

# *Into the Deep*

Issue 236

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

May 2023

## When Was the Last Time?

**Pope Francis, Regina Caeli address 10-04-2023**

Let us think again of the women of the Gospel: there was the sealed stone and despite this, they go to the tomb; there was an entire city that had seen Jesus on the cross and nevertheless they go to the city to announce that he is alive.

Dear brothers and sisters, when one encounters Jesus, no obstacle can prevent us from proclaiming him. If instead we keep his joy for ourselves, perhaps it is because we have not yet truly encountered him.

Brothers, sisters, before the women's experience we ask ourselves: tell me, when was the last time you bore witness to Jesus? When was the last time I bore witness to Jesus? Today, what shall I do so that the people I meet receive the joy of his proclamation? And again: can someone say: this person is serene, happy, good, because he has met Jesus? Can this be said of every one of us?

Let us ask Our Lady to help us be joyful proclaimers of the Gospel.

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## Month of Mary

**Blessed Pope Paul VI, Mense Maio, n.1,2**

For this is the month during which Christians, in their churches and their homes, offer the Virgin Mother more fervent and loving acts of homage and veneration; and it is the month in which a greater abundance of God's merciful gifts comes down to us from our Mother's throne. We are delighted and consoled by this pious custom associated with the month of May, which pays honour to the Blessed Virgin and brings such rich benefits to the Christian people. Since Mary is rightly to be regarded as the way by which we are led to Christ, the person who encounters Mary cannot help but encounter Christ likewise.

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## Apology Again

Unfortunately we are *still* awaiting the final printing of Fr John Speekman's book, *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*. The delays have been extraordinary. But once again, we are confident that we will have them 'any day now' and will be able to begin shipping out orders soon.

My apologies again to those who have already paid and are waiting patiently.

For those who haven't ordered yet, you are most welcome to order now so that once we have the books we can get all orders out together straight away. See page 3 of this issue of ITD to find out how you can get a *free copy!*

Ed.

## "Jesus is the Hope of Mankind

for he came to give us the good news that God is Love, and that he loves us and that he wants us to love each other as God loves each one of us."

**St Teresa of Calcutta**

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

# Ready to be Martyrs

Pope Francis, General Audience, 19-04-2023

Today there are many martyrs in the Church, many of them, because for confessing the Christian faith they are banished from society or end up in prison. ... Vatican Council II reminds us that "The Church considers martyrdom as an exceptional gift and as the fullest proof of love. By martyrdom a disciple is transformed into an image of his Master by freely accepting death for the salvation of the world – as well as his conformity to Christ in the shedding of his blood" (Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 42).

The martyrs, in imitation of Christ and with his grace, turn the violence of those who refuse the proclamation into a great occasion of love, supreme, which goes as far as forgiveness of their own tormentors. This is interesting: the martyrs always forgive their tormentors. Stephen, the first martyr, died praying, "Lord, forgive them, they know not what they do". The martyrs pray for their tormentors.

Although martyrdom is asked of only a few, "nevertheless all must be prepared to confess Christ before men. They must be prepared to make the profession of faith even in the midst of persecutions, which will never be lacking to the Church, in following the way of the cross" (*ibid.*, 42). ... The martyrs show us that every Christian is called to the witness of life, even when this does not go as far as the shedding of blood, making a gift of themselves to God and to their brethren, in imitation of Jesus. ... Let us pray, then, that we may never tire of bearing witness to the Gospel, even in times of tribulation.

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## Thank You!

Little comments like these below are what make my day sometimes. *Thank you* to those who write, who donate, who pass ITD on to others, and who appreciate the content. It makes all the effort worthwhile! God bless you. **Ed.**

We advise we have changed our address – please continue to send ITD. We thank you for your commitment and hope your work brings success.

**B.M. Samford, Queensland**

As a regular reader of ITD for many years, I pass my copy on to my elderly neighbour. She would like to receive it as well. **M.C., Balwyn, Victoria**

Thank you for sending ITD. Very interesting spiritual reading! A donation enclosed, and payment for Fr Speakman's book. Appreciated.

**K.B., Balwyn, Victoria**

Please find enclosed my cheque. I do enjoy receiving ITD. Thank you and may God bless you for the wonderful work you do. **M.R. Elsternwick, Victoria**

## Vocational Help

**Vita Consecrata, n.28**

A filial relationship to Mary is the royal road to fidelity to one's vocation and a most effective help for advancing in that vocation and living it fully.

## Random Thoughts

**An act of the will.** Love is an act of the will, rather than just a feeling. I learnt that a long time ago, in high school I think, and have taken it for granted ever since then. It certainly is necessary knowledge (wisdom) for any marriage. But I'd never thought the same about repentance, until a homily by my parish priest a while ago (thanks, Fr Ken) – that repentance is an act of the will, whereas to feel sorrow for our sins is a gift of God. We can make the decision to repent, and go to Confession, regardless of how we feel. I suppose the same is true of that feeling after Confession – sometimes we are blessed with that most incredible feeling of having been forgiven, released, relieved, healed, lightened, strengthened, blessed. Other times, well, we feel much the same as we did before we went in. Either way, our sins have been forgiven and we are renewed – an act of God's will.

**In communion.** I was recently struck by the image of a mother, praying in church, sitting on the edge of the pew, leaning forward, elbows on her knees, head bent down, hands clasped tightly together, eyes tight closed. It was like I could feel her agony. I didn't know what she was praying for or what she was going through. But I found myself instinctively praying for whatever she was praying for, joining my prayers to hers. It's a beautiful thing to be Catholic.

**Ed.**

# Fr Speakman's Book

To order your copy of *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*:

1. Contact ITD by mail or email (details on p.12).
2. Payment accepted via cash, cheque or Direct Deposit to ITD (details on p.12) – include your name as reference.
3. Cost of the book is only \$15
4. Add postage according to your choice below:
  - Standard envelope, no padding or tracking: \$3
  - Standard envelope, no padding, with tracking: \$5
  - Parcel Post bag, with padding and tracking: \$10Parcel Post will be the same for up to 10 books. Consider buying extra for your friends and family. It would make a lovely gift!
5. For international postage, please email me to advise the number of books and postal address *first*, and I will calculate postage *before* you pay.

For more information about *Things Serious, Silly and Sublime* and for excerpts from the book, see Jan/Feb ITD p.10, March ITD p.2-3, and April ITD p.3.

Proceeds from the sale of the book at this stage go to ITD, thanks to Fr Speakman, so you have twice the reason to buy the book!

Ed.

## Book Winner!

Congratulations to Chris Holt from London, UK, who won the free copy of Fr Speakman's book as a new subscriber to ITD during the month of April! Your book will be in the mail as soon as we have them.

## Get One Free!

The next promotion – during May and June – will be anyone who orders 4 books will receive a 5<sup>th</sup> book free! Buy extra for your friends and family!

Ed.

## Do You Know?

Can you think of any of the eight **symbols of the Holy Spirit** that the Catechism describes in paragraphs 694-701?

See page 8 of this ITD for answers.

# I Will Not Sin Again

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

When I was a youngster I was taught the Act of Contrition first by the Sisters of St Joseph and later by the Marist Brothers. It ran:

*Oh my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you because you are so good and, with your help, I will not sin again.*

Those children, and often adults, who still remember how to make an Act of Contrition now seem to say: *and, with your help, I will **try** not to sin again.*

I confess this really annoys me big time. What people seem to have forgotten is that when we say 'I will *not* sin again' we are stating our intentions. In other words, *I intend not to sin again.*

Can you imagine the loving couple at the altar exchanging vows: *I, Betty, take you, John. I will try to love you and I will try to honour you for the rest of my life.*

Or the witness in the court trial: *I promise to try to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.*

When it comes to stating intentions we are not foretelling future behaviour and we should not subject the fullness of our intention to the possibility that one day we may sin again.

## Pentecost

**Catechism of the Catholic Church**

**731** On the day of Pentecost when the seven weeks of Easter had come to an end, Christ's Passover is fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, manifested, given, and communicated as a divine person: of his fullness, Christ, the Lord, pours out the Spirit in abundance.

**732** On that day, the Holy Trinity is fully revealed. Since that day, the Kingdom announced by Christ has been open to those who believe in him: in the humility of the flesh and in faith, they already share in the communion of the Holy Trinity. By his coming, which never ceases, the Holy Spirit causes the world to enter into the "last days," the time of the Church, the Kingdom already inherited though not yet consummated.

# The Church – A Gift

Of late, the Catechism in a Year podcast with Fr Mike Schmitz has been dealing with Article 9 of the Creed, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church". It has made me reflect seriously on my attitude towards the Church as my Mother and Teacher, my relationship with her as the Spotless Bride of Christ, and the implications this has for my life as a practising member of the Body of Christ in this fallen world.

All too often I have seen how the smallest of errors in understanding the nature, origin, source and purpose of the Church, have led to immense misconceptions, problems and incoherencies in understanding her, her faith and mission.

I have always been somewhat bemused by Catholics, the hierarchy in particular, who seem to think that they have the authority and power to shape and reshape the Church that existed from all eternity in the heart of the Blessed Trinity, according to their own image and likeness.

There are many Christians, and I mean many, women in particular, who are very angry and disillusioned with her visible hierarchical structure, all because Jesus founded her on his fallible Apostles, and gave impetuous Peter and his successors the keys of the Kingdom here on earth.

Then there are Christians who will tell you they love Jesus as the head, but not his Body, the Church. They trust him, the Bridegroom with their lives, but not his Bride. They talk about her so disparagingly as if Jesus Christ was bereft of wisdom when he founded the Church, as if he did not know what he was doing, made a big mistake, an error in judgment. Often, I have heard Christians write her off as an institution that is useless, hypocritical, a waste of time, and one that certainly is not going to tell them how to live their lives.

Throughout her 2000-year history, there has been this temptation by people to treat the Church like some relative cultural institution that is incidental to salvation, past her 'use-by date', because she's no longer a force for good in the world. They forget that for 1500 years before the Protestant Reformation, there was only the Catholic Church, and that in the last 500 years or so, because of the folly of our sin, thousands of denominations have broken from her. Many Christians seem to forget that it was she who gave the world the Bible and might I add, the current Catechism, which is teaching me about her divine and human mystery and reality, and article 9 which I sincerely profess to believe in every Sunday.

Whenever I have heard people in their arrogance, pride or ignorance, spit out all sort of profanities about her failings and shortcomings, I think of the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman at the well, "If [only] you knew the gift of God" (John 4:10).

If only they took the time and made the effort to diligently and humbly learn from the Church as Mother and Teacher, about her nature, origin, source and mission, and how central she is to our redemption and God's plan of salvation; about her rich Tradition, and the deep mystery and divine reality that she is. Then they might see her differently, and even begin to love her as Christ loves her, and lay down their lives for her in the way he lays down his life for her, his Spotless Bride, and the salvation of the world.

**Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria**

## Pectoral Cross

**Pope John Paul II**

"Cross of Christ, may you be forever praised, forever blessed; you are the source of strength and courage, our victory lies in you." I never put on my episcopal pectoral Cross carelessly; I always accompany this gesture with a prayer. It has been resting on my chest, beside my heart, for more than forty-five years. To love the Cross is to love sacrifice.

*Rise, let us be on our way, by John Paul II, p.197*

## Zero

**St Therese of Lisieux**

Alone, I am zero.

When I think of zero... I realise that by itself, it has no value, but placed next to a number, it can have great power, provided that it is on the right side, after that number, not in front of it.

It is like that for us with Jesus, together with him on his right, we have all of the power in the world.

# Another Gem From Fr Mike

Thank you for another spiritual read in the April ITD. I too am a big fan of Fr Mike Schmitz and thought you may like to share this gem with your readers.

On Day 70 of Catechism in a Year, on the Immaculate Conception, he ends up giving his thoughts on the question which could arise: "If God chose to bestow on Mary the singular grace and privilege of her being conceived without sin, why didn't He give this grace to everyone?" Fr Mike's answer to that was that God always gives us exactly what we need to fulfil His mission for us. Because Mary's mission was so great, she was given all that she needed to be the new Eve. Eve, the mother of all humankind and, with Adam, given the mission to be stewards of God's creation, was also conceived without sin. However when Eve was visited by an angel of light (Lucifer) she freely chose to disobey God. Her "No", with Adam, brought sin into the world. Mary, without the inclination to sin, when visited by the Angel Gabriel, was able to wholeheartedly, freely say her "Yes" to conceive Jesus, the new Adam, who brought our salvation.

Thankfully God has not given us such a sublime mission, but we have all been created for a special mission and God gifts us with all the graces we need for that mission. We only need to trust Him and say our "Yes", like Mary did, to accomplish His Will for us.

I make notes on all his talks, and most of the talks I listen to, they are so good. Over the years I have gained a lot of "head" knowledge of our Faith, but Fr Mike is deepening my "heart" knowledge and it is so exciting!

**Maureen Wright, Lurnea New South Wales**

## For Clergy: Overcome Spiritual Mediocrity

**Pope Francis to clergy, Kinshasa 02-02-2023**

First of all, *we need to overcome spiritual mediocrity*. ... the priority in our life must be our encounter with the Lord, especially in personal prayer, because our relationship with him is the basis of everything we do. Never forget that the secret of everything is prayer, since the ministry and the apostolate are not primarily our own work and do not depend solely on human means. You are going to tell me: yes, true enough, but commitments, pastoral priorities, apostolic labours, fatigue and so on risk leaving us with little time and energy for prayer. That is why I would like to share a few pieces of advice.

First of all, let us remain faithful to certain liturgical rhythms of prayer that mark the day, from the Mass to the breviary. The daily celebration of the Eucharist is the beating heart of priestly and religious life. The Liturgy of the Hours allows us to pray with the Church and with regularity: may we never neglect it! Then too, let us not neglect Confession. We always need to be forgiven, so as then to bestow mercy upon others.

Now, a second piece of advice. As we all know, we cannot limit ourselves to the rote recitation of prayers, but must set aside a time of intense prayer each day, to remain "heart-to-heart" with the Lord. It may be a prolonged time of adoration, in meditation on the word, or with the Holy Rosary, but a time of closeness to the One whom we love above all else. In addition, even in the midst of activity, we can always resort to the prayer of the heart, to short "aspirations" – which are a real treasure – words of praise, thanksgiving and invocation, to be repeated to the Lord wherever we find ourselves.

Prayer takes the focus off ourselves, it opens us up to God, and it puts us back on our feet because it puts us in his hands. It creates in us the space to be able to experience God's closeness, so that his word becomes familiar to us and, through us, to all those whom we meet. Without prayer, we will not get very far. Finally, to overcome spiritual mediocrity, let us never tire of invoking Our Lady, our Mother, learning from her to contemplate and to follow Jesus.

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# God is Waiting For Us There

**Pope Francis, Celebration of Reconciliation, 17-03-2023**

People who are extremely rich in their own minds, and proud of their religious accomplishments, consider themselves better than others – how frequently does this happen in a parish: “I’m from Catholic Action; I’m going to help the priest; I do the collection... it’s all about me, me, me”; how often people believe themselves better than others; each of us, in our hearts, should reflect on whether this has ever happened – they feel satisfied that they cut a good figure. They feel comfortable, but they have no room for God because they feel no need for him. And many times, “good Catholics”, those who feel upright because they go to the parish, go to Mass on Sunday and boast of being righteous, say: “No, I don’t need anything, the Lord has saved me”. What has happened? They have replaced God with their own ego, and although they recite prayers and perform works of piety, they never really engage in dialogue with the Lord. They perform monologues in place of dialogue and prayer. Scripture tells us that only “the prayer of the humble pierces the clouds” (Sir 35:1), because only those who are poor in spirit, and conscious of their need of salvation and forgiveness, come into the presence of God; they come before him without vaunting their merits, without pretense or presumption. Because they possess nothing, they find everything, because they find the Lord. Jesus offers us this teaching in the parable that we have just heard. It is the story of two men, a Pharisee and a tax collector, who both go to the Temple to pray, but only one reaches the heart of God. ...

How often we make a *façade* of our lives. This Pharisee does not await the Lord’s salvation as a free gift, but practically demands it as a reward for his merits. “I’ve completed my tasks, now I demand my prize”. This man strides right up to the altar of God and takes his place in the front row, but he ends by going too far and puts himself before God! ...

Brothers, sisters, let us remember this: the Lord comes to us when we step back from our presumptuous ego. Let us reflect: Am I conceited? Do I think I’m better than others? Do I look at someone with a little contempt? “I thank you, Lord, because you have saved me and I’m not like those people who understand nothing; I go to church, I attend Mass; I am married, married in church, whereas they are divorced sinners...”: is your heart like this? That is the way to perdition. Yet to get closer to God, we must say to the Lord: “I am the first of sinners, and if I have not fallen into the worst filth it is because your mercy has taken me by the hand. Thanks to you, Lord, I am alive; thanks to you, Lord, I have not destroyed myself with sin”. God can bridge the distance whenever, with honesty and sincerity, we bring our weaknesses before him. He holds out his hand and lifts us up whenever we realize we are “hitting rock bottom” and we turn back to him with a sincere heart. That is how God is. He is waiting for us, deep down, for in Jesus he chose to “descend to the depths” because he is unafraid to descend even to our inner abysses, to touch the wounds of our flesh, to embrace our poverty, to accept our failures in life and the mistakes we make through weakness and negligence, and all of us have done so. There, deep down, God waits for us, and he waits for us especially in the sacrament of Penance, when, with much humility, we go to ask forgiveness, as we do today. God is waiting for us there.

Vatican.va

## Precedence Over All Opinion

**Declaration on Procured Abortion, Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1974**

Any discrimination based on the various stages of life is no more justified than any other discrimination. The right to life remains complete in an old person, even one greatly weakened; it is not lost by one who is incurably sick. The right to life is no less to be respected in the small infant just born than in the mature person. In reality, respect for human life is called for from the time that the process of generation begins. From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun which is neither that of the father nor of the mother, it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth. It would never be made human if it were not human already. (n.12) ... It is true that it is not the task of the law to choose between points of view or to impose one rather than another. But the life of the child takes precedence over all opinions. One cannot invoke freedom of thought to destroy this life. (n.20)

# Acknowledging His Real Presence

Fr Ken Clark, Parish Priest of the Ordinariate Parish of the Most Holy Family, Gippsland

Parish bulletin 23-04-2023

'And He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.'

I always find this quote interesting. We are Catholic and the core belief is that when the priest consecrates bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ that Christ becomes wholly present – body, mind, soul and spirit. He is present and He is 'enfleshed'. It is really His Body, and it is really His Blood. You know that, I know that, and yet the majority of Catholics do not know this. In the United States a Pew Research survey done in 2019 showed that 69% of Catholics said they believed the bread and wine are only symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, rather than his actual body and blood. The other 31% believed in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist (transubstantiation).

This is a sad indictment of the teaching that has happened, probably since the late sixties. Catholics are slowly losing their faith in the Real Presence. What can we do to restore the sense of the sacred in our midst?

Firstly, we must return to Catechetical teaching, providing people with the knowledge of the faith. All we have to do is pick up the Catechism and read what the Church teaches:

**1374** The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend." In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained." "This presence is called 'real' – by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be 'real' too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a substantial presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present."

Secondly, is learning by observation. Have you been to Mass where the priest wanders across in front of the tabernacle and does not acknowledge our Lord in anyway. Servers walk to and fro, there is no reverence, no awe, nothing. We, and this includes the priest, can teach and deliver a whole sermon each and every time we go to Mass by what we do. Genuflect when you get to your seat, when you leave your seat for any reason genuflect. When you pass in front of the tabernacle, genuflect. Use the sacramentals (Holy Water, the sign of the Cross) at the appropriate time. Kneel for communion. Kneel for prayers. We learn not just by reading, and/or listening, but by observation. We also teach the same way.

Jesus is 'really and truly' present and we must always do the actions that acknowledge His Real Presence.

## Catholic Stats

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference released some figures on Catholics in Australia, based on the 2021 national census.

To summarise (roughly speaking):

- There are 25 million people in Australia.
- Of these, 5 million are Catholic.
- Of Catholics, 1 million were born in a non-English speaking country.
- Of these, the top 5 countries were the Philippines, Italy, India, Vietnam, and Croatia.

Ed.

## Novenas

Catholics have been praying novenas for thousands of years. In fact, the origins of this traditional devotion go all the way back to the time of the apostles!

At his Ascension, Jesus instructed the apostles to pray in preparation for Pentecost. 9 days later, he sent the Holy Spirit as tongues of fire to strengthen them for the ministry that would spread the Good News throughout the world.

Early Christians noticed this pattern of prayer, and thus novenas follow this 9-day example.

Ascensionpress.com

# Symbols of the Holy Spirit

## Catechism of the Catholic Church

**694 Water.** The symbolism of water signifies the Holy Spirit's action in Baptism... As "by one Spirit we were all baptized," so we are also "made to drink of one Spirit." ...

**695 Anointing.** The symbolism of anointing with oil also signifies the Holy Spirit, to the point of becoming a synonym for the Holy Spirit. In Christian initiation, anointing is the sacramental sign of Confirmation... Its full force can be grasped only in relation to the primary anointing accomplished by the Holy Spirit, that of Jesus. Christ (in Hebrew "*messiah*") means the one "anointed" by God's Spirit. ...

**696 Fire.** ... symbolizes the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit's actions. ... John the Baptist...proclaims Christ as the one who "will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Jesus will say of the Spirit: "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!" In the form of tongues "as of fire," the Holy Spirit rests on the disciples on the morning of Pentecost and fills them with himself. ...

**697 Cloud and light.** ... In the theophanies of the Old Testament, the cloud...reveals the living and saving God, while veiling the transcendence of his glory... The Spirit comes upon the Virgin Mary and "overshadows" her, so that she might conceive and give birth to Jesus. On the mountain of Transfiguration, the Spirit in the "cloud came and overshadowed" [them] ... Finally, the cloud took Jesus out of the sight of the disciples on the day of his ascension and will reveal him as Son of man in glory on the day of his final coming.

**698 The seal** is a symbol close to that of anointing. "The Father has set his seal" on Christ and also seals us in him. ... this seal indicates the indelible effect of the anointing with the Holy Spirit in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, ...

**699 The hand.** Jesus heals the sick and blesses little children by laying hands on them. In his name the apostles will do the same. Even more pointedly, it is by the Apostles' imposition of hands that the Holy Spirit is given. ...

**700 The finger.** "It is by the finger of God that [Jesus] cast out demons." If God's law was written on tablets of stone "by the finger of God," then the "letter from Christ" entrusted to the care of the apostles, is written "with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts." ...

**701 The dove.** At the end of the flood, whose symbolism refers to Baptism, a dove released by Noah returns with a fresh olive-tree branch in its beak as a sign that the earth was again habitable. When Christ comes up from the water of his baptism, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, comes down upon him and remains with him. ...

## Spiritual Unity

### St Cyril of Alexandria

All of us who have received one and the same Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit, are in a sense blended together with one another and with God.

For if Christ, together with the Father's and his own Spirit, comes to dwell in each of us, though we are many, still the Spirit is one and undivided. He binds together the spirits of each and every one of us, ... and makes all appear as one in him.

For just as the power of Christ's sacred flesh unites those in whom it dwells into one body, I think that in the same way the one and undivided Spirit of God, who dwells in all, leads all into spiritual unity.

Quoted in the Catechism, n.738

## The Word "Church"

### Catechism of the Catholic Church

**751** The word "Church" (Latin *ecclesia*, from the Greek *ek-ka-lein*, to "call out of") means a convocation or an assembly. It designates the assemblies of the people, usually for a religious purpose. *Ekklesia* is used frequently in the Greek Old Testament for the assembly of the Chosen People before God, above all for their assembly on Mount Sinai where Israel received the Law and was established by God as his holy people. By calling itself "Church," the first community of Christian believers recognized itself as heir to that assembly. In the Church, God is "calling together" his people from all the ends of the earth. The equivalent Greek term *Kyriake*, from which the English word *Church* and the German *Kirche* are derived, means "what belongs to the Lord."



# The Family in God's Plan

The story of the Fall recalls that Adam and Eve hid from God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Adam explained that they hid because they were naked. Yet when God created Eve 'both of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they felt no shame in front of each other' (Gen 2:25). So the family, formed by the man and his wife, was subject to the shame that resulted from the Fall.

Indeed, the family was also subjected to other punishment because of failures on the part of the man and the woman. In the case of the woman, God declared 'I will multiply your pains in childbearing, you shall give birth to your children in pain' (Gen 3:16). So God clearly intended using the family to continue his process of creation from the very start. In the case of Adam, 'accursed be the soil because of you, with suffering shall you get your food from it' (Gen 3:17).

It is to be expected that the relation between the man and his wife would be very different after the Fall than it was beforehand. Yet God's commandment to 'be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth' (Gen 1:28) was not changed. Hence, 'the man had intercourse with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain' (Gen 4:1). So the family is an integral part of God's plan for creation; and survives God's anger aroused by rejection of his commandments.

This was further demonstrated in the case of the Flood. God's anger 'with the wickedness of man' (Gen 6:5) resulted in the population of the world being reduced to eight people. Yet God blessed Noah and his family and renewed his commandment to the family: 'Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth' (Gen 9:1). In short, after a most chilling demonstration of the results of disobeying God's will, God used the family to maintain his plan for creation.

Jesus also portrays God's high regard for the family. In the case of the woman taken in adultery, Jesus countermands pharisaical demand for the death penalty by dismissing the savage crowd and addressing the guilty women with, 'Neither do I condemn you... go away and don't sin anymore' (John 8:11). Jesus was clearly aware that adultery was a sin. In this case, he was also on his way to personally experience the cruelty associated with the redemptive crucifixion being organized by the pharisees.

**John Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria**

## Desolation in the Spiritual Life

**Pope Francis, General Audience, 16-11-2022**

Dear brothers and sisters, the spiritual life is not a technique at our disposal, it is not a programme for inner "wellbeing" that it is up to us to plan. No. The spiritual life is *the relationship with the Living One*, with God, the Living One who cannot be reduced to our categories.

And desolation, then, is the clearest response to the objection that the experience of God is a form of wishful thinking, a simple projection of our desires. Desolation is not feeling anything, when everything is dark, but you seek God in the desolation. In that case, if we think that he is a projection of our desires, we would always be the ones to plan, and we would always be happy and content, like a record that repeats the same music. Instead, those who pray realize that the outcome is *unpredictable*: experiences and passages from the Bible that have often enthralled us, today, strangely, do not move us. And, equally unexpectedly, experiences, encounters and readings that we have never paid much attention to or preferred to avoid – such as the experience of the cross – bring immense peace.

Do not fear desolation; face it with perseverance, do not evade it. And in desolation, try to find the heart of Christ, to find the Lord. And the answer will come, always.

Faced with difficulties, therefore, never be discouraged, please, but confront the test with determination, with the help of the grace of God, which is never lacking. And if we hear within us an insistent voice that wants to turn us away from prayer, let us learn to unmask it as the voice of the tempter; and let us not be influenced; let us simply do the opposite of what it tells us!

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# Mary and the Holy Spirit

**Pope Benedict XVI, Marian Vigil 30-05-2009**

The great Feast of Pentecost invites us to meditate on the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Mary, a very close, privileged and indissoluble relationship.

The Virgin of Nazareth was chosen in advance to become the Mother of the Redeemer through the power of the Holy Spirit: in her humility, she found favour in God's eyes. In fact, in the New Testament we see that Mary's faith, so to speak, "attracts" the gift of the Holy Spirit. First of all in the conception of the Son of God, a mystery that the Archangel Gabriel himself explains in this way: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you". Immediately afterwards Mary went to help Elizabeth, and when she arrived and greeted her, the Holy Spirit caused the child to leap in the womb of her elderly kinswoman; and the whole dialogue between the two mothers is inspired by God's Spirit, especially the *Magnificat*, the hymn of praise in which Mary expresses her innermost sentiments. The whole event of Jesus' birth and early childhood is guided almost tangibly by the Holy Spirit, although he is not always mentioned. Mary's heart, in perfect unison with the divine Son, is a temple of the Spirit of truth in which every word and every event are preserved in faith, hope and charity.

We may therefore be certain that the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, in the whole of his hidden life in Nazareth always found in his Mother's Immaculate Heart, a "hearth" ever alight with prayer and with constant attention to the voice of the Spirit. The events at the Wedding at Cana are an attestation of this unique harmony between the Mother and the Son in seeking God's will. In a situation laden with symbols of the Covenant, such as the wedding feast, the Virgin Mother intercedes and provokes, so to speak, a sign of superabundant grace: the "good wine" that refers to the mystery of Christ's Blood. This leads us directly to Calvary, where Mary stands beneath the Cross together with the other women and with the Apostle John. The Mother and the disciple receive spiritually the testament of Jesus: his last words and his last breath, in which he begins to pour out the Spirit; and they receive the silent cry of his Blood, poured out entirely for us. Mary knew where that Blood came from: it had been formed within her by the power of the Holy Spirit and she knew that this same creative "power" was to raise Jesus, as he had promised.

Thus Mary's faith sustained that of the disciples until their encounter with the Risen Lord and continued to accompany them also after his Ascension into Heaven, as they waited for "[Baptism] in the Holy Spirit". At Pentecost the Virgin Mother appears anew as the Bride of the Spirit, for a universal motherhood of all those who are generated by God through faith in Christ. This is why, for all the generations, Mary is an image and model of the Church which together with the Spirit journeys through time, invoking Jesus' glorious return: "Come, Lord Jesus".

Dear friends, let us too learn at the school of Mary to recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, to listen to his inspirations and to follow them with docility. He makes us grow in accordance with the fullness of Christ, in accordance with those good fruits which the Apostle Paul lists in his Letter to the Galatians: "Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control". I hope you will be filled with these gifts and that you will always walk with Mary, in accordance with the Spirit.

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## Christ Lives in His Church

**St Leo the Great**

My dear brethren, there is no doubt that the Son of God took our human nature into so close a union with himself that one and the same Christ is present, not only in the firstborn of all creation, but in all his saints as well. The head cannot be separated from the members, nor the members from the head. Not in this life, it is true, but only in eternity will God be all in all, yet even now he dwells, whole and undivided, in his temple the Church. Such was his promise to us when he said: *See, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.*

# The Devil Has No Chance if There is Prayer

Vatican News, 11 April 2023

*Pope Francis, in a previously unpublished interview, contained in the newly released book "Esorcisti contro Satana" (Exorcists against Satan) by Italian journalist Fabio Marchese Ragona*

**Holy Father, in the testimony of the possessed nun, we read that the Devil reportedly spoke about you saying: "I hate him, he always speaks badly of me. Have you seen how much trouble I cause him?" What can we make of these statements?**

I am not personally familiar with this case and, therefore, cannot comment. But, yes, it is possible that I get on the Devil's nerves, because I try to follow the Lord and do what the Gospel says. And that annoys him. At the same time, he is certainly happy when I commit some sin. He seeks man's failure, but he has no chance if there is prayer.

**Have you ever dealt directly with people possessed by the Devil?**

When I was archbishop of Buenos Aires I had several cases of people who came to me saying they were possessed. I sent them for a consultation with two good "specialist" priests: they are not healers, but exorcists. ... Both of them later told me that only two or three of those people were really victims of diabolical possession. The others suffered from diabolical obsession, which is quite different because they didn't have the Devil in their bodies. This should be specified.

**And as a pontiff, have you ever practiced exorcisms?**

No, that never happened. If it were to happen, I would ask for the support of a good exorcist, as I already did as an archbishop.

**Several people have said about Benedict XVI that during his pontificate he was attacked by the Devil – who always tempts us – but that, despite having suffered from this, he resisted well. Paul VI in 1972 said that the smoke of Satan had entered the Temple of God through some fissure. Can the Devil therefore also act in the Vatican and attack the Pope?**

What is certain is that the Devil tries to attack everyone without distinction, and tries above all to strike those who have more responsibilities in the Church or in society. Even Jesus suffered temptations from the Devil, we can also think of those [suffered] by Simon Peter, to whom He said: "Get away from me, Satan". Even the Pope, therefore, is attacked by the evil one.

We are human beings and he always tries to attack us. It is painful, but in the face of prayer, he has no chance! And then, yes, it is true, as Saint Paul VI said, that the Devil can also enter the Temple of God, to sow discord and turn one against the other: divisions and attacks are always the work of the Devil. He always tries to insinuate himself to corrupt the heart and mind of man. The only salvation is to follow the path indicated by Christ.

Vaticannews.va

## Little Headaches

Little headaches, little heartaches  
Little griefs of every day,  
Little trials and vexations,  
How they throng around our way.  
Let us not then through impatience  
Mar the beauty of the whole,  
But for love of Jesus bear all  
In the silence of our soul.

Quoted by Cardinal George Pell in  
Prison Journal, Volume 2, diary entry for 18 July 2019

"O Lord, give us a mind that is  
humble, quiet, peaceable,  
patient and charitable,  
and a taste of your Holy Spirit  
in all our thoughts,  
words and deeds."

**St Thomas More**

Quoted by Cardinal George Pell in  
Prison Journal, Volume 2, diary entry for 24 July 2019

## Eucharistic Adoration, Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday after 9.10am Mass
Heyfield	1 <sup>st</sup> Fridays 10am – 4.30pm
Cowwarr Ord.	Wednesday (Mass 10am) – 11am 1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday (Mass 10am) – 11am
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) – 11am
Cranbourne	Fri & Sat in church: (9.30 Mass) – 11am
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am 1 <sup>st</sup> Friday 4pm–8pm (every 2 <sup>nd</sup> month, Dec. on)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Maffra	Wednesday (5pm Mass) – 6pm
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday 10am-11am (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 <sup>st</sup> Fri 4pm–8pm (every 2 <sup>nd</sup> month, Jan. on)
Wonthaggi	2 <sup>nd</sup> Friday (9.30am Mass) – 10.30am

## Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,

That my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit,

That my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,

That I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,

To defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,

That I always may be holy.

**St Augustine**

## Rest in Him

**St Anselm**

“Come now, insignificant man,  
fly for a moment from your affairs,  
escape for a little while from the  
tumult of your thoughts.

Put aside now your weighty cares  
and leave your wearisome toils.  
Abandon yourself for a little to God  
and rest for a little in Him.”

## Contact *Into the Deep*

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

[stoneswillshout@bigpond.com](mailto:stoneswillshout@bigpond.com)

12 Vincent Road, Morwell, Vic, 3840, Australia

 find us on  **facebook**

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**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**