

# ***Into the Deep***

Issue 213

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

March 2021

## **The Sense of Sin**

**Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus Address 13-03-2011**

If we ask ourselves: "Why Lent? Why the Cross?", the answer in radical terms is this: because evil exists, indeed sin, which according to the Scriptures is the profound cause of all evil. However, this affirmation is far from being taken for granted and the very word "sin" is not accepted by many because it implies a religious vision of the world and of the human being.

In fact, it is true: if God is eliminated from the world's horizon, one cannot speak of sin. As when the sun is hidden, shadows disappear. Shadows only appear if the sun is out; hence the eclipse of God necessarily entails the eclipse of sin. Therefore, the sense of sin – which is something different from the "sense of guilt" as psychology understands it – is acquired by rediscovering the sense of God. ...

In the face of moral evil, God's attitude is to oppose sin and to save the sinner. God does not tolerate evil, because he is Love, Justice and Fidelity; and for this very reason he does not desire the death of the sinner but wants the sinner to convert and to live. To save humanity God intervenes: we see him throughout the history of the Jewish people, beginning with the liberation from Egypt. God is determined to deliver his children from slavery in order to lead them to freedom. And the most serious and profound slavery is precisely that of sin.

For this reason, God sent his Son into the world: to set men and women free from the domination of Satan, "the origin and cause of every sin".

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## **Remember Your Soul**

**St John Vianney**

Oh, how bitterly shall we regret at the hour of death the time we have given to pleasures, to useless conversations, to repose, instead of having employed it in mortification, in prayer, in good works, in thinking of our poor misery, in weeping over our poor sins; then we shall see that we have done nothing for Heaven. Oh, my children, how sad it is! Three-quarters of those who are Christians labour for nothing but to satisfy this body, which will soon be buried and corrupted, while they do not give a thought to their poor soul, which must be happy or miserable for all eternity.

## **The Mass**

**Venerable Fulton Sheen, 'Calvary and the Mass'**

Hence the Mass is to us the crowning act of Christian worship.

A pulpit in which the words of our Lord are repeated does not unite us to Him; a choir in which sweet sentiments are sung brings us no closer to His Cross than to His garments. A temple without an altar of sacrifice is non-existent among primitive peoples, and is meaningless among Christians.

And so in the Catholic Church the altar, and not the pulpit or the choir or the organ, is the centre of worship, for there is re-enacted the memorial of His Passion. Its value does not depend on him who says it, or on him who hears it; it depends on Him who is the One High Priest and Victim, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All issues of *Into the Deep* are at [www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com)**

# Prayer as an Encounter

Pope Francis, General Audience 03-02-2021

Today I would like to focus on the prayer we can do beginning with a Bible passage. The words of Sacred Scripture were not written to remain imprisoned on papyrus, parchment or paper, but to be received by a person who prays, making them blossom in his or her heart.

The Word of God goes to the heart. The *Catechism* affirms that: "prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture" – the Bible cannot be read like a novel – "so that a dialogue takes place between God and man" (n. 2653). This is where prayer leads you, because it is a dialogue with God. That Bible verse was written for me too, centuries and centuries ago, to bring me a word of God. It was written for each of us.

This experience happens to all believers: a passage from Scripture, heard many times already, unexpectedly speaks to me one day, and enlightens a situation that I am living. But it is necessary that I be present on that day for that appointment with the Word. That I be there, listening to the Word. Every day God passes and sows a seed in the soil of our lives. We do not know whether today he will find dry ground, brambles, or good soil that will make that seed grow (cf. Mk 4: 3-9). That they become for us the living Word of God depends on us, on our prayer, on the open heart with which we approach the Scriptures. God passes continually through Scripture. ...

The believer does not turn to the Holy Scriptures to support his or her own philosophical and moral view, but because he or she hopes for an encounter; the believer knows that those words were written in the Holy Spirit, and that therefore they should be welcomed and understood in that same Spirit, so that the encounter can occur.

It bothers me a little when I hear Christians who recite verses from the Bible like parrots. "Oh, yes... Oh, the Lord says... He wants this...". But did you encounter the Lord, with that verse? It is not only a question of memory: it is a question of the memory of the heart, which opens you to the encounter with the Lord. And that word, that verse, leads you to the encounter with the Lord.

Thus, we read the Scriptures so that they may "read us". And it is a grace to be able to recognize oneself in this passage or that character, in this or that situation. The Bible was not written for a generic humanity, but for us, for me, for you, for men and women in flesh and blood, men and women who have a name and a surname, like me, like you. And when the Word of God, infused with the Holy Spirit, is received with an open heart, it does not leave things as they were before: never. Something changes. And this is the grace and the power of the Word of God.

Vatican.va

## Rest in Peace

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Pat Ryan, of London, England, who died in February. He has been a regular supporter of and contributor to ITD – see the December 2020 issue of ITD, p. 2 for his last letter. I will miss his regular emails and words of wisdom and encouragement.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.

Ed.

## Thank You

Thank you to those who have supported ITD with donations in the last couple of months. Donations have been down, and subscribers have been down, with some mail being returned to sender and some email addresses no longer being in existence. Please remember to update your details if you move or change your email address, and please encourage others to subscribe. ITD can only continue with your support.

Ed.

"Even when alone be cheerful, remembering always that you are in the sight of the angels."

St Therese of Lisieux

## Reader Responses

Thank you for the 'Random Questions' segment in your February issue (p.3). Thought-provoking, pithy and very readable.

It's only a suggestion, but I think it would be a most welcome column in future issues.

**Christopher Holt, London, England**

Thank you for another great read in this issue of ITD. I always enjoy reading your quotes from the Popes and Blessed Carlo Acutis' quote re sadness and happiness is very insightful (p.7).

**Maureen Wright, Lurnea, New South Wales**

God bless you all! Thank you for posting wonderful things which our Holy Father Pope Francis has said in his homilies etc.! Too many have fallen prey to those who foment dissent... it's like another "epidemic".

I love Into the Deep! May Our Lord, Our Blessed Mother, Archangel St Michael and all the holy angels protect and defend you. And may they bring unity to the Mystical Body of Christ. Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia!

**Maria, Detroit [website comment]**

## Year of St Joseph

**Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* of Pope Francis on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Proclamation of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church**

**2. A tender and loving father**

... Even through Joseph's fears, God's will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.

**3. An obedient father**

As he had done with Mary, God revealed his saving plan to Joseph. He did so by using dreams, which in the Bible and among all ancient peoples, were considered a way for him to make his will known. ...

In every situation, Joseph declared his own "fiat", like those of Mary at the Annunciation and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

## Random Thoughts

- Has it ever struck you how the Gospel says that Jesus couldn't perform any miracles in his home town because of their lack of faith – so he 'only' cured some people of their illnesses? Think of all the people we pray for who are ill. Do we really believe that for Jesus to cure them of their illness is really no big deal, not even a miracle?
- I overheard part of an interview on TV about sex selection. The man being interviewed, who I assume had some sort of IVF clinic, was defending the right of parents to choose the sex of the baby they wanted. He said he sees it as part of "reproductive rights". My first thought was, "And what do you do with the children that are not the preferred sex?" My second thought was that it all makes sense really. If we accept abortion as part of "reproductive rights", then it makes perfect sense that sex-selection should also be. If you can kill a preborn child just because you don't want him, then of course you can kill a preborn child because he's not the right sex – you still "just don't want him".
- There's a "Youth Space" in Morwell that has recently been given its own large building to occupy. This Youth Space is supported by a vast number of local government organisations. As you drive past, the first thing you'll notice is a big band of different flags splashed along the top of the windows. Of course there's the Australian flag and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag, and the obligatory rainbow flag. As for the many other flags tagging along, I had to look them up online. Turns out they are: transgender, bisexual, aromantic, lesbian, intersex, non-binary, genderfluid, genderqueer, agender and asexual 'pride flags'. Do you think your average young heterosexual teenager would be welcome there? I wonder.

**Ed.**

"If you are humble,  
nothing will touch you,  
neither praise nor disgrace,  
because you know what you are."

**St Teresa of Calcutta**

# Stoles and Chasubles

Bishop Peter Elliot wrote a very informative article in *The Priest*, Spring 2019 issue (p.33), titled "The Priest as a Liturgist". He begins by saying, "Whenever I hear someone say that a certain priest is "a liturgist" I begin to feel uncomfortable. It usually means quite the opposite."

Bishop Elliot goes on to contrast "the liberal liturgist" and "the traditional liturgist", referring both to "the binding guidance of a succinct statement in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 22: "Therefore no other person, not even a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority". This is repeated in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 24. Reject that and your name is disobedience and you are an agent of error and anarchy."

I learnt an interesting meaning of the stole and chasuble in one of Bishop Elliot's examples. In referring to the liberal "liturgist", he writes: "It is all rather predictable. He prefers a stole to the chasuble, and he seems unaware that the stole represents authority while the chasuble represents love."

At the end of the article, Bishop Elliot adds the following Postscript:

Recently I wrote to a priest who does not wear the chasuble at weekday Masses. I gently invited him to reflect on the meaning of the chasuble, on how the vestment of the Catholic priest reflects the vestments of the High Priest in tabernacle and temple and the ministerial anointing of Aaron.

Then I quoted another authority: "...the priest celebrates by carrying on his shoulders the people entrusted to his care and bearing their names written on his heart. When we put on our simple chasuble, it might well make us feel, upon our shoulders and in our hearts, the burdens and the faces of our faithful people, our saints and martyrs of whom there are many in these times. From the beauty of all these liturgical things, which is not so much about trappings and fine fabrics than about the glory of our God resplendent in his people, alive and strengthened, we turn to a consideration of activity, action..."

These are the words of Pope Francis, speaking to priests at the Mass of the Chrism on Holy Thursday 2013. The Holy Father's words integrate priestly ministry, pastoral spirituality and the mission of the Church with the proper celebration of the liturgy, that is, *when the Eucharist as Sacrifice and Sacrament takes absolute priority over "liturgy"*.

Ed.

## Just Getting Older (12) – Being Productive

May God give us his blessing throughout this coming year, and although the fires have done a lot of damage, it has somehow brought us closer to God and to each other. It also made us aware that it is healthy to think about what forces us to consider things other than ourselves. During this traumatic period of recovery one starts to understand how high God's estimation is of each one of us, when you reflect on what he did for you.

Looking back on my earlier days, our worth was mostly judged on how strong physically we were, how capable and how clear and reasonable our thinking was. Were we economically productive, could we be beneficial towards society, and would we have some influence towards it?

But what does that all mean if our lives are without the Lord's input? Because to Him, a loving heart is all that matters. Therefore, I ask the Lord to give us the strength and the opportunity to achieve things for the benefit of our fellow man.

This made me come to realise that the most profound meaning of being, of man or woman, is not what we achieve; it has its seat in what we are, as Christian individuals, in relation to our moral standing. To be a Christian, to be willing to be at the disposal of a community, to build a society, to carry one another's burdens, and share each other's happiness. This is not being productive in the normal sense of the word. However, it is most certainly being productive in what is being understood as humanly enriching.

Bert Van Galen, Mowbray, Tasmania

# An Ordinary Boy

Thank you for including the article on Blessed Carlo Acutis in last month's issue of ITD (p.7). What a great testimony of hope and inspiration he was and is for Christians around the world.

Blessed Carlo bloomed where he was planted, so to speak, and his life of faith as a Catholic bore fruit, and continues to do so. He simply took his belief in God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit seriously! He naturally knew what it meant to be a child of God in his great family the Catholic Church. He understood what it meant to be a son of the Father and Holy Mother Church. As a child of God, he knew that his primary vocation and mission as a Catholic is to be holy, and to bring to birth the Christ which he so passionately followed, in the people around him.

From what I gather, he had no aspiration to take his Bible and go off to Africa or India as a missionary, or take up some leadership role and ministry of some sort in his parish to be an effective evangelizer. No, he was just an ordinary boy who knew and understood that the most important way to evangelize was to lead a profoundly Catholic life no matter where he was stationed in life. Living Christ's Gospel fervently wherever he was, was being missionary. Living the teachings of Holy Mother Church joyfully, loyally, lovingly and obediently no matter what the circumstances, was being missionary.

In reading about his passion for the Eucharist, it's as if he instinctively knew that the Sacrifice of the Mass, which was the centre of his short life, was the supreme act and source of the Church's evangelizing mission. For him the Sacrifice of the Mass was a proclamation of the Good News of God's love for him and for the world. His commitment to Sunday Mass was not only an expression of ongoing conversion, but who he wanted to be and what he wanted to do in responding to God the Father's love.

With Blessed Carlo you get the impression that the gift of faith and sonship grew stronger in his short life and found expression in all his ways of living. In his illness towards the end of his life he truly followed Christ into the very depths of his Paschal Mystery by making his sick, suffering body a gift and offering to the Lord and his Bride, the Church.

Finally, Blessed Carlo is a reminder to all God's children that through the gift of the holy Catholic Church, our Mother and teacher, we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places to truly become his sons and daughters, to love, serve and worship him, to become saints, and end up with him in heaven; and that is why we should cherish, love and respect the Church, and confide our bodies and souls to her daily.

**Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria**

## Divine Mercy Book

I recently read a beautiful book on the Devotion to the Divine Mercy entitled, "7 Secrets of Divine Mercy", by Vinny Flynn (Ignatius Press, 2015).

I found it very spiritually edifying and thought your readers may be interested, especially as the feast day is in April. It is a very special read, especially for people who like to say the Chaplet and make the novena, but have never read St Faustina's diary or know much about the meaning of the devotion.

**Maureen Wright, Lurnea, New South Wales**

[EWTN has also promoted this book, noting (Bookmark (16-04-2017): "Vinny Flynn's "7 Secrets of Divine Mercy" draws from Scripture, Church teachings and St. Faustina's diary to explore the message of the Divine Mercy and explain what sets this integral devotion apart." – Ed.)

## Year of St Joseph Prayer to St Joseph

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,  
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
To you God entrusted his only Son;  
in you Mary placed her trust;  
with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
show yourself a father  
and guide us in the path of life.  
Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,  
and defend us from every evil.

Amen.

# Lectio Divina

**Pope Francis, General Audience 03-02-2021**

Christian tradition is rich in experiences and reflections on prayer with the Sacred Scripture. In particular, the method of "*Lectio divina*" was established; it originated in monastic circles, but is now also practised by Christians who frequent their parishes.

It is first of all a matter of reading the biblical passage attentively: even more, I would say with "obedience" to the text, to understand what it means in and of itself.

One then enters into dialogue with Scripture, so that those words become a cause for meditation and prayer: while remaining faithful to the text, I begin to ask myself what it "says to me". This is a delicate step: we must not slip into subjective interpretations, but rather become part of the living Tradition, which unites each of us to Sacred Scripture.

The last step of *Lectio divina* is contemplation. Words and thoughts here give way to love, as between lovers for whom sometimes it is enough to just look at each other in silence. The biblical text remains, but like a mirror, like an icon to be contemplated. And in this way, there is dialogue.

Through prayer, the Word of God comes to abide in us and we abide in it. The Word inspires good intentions and sustains action; it gives us strength and serenity, and even when it challenges us, it gives us peace. On "bad" and confusing days, it guarantees to the heart a core of confidence and of love that protects it from the attacks of the evil one.

Vatican.va

## U.S. Bishops Respond

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, usccb.org**

28-01-2021 WASHINGTON – Today, President Joe Biden signed an executive order allowing U.S. taxpayer funds to be sent to organizations that both promote and provide abortions in developing countries. The policy which he overturned, known as both the Mexico City and the Promoting Life in Global Health policy, had separated abortion from family planning activities and ensured U.S. taxpayer dollars only went to organizations that agreed to provide health services in a way that respected the dignity of all persons.

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas, and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities and Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, and chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace, responded:

"It is grievous that one of President Biden's first official acts actively promotes the destruction of human lives in developing nations. This Executive Order is antithetical to reason, violates human dignity, and is incompatible with Catholic teaching. We and our brother bishops strongly oppose this action. We urge the President to use his office for good, prioritizing the most vulnerable, including unborn children. As the largest non-government health care provider in the world, the Catholic Church stands ready to work with him and his administration to promote global women's health in a manner that furthers integral human development, safeguarding innate human rights and the dignity of every human life, beginning in the womb. To serve our brothers and sisters with respect, it is imperative that care begin with ensuring that the unborn are free from violence, recognizing every person as a child of God. We hope the new administration will work with us to meet these significant needs."

## Lenten Prayer of St Ephrem

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.  
But grant rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.  
Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother;  
for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen.

# Wonders of Marriage

In his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel (Evangelii Gaudium)*, Pope Francis identifies 'four specific principles which can guide the development of life in society' (Section III).

- a. Time is greater than space.
- b. Unity prevails over conflict.
- c. Realities are more important than ideas.
- d. The whole is greater than the part.

With regard to principle [c.], Pope Francis recognizes the "constant tension between ideas and realities which ... calls for rejecting the various means of masking reality: angelic forms of purity, dictatorships of relativism..." etc. (n.231).

Clearly development of life in a society depends on people. And while God created Adam and Eve directly, subsequent birth of people depends on parents exchanging their personal sexual powers to pass life on to others made in the image and likeness of God. So the parents' understanding of 'developing life in society' is based on the reality of personal experience rather than ideological controversy.

In this regard, God in his wisdom made this exercise of sexuality, this co-operation with God's act of creation, very pleasurable. Sadly, there are those who give greater weight to the pleasure than to the purpose. Hence there has been a deluge of ideology directed to over-riding God's primary purpose. Concerns about alleged population explosion, contraception, abortion, various aberrations of homosexuality and so on have served to feed this ideological controversy. These ideas, directed to frustrating God's plan for his creation, have played into the hands of Satan, the Prince of Lies. These lies have gained traction over the years such that sometimes the pleasure tends to far outweigh the purpose.

Greater appreciation for the realities associated with the wonders of marriage will serve to counter Satan's purpose; and bring God's purpose to the fore.

**John Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria**

## What, When, and How You Want

**Pope Francis, General Audience, 18-11-2020**

On our course of catechesis on prayer, today we meet *the Virgin Mary as the prayerful woman*. The Madonna prayed. When the world still knew nothing of her, when she was a simple girl engaged to a man of the house of David, Mary prayed. We can imagine the young girl of Nazareth wrapped in silence, in continual dialogue with God who would soon entrust her with a mission. She is already full of grace and immaculate from the moment she was conceived; but she knows nothing yet of her surprising and extraordinary vocation and the stormy sea she will have to cross. ...

Mary was praying when the Archangel Gabriel came to bring his message to her in Nazareth. Her small yet immense "Here I am", which makes all of creation jump for joy at that moment, was preceded throughout salvation history by many other "Here I am's", by many trusting obediences, by many who were open to God's will. There is no better way to pray than to place oneself in an attitude of openness, of a heart open to God: "Lord, what You want, when You want, and how You want". That is, with a heart open to God's will. And God always responds. How many believers live their prayer like this! Those who are the most humble of heart pray like this: with essential humility, let's put it that way; with simple humility: "Lord, what You want, when You want, and how You want". They pray like this and do not get upset when problems fill their days, but they go about facing reality and knowing that in humble love, in love offered in each situation, we become instruments of God's grace. "Lord, what You want, when You want, and how You want". A simple prayer, but one in which we place ourselves in the Lord's hands so that He might guide us. All of us can pray like this, almost without words. ...

Zenit.org 18-11-2020

# Interesting Bits About Confession

From an article by Rev Dr John Doherty and Rev Dr Julian Wellspring, 14 June 2019, published in *The Priest*, Spring 2019 issue (p.14): **The Seal of Confession and Civil Mandatory Reporting Laws: Advice to Confessors**

- ... the confessor can never, in any circumstance or for any reason, divulge what was confessed. This is true even if the penitent attempts to release the confessor from the obligation of the seal. The confessor should not use confessional material to illustrate a point in teaching or in a homily, even if there is no danger of identifying the penitent. This applies also to small talk with priest friends, or in role-playing during the sacramental program, and so forth. [see An Instruction of the Holy Office, 9 June 1915]
- Those who are not confessors and come to learn of the contents of a confession are bound to the confessional secret. [see canon 983 §2]
- Can non-sins revealed in the internal forum later be revealed in the external forum? No. Everything said in the context of confession is in the internal forum and always under the seal.
- The penitent has a right to privacy and anonymity and the sacred pastors have a duty to respect that right.
- Confessors also have a right to hear confessions anonymously. [see Canon 964...]
- The Rite contains a liturgical greeting that begins the sacramental encounter as well as a formal dismissal; the confessor should avoid all other non-essential greetings, pleasantries, personal comments, and the like at any stage of the celebration of before or after the confession. This will minimise the possibility of the confessor identifying the penitent.
- If the confession is being heard in an open place and not in a confessional – such as the sanctuary – there should be a portable screen between the penitent and the confessor.
- It is best not to know the identity of the penitent; the penitent should be known to God alone.
- Pastors entrusted with the care of souls must respond to reasonable requests to hear confessions outside set times [see Canon 986 §1]. However, the confessor has a right to decline some requests for confession at inappropriate times or in inappropriate places. ...
- Only in cases of urgent necessity and danger of death, when the penitent's eternal salvation is at risk, would the priest be obliged to hear a confession.
- For a recidivist perpetrator, absolution could be refused or deferred [see Canon 980...]. However, the confessor is still bound by the seal.
- If a confessor becomes suspicious for any reason [e.g. of being set-up by someone pretending to be a penitent who confesses the sin of sexual abuse while really seeking to have the confessor charged for not reporting the matter], he can stop the confession and, if necessary, abandon the confessional.
- In catechesis, clergy should remind the faithful that a penitent is bound by the obligation of a natural and committed secret and should never discuss the sacramental encounter with others. However, the faithful should be instructed that they are not bound by this secret if the priest fails to follow the Rite or appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance or assaults the penitent.

## Act of Contrition

Oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

“The love of God sometimes follows paths one could never have imagined, but it always reaches those who are willing to be found.”

**Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Vocations 2013**



# Confession

## Code of Canon Law

**Can. 988 §1.** A member of the Christian faithful is obliged to confess in kind and number all grave sins committed after baptism and not yet remitted directly through the keys of the Church nor acknowledged in individual confession, of which the person has knowledge after diligent examination of conscience.

**§2.** It is recommended to the Christian faithful that they also confess venial sins.

**Can. 989** After having reached the age of discretion, each member of the faithful is obliged to confess faithfully his or her grave sins at least once a year.

**Can. 991** Every member of the Christian faithful is free to confess sins to a legitimately approved confessor of his or her choice, even to one of another rite.

**Can. 983 §1.** The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason.

**Can. 984 §1.** A confessor is prohibited completely from using knowledge acquired from confession to the detriment of the penitent even when any danger of revelation is excluded.

**Can. 960** Individual and integral confession and absolution constitute the only ordinary means by which a member of the faithful conscious of grave sin is reconciled with God and the Church. ...

**Can. 964 §1.** The proper place to hear sacramental confessions is a church or oratory.

**§2.** The conference of bishops is to establish norms regarding the confessional; it is to take care, however, that there are always confessionals with a fixed grate between the penitent and the confessor in an open place so that the faithful who wish to can use them freely.

**§3.** Confessions are not to be heard outside a confessional without a just cause.

## The Sacramental Seal

### Catechism of the Catholic Church

**1467** Given the delicacy and greatness of this ministry and the respect due to persons, the Church declares that every priest who hears confessions is bound under very severe penalties to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that his penitents have confessed to him. He can make no use of knowledge that confession gives him about penitents' lives. This secret, which admits of no exceptions, is called the "sacramental seal," because what the penitent has made known to the priest remains "sealed" by the sacrament.

**"If we knew the value**

of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, how much greater effort we would put forth in order to assist at it."

**St John Vianney**

## Not Enough

### Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household, 1<sup>st</sup> Lenten Sermon 2021

As an early Father put it, a Christian life filled with ascetic efforts and mortification, but short of the enlivening touch of the Spirit, would look like a Mass service with many readings, rituals and offerings, but without the priest consecrating the species. All would remain what it was before, bread and wine.

As the Church Father concluded, "The same also applies to Christians. Even if they have perfectly fasted, taken part in the vigil, sung the psalms, performed every ascetic deed and practiced virtue, but grace has not worked the mystical operation of the Spirit on the altar of their hearts, that whole ascetic process is incomplete and almost vain, because they are not filled with the joy of the Spirit mystically working in their hearts."

[www.cantalamessa.org](http://www.cantalamessa.org), 26-02-2021

**"Make St Joseph the patron of your family and you will soon have tangible proof of his protecting hand." St Peter Julian Eymard**

# Death is a Big Deal

**Homily of Fr John Speekman** 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent - Year A, Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45

Jesus stands before the tomb of Lazarus: *a cave with a stone to close the opening*. There are tears in his eyes. Not long now and *he* will be the one in a cave and there will also be a stone to close the opening.

That's the thing about death, isn't it? It takes us prisoner, into the darkness, and locks us away forever until every trace of our human selves has disappeared. It *destroys* us.

The painful journey to that day still lies before Jesus but, in a way, he is standing before his own tomb, gazing at his own future. I wonder what is going through his mind?

This miracle of the raising of Lazarus was no ordinary miracle. It was the final one before his own death; it was the one they would use against him to justify the killing. And Jesus knew it. Didn't he say to his disciples a few days ago: *This sickness will not end in death but ... through it the Son of God will be glorified?* He knew his turn was coming, that he would soon be 'glorified' on the Cross.

They were right, those 'some' who said: *...could he not have prevented this man's death?* He could have prevented it, easily, if he had just come when he first heard the news. But he didn't. He had deliberately delayed for two more days, as though he actually *wanted* to find his friend dead.

Ironically, this is precisely what his heavenly Father would do to him. Though he could have sent him *more than twelve legions of angels* (Mt 26:53) to save him he won't. He will delay to save him – and Jesus will die alone.

Did Lazarus, perhaps, cry out in his lonely agony, 'My friend, my Lord, Jesus, why have you abandoned me?' At any rate, Lazarus is dead; he has been in the tomb for four days. The Jews believed that the human soul leaves the body after three days and then decomposition begins to set in.

Mary Magdalene may have wanted the body of Jesus early on that first Easter morning but Martha protests when Jesus wants the stone rolled away from her brother's tomb. Despite her awe-inspiring affirmation of faith in Jesus a few moments earlier, her practical, human, dare I say, feminine side, momentarily reasserts itself and she blurts out: *Lord, by now he will smell...*

Death is a big deal for us, in fact, it's the biggest deal in our life. It is the biggest hurdle, the biggest issue we have to face. Dr Elizabeth Kubler Ross the great clinician of death and dying maintains that very few people, even among Christian believers, accept death without great fear.

As he stands before the cave in which his friend Lazarus is lying, he, Life itself, is standing before the ugly reality of the very foe he has come to destroy – *death*.

Jesus is weeping, but why?

When he went to raise Jairus' dead daughter he had said to the those who were weeping: *Why all this commotion and crying?* (Mk 5:39). And standing beside the bier on which lay the dead son of the widow of Nain his eyes were dry, even though we are told he felt sorry for her. '*Do not cry*' he had told the weeping mother (Lk 7:13).

The anguished recrimination of Mary: *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died*, must have pierced his heart. John tells us it was at the sight of *her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her* that the Lord's emotions began to overwhelm him.

Could it be that in the eyes of this woman who loved him so deeply Jesus, for an instant, saw the bitter torment and distress of his own mother, and through her, the unbearable sorrow of every human being as their loved one is torn from their arms by death?

The stone is rolled away; Jesus lifts his eyes in prayer to his heavenly Father: *Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer*. At the loud cry of Jesus the stench of death becomes the sweet fragrance of eternal life.

As he uttered those words: *Lazarus, here! Come out!* did Jesus hear, in his own heart, the voice of the Father as he, only a few days from now, would cry out in a loud voice: *Jesus, my Son, my Beloved, here! Come out?*

We, too, long to hear those words of the Father calling our name. This is the great Christian hope. At those words we will step out of the darkness of death into the light of eternal joy and peace.

Homiliesfromaustralia.blogspot.com

# Impossible!

The Victorian Government (Department of Justice and Community Safety) publishes the following on their Engage Victoria website ([engage.vic.gov.au/changeorsuppression](https://engage.vic.gov.au/changeorsuppression)):

The government committed to bringing in a ban to practices that seek to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Change or suppression practices (also known as conversion practices) are any practices directed at an individual that attempt to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

These are practices which have no basis in medicine; there is no evidence that sexual orientation or gender identity can be changed. Not only are these practices ineffective, they are deeply harmful and can cause long-term mental health issues and, in the most tragic of cases, suicide.

This doesn't make sense. If there is "no evidence that sexual orientation or gender identity can be changed", then how do all the "gender-fluid" people manage to change to anything they choose? We are required to respect their chosen gender at any one time (and use their chosen pronoun at any one time) but if they choose to become heterosexual then it's "not possible"?

And if the government want things with a "basis in medicine" then let's stick to biology, not ideology.

From the Fact Sheet's 'Frequently asked questions' on the same website:

*If someone comes to me asking to be changed, are there any issues if I try to help them?*

Yes, because it is not possible for a person to change their sexual orientation or gender identity – but there are no issues with supporting or encouraging them to seek professional help and guidance from a health service.

Really? Not possible? Where is the evidence for that? What if a heterosexual person 'asks to be changed' to a homosexual? I bet there will be no issues with anyone trying to 'help' them achieve their goal. That's discrimination. Only those with disordered sexual desires are respected.

*Can I run a support group designed to help people not act on their same-sex attraction?*

No. This type of support group is designed to suppress a person's sexual orientation. However, you may support or encourage others to seek professional help or guidance from a health service.

So chastity is considered suppression of sexual orientation? Clearly only a secular society hell-bent on acting on every sexual urge would claim that. Does that mean that heterosexuals who choose to live a chaste life are also suppressing their identity? How dare they reduce everyone to the level of animals!

No prizes for guessing what "professional help and guidance from a health service" would be recommending in any of these circumstances. They'd be affirming every disordered desire, encouraging them to act on them, and teaching them to fly a flag with "pride".

What has the world come to? The Christian voice has been silent for so long that nobody knows what truth is anymore.

Ed.

## Beware Amnesty International

In case any Catholics still think supporting Amnesty International is acceptable, here's the text of a sponsored advert on Facebook that appeared after Victoria banned "conversion therapy" attempts:

HUGE! Victoria has officially banned LGBTQA+ conversion practices

This means LGBTQA+ people in Victoria will no longer be at risk of harmful attempts to change their gender or sexual orientation.

Shockingly, most states and territories in Australia still allow conversion practices - but this is the perfect moment to push to rid the community of these harmful practices. Sign the petition calling on all governments to ban conversion practices now.

## Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

### in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday after 9.10am Mass
Heyfield	1 <sup>st</sup> Fridays 10am – 4.30pm
Cowwarr Ord.	Wednesday (Mass 10am) – 11am Thursday 6-7pm; 1 <sup>st</sup> Friday (Mass 6pm) – 9pm 1 <sup>st</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> Friday 4pm–8pm (every 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> Friday till 4pm
Trafalgar	Wed & 1st Sat: (9.30am Mass) – 10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am 1 <sup>st</sup> Fri 4pm–8pm (every 2 <sup>nd</sup> month, Jan. on)
Wonthaggi	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday 7pm – 8pm

## Most Sacred Mystery

### Sacrosanctum Concilium, n.47

At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

“Take great care to go to Holy Mass, even on weekdays; and for such a cause be willing to put up with some inconvenience. Thereby you will obtain every kind of blessing from the Lord.”

St John Bosco

## Contact *Into the Deep*

[www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com)

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 find us on  facebook

ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email and on the blog; printed copies about a week later. Deadline for contributions is one week before the end of the month (but preferably by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month).

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ITD's bank details for **Direct Deposits:**

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BSB: 013-745 (ANZ)

Account number: 2901-63632

Donate via Ritchies Supermarkets Community Benefit program by nominating Into the Deep, CB number 81799.

**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