

Into the Deep

Issue 233

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

January/February 2023

In This Issue

A lot has happened since the December issue of ITD! Here's what we have this month:

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Rest in Peace. See p.2-3 for words about him and from him, for us.

Cardinal George Pell, Rest in Peace. See p.2 for a media release from Archbishop Fisher that pays Cardinal Pell a fitting tribute.

Fr John Speekman's book. Fr Speekman has written a book, called "Things Serious, Silly and Sublime". Available soon. See p.10 for more.

Lent is on its way. With Ash Wednesday on 22 February, it's time to start thinking about what we're going to do for Lent. See p.6 for a few ideas.

Readership Survey. Complete the ITD Readership survey on p.11 (or online) to help the future of ITD.

Free Gift! You can complete the ITD reader survey anonymously, but if you choose to add your name and address, you will be in the running to receive a free copy of Fr Speekman's book!

Ed.

Vatican.va

Pray to Forgive

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 26-12-2022

It is forgiveness that tells whether we truly practice charity towards others, and if we live the Word of God. Forgiveness [in Italian *perdono*], is indeed as the word itself suggests, a greater gift [*dono*], a gift we give to others because we belong to Jesus, forgiven by him. I forgive because I have been forgiven: let us not forget this...

Let us think, let each one of us think of his or her own capacity to forgive: how is my capacity to forgive ... some people with whom we have not got along, who have hurt us, with whom we have never patched up our relationship. Let us ask the newborn Jesus for the newness of a heart capable of forgiveness: we all need a forgiving heart! Let us ask the Lord for this grace: Lord, may I learn to forgive. Let us ask for the strength to pray for those who have hurt us, to pray for those who have harmed us, and to take steps of openness and reconciliation. May the Lord give us today this grace.

Change History

Pope Francis, Ash Wednesday homily 2022

Prayer, humble prayer, prayer "in secret", in the hiddenness of our rooms, becomes *the* secret to making our lives flourish everywhere else. Prayer is a dialogue, warm in affection and trust, which consoles and expands our hearts. During this Lenten season, let us pray above all by looking at the Crucified Lord. ... If prayer is real, it necessarily bears fruit in *charity*. And charity sets us free from the worst form of enslavement, which is slavery to self. ... Finally, *fasting*. Fasting is not a diet. Indeed, it sets us free from the self-centred and obsessive quest of physical fitness, in order to help us to keep in shape not only our bodies but our spirit as well. ... Nor should fasting be restricted to food alone. Especially in Lent, we should fast from anything that can create in us any kind of addiction. This is something each of us should reflect on, so as to fast in a way that will have an effect on our actual lives.

Prayer, charity and fasting need to grow "in secret", but that is not true of *their effects*. Prayer, charity and fasting are not medicines meant only for ourselves but for everyone: they can change history ... because prayer, charity and fasting are the principal ways for God to intervene in our lives and in the world.

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

Cardinal George Pell, Rest in Peace

A Statement from the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP, 11-01-2023

Today we have lost a Cardinal of the Church, a former Archbishop of Sydney, a fine priest, a good Christian soul. The Church in Australia and around the world is deeply saddened at the sudden passing of Cardinal George Pell, the former Archbishop of Sydney and of Melbourne.

Cardinal Pell's episcopal motto was 'Be Not Afraid' and through good days and bad, he lived up to these words as a man of courage and with a big heart, who trusted in divine providence.

He fearlessly proclaimed the Gospel and worked to explain the teachings of the Church. He spoke truth as he found it, however difficult or unpopular. He was also a man of prayer, of deep Christian faith and a loving shepherd to his flock in parishes, schools, hospitals and throughout his dioceses.

I was in Rome last week for the funeral of another great churchman and close friend of Cardinal Pell, Pope Benedict XVI. The Cardinal and I did not know it would be the last time we would see each other in this life, but he was in good spirits and his regular, witty self, and I am thankful that we shared this time together.

Cardinal Pell was a proud Australian who loved this country and its people and he was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2005.

The Archdiocese of Sydney thrived under his leadership. He saw great promise in youth, and his vision in bringing World Youth Day 2008 to Sydney saw a whole generation of young Catholics respond to Christ's call. Our community as a whole was uplifted by this colossal event and moved by the testimony it offered.

His Eminence was an author of books and a regular newspaper columnist, a lecturer and leader in Catholic education, and a scholar in his own right. He served the broader Church as a member of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vox Clara Commission, the Pontifical Council for the Family and the Congregation of Bishops.

As Prefect for the Secretariat of the Economy, member of Pope Francis' Council of Cardinal Advisors and one of the highest-ranking church officials in the world, the Cardinal's work for openness in Church affairs was hugely important.

His final years were marked by his wrongful conviction and imprisonment, but he bore this with grace and goodwill and gave us all an example of how to accept suffering with dignity and peace. His words of reconciliation with his detractors and concern for survivors increased in authenticity as he steadfastly and successfully maintained his innocence.

He will be remembered as a courageous leader who inspired so many clergy and lay faithful around the world to proclaim Christ crucified, risen and with us still.

sydneycatholic.org

Heralds of Peace

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, Christmas 2005

When we celebrate the Eucharist, we find ourselves in Bethlehem, in the 'house of bread'. Christ gives himself to us and, in doing so, gives us his peace. He gives it to us so that we can carry the light of peace within and give it to others. He gives it to us so that we can become peacemakers and builders of peace in the world. And so we pray: Lord, fulfil your promise! Where there is conflict, give birth to peace! Where there is hatred, make love spring up! Where darkness prevails, let light shine! Make us heralds of your peace!

Vatican.va

Defence of Life

Pope Francis, to diplomatic corps, 09-01-2023

Peace requires before all else the defense of life, a good that today is jeopardized not only by conflicts, hunger and disease, but all too often even in the mother's womb, through the promotion of an alleged "right to abortion". No one, however, can claim rights over the life of another human being, especially one who is powerless and thus completely defenceless. For this reason, I appeal to the consciences of men and women of good will, particularly those having political responsibilities, to strive to safeguard the rights of those who are weakest ...

Vatican.va

Benedict XVI, Rest in Peace

Archbishop Georg Gänswein, private secretary of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, interview with Vatican News

Q: How did Benedict XVI live these last days? What were his last words?

I didn't hear his last words with my own ears, but the night before his death one of the nurses assisting him overheard them. Around three o'clock: "Lord, I love you." The nurse told me in the morning as soon as I arrived in the bedroom, these were the last truly understandable words. ...

VaticanNews.va 04-01-2023

Pope Francis, final words of his homily at Pope Emeritus Benedict's funeral Mass, 05-01-2023

Benedict, faithful friend of the Bridegroom, may your joy be complete as you hear his voice, now and forever!

Vatican.va

Stand Firm in the Faith!

From the Spiritual Testament of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, dated 29 August 2006 – released after his death

When, at this late hour of my life, I look back on the decades I have wandered through, I see first of all how much reason I have to give thanks. Above all, I thank God Himself, the giver of all good gifts, who has given me life and guided me through all kinds of confusion; who has always picked me up when I began to slip, who has always given me anew the light of his countenance. In retrospect, I see and understand that even the dark and arduous stretches of this path were for my salvation and that He guided me well in those very stretches. ...

... I now say to all who were entrusted to my service in the Church: Stand firm in the faith! Do not be confused! Often it seems as if science – on the one hand, the natural sciences; on the other, historical research (especially the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures) – has irrefutable insights to offer that are contrary to the Catholic faith. I have witnessed from times long past the changes in natural science and have seen how apparent certainties against the faith vanished, proving themselves not to be science but philosophical interpretations only apparently belonging to science – just as, moreover, it is in dialogue with the natural sciences that faith has learned to understand the limits of the scope of its affirmations and thus its own specificity. For 60 years now, I have accompanied the path of theology, especially biblical studies, and have seen seemingly unshakeable theses collapse with the changing generations, which turned out to be mere hypotheses: the liberal generation (Harnack, Jülicher, etc.), the existentialist generation (Bultmann, etc.), the Marxist generation. I have seen, and see, how, out of the tangle of hypotheses, the reasonableness of faith has emerged and is emerging anew. Jesus Christ is truly the Way, the Truth, and the Life – and the Church, in all her shortcomings, is truly His Body.

Finally, I humbly ask: pray for me, so that the Lord may admit me to the eternal dwellings, despite all my sins and shortcomings. For all those entrusted to me, my heartfelt prayer goes out day after day.

Benedictus PP XVI.

Don't Wish Me That

Dr Michael Hesemann, friend of the late Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and co-author with Msgr. Georg Ratzinger of the book *My Brother, the Pope*

After Benedict XVI turned 90, in 2017, I had an appointment with him in the Vatican Gardens, at the Lourdes Grotto, to congratulate him: "Holy Father, I wish you many more years in good health, strength and spirits, blessed by God!" He looked at me with a serious expression, rising his right index finger, and admonished me: "Mr Hesemann, please don't wish me that!" I was shocked. "But, Holy Father, you have such a good life here in the beautiful Vatican Gardens" was the only thing I could say before his index finger went even higher: "Heaven is much more beautiful!"

VaticanNews.va

Benedict XVI: 'Father of Catechism'

By Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is undoubtedly among the great legacies of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. ... A conference on "The Crisis of Catechesis" held by Cardinal Ratzinger in Lyon and Paris in 1983... resounded on a global level. Cardinal Ratzinger had not only tackled the crisis of the proclamation of the faith, but had also presented a program on how the catechesis of the Church could be renewed. To that end, he had referred to the *Catechismus Romanus* of 1566 and to his preoccupation of explaining the faith of the Church in its beauty without controversy. ... Ratzinger's conference in Lyon and Paris was undoubtedly a strong boost that encouraged the synodal fathers to ask John Paul II to contemplate something similar for our times.

In 1986, Pope John Paul II began to give concrete shape to the requests of the synod. It is not surprising that he entrusted Cardinal Ratzinger with the task of leading the project. It is not necessary for me to retrace the stages of that journey which lasted six years. A commission of 12 cardinals and bishops led by Ratzinger was set up. An editorial board of seven diocesan bishops was established in which I – at the time a professor in Freiburg – was the secretary.

I think it is important to underscore above all Cardinal Ratzinger's contribution to that work. His guidance, his spirit and his inspiration were decisive. The first thing and also the most important one, is that he truly believed in this project. From the first day, there was bitter debate on the meaning that it could have and on the possibility of preparing a compendium of the faith that could be applied to the whole world. The pluralization of cultures, of the ways of faith seemed to be in clear contrast with that idea. He believed with courage and trust in that possibility. The unity of the faith makes even a shared expression of that unity possible. With this premise as a guide, he began the work.

There was a second contribution with which he accompanied the work: the conviction that the four classic pillars of catechesis continue to be the backbone today. He also pointed out the order: the Creed has been the foundation ever since the beginning of the Church; the Sacraments are the doors through which grace enters our lives; the Ten Commandments are the sure signposts of a successful life; the Our Father is the measure and the original form of all our prayers. This, then, is the structure of the book on faith.

The third indication was decisive for the style of the work. It was not to repeat and continue theological debates. It had to illustrate in a simple and clear way only the doctrine of the faith. The Catechism was not to take a position among theological schools, but rather offer all that precedes theology and that is the base of all theology: the *depositum fidei*.

For Cardinal Ratzinger, it was particularly important to see the doctrine of the faith as an organic whole, taking into account the *nexus mysteriorum*, the intimate connection among all the teachings of the faith and their symphony. The Catechism was not to be an arid and abstract doctrinal structure, but rather make people perceive the beauty of the faith.

Under his guidance, his constant encouragement and his spiritual fatherhood, the work grew to be what it finally became after the promulgation by Pope John Paul II: a sure measure and orientation for faith in our time. The Catechism remains a great witness of the determining force of the theologian Joseph Ratzinger/Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

VaticanNews.va 31-12-2022

The Means of Seeing God

St Augustine

But pay attention to the saying, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." Provide yourself with this means of seeing God. Let me speak concretely: Why would you, while your eyes are bleary, desire to see a sunrise? Let the eyes be sound, and that light will be full of joy. If your eyes are blind, that light itself will be a torment. Unless your heart is pure, you will not be permitted to see what cannot be seen unless the heart be pure.

Always and Everyone

Pope Francis, Homily 05-11-2022, Bahrain

The prophet Isaiah says about the Messiah whom God will raise up, "His power shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace" (Is 9:6). This sounds like a contradiction in terms: on the world scene, we often notice that the more power is sought, the more peace is threatened. Instead, the prophet announces extraordinary news: the Messiah to come will indeed be powerful, not in the manner of a commander who wages war and rules over others, but as the "Prince of Peace", who reconciles people with God and with one another. His great power does not come from the force of violence, but from the weakness of love.

And this is Christ's power: it is love. Jesus gives us that same power, the power to love, to love in his name, to love as he loved. How? Unconditionally. Not only when things are going well and we feel like loving, but *always*. Not only towards our friends and neighbours, but towards everyone, including our enemies. Always and towards everyone. ...

Brothers and sisters, the power of Jesus is love. Jesus gives us the power to love in this way, which for us seems superhuman. This ability, though, cannot be merely the result of our own efforts; it is primarily the fruit of God's grace. A grace that must be implored insistently: "Jesus, you who love me, teach me to love like you. Jesus, you who forgive me, teach me to forgive like you. Send your Spirit, the Spirit of love, upon me."

Let us ask for this grace. So often we bring our requests before the Lord, but what is essential for us as Christians is to know how to love as Christ loves. His greatest gift is the ability to love, and that is what we receive when we make room for the Lord in prayer, when we welcome his presence in his transforming word and in the revolutionary humility of his broken Bread.

Vatican.va

I Believe That You Love Me

Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household, 3rd Advent Sermon, 2022

The traditional "act of charity", at least in the private and personal recitation, should not begin with the words: "My God, I love you with all my heart", but "My God, I believe with all my heart that you love me".

What we must do, first of all, ... is to believe in God's love for us. It seems like an easy thing. Instead it is among the hardest things in the world. ... Unconsciously we do not want to be debtors, but creditors. Yes, we want God's love, but as a reward, rather than as a gift. In this way, however, a shift [is] effected: ... in the place of the gift, is put duty, in the place of grace, the law, in the place of faith, works.

... God – the Eternal, the Being, the All – loves me and cares for me, a little nothing lost in the immensity of the universe and of history! All we can do is to say with the poet: "And it is sweet to shipwreck in such a sea".

You have to become a child to believe in love. Children believe in love, but not based on reasoning. By instinct, by nature. They are born full of confidence in the love of their parents. ... It is above all for this reason that Jesus so often recommends becoming like children to enter his Kingdom.

Cantalamessa.org

Baptism Quiz

Adoremus Bulletin had a quiz on Baptism in January: For those who read ITD online, click [here](#) to go to the quiz. Otherwise go to [Adoremus.org](#), and go to the January 2023 bulletin to find it. I scored an embarrassing 4/10 – and learnt a lot about Baptism in the process! (now if only I can remember it...!)

Ed.

"I Believe in God..."

"This Creed is the spiritual seal,
our heart's meditation
and an ever-present guardian;
it is, unquestionably,
the treasure of our soul."

- St Ambrose

Some Ideas for Lent

The Bible in a Year podcast: From the introduction to each podcast: "Bible in a Year podcast, where we encounter God's voice and live life through the lens of Scripture. We'll read all the way from Genesis to Revelation, discovering how the story of salvation unfolds and how we fit into that story today."

Daily podcasts from Ascension Press. Listen free on any podcast app or YouTube or on your computer at ascensionpress.com. Each podcast is about 25 minutes long, including introduction, Scripture reading, prayer and explanatory talk by Fr Mike Schmitz.

The Catechism in Year podcast: From the introduction to each podcast: "Catechism in a Year podcast, where we encounter God's plan of sheer goodness for us, revealed in the Scripture and passed down through the Tradition of the Catholic Faith. In 365 days, we'll read through the Catechism of the Catholic Church discovering our identity in God's family as we journey together toward our heavenly home."

Daily podcasts from Ascension Press. Listen free on any podcast app or YouTube or on your computer at ascensionpress.com. Each podcast is about 15 minutes long, including introduction, prayer, Catechism reading and explanatory talk by Fr Mike Schmitz.

The Chosen TV series: From The Chosen website: "The Chosen is the first-ever multi-season series about the life of Christ. It's the free show that tens of millions of people won't stop talking about."

Series 1 – 8 Episodes + Pilot episode

Series 2 – 8 Episodes + Christmas special

Series 3 – 8 Episodes (6 already available, with last 2 being released by 8 February)

Free to watch. Download the free The Chosen app (or free Angel Studios app) available from your App Store or Google Play, or watch on your computer at watch.angelstudios.com.

Ed.

Thoughts from Bible in a Year

Something that made me smile from Fr Mike: The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees did not – that's why they were 'sad, you see'!

Something that made me think from Fr Mike: We often get despondent about having to go to Confession confessing the same sins over and over again. But on the other hand, imagine if you had to confess a whole set of *new* sins each time... At least with the same sins all the time, you can focus on what you need to work on.

Ed.

Not Our Fine Ideas

Pope Francis, Epiphany homily, 06-01-2020

In addition to Herod, other people in the Gospel are incapable of worship: they are the chief priests and the scribes. They tell Herod with great precision where the Messiah is to be born: in Bethlehem of Judea. They know the prophecies and can quote them exactly. They know where to go – they are great theologians, great! – but they do not go there. Here too we can draw a lesson. In the Christian life, it is not enough to be knowledgeable: unless we step out of ourselves, unless we encounter others and worship, we cannot know God. Theology and pastoral effectiveness mean little or nothing unless we bend the knee; unless we kneel down like the Magi, who were not only knowledgeable about planning a journey, but also capable of setting out and bowing down in worship. Once we worship, we come to realize that faith is not simply a set of fine doctrines, but a relationship with a living Person whom we are called to love. It is in encountering Jesus face to face that we come to see him as he is. Through worship, we discover that the Christian life is a love story with God, where what really matters is not our fine ideas, but our ability to make him the centre of our lives, as lovers do with those whom they love.

Vatican.va

Thanks Fr Mike and Ascension Press!

Last month (December ITD, p.6), I expressed the sincere hope that the Catechism in a Year podcast would be as popularly received worldwide as Fr Mike Schimtz's Bible in a Year. Astonishingly, I have been pleasantly surprised, and indeed Fr Mike's Catechism in a Year podcast so far has exceeded all my hopes and expectations! The Catechism in a Year debuted at number 1 on Apple podcasts (All Categories) at its 2023 launch. Bible in a Year was number 1 at the start of 2021 and again in 2022. It remains in the top few of Apple charts in all categories. By December 2022, the Bible in a Year podcast had 430 million downloads. Ascension Press and Fr Mike puts it all down to accessibility and a "deep longing we have to respond to God's plan"; that may well be true! I, on the other hand, attribute its popular response to a deep spiritual depression which was created over 30 years ago by the Church's episcopal failure and neglect in the education and formation of its people, particularly in the 'first world' West. Not only has this catastrophic failure and neglect starved Catholics spiritually, but it has brought her all-important evangelising mission to a grinding halt, and has caused numerous crises in the Church's faith and morals.

I read somewhere in some Church document, that the Church 'catechises in order to evangelise, and she evangelises in order to catechise', something to that effect anyway. What this makes absolutely clear to me, is that the Church is responsible for both, since they are inseparably connected. Both are necessary for our ongoing faith formation and nourishment, spiritual maturity, salvation and holiness.

Ascension Press is a Catholic multimedia network whose faith resources have reached over 10 million people worldwide. Quite incredible when you think about it! It is a leader not only in effective Catholic faith formation but in continuing the Church's all-important evangelising mission and ongoing catechetical mandate. To me, this is truly an astonishing effort and a God-sent gift, to seriously address and atone for what I believe has been neglected by the hierarchy in the West for nearly two generations.

I cannot commend the whole Ascension Press community enough for all their endeavours in revitalising the Church's faith worldwide, and effectively resuscitating her evangelising mission. May almighty God truly bless their work in making his only begotten Son and his Gospel, effectively known and loved throughout the whole world.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

The Renunciation of the Papacy

Archbishop Georg Gänswein, private secretary of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, interview with Vatican News

Q: The world will never forget that 11 February 2013, the announcement of the resignation. There are those who continue to say that it was not a free choice or even that he wanted to remain Pope in some way. What do you think?

I myself asked him this same question on various occasions, saying to him: "Holy Father, they are looking for a conspiracy behind the announcement of February 11 after the Consistory. They search, they search, they search..." Benedict replied: "Whoever does not believe that what I said is the real reason for giving up will not believe me even if I say now 'Believe me, it is so!'" This is and remains the only reason and we must not forget it. He had announced this decision to me: "I have to do it". I was among the first who tried to dissuade him. And he answered me clearly: "Look, I'm not asking for your opinion, but I'm communicating my decision. A prayed, suffered decision, taken *coram Deo*" [before God].

There are those who do not believe, or make up theories, saying that they would have "left one part but kept another part", etc.: all those who say this are only making up theories about one word or the another and in the end they do not trust Benedict, what he said. This is just an affront to him. Of course, everyone is free to say sensible or less sensible things. But the naked truth is this: he no longer had the strength to lead the Church, as he said in Latin that day. I asked: "Holy Father, why in Latin?" He replied: "This is the language of the Church." Anyone who thinks they can find or need to find some other reason is wrong. He communicated the real reason. Amen.

VaticanNews.va 04-01-2023

Under Authority of The Word

Pope Francis, Homily 22-01-2023, Sunday of the Word of God

Let us now come to the second aspect: the Word of God, which is addressed to all, *calls everyone to conversion*. In fact, Jesus repeats in his preaching: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 4:17).

This means that God's nearness is not inconsequential, his presence does not leave things as they are, it does not advocate a quiet life. On the contrary, his Word shakes us, disturbs us, incites us to change, to conversion. It throws us into crisis because it "is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb 4:12).

Like a sword, the Word penetrates life, enabling us to discern the feelings and thoughts of the heart, that is, making us see where the light of goodness is to be afforded room and where, instead, the thick darkness of vices and sins is to be resisted. When it enters us, the Word transforms our hearts and minds; it changes us and leads us to direct our lives to the Lord.

Here is Jesus' invitation: God has come close to you; recognize his presence, make room for his Word, and you will change your outlook on life. I can also put it like this: *place your life under the Word of God*. This is the path the Church shows us.

All of us, even the pastors of the Church, are under the authority of the Word of God. Not under our own tastes, tendencies and preferences, but under the one Word of God that moulds us, converts us and calls us to be united in the one Church of Christ.

So, brothers and sisters, we can ask ourselves: Where does my life find direction, from where does it draw its orientation? From the many "words" I hear, from ideologies, or from the Word of God that guides and purifies me? What are the aspects in me that require change and conversion?

Vatican.va

Missionary Deaths

By Lisa Zengarini, **VaticanNews.va 30-12-2022**

Eighteen Catholic missionaries lost their lives violently across the world this year ... The data were gathered by Fides Agency which released its annual report ...

The highest number of murders has been recorded in the African continent, with four priests killed in kidnapping-prone Nigeria; three missionaries murdered in conflict-torn Democratic Republic of Congo, including two priests and a nun; one priest in Tanzania, and another nun in Mozambique ...

Mexico again this year endured the bulk of missionary murders in the Americas, with three priests and a seminarian killed against the backdrop of growing drug-related insecurity in the Latin American country. ...

Missionaries also lost their lives in Honduras (2), Bolivia (1) and in Haiti (1). ...

In Asia, a Vietnamese Dominican priest, was stabbed to death while listening to confessions in the diocese of Kon Tum, by a mentally ill man.

Give With Love

St Leo the Great

Dear friends, what the Christian should be doing at all times should be done now with greater care and devotion, so that the Lenten fast enjoined by the apostles may be fulfilled, not simply by abstinence from food but above all by the renunciation of sin.

There is no more profitable practice as a companion to holy and spiritual fasting than that of almsgiving. This embraces under the single name of mercy many excellent works of devotion, so that the good intentions of all the faithful may be of equal value, even where their means are not. ... The person who shows love and compassion to those in any kind of affliction is blessed, not only with the virtue of good will but also with the gift of peace.

The works of mercy are innumerable. Their very variety brings this advantage to those who are true Christians, that in the matter of almsgiving not only the rich and affluent but also those of average means and the poor are able to play their part. Those who are unequal in their capacity to give can be equal in the love within their hearts.

The Holy Family

The Holy Family (30 December) is a fitting feast with which to end the year; and to welcome the coming year. For the family has been a part of our being from the very start. 'God said let us make man in our own image and likeness' (Gen 1:26). God had a clear purpose for his creation and man was an important part of it. Subsequently, God saw that it is not good that the man should be alone. 'I will make him a helpmate' (Gen 2:18). So God created the family to achieve the purpose he had in mind for his creation.

The family is clearly the means by which God's purpose in creating people is maintained. This maintenance stems from a sacred act carried out by the parents; an act which results in the birth to a unique person created in the image and likeness of God. However, each of the parents is also a unique person and the sacred act exposes each person to personal concerns. For example, the mother is exposed to the trauma of pregnancy. The father's challenges come later but are foreseen. Hence there is need for mutual attraction to enable the parents to achieve God's purpose. God has provided this attraction. Sadly, Satan has also exploited the attraction to make pleasure override the purpose of God's creation. We do well to recall that the family is God's chosen method of maintaining his ongoing process of creation.

John Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria

The Beauty and Truth of the Liturgy

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

16. ... With this letter I simply want to invite the whole Church to rediscover, to safeguard, and to live the truth and power of the Christian celebration. I want the beauty of the Christian celebration and its necessary consequences for the life of the Church not to be spoiled by a superficial and foreshortened understanding of its value or, worse yet, by its being exploited in service of some ideological vision, no matter what the hue. The priestly prayer of Jesus at the Last Supper that all may be one (Jn 17:21) judges every one of our divisions around the Bread broken, around *the sacrament of mercy, the sign of unity, the bond of charity*. ...

62. I would like this letter to help us to rekindle our wonder for the beauty of the truth of the Christian celebration, to remind us of the necessity of an authentic liturgical formation, and to recognize the importance of an art of celebrating that is at the service of the truth of the Paschal Mystery and of the participation of all of the baptized in it, each one according to his or her vocation.

All this richness is not far from us. It is in our churches, in our Christian feasts, in the centrality of the Lord's Day, in the power of the sacraments we celebrate. Christian life is a continual journey of growth. We are called to let ourselves be formed in joy and in communion.

Orthodox Catholic School for WA

From the website www.sttheos.org

Saint Theodore of Canterbury Inc., is an Incorporated Association in Western Australia under the auspices of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross. ... We are seeking to open a new P-12 Catholic School in Perth, Western Australia, ideally at the beginning of the school year in 2024. We believe there is a need for a revival of the classical approach to learning and for a more traditional approach to teaching the Catholic Faith in schools. Saint Theodore of Canterbury Catholic Grammar School (Saint Theo's for short), will specialise in delivering an entire classical curriculum including a strong Performing Arts focus (Music, Dance, and Drama, especially as discovered in their most classical forms), with a Faith Formation programme solidly based in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and through the practice of prayer both liturgical and contemplative. ... The Association is seeking interested stakeholders, parents, educators, donors, friends and connections. See www.sttheos.org for more information.

Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime

**FOREWORD of the book "Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime" in the life of a Catholic priest
by Fr John Speekman**

This little book is intended mainly for my family and friends as something to remember me by. It is a kind of parting gift. Not that I am expecting to die tomorrow, or even the day after, it's just that as I approach my 77th year the thought of leaving this world and coming to stand before my Master is a thought whose reality is daily becoming more clearly defined.

I hope you find the contents of these pages enjoyable. Some day I'd like to write a novel – but this is not it. What you are holding is much like what people do when they are thinking of moving house. They gather the bits and pieces they value and put them in a box. For better or worse I chose to put mine into this book.

Finally, I need to ask you to pray for me, especially when I'm gone. I have been blessed by such a large and loving family and such a wonderful circle of friends (which I don't deserve), that I really count myself most blessed. I love you all very much and I hope you will show your love for me, particularly when I'm gone, by praying for me as often as your charity prompts you.

What It's About

From the back cover of the book, *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*, by Fr John Speekman:

Things Serious, Silly and Sublime is a collection of Fr Speekman's thoughts and reflections from his time as a hospital chaplain and parish priest.

It gives readers an over-the-shoulder look at encounters in the life of a priest, where each interaction becomes a source of deeper reflection, even those moments that seem, at first glance, ordinary or routine.

Fr Speekman's pithy recollections and personal insights not only reveal a quirky sense of humour and obvious love of people, but give readers a sense of his deep Catholic faith.

This engaging little book will entertain, challenge, invite, and console; and ultimately draw readers closer to the heart of Christ.

[The book should be available to order from March 2023]

He Takes Everything

**From the book, *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*,
by Fr John Speekman**

Mrs Ramon was dying and she knew it.

I used to take her Holy Communion every morning and she was so very grateful. After Communion she never spoke. She would close her eyes and lock herself in that inner room which the Lord commanded us to enter when we pray.

One day, shortly before her death, she took Holy Communion and then closed her eyes.

I stood beside the bed and looked down on her, marvelling at her faith. Despite the ravages of her illness she looked inexplicably beautiful.

Suddenly she opened her eyes and said: *You know, Father, he takes our home, he takes our family, he takes our health.* Then she added, with that authenticity which comes only from personal experience: *But he never takes himself.*

Prepare for the Mystery

Pope Francis, to diocesan liturgy officials, 20-01-2023

And finally, I urge you to cultivate silence. In this age, we talk, we talk... Silence. Especially before the celebrations – a moment that is at times taken for a social gathering. We talk: "Ah, how are you? Is everything going well? Why not?". Silence helps the assembly and concelebrants to concentrate on what is to be done. Often sacristies are noisy before and after celebrations, but silence opens and prepares for the mystery: it is silence that enables you to prepare for the mystery, it permits its assimilation, and lets the echo of the Word that is listened to resound. Fraternity is beautiful; greeting one another is beautiful, but it is the encounter with Jesus that gives meaning to our gathering, to our coming together. We must rediscover and cherish silence!

Vatican.va

ITD Readership Survey

Please complete this survey and mail to ITD (details p.12) or complete it online at www.stoneswillshout.com. Thank you! All who complete the survey – and include name and address! – will go into a draw to receive a free copy of Fr John Speakman’s newly released book (see p.10 of this ITD). One name will be drawn, and will be published in the next issue of ITD. **Ed.**

1. Where are you from?
 - a. VIC
 - b. NSW
 - c. QLD
 - d. TAS
 - e. ACT
 - f. WA
 - g. SA
 - h. NT
 - i. Outside of Australia (please specify)
.....
2. How long have you been reading ITD?
 - a. Only just started
 - b. Since the first issue in 2002
 - c. Last few years
 - d. At least 10 years
3. How much of ITD do you read?
 - a. All of it, cover to cover
 - b. I read most of it, but not everything
 - c. I read a few things that may grab my attention and don't bother with the rest
 - d. I bin it straight away
4. How many others do you pass ITD on to?
 - a. I've never shared it with anyone
 - b. One or two people
 - c. Up to 10 people
 - d. More than 10 people
5. What do you like best in ITD? (mark all that apply)
 - a. Popes' homilies
 - b. Quotes from saints and others
 - c. Letters to the editor
 - d. Quizzes and trivia
 - e. Excerpts from the Catechism and other Church documents
 - f. Stories about saints
 - g. Excerpts from books
 - h. Other (please specify)
.....
6. What do you like least in ITD? (mark all that apply)
 - a. Popes' homilies
 - b. Quotes from saints and others
 - c. Letters to the editor
 - d. Quizzes and trivia
 - e. Excerpts from the Catechism and other Church documents
 - f. Stories about saints
 - g. Excerpts from books
 - h. Other (please specify)
.....
7. What would you like to see in ITD that isn't already there?
.....
.....
8. Have you ever written a Letter to the Editor? (of ITD)
 - a. Yes, once
 - b. Yes, regularly
 - c. No, not yet
9. Have you ever donated to ITD?
 - a. Yes, once
 - b. Yes, regularly
 - c. No, not yet
10. Do you pray the prayer to Mary on p.12 each month?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. No, but I will.

NAME AND ADDRESS if wanting to go into the draw for Fr Speakman's book: (and/or **COMMENTS**)

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
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	2 nd Friday (9.30am Mass) – 10.30am

Open God's Ear

St Peter Chrysologus

Fasting is the soul of prayer,
mercy is the lifeblood of fasting.

So if you pray, fast;

if you fast, show mercy;

if you want your petition to be heard,

hear the petition of others.

If you do not close your ear to others,
you open God's ear to yourself.

Put on Christ

Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household, 2nd Lent Sermon 05-03-2021

Saint Paul often calls on Christians to 'put off the old self' and to 'put on Christ'. The image of stripping and putting on does not only point to an ascetic operation, consisting in discarding certain 'clothes' or 'habits' [but] replacing them with others, that is dropping vices and acquiring virtues. That operation is first of all accomplished by means of faith. In a moment of prayer, in this Lent tide, one can sit before the Cross and, with an act of faith, hand over to him all their sins, their past and present misery, as they strip and throw in the fire their dirty clothes; then they again put on the righteousness that Christ has purchased for them. He or she, as the Publican did in the temple, will say: 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner!' and they too go home 'justified'.

Contact *Into the Deep*

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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 15th of the month).

Editor: Janet Kingman

Subscription is free. We rely on donations.

Cheques to be made out to Janet Kingman.

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

Account name: Janet Kingman

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 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