

Into the Deep

Issue 90

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

March 2010

Don't Mistake Dissent for Mature Debate

*Pope Benedict XVI to Bishops of England and Wales
during their ad limina visit, 01-02-2010*

Fidelity to the Gospel in no way restricts the freedom of others – on the contrary, it serves their freedom by offering them the truth. ...

If the full saving message of Christ is to be presented effectively and convincingly to the world, the Catholic community...needs to speak with a united voice. This requires not only you, the Bishops, but also priests, teachers, catechists, writers – in short all who are engaged in the task of communicating the Gospel – to be attentive to the promptings of the Spirit, who guides the whole Church into the truth, gathers her into unity and inspires her with missionary zeal.

Make it your concern, then, to draw on the considerable gifts of the lay faithful...and see that they are equipped to hand on the faith to new generations comprehensively, accurately, and with a keen awareness that in so doing they are playing their part in the Church's mission.

In a social milieu that encourages the expression of a variety of opinions on every question that arises, it is important to recognise dissent for what it is, and not to mistake it for a mature contribution to a balanced and wide-ranging debate. It is the truth revealed through Scripture and Tradition and articulated by the Church's Magisterium that sets us free.

www.zenit.org 01-02-2010

Received From Her

St Augustine

“The world being unworthy to receive the Son of God directly from the hands of the Father, he gave his Son to Mary for the world to receive him from her.”

The Mirror

St Anthony of Padua

“Christ, who is your life, is hanging before you, because you look at the cross as in a mirror. There you will be able to know how mortal were your wounds, which no medicine but that of the blood of the Son of God could have cured. If you look well, you will realize how great are your human dignity and your value ... In no other place can man realize better how much he is worth, but by looking at himself in the mirror of the cross.”

Isolation

Caritas in Veritate, n.53

One of the deepest forms of poverty a person can experience is isolation.

If we look closely at other kinds of poverty, including material forms, we see that they are born from isolation, from not being loved or from difficulties in being able to love.

Poverty is often produced by a rejection of God's love, by man's basic and tragic tendency to close in on himself, thinking himself to be self-sufficient or merely an insignificant and ephemeral fact, a “stranger” in a random universe.

Man is alienated when he is alone, when he is detached from reality, when he stops thinking and believing in a foundation. All of humanity is alienated when too much trust is placed in merely human projects, ideologies and false utopias.

Today humanity appears much more interactive than in the past: this shared sense of being close to one another must be transformed into true communion. The development of peoples depends, above all, on a recognition that the human race is a single family working together in true communion, not simply a group of subjects who happen to live side by side.

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

What is Mine

From Pope Benedict XVI's Lenten Message 2010

Each year, on the occasion of Lent, the Church invites us to a sincere review of our life in light of the teachings of the Gospel. This year, I would like to offer you some reflections on the great theme of justice, beginning from the Pauline affirmation: "The justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ" (cf. Rm3, 21-22).

First of all, I want to consider the meaning of the term "justice," which in common usage implies "to render to every man his due," according to the famous expression of Ulpian, a Roman jurist of the third century.

In reality, however, this classical definition does not specify what "due" is to be rendered to each person.

What man needs most cannot be guaranteed to him by law. In order to live life to the full, something more intimate is necessary that can be granted only as a gift: we could say that man lives by that love which only God can communicate since He created the human person in His image and likeness. Material goods are certainly useful and required – indeed Jesus Himself was concerned to heal the sick, feed the crowds that followed Him and surely condemns the indifference that even today forces hundreds of millions into death through lack of food, water and medicine – yet "distributive" justice does not render to the human being the totality of his "due." Just as man needs bread, so does man have even more need of God. Saint Augustine notes: if "justice is that virtue which gives every one his due ... where, then, is the justice of man, when he deserts the true God?" ...

Injustice, the fruit of evil, does not have exclusively external roots; its origin lies in the human heart, where the seeds are found of a mysterious cooperation with evil. With bitterness the Psalmist recognises this: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps51,7). Indeed, man is weakened by an intense influence, which wounds his capacity to enter into communion with the other.

By nature, he is open to sharing freely, but he finds in his being a strange force of gravity that makes him turn in and affirm himself above and against others: this is egoism, the result of original sin. ... How can man free himself from this selfish influence and open himself to love? ...

What then is the justice of Christ? Above all, it is the justice that comes from grace, where it is not man who makes amends, heals himself and others.

The fact that "expiation" flows from the "blood" of Christ signifies that it is not man's sacrifices that free him from the weight of his faults, but the loving act of God who opens Himself in the extreme, even to the point of bearing in Himself the "curse" due to man so as to give in return the "blessing" due to God (cf. Gal3, 13-14).

But this raises an immediate objection: what kind of justice is this where the just man dies for the guilty and the guilty receives in return the blessing due to the just one? Would this not mean that each one receives the contrary of his "due"?

In reality, here we discover divine justice, which is so profoundly different from its human counterpart.

God has paid for us the price of the exchange in His Son, a price that is truly exorbitant. Before the justice of the Cross, man may rebel for this reveals how man is not a self-sufficient being, but in need of Another in order to realize himself fully.

Conversion to Christ, believing in the Gospel, ultimately means this: to exit the illusion of self-sufficiency in order to discover and accept one's own need – the need of others and God, the need of His forgiveness and His friendship.

So we understand how faith is altogether different from a natural, good-feeling, obvious fact: humility is required to accept that I need Another to free me from "what is mine," to give me gratuitously "what is His."

This happens especially in the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Thanks to Christ's action, we may enter into the "greatest" justice, which is that of love (cf. Rm13, 8-10), the justice that recognises itself in every case more a debtor than a creditor, because it has received more than could ever have been expected.

Strengthened by this very experience, the Christian is moved to contribute to creating just societies, where all receive what is necessary to live according to the dignity proper to the human person and where justice is enlivened by love.

The Universe Trembles

St Francis of Assisi

"The whole of humanity fears, the whole universe trembles and heaven exults, when on the altar, in the hand of the priest, there is Christ, the Son of the living God. O wonderful favour! O sublime humility, that the Lord of the universe, God and Son of God, so humbles himself as to hide himself for our salvation, under the low form of bread."

No Mass!

A comment on the Mass sheet for the January Serra Club Mass at the Cathedral in Sale said: "Mass will no longer be celebrated in this diocese", and continues "Could this announcement be made by our Bishop in 25 years time?" The comment then goes on to point out that to have Mass we need priests. Well that is obvious! But it is also obvious to those who want to know, that where vocations are plentiful, conditions are vastly different to those in Sale.

In dioceses where the bishop and priests wear a clearly identifiable religious habit, are explicit about their fidelity to the Church and the teachings of the Magisterium, have real Catholic schools where students are taught from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and where Mass and the sacraments are the central feature of every parish, vocations are plentiful.

Can anyone say these conditions have been evident in the Sale diocese in the past thirty years or so?

Pat O'Brien, Sale

Apologetics Talks in Queensland

Robert Haddad is Director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. He is also an author and apologist.

He will launch his new book 'The Case for Christianity' at the following venues:

Banyo, Friday 19 March

Holy Trinity Church, 352 St Vincent's Road
7.30-9.00pm

The Case for Christianity: How St Justin Martyr defended the rights of Christians in a hostile pagan world.

Fortitude Valley, Saturday 20 March

Legion House, 377 St Paul's Terrace
10am-12noon

The Mary MacKillop Canonisation: Answering secular and sectarian attacks.

Toowoomba, Sunday 21 March

Holy Name Parish Hall, 190 Bridge Street
9.45am -12noon

The Case for Christianity: How St Justin Martyr defended the rights of Christians in a hostile pagan world.

Blessed Trinity Apologetics invites you to hear these talks. Tea and coffee will be provided at all venues. For enquiries, please contact me via email joyvin16@hotmail.com or phone 07 3267 0265, or mobile 0401 598 423.

Vince McHugh, Brisbane

Reader Survey:

Why Do You Read ITD?

As mentioned in last month's issue, we're giving away a few gifts to celebrate (belatedly!) our ITD birthday. We have:

- two autographed copies of the De Souza Family Choir's music CD, "Sensus Sacrorum", thanks to Raymond de Souza,
- two copies of George Weigel's book, "The Cube and the Cathedral", thanks to Fons Janssen,
- the book "The End of the Present World" by Fr Charles Arminjon, thanks to St Benedict Book Centre, and
- a pocket version (WYD08 edition) of the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Write to us (contact details on p.12) by 26 March and tell us why you read ITD. You can also add something interesting about who you are and/or where you're from. Don't forget to include your mailing address. The most interesting and/or entertaining responses will be published in the April issue of ITD.

- Ed.

Enormous Privilege and Joy

Pope Benedict XVI to Bishops of England and Wales during their ad limina visit, 01-02-2010

Be close to your priests, and rekindle their sense of the enormous privilege and joy of standing among the people of God as alter Christus. In Newman's words, "Christ's priests have no priesthood but His ... what they do, He does; when they baptize, He is baptizing; when they bless, He is blessing" (Parochial and Plain Sermons, VI 242).

Indeed, since the priest plays an irreplaceable role in the life of the Church, spare no effort in encouraging priestly vocations and emphasizing to the faithful the true meaning and necessity of the priesthood.

Encourage the lay faithful to express their appreciation of the priests who serve them, and to recognize the difficulties they sometimes face on account of their declining numbers and increasing pressures. The support and understanding of the faithful is particularly necessary when parishes have to be merged or Mass times adjusted. Help them to avoid any temptation to view the clergy as mere functionaries but rather to rejoice in the gift of priestly ministry, a gift that can never be taken for granted.

www.zenit.org 01-02-2010

All Very Sad in Kyneton

Regarding Sean Kennedy's letter on liturgical abuses in the parish of Kyneton (ITD Feb 10, p.8), I can add to the list:

Father Caldwell, who has been here just over two years, has never worn a chasuble.

Father does not genuflect at the consecration.

Mary's rosary beads were removed from her hands very soon after his arrival.

Our parish is not blessed with prayer groups, devotions, Benediction, holy hour etc. Nothing happens. Our holy priest was removed about ten years ago.

In recent times the piety shop has been dismantled.

80% of our congregation is over 50 years of age. At best on a regular Sunday there could be up to 7 people under 20 years.

It is all very sad.

Name and address supplied

Help Stop the Decay

The Manhattan Declaration was published in America on 20 November 2009 and covered three major and vital issues:

1. the sanctity of human life;
2. the dignity of marriage as the conjugal union of husband and wife;
3. the rights of conscience and religious liberty.

Orthodox, Catholic and evangelical Christian leaders upheld it and over 420 000 have signed it in agreement so far. You can sign the Manhattan Declaration at www.manhattandeclaration.org.

President Obama and the pro-abortion supporters thought the Catholic Bishops were the only stumbling block but they were wrong, and no doubt surprised by the result.

Here in Australia, as it is in the rest of the world, we have the same dilemma, and Victoria is no exception. The moral and religious values are in ruin. The political leaders are those who are making the decisions on those matters for us, which should not be the case. What will stop the decay? Contact Mr Brumby and Mr Rudd and your local politician. Let them know that to legalise abortion is unacceptable, that marriage is only between a man and a woman, that the freedom of religion is of paramount importance to you, and that you will not accept euthanasia. It is your right and onus in doing so.

Australia is a Christian country. It is our duty to keep it Christian. Resolve to act in favour of Christian ethics here in Australia. Please act and lodge an objection to what is taking place at the present time, in this, our 'blessed' land.

Leo Morrissey, Sandringham, Vic

Without Love, Faith Dies

From Pope Benedict XVI's general audience address, 10-02-2010, on St Anthony of Padua

In the last period of his life, Anthony committed to writing two series of "Sermons" ... In them he comments on the texts of sacred Scripture presented by the liturgy ...

The wealth of the spiritual teachings contained in the "Sermons" is such that, in 1946, the Venerable Pope Pius XII proclaimed Anthony a doctor of the Church, attributing to him the title of "Evangelic Doctor," because from these writings arises the freshness and beauty of the Gospel; even today we can read them with great spiritual profit.

In them, he speaks of prayer as a relationship of love, which drives man to converse sweetly with the Lord, creating an ineffable joy, which gently envelops the soul in prayer.

Anthony reminds us that prayer needs an atmosphere of silence, which is not the same as withdrawal from external noise, but is an interior experience, which seeks to remove the distractions caused by the soul's preoccupations.

According to the teaching of this distinguished Franciscan doctor, prayer is made up of four indispensable attitudes which, in Anthony's Latin, are described as: *obsecratio, oratio, postulatio, gratiarum actio*. We could translate them thus: to open one's heart confidently to God, to speak affectionately with him, to present to him our needs, to praise him and to thank him.

In this teaching of St Anthony on prayer we see one of the specific features of Franciscan theology – of which he was the initiator – namely, the role given to divine love, which enters in the sphere of affection, of the will, of the heart and which is also the source from which springs a spiritual knowledge that surpasses all knowledge.

Anthony writes: "Charity is the soul of faith, makes it alive; without love, faith dies."

Only a soul that prays can make progress in the spiritual life: this is the privileged object of St Anthony's preaching. He knows well the defects of human nature, the tendency to fall into sin; that is why he constantly exhorts to combat the inclination to covetousness, to pride, to impurity and to practice the virtues of poverty and generosity, of humility and obedience, of chastity and purity.

www.zenit.org 10-02-2010

From the Fact File:

There are 2668 employees of the Holy See.

[Vatican Information Service]

Laws of Logic

I'm sure we don't think of ourselves as philosophers, but there is a part of philosophy called logic, which is about how to think properly, and my guess is that most of us would like to imagine that we know how to think.

Logic has rules. Learn the rules and follow them if you want the right answer. We need to learn the rules of correct thinking, and abide by them. So, if such and such is the case (let us call it A), then there is a consequence (let us call it B). If the thinker can make out a case that A is true, then B follows.

Justice is a very important virtue for the good running of Church and State, so important that it is often set down in some detail. Justice is that attitude which is prepared to render or give or grant to other people what is due to them. The opposite, not giving people their due, is injustice. We might not be able to say what justice is as something theoretical, but if we get \$10 short in our pay-packet, we all know immediately what justice is in a very real sense.

The Congregation for the Clergy in Rome has twice told us in some detail what justice means in regard to Fr Speekman. That was some years ago. There is a bishop now that people are watching closely to see whether he will operate according to the principles of politics, pragmatism, compromise or justice.

If any people are wondering why this matter will not be allowed to die, it is because Fr Speekman has not done anything wrong, and we have that on the authority of the Sacred Congregation itself. While Bishop Coffey was silly and obstinate enough to bring this on himself at the end of his career, it now faces the new bishop at the beginning of his time, and the longer it is allowed to fester the more proof people will have of where things really stand.

How do the inescapable laws of logic apply here? If Fr Speekman deserves to be fully reinstated and compensated, then he ought to be. This is how to be just. But we already have the proof and directive from Rome of what justice means in this situation. Delay or denial would be the opposite – injustice. There is an authority in the diocese quite competent to make the decision necessary, so what is it going to be – justice or injustice?

S.C., Melbourne

Firm Confidence

Pope Benedict XVI (to bishops of Brazil, Nov 2009)

“Continue to work for the triumph of God's cause, not with the sad spirit of one who only sees want and dangers, but with the firm confidence of one who knows he can count on Christ's victory.”

Music in Lent

Answered by Fr Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy at the Regina Apostolorum university

Q: What is the rule/thought of prelude music during Lent? I thought I read in liturgy documents that silence should be observed during Lent. - V.K., Fremont, Nebraska

A: This question is basically covered in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, No. 313:

“...In Lent the playing of the organ and musical instruments is allowed only to support the singing. Exceptions are Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent), Solemnities, and Feasts.”

www.zenit.org 10-03-2009

Music on Good Friday

Answered by Father Edward McNamara

Q: “I would like to know if it is appropriate to play background music (on organ or piano) during the reading of the Passion on Palm Sunday/Good Friday. If it is not appropriate, please cite the rule that defines this. I have read through various sections of the Roman Missal, and I cannot find any specific rule prohibiting this practice.” - A reader from Ohio

A: I would first comment on a question of liturgical interpretation. Usually the missal and other liturgical documents say what is to be done and not the reverse. Therefore the fact that nothing is written against a practice does not mean that it is automatically permitted. Indeed, since Church law generally follows the principles of Roman law, and not Anglo-Saxon common law, the presumption is that what is not expressly permitted is forbidden.

Explicit prohibitions usually arise as the result of people initiating practices that are not contemplated in the norms and that are perceived as going against the letter or the spirit of the liturgical norm.

That said, I would reply that the playing of instrumental music during the Passion reading, and indeed during any readings except the psalms, does not correspond to Catholic tradition which emphasizes the priority of the Word. Throughout the history of the Latin liturgy the readings have been chanted according to simple tones without musical accompaniment.

If this is true of all readings, it is especially so during the proclamation of the Passion in which habitual liturgical solemnities such as incense are left aside.

Finally, on Good Friday the use of all musical instruments is excluded – hence, also during the Passion narrative.

www.zenit.org 28-04-2009

Church and State

Fr Linus Clovis (Ph.D, M.Sc, JCL, STB) delivered a talk in Melbourne on 21 October 2009, thanks to Family Life International. He spoke on the “Imminent Confrontation of Church and State”. Fr Clovis is the Spiritual Director Family Life International.

The following are some notes taken at his presentation:

- The anger and the bile is not directed against us, but against Our Lord. We should not be offended.
- As prophets, we have the moral authority to speak out when we see something morally wrong.
- We have the moral right to ask our bishops to stand up and speak with authority, to appeal to them, to ask them to lead us.
- When you make lots of little compromises, you get to a stage where you can't go back without looking like an idiot, like you don't know what you're on about.
- The Church throughout history has had to stand against the State, in order to remain independent.
- We are obliged not to follow laws that are morally wrong (CCC §2235). We are empowered (of course we may end up like John the Baptist). There is no reason to be afraid (for example, priests being afraid of a little criticism).
- It is the Church's duty to pass judgment even on matters of politics if souls are at stake. (CCC §2246)
- In education, the State is now determining what is taught.
- When we see someone stand up for the faith, we should rally around them, support them (e.g. pharmacists)
 “Some drugs sold as birth control do not prevent fertilisation, but rather prevent the fertilised egg from being implanted in the uterus... Catholic pharmacists cannot work directly or indirectly to supply products for purposes that are clearly immoral, such as abortion...” *Benedict XVI to International Congress of Pharmacists, 2007*
- We must speak out. There is a price to be paid. But we know that the reward is greater than any State can match.
- The Popes condemn. The Bishops are silent.
- Prayer and sacrifice. The rosary is more powerful than the sword.
- Show a presence in the media.
- Batter down the gates of Hell – don't wait for Hell to come to us.
- We need witnesses. Martyrs.
- We have large families. The future is ours. We can form the future.
- We need to anchor ourselves in devotion to Our Lady and the Eucharist.
- The Church has overcome the State and the Church will overcome the State. The battle is on. It's not a new battle, it's been going on through history.
- They are threatened by those who disagree.
- Pray when confronted: “Lord, I don't know. Put the words into my mouth.” We won't win hearts with intellectual arguments.
- Priests don't realise that if you don't form the laity, the laity aren't formed.

Where Christ has gone, the Church must follow: “You will be hated by all for my name's sake. ... A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master; it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.” (Mt.10:22-25)

- Ed.

From the Catechism

§2235 Those who exercise authority should do so as a service. “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant.” The exercise of authority is measured morally in terms of its divine origin, its reasonable nature and its specific object. No one can command or establish what is contrary to the dignity of persons and the natural law.

§2242 The citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teachings of the Gospel. *Refusing obedience* to civil authorities, when their demands are contrary to those of an upright conscience, finds its justification in the distinction between serving God and serving the political community. “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.” “We must obey God rather than men”:

When citizens are under the oppression of a public authority which oversteps its competence, they should still not refuse to give or to do what is objectively demanded of them by the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority within the limits of the natural law and the Law of the Gospel.

Self-fulfillment is Too Little

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience address, 21-02-2007

Lent is an opportunity to “become” Christian “anew”, through a constant process of inner change and progress in the knowledge and love of Christ. Conversion is never once and for all but is a process, an interior journey through the whole of life. ...

What does “to be converted” actually mean? It means seeking God, moving with God, docilely following the teachings of his Son, Jesus Christ; to be converted is not a work for self-fulfillment because the human being is not the architect of his own eternal destiny. We did not make ourselves.

Therefore, self-fulfillment is a contradiction and is also too little for us. We have a loftier destination. We might say that conversion consists precisely in not considering ourselves as our own “creators” and thereby discovering the truth, for we are not the authors of ourselves.

Conversion consists in freely and lovingly accepting to depend in all things on God, our true Creator, to depend on love. This is not dependence but freedom.

To be converted thus means not pursuing one’s own personal success – that is something ephemeral – but giving up all human security, treading in the Lord’s footsteps with simplicity and trust ...

Those who let themselves be conquered by him do not fear losing their life, for on the Cross he loved us and gave himself for us. It is precisely by losing our life for love that we rediscover it. ...

God is love, and his love is the secret of our happiness. So it is that there is no other way to enter into this mystery of love than to lose ourselves, to give ourselves: the way of the Cross. ...

This is why the Lenten liturgy, while it invites us to reflect and to pray, spurs us to hold penance and sacrifice in greater esteem, to reject sin and evil and to conquer selfishness and indifference.

Prayer, fasting and penance, and charitable works for our brethren thus become spiritual paths on which to start out in order to return to God.

Welcomed and Shared

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

“In the mystery of the Annunciation and the Visitation, Mary is the very model of the life we should lead. First of all, she welcomed Jesus in her existence; then, she shared what she had received. Every time we receive Holy Communion, Jesus the Word becomes flesh in our life – gift of God who is at one and the same time beautiful, kind, unique.”

From Personage to Person

From a reflection by Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the Pontifical Household

The first step, to make Jesus the soul of one’s priesthood, is to go from the Jesus personage to the Jesus person.

A personage is one of whom one can speak as much as one pleases, but to whom and with whom no one dreams to speak. One can speak of Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Napoleon as much as one wishes, but if someone said he speaks with one of them they would send him immediately to a psychiatrist.

The person, on the contrary, is one with whom and to whom one can speak. As long as Jesus remains an ensemble of opinions, of dogmas or of heresies, someone who is placed instinctively in the past, a memory, not a presence, he is a personage.

It is necessary to convince oneself that he is alive and present, and more important than speaking about him is to speak with him.

One of the most beautiful traits of Don Camillo of Guareschi, naturally taking into account the literary genre adopted, is his speaking in a loud voice with the Crucified of all the things that happen in the parish. If we made it a habit to do so, spontaneously, with our own words, how many things would change in our priestly life! We would realize that we never speak to a void, but to someone who is present, who listens and who responds, perhaps not in a loud voice like Don Camillo.

www.zenit.org 07-12-2009

Catholic Sex Education

Pope Benedict XVI in an address to Italian officials

As part of the promotion of the common good, the education of the new generations...is a predominant concern. ...It is vital to help young people base their lives on authentic values, values that refer to an ‘exalted’ view of man which finds one of its most sublime expressions in Christian religious and cultural heritage.

When educating on the great questions of affectivity and sexuality, which are so important for life, we must avoid showing adolescents and young people ways that tend to devalue these fundamental dimensions of human existence.

To this end the Church calls for everyone to collaborate, especially those who work in schools, to educate the young to a lofty vision of human love and sexuality. Thus I invite everyone to understand that, in pronouncing her ‘noes’, the Church is really saying ‘yes’ to life, to love lived in the truth of the giving of self to the other, to the love that opens up to life and does not close itself in a narcissistic view of the couple.

Vatican Information Service 14-01-2010

Being a Priest

From an interview by ZENIT with the prefect of the Congregation for Clergy, Cardinal Cláudio Hummes:

ZENIT: For you as a priest, what is the most beautiful aspect of your vocation?

Cardinal Hummes: This question brings to mind something from St Francis of Assisi. He once said, "If I were to meet on the road a priest and an angel, I would first greet the priest and then the angel. Why? Because the priest is the one who gives us Christ in the Eucharist."

This is what is most fundamental and marvelous: The priest has the gift and the grace of God to be a minister of this great mystery of the Eucharist. ... This is what is most important and at the centre. The Eucharist is the centre of the Church. Pope John Paul II said that the Church lives off the Eucharist. ...

And then we also have the sacrament of reconciliation. Jesus said, "Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

He came to reconcile the world with God and human beings among themselves. He gave the Holy Spirit to the apostles, breathing upon them. He gave to the apostles in the name of God and his name that which he had acquired with his blood and with his life on the cross, transforming violence into an act of love for the forgiveness of sins. And he says to the apostles that they will be the ministers of this pardon. This is fundamental for everyone. Everyone wants to be forgiven of his sins, to be in peace with God and with others. The ministry of reconciliation is very important in the life of the priest.

There are many other activities, like evangelization, the proclamation of the person of Jesus Christ, dead and risen, and of his Kingdom. The world has a right to know and to learn about Jesus Christ and everything that his Kingdom means. This is also a specific ministry of the priest who shares it with the bishops and with the laity who proclaim the Word, and who should bring people to an intense and personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

www.zenit.org 04-06-2009

Overworked

On the subject of overworked priests, we had a crowd of 25 at a weekday Mass recently at Deception Bay. Two priests concelebrated.

It seems that one extraordinary minister was not sufficient, so the parish priest summoned another from the audience. Two priests, and two extraordinary ministers.

It's incredible the amount of stress caused by half an hour of Mass. Gotta reduce the load somehow.

Richard Stokes, Caboolture QLD

Prophetic (Internet) Ministry

Whenever I am updating myself about what is happening in the universal Church through the internet, I cannot help but realize the important role that the simple homily plays in the pastoral and evangelizing mission of the Church.

In many ways we have lost sight of the power and effectiveness the regular Sunday homily can have in carrying out Christ's ministry of preaching and teaching. The prophetic task of a priest's ministry, the task of proclaiming the Word, of calling the world to faith in God, to life in His Church and in the Kingdom to come, has been largely undervalued and neglected.

When the parish priest, who is father and shepherd, stands as head of the parish family and preaches his homily on Sundays he teaches, guides, corrects and forms his children in the truths of Christ and His Church.

But when this same priest happens to be internet savvy and courageously posts his Sunday homilies on the internet, he is using one of the best tools of social communication available to preach and teach far beyond his parish family. His faithful preaching and teaching of the Gospel is transmitted in a matter of seconds as a source of light, nourishment, strength and courage to all nations. More people are able to read his homily on the internet at any given time than his entire parish and diocese.

Through the internet we get to see how the Gospel becomes a living word addressed to a particular person anywhere in the world while they have the freedom of responding to it in their own time and way, including by posting comments via the internet.

Amazing, really, when you think about it. And yet, Jesus did the same in his day. In the Gospel according to St Mark, Jesus asked to be let out on the water in a little boat so that he could be heard by a much larger crowd on the shore. There were no electrical amplifiers or loud speakers in those days. By preaching from a boat, he used the best social communication tool available to him at the time to address a wider audience, and his voice resounded on the water.

Today, in the modern world of technology priests and bishops are called to do the same, in spreading Christ's Gospel message effectively. Priests and bishops who regularly post their Sunday homily on the internet are not only fulfilling their prophetic office of preaching and teaching by using the best social communication tools available to them, but are faithfully carrying out their Lord's command to "put out into the deep": *Duc in altum* (Lk 5:4).

But to be effective, a homily has to be good, true, and faithful to the Church's teachings. This is why a great deal of prayer, reflection and careful preparation has to go into a priest's homily. It is not a duty to be taken lightly.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

House-Cleaning

Reading the articles on Father Speekman (ITD Jan 10, p.2,3) has caused me to reflect on our Church around the world.

It is a shame that our Church has fallen under political correctness and politics. The on-goings concerning Father Speekman should be squashed by the hierarchy. This is an obvious abuse of authority and position. Also, the failure to do something concerning the men who embrace this atrocity should also be punished. Our Church is suffering from lack of credibility not the lack of sex or marriage by priests. Our dear Pope needs to clean house of ungodly priests/brothers and sisters/nuns. If I recall correctly, Father Speekman is a Roman Catholic not just a Catholic.

Mary Dorris, Gulfport, Mississippi, USA

Two Churches, One Parish

- Good Friday implications

Answered by Father Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy at the Regina Apostolorum university

Q: “Can a deacon officiate as the only minister at the solemn Commemoration of the Passion on Good Friday afternoon? In our parish, we now have two churches but with only one priest. Our priest celebrates the solemn liturgy in one church at 3pm, whilst our deacon celebrates the same solemn liturgy simultaneously in the other church. (Both churches enjoy a full congregation for this particular service.) The deacon even wears his red dalmatic Mass vestments. I have been told that the solemn liturgy on Good Friday can only be celebrated by a priest. Please let me know which is correct.”

- A reader from Birmingham, England

A: Effectively, this rite is reserved to the priest, although not necessarily the same priest.

Moreover, since the Mass of the Lord’s Supper and the Celebration of the Passion are intimately connected, the norms are explicit that both must be celebrated in the same church.

It is forbidden to reserve or transfer the Blessed Sacrament to another church for the purpose of adoration or distribution of holy Communion.

Consequently for there to be two celebrations of the Passion, there would necessarily have to be two separate Masses of the Lord’s Supper, one in each church. This is certainly allowable, but the priest would also have to celebrate two rites of the Passion, perhaps one at 3pm and the other at 6.

www.zenit.org 28-04-2009

Human Beings or Persons

The question as to when the physical dimension of a human *being* begins via sexual reproduction is a scientific one which should be answered exclusively by scientists who are human embryologists. Frequently, however, it is philosophers, philosophisers, bioethicists, theologians, politicians, X-ray technicians, actors and letter writers who offer their tuppence worth even though their knowledge of embryology is absolutely zilch! They are able to offer only opinions and snippets of hearsay, rather than any facts provided by the science of embryology.

The issue is not when human *life* begins, but rather when the life of a human *being* – every human *being* – begins. A human kidney, skin cell, or oocyte (a female germ cell) all possess human *life*, but obviously they are not human beings but *parts* of a human being. Those who claim the product of fertilisation is simply a “blob”, a “bunch of cells”, or a “piece of a mother’s tissues”, simply ignore the fact that the human embryonic organism formed at fertilisation is a whole human being that has a mixture of both the father’s and the mother’s chromosomes.

The question as to when a human *person* begins is not a scientific but a philosophical one. However, scientific myths cause much confusion whenever discussions concerning ‘personhood’ crop up. Some pundits insist on defining ‘personhood’ in terms of being able to exercise rational attributes such as thinking, willing, choosing, having self-consciousness, and being able to interact with one’s environment. Others ‘grant’ personhood only to those who can actively exercise sentience, thus are able to experience pain, pleasure and so on.

Unfortunately for those who define personhood on those grounds, the scientific fact is that the brain, which they feel must be able to be the physiological support for both rational attributes and sentience, is *not completely developed* until young adulthood.

Henk Verhoeven, Beacon Hill NSW

Your Prayers Please

Please pray for Fr Jeff Kleynjans, young priest of the Diocese of Sale, who has recently resigned from his positions citing the need to give time to personal issues. Fr Jeff was administrator of Morwell Catholic Parish and Vocations Director for the diocese. He recently reinstated a weekly 24-hour period of Eucharistic adoration in Morwell Parish. Let’s offer a Holy Hour each week for his vocation, and the vocations of all our priests, in this Year for Priests. God bless them and strengthen them all.

- Ed.

Solid, Certain

From a reflection by Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the Pontifical Household

St Paul says that God loves the one who gives with joy, and Mary said her “yes” to God with joy.

The verb with which Mary expresses her consent, and which is translated as “fiat” or as “let it be done.” In the original Greek it appears in the optative mood (“genoito”), which is used to express desire and even joyful impatience that a certain thing should happen. It is as if the Virgin said: “I also want, with all my being, what God wants; may what he wishes be fulfilled soon.” In truth, as St Augustine said, before conceiving him in her body, she conceived him in her heart.

However, Mary did not actually say “fiat” as she didn’t speak Latin, and she didn’t even say “genoito,” which is a Greek word. What did she say then? What is the word, which in the language spoken by Mary, corresponds most closely to this expression?

When a Jew wished to say to God, “yes, so be it,” he said “amen!” If we try to go back to the exact word that came from Mary’s lips, we arrive precisely at the word “amen.” Those Psalms that in the Latin Vulgate ended with the expression: “fiat, fiat”, in the Greek text of LXX, end with “genoito, genoito” and in the original Hebrew known by Mary with “amen, amen.”

Amen is a Hebrew word, the root of which means to be solid, to be certain; it was used in the liturgy as a response of faith to the Word of God. With “amen” one recognizes what has been said as firm, stable, valid and binding. Its exact translation, when it is a response to the Word of God, is this: “So it is, and so be it.”

It indicates faith and obedience at the same time; it recognizes that what God says is true and one submits to it. It is to say “yes” to God.

www.zenit.org 19-12-2009

Sentimentalism

Pope Benedict XVI, in his address to the Tribunal of the Roman Rota, 29-01-2010

Charity without justice is not charity, but only a falsification, because charity itself requires that objectivity typical of justice, which must not be confused with inhuman coldness.

Whoever loves others with charity is above all just to them. Not only is justice not foreign to charity, not only is it not an alternative or parallel way to charity: Justice is ‘inseparable from charity,’ intrinsic to it.

Without truth, charity ends up in sentimentalism.

www.zenit.org 29-01-2010

Begin Your Hour with Love

St Peter Julian Eymard, The Real Presence

Begin every one of your adoration hours with an act of love; bringing your soul under the influence of God will be a delight. If you begin with yourself, you will stop halfway; or if you begin with any virtue other than love, you are taking the wrong road. ... The only door to the heart is love.

... Speak to Love of itself; speak to Jesus of His Heavenly Father Whom He loves so much; speak to Him of the task He has undertaken for His Father’s glory, and you will gladden His Heart, and He will love you all the more. Speak to Jesus of His love for all men; that will make His Heart and yours expand with happiness and joy. Speak to Jesus of His Blessed Mother whom He loved so much, and you will make Him experience anew the happiness of a good son. Speak to Him of His Saints in order to glorify His grace in them.

The real secret of love is, therefore, to forget oneself like Saint John Baptist in order to exalt and glorify the Lord Jesus. True love looks not at what it gives but at what its Beloved deserves.

Jesus will thus be pleased with you and will speak to you of yourself. He will tell you His love for you, and your heart will open under the rays of this Sun just as a flower, dampened and chilled by the night air, opens under the rays of the sun. His gentle voice will penetrate your soul just as fire eats into combustible material. With the Spouse in the Canticle of Canticles you will say: “My soul melted with bliss when my Beloved spoke.” Then, you will listen to Him in silence, or rather in love’s most gentle and powerful action: you will become one with Him.

For what stands in strongest opposition to the growth of the grace of love in us if not that we are no sooner at the feet of our good Master than we straightway speak to Him of ourselves, of our sins, of our defects, and of our spiritual wretchedness? In other words, we tire our mind with the sight of our misery, we sadden our heart with the thought of our ingratitude and unfaithfulness. Sadness gives rise to distress, and distress to discouragement; and it is only after much humiliation, affliction, and suffering that we finally get out of this maze and recover our freedom before God.

Do not therefore go about it that way any more. But since the first movement of the soul ordinarily determines what the whole action will be, direct this first movement to God and say to Him: “O my good Jesus, how happy and pleased I am to come to see Thee, to spend this hour with Thee and tell Thee my love! How kind of Thee to have invited me! How lovable Thou art to love such a poor creature as I am! Oh! yes, I really want to love Thee!”

Love has then opened the door to the Heart of Jesus; go in, love, and adore.

Becoming Like That Tree

Homily by Fr John Speekman for the 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C: Jeremiah 17:5-8; 1 Corinthians 15:12.16-20

Taken from: homiliesfromaustralia.blogspot.com

Do you ever stop to think that, roughly speaking, nine out of ten Catholics in Australia no longer come to Mass? That's a lot of people! It means that there should be another nine people sitting where you are sitting.

There are many reasons for their absence – the analysts of such things have a lot to say – materialism, individualism, secularism, relativism, and so on and so on. Then there are the scandals, terrible scandals. Confusion and anger are everywhere; people are 'fed up' say the experts.

Which leaves us with a question, a rather interesting question: *Why are you still here? Why am I still here?*

What is it that keeps us coming to Church every Sunday? Why are we still hopeful and faithful? Why is it that the terrible spiritual drought which is sweeping the Western world has overlooked us? Are we the *silly* ten percent? Are we blind to the signs of the times? Have we been left behind while the modern world journeys on to a glorious future?

Jeremiah offers us a number of images today but one stands out amongst the others – the image of a tree planted by a running stream. Actually, it's not a tree, it's a man, or if you prefer, a woman. This tree is an image of a true disciple. Although there is drought and devastation all around, it stands quietly by the waterside, its foliage green, its branches full of fruit. The secret of its vigour lies hidden from those who *have no eyes for what is good*.

It thrusts its roots to the stream.

'So how do we get to be like that tree?' I hear you ask. 'Where is that water? Where is that sunny river bank where I can plant myself and grow to mature holiness? I want to be a real disciple, I want to be like Jesus!'

The answer is as simple as it is challenging – *the Church*.

The Church is the sheepfold protected by the Shepherd, it is the Bride beloved of the Bridegroom, it is the New Israel formed on the Cross, it is People of God empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Church is the river of running water beside which we are planted. Jesus *saves* us in the Church.

For many and varied reasons, as well as just ignorance, it seems the ninety percent who should be present here today no longer really believe that the Church is necessary and have turned their backs on it. But like it or not, when we turn our backs on the Church we turn our backs on Christ, and on the one who sent him.

This truth would cause us all to despair if it were not for another very consoling truth: *Christ never turns his back on us*. There is always room for hope, but no room at all for complacency.

So here's some free advice for *wannabe* healthy trees:

Believe what the Church believes and only what the Church believes. Don't add; don't subtract. When we do this we 'unplant' ourselves; we pull ourselves up by the roots and can no longer drink the cool water of Christ's truth.

Get to know your faith. Getting to know your faith is equivalent to 'thrusting your roots to the stream'. If you don't know your faith, if you can't explain it to others, you haven't yet 'thrust your roots' down and are at grave risk when the drought comes.

Be scrupulously faithful to Sunday Mass. Don't let anything except the most major circumstances keep you from your Sunday Mass. To miss Mass for no good reason is not only to dig up the tree but to cut it into pieces.

Make a habit of regular Confession to the priest. So many church-going Catholics today excuse themselves from face to face Confession of their mortal sins by saying 'it's not necessary, we just have to make an act of contrition.' There is only one problem with this – it's not Church teaching – it's just an opinion without any power to save.

Develop a real prayer life. Prayer is a major exercise in pushing our roots down into the rich soil of God's love and drawing from him the grace to live good lives.

Develop a sense of 'being Catholic'. Our Catholic faith is gift. It is not an insult to a Protestant or a Hindu or a Moslem if we say 'I am a Catholic and I'm proud of it'. We belong to Christ – in the Catholic Church – and we seek to draw into the sheepfold those who are searching for him.

The modern world does not make it easy today to be serious Christians. There are strong, unremitting forces at work drawing us away from faith and any sort of committed spiritual life. We are, in a sense, 'under attack'.

So my final exhortation would be that parents take seriously their role as *the first teachers of the faith to their children*. The day will come when the parents will no longer be around. How reassuring it will be for them to know that their children will *feel no alarm* when the heat comes and have *no worries in a year of drought!*

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 | 6pm Thursday – 6pm Friday (6pm Mass) [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 Friday 7pm – 8pm |

Received as Gift

Caritas in Veritate, n.52

“Truth, and the love which it reveals, cannot be produced: they can only be received as a gift. Their ultimate source is not, and cannot be, mankind, but only God, who is himself Truth and Love.”

Fidelity Sealed

Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus address, 22-11-2009

Whom do I want to follow? God or the evil one? The truth or the lie?

Choosing Christ does not guarantee success according to the criteria of the world, but it assures that peace and that joy that he alone can give.

This is shown in every age by the experience of many men and women who, in the name of Christ, in the name of truth and justice, knew how to oppose themselves to the enticements of earthly power with its different disguises, to the point of sealing this fidelity of theirs with martyrdom.

www.zenit.org 22-11-2009

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

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- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
- We rely on donations (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 about 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, 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.