Once we lose God in the pursuit of happiness, and once we lose the sense of the dignity of the human person and the God in whose image and likeness we are truly created, then we lose all sense of any moral compass or any moral standard. Without God, can there be any morality at all? Or is it set by the thinking of the day that can change from generation to generation, rooted in no truths that are valid for every person in every generation?

www.zenit.org 24-10-2008

Courage To Be Catholic

I would like to congratulate Mr Richard Stokes on his courage in living his baptismal call and promises responsibly amidst the discord, error, malpractice and chaos that is St Mary's parish South Brisbane.

As Catholics we believe that within the hierarchy of the Communion of Saints those of us still living here on earth are members of the Church militant. This means that by virtue of the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation every Catholic has a duty to love and defend Christ, His Church and the integrity of the faith. We do this by giving obedience of faith and assent to her Magisterium and by combating evil that threatens the Church from within and without.

Fr Kennedy has been at pains to try and identify Mr Stokes as the real cause of the grave scandal at St Mary's, by claiming that if he had not provided the Vatican with concrete evidence of the abuses, then the three Congregations would not have called the archbishop to task.

In public comments made by Fr Kennedy and his parishioners and dissenting Catholics, Mr Stokes has been vilified and attacked as an extremely right-wing, conservative, pharisaical, trouble-making, vigilante Catholic for calling attention to the denial of fundamental Church teaching that threatens the integrity and unity of the faith within the archdiocese of Brisbane. He has been made the object of their scorn for doing what the archbishop has failed to do.

After all, vigilance is primarily a duty that should be exercised by Archbishop Bathersby, who has been appointed by the Church as principal guardian of the integrity and unity of the faith in his region. As the Metropolitan, he has the apostolic right and duty to inform the Holy Father directly of any evil and scandal that threatens or harms the Church not only within his own archdiocese but in the dioceses of his suffragans (e.g. Bishop Morris's diocese), even though he may not have the authority to intervene in their affairs.

Fr Kennedy said the archbishop has known for many years what has been happening in his parish. Even after 2004 when Rome notified Archbishop Bathersby of the invalid baptisms, he failed to take steps to correct the deformities and to stop Fr Kennedy, thus failing in his duty to the Church, his priests and the faithful.

But Fr Kennedy's disastrous leadership is by no means unique, and the root cause of this scandal in St Mary's was likely years in the making, with the archbishop and his suffragans pursuing an erroneous form of ecumenism and a policy of accommodation.

As a result, Queensland has become a haven for liberals, dissenters and rebels in much the same way that St Mary's has become a 'spiritual home' for all those 'catholics' who have drifted into believing anything and nothing in particular.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Creation Restored!

Pope Benedict XVI

Christ came to restore beauty and dignity to creation, to the universe: this is what began at Christmas and makes the angels rejoice. The earth is restored to good order by virtue of the fact that it is opened up to God, it obtains its true light anew, and in the harmony between human will and divine will, in the unification of height and depth, it regains its beauty and dignity. Thus Christmas is a feast of restored creation.

How to Make Masks Slip

*From a reflection by Father Raniero Cantalamessa,
Pontifical Household preacher:*

This interior charity, or charity of the heart, is charity that can be exercised by all and always, it is universal. It is not a charity that only a few - the rich and the healthy - bestow, and others - the poor and the sick - receive. All can give and receive. Furthermore, it is very concrete. It is a matter of beginning to look with a new eye upon the situations and people with which we live. What is this new eye? It's simple: it is the eye with which we would like God to look upon us! The eye of mercy, of benevolence, of understanding.

When this happens all our relationships change. As if by a miracle, all the prejudice and hostility that kept us from loving a certain person falls away and we begin to open up to what he is in reality: a poor human being who suffers from his weaknesses and limits, like you, like everyone. It is as if the mask that people and things placed over his face has begun to slip and the person appears to us as he truly is.

www.zenit.org 24-10-2008 [Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic]

One Man One Cow

List ten things you think that should be or could be the central focus of a diocese. Actually, go on – think of ten more, and I reckon you still wouldn't get to this one.

From a bulletin notice, Diocese of Sale:

“The central focus for the Diocese is “Climate Change”, and how we, as Catholics, can redress it. Further to this, as a continuation of the days already held, on Sunday 23rd November from 2pm until 4pm, the DVD “One Man, One Cow, One Planet” will be shown at the Marist-Sion Marian Theatre. Discussion of this DVD will take place afterwards, and further resources will be available.” From the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council.

- Ed.

How Much We Lose

Thank you for producing ITD. I was interested to read Leo Morrissey's letter in November's issue.

I am in my early 60's and miss the reverence and tradition that was once part of Holy Mother Church. It is difficult during Mass and after Mass to find quiet to just be with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, but I'm afraid nobody else seems to feel the same way. It seems more like a café sometimes, and the children are not set a good example. Nobody seems to teach them about the real presence of God in the tabernacle. Even the altar girls laugh and giggle, and think it's all a bit boring.

I remember the nuns who taught me my faith at Mt Saint Bernard College, Herberton in north Queensland. I still keep intact the faith they taught, and remember my First Holy Communion Day even now, and the wonder of it all. Those Irish nuns really knew how to hand on the faith. And the priests too. If only it would all come back. The old saying is true – “You don't know what you've lost until it's gone.”

I remember with what reverence we received Holy Communion on our knees and how there were 33 Signs of the Cross throughout the old Mass. It really was the House of God in the old days. The love and devotion of the congregation was so strong. And if people didn't go up to Communion because they needed to go to Confession, then they stayed behind. That was normal practice. Nobody paid any attention. The Latin Gregorian chant was especially wondrous on Holy Thursday night, and I never missed it. We had so many wonderful nuns and priests and brothers in their habits. How spoiled we were then. It was all so long ago, but I still pray that we can get it all back again and devotion to the Rosary after Mass, and Benediction. And I wish we could still recite the prayer to St Michael the Archangel. I always say it after the Rosary and hope he can help us to regain what we have lost, so we can be a good example to the youth and bring the faith back again to our Church.

It was lovely to see the Mass at St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney for religious on TV when The Holy Father was out here for World Youth Day. All the nuns in the church in their habits brought tears to my eyes, they were so beautiful. God bless them. I was so proud of them. If only the modern nuns realised how much we lose every time they refuse to wear the habit. It might be a sacrifice for them, but it's a great gift to the rest of us when it builds up our spirits and gives us heart. And I know vocations would follow, if only the religious could be a good example to us once again.

Dianne Smyth, Nanango, QLD

“Don't let anything make you so sad that you forget the resurrection of the Lord.”

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Don't Be a Wimp!

It will not be news to you that Australia has become a pagan country. The new religion is climate change and is growing in ever increasing fervour. We have also recently witnessed the Victorian government passing legislation sanctioning the killing of innocent life, the unborn. On top of this barbaric legislation, we now have a Bill being introduced to give lesbians and single women access to IVF. The issue of same-sex marriage is on the agenda. The family has been under continued attack for some time. We are fast sinking into the bottomless cesspool. Discussion is surfacing to replace the reading of the Lord's Prayer in Parliament with a pagan ritual. Quite simply we have gone mad.

Christianity, in particular the Catholic Church, is under sustained attack. What has been our response? Frankly we have acted like wimps. Witness what has happened and continues to happen at St Mary's South Brisbane. Don't think there are not other parishes like St Mary's.

Over a number of years we have seen the feminisation of the Church in Australia facilitated by radical feminist religious who encourage other willing women by telling them "we need more women on the altar". See them swarming all over the sanctuary at our weekend Masses. They cannot even dress appropriately. When the priest is away for a few days, they conduct Communion services with his blessing. Where there are dual parishes they hold Communion services in place of Sunday Mass. We cannot even travel half an hour or an hour to attend Mass, but think nothing of travelling that far or further to shop or attend a football match.

There are ministries for all types of things, just name it. These people not only think they run the parish, they in fact do. What do you think would happen if the priest took control and removed them? I can hear the squeals now: 'He can't do that to us; it is our right.' Well, it is not a right. If you are asked to perform a task, consider it a privilege and perform it with all humility.

For years what has been the response of the episcopacy and the clergy? In the main they have failed to act and by this failure have encouraged them. We have had calls from some members of the National Council of Priests that the Church must become 'relevant' to modern society. The moral teachings of the Church are no longer 'relevant' to their parishioners. Witness the Collins/Purcell petition calling for married clergy, the ordination of women etc. signed by a great many radical feminist religious, liberal clergy, deacons and laity. This country is in a mess because the Church and clergy are in a mess. It is high time those in authority acted with some good old-fashioned guts and determination.

What can we the laity do? Pray, especially pray the rosary because Our Lady has told us that is the weapon. Defend the faith when the opportunity arises either inside or outside the Church. Don't be a wimp.

John Henderson, Morwell

Protecting Our Children?

Child abuse comes in many forms.

Governments around the world are implementing mandatory vaccination programs using Gardasil supposedly to combat human papillomavirus (HPV). The testing process of the drug is not expected to be completed until 2009. The program has been completed across the Moira Shire in Victoria. Gardasil, the vaccine, has been linked in Fiji with 3 cases of outbreaks of genital warts among primary students.

HPV, the most common sexually transmitted infection which causes genital warts, has been linked to the development of cervical cancer in women.

Earlier this year, Judicial Watch, a non-profit watchdog group, listed 21 deaths and 9749 adverse reactions linked to Gardasil, including 78 outbreaks of genital warts and 10 miscarriages. Documents through the Freedom of Information Act show 10 deaths associated with Gardasil since September 2007, and 140 "serious" reports of adverse reactions. The drug is also commonly used by the active homosexual population who are at significantly higher risk for genital warts and anal cancer than the general population.

Girls between the ages of 12 - 25 are targeted for this vaccination, believing that this group is more sexually active, therefore are at a greater risk of contracting diseases and developing cancer. What an insult to children, to presume that they are all living this way.

J. Lawless, Vic

Unique and Useful

The following email introduced Zenit's annual subscription campaign:

"This year's moment has arrived and we are kicking off our "Give ZENIT as a Gift Campaign".

"It's an unbeatable combination to give something of great value without spending a cent. Why not give your friends the gift of ZENIT? They can receive the daily ZENIT e-mail dispatch for free, and thanks to you, stay close to the Church and aware of its activities around the world.

"Gifts are rarely so unique and useful! And it's completely free, both for you and your friends. If you appreciate ZENIT, be sure that you will be doing us a favour by sending a gift subscription to friends, family members, co-workers, people from your parish, etc.

"Thanks in advance! And, as in the past, those who give the most ZENIT subscriptions will be rewarded with prizes. To send ZENIT gift subscriptions, go to: <http://www.zenit.org/english/gift.html>"

[And the same goes for Into the Deep – give an ITD subscription to someone – also free, also useful! - Ed.]

By Their Fruits ...

On 31-08-2008 I sent a 2½ page handwritten letter to Mrs Ros Joyner, principal of St Joseph's Primary School, Orbost. After acknowledging the difficulties inherent in being a Catholic school principal in current times, I expressed my concerns about Catholic education and the Catholic ambiance of the school, for example:

"The students only genuflect if they are told to by a teacher and even then they don't seem to know who or what they are genuflecting to and why. When asked questions from Father Brendan their ignorance is not helped by the fact that he says, "Fantastic" to whatever they say so they wouldn't know the difference between a good or incorrect answer anyway."

"Ironically it seems to be quite widespread in 'Catholic' schools to employ anybody rather than practising Catholics. Some of us had hoped things would have changed at St Joseph's when you became principal but perhaps your hands are tied! What hope have the children got when non-Catholics and agnostics are employed without question and committed Catholic teachers rejected? How can the Catholic faith be taught if no one seems to know or believe in what is central to our faith?"

"It would seem from the lack of respect for Jesus, truly present in the consecrated Host resident in the Tabernacle, and the fact that all post First Eucharist students and non-Catholic teachers stroll up to receive Our Lord that they do not believe in this fundamental dogma of the Catholic faith – the Real Presence. If they did they would faithfully go to Reconciliation regularly, attend Holy Mass every Sunday, and seeing the church is right next door to the school, be encouraged to visit their Creator and Redeemer, truly present in the Tabernacle of St Colman's, in prayer and adoration – even if only briefly during recess.

"I suppose what prompted this concerned letter was receiving that colour brochure on St Joseph's in the St Colman's bulletin. I must sadly congratulate you on your courage and honesty to admit that St Joseph's is no longer pretending to be a Catholic school: You advertise it is a "school for the wider community", applaud its secular achievements and mention neither God, His Son, His Mother, Catholicity or Religious Education!"

"Both you and Fr Brendan have difficult jobs but you are responsible not only for your own souls but those placed in your care. You and the children are very much in my prayers."

On 06-10-2008 I received the following reply: "Dear Richard, I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 31st August, 2008. Yours sincerely, Mrs Roslyn Joyner".

Richard Earle, Marlo

Making Ourselves Irrelevant

It is time for Christians to leave aside inferiority complexes and become valiant witnesses in the world, says the president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko affirmed this at the opening of the 23rd plenary assembly of that Vatican dicastery, L'Osservatore Romano reported.

The cardinal analysed the situation of Western societies, characterized by the "dictatorship of relativism," and denounced the growth of a new "anti-Christian attitude" that "make attacks on Christians, and particular on Catholics, pass off as politically correct."

Today, he warned, "one who wants to live and act according to the Gospel of Christ has to pay a price, even in the highly liberal societies of the West."

"The idea of creating a new man completely uprooted from Judeo-Christian tradition and a new world order is gaining ground," Cardinal Rylko contended.

In this regard, the Vatican official said the problem for Christians is not with being a minority, but rather that of "we ourselves putting ourselves at the margin, making ourselves irrelevant – due to a lack of courage, so that people leave us in peace, because of mediocrity."

"For Christians," Cardinal Rylko added, "the moment has arrived to free themselves from a false inferiority complex [...] to be valiant witnesses of Christ."

This should be the "hour of the laity," he continued, and their "responsibility in the diverse fields of public life, from politics to the promotion of life and family, from work to the economy, from education to the formation of youth."

www.zenit.org 14-11-2008

A Gift So Great

Pope Benedict XVI

"Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).

The Greek verb used, "sumballousa," literally means "piecing together" and makes us think of a great mystery to be discovered little by little. Although the Child lying in a manger looks like all children in the world, at the same time he is totally different: he is the Son of God, he is God, true God and true man.

This mystery – the Incarnation of the Word and the divine Motherhood of Mary – is great and certainly far from easy to understand with the human mind alone.

Yet, by learning from Mary, we can understand with our hearts what our eyes and minds do not manage to perceive or contain on their own. Indeed, this is such a great gift that only through faith are we granted to accept it, while not entirely understanding it.

Security Alarm

From a reflection by Father Thomas Rosica CSB, chief executive officer of the Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation and Television Network in Canada

Advent reminds us that we must be ready to meet the Lord at any and every moment of life. Just like a security alarm wakes up a homeowner, Advent wakes up Christians who are in danger of sleeping through their lives.

For what or for whom are we waiting in life? What virtues or gifts are we praying to receive this year? Do we long for healing and reconciliation in broken relationships? What meaning and understanding do we desire to have in the midst of our own darkness, sadness, and mystery? How are we living out our baptismal promises? What qualities of Jesus are we seeking in our own lives this Advent? Many times, the things, qualities, gifts, or people we await give us great insights into who we really are. Tell me whom you are waiting for and I will tell you who you are!

Advent is a time for opening eyes, focusing views, paying attention, keeping perspective on God's presence in the world and in our own lives. [...]

Our own baptism is a share in the royal, messianic mission of Jesus. Anyone who shares this mission also shares royal responsibilities, in particular, care for the afflicted and the hurting. Advent is a wonderful opportunity to "activate" our baptismal promises and commitment. [...]

This Advent, allow me to suggest that you mend a quarrel. Build peace. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a kind answer even though you would like to respond harshly. Encourage a young person to believe in him/herself. Manifest your loyalty in word and deed. Keep a promise. Find the time. Make time. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. Listen more. Apologize if you were wrong. Be kind even if you weren't wrong!

Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine the demands you make on others. Think first of someone else. Appreciate. Be kind, be gentle. Laugh a little. Laugh a little more. Deserve confidence. Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency. Express gratitude. Go to Church. Stay in Church a little while longer than usual. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love. Speak it once again. Speak it even more loudly. Speak it quietly. Rejoice, for the Lord is near!

www.zenit.org 26-11-2008

Rebuilding Catholic Culture

From an article by Rev. Thomas J. Euteneuer, President, Human Life International www.hli.org

The degradation of Catholic culture is largely, but not exclusively, the fault of the clergy. For four decades in the Catholic Church in America we have seen:

1. Liturgical abuses run rampant, aided and abetted by those in charge
2. Two or three generations of Catholics left un-catechized or taught with flimsy, Protestantized fluff passed off as Catholic education
3. Sexual abuse by clergy excused and unaddressed by the hierarchy
4. A blind eye turned to high profile dissent and political class heretics
5. Wholesale attacks on sacred teachings that receive virtually no response from our pastors (and if it weren't for Catholic Answers, EWTN and the Catholic League we would have no defense whatsoever)
6. The succumbing of our Catholic institutions of higher education to the ravages of political correctness, and the list goes on.

In the face of all this, should we be surprised that 54% of "Catholics" voted for Barack? Hardly.

The battle for Catholic culture begins with us, and there is no time like the present to don the armour of spiritual warfare. We either believe and practice what the Church teaches, or we live as part of the shadow church, falsely trading on the Name Catholic for its benefits without at the same time shouldering the crosses that this entails.

There is, however, great hope for the future because the battle has already been engaged: new Catholic colleges are springing up to replace the old decrepit houses of heresy, new religious orders with abundant vocations and orthodoxy have arisen, home schooling families and strong lay movements are abundant now.

Only when we take back our beloved Church from the false Catholics and clerics will our Church be able to stand up and rebuke the storm winds of paganism that are building faster than we care to admit.

This project is not without its price, however. The cost of being a true believer will undoubtedly be much higher than ever before in our lifetime. Starting now and into the next generation we as Catholics will have to show the world not only *what* we believe but *that we are willing to lay down our lives for it* as a witness to the truth.

"God is the true wisdom that never ages. He is the authentic wealth that does not decay, he is the joy to which the depth of each human heart aspires."

Pope Benedict XVI

Going to Church

*From a reflection by Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap,
Pontifical Household preacher*

We must also consider a sad phenomenon: the massive drop in church attendance and participation in Sunday Mass. The statistics on religious practice should make one weep.

I do not say that those who do not go to church no longer believe; It is rather that they have replaced the religion instituted by Christ with a “do it yourself” religion, what in America they call “pick and choose,” like you do at the supermarket. Everyone makes up his own idea of God, of prayer, and he is content with it.

Thus it is forgotten that God revealed himself in Christ, that Christ preached a Gospel, that he founded an “ekklesia,” that is, an assembly of those called, he instituted sacraments as signs and conveyors of his presence and salvation. Ignoring this in order to cultivate your own image of God is to advocate total religious subjectivism. We take ourselves as the only standard: God is reduced - as the German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach said - to a projection of our own needs and desires; it is no longer God who creates man in his image, but man who creates a god in his image. But it is not a god who saves!

Of course, a religion that is entirely made up of external practices has no point; we see Jesus fighting against such a religion everywhere in the Gospel. But there is no contradiction between a religion of signs and sacraments and one that is intimate, personal; there is no contradiction between ritual and spirit. The great religious geniuses (Augustine, Pascal, Kierkegaard ...) were men of a profound and personal interiority who were at the same time members of a community, went to church, they “practised.”

In the “Confessions” (VIII, 2) St Augustine recounts the great Roman philosopher and rhetorician Victorinus’ conversion to Christianity from paganism. Now convinced of the truth of Christianity he told the priest Simplicianus: “You know I am already Christian.” Simplicianus answered him: “I will not believe you until I see you in the church of Christ.” Victorinus replied: “Is it the walls that make a Christian?” The skirmish continued between the two. But one day Victorinus read in the Gospel these words of Christ: “Whoever disowns me in this generation, I will disown before my Father.” He understood that it was human respect, fear of what his academic colleagues would say, that kept him from going to church. He went to Simplicianus and said to him: “Let’s go to church, I want to become a Christian.” I think that this story has something to say to people of culture today too.

www.zenit.org 07-11-2008 [Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic]

Goals of Catholic Education

*Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, prefect of the Congregation
for Catholic Education, in an interview published Oct. 30
by the Italian magazine “Il Consulente Re”:*

Education, the cardinal explained, is not just knowledge and technical capacities. This information can be “used for good or evil,” he said, as history shows.

Instead, “it’s necessary to educate people so they know how to and want to use what they have learned in favour of good and not evil,” Cardinal Grocholewski said.

True education “is not contrary to liberty and is not an imposition,” but instead “looks precisely toward forming free persons, who are not and will not become slaves of their vices,” he continued. [...]

Cardinal Grocholewski said there are three fundamental goals for Catholic education: “the effective proclamation of the Gospel, entrance into the life of liturgy and prayer, and the religious, spiritual and moral maturing of the student.” [...]

And, the cardinal continued, Catholic education should begin in the family. Today, he said, it is necessary that families “take up again the educational function that pertains to them.”

“In the warmth of the family home, in fact, the first school of life and social virtues is found, the first and irreplaceable school of citizenship and faith, of becoming sensitive to values,” the Vatican official added.

Cardinal Grocholewski went on to say that Catholic education is open to everyone and not reserved to Catholics alone. He noted that in countries of non-Christian majority or in developing nations, Catholic schools play a role of civil progress, promotion of the person, inculturation, and interreligious dialogue.

Still, the cardinal affirmed, Catholic schools should not be hypocritical: “that is, say they are Catholic and avoid transmitting Christian values.” [...]

www.zenit.org 10-11-2008

The Answer!

How does one ensure that our children receive “the best Catholic education we can provide”?

According to a large, glossy, colour brochure (with bad grammar and punctuation, mind you) about the future of St Michael’s primary school in Traralgon, the answer is to improve the buildings and infrastructure (or relocate to ensure improved buildings and infrastructure).

They explain that these initiatives have been taken “to ensure that our primary school students at St Michael’s receive the best Catholic education we can provide.”

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

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	Friday and Saturday in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday (10am Mass) 10.30am – 12 noon
Orbost	Friday 9.30am – 10.30am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10.30am – 11.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
Trafalgar	Tuesday 10am – 11am First Saturday 10am – 11am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, January onwards)

Encouraging Adoration

In the modern Roman Rite the public worship of the Eucharist is envisaged as a normal part of the liturgical life of diocesan, parish and religious communities. Exposition with the monstrance or pyx may take place in any church or oratory where the Eucharist is reserved. Pope John Paul II set an example for the Church when he instituted daily exposition in St Peter's Basilica, later extended to the other three major Roman basilicas. [663]

The modern development of perpetual adoration as a parish lay spirituality may include daily exposition. Regular public celebrations of Eucharistic adoration should form part of this devout "watching". Personal visits to the Blessed Sacrament are explicitly encouraged in the provision of the 1983 Code [of Canon Law] that churches ought to be kept open at least for some hours each day for people to adore Our Lord. [666]

Possibilities during the time of adoration include: Scripture readings, homilies related to the Eucharist, appropriate hymns, reflective music, litanies, intercessions, a paralyurgy, a novena or popular devotions in harmony with the season. However, there should always be generous provision for silent prayer before the Lord. [682]

From *Ceremonies of the Modern Roman Rite: The Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours: a Manual for Clergy and All Involved in Liturgical Ministries*, by Peter J. Elliott, 2005

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.
- Donations are welcome! (Cheques made out to John Henderson please)

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.