

Into the Deep

Issue 239

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

September 2023

The Sign of the Cross

Pope Francis, Angelus address 04-06-2023

Yes, that is how it is, brothers and sisters, our God is a *communion of love*: and this is how Jesus revealed him to us. And do you know how we can remember this? With the simplest gesture, which we learned as children: the sign of the cross. By tracing the cross on our body, we remind ourselves how much God loved us, to the point of giving his life for us; and we repeat to ourselves that his love envelops us completely, from top to bottom, from left to right, like an embrace that never abandons us. And at the same time, we commit ourselves to bear witness to God-as-love, creating communion in his name.

Vatican.va

Be Convincing

Pope Francis, Lisbon, 03-08-2023

[M]ake your faith credible through your decisions. For unless faith gives rise to convincing lifestyles, it will not be a "leaven" in the world. It is not enough for us Christians to be convinced; we must also be convincing. Our actions are called to reflect, joyfully and radically, the beauty of the Gospel.

Vatican.va

Commitment

Pope John Paul II, 21-04-1985

Contemporary civilisation is permeated with different currents – not only Christian ones, but also anti-Christian, non-Christian, non-religious and anti-religious ones. ... This situation needs commitment if it is to be overcome: the commitment of all Christians who are aware of what it means to be a Christian.

Agenda for the Third Millennium, p.2

A Marvellous Transformation

St Louis De Montfort, in *The Secret of Mary*

God wants you to become holy like him in this life, and glorious like him in the next. It is certain that growth in the holiness of God is your vocation. All your thoughts, words, actions, everything you suffer or undertake must lead you towards that end. ...

What a marvellous transformation is possible! Dust into light, uncleanness into purity, sinfulness into holiness, creature into Creator, man into God! A marvellous work, I repeat, so difficult in itself, and even impossible for a mere creature to bring about, for only God can accomplish it by giving his grace abundantly and in an extraordinary manner. The very creation of the universe is not as great an achievement as this. ...

What steps will you take to reach the high level to which God is calling you? The means of holiness and salvation are known to everybody, since they are found in the gospel; the masters of the spiritual life have explained them; the saints have practised them and shown how essential they are for those who wish to be saved and attain perfection.

These means are: sincere humility, unceasing prayer, complete self-denial, abandonment to divine Providence, and obedience to the will of God.

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

Fr Speekman's Book

Thank you to all who have purchased Fr Speekman's book so far. I trust you have enjoyed it! Please let me know your thoughts after having read it. I would love to share your impressions with others.

Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime costs only \$15, and postage starts at only \$3. Contact me for further details and to place your order.

For more information about *Things Serious, Silly and Sublime* and for excerpts from the book, see Jan/Feb ITD p.10, and page 3 of all issues of ITD since March 2023.

Proceeds from the sale of the book at this stage go to ITD, thanks to Fr Speekman, so you have twice the reason to buy the book! Thanks for your support.

Ed.

He Has a Knack

I read Fr Speekman's book yesterday in one sitting. Much of the time I was smiling while turning the pages – and even laughing out loud at other times, scaring my dog.

Other parts certainly got my attention. In the past I have tried to think some of these items through in my head but just didn't have the words or couldn't put them in the right order. He has a knack.

Christina Maddy, Indiana, USA

Final "Arrest"

From the book, *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*
by Fr John Speekman, p.23

Ring! Ring!

Hello, this is Fr Speekman.

Yeah, hello, are you the Catholic chaplain?

Yes, I am.

Oh, good. Right. Well, I'm Jason, a nurse on 12 West 1 and I have a patient here who's failing fast. The family would like you to come in as soon as possible and read him his Last Rights.

No problem, Jason. I'll be there in 10 minutes.

Cool. Thanks.

The Blurb

From the back of the book

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.

He Inspires Us

It is Sunday afternoon and I have just re-read Father John Speekman's little book *Things Serious, Silly and Sublime* (in the life of a Catholic priest).

I can't seem to put into words what I feel about this book. I love it. What a joy to walk along with him, as he shares his deep faith and carefully carries out his work for the glory of God. He really does inspire us to appreciate the love of our God and to share what we know with others.

Well done, Father. Looking forward to the next book.

Helen Palma, Morwell, Victoria

Get One Free!

During September and October, EVERY person who donates \$100 to ITD will receive a FREE copy of *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*.

This is in anticipation of ITD's birthday month, October, when ITD will be 21 years old! Many ITD readers donate generously around our birthday month, and this is a way to thank you more than usual, with a free copy of Fr Speekman's book.

The winner of the free copy from July/August for writing a review of *TSSS* is Helen Palma of Morwell. Congratulations, Helen!

Ed.

The Joy of Knowing God's Will

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily 30-08-2009

Today's First Reading from the *Book of Deuteronomy* offers us important details... We are listening here to something that we may find surprising: God himself asks Israel to be grateful and to feel humbly proud of knowing God's will and therefore of being wise.

[Moses said to the people: 'Now, Israel, take notice of the laws and customs that I teach you today, and observe them, that you may have life and may enter and take possession of the land that the Lord the God of your fathers is giving you. You must add nothing to what I command you, and take nothing from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God just as I lay them down for you. Keep them, observe them, and they will demonstrate to the peoples your wisdom and understanding. When they come to know of all these laws they will exclaim, "No other people is as wise and prudent as this great nation." And indeed, what great nation is there that has its gods so near as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call to him? And what great nation is there that has laws and customs to match this whole Law that I put before you today?' Deut 4:1-2, 6-8]

In that very period, humanity, in both the Greek and Semitic contexts, was seeking wisdom: it was seeking to understand what matters. Science says many things, and many aspects of it are useful to us, but wisdom is knowledge of the essential, knowledge of the aim of our life and of how we should live in order to live life in the best possible way.

The Reading from *Deuteronomy* mentions the fact that wisdom, in the final analysis, is identical to the Torah, to the Word of God that reveals to us what is essential, for what purpose and in what way we should live. Thus, the Law does not appear as a form of slavery, but is, as the great Psalm 119 states, a cause of great joy: we do not grope in the dark, we do not wander in vain seeking what might be righteous, we are not like sheep without a shepherd who do not know which is the right path. God has manifested himself. He himself shows us the way. We know his will and with it, the truth that counts in our life.

We are told two things about God: on the one hand, that he manifested himself and that he shows us the right path to take; on the other, that God is a God who listens, who is close to us, answers us and guides us. With this we also come to the topic of purity: his will purifies us, his closeness guides us.

I believe that it is worth reflecting for a moment on Israel's joy at knowing God's will and thus having received as a gift, wisdom which heals us and which we cannot find on our own. Is there among us, in the Church today, a similar sentiment of joy at God's closeness and at the gift of his Word? Anyone who wished to show this joy would soon be accused of triumphalism. In fact, it is not our ability that shows us God's true will. It is an undeserved gift that makes us at the same time humble and glad.

If we reflect on the world's perplexity in the face of the great issues of the present and the future, joy should arise again within us at the fact that God has freely shown us his Face, his will, himself. Should this joy manifest itself again in us it would also move the hearts of non-believers. Without this joy we are not convincing. However, where this joy is present even involuntarily it has a missionary power. Indeed, it makes human beings wonder if this might not truly be the way, if this joy might not effectively guide us in God's footsteps.

Vatican.va

Thank You

I've been receiving ITD by email for years, and look forward to each production. I would like to purchase Fr John Speekman's book please, and am enclosing this cheque for payment – the balance is a donation.

P.M., Capel Sound, Victoria

Old Age

Our society looks down on old age, linking it with the past and the obsolete, but old age is the future for all of us. To honour the elderly today is to prepare the future dignity with which we aspire to be treated.

Declaration of the Abrahamic Religions: Elderly persons in contemporary society and their protection

A Movie to Watch

Sound of Freedom is a movie worth watching. It's not exactly entertainment, but it's very much worth watching. It's about child sex trafficking, and the courage of a few good men to do something about it.

The movie was released on 4 July 2023 by Angel Studios (who release The Chosen series) and has already become "one of the most successful independent films in history. It has grossed \$179 million against a \$14.5 million budget. It received mixed reviews from critics, while audience reception has been highly positive." (Wikipedia). It was released in Australia late August.

I encourage everyone to go and see the movie while it's in cinema, at the very least to show the movie-world that films of substance and moral courage are worth screening and people will come.

The film is based on the true story of family man Timothy Ballard, a U.S. Special Agent who used to work on finding people who possessed and distributed child pornography, before turning his attention to trying to rescue the children involved, starting with one little boy and his and sister who were taken to Colombia. The movie uncovers a world of child trafficking and sex slavery (without requiring any graphic or explicit scenes of abuse or violence). Tim's motivation for his search is the thought – what if it were your own child?

At the end of the movie are shocking statistics on the growth of the pornography 'industry' and children trafficked as sex slaves. There are currently more slaves in the world than when slavery was legal. There is a message by actor Jim Caviezel during the credits indicating that the intent of the movie is to ultimately bring the child sex trade to an end. "God's children are not for sale" is a line that recurs in the movie. "Sound of freedom" is a reference to the sound of children playing and chattering after being rescued.

Ed.

Behind Every Addiction

Pope Francis, to Forensic Toxicologists, 27-08-2023

Adolescence and youth, as we know, are particularly delicate phases in a person's life, characterized by considerable physical, emotional and social changes. Added to this is the fact that our current societies are in many ways fragile and marked by an underlying insecurity. ...

Thus, disoriented and often deprived of points of reference, many young people pursue the illusion of finding in drug use a reprieve from anguish and lack of meaning: it is the "vain hope" of a stupefaction that relieves them of the fatigue of being and existing, often concealed under the disguise of a desire for escape and fun. We cannot forget, then, that behind every addiction there are concrete experiences, stories of loneliness, inequality, exclusion, lack of integration. Faced with these situations, we cannot be indifferent. The Lord Jesus paused, drew near, healed wounds. In the style of his closeness, we too are called to act, to pause before situations of fragility and pain, to know how to listen to the cry of loneliness and anguish, to stoop to lift up and bring back to life those who fall into the slavery of drugs.

Vatican.va

The Cardinal Virtues

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1833 Virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good.

1834 The human virtues are stable dispositions of the intellect and the will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct in accordance with reason and faith. They can be grouped around the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

1835 *Prudence* disposes the practical reason to discern, in every circumstance, our true good and to choose the right means for achieving it.

1836 *Justice* consists in the firm and constant will to give God and neighbour their due.

1837 *Fortitude* ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good.

1838 *Temperance* moderates the attraction of the pleasures of the senses and provides balance in the use of created goods.

1839 The moral virtues grow through education, deliberate acts, and perseverance in struggle. Divine grace purifies and elevates them.

Sacred Acts

The article on celibacy (August ITD, p.4) raises crucial issues. Celibacy clearly relates to a particular attitude to sexuality. Pope Francis is concerned about priestly celibacy and the alleged connection with child abuse in the Church. Pope Francis acknowledges the problem of clerical child abuse, but notes the clear evidence that the problem also affects families.

The church founded by Jesus achieves redemptive action by means of the sacraments, two of which, Orders and Marriage, are vocational. Certainly, celibacy is part of life for a Catholic priest. After being accepted by a bishop, the applicant completes a seminary course to achieve ordination. The ordained seminarian consummates his priesthood by celebrating Mass, which includes the sacred act of confecting bread and wine to produce the Body and Blood of Jesus. People contemplating marriage spend time getting to know each other, and knowing their differences, until they reach a point at which they agree to spend their lives together. Marriage is the one sacrament not administered by a priest, for the couple administer the sacrament to each other. They consummate their marriage by sexual intercourse, a sacred act, responding to the commandment given by God to Adam, Eve, and later Noah and his sons: 'Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth'. So, God made clear his plan for continuing creation even after severely punishing the man and the woman for their Fall.

On the other hand, Satan is very active in attacking God's plan for creation, which includes both vocational sacraments. Pope Francis refers to the attack on priestly celibacy. With regard to marriage, Satan has used pleasure to override purpose. For example, a compliant media provides saturation coverage of bikini-clad women to attract attention to that media and whatever the media is trying to sell. This is rarely marriage; but these feminine portrayals make clear that women are especially made for motherhood. Indeed, sometimes breast-feeding women are included in the mix and these clearly display a positive response to God's commandment to be fruitful. Indeed, there have for centuries been classical portrayals by skillful artists of Mother Mary breastfeeding her newborn son Jesus. Moreover, Pope Francis has recently encouraged mothers to breastfeed their babies while attending events and ceremonies taking place in the Sistine chapel. In short, attractions to prudery have tended to cloud over the wonders of God's creation. And the sacrament of marriage involves the use of sacred acts directed towards this continuation of God's act of creation.

John Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria

The Theological Virtues

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1840 The theological virtues dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity. They have God for their origin, their motive, and their object – God known by faith, God hoped in, and loved for his own sake.

1841 There are three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. They inform all the moral virtues and give life to them.

1842 By *faith*, we believe in God and believe all that he has revealed to us and that Holy Church proposes for our belief.

1843 By *hope* we desire, and with steadfast trust await from God, eternal life and the graces to merit it.

1844 By *charity*, we love God above all things and our neighbour as ourselves for love of God. Charity, the form of all the virtues, "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col 3:14).

March for the Babies

The 2023 March for the Babies will be held on **Saturday, October 7th**, as a peaceful walk from Treasury Gardens to Melbourne Parliament House. Start organising your family and friends now.

Marchforthebabies.com

Original Grace

Pope Francis, Angelus address 08-12-2022

We talk a lot about original sin, but we have also received an original grace, of which often we are unaware. What is it, this original grace? It is what we received on the day of our Baptism, which is why it is good for us to remember, and even celebrate it! ... because that day is the day of the great grace, of a new life beginning, of an original grace that we have. God descended into our lives that day, and we became his beloved children forever. This is our original beauty, for which to be joyful! ...

We can grasp this through the image of the white Baptismal garment; it reminds us that, beyond the evil we have stained ourselves with over the years, there is a good in us greater than all the evils that have befallen. Let us listen to the echo, let us hear God saying to us: "Son, daughter, I love you and I am with you always, you are important to me, your life is precious". That is God's message to us. When things do not go well and we are discouraged, when we are downcast and risk feeling useless or wrong, let us think about this, about this original grace. And God is with us, God is with me from that day. ...

Entrust Yourself to Mary

But we know this from experience too, all of us: it takes effort to choose good, it costs us; it takes effort to safeguard the good that is in us. Think of how many times we have squandered it by giving in to the lure of evil, being crafty for our own interests or doing something that would defile our hearts; or even wasting time in useless or harmful things, putting off prayer, for example, and saying "Today I can't", or saying "I can't" to those who have needed us, when instead we could have.

But today, faced with all this, we have good news: Mary, the only human being in history without sin, is with us in the battle, she is our sister and, above all, our Mother. And we, who struggle to choose good, can *entrust ourselves to her*. By entrusting ourselves, consecrating ourselves to Mary, we say to her: "Take me by the hand, Mother, guide me: with you I will have more strength in the battle against evil; with you I will rediscover my original beauty".

Let us entrust ourselves to Mary today, let us entrust ourselves to Mary every day, repeating to her: "Mary, I entrust my life to you, I entrust my family, my work, I entrust my heart and my struggles. I consecrate myself to you".

Vatican.va

Not a Memory of the Past

Pope Francis, Angelus address 27-08-2023

Today in the Gospel, Jesus asks the disciples a good question: "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" It is a question we too can ask: what do the people say about Jesus? In general, good things: many see him as a great teacher, as a special person: good, righteous, consistent, courageous. But is this enough to understand who He is, and above all, is it enough for Jesus? It seems not. ... Therefore, immediately afterwards, the Lord asks the disciples the decisive question: "But who do you – you! – say that I am?" Who am I for you, now? Jesus does not want to be a key figure from past history; He wants to be an important person for you today, for me today; not a distant prophet: Jesus wants to be the God who is close to us!

Christ, brothers and sisters, is not a memory of the past, but the God of the present. If He were merely an historic figure, to imitate Him today would be impossible: we would find ourselves faced with the great chasm of time, and above all, faced with his model, which is like a very high, unscalable mountain; we would want to climb it, but lack the ability and the necessary means.

Instead, Jesus is living: let us remember this, Jesus is living, Jesus lives in the Church, He lives in the world, Jesus accompanies us, Jesus is by our side, He offers us His Word, He offers us His grace, which enlighten and refresh us on the journey.

Vatican.va

Just Call Me Joe

Recently in the Catechism in a Year podcast, Fr Mike Schmitz was dealing with the sacrament of Holy Orders. What surprised and really floored me, was that one of the first things he mentioned with regards to the sacrament of Holy Orders, was priests who insist on being called by their first name, like Joe or Pete, rather than Father Joseph and Father Peter. I thought wow, you must have read my mind, Fr Mike!

I find it difficult to fathom why any man who has trained and studied for the best part of seven years, and has made Jesus Christ, the one, true and heavenly High Priest, the only meaning of his life, would after ordination, exercise his priestly office denying the effects of the sacrament; would be blasé about who and what he has become through the power and grace of the Holy Spirit in the Church and the world.

Especially when you know that his lecturers would have taught him that theologically and sacramentally ordination changes him at the very core of his being and imprints an indelible spiritual character on him permanently; that he has undergone a sacramental change and has been endowed with special power and grace to administer the sacraments of the Church as if it were Christ, the Head, himself doing it.

As the Catechism tells us (1148-1149), he acts in the person of Christ and like him, is a visible image of God the Father.

Becoming a priest of the new and everlasting covenant means he can never go back to being Joe Blow or Pete, even though he still appears the same.

It really grates me when bishops and priests act this way! Because these same bishops and priests, who have lost sight of who and what they have become through the sacrament, have also lost sight of what the Church is and who it is they have been configured to for service. The old Joe and Pete are not stewards of the mysteries of Christ, their words haven't got the power of the Holy Spirit to effect grace and make Jesus Christ present in the Church and the world.

Many of these bishops and priests who encourage, and at times insist on being called by their first names rather than Father, are the same ones who have abdicated their fatherly authority and responsibility; some discarding their collar and clericals and resembling the world rather than God's kingdom.

They forget that they have not been sacramentally transformed for themselves, as some reward for seven years of hard training and study, but to serve the body Christ, to bring and lead people entrusted to their pastoral care, and all over the world, into communion with the God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

And even more tragically, they are often the ones who would personalize the celebration of the Mass as if it were theirs, and exercise their hierarchical office in the Church according to their own liking, tastes and wishes.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

Change the Focus

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

If you will whatever God wills, you will always have exactly what you want.

When you want anything else, you are not happy before you get it, and when you do get it, you do not want it. That is why you are 'up' today and 'down' tomorrow.

You will never be happy if your happiness depends on getting solely what you want.

Change the focus. Get a new centre. Will what God wills, and your joy no man shall take from you.

Almighty God,

who knows our necessities before we ask,
and our ignorance in asking:

Set free your servants

from all anxious thoughts for the morrow;

give us contentment with your good gifts;

and confirm our faith so that,

according as we seek your Kingdom,

you will not suffer us to lack any good thing,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

St Augustine

Our Lady of Sorrows

Feast Day 15 September

The Seven Dolors (Sorrows) of the Blessed Virgin Mary According to a form approved by Pope Pius VII (1815)

V. O God, come to my assistance;

R. O Lord, make haste to help me

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hail Mary...

1. The Prophecy of Simeon (Luke 2:34-35)

I grieve for you, O Mary, most sorrowful, in the affliction of your tender heart at the prophecy of the holy and aged Simeon. Dear Mother, by your heart so afflicted, obtain for me the virtue of humility and the gift of the holy fear of God. *Hail Mary...*

2. The Flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-21)

I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in the anguish of your most affectionate heart during the flight into Egypt and your sojourn there. Dear Mother, by your heart so troubled, obtain for me the virtue of generosity, especially toward the poor, and the gift of piety. *Hail Mary...*

3. The Loss of Jesus for Three Days (Luke 2:41-50)

I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in those anxieties which tried your troubled heart at the lost of your dear Jesus. Dear Mother, by your heart so full of anguish, obtain for me the virtue of chastity and the gift of knowledge. *Hail Mary...*

4. The Carrying of the Cross (John 19:17)

I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in the consternation of your heart at meeting Jesus as He carried His cross. Dear Mother, by your heart so troubled, obtain for me the virtue of patience and the gift of fortitude. *Hail Mary...*

5. The Crucifixion of Jesus (John 19:18-30)

I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in the martyrdom which your generous heart endured in standing near Jesus in His agony. Dear Mother, by your afflicted heart, obtain for me the virtue of temperance and the gift of counsel. *Hail Mary...*

6. Jesus Taken Down from the Cross (John 19:39-40)

I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in the wounding of your compassionate heart, when the side of Jesus was struck by the lance before His Body was removed from the cross. Dear Mother, by your heart thus transfixed, obtain for me the virtue of fraternal charity and the gift of understanding. *Hail Mary...*

7. Jesus Laid in the Tomb (John 19:39-42)

I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, for the pangs that wrenched your most loving heart at the burial of Jesus. Dear Mother, by your heart sunk in the bitterness of desolation, obtain for me the virtue of diligence and the gift of wisdom. *Hail Mary...*

Let Us Pray: Let intercession be made for us, we beseech You, O Lord Jesus Christ, now and at the Hour of our death, before the throne of Your mercy, by the Blessed Virgin Mary, Your Mother, whose most holy soul was pierced by a sword of sorrow in the hour of Your bitter Passion. Through You, O Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world, Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

Ewtn.com

Seven Promises for Seven Sorrows

Our Lady presented seven promises to 14th-century mystic St Bridget of Sweden. She asked that the faithful pray at least one Hail Mary in honour of each sword of sorrow. One must pray seven Hail Mary's daily to obtain these graces.

Our Lady's Seven Promises for praying seven Hail Mary's in honour of her Seven Sorrows:

1. "I will grant peace to their families."
2. "They will be enlightened about the divine Mysteries."
3. "I will console them in their pains and I will accompany them in their work."
4. "I will give them as much as they ask for as long as it does not oppose the adorable will of My divine Son or the sanctification of their souls."
5. "I will defend them in their spiritual battles with the infernal enemy and I will protect them at every instant of their lives."
6. "I will visibly help them at the moment of their death – they will see the face of their Mother."
7. "I have obtained this grace from My divine Son, that those who propagate this devotion to My tears and sorrows will be taken directly from this earthly life to eternal happiness, since all their sins will be forgiven and My Son will be their eternal consolation and joy."

Ewtn.co.uk

Liberal Parish

My husband and I were in Melbourne recently and attended Saturday night Mass at St Columba Parish in Elwood. They were celebrating First Holy Communion on this particular weekend.

We sat further back from the middle of the church and it was difficult to hear the priest over the noise in the church with people chatting while the priest was speaking, as he only had the small microphone attached to his collar.

For a celebration such as First Holy Communion the priest wasn't wearing the appropriate vestments for Mass. He remained in the white alb with a decorative stole.

There was some reference to the first nations people at the start.

The words of the Gloria and Creed were changed to words to accommodate the children.

After the Gospel he gathered all the children around him, and read them the story 'The Frog and The Toad', and subtly preached on the first nations people, leaning towards the yes vote. Mass is no place to get political. I failed to understand the connection between the story book and Matthew's Gospel 16:13-20, where Jesus asks Peter, 'Who do you say I am?'

He asked for the Communicants and their families to come up for Communion first and then the rest of the congregation. As I was approaching the priest, I noticed the families talking amongst themselves; there was no reverence or quiet before, during or after Holy Communion. I felt I was in a concert hall. They were unaware Who it was they received and lacked respect, reverence and prayer. It truly was disappointing to think the priest is ok with his congregation behaving this way during Mass. What lessons did the first Communicants receive?

Why don't priests keep the Mass as it should be, without changing or adding to it. Catholics should be able to attend a Catholic church anywhere and hear a holy Mass.

This experience has certainly made me appreciate the Ordinariate Mass in the small town of Cowwarr, where I know I will be led in truth in a spiritual and holy way.

Josie Vitale, Morwell, Victoria

When People Walk Away from the Mass

Fr Mike Schmitz, in *Catechism in a Year*, Day 150

What has been lost when people have walked away from the Mass, is – yes, you have times of prayer; yes, you have times of song; you have times of Scripture being proclaimed; all of those things are good … – but if we walk away from the Mass, if we walk away from the Eucharistic liturgy, we’re walking away from this *thing that happens*, this gift that we’ve been given that makes the very events that saved us, present to us.

When you and I go in to Mass, regardless of whether it’s maybe quiet, or you might say boring or ordinary, or with organ and schola and incense … and everything in-between – what’s happening at every Mass is the saving events, the events of salvation are made present to us – we’re present to them. As I said the other day, that heaven and earth touch; time and eternity kiss. At every Mass, we are presented to heaven, we are presented to the Lord himself. We are participating in those mysteries. And again, that’s the tragedy of when someone walks away from the Mass.

At the Mass the Paschal mystery of Christ is celebrated (not repeated – remember it’s a once for all sacrifice; Jesus died once for all; he rose from the dead once; so this is celebrated, it’s not repeated – the celebrations are repeated) – and in each celebration there’s an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that makes the unique mystery present. Every time you and I go to Mass – again, it can be just you and the priest, or it could be World Youth Day, where a million people gather to worship – the outpouring of the Holy Spirit makes the unique mystery of the saving events of Jesus Christ present to us.

And now highlighting the epiclesis – the epiclesis is that moment in the Mass where the priest extends his hands over the gifts and prays for outpouring of the Holy Spirit to make these gifts a holy offering. So the epiclesis “is the intercession by which the priest begs the Father to send the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, so that the offerings may become the Body and Blood of Christ” (Catechism, 1105).

If you are familiar with the Mass, where they ring bells… the first time is when the priest extends his hands over the gifts, and that is the epiclesis. So that’s where we’re begging the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon the gifts. And this is key.

Go all the way back to Saint John Damascene who says this: “You ask why the bread becomes the Body of Christ and the wine the Blood of Christ. I shall tell you. The Holy Spirit comes upon them and accomplishes what surpasses every word and thought.” (Catechism, 1106) He even makes the connection, he says it is very, very similar, maybe even the same action, in some ways, as when the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Son of God became incarnate in her womb. …

Well, the Holy Spirit comes upon the bread and wine, and what happens is they are transformed into the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. And that’s so incredible!

[Transcribed from the Podcast - Ed.]

By the Power of the Holy Spirit

St John Damascene

You ask how the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and the wine…the Blood of Christ. I shall tell you: the Holy Spirit comes upon them and accomplishes what surpasses every word and thought. … Let it be enough for you to understand that it is by the Holy Spirit, just as it was of the Holy Virgin and by the Holy Spirit that the Lord, through and in himself, took flesh.

Quoted in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, para 1106

To Live Well

St Augustine

To live well is nothing other than to love God with all one's heart, with all one's soul and with all one's efforts; from this it comes about that

love is kept whole and uncorrupted (through *temperance*).

No misfortune can disturb it (and this is *fortitude*).

It obeys only [God] (and this is *justice*),

and is careful in discerning things, so as not to be surprised by deceit or trickery (and this is *prudence*).

Are All Saved?

By Fr John Flader, 25-08-2023, The Catholic Weekly

Q. Someone recently mentioned a book by David Bentley Hart which argues that there is no one in hell and all are saved.

A. The book you mention is *That All Shall Be Saved: Heaven, Hell, and Universal Salvation*, published in 2019. The author was raised an Anglican, converted to Eastern Orthodoxy at the age of 21 and is now a research scholar at the University of Notre Dame in the US.

In this book he maintains that the salvation of all is something that one may not only be hopeful about, as proposed by Karl Rahner, Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar among others, but that it is absolutely certain. Yes, he says, all are saved. All. This position is unacceptable.

A recent comprehensive defence of the traditional Catholic teaching on the question is fellow-theologian Michael McClymond's monumental two-volume work *The Devil's Redemption: A New History and Interpretation of Christian Universalism*, published by Baker Academic in 2018. Universalism, by the way, is the idea that all are saved, with no one in hell.

McClymond says in an article on Hart's book: "His work is a personal statement of 214 pages, without footnotes or source citations, and with minimal reference to the complex historical debates over universalism. My work runs to 1,325 pages, cites more than 3,000 sources, and contains some 3,500 footnotes." Anyone interested in going deeper into this question should read McClymond's book.

McClymond says that in 2015, when he was engaged in email exchanges with Hart over universalism, he told Hart that "the overwhelming majority (perhaps 10-to-1) of the early Christian authors – Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Coptic – were not universalists. In an email response, David wrote that he was more concerned with truth itself than with precedent or authority – though he believed that at least some authorities supported his views. He added that if an eternal hell were a necessary part of Christian teaching, then for him this would mean that Christianity itself would be self-evidently false."

This statement of Hart is truly extraordinary, given that Christ himself often spoke of hell and its eternity. For example, "And they [the damned] will go away into eternal punishment" (Mt 25:46). Christ spoke too of the "unquenchable fire" (Mk 9:44; 9:48). What is more, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states categorically: "The teaching of the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity" (CCC 1035).

As I wrote in *Question Time 4*, question 484, the church has always taught that not all are saved. In 1547 the Council of Trent, in its Decree on Justification, solemnly declared: "Although it is true that 'He died for all' (2Cor 5:15), not all, however, receive the benefit of his death, but only those to whom the merit of his Passion is communicated" (Dz 795).

And in 1549, Pope Pius II condemned the proposition that "all Christians must be saved" (Dz 717b). St Peter gives the justification for this teaching: "If the righteous man is scarcely to be saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?" (1Pet 4:18).

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (prior to his pontificate) explains why not all are saved: "God never, in any case, forces anyone to be saved. God accepts man's freedom. He is no magician, who will in the end wipe out everything that has happened and wheel out his happy ending. He is a true father; a creator who assents to freedom, even when it is used to reject him. That is why God's all-embracing desire to save people does not involve the actual salvation of all men. He allows us the power to refuse. God loves us; we need only to summon up the humility to allow ourselves to be loved" (*God is Near Us*, Ignatius 2003, pp. 36-37).

While the church has never defined the question of the relative numbers of those saved and damned, the majority of the eastern fathers, among them Sts Irenaeus, Basil, Cyril of Jerusalem, and John Chrysostom, taught that the majority were damned. Also of this view were great thinkers like St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas, Francisco Suarez, St Peter Canisius and St Robert Bellarmine. This is a far cry from arguing that all are saved.

Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland, Victoria

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 10am-11am (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 10am - 11am Mass
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

In Public and Private Life

Pope Benedict XVI, 16-08-2005

In public life, it is important that God be present, for example, through the cross on public buildings, and that he be present in our community life, for only if God is present do we have an orientation, a common direction; otherwise, disputes become impossible to settle, for our common dignity is no longer recognized.

Let us make God great in public and in private life.

This means making room for God in our lives every day, starting in the morning with prayers, and then dedicating time to God, giving Sundays to God.

We do not waste our free time if we offer it to God. If God enters into our time, all time becomes greater, roomier, richer.

Vatican.va

“One’s everyday life ought to be
both a preparation and a
thanksgiving for Communion.”

St John Vianney

Contact *Into the Deep*

www.stoneswillshout.com

stoneswillshout@bigpond.com

12 Vincent Road, Morwell, Vic, 3840, Australia

 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