

Into the Deep

Issue 86

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

November 2009

Greater Than We Are

Caritas in Veritate, n. 34

Truth - which is itself gift, in the same way as charity - is greater than we are, as Saint Augustine teaches. Likewise the truth of ourselves, of our personal conscience, is first of all *given* to us. In every cognitive process, truth is not something that we produce, it is always found, or better, received. Truth, like love, "is neither planned nor willed, but somehow imposes itself upon human beings."

Rocket Science Examination

UNIVERSITY OF THE FLIPPIN' OBVIOUS

Bachelor of Commonsense Honours Degree Examination

Rocket Science Level I (Faculty of drawing conclusions from empirical observation)

Answer question 1. (Three hours allowed)

1. Which of the following will be more effective in reviving Catholic faith and devotion [in Britain] today?

a) Arranging meetings to discuss the environment, climate change, the credit crunch, inclusion, exclusion, holism, and equality, discerning how best to downsize the Church's activity by closing parishes, and identifying the possibilities for lay ministry in priestless Churches, with people breaking into small groups to discuss their feelings about these important issues.

b) Vigorously promoting the traditional devotional life and magisterial teaching of the Church, and giving high profile support to all events that encourage and nurture faith in the Blessed Sacrament, and devotion to Our Lady and the Saints - not excluding devotion to relics of the same. (Without actually needing to break up into small groups.)

*Thanks to Fr Tim Finigan of
the-hermeneutic-of-continuity.blogspot.com, 11-10-2009*

One Thing Missing

From a homily of Pope Benedict XVI, 11-10-2009

"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" This is the question that opens the brief dialogue we heard in the Gospel, between a man, identified elsewhere as the rich young man, and Jesus. We do not have very many details about this nameless character: all the same from the little we do have we are able to perceive his sincere desire to attain eternal life by living an honest and virtuous existence on earth. In fact he knows the commandments and has obeyed them since childhood. And yet all of this, while important, is not sufficient – says Jesus – there is one thing missing, but it is an essential thing. Seeing then that he is willing, the Divine Master looks at him with love and proposes the qualitative leap, he calls him to the heroism of sanctity, he asks him to abandon everything and follow him: "Sell what you own and give the money to the poor...then come, follow me!"

"Then come, follow me!" This is the Christian vocation that flows from a proposal of love by the Lord, and that can be realized only thanks to our loving reply. Jesus invites his disciples to the total giving of their lives, without calculation or personal gain, with unfailing trust in God. The saints welcome this demanding invitation and set about following the crucified and risen Christ with humble docility. Their perfection, in the logic of a faith that is humanly incomprehensible at times, consists in no longer placing themselves at the centre, but choosing to go against the flow and live according to the Gospel.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us give thanks to the Lord for the gift of sanctity that today shines in the Church with a singular beauty. ...I would like to invite all of you to let yourselves be drawn by the shining example of these Saints, to allow yourselves to be guided by their teachings, so that our whole existence can become a hymn of praise to the love of God. May we gain this grace through their heavenly intercession and, above all, the maternal protection of Mary, Queen of the Saints and Mother of humanity. Amen.

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Full, Visible Communion!

BLACKWOOD, South Australia, OCT. 20, 2009 (Zenit.org). –

The prayers of Anglicans wishing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church have been more than answered today, according to the primate of the Traditional Anglican Communion. Archbishop John Hepworth said this today in a statement that responded to the Vatican announcement that Benedict XVI would allow Anglicans to enter full communion with the Catholic Church while preserving elements of the Anglican spiritual and liturgical tradition.

This policy has been established in a forthcoming apostolic constitution, and it responds to requests from Anglicans who have expressed wishes to become Catholic, particularly as the Anglican Tradition continues to take steps toward opening their priesthood and episcopate to women and active homosexuals, and blessing same-sex unions. Between 20 and 30 Anglican bishops have made such a request. The constitution was announced at a press conference at the Vatican today, offered by Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Hepworth, who also heads the Diocese of Australia in the Anglican Catholic Church in Australia, said that the Traditional Anglican Communion is “profoundly moved by the generosity of the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI. He offers in this Apostolic Constitution the means for ‘former Anglicans to enter into the fullness of communion with the Catholic Church’. He hopes that we can ‘find in this canonical structure the opportunity to preserve those Anglican traditions precious to us and consistent with the Catholic faith.’ He then warmly states ‘we are happy that these men and women bring with them their particular contributions to our common life of faith.’”

“May I firstly state that this is an act of great goodness on the part of the Holy Father,” continued Hepworth. “He has dedicated his pontificate to the cause of unity.” “It more than matches the dreams we dared to include in our petition of two years ago,” he added. “It more than matches our prayers.”

The archbishop said he would take the offer of the Holy See to each of the national synods of the Traditional Anglican Communion. “Now the Holy See challenges us to seek in the specific structures that are now available the “full, visible unity, especially Eucharistic communion,” for which we have long prayed and about which we have long dreamed. That process will begin at once,” he affirmed.

Noting that the Anglican Office of Morning Prayer included the Hymn of Thanksgiving, the Te Deum, Hepworth added: “It is with heartfelt thanks to Almighty God, the Lord and Source of all peace and unity, that the hymn is on our lips today. This is a moment of grace, perhaps even a moment of history, not because the past is undone, but because the past is transformed.”

Why Didn't They Resign?

Fr Conway, in the October issue of ITD (p.5), wrote something I would have thought completely impossible at the time, namely that in 1968 of 45 Australian bishops, only 23 voted to accept the infallible teaching of the Pope, while 22 rejected it.

Christ Himself warned us against false shepherds, starting with Judas Iscariot at the Last Supper through 80% of the bishops who opted for Arianism, the German prince/bishops more interested in their own perquisites than dealing with Lutheranism, the French potentates who rejected Rome's authority (Gallicanism) while simultaneously alienating their own clergy and facilitating the French Revolution, the cowardly English bishops in front of Henry VIII, to list just some of the more obvious mass episcopal malfeasances in history, without exploring post-1968's numerous examples.

Yet after the heroic rebuilding of the Papacy by Pius IX, and the succeeding reigns of St Pius X, Leo XIII, Benedict XV, Pius XI and Pius XII, those truly golden years led Catholics to automatically assume that all bishops everywhere would always teach in unison with the Pope. This is now quite obviously not so, and it is obligatory to say so publicly.

When I passed Fr Conway's statistic to a younger brother (62), his first response was, “Why didn't they have the honesty to resign in accordance with their beliefs?” and then recalled our Dad's teaching, “You can't go round saying I'm a Catholic but...”

Don Gaffney, Tarragindi QLD

Courage to Speak the Truth

*Pope Benedict XVI to civil and political authorities,
Prague, 26-09-2009*

Fidelity to the peoples whom you serve and represent requires fidelity to the truth which alone is the guarantee of freedom and integral human development.

Courage to articulate the truth in fact serves all members of society by shedding light on the path of human progress, indicating its ethical and moral foundations, and ensuring that public policy draws upon the treasury of human wisdom. Sensibility to universal truth should never be eclipsed by particular interests, important though they may be, for such would lead only to new examples of the social fragmentation or discrimination which those very interest or lobby groups purport to overcome.

Indeed, far from threatening the tolerance of differences or cultural plurality, the pursuit of truth makes consensus possible, keeps public debate logical, honest and accountable, and ensures the unity which vague notions of integration simply cannot achieve.

www.zenit.org 26-09-2009

With the Stroke of a Pen

The origin of the Speekman affair was a small matter of a Parish Priest exercising his ordinary pastoral duty and authority. His employee - that's right, because in Victoria the Parish Priest is the parish employer - didn't agree with her boss and went to others, behind his back, to get her own way.

This school principal, Maree Swenson, connived with the Catholic Education Office for twelve months; it connived with Bishop Coffey during that time, who connived with State teachers' union officials. The school principal kept her job and financial entitlements, but the Parish Priest was unlawfully removed and got nothing.

Fr Speekman, on the other hand, played it all by the book; in fact, he was the only one who did. He exercised his legitimate right of appeal to higher authority, which twice exonerated him and backed him unreservedly. By this time the bishop had lost the plot. He just dug his toes in and Rome proved to be a paper tiger. The bishop then put some case to the Apostolic Signatura, a very high authority in Rome, which, after nearly three years, has done nothing. Everyone now seems frozen, as if nothing can be done, which is not really true.

What is true is that a bishop, like a Pope, is not bound by the actions of his predecessor. The Signatura appeal is now a diocesan matter which the current bishop can cancel, just as a civil accuser can decide not to go ahead with a case already lodged with the authorities. If so, the case then lapses.

If the new bishop should decide to do this, the overloaded Signatura would be happy, and everybody else too. Even if he doesn't, he can still lawfully restore Fr Speekman to his rightful position. With the stroke of a pen the whole affair would be over.

This would commend the bishop to his people and clergy as one who genuinely believes in justice enough to implement it. The rest of the clergy of the diocese would be particularly supportive, since it would send out a strong message to all in the diocese that the position and role of a Parish Priest is not one to be lightly dismissed.

In this Year for Priests proclaimed by the Pope, it would publicly say that the bishop runs the diocese assisted by his clergy, and diocesan agencies and employees are to carry out their responsibilities properly, not politically.

S.C., Melbourne

*“Christianity lies in achieving greatness
in the face of a world's hatred.”*

St Ignatius of Antioch

Is Holiness Relevant?

*From a homily by Pope Benedict XVI, 28-09-2009,
on the martyr Saint Wenceslaus*

This great saint ... invites us always to follow Christ faithfully, he invites us to be holy. He himself is a model of holiness for all people, especially the leaders of communities and peoples.

Yet we ask ourselves: in our day, is holiness still relevant? Or is it now considered unattractive and unimportant? Do we not place more value today on worldly success and glory? Yet how long does earthly success last, and what value does it have?

The last century ... saw the fall of a number of powerful figures who had apparently risen to almost unattainable heights. Suddenly they found themselves stripped of their power. Those who denied and continue to deny God, and in consequence have no respect for man, appear to have a comfortable life and to be materially successful. Yet one need only scratch the surface to realize how sad and unfulfilled these people are.

Only those who maintain in their hearts a holy “fear of God” can also put their trust in man and spend their lives building a more just and fraternal world. Today there is a need for believers with credibility, who are ready to spread in every area of society the Christian principles and ideals by which their action is inspired. This is holiness, the universal vocation of all the baptized, which motivates people to carry out their duty with fidelity and courage, looking not to their own selfish interests but to the common good, seeking God's will at every moment.

www.zenit.org 28-09-2009

Look After Those Hands

Pastores Gregis, n.47

The presbyters, and among them parish priests in particular, are therefore the closest co-operators in the Bishop's ministry. ... The Bishop will always strive to relate to his priests as a father and brother who loves them, listens to them, welcomes them, corrects them, supports them, seeks their cooperation and, as much as possible, is concerned for their human, spiritual, ministerial and financial well-being. ...

Each Diocesan Bishop has as one of his primary duties the spiritual care of his presbyterate:

“The action of the priest who places his hands in the hands of the Bishop on the day of his priestly ordination, as he professes to him ‘filial respect and obedience’, can at first sight seem a one-way gesture. In reality, the gesture commits them both: priest and Bishop. The young presbyter chooses to entrust himself to the Bishop and the Bishop for his part obliges himself to look after those hands.” ...

Found! Orthodox Parishes

Wonderful

Re "Wanted - an Orthodox Parish" October ITD (p.8): I can highly recommend Fr Peter Austin at St Joseph's Parish Rochester. All the requests plus much, much more. Divine Mercy Devotions every month. Adoration for Vocations after 9am Mass till 7pm every Thursday, also Adoration on Fridays. Lots and Lots of extra orthodox things. I moved to Echuca from Lakes Entrance after what they did to Fr Shanley, and this priest is wonderful. He still wears his collar and clerical dress.

V.B., Echuca

Travel

Your reader looking for an orthodox parish might like to investigate Deer Park, or they could consider doing what dozens of families do, for Sunday Mass at least, travel to St Mary Star of the Sea in West Melbourne. The parish runs a catechetics program for children after Sunday Mass, has two separate holy hours, daily Mass with confessions before and after (and on Sundays). The parish is run by the Opus Dei priests - you won't find better than they!

And how pleased I was to see the excerpt from Fr Peter Joseph's wonderful article in October's ITD (p.6)! The addiction to false apparitions among devout Catholics has reached plague proportions, if I may mix a metaphor.

G.M., St Kilda

Across the border

It is my view your correspondent's needs would be met in only a few parishes in the Sandhurst Diocese.

The Wagga Diocese might be seen as better meeting requirements - there are three parishes in Albury (just across the Victorian Border) that largely meet the criteria outlined. In particular, the newest Albury Parish, Immaculate Heart of Mary located in the suburb of Thurgoona, served by the Confraternity of Christ the Priest, has a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, with this Order of Priests and Brothers also strongly committed to catechesis.

The Wagga Diocese has the further attraction of recently established, private independent schools, providing instruction in the Catholic Faith - one located in Wagga and another in the Albury satellite town of Jindera. The Albury College, with which I am familiar - known as Blessed Mary McKillop Colleges Albury - aims to provide separate single sex schools for secondary pupils as numbers permit. Currently it operates Kindergarten to Year 8. Inquiries to the Albury College can be made via email: bmmcalbury@gmail.com or telephone (02) 6045 9422.

P.M., Wodonga

A banquet for the soul

I read in your newsletter about the couple who would like to live in Victoria, in a parish that has what I call a banquet for the soul. At St Peter Chanel parish in Deer Park there is Perpetual Adoration, Daily Mass at 8am and 7pm, Legion of Mary, obedience to the Magisterium etc.

In the surrounding area of Deer Park, there are other parishes that are also very good, with Daily Mass, and good things happening, like at Our Lady's church in Sunshine they have every Tuesday Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, with Holy Mass and Confessions. Also the city is not too far, and easy to get to St Patrick's Cathedral, where there are many special church functions like Walk with Mary or Eucharistic procession.

L.A., Melbourne

A great experience

We wanted to spend a quiet week in the country but one where we could go to an orthodox daily Mass. Our parish priest Father John Walshe, Mentone, directed us to Rochester Parish where we spent a very happy fruitful week going to Mass every day attending several devotions that were on offer and being delighted by the two very orthodox priests there.

All the criteria listed were there and more. Fr Peter Austin is very welcoming and very loyal to the Magisterium. It was a great experience and the Pub where we stayed - Leo's - was great too.

Thank you from us for Into the Deep which we devour when it comes. We will pray for you to Our Lady of Good Success, to obtain every blessing on you all.

C. P., Sandringham

Privileged

There were others who wrote in about Rochester parish with Fr Austin and assistant priest Fr Leo Hynes who celebrates the Tridentine Mass, e.g.

"It would be the most orthodox parish in the Southern Hemisphere." *K.H.*

"We have two very holy priests. We are very privileged to have all the devotions here." *S.R.*

Thank you to all who sent in their recommendations. And thank you to the priests who provide these 'banquets for the soul'.

It wasn't my intention to publish the responses received to the call for an orthodox parish for our potential new Victorians, but after reading the wonderful praise, it seemed logical to pass on such joyful information to everyone, and to acknowledge those country priests doing such a great job!

- Ed.

Priests To Teach Us

Congratulations to *Into the Deep* for an excellent October issue, an issue worthy of ITD's 7th anniversary! And congratulations for providing your readers with such an excellent publication throughout the past seven years!

It is good to see that you have once again printed something from Father Speekman's 'blog'. Anything written by Father Speekman is worthy of a place in ITD or any other quality Catholic publication.

What you printed was, of course, posted by Father on the 23rd September. His homily posted on the 30th September, for the 27th Sunday of Ordinary Time, had to do with the Sacraments and, in particular, with the Eucharist and Reconciliation and Marriage. I still had his words in mind when, on the 3rd October, I read something written by another great priest, Father Tim Finigan of Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Blackfen, England (the-hermeneutic-of-continuity.blogspot.com).

Father Finigan posted about his visit to a hospital late one night recently, when he was called to anoint a dying man. He went on:

"The Sacrament of Anointing carries with it the full remission of sin and the consecration of the time of dying, preparing the dying person to enter into paradise. The Apostolic Blessing is one of the most powerful prayers in the Church's treasury, not only giving forgiveness but also the remission of all temporal punishment due to sin. The Commendation for the dying is one of the most beautiful prayers of the Church, bringing the beauty of the intercession of the angels and saints into the last moments of a person's life. Of all the things that a priest does, the ministration of the sacraments to the dying must surely be at the same time the most agonizing and the most sublime."

Words like these – and those of Fr Speekman – were once heard frequently from the altar, and in Christian Doctrine classes at our Catholic schools. I remember. But now they are rarely heard from the altar, and hardly ever taught in Christian Doctrine (RE?) classes.

With the shortage of priests – and I mean orthodox priests – in recent years, many more Catholics than ever before are dying without what we once knew as the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. Which reminds us of the need for constant prayer for vocations. We are desperately in need of many more good, holy priests, completely faithful to the teachings of the Church. In the words of The Holy Father in his message for the 46th World Day of Prayer for Vocations:

"Pray! The urgent call of the Lord stresses that prayer for vocations should be continuous and trusting. The Christian community can only really have ever greater faith and hope in God's providence if it is enlivened by prayer".

Michael Ryan, Rosanna VIC

Price of Orthodoxy

The first decree (from the Congregation for the Clergy) which upheld Fr Speekman's appeal against his removal, states: "The letters from the parishioners as well as the testimony of the Bishop and the priests that he consulted in the removal process indicate that Father Speekman is an orthodox priest, faithful to the Magisterium and dedicated to the Parish." Even more significantly, it continues that Bishop Coffey "admitted that "Father Speekman is a very good person and a deeply spiritual man. He is intensely passionate in his love for the Church, and in his vision for the spread of the Gospel. He certainly brings the best out of devout people." "

This begs the question: why was Bishop Coffey then so set against Fr Speekman that he removed him from his parish on a charge of ineffective and harmful ministry? Why was he so determined to ruin him? My suspicion is this:

Fr Speekman's orthodox, Catholic priesthood and his faithful love of the Church inspired the laity to renew their faith and stand up for orthodoxy. They began to oppose the diocese's radical anti-tradition, anti-clerical and liberal agenda (all of which was officially enshrined in the diocese's pastoral plan, *Journeying Together*). The diocese could no longer tolerate this witness which was emboldening others. Something had to be done. The only way Bishop Coffey could stop this powerful and effective voice of orthodoxy in the diocese was through a canonical act of removal. This would not only humiliate Fr Speekman but would publicize the lie to the whole country that he had violated Church or civil law.

Fr Speekman's accusers were so desperate to make the charge stick, that they resorted to slander, rumours and allegations. They worked on the principle that if you tell a big lie and repeat it often enough then sooner or later people will believe it. Hence things were attributed to him that he never said or did. It didn't even matter that Bishop Coffey and his collaborating priests were in fact guilty of the very accusations they were making against Fr Speekman. They were the ones who had caused harm to the faith, to souls and to the Church, they were the liturgical abusers and ineffective in their ministry.

No, all that mattered was that Fr Speekman was removed from his parish so that a leading witness could be silenced. The delay by Rome to justly resolve this case continues to breathe life into the lies and rumours which have caused damage to Fr Speekman's reputation. He was judged unfit and unworthy to be a priest in Bishop Coffey's diocese and was driven into exile.

And this is what is most disturbing about the Fr Speekman case – that orthodoxy, traditional priestly fatherhood, and obedience to Church teaching has been re-defined by liberal left-wing bishops, priests and religious as something alien, as an enemy that must be destroyed.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Ideas For Praying For Priests

Since you so very kindly published my letter about parishes celebrating the anniversary of the ordination of their priests in the June issue of your magazine, I thought that you might like to hear something of what we did in our parish. The idea could be copied by any parish.

A layman spoke in our parish at all Masses about the need to pray for our priests. At the same time a two-sided leaflet, containing an application to join the 31 Club (which is actively promoted by Serra) or to become Friends of the Lamb was placed on all benches in the church [see below]. Those who wished to participate were asked to write their names on the form, with their chosen date. Participants were then given a holy card as a reminder of the date they had chosen to pray for our priests. It showed The Lamb who accompanied Our Lady at the apparition at Knock. The Christian names of the Friends of The Lamb and 31 Club members were placed on the notice board in the church under their dates.

Regular Mass attendance in our parish is about 1100. Following the invitation, 137 people joined the 31 Club and 66 youngsters signed up to become Friends of the Lamb. Our priests must surely be pleased to know that on average more than six people are now praying for them every day during the Year for Priests.

We are now learning about young boys between 7 and 12 who are telling their parents that they would like to be priests. Obviously the parents don't want everyone to know their little secret, but we have found a way to give these youngsters encouragement. Every Friday we have Eucharistic Adoration. All present are now asked to pray "For all those young boys in our parish who would like to be a priest."

Pat Ryan, London, UK

Friends of The Lamb

This is a very special invitation to you, our young parishioners, to become Friends of The Lamb and to pray for our priests and for vocations in our parish during the Year for Priests. Jesus is the Lamb. At Holy Mass we say "Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world."

Friends of The Lamb can be tiny babes in arms, children preparing for First Holy Communion, and older youngsters who have not yet been confirmed. In short absolutely every young parishioner who has not yet been confirmed is invited to become a Friend of The Lamb!

If You Have Not Yet Made Your First Holy Communion you are asked to say one Hail Mary for our priests on one particular date in the month. Of course if you are just a tiny little baby you will not yet know the words of the "Hail Mary" but your mothers, fathers or guardians will know them and they can recite them for the wellbeing of our priests as they hold you in their arms. Just imagine the joy in a mother's heart as she announces to the priest after he has baptised her little baby that henceforth both she and her child will pray for him on a special day each month.

You are only asked to say one Hail Mary on an easy to remember date in the month such as your baptism or birth date. Of course if you want to you could pray on as many days of the month as you wish, but the idea is to encourage you to start praying for our priests. You are not being asked to do something difficult but something beautiful. It is your special gift to our priests and our parish.

If You Have Already Made Your First Holy Communion: You are invited to say three Hail Marys on one special date of the month for our priests.

The 31 Club

If You Have Already Been Confirmed you are invited to join the "31 Club" since, spiritually, you have become an adult. Our Holy Father has announced that the entire Church will celebrate The Year for Priests from 19th June 2009. Pope Benedict wishes to encourage our priests to become good and holy men and he is also asking each and every one of us to pray for them at this special time. One way we can comply with our Holy Father's recommendation is for each of us to join what is called the 31 Club.

Although it is called a club, there are no dues, no meetings and no commitments. All you have to do to join is agree that if it is possible you will try to attend Holy Mass on one day of the month, in addition to the normal Sunday obligation, so that you can pray for our priests and an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

You may select any date of the month that suits you, from 1 to 31 (hence the name) that will be convenient to attend the Mass. Choose a date that is easy to remember, such as your birthday, your graduation, your profession or the day you were married etc. Never worry if you miss your selected date, merely go to Mass on another convenient date that month.

If You Are Sick or Housebound and cannot attend Holy Mass, do not worry because you will be a most treasured member of the 31 Prayer Club. There are many ways in which you can participate. Never waste your suffering! Why not offer up one hour of your daily sufferings for priests? You could say a rosary or recite some prayer that you like and that would not be too onerous. Do what you feel comfortable with. Your prayers are precious.

Learning from the Saints

The Catholic Church has always encouraged the faithful to read the 'Lives of the Saints' [Butler's] as a sound spiritual exercise. It also wishes us to follow in their likeness and to copy their way of life. As well as having a greater knowledge of the Saints, we do well to dwell on the reflections for the day that lead us to perfect our life.

The book of the 'Lives of the Saints' is ranked to compare with the Bible and to 'The Imitation of Christ'. Over the years the book has had a good past and contains a spirit in and a reverence for our Saints traditions. The reflections are based on the virtues of the Saints of the day and is extremely valuable if read daily in order to be in tune with Catholic ideals. It helps to develop a truly Catholic approach to life and fills a real need in today's distraught world.

Young mothers and fathers can find in the book a truly Christian name for their children, and in this age of celebrating it leads them to keep not only their birthday, but also to teach them the value of their Saint's feast day and the day of their Baptism.

The book that contains the Lives of the Saints, the Martyrs, the principal Saints, and of the Holy men and women is available at a Catholic bookshop and is bound to please.

Leo Morrissey, Sandringham, VIC

[Editor's note – Stick to orthodox Catholic bookshops when looking for 'Lives of the Saints'! There are quite a few bearing the same title – including one by dissenter Richard McBrien that includes Catholics and non-Catholics alike whom 'he believes' merit sainthood, even though they aren't...]

Mother Angelica Honoured

Pope Benedict XVI has conferred the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* Medal on the founder of the Eternal Word Television Network and a deacon who helped the TV channel to succeed.

The Pope gave the award to Mother Angelica, a Poor Clare Nun of Perpetual Adoration, and Deacon Bill Steltemeier. It is the highest honour a pope can bestow upon laity and religious. Bishop Robert Baker of Birmingham, Alabama, conferred the awards [on 4 October] at the headquarters of EWTN.

Mother Angelica, 86, founded the network in the garage of her monastery in 1981. Deacon Steltemeier, 80, left his work as an attorney to help Mother Angelica when EWTN was just starting. He served as president of the network and now is chairman of its board.

Bishop Baker affirmed in his homily that the medal is "a significant acknowledgement by our Holy Father, of Mother's labours of love in support of our Church."

www.zenit.org 07-10-2009

Souls Grow Tepid

From Pope Benedict XVI's letter to the priests of the world on the occasion of the Year for Priests:

In his time the Curé of Ars was able to transform the hearts and the lives of so many people because he enabled them to experience the Lord's merciful love. Our own time urgently needs a similar proclamation and witness to the truth of Love.

Thanks to the Word and the Sacraments of Jesus, John Mary Vianney built up his flock, although he often trembled from a conviction of his personal inadequacy, and desired more than once to withdraw from the responsibilities of the parish ministry out of a sense of his unworthiness.

Nonetheless, with exemplary obedience he never abandoned his post, consumed as he was by apostolic zeal for the salvation of souls. He sought to remain completely faithful to his own vocation and mission through the practice of an austere asceticism: "The great misfortune for us parish priests - he lamented - is that our souls grow tepid"; meaning by this that a pastor can grow dangerously injured to the state of sin or of indifference in which so many of his flock are living.

He himself kept a tight rein on his body, with vigils and fasts, lest it rebel against his priestly soul. Nor did he avoid self-mortification for the good of the souls in his care and as a help to expiating the many sins he heard in confession. To a priestly confrere he explained: "I will tell you my recipe: I give sinners a small penance and the rest I do in their place."

Aside from the actual penances which the Curé of Ars practised, the core of his teaching remains valid for each of us: souls have been won at the price of Jesus' own blood, and a priest cannot devote himself to their salvation if he refuses to share personally in the "precious cost" of redemption.

Guide to Sainthood

Pope Benedict XVI

"The Virgin Mary is the star that guides all journeys to sainthood. Her *fiat* is the model of perfect adherence to the divine will, and her Magnificat expresses the hymn of joy of the Church, which on earth already rejoices for the great works of God, and in heaven eternally praises His glory."

Pray for Him

Please find a small donation enclosed. Please continue with your great work – we need the truth.

Also, my husband Robert Sutton died very suddenly on 29 June 2009 – could you please pray for him.

May God bless and keep you always.

Rita Sutton, Tamworth NSW

Guidance for Youth

From an address by Pope Benedict XVI to youth during his visit to the Czech Republic, 28-09-2009

Dear friends, it is not hard to see that in every young person there is an aspiration towards happiness, sometimes tinged with anxiety ... [T]hat longing for happiness must be taken seriously, it demands a true and comprehensive response. At your age, the first major choices are made, choices that can set your lives on a particular course, for better or worse. ...

I invite you all to consider the experience of Saint Augustine, who said that the heart of every person is restless until it finds what it truly seeks. And he discovered that Jesus Christ alone is the answer that can satisfy his and every person's desire for a life of happiness, filled with meaning and value.

As he did with Augustine, so the Lord comes to meet each one of you. He knocks at the door of your freedom and asks to be welcomed as a friend. He wants to make you happy, to fill you with humanity and dignity. The Christian faith is this: encounter with Christ, the living Person who gives life a new horizon and thereby a definitive direction. And when the heart of a young person opens up to his divine plans, it is not difficult to recognize and follow his voice.

The Lord calls each of us by name, and entrusts to us a specific mission in the Church and in society. Dear young people, be aware that by Baptism you have become children of God and members of his Body, the Church. Jesus constantly renews his invitation to you to be his disciples and his witnesses.

Many of you he calls to marriage, and the preparation for this Sacrament constitutes a real vocational journey. Consider seriously the divine call to raise a Christian family, and let your youth be the time in which to build your future with a sense of responsibility. Society needs Christian families, saintly families!

And if the Lord is calling you to follow him in the ministerial priesthood or in the consecrated life, do not hesitate to respond to his invitation. ... The Church in every country...needs many holy priests and also persons fully consecrated to the service of Christ, Hope of the world.

Hope! This word, to which I often return, sits particularly well with youth. You, my dear young people, are the hope of the Church! ...

The Pope asks you to live your faith with joy and enthusiasm; to grow in unity among yourselves and with Christ; to pray and to be diligent in frequenting the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Confession; to take seriously your Christian formation, remaining ever obedient to the teachings of your Pastors. ... I bless all of you with affection!

www.zenit.org 28-09-2009

Couldn't Be So Obvious

Recently Cardinal Walter Kasper said: "We have to ask what is wrong or what is deficient with our own pastoral work. Why [do] so many Christians leave our Church? What they are missing with us and searching [for] elsewhere?"

I can't help thinking that the reason many people leave the Catholic Church is that they *don't know* what they're leaving.

At some stage, for some reason, many schools stopped teaching phonics. They figured children would just naturally figure out how to read if they saw enough words. Now everyone's wondering what went wrong, why children are struggling to read, and how we can address it.

The same with discipline – at some stage it was decided that it was bad to discipline children. Now everyone's wondering where the violence and disrespect and lack of self-control comes from, and how do we address it.

And of course, at some stage priests and Catholic schools decided that it wasn't worth actually teaching the Catholic faith anymore. People would just absorb it from somewhere and everything would be much better. Now we wonder why so many are leaving.

The answers are staring us in the face, but we are too clever for such simplicity.

- Ed.

Great Music

Pope Benedict XVI

after a concert in his honour in Paul VI Hall, 17-10-2009

This concert has, once again, permitted us to taste the beauty of music, a spiritual and therefore universal language, a vehicle so importantly suited to understanding and union between persons and peoples. Music is a part of all cultures and, we might say, accompanies every human experience, from pain to pleasure, from hatred to love, from sadness to joy, from death to life. We see how, over the course of the centuries and millennia, music has always been used to give a form to that which we are not able to speak in words, because it awakens emotions that are difficult to communicate otherwise. So it is not by chance that every civilization has placed such importance and value on music in its various forms and expressions.

Music, great music, gives the spirit repose, awakens profound sentiments and almost naturally invites us to lift up our mind and heart to God in every situation, whether joyous or sad, of human existence. Music can become prayer.

[Translation by Joseph G. Trabbic] www.zenit.org 18-10-2009

Renewing the Church: A Real Pastoral Plan!

Full text of Bishop Nickless' letter at stoneswillshout.com under Documents www.zenit.org 19-10-2009

Trying to engage the world but forgetting what is distinctively Catholic has “wreaked havoc on the Church,” according to the bishop of Sioux City, Iowa. This is the claim made by Bishop R. Walker Nickless in his first pastoral letter, *Ecclesia Semper Reformanda* (The Church is Always in Need of Renewal).

In his letter, the prelate reflected on the Second Vatican Council, something he called the “greatest gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church in centuries.” But, he said, citing Benedict XVI, the “implementation of the council has been difficult and is not complete.”

Rival camps on how to interpret the council have “weakened our identity and mission,” Bishop Nickless affirmed. “It is crucial that we all grasp that the hermeneutic or interpretation of discontinuity or rupture, which many think is the settled and even official position, is not the true meaning of the council. This interpretation sees the pre-conciliar and post-conciliar Church almost as two different churches. It sees the Second Vatican Council as a radical break with the past. There can be no split, however, between the Church and her faith before and after the Council. We must stop speaking of the ‘Pre-Vatican II’ and ‘Post-Vatican II’ Church...”

Five Point Plan

With this backdrop, Bishop Nickless unfolded a five-point pastoral plan for his diocese.

The first priority, he said, is renewing “our *reverence, love, adoration and devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament*, within and outside of Mass.”

Next, he said, “[w]e must strengthen *catechesis* on every level, beginning with and focusing on adults.”

“If we, who are supposed to be mature in faith, do not know the Catholic Faith well, how can we live it and impart it to our children and future generations of Catholics?” the prelate questioned.

Points one and two, the bishop maintained, will lead to making point three possible – *holy Christian families*. “We need holy families, lest the Church and the world perish,” he wrote.

“We have a grave responsibility to build up and nurture holy families in our midst,” the bishop continued. “We must do so by strengthening their Catholic faith, identity, and culture through the above pastoral priorities, but also by sustained preaching and well-crafted pastoral ministry programs. We must give concrete help against the corrosive effects of pre-marital promiscuity, cohabitation, contraception and abortion, pornography industry, easily executed divorce, and infidelity.

“But we must also guard against and equip families to resist the breakdown of the family that sometimes

happens through over activity, the domination of communication technologies and novelties, and the cult of fun and entertainment, to name just a few dangers.”

A fourth pastoral priority flows directly from the third, Bishop Nickless stated: *vocations* to the priesthood and the consecrated life. “The lack of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life is not a mystery; it is precisely a crisis of faith,” he said. “Where Catholic faith and life flourish, vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life also flourish.”

Finally, the Iowa prelate pointed to the Church’s missionary character. “Our discipleship of Jesus will always be imperfect and incomplete if we fail to *preach the Gospel*,” he wrote. “Moreover, our faith will wither and die if we do not embrace our call to be apostles. The Church is inherently missionary. Sharing our faith is an intrinsic duty of charity. Each in different ways and according to our own circumstances and abilities, we must all be evangelists.”

Call to Renunciation

In the conclusion of his pastoral letter, Bishop Nickless makes a call to renunciation. He wrote:

“My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, in the time I have been among you I have learned how admirably strong is the faith to which you cling, yet how far it is from the ‘fullness of faith’ to which we are called by our loving Savior. We truly need today those ‘great acts of renunciation’ for the sake of Christ: not so much renunciation of our material things, as of our false attachments to both material and spiritual things.”

Bishop Nickless offered a selection of examples calling for renunciation. “In order to strengthen our devotion to Christ in the Holy Eucharist and worship God rightly, we need to renounce any attachment to how we worship currently,” he said. “To improve the spiritual depth of how we perform the Church’s liturgy, we will need to renounce attachment to worldly expectations and long-standing habits. To spend more time adoring Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, we need to renounce attachment to how we currently use our time.

“To deepen our intimate love for God in our hearts and heads, we need to renounce attachment to whatever is not God that is filling our hearts and heads. To live in more intentional and holy Catholic families, we need to renounce attachment to distractions, sins, and imperfections that harm our domestic churches.”

Finally, the bishop affirmed, “To accept the divine plan God has for each of us, we need to renounce attachment to our own plans. To change the world for Christ, we need to renounce attachment to how we want the world to be for ourselves.”

We Must Be Catholic

Bishop R. Walker Nickless, bishop of Sioux City, Iowa

Our urgent need at this time is to reclaim and strengthen our understanding of the deposit of faith. We must have a distinctive identity and culture as Catholics, if we would effectively communicate the Gospel to the people of this day and Diocese. This is our mission. Notice that this mission is two-fold, like the Second Vatican Council's purpose. It is toward ourselves within the Church (ad intra), and it is to the world (ad extra). The first is primary and necessary for the second; the second flows from the first. This is why we have not been as successful as we should be in bringing the world to Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ to the world. We cannot give what we do not have; we cannot fulfill our mission to evangelize, if we ourselves are not evangelized.

Science Tests Faith

Following are a few quotes from a presentation by Ron Tesoriero (lawyer and author) and Mike Willesee (journalist and TV presenter) in Melbourne a few months ago. Years ago Ron challenged Mike, a sceptic at the time, to investigate mystical phenomena in the Catholic Church using scientific research. He did, and ended up returning to his Catholic faith. Ron and Mike have made a documentary on their research findings, called "Signs from God - Science Tests Faith", which was watched by an audience of 28 million in the U.S. - Ed.

Does God intervene in this world? Read the lives of the saints!

Apparitions are still happening, but why aren't we seeing it on TV? Why aren't they being investigated?

The brain function of those who claim to see apparitions, is being studied. Findings show that the state of the brain during apparitions is unknown to neuro-science, but is similar to a coma state.

Mike considers the work he's doing now makes all his work as a career journalist almost irrelevant.

In Argentina, a Host in water was transformed into tissue and blood – it was found to be inflamed heart tissue, and was living when the sample was taken. The type of heart tissue was consistent with that of the Host in Lanciano – human life. Human blood has been identified but with no genetic code.

A piece of bread which had no life, has been transformed into something that has life – an act of creation. God can do this. Why are we surprised?

If God does these things, there must be a reason. Some of us need proof to believe. The proof is there.

Scientists pride themselves in changing what they think as new evidence comes along. They must consider the evidence.

The gates of Heaven do not open automatically.

Respecting Reputations

In our latest St Michael's Traralgon Parish Gazette, the front page was taken up by an article by Parish Priest, Fr Peter Bickley. The heading said: Persons of Good Repute – Respecting a Person's Reputation.

Father makes the point that reputations matter very much, e.g. "Everyday the media casually destroy people's reputation by accusation or insinuation. ... Whole classes of people are rubbished. ... Do we cherish the good name of those whom others consider scum? Can we learn to shut our mouths and never say a word that will destroy the good name of another child of God, unless justice requires that we do so?"

Now I quite agree with Fr Bickley. However we are also required as far as possible to publicly rectify that person's good name if we have knowingly destroyed that person's good name.

This reminds me of a story I heard years ago. It goes something like this. A person went to confession. One of his sins was that he had destroyed somebody's good name. The priest gave him absolution and said for your penance I want you to collect a large bag of feathers and bring it to me next week. That person left the confessional wondering what on earth that priest wanted that bag full of feathers for. Anyhow he thought a penance is required for forgiveness of my sins so he did what the priest had asked him to do. Next week he brought the bag full of feathers to the priest. The priest then said I want you to take this to the market place and empty it in the village square and when you have done that I want you to pick them all up again. The penitent said Father that is impossible, the wind will have blown those feathers all over the place. Precisely so, Father replied and so it is with false accusations. Then the penitent understood. The moral of the story is that it is very easy to destroy somebody's good name, but very hard to rectify it.

Now Fr Bickley's was one of the signatures on that infamous petition in support of our previous bishop's wrongful dismissal of a good orthodox priest Fr John Speekman. Can we now expect from Fr Bickley a sincere apology to Fr Speekman and to do everything in his power to 'right the wrong', and that he will make Fr Speekman very welcome and support him in his rightful parish in Morwell?

Furthermore the big difference between Fr Speekman and Frs. Kennedy, Fitzgerald and Macquire is that Fr Speekman obeyed his bishop even, as has been proven, when Bishop Coffey was wrong with his unlawful dismissal of Fr Speekman, and was ordered by Rome to reinstate him without any further delay.

Now we are all sinners, but our Lord never refuses the confession of a humble and contrite heart. I sincerely hope that it is not going to be "do as I say, but do not do as I do!"

Fons Janssen, Willung South, Vic

Apparitions

From a talk by Bishop Peter J. Elliott at the Marian Conference in Traralgon, 16-05-2009

Devotion to Mary may be enriched by her apparitions, but it should never be based on apparitions.

Some apparitions, such as Guadalupe, Lourdes and Fatima, have the strong approval of the Church, evident in the pilgrimages Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II have made to these shrines, but no Catholic is bound to believe even in these recognised apparitions and messages. Others are more problematical and complex, and even the most popular in this second category still await the judgment of the Church, for example Garabandal and Medjugorje, and there are complex problems to be resolved in both cases, and I would not be optimistic about the outcome. Then there is a third category that is a source of mischief, error and division, the false apparitions and fanatical messages such as the "Little Pebble" and Bayside. Satan can be a deceiving mimic of what is good and true.

But apparitions teach us something that intensifies devotion to Mary. According to God's providential Will, Mary is permitted to enter human history to promote her Son's work and plan of salvation. This happened at Fatima, when she called us back to his Gospel essentials, prayer and penance, in the terrible century of blood, marred by wars, persecutions, genocide and revolutions. However, within the Church, we should never let this area of apparitions intrude too far, because it may detract from the central simple case for devotion to Mary – who she is in God's plan of salvation. Our primary evangelistic and apologetical mission is surely to stick to the essentials.

The full text of Bishop Elliot's Marian Conference talks are at stoneswillshout.com under Documents

No Dignity For Them

The phrase "dying with dignity" is now as popular with some pro-euthanasia letter writers as were the words "mandate" and "economic responsibility" when John Howard was at the helm.

In Australia, around 90,000 of our unborn are dying every year legally without dignity, then are discarded like waste products. Never any reference in the letters columns of our newspapers to *their* quality of dying! Perhaps it's not fashionable? Maybe politically incorrect? Possibly boring...?

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill NSW

A Demand of Social Justice

Archbishop Charles Chaput, Archbishop of Denver, in an article in Italian newspaper Il Foglio, 06-10-2009

"Much is made, in some religious circles, of the President's [Obama] sympathy for Catholic social teaching. But defense of the unborn child is a demand of social justice. There is no 'social justice' if the youngest and weakest among us can be legally killed. Good programs for the poor are vital, but they can never excuse this fundamental violation of human rights."

www.zenit.org 07-10-2009

Church Signs

You are not too bad to come in.
You are not too good to stay out.

Can't sleep?
Try counting your blessings.

Under same management for over 2000 years.

Try Jesus. If you don't like Him, the devil will
always take you back.

Still Catholic Lite

I try not to read the diocesan newspaper Catholic Life. It gives me that sick feeling in my stomach, the realisation that things really are as bad as they seem. October's issue went from bad to worse.

Bishop Prowse, in his early months as bishop of Sale, laying his foundations for the diocese, chooses to talk vaguely about ecology and Aboriginal Australians. Three women from our diocese represented 'us' in Canberra and gushed about their "gathering, affirming and celebrating" there. Fr Bernard Buckley, looking anything but a priest, dressed in a benign suit, bemoans the lack of priestly vocations, while claiming to believe in the greatness of the Catholic tradition and faith. Catholic College Sale girls are pictured as harem girls. And the jokes (often unsavoury) include an exclamation of "Oh my God", unnecessary and uncensored. And that was just flicking through it.

I thought maybe under a new bishop there would be some more Catholic in Catholic Life, but it appears not.

- Ed.

"He does not love Christ who does not love the cross of Christ."

St Peter Damian

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 (continuing until 6pm on First Fridays) [Sacred Heart Church]
Orbost	Friday 9.30am – 10.30am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10am – 11am
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)
Wonthaggi	First Sunday 2pm – 3pm

Full of Comfort

St John Vianney

“Ah! How sweet and full of comfort are the moments spent before the Blessed Sacrament! Are you in any trouble? Come and throw yourself at his feet. ... Do people speak badly of you? Come to him and you will find a good friend who will never fail you.”

Ever Present

St Francis of Assisi

And just as He appeared before the holy Apostles in true flesh, so now He has us see Him in the Sacred Bread. Looking at Him with the eyes of their flesh, they saw only His Flesh, but regarding Him with the eyes of the spirit, they believed that He was God. In like manner, as we see bread and wine with our bodily eyes, let us see and believe firmly that it is His Most Holy Body and Blood, True and Living. For in this way our Lord is ever present among those who believe in him, according to what He said: "Behold, I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."

Mary, our mother

And mother of the Redeemer,
Gate of heaven and Star of the sea,
Come to the aid of your people,
Who have sinned,
Yet also yearn to rise again!
Come to the Church's aid,
Enlighten your devoted children,
Strengthen the faithful throughout the world,
Let those who have drifted
Hear your call,
And may they who live as prisoners of evil
Be converted!

Pope John Paul II

Contact *Into the Deep*

www.stoneswillshout.com

stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au

**PO Box 446, Traralgon, VIC, 3844
Australia**

- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
- We rely on donations (cheques made out to John Henderson please)

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Editor - Janet Kingman

The purpose of ITD is to provide a forum for those who:

- no longer have a voice in Catholic Life, and other diocesan newspapers,
- 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.