

Into the Deep

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The Universal Church

St Cyril of Jerusalem (313-386AD)

The Catholic, or universal, Church gets her name from the fact that she is scattered through the whole world from the one end of the earth to the other, and also because she teaches universally and without omission all the doctrines which are to be made known to mankind, whether concerned with visible or invisible things, with heavenly or earthly things. Then again because she teaches one way of worship to all men, nobles or commoners, learned or simple; finally, because she universally cures and heals every sort of sin which is committed by soul and body. Moreover, there is in her every kind of virtue in words and deeds and spiritual gifts of every sort.

The Church, that is, the assembly, is designated by this apt term, because it assembles all and brings them together, as the Lord says in Leviticus: *Assemble all the congregation at the door of the tent of meeting.* Moreover, it is worth noting that this word 'assemble' is first used in scripture in the place where the Lord appointed Aaron to the high priesthood. And in Deuteronomy God says to Moses: *Assemble the people that they may hear my words, that they may learn to fear me.* He mentions the Church or assembly again when he speaks of the tables of the law. *In them were written all the words which the Lord spoke with you on the mountain, out of the midst of the fire, on the day of the Church or assembly – or to put it more clearly, On the day on which you were called by the Lord and assembled together.* The psalmist also says: *I will give you thanks, O Lord, in the great Church, in the gathering of the throng I will praise you.*

Earlier the psalmist had sung: *Bless the Lord in the Church, bless God, you who are Israel's sons.* The second Church the Saviour built from the Gentiles, our holy Church of the Christians, of which he said to Peter: *On this rock I will build my Church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it.*

Mary Welcomed to Heaven

From a homily by St Josemaría Escrivá on the Feast of the Assumption of Mary

It was on Calvary that Christ, her most blessed Son and our brother, gave her to us as our mother, when he said to St John: "Behold your mother." And we received her, along with the beloved disciple, in that moment of supreme grief. The Blessed Virgin embraced us in her suffering, as the ancient prophecy was fulfilled: "And a sword shall pierce your own soul." We are all her children, she is the Mother of all mankind. And now, the whole human race commemorates her ineffable assumption. Mary is welcomed to heaven: the Daughter of God the Father, Mother of God the Son, Spouse of God the Holy Spirit. Greater than she no one but God.

www.escrivaworks.org, in the book 'Christ is Passing By', Ch 17, n.171

Has not God in fact won for himself a claim on all our love? From all eternity he has loved us. And it is in this vein that he speaks to us: "O man, consider carefully that I first loved you. You had not yet appeared in the light of day, nor did the world yet exist, but already I loved you.

From all eternity I have loved you." - **St Alphonsus Liguori**

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

Back on Deck

Greg and I are back home after our amazing road trip across the Nullarbor (hence no issue of ITD last month). We had a fantastic time traveling and exploring and relaxing. What an incredible country we live in, and what magnificent creation our God has given us. The Great Australian Bight is breathtakingly beautiful, and the vastness of the Nullarbor is a wonder to experience. We loved every minute of it. Our little Nissan Juke travelled 9000km without complaint – I think he enjoyed it as much as we did! We went to Sunday Masses in Port Lincoln, Norseman, Esperance, and Renmark, and were welcomed by priests and parishioners alike. It was fascinating to meet people who were originally from towns near us in Victoria, and from South Africa (our country of birth). It's a small world. But now holiday is over and it's back to 'real life', work and ITD (while planning our next road trip in my mind!) Thanks to those who sent emails, letters or donations while we were away, and my apologies for not responding straight away.

Ed.

"Take, Lord, and receive

all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You have given all to me. To you, O Lord, I return it. All is yours; dispose of it wholly according to your will. Give me only your love and your grace, for this is sufficient for me."

St Ignatius of Loyola

Remembering Grievances

St Francis of Paola

Remembering grievances works great damage. It is accompanied by anger, fosters sin, and brings a hatred for justice. It is a rusty arrow spreading poison in the soul. It destroys her virtue and is a cancer in the mind. It thwarts prayer and mangles the petitions we make to God. It drives out love and is a nail driven into the soul, evil that never sleeps, a sin that never fades away, a kind of daily death. Be lovers of peace, the most precious treasure that anyone can desire.

Some Misgivings

**Archbishop Anthony Fisher of Sydney,
in an interview with Catholic Weekly about the
Plenary Council**

"So much attention has been given to 'governance' and the role of women in church governance and ministry. But where are lay men in all of this, or mothers, or religious women and men, or Catholics whose principal vocation is in the world? All these are almost completely absent from the resolutions. There's very little that speaks to the crisis of vocations to marriage and parenting, and to priestly and religious life."

"We have a whole chapter on the importance of the liturgy especially the Eucharist and Penance. Yet there are no positive proposals about how we will get the priests we need to celebrate those sacraments. Meanwhile fewer and fewer people availing themselves of those sacraments because of the decline of faith, affiliation and practice in Australia. If we don't address this head-on with a major focus on evangelisation, we could end up with fine governance structures and imaginative liturgies but an empty church."

"There was not enough in terms of what Pope Francis calls 'missionary impulse', a passion for bringing people to Christ, to conversion and new life in Him. There was too little attention to the invisible people – the pregnant, unborn, refugees, trafficked, mentally ill, dying and the poor. And there were no practical proposals for promoting religious freedom at a time when it is clearly threatened."

catholicweekly.com.au 09-07-2022

Early Masses

As our parish priest is on leave, I have been searching for an early Mass. Seems no early Masses now. What about those who work? Many years ago there was an early Mass 5am at Hunter's Hill in Sydney. Many builders and tradesmen went to this Mass. What about the farmers? It would be great if they could have an early Mass before milking their cows. I found a recent article about the Conventual Franciscans in Australia to be a bit of fresh air. At their Shrine of the Holy Innocents in Kellyville, NSW, there is a 6.45am Mass each morning. God bless them. And God bless all ITD readers.

Don Kempster, Monbulk, Victoria

Gifts God Offers Us

Pope Francis, World Meeting of Families, 22-06-2022, in response to a couple who shared their testimony

I was greatly consoled when you explained the reason that led you to baptize your children. You said something very beautiful: "Despite our noblest human efforts, we are not sufficient unto ourselves".

It is true, we can have the loveliest dreams, the loftiest ideals, but in the end, we also discover – and this is wisdom – our own limitations, which we cannot overcome by ourselves but by opening ourselves to the Father, to his love and to his grace.

That is the meaning of the sacraments of baptism and of matrimony: they are the concrete helps that God gives us in order not to leave us alone, precisely because "we are not sufficient unto ourselves". It was good to hear those words: "we are not sufficient unto ourselves".

We can say that whenever a man and a woman fall in love, God offers them a gift; that gift is marriage. It is a marvellous gift, which contains the power of God's own love: strong, enduring, faithful, ready to start over after every failure or moment of weakness.

Marriage is not a formality you go through. You don't get married in order to be "card-carrying" Catholics, to obey a rule, or because the Church tells you to, or to have a party... No, you get married *because you want to build your marriage on the love of Christ*, which is solid as rock. In marriage, Christ gives himself to you, so that you can find the strength to give yourselves to one another.

So take heart: family life is not "mission impossible"! By the grace of the sacrament, God makes it a wonderful journey, to be undertaken together with him and never alone. The family is not a lofty ideal that is unattainable in reality. God solemnly promises his presence in your marriage and family, not only on the day of your wedding, but for the rest of your lives. And he keeps supporting you, every day of your journey.

Vatican.va

A Trip with Jesus

Pope Francis, World Meeting of Families, 25-06-2022

To follow Jesus means to set out on a never-ending "trip" with him through the events of life. How true this is for you married couples! By accepting the call to marriage and family, you too have left the "nest" and set out on a trip, without knowing beforehand where exactly it would lead, and what new situations, unexpected events and surprises, some painful, would eventually lie in store for you. That is what it means to journey with the Lord. It is a lively, unpredictable and marvellous voyage of discovery. Let us remember that every disciple of Jesus finds his or her repose in doing God's will each day, wherever it may lead.

Vatican.va

Holy Days of Obligation

Q. How many holy days of obligation are there in Australia in 2022?

See p.10 to check your answer.

Calling for Drops

I have been an ITD reader for many years, as well as being an old online friend of Fr John Speekman. In 2007 I started a Lay Dominican newsletter, "Truth Be Told" (which I based on the ITD layout, incidentally; and reprinted some of ITD's articles).

It has been 4 years since "Truth Be Told" ceased distribution. During that time, my neuromuscular disease, Inclusion Body Myositis (IBM, featured in the new movie "Father Stu") has progressed to a more advanced state where I am homebound and dependent on a power wheelchair. I am not even able to go to Mass anymore.

I have started a fundraising campaign so I can purchase a wheelchair van and at least get to Mass! It is unfortunate that being handicapped is not cheap. Fortunately, "Many hands make light work", and your drops in my bucket will be greatly appreciated. Please read my story at the link below, and share it as you see fit.

givesendgo.com/G3BM3

Thank you and may God bless you.

Mark Gross, OP, Eagle, Idaho, USA

Reflections on ITD

A belated thank you for putting in the May issue of ITD (p.6-7) Archbishop Julian Porteous's speech about the crisis of faith in Australia and the Plenary Council. I did not know our Archbishop had written on this before and we only had a very small reflection in our Catholic Standard newspaper. I told our Catholic Women's League Ladies about it, so we have all been praying for a good and holy result. I think our Bishop may encounter some opposition from the Concerned Catholics Association which is big here in Launceston. They want women deacons and more women's authority in the running of parishes, and down the track women priests! It is looked upon as a job or career.

I also want to thank you for the Whitsun Quiz in the June/July edition (p.11). Great questions and of course good fun! I like to think I got them all right! A few questions on our faith are always good fun. Whitsun is what we used to call Pentecost at home when I was brought up in Kent, England. We were English Catholics from Reformation times, so we looked after our Faith in a Protestant country. Of course, we had community and Catholics stayed together. I was fortunate to have been taught the faith very well, by Spanish nuns who had escaped from the Spanish Civil War 1939 and had fled to England. Religious were being shot in those days.

I too was shocked that the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill was passed in the NSW Parliament (June/July ITD, p.8). It seems that a lot of younger people and Parliamentarians don't believe anymore that we have a soul which animates us and connects us to God as His creation. Maybe a priest could write something on the soul for ITD.

Thank you for your reflection on The Eleventh Hour (June/July ITD, p.10). Some of us could identify with that disappointment and think it unfair. However, I thought the man chosen at the 11th Hour may have been waiting all day in the sun for work to feed himself and his family and was pleased to get the work.

I like your snippets on Cardinal George Pell's Journal. I have all 3 Volumes and have found them very relaxing and peaceful to read before going to bed. He imparts great wisdom, humour, truth of faith and common sense!

I have been reading ITD for at least 20 years when we lived in Queensland. We lived in Sale and Warragul for a while too, which was interesting church times! Thank you for all your hard work and encouragements of the faith with your articles.

Wendy Harrap, George Town, Tasmania

A Great Truth Entrusted to Us

Pope Francis, to a conference on education, 01-06-2022

The "throwaway culture" would have us believe that, as soon as something no longer functions properly, it should be thrown out and exchanged. That is what we do with consumable goods. Sadly, it has also become a mindset that affects what we do with people. For example, if a marriage no longer "works", you change it; if a friendship is on the rocks, you cut bait; if an older person is no longer self-sufficient, you cast him or her aside... Fragility, however, is synonymous with great value: the elderly and the young are like fragile vases, to be carefully protected. Both are fragile.

Dear friends, in our time, when technology and consumerism are turning us into users and consumers, the crisis can become an opportunity for evangelization, for preaching anew the meaning of our humanity, our life and this world in which we live. An opportunity to reassert the centrality of the human person as a creature that, in Christ, is the image and likeness of its Creator. This is the great truth entrusted to us, a truth that we must bear witness to and hand down, also in our educational institutions. We cannot fail to speak to young people about the truths that give meaning to life. That is part of truth. Not to speak the truth about God out of respect for those who do not believe would be, in the field of education, like burning books out of respect for those who are not intellectuals, destroying works of art out of respect for those who do not see, or silencing music out of respect for those who do not hear.

Vatican.va

The Secret of Mary's Success

Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 15-08-2021

In today's Gospel, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven, the *Magnificat* resounds in the liturgy. This hymn of praise is like a "photograph" of the Mother of God. Mary "rejoices in God because he has looked on the *humility* of his handmaid".

Mary's secret is humility. It is her humility that attracted God's gaze to her. The human eye always looks for grandeur and allows itself to be dazzled by what is flashy. Instead, God does not look at the appearance. God looks at the heart and is enchanted by humility. Humility of heart enchants God.

Today, looking at Mary assumed into heaven, we can say that humility is the way that leads to Heaven. The word "humility" comes from the Latin word *humus*, which means "earth". It is paradoxical: to arrive on high, into Heaven, what is needed is to stay low, like the earth! Jesus teaches this: "he who humbles himself will be exalted". God does not exalt us because of our gifts, because of our wealth or because of our skills, but because of humility. God loves humility. God lifts up those who humble themselves; he lifts up those who serve. Mary, in fact, attributes no other "title" except servant to herself: she is, "the handmaid of the Lord". She says nothing else about herself, she seeks nothing else for herself.

Today, then, let us ask ourselves, each one of us in our heart: how am I doing with humility? Do I seek to be recognized by others, to affirm myself and to be praised, or do I think rather about serving? Do I know how to listen, like Mary, or do I want only to speak and receive attention? Do I know how to keep silence, like Mary, or am I always chattering? Do I know how to take a step back, defuse quarrels and arguments, or do I always want to stand out? Let us think about these questions: how am I doing with humility?

In her littleness, Mary wins Heaven first. The secret of her success is precisely that she recognizes her lowliness, that she recognizes her need. With God, only those who recognize themselves as nothing can receive the all. Only those who empty themselves can be filled by him. And Mary is the "full of grace" precisely because of her humility. For us too, humility is always the point of departure, the beginning of our having faith. It is fundamental to be poor in spirit, that is, *in need of God*. Those who are filled with themselves have no space for God – and we are often full of ourselves – but those who remain humble allow the Lord to accomplish great things.

The poet Dante calls the Virgin Mary, "humbler and loftier than any creature" (*Paradise*, XXXIII, 2). It is beautiful to think that the humblest and loftiest creature in history, the first to win heaven with her entire being, in soul and body, lived out her life for the most part within the domestic walls, in the ordinary, in humility. The days of the *Full of Grace* were not all that striking. They followed one another, often exactly the same, in silence: externally, nothing extraordinary. But God's gaze was always upon her, admiring her humility, her availability, the beauty of her heart never stained by sin.

It is a huge message of hope for each of us, for you whose days are always the same, tiring and often difficult. Mary reminds you today that God calls you too to this glorious destiny. ...

Vatican.va

Pope John Paul I

Pope John Paul I will be beatified in September. The Holy See Press Office announced that Pope Francis will preside over the beatification Mass in St Peter's Square on Sunday, 4 September 2022.

Pope John Paul I was born Albino Luciani on 17 October 1912. He was elected pope on 26 August 1978, but died 33 days later. He was the last Italian-born pope in an unbroken succession of Italian-born popes since Pope Clement VII's election in 1523.

Pope John Paul I was the first pope to choose a double name, and the first pope to designate himself "the first", as in John Paul "I". He chose John Paul to honour his immediate predecessors, Pope John XXIII who had named him Bishop, and Pope Paul VI who had named him Cardinal.

Vatican News and Wikipedia

Assuming Authority

For a while now I've been listening to Fr Mike Schmitz' Bible in a Year podcasts with my wife, and what struck me while listening to these podcasts, is that since the fall of our first parents in Genesis, man cannot take it upon himself to communicate or initiate contact with God directly in a manner which seems comfortable or fitting to him. Heaven was shut! And the only way to reach God was through his anointed ones, via his chosen mediators, be they kings, priests or prophets. He initiated contact and chose who would be his mediator, and once appointed, you were no longer the master of your own life. You belonged to him, and your whole life was set aside for his plan, purpose and will, to be a light to the nations, salt for the earth and to make him known, loved and glorified.

Furthermore, God's anointed and appointed ones had to live lives worthy of their divine vocation; by humbly and obediently listening to his commands, instructions and laws, by invoking him when in doubt, and by faithfully carrying out his divine will. This was particularly the case when it came to worshipping God through offering sacrifice.

Betrayal, disobedience and unfaithfulness resulted in dire consequences. Whenever these mediators – whether priests, prophets or kings – assumed authority or rights, or abused their power, they suffered God's punishment if they did not admit their guilt and repent.

It astounds me that most Protestant denominations, and there are thousands, believe that they have the authority and power to worship God according to their own taste, wishes and wills; that they have the right to determine the where, when, how and what of worshipping God. Some Catholics believe this too! This is very unbiblical, because the sacred Scriptures reveal that God alone determines the where, when, how and what of worship. He alone, and not man, stipulates the place, the time, the priest, the victim, the altar, and the pattern of worship for his covenantal people to follow. The reason for this is because worshipping God in the manner that is fitting, pleasing and acceptable to him is so central to our redemption and his plan of salvation.

It seems our Protestant brethren have forgotten that salvation comes from God alone, and this side of heaven, it is only to be found in his One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which was established by his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. In her alone, God the Father has definitively revealed through his Son how to worship him in Spirit and in Truth, how to enter into communion with him and share in his love and life. In the Catholic Church it is known as the Sacred Liturgy, of which the Holy Mass is the crowning jewel, and the centre, source and summit of his Church's life.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

Vatican Sends Message to Germany

Holy See Statement, Secretariate of State, 21-07-2022

In order to protect the freedom of the People of God and the exercise of the episcopal ministry, it would appear necessary to clarify that the "Synodal Way" in Germany does not have the power to compel the bishops and the faithful to adopt new ways of governance and new approaches to doctrine and morals.

Prior to an agreed understanding at the level of the universal Church, it would not be permissible to initiate new official structures or doctrines in the dioceses, which would represent a wound to ecclesial communion and a threat to the unity of the Church. As the Holy Father recalled in his Letter to the Pilgrim People of God in Germany: "The universal Church lives in and of the particular Churches, just as the particular Churches live and flourish in and from the universal Church. If they find themselves separated from the entire ecclesial body, they weaken, rot and die. Hence the need always to ensure that communion with the whole body of the Church is alive and effective". It is therefore hoped that the proposals of the Way of the Particular Churches in Germany will converge with the synodal path being followed by the universal Church, for mutual enrichment and a testimony of that unity with which the body of the Church manifests its fidelity to Christ the Lord.

Vatican.va

On Pain, Loss, Forgiveness, Holiness

Vatican News, 25 June 2022, By Benedict Mayaki, SJ

Daniel and Leila Abdallah share their personal story with fellow Catholics from around the world gathered in Rome for the 10th World Meeting of Families (22-26 June) in order to encourage them to “hold on to Christ, embrace suffering and offer it up to the cross,” even when life is difficult.

The Maronite Christian couple – parents of seven children – who gave a presentation on the fourth day of the 5-day event “on paths of holiness”, narrated the tragedy they went through on 1 February 2020 when a drunk and drug-affected driver killed three of their children: daughters Sienna and Angelina, son Anthony, and their niece Veronique Sakr.

It is a story of pain, of disbelief, of a family shattered and a community in mourning, but it is also a story of love, forgiveness and healing, as the couple continues on the path to holiness.

During the speech, Leila tells of her choice to forgive the driver who caused her and her family so much pain. When asked by the media about her feelings, she said, “I don’t hate him; I think in my heart I forgive him, but I want the court to be fair.” She notes that she did not know the impact of these words yet she believes that “the Holy Spirit moved my lips to speak words of forgiveness.”

Daniel, for his part, said he realized that whatever reaction he would have could determine where he and his family “would be” for the rest of their lives. “I chose to forgive myself for telling my kids to go for a walk,” he said. “I chose to forgive the offender in obedience to my Father in heaven. If my children were here today, they would say, ‘Dad, forgive him.’”

“Forgiveness is more for the forgiver than the forgiven. When you forgive the other person, you start to heal.”

The couple from Australia spoke to Vatican News in an interview on the sidelines of the WMOF, sharing their testimony of love in spite of the loss of three of their children.

Daniel insists that the depth of forgiveness they have as a couple has also taught them so much about each other and about the way they look at each other. He adds that in spite of the occasional arguments, they have learned how to come back to a place of forgiveness because “there are sometimes things that are not worth holding on to.”

His wife, Leila, shares his viewpoint, noting that some couples get divorced because they do not know how to forgive each other. *“It is important to let go of your anger. Forgive unconditionally. Love unconditionally in order for you to have empathy and compassion in your marriage.”*

The couple’s presentation at the WMOF also touched on their faith which they had to draw upon as they tried to heal and forgive. When asked about how they developed this faith, Leila recounts that she grew up in her faith from her childhood: attending Mass, going to confession and praying the rosary. She says she continued with these practices even after her marriage and she has passed them on to her children, teaching them to practice forgiveness as well.

Her husband’s faith came a bit later, after marriage and having children. He notes that he has drawn a lot of inspiration from the “Our Father”, particularly when we say “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

To other people struggling with grief and loss, Daniel and Leila invite them not to give up hope and to offer their sufferings to Christ on the cross, because we will all experience the suffering Jesus as well as the glory of Jesus.

“My message would be everyone has a cross to carry,” says Leila. “We can’t choose what will happen to us in life, but we can choose how to respond. Respond with a smile! Offer it up to Jesus! Trust in God’s will.”

The couple has even found a way to transform their pain into helping others. They have established the “i4give.com” foundation which gives people tools to learn how to forgive and the benefits of forgiveness.

“Our world is yearning for forgiveness,” says Daniel, “And when we talk about it, people are just so hungry and so thirsty to understand what tools do I need to be equipped with about forgiveness.”

Celebrating Catholic Education?

The Latrobe Valley Express (25-05-2022) had a 6-page feature on "Celebrating Catholic Education Week 2022". The introductory article, presumably written by the Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Sale, states: "This year's theme for Catholic Education Week, is 'Go out into the world and spread the Good News to all creation', from the Gospel of Mark 16:15, and our schools are currently living this call in many ways."

Are they serious? Our Catholic schools are currently living the call to spread the Gospel to all creation? You've got to be kidding! But when I read the next paragraph, it all made sense. The Good News they refer to, is not the Gospel you may be thinking of. Here's what they say:

"The Good News theme is a call for all members of a school community to enact a vision for a better world, one where people can live in harmony with each other and with, in response to the call of Pope Francis, the environment."

That's the Good News? Nothing about Christ, his death and resurrection, nothing about sin and salvation, nothing about the Church and the Sacraments? Just having a vision for a better world, and living in harmony. Could be Buddhist, could be atheist, could be anything really.

The article continues with an interesting definition of what Catholic education is all about. No surprise it's also not related to what the Church teaches: "The theme also reflects the core purpose of Catholic education, which is to nurture the potential of each child, and develop their knowledge and skills to become compassionate and contributing members of society."

That's the *core purpose* of Catholic education? Nothing specifically Catholic about that. Could be any school. The Church, on the other hand, says that Catholic schools form part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith. Any room for that, I wonder?

Celebrating Catholic education. Yeah, right.

Ed.

The Church's Work of Education

Instruction of the Congregation for Catholic Education, "The identity of the Catholic school for a culture of dialogue", Congregation for Catholic Education, 2022 (n.13)

For her part, the *Church* has the duty to educate "especially because she has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men, of communicating the life of Christ to those who believe, and, in her unfailing solicitude, of assisting men to be able to come to the fullness of this life.

The Church is bound as a mother to give to these children of hers an education by which their whole life can be imbued with the spirit of Christ".

In this sense, the education that the Church pursues is evangelisation and care for the growth of those who are already walking towards the fullness of Christ's life. However, the Church's educational proposal is not only addressed to her children, but also to "all peoples [to promote] the complete perfection of the human person, the good of earthly society and the building of a world that is more human".

Evangelisation and integral human development are intertwined in the Church's educational work. In fact, the Church's work of education "aims not only to ensure the maturity proper to the human person, but above all to ensure that the baptised, gradually initiated into the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of faith".

Catholic Doctrine

Code of Canon Law

803 §2. The instruction and education in a Catholic school must be grounded in the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life.

The Salvific Mission of the Church

The Catholic School, The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977

5. In the fulness of time, in His mysterious plan of love, God the Father sent His only Son to begin the Kingdom of God on earth and bring about the spiritual rebirth of mankind. To continue His work of salvation, Jesus Christ founded the Church as a visible organism, living by the power of the Spirit.
6. Moved by the same Spirit, the Church is constantly deepening her awareness of herself and meditating on the mystery of her being and mission [*Ecclesiam suam*, n.7]. ... Her destiny is to serve humanity until it reaches its fullness in Christ.
7. Evangelisation is, therefore, the mission of the Church; that is, she must proclaim the good news of salvation to all, generate new creatures in Christ through Baptism, and train them to live knowingly as children of God. ...
9. The Catholic school forms part of the saving mission of the Church, especially for education in the faith.

Catholic Identity

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997

The Catholic school at the heart of the Church

11. The complexity of the modern world makes it all the more necessary to increase awareness of the ecclesial identity of the Catholic school.

It is from its Catholic identity that the school derives its original characteristics and its "structure" as a genuine instrument of the Church, a place of real and specific pastoral ministry. The Catholic school participates in the evangelizing mission of the Church and is the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out. ...

Thus it must be strongly emphasized that this ecclesial dimension is not a mere adjunct, but is a proper and specific attribute, a distinctive characteristic which penetrates and informs every moment of its educational activity, a fundamental part of its very identity and the focus of its mission. The fostering of this dimension should be the aim of all those who make up the educating community.

The Good News

Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q.79. What is the Good News for humanity?

It is the proclamation of Jesus Christ, the "Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16), who died and rose from the dead. In the time of King Herod and the Emperor Caesar Augustus, God fulfilled the promises that he made to Abraham and his descendants. He sent "his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal 4:4-5).

Bishop Takes Action

Aleteia.org 16-06-2022

A middle school in Worcester, Massachusetts was informed by the bishop of the Diocese of Worcester, Massachusetts that it has lost its Catholic designation after the school refused to stop flying Black Lives Matter and gay pride flags. Bishop Robert McManus issued a formal decree to the Nativity School, informing them that the diocese would no longer support the school and that it could no longer call itself Catholic. ... The bishop wrote: "I publicly stated in an open letter dated May 4, 2022, that "these symbols (flags) embody specific agendas or ideologies (that) contradict Catholic social and moral teaching." It is my contention that the "Gay Pride" flag represents support of gay marriage and actively living a LGBTQ+ lifestyle."

The Catholic Church "unequivocally stands behind the phrase 'black lives matter,' McManus wrote, but the Black Lives Matter movement, he said, promotes a platform that "directly contradicts Catholic social teaching on the importance and role of the nuclear family and seeks to disrupt the family structure." ...

"As Diocesan Bishop, it is my sacred duty and inherent responsibility to determine when a school claiming to be 'Catholic' is acting in such a way that is contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church and disregards my legitimate authority as the guardian and overseer of Catholic education in the Diocese of Worcester," the statement continued.

"Despite my insistence that the school administration remove these flags because of the confusion and the properly theological scandal that they do and can promote, they refuse to do so. This leaves me no other option but to take canonical action," he wrote.

The Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage has been a part of our humanity from the very beginning. For God directly created only two people, Adam and Eve. Thereafter, he left the ongoing process of creating people with parents. Sadly, the serpent exploited God's delegated process of creation. Satan distracted Adam and Eve from obedience to God's will, and this disruption needs to be corrected. Indeed, the Sacrament of Marriage is one of the seven sacraments that have been given to us by Jesus for our redemption. Certainly, the Sacrament of Marriage is still subjected to the serpent's malice. The scripture book on Tobit gives an insight to this malice and how it is defeated.

Tobit records the experience of two Jewish families having trouble with their marriages. Tobit has been blinded so he cannot continue providing a comfortable living for his family. He has some money deposited with his brother Raguel who lived some distance away, and he decided to send his son Tobias to collect the money. Tobias knew neither his uncle Raguel, nor the way to his house. Accordingly, God sent the Archangel Raphael to help solve Tobit's family problems. As it happened Raguel was also having family problems. His daughter Sarah had been married seven times but each marriage had not been consummated because each husband had died before 'knowing Sarah'. So Raphael had the task of helping two families in trouble. In short, God does take an interest in families and responds to their needs.

One of the first tasks Raphael performed was to conquer the demon causing Sarah's problems. Accordingly, Tobias was able to ask Raguel for his daughter's hand in marriage knowing that Raphael had removed the demon persecuting her. Raguel and his wife did not have this knowledge and so had great misgivings about such a marriage because of past failures. However, Tobias was insistent that the marriage take place and after completion of the marriage celebrations, the couple prepared to share their first night together. Sarah's parents were grief-stricken and prepared a grave for Tobias. However, Tobias was more concerned about prayer than about consummating the marriage. So he led Sarah with the following prayer:

"It was you who created Adam, you who created Eve his wife to be his help and support; and from these two the human race was born. It was you who said '*It is not good that man should be alone; let us make him a helpmate like himself*'. And so, I do not take my sister for any lustful motive; I do it in singleness of heart. Be kind enough to have pity on her and me and bring us to old age together."

Tobias' distinction between transitory 'lustful motives' and a lifelong commitment to coming 'to old age together' marks a crucial distinction for those coming to the first sacred act of their marital intercourse. In his Apostolic Exhortation *The role of the Christian Family in the Modern World*, Pope Saint John Paul II treats the same topic. "Faced with a culture that largely reduces human sexuality to the level of something commonplace ... and with selfish pleasure ... (true) sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person – body, emotions and soul – and it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love." (37). In short, the sacred act that establishes the sacrament of marriage involves unique persons who must adjust to each other. It is common experience that, like Tobias and Sarah, this may not be achieved on the night of the wedding. In particular, for the future mother aware of the challenges associated with conception, pregnancy, childbearing and child rearing, faces a very demanding situation: a situation the parents resolve together. Indeed, as Pope John Paul II observes, 'so great and splendid is the educational ministry of Christian parents that St Thomas has no hesitation in comparing it with the ministry of priests'. (38)

John H. Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria

Holy Days Answer

(See question p.3)

A. 53. 52 Sundays + the Feast of the Assumption on 15 August. Christmas Day 2022 is a Sunday, so is included in the 52.

Ed.

Quiz Answers

My apologies for forgetting to include the Whitsun Quiz answers in the June/July issue of ITD (p.11). Hopefully you didn't need them! Answers are:
1a. 2c. 3c. 4b. 5a. 6b. 7c. 8c. 9b. 10c.

Ed.

The Beauty and Truth of the Liturgy

Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Letter, *Desiderio Desideravi*, On the Liturgical Formation of the People of God

1. My dearest brothers and sisters, with this letter...I write to share with you some reflections on the liturgy, a dimension fundamental for the life of the Church. ... I do not intend to treat the question in an exhaustive way. I simply desire to offer some prompts or cues for reflections that can aid in the contemplation of the beauty and truth of Christian celebration.

The Liturgy: the "today" of salvation history

2. *"I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."* (Lk 22:15) These words of Jesus, with which the account of the Last Supper opens, are the crevice through which we are given the surprising possibility of intuiting the depth of the love of the persons of the Most Holy Trinity for us.

3. Peter and John were sent to make preparations to eat that Passover, but in actual fact, all of creation, all of history – which at last was on the verge of revealing itself as the history of salvation – was a huge preparation for that Supper. Peter and the others are present at that table, unaware and yet necessary. Necessary because every gift, to be gift, must have someone disposed to receive it. In this case, the disproportion between the immensity of the gift and the smallness of the one who receives it is infinite, and it cannot fail to surprise us. Nonetheless, through the mercy of the Lord, the gift is entrusted to the Apostles so that it might be carried to every man and woman.

4. No one had earned a place at that Supper. All had been invited. Or better said: all had been drawn there by the burning desire that Jesus had to eat that Passover with them. He knows that he is the Lamb of that Passover meal; he knows that he *is* the Passover. This is the absolute newness, the absolute originality, of that Supper, the only truly new thing in history, which renders that Supper unique and for this reason "the Last Supper," unrepeatable. Nonetheless, his infinite desire to re-establish that communion with us that was and remains his original design, will not be satisfied until every man and woman, *from every tribe, tongue, people and nation* (Re 5:9), shall have eaten his Body and drunk his Blood. And for this reason that same Supper will be made present in the celebration of the Eucharist until he returns again.

5. The world still does not know it, but everyone is *invited to the supper of the wedding of the Lamb* (Re 19:9). To be admitted to the feast all that is required is the wedding garment of faith which comes from the hearing of his Word (cf. Ro 10:17). The Church tailors such a garment to fit each one with the whiteness of a garment *bathed in the blood of the Lamb*. (Re 7:14). We must not allow ourselves even a moment of rest, knowing that still not everyone has received an invitation to this Supper or knowing that others have forgotten it or have got lost along the way in the twists and turns of human living. This is what I spoke of when I said, "I dream of a 'missionary option', that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation." (*Evangelii gaudium*, n. 27). I want this so that all can be seated at the Supper of the sacrifice of the Lamb and live from Him.

6. Before our response to his invitation – well before! – there is his desire for us. We may not even be aware of it, but every time we go to Mass, the first reason is that we are drawn there by his desire for us. ... Indeed, every reception of communion of the Body and Blood of Christ was already desired by him in the Last Supper. ...

8. If we had somehow arrived in Jerusalem after Pentecost and had felt the desire not only to have information about Jesus of Nazareth but rather the desire still to be able to meet him, we would have had no other possibility than that of searching out his disciples so that we could hear his words and see his gestures, more alive than ever. ... For this reason the Church has always protected as its most precious treasure the command of the Lord, "Do this in memory of me." ...

9. From the very beginning the Church was aware that this was not a question of a representation, however sacred it be, of the Supper of the Lord. ... From the very beginning the Church had grasped, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, that that which was visible in Jesus, that which could be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands, his words and his gestures, the concreteness of the incarnate Word — everything of Him had passed into the celebration of the sacraments.

Eucharistic Adoration, 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 1 st Saturday (Mass 10am) – 11am
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) – 11am
Cranbourne	Fri & Sat in church: (9.30 Mass) – 11am
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

Godhead here in hiding,

whom I do adore, Masked by these bare shadows,
shape and nothing more,

See, Lord, at Thy service low lies here a heart
Lost, all lost in wonder at the God thou art.

Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived:
How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed;
What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do;
Truth Himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.

On the cross Thy godhead made no sign to men,
Here Thy very manhood steals from human ken:
Both are my confession, both are my belief,
And I pray the prayer of the dying thief.

I am not like Thomas, wounds I cannot see,
But can plainly call thee Lord and God as he;
Let me to a deeper faith daily nearer move,
Daily make me harder hope and dearer love.

O thou our reminder of Christ crucified,
Living Bread, the life of us for whom he died,
Lend this life to me then: feed and feast my mind,
There be thou the sweetness man was meant to find.

Bring the tender tale true of the Pelican;
Bathe me, Jesu Lord, in what Thy bosom ran
Blood whereof a single drop has power to win
All the world forgiveness of its world of sin.

Jesu, whom I look at shrouded here below,
I beseech thee send me what I thirst for so,
Some day to gaze on thee face to face in light
And be blest for ever with Thy glory's sight. Amen.

St Thomas Aquinas

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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