

Into the Deep

Issue 208

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

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No Retreat in the Face of Trials

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 30-08-2020

Addressing everyone then, Jesus adds: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt 16:24). In this way He indicates the way of the true disciple, showing two attitudes.

The first is 'to renounce oneself', which does not mean a superficial change, but a conversion, a reversal of mentality and of values.

The other attitude is that of taking up one's own cross. It is not just a matter of patiently enduring daily tribulations, but of bearing with faith and responsibility that part of toil, and that part of suffering that the struggle against evil entails. The life of Christians is always a struggle. The Bible says that the life of Christians is a military undertaking: fighting against the evil spirit, fighting against Evil. Thus, the task of "taking up the cross" becomes participating with Christ in the salvation of the world.

Considering this, we allow the cross hanging on the wall at home or that little one that we wear around our neck, to be a sign of our wish to be united with Christ in lovingly serving our brothers and sisters, especially the littlest and most fragile. The cross is the holy sign of God's Love, it is a sign of Jesus' Sacrifice, and is not to be reduced to a superstitious object or an ornamental necklace. Each time we fix our gaze on the image of Christ crucified, let us contemplate that He, as the true Servant of the Lord, has accomplished His mission, giving life, spilling His blood for the pardoning of sins.

And let us not allow ourselves to be drawn to the other side, by the temptation of the Evil One. As a result, if we want to be his disciples, we are called to imitate him, expending our life unreservedly out of love of God and neighbour.

May the Virgin Mary, united to her Son unto Calvary, help us not to retreat in the face of the trials and suffering that witnessing to the Gospel entails.

Zenit.org 30-08-2020

Take, Lord, Receive

"Take, O Lord, all my liberty; receive my memory, my understanding, and my whole will. All that I am and all that I have come to me from Thy bounty; I give it all back to Thee, and surrender it all to the guidance of thy holy Will. Give my Thy Love and Thy Grace; with these, I am rich enough and ask for nothing more."

Saint Ignatius of Loyola

"Christianity is not moralism, but rather a gift of the love of God."

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Homily, 14-11-2004

"The business of this life

should not preoccupy us with its anxiety and pride, so that we no longer strive with all the love of our heart to be like our Redeemer and to follow His example." - **St. Leo the Great**

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

Make Him Visible

Pope Benedict XVI, to Canadian bishops, 08-11-2006

[T]he fundamental task of the evangelization of culture is the challenge to make God visible in the human face of Jesus. In helping individuals to recognize and experience the love of Christ, you will awaken in them the desire to dwell in the house of the Lord, embracing the life of the Church. This is our mission. It expresses our ecclesial nature and ensures that every initiative of evangelization concurrently strengthens Christian identity. In this regard, we must acknowledge that any reduction of the core message of Jesus, that is, the 'Kingdom of God', to indefinite talk of 'kingdom values' weakens Christian identity and debilitates the Church's contribution to the regeneration of society. When believing is replaced by 'doing' and witness by talk of 'issues', there is an urgent need to recapture the profound joy and awe of the first disciples whose hearts, in the Lord's presence, "burned within them" impelling them to "tell their story".

w2.vatican.va

Thank You!

Please find enclosed a cheque as a small donation towards the costs of producing the excellent magazine, Into the Deep. May God bless you richly in the work you do for Him. – **Patricia Craven, Lugarno, New South Wales**

Thanks also to a very generous donor from New South Wales who wishes to remain anonymous, but says, "It's my contribution towards the spread of truth and goodness in the world."

Ed.

Singapore Mass

If you're looking for a midday Sunday Mass to follow live online, consider the Archdiocese of Singapore. Archbishop William Goh celebrates Sunday Mass (in English) at 12 noon Australian time. Mass is said simply and reverently, hymns are traditional and lovely, all readings and responses are on-screen, and the Archbishop preaches very well indeed! He speaks simply but powerfully, and makes us challenge ourselves to be better at evangelising. Highly recommended. Website is Catholic.sg and live-streamed Masses are on their YouTube channel.

Ed.

Authority

As I was walking in town to get an "essential haircut" I took notice of the almost vacant street, and the few people including myself wearing a mask. How robotic have we become. For a split second I felt humiliated and embarrassed that one voice from Government has to say jump and we respond, how high!

Don't get me wrong I know why we have to distance, mask up, etc, so to stop the spread of Covid19. If we don't there are hefty fines we can be issued with. So, you're probably wondering what I'm getting at. The authoritarian government in Victoria has closed our churches, businesses are suffering, we cannot visit family, and some sadly cannot visit loved ones who are dying (also due to border closures), or go to funerals of loved ones. As unnecessary as these draconian laws are, the church and 99% of the people are adhering to them. Our freedoms and way of life have been taken away.

There is one Authority who rules over all authority and that is God. He has laid down the law, but how many are listening? Obeying? He even sent His own Son Jesus to teach and show His people how to live, pray, sacrifice, and most of all love. Jesus suffered and died for us.

How much more should we be obedient to God's authority, hence the penalty we face if we don't!

Josie Vitale, Mowell, Victoria

Imagine

Pope Francis, Homily, 04-11-2019

...Saint Ignatius suggests that before making any important decision, we should imagine ourselves standing before God at the end of time. That is the final and inevitable moment, one that all of us will have to face. Every life decision, viewed from that perspective, will be well directed, since it is closer to the resurrection, which is the meaning and purpose of life. As the departure is calculated by the goal, as the planting is judged by the harvest, so life is best judged by starting from its end and purpose. Saint Ignatius writes: "Let me consider myself as standing in the presence of my judge on the last day, and reflect what decision on the present matter I would then wish to have made; I will choose now the rule of life that I would then wish to have observed" (*Spiritual Exercises*, 187).

The Mystery of Communion

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 14-06-2020

In the second reading of today's liturgy, Saint Paul describes the Eucharistic celebration (see 1 Cor 10:16-17). He highlights two effects of the shared chalice and the broken bread: the mystical effect and the communal effect. First, the Apostle states: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?". These words express the mystical, or let us say, spiritual effect of the Eucharist: it relates to the union with Christ, who in the bread and the wine offers Himself for the salvation of all. Jesus is present in the sacrament of the Eucharist to be our nourishment, to be assimilated, and to become in us that renewing force that gives once again the energy and the desire to set out again after every pause or after every fall. But this requires our assent, our willingness to let ourselves be transformed – our way of thinking and acting. Otherwise, the Eucharistic celebrations in which we participate are reduced to empty and formal rites. And many times, someone goes to Mass because they have to go as if it is a social event, respectful but social. But the mystery is something else. It is Jesus who is present, who comes to nourish us.

The second effect is the communal one and is expressed by Saint Paul in these words: "Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body". It is the mutual communion of those who participate in the Eucharist, to the point of becoming one body together, in the same way, that one loaf is broken and distributed. We are a community, nourished by the body and blood of Christ. Communion with the body of Christ is an effective sign of unity, of communion, of sharing. One cannot participate in the Eucharist without committing oneself to mutual fraternity – that it be sincere. But the Lord knows well that our human strength alone is not enough for this. On the contrary, He knows that there will always be the temptation of rivalry, envy, prejudice, division ... among His disciples. We are all aware of all these things. For this reason, too He left us the Sacrament of His real, tangible and permanent Presence, so that, remaining united to Him, we may always receive the gift of fraternal love. "Remain in my love" (Jn 15:9), Jesus said. And it is possible thanks to the Eucharist. Remain in friendship, in love.

This dual fruit of the Eucharist: first, union with Christ and second, communion between those who are nourished by Him, generates and continually renews the Christian community. It is the Church that makes the Eucharist, but it is more fundamental that the Eucharist makes the Church, and allows her to be her mission, even before she accomplishes it. This is the mystery of communion, of the Eucharist: to receive Jesus so He might transform us from within and to receive Jesus so that in Him we might be united, not divided.

Zenit.org 14-06-2020

U.S. Bishops Applaud Trump Administration for Ethical Scrutiny of Fetal Tissue Research

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 20-08-2020

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, applauded the Trump Administration following the release of the National Institutes of Health Human Fetal Tissue Research Ethics Advisory Board report in which the Board recommended withholding federal funding from 13 out of 14 research proposals involving the use of fetal tissue.

"We applaud the Administration for moving NIH in a direction that shows greater consideration for medical ethics in research, and greater respect for innocent human life. It is neither ethical nor necessary to further violate the bodies of aborted babies by commodifying them for use in medical research. The victims of abortion deserve the same respect as every other human person. We are grateful that the Administration is following through on its commitment to end federal funding of research using aborted fetal tissue."

usccb.org

Just Getting Older (8)

– Trust in His Love

Just looking out of the window, I realise that today mankind seems to have no time; time to be in awe of what they see. Is it that they have no time because they have no love? I thought that love and time go together.

Thinking about it, I am overjoyed to realise that I have God as my Father, and I want to be united to him today. I want him to bless this day for me and let me taste his goodness and affection. He makes me stand firm and gives me vitality.

I love God with all my heart. I ask him today to give me his blessing while I work, and also while I have a rest and enjoy life. I ask him to help me when the burden is heavy and grinds me to a halt. I ask him to protect me from all disaster, and let me become a more devout, more complete and better person.

God has given me years in which I could fulfil my life's ambition. I ask him now to help me and supply me with his wisdom and patience so that I don't become self-centred; to help me rather show a love with all my heart towards the people I meet and come after me. I ask to be happy with the task God has given me that I have been able to complete. Although much of this has been forgotten, the right intentions were always there. Even those little treasures God gave me to hold for just a short time showed that he loves me.

And although what God gave me is now in the past, the Lord is still the same, from his goodness he gave, and from his goodness he takes away. Even now, I commit myself to the Lord with all that I can do. I completely trust in his love.

Bert van Galen, Mowbray, Tasmania

Prayer: Always Possible

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2743 *It is always possible to pray.* The time of the Christian is that of the risen Christ who is with us always, no matter what tempests may arise. Our time is in the hands of God:

It is possible to offer fervent prayer even while walking in public or strolling alone, or seated in your shop, ...while buying or selling, ...or even while cooking. - **St John Chrysostom**

Like A Child Running To Its Parents

Pope Francis, to the Franciscan Minim Sisters of the Sacred Heart, 08-08-2020

The Lord has given you life; He has generated you to the faith and has called you to Himself in a consecrated life, attracting you to His Heart. This belonging is manifested in a particular way in *prayer*. Our whole life is called, with the grace of the Spirit, to become *prayer*. Therefore we must allow the Lord to remain united to us always. And thus He transforms us, day after day, rendering our heart ever more like His.

There are moments in the day that foster this union with God: the Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, Adoration, meditation on the Word, the Rosary, spiritual reading. May your going to the Lord be full of joy, the joy of the child that runs to its parents to embrace and kiss them. This joy attracts and is contagious! Sometimes it seems there are a thousand things more necessary to do, or we feel the effort to be with Jesus. However, as the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus invites us to stay there, close to Him. Let us allow the Lord to remain united to us!

Zenit.org 10-08-2020

Intellectual Charity

Pope Benedict XVI, to Canadian Bishops, 08-11-2006

A particularly insidious obstacle to education today ...is the marked presence in society of that relativism which, recognizing nothing as definitive, leaves as the ultimate criterion only the self with its desires.

Within such a relativistic horizon an eclipse of the sublime goals of life occurs with a lowering of the standards of excellence, a timidity before the category of the good, and a relentless but senseless pursuit of novelty parading as the realization of freedom.

Such detrimental trends point to the particular urgency of the apostolate of 'intellectual charity' which upholds the essential unity of knowledge, guides the young towards the sublime satisfaction of exercising their freedom in relation to truth, and articulates the relationship between faith and all aspects of family and civic life.

w2.vatican.va

Lord, Save Me!

Pope Francis, Angelus Address 09-08-2020

This Sunday's Gospel passage (cf. Mt 14:22-33) speaks of Jesus walking on the water of the stormy lake. ... Peter gets out of the boat and takes a few steps; then the wind and waves frighten him and he begins to sink. "Lord, save me", he cries, and Jesus grasps him by the hand and says to him: "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

This narrative is a call to abandon ourselves trustingly to God in every moment of our life, especially in moments of trial and turmoil. When we have strong feelings of doubt and fear and we seem to be sinking, we must not be ashamed to cry out, like Peter: "Lord, save me." It is a beautiful prayer!

And the gesture of Jesus, who immediately reaches out his hand and grasps that of his friend, should be contemplated at length: this is Jesus; he is the hand of the Father who never abandons us; the strong and faithful hand of the Father, who always and only wants what is good for us. God is not the hurricane, the fire, the earthquake – as the narrative about the Prophet Elijah also recalls today; God is the light breeze that never imposes itself but asks to be heard (cf. 1 Kings 19:11-13).

Having faith means, amid the storm, keeping your heart turned to God, to his love, to his Fatherly tenderness. Jesus wanted to teach this to Peter and the disciples, and also to us today. He is well aware that our faith is lacking and that our journey can be troubled, hindered by adverse forces. But he is the Risen One, the Lord who went through death in order to lead us to safety. Even before we begin to seek him, he is present beside us. And in lifting us back up after our falls, he helps us grow in faith.

The boat at the mercy of the storm is the image of the Church, which in every age encounters contrary winds, at times very harsh trials: let us think of certain long and persistent persecutions of the last century. In those situations, she may have the temptation to think that God has abandoned her. But in reality, it is precisely in those moments that the witness of faith, love and hope shines the most. It is the presence of the Risen Christ in his Church that gives the grace of witness unto martyrdom, from which sprout new Christians and fruits of reconciliation and peace for the entire world.

May the intercession of Mary Most Holy help us to persevere in faith and fraternal love when the darkness and storms of life set our trust in God into crisis.

Zenit.org 09-08-2020

Prayer: A Vital Necessity

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2744 *Prayer is a vital necessity.* Proof from the contrary is no less convincing: if we do not allow the Spirit to lead us, we fall back into the slavery of sin. How can the Holy Spirit be our life if our heart is far from him?

Nothing is equal to prayer; for what is impossible it makes possible, what is difficult, easy. ... For it is impossible, utterly impossible, for the man who prays eagerly and invokes God ceaselessly ever to sin.

- St John Chrysostom

Those who pray are certainly saved; those who do not pray are certainly damned.

- St Alphonsus Liguori

Prayer: Inseparable from Christian Life

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2745 Prayer and *Christian life* are *inseparable*, for they concern the same love and the same renunciation, proceeding from love; the same filial and loving conformity with the Father's plan of love; the same transforming union in the Holy Spirit who conforms us more and more to Christ Jesus; the same love for all men, the love with which Jesus has loved us. "Whatever you ask the Father in my name, he [will] give it to you. This I command you, to love one another."

He "prays without ceasing" who unites prayer to works and good works to prayer. Only in this way can we consider as realizable the principle of praying without ceasing. - **Origen**

It's Not My Church

I recently read an article by Fr Dwight Longenecker titled *The Patchwork Church* (dwrightlongenecker.com 12-05-2020). In it he shared his insights as to why he loves the Church.

He reflected that there were people in the church who drive him crazy, people he just doesn't connect with, and people around the world from different cultures and customs that he has little in common with; he admitted there is corruption and hypocrisy, stupidity and incompetence, conflict and misunderstanding. But he found himself thanking God for this Catholic Church he loves so much. Why? Because as he says, "in all the mess I'm reminded that I'm part of the mess, and this whole universal thing we call the Catholic Church is bigger than me. It's not my church. It's Christ's church. He's in charge not me. If the church is not always to my liking maybe it's because I should change."

Beautifully said! Indeed, the Church is not ours. It is Christ's Church! He is her one foundation and cornerstone. He is the living Head of her mystical body.

Fr Longenecker is not talking here about the protestant historical Jesus, as a person of the past or some ethereal and spiritualized Jesus of Sola Scriptura. Nor is he speaking of a Jesus whose words and actions belong to Vatican I and II. No, he is talking about the reality of the living and true Jesus Christ, who is present in his Church in the sublime sacrament of the Eucharist. The Paschal Christ who is alive now, and speaks and lives for us now, and who as the living Head of the Church shows us how to live, love and die in this fallen and falling world today. The Christ who is our living bread, who through his very flesh and blood, feeds, forgives, heals, nourishes, and offers grace, life and truth to God's great family, and the entire world. The Jesus Christ who in the Gospel according to John (6:54) says: "Truly, truly I say to you: Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you cannot have (my) life in you." The Christ who in the Gospel according to Matthew (28:19) says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." These are two divine mandates which Christ communicates and reveals to the universal Church every day. They are not optional or suggestions!

As the Sacrament of Salvation, the Church exists to evangelize, that is, to engage and convert the whole of the fallen world, and through Baptism lead them to the Liturgy so that all of humanity may fully participate in the very life of the Trinity through prayer and the Sacraments.

I have always been bemused by Catholics who seem to think that they have the authority and power to shape and reshape the Church that existed from all eternity, according to their own image, likeness and plans. Throughout the history of mankind, there has been this temptation of some Catholics (the hierarchy no less) to treat the Church like some man-made culturally relevant institution that is incidental to God's plan of salvation for all nations.

In this country I've seen bishops discard the divine plan and carry out their own pastoral plans instead. I've read about hierarchy who, under the guise of ecumenism and inspired by their own whims and wishes, make alliances and covenants with Protestant sects and portray it as the primary mission of the Church. They seem to forget that salvation comes from God alone, and that this side of heaven, it is only to be found in his One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. There is no Plan B.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

Catholics in Political Life

Pope Benedict XVI, to Canadian Bishops, 08-11-2006

False dichotomies are not unknown within the Christian community itself. They are particularly damaging when Christian civic leaders sacrifice the unity of faith and sanction the disintegration of reason and the principles of natural ethics, by yielding to ephemeral social trends and the spurious demands of opinion polls. Democracy succeeds only to the extent that it is based on truth and a correct understanding of the human person. Catholic involvement in political life cannot compromise on this principle; otherwise Christian witness to the splendour of truth in the public sphere would be silenced and an autonomy from morality proclaimed. In your discussions with politicians and civic leaders I encourage you to demonstrate that our Christian faith, far from being an impediment to dialogue, is a bridge, precisely because it brings together reason and culture.

Baptism Formula

Zenit.org 06-08-2020

It is only Christ who baptizes...

Baptism formulas must be legitimate and cannot be arbitrary...

These are the keys of the responses published Aug. 6, 2020, by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) entitled 'Responses to questions proposed on the validity of Baptism conferred with the formula "We baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."'

Stressing that Christ alone baptizes, not the community, the CDF said that those who have been baptized with the modified formula "We baptize you..." will have to be baptized again according to the traditional formula "I baptize you..." ...

The doctrinal note clarifies that it is Christ himself who baptizes, and not the community, and given this, criticizes and calls invalid any arbitrary modifications to the formula.

Excerpts from the "DOCTRINAL NOTE on the modification of the sacramental formula of Baptism" by the CDF:

Recently there have been celebrations of the Sacrament of Baptism administered with the words: "In the name of the father and of the mother, of the godfather and of the godmother, of the grandparents, of the family members, of the friends, in the name of the community we baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Apparently, the deliberate modification of the sacramental formula was introduced to emphasize the communitarian significance of Baptism, in order to express the participation of the family and of those present, and to avoid the idea of the concentration of a sacred power in the priest to the detriment of the parents and the community that the formula in the *Rituale Romano* might seem to imply. With debatable pastoral motives, here resurfaces the ancient temptation to substitute for the formula handed down by Tradition other texts judged more suitable. ...

The Second Vatican Council states that: "when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes". ...

When celebrating a Sacrament, the Church in fact functions as the Body that acts inseparably from its Head, since it is Christ the Head who acts in the ecclesial Body generated by him in the Paschal mystery. ...

Therefore, in the specific case of the Sacrament of Baptism, not only does the minister not have the authority to modify the sacramental formula to his own liking ... but neither can he even declare that he is acting on behalf of the parents, godparents, relatives or friends, nor in the name of the assembly gathered for the celebration ... When the minister says "I baptize you..." he does not speak as a functionary who carries out a role entrusted to him, but he enacts *ministerially* the sign-presence of Christ...

Moreover, to modify the sacramental formula implies a lack of an understanding of the very nature of the ecclesial ministry that is always at the service of God and his people and not the exercise of a power that goes so far as to manipulate what has been entrusted to the Church in an act that pertains to the Tradition. Therefore, in every minister of Baptism, there must not only be a deeply rooted knowledge of the obligation to act in ecclesial communion, but also the same conviction that Saint Augustine attributes to the Precursor, which "was to be a certain peculiarity in Christ, such that, although many ministers, be they righteous or unrighteous, should baptize, the virtue of Baptism would be attributed to Him alone on whom the dove descended, and of whom it was said: 'It is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit' (Jn 1:33)". Therefore, Augustine comments: "Peter may baptize, but this is He that baptizes; Paul may baptize, yet this is He that baptizes; Judas may baptize, still this is He that baptizes."

"Idleness begets a life of discontent. It develops self-love, which is the cause of all our miseries and renders us unworthy to receive the favours of divine love." - **St Ignatius of Loyola**

"We do not pray that we may have good things; we pray rather that we may be good."

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

Thoughts on Democracy

Cardinal George Pell, Sydney Morning Herald 12-11-2004, from his address to the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty (submitted by a reader as being of interest to other ITD readers – Ed.)

Democracy is never unqualified. We are used to speaking of "liberal democracy", which as currently understood is a synonym for "secular democracy". In Europe there are parties advocating "Christian democracy". Lately there has been interest in the possibility of "Islamic democracy". These descriptors do not simply refer to how democracy might be constituted, but to the moral vision democracy is intended to serve.

This is especially true in the case of secular democracy, which some insist is intended to serve no moral vision at all. But as Pope John Paul argues: "The value of democracy stands or falls with the values which it embodies and promotes." Democracy is not a good in itself. Its value is instrumental and depends on the vision it serves. ...

But think for a moment what it means to say that there can be no other form of democracy than secular democracy. Does democracy need a burgeoning billion-dollar pornography industry to be truly democratic? Does it need an abortion rate in the tens of millions? Does it need high levels of marriage breakdown, with the growing rates of family dysfunction that come with them? Does democracy need legalised euthanasia, extending to children under the age of 12? Does democracy need assisted reproductive technology (such as IVF) and embryonic stem cell research? Does democracy really need these things? What would democracy look like if you took some of these things out of the picture? Would it cease to be democracy? Or would it actually become more democratic?

These are the things by which secular democracy defines itself and stakes its ground against other possibilities. The alarm with which many treat people in public life who are opposed to these things often implies they are a danger to democracy. This overreaction is a bluff, an attempt to silence opposition, almost suggesting that these practices are essential to democracy.

If we think about the answers to the questions above we begin to have an inkling about what a form of democracy other than secular democracy might look like, an alternative I call "democratic personalism". It means nothing more than democracy founded on the transcendent dignity of the human.

Transcendence directs us to our dependence on others and our dependence on God. And dependence is how we know the reality of transcendence. There is nothing undemocratic about bringing this truth into our reflections about our political arrangements. Placing democracy on this basis does not mean theocracy. ... Democratic personalism does not mean seizing power to pursue a project of world transformation, but broadening the imagination of democratic culture so that it can rediscover hope, and re-establish freedom in truth and the common good. ...

smh.com.au 12-11-2004

Religion in the Public Square

Pope Benedict XVI, Westminster Hall, 17-09-2010

Religion, in other words, is not a problem for legislators to solve, but a vital contributor to the national conversation. In this light, I cannot but voice my concern at the increasing marginalization of religion, particularly of Christianity, that is taking place in some quarters, even in nations which place a great emphasis on tolerance. There are those who would advocate that the voice of religion be silenced, or at least relegated to the purely private sphere. There are those who argue that the public celebration of festivals such as Christmas should be discouraged, in the questionable belief that it might somehow offend those of other religions or none. And there are those who argue – paradoxically with the intention of eliminating discrimination – that Christians in public roles should be required at times to act against their conscience. These are worrying signs of a failure to appreciate not only the rights of believers to freedom of conscience and freedom of religion, but also the legitimate role of religion in the public square. I would invite all of you, therefore, within your respective spheres of influence, to seek ways of promoting and encouraging dialogue between faith and reason at every level of national life.

Be Holy. Be Perfect. But How?

Pope Francis, Homily during a parish visit in Rome, 19-02-2017

"Be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev 19:2). God the Father says this to us. And that Word of Jesus: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt 5:48) – the same thing. This is the program of life. Be holy, for He is holy; be perfect, for He is perfect.

And you can ask me: But, Father, what is the way to holiness, what is the path to become saints?" ...

We all have enemies; we all know that he or she speaks badly of me; we all know it. ... And we begin a little. "But I know he's calumniated me, he has said awful things about me." I suggest to you: take a minute, turn to God the Father: "He or she is your child, she is your daughter: change her heart. Bless him, bless her." This is called praying for those who don't love you, for enemies. It can be done with simplicity. Perhaps rancour remains; perhaps rancour remains in us, but we are making the effort to go on the path of this God who is so good, merciful, holy and perfect; who has the sun rise on the evil and on the good: He is for all, He is good to all. We must be good to all, and we must pray for those who aren't good – for all.

Do we pray for those who kill children in war? It's difficult, it's very far away, but we must learn to do so, so that they convert. Do we pray for those persons who are closest to us and hate us or do us harm? "Ah, Father, it's difficult. I would like to wring his neck!" – Pray, pray so that the Lord changes their life.

Prayer is an antidote against hatred, against wars, these wars that begin at home, that begin in the neighbourhood, that begin in families. Think only of the wars in families over inheritance: how many families are destroyed, hate one another over inheritance. Pray so that there is peace. And if I know that someone wishes me evil, doesn't love me, I must pray especially for him. Prayer is powerful, prayer overcomes evil; prayer brings peace. ...

I ask you, please, to have this experience: a prayer every day. "Oh, he doesn't love me, but Lord, I ask you..." One a day, thus one overcomes, thus we'll go on this path of holiness and of perfection.

[Translation by Zenit] Zenit.org 20-02-2017

In the Lord, We Have Become Close

Pope Benedict XVI, Easter Vigil homily 2008

This is the reality of Baptism: he, the Risen One, comes; he comes to you and joins his life with yours, drawing you into the open fire of his love. You become one, one with him, and thus one among yourselves. At first this can sound rather abstract and unrealistic. But the more you live the life of the baptized, the more you can experience the truth of these words. Believers – the baptized – are never truly cut off from one another. Continents, cultures, social structures or even historical distances may separate us. But when we meet, we know one another on the basis of the same Lord, the same faith, the same hope, the same love, which form us. Then we experience that the foundation of our lives is the same. We experience that in our inmost depths we are anchored in the same identity, on the basis of which all our outward differences, however great they may be, become secondary. Believers are never totally cut off from one another. We are in communion because of our deepest identity: Christ within us. Thus faith is a force for peace and reconciliation in the world: distances between people are overcome, in the Lord we have become close (cf. Eph 2:13).

Zenit.org 23-03-2008

Thirsty For More

Pope John Paul II

It isn't difficult to see how the world today, its beauty and grandeur notwithstanding, the conquests of science and technology notwithstanding, the sought-after and abounding material goods it has to offer notwithstanding, is thirsty for more truth, more love, more joy.

Agenda for the Third Millennium, p.169

SSPX: Limited Progress Toward Reconciliation

Answered by Fr Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy and sacramental theology and director of the Sacerdos Institute at the Regina Apostolorum university Zenit.org 17-03-2020

Q: What is the status of Catholics attending the Mass of the Society of Saint Pius X? Years ago I thought we weren't supposed to attend but could if out of necessity. But since then, overtures have been made from recent popes, and I think the rules have been relaxed. Are we now allowed to attend this Mass, and if so, are we allowed to receive Communion if we attend? – T.B., Courtenay, British Columbia

A: I dealt with a similar question on June 21, 2011. In that response I wrote in part:

"...For doctrinal rather than disciplinary reasons, the society has no canonical status in the Catholic Church. As Pope Benedict XVI said in his letter of March 10, 2009, concerning his remission of the excommunication of the four bishops of the Society of St. Pius X: 'Until the doctrinal questions are clarified, the Society has no canonical status in the Church, and its ministers – even though they have been freed of the ecclesiastical penalty – do not legitimately exercise any ministry in the Church.' ..."

"With respect to the status of the members of this society, the Pontifical Commission Ecclesiae Dei has issued several private replies to individuals which have later been published on the Internet. One of these, from 2008, reflects earlier replies. Regarding the status of adherents to the society, it states: 'The priests of the Society of St. Pius X are validly ordained, but suspended, that is prohibited from exercising their priestly functions because they are not properly incardinated in a diocese or religious institute in full communion with the Holy See (cf. Code of Canon Law, canon 265) and also because those ordained after the schismatic Episcopal ordinations were ordained by an excommunicated bishop. Concretely, this means that the Masses offered by the priests of the Society of St. Pius X are valid, but illicit, i.e., contrary to Canon Law. ... While it is true that participation in the Mass at chapels of the Society of St. Pius X does not of itself constitute "formal adherence to the schism" (cf. Ecclesia Dei 5, c), such adherence can come about over a period of time as one slowly imbibes a schismatic mentality which separates itself from the teaching of the Supreme Pontiff and the entire Catholic Church. While we hope and pray for a reconciliation with the Society of St. Pius X, the Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei" cannot recommend that members of the faithful frequent their chapels for the reasons which we have outlined above. We deeply regret this situation and pray that soon a reconciliation of the Society of St. Pius X with the Church may come about, but until such time the explanations which we have given remain in force.'

"Thus I think it is fairly clear. The mere fact of assisting at a Mass of this society is not a sin. It would only become so if a person attended this Mass with the deliberate intention of separating himself from communion with the Roman Pontiff and those in communion with him. I would say, therefore, that a conscientious Catholic should not knowingly attend a Mass celebrated by a priest not in good standing with the Church. Doing so deprives participation at Mass of that fullness of communion with Christ and his Church which the Mass, by its very nature and in all its forms, is called to express."

Thus far the 2011 response. There has been continuous contact between the Holy See and the Society of St. Pius X with a view toward reconciliation which unfortunately have not yet borne fruit. The canonical status of priests of the society remains practically unvaried. Pope Francis, however, has granted two concessions regarding the sacraments of reconciliation and marriage. These concessions are above all for the benefit of the faithful who habitually attend the pastoral activities of the Society so as to guarantee the validity of confessions and marriages. ... Therefore, although some progress might have been made, and the Holy See desires a reconciliation, I believe that what I wrote above in 2011 regarding attending Masses of the society is still sound. ... Only if there is objectively no alternative should one attend the Mass celebrated by a priest from the Society of St. Pius X. If one has to do so, then I would say that one may go in good conscience and receive Communion at such a Mass. It would also fulfill the Sunday obligation. At the same time, it is our ardent prayer and desire, as it should be for all Catholics, that the doctrinal issues with the Society of St. Pius X will be resolved as soon as possible so that these priests may return to full communion and canonical good standing within the Church.

Moving In or Moving On

I love men as much as I love women. I'm not a man-hater, nor am I a champion of all things woman. But we are clearly different, and I think it's only sensible to acknowledge those differences.

It breaks my heart to see how many young women are happy to move in with their boyfriends. No marriage required. No commitment or expectations. Just delighted that the boyfriend/'partner' wants to have them. The following is what I imagine takes place in a man and woman's mind and heart when considering 'moving in together'. Clearly these are generalisations. What do you think?

What a woman wants to hear, is, "I love you so much that I want to marry you, have children with you, grow old with you." A woman wants love, protection, faithfulness, a good father for her children and a forever companion for herself, who understands her and loves her no matter what. She thinks moving in together is a step towards that goal.

What a man wants to hear, is, "I love you so much that I want to give you sex whenever you want it, with no strings attached." (Incidentally, I think this is why homosexuality appeals to a lot of men). A man wants sex, along with the freedom to do what he wants to do and not be constrained by a wife and children. If his girlfriend is willing to move in with him, he has all bases covered. He gets sex, a companion when he wants one, and most likely also someone to cook and clean for him like his mother did. Yet he's still free to do his own thing, or choose another girlfriend when he's ready. He's also free to reject a baby and feels within his rights to 'require' an abortion if his girlfriend falls pregnant, because he didn't sign up for children and certainly didn't have marriage on his mind.

The two 'sides' are often miles apart, and it's the woman who is crushed when the relationship falls apart – the man moves on without a care in the world, leaving her devastated and lost and broken. He says, "But we weren't married, what's the problem?" She says, "But I thought we were eventually going to get married if I waited long enough."

There is much talk about the strength of women to withstand great challenges and setbacks and suffering. I wish women were strong enough to say to their man, "If you truly love me, you wouldn't want to just move in with me, but marry me. I'm willing to wait for that. Are you?" **Ed.**

This is Not Freedom

Pope Benedict XVI, in a question and answer session with youth of Italian Catholic Action, 30-10-2010

It is quite true: you cannot and must not adapt yourselves to a love reduced to a commodity, to be consumed without respect for oneself or for others, incapable of chastity and purity. This is not freedom.

Much of the "love" that is proposed by the media, on the Internet, is not love but egoism, closure, it gives you a momentary illusion, but it does not make you happy, it does not make you grow up, it binds you like a chain which restrains the more beautiful thoughts and sentiments, the true aspirations of the heart, that irrepressible power that is love and has its maximum expression in Jesus and its strength and fire in the Holy Spirit, who enflames your lives, your thoughts and your affections.

Of course, it demands sacrifice to live love in the true way – without renunciation one does not find this road – but I am certain that you are not afraid of the toil of a challenging and authentic love. It is the only kind that ultimately gives true joy!

There is a test that tells you whether your love is growing in a healthy way: if you do not exclude others from your life, above all your friends who are suffering and alone, people in difficulty, and if you open your heart to the great Friend, Jesus.

www.vatican.va

"We do not pray that we may change God's will; we pray rather to change our own."

- Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Heyfield	1 st Fridays 10am – 4.30pm
Cowwarr Ord.	Wednesday (Mass 10am) – 11am Thursday 6-7pm; 1 st Friday (Mass 6pm) – 9pm 1 st Saturday (Mass 10am) – 11am
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) – 11am
Cranbourne	Fri & Sat in church: (9.30 Mass) – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am 1 st Friday 4pm–8pm (every 2 nd month, Dec. on)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Maffra	Wednesday (5pm Mass) – 6pm
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday 2pm - 6pm (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am–12pm; 1 st Friday till 4pm
Trafalgar	Wed & 1st Sat: (9.30am Mass) – 10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am 1 st Fri 4pm–8pm (every 2 nd month, Jan. on)
Wonthaggi	1 st Friday 7pm – 8pm

“When you wake up in the middle
of the night, transport yourself
quickly in spirit to the tabernacle.”

St John Vianney

To Know What He Wants

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2736 Are we convinced that "we do not know how to pray as we ought"? Are we asking God for "what is good for us"? Our Father knows what we need before we ask him, but he awaits our petition because the dignity of his children lies in their freedom. We must pray, then, with his Spirit of freedom, to be able truly to know what he wants.

“God will not supply every *want*,
but He will supply every *need*.
The trouble is that we want what
we do not need.”

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

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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. There is no guarantee that every letter will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. 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.

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