

Into the Deep

Issue 251

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

November 2024

Mercy

Pope Francis, to clergy, consecrated persons and pastoral workers, Brussels, 28-09-2024

The Gospel, embraced and shared, received and given, leads us to joy because it makes us discover that God is the Father of mercy, who is moved to compassion for us, who lifts us up when we fall and who never withdraws his love from us.

It should be fixed in our hearts that *God never withdraws his love from us.*

"But is he Father even when I have done something serious?". God never withdraws his love from you.

This can sometimes seem "unjust", when we are faced with the experience of evil. This is because we simply apply an earthly justice that says, "Whoever does wrong must pay". Yet God's justice is greater: those who have done wrong are called to right their wrongs. But they need God's merciful love to heal their hearts.

Vatican.va

Pray for Them

Catechism of the Catholic Church

958 *Communion with the dead.*

In full consciousness of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Church in its pilgrim members, from the very earliest days of the Christian religion, has honoured with great respect the memory of the dead; and because it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins she offers her suffrages for them.

Our prayer for them is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective.

Joy

Pope Francis, to clergy, consecrated persons and pastoral workers, Brussels, 28-09-2024

[Joy] is a gift that comes from above, from God. It is the joy of hearts kindled by the Gospel. It is knowing that we are not alone on our journey and that even in situations of poverty, sin, and affliction, God is near. He cares for us and will not allow death to have the last word. God is close.

Long before he became pope, Joseph Ratzinger wrote that one particular rule of discernment is, "Where joy is lacking, and humour dies, not even the Holy Spirit remains [...] and vice versa: Joy is a sign of grace" (*The God of Jesus Christ, Brescia 1978, 129*). How beautiful!

Thus, I would like to say to you: let your preaching, your celebrations, your service and apostolates radiate the joy of your hearts, for this will stir up questions and attract even those who are far away. The joy that comes from the heart, not a fake smile that is fleeting, rather the joy that comes from the heart. ... When fidelity seems difficult, we must show...that it is the "path to happiness". Then, by focussing on where the road leads, we are more willing to begin the journey.

Vatican.va

May the souls of the
faithful departed,
through the mercy of God,
rest in peace.
Amen

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

No More Donations Thank You

As I mentioned in last month's ITD (Oct, p.2), please hold off on any further donations to ITD as I'm thinking of finishing up ITD when the current donations run out, likely to be towards the end of 2025. Thanks as always for your support.

Ed.

More Please!

God works in marvellous ways – you know, I have been praying for Father John Speekman for many, many years. I had never met him, but was told all those years ago that he needed prayer.... and so I did.... And just by me wanting to know where he now was, and googling his name, I found you and his book – and ordered 4 copies. I received them today and have read it – today, cover to cover, and realise now – just what a wonderful priest God has in him.

So, I have already deposited money for another 4 books please. Great little Christmas gift!

Gail Sacca, Melbourne, Victoria

Common Language

In the last two issues (Sept & Oct ITD, p.2) I wrote about how many Biblical or Christian words and phrases have made it into everyday conversation, in spite of generally non-religious society/media. Thanks to those who have added to the collection.

So far we've had: A good Samaritan, the Golden Rule/Do unto others, Thou shalt not, David and Goliath, the prodigal son, the Ten Commandments, Noah's Ark, Amen, Alleluia, to 'crucify' someone, seek and ye shall find, calling someone a Judas, moving heaven and earth, Thou shalt not kill, Love thy neighbour, suffer the children, God-given talents, God's own country, and a Hail Mary kick.

New ones to add:

The Twelve Apostles

Let there be light

Extend an olive branch

A cardinal sin

Let me know of any others you can think of.

Ed.

Special Offer! See p.11 for a special offer on Fr Speekman's book for Christmas! - Ed.

The Bond of Unity

Pope Francis, General Audience, 09-10-2024

Saint Augustine explains the unity achieved by the Holy Spirit with an image, which has become classic: "How the soul is of the body of man is the holy Spirit of the body of Christ, which is the Church".

The image helps us to understand something important. The Holy Spirit does not create the unity of the Church from the outside; He does not limit Himself to commanding us to be united. He Himself is the "bond of unity". It is He who creates the unity of the Church.

As always, we will conclude with a thought that helps us to pass from the Church as a whole to each one of us. The unity of the Church is the unity between people and is not achieved on the drawing board, but in life. It is implemented in life. We all want unity, we all desire it from the depths of our heart; and yet it is so difficult to attain that, even within marriage and the family, union and concord are among the most difficult things to achieve and even harder to maintain.

The reason why unity among us is difficult is that, yes, everyone wants unity, but based on one's own point of view, without considering that the other person in front of him thinks exactly the same thing about his "own" point of view. In this way, unity becomes even more elusive. The unity life, the unity of Pentecost, according to the Spirit, is achieved when one makes the effort to put God, not oneself, at the centre. Christian unity is built in this way too: not waiting for others to reach us where we are, but moving together towards Christ.

Vatican.va

Counting on the Saints

Pope Francis, Angelus address 01-11-2023

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. In the light of this feast day, let us pause and think a little on holiness, in particular on two of the characteristics of true holiness: it is a *gift* – it is a gift, it cannot be bought – and at the same time it is a *journey*. A *gift* and a *journey*.

First of all, a *gift*. Holiness is a gift from God which we have received with Baptism: if we let it grow, it can completely change our life. Saints are not unreachable or distant heroes, but people like us, our friends, whose starting point is the same gift we have received: Baptism. Indeed, if we think about it, we have certainly met some of them, some everyday saints: some righteous person, someone who lives the Christian life seriously, with simplicity... they are those I like to call "the saints next door", who live normally among us.

Holiness is a gift offered to everyone for a happy life. And after all, when we receive a gift, what is our first reaction? It is precisely that we are happy, because it means that someone loves us; and the gift of holiness makes us happy because God loves us.

But every gift, however, must be accepted, and it carries with it the responsibility of a response, a "thank you". But how can we say this "thank you"? It is an invitation to commit oneself so that it is not squandered.

All the baptized have received the same calling to hold on to and complete in our lives the holiness we have received. This is how we come to the second point – holiness is also a *journey*, a journey to be made together, helping each other, united with those excellent companions who are the Saints.

They are our elder brothers and our sisters, on whom we can always count: the saints support us and, when we take a wrong turn along the way, with their silent presence they never fail to correct us; they are sincere friends, whom we can trust, because they desire our wellbeing. In their lives we find an example, in their prayers we receive help and friendship, and with them we are bound in a bond of brotherly love.

Holiness is a journey, it is a gift. So, we can ask ourselves: do I remember having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, who calls me to holiness and helps me arrive there? Do I thank the Holy Spirit for this, for the gift of holiness? Do I feel that the saints are close to me, do I talk to them, do I turn to them? Do I know the story of some of them?

It is good for us to know the lives of the saints and to be moved by their examples. And it does us a great deal of good to address them in prayer.

May Mary, Queen of all Saints, make us feel the joy of the gift received and increase in us the desire for the eternal destination.

Vatican.va

All the Works of Mercy Together

St Francis de Sales

To assist the souls in Purgatory is to perform the most excellent of the works of mercy, or rather it is to practice in a most sublime manner all the works of mercy together: it is to visit the sick; it is to give drink to those who thirst for the vision of God; it is to feed the hungry, to ransom prisoners, to clothe the naked, to procure for poor exiles the hospitality of the heavenly Jerusalem; it is to comfort the afflicted, to instruct the ignorant.

Open to Children

Pope Francis, Angelus address 06-10-2024

Let us not forget, also, that for spouses it is essential to be open to the gift of life, to the gift of children, that are the most beautiful fruit of love, the greatest blessing from God, a source of joy and hope for every home and all of society. Have children! ... Please, be open to life, to what God may send you.

Dear brothers and sisters, love is demanding, yes, but it is beautiful, and the more we allow ourselves to be involved by it, the more we discover true happiness in it.

Vatican.va

Another Catholic Educational Fiasco

Recently the digital media, and to some extent the printed media, was stunned and in shock and horror reporting that Mr Joe de Bruyn, a Catholic, had the audacity to speak about the Gospel of Life at a Catholic university graduation ceremony. Apparently the former national president of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association and member of the National Executive of the Australian Labor Party, was conferred an honorary doctorate by the Australian Catholic University in recognition of his dedication to the rights of workers, educational advancement, and improving social welfare.

According to most news reports, his speech was "going well" until Mr de Bruyn spoke about his work within the Labor party to oppose abortion, IVF for single women, and same sex marriage, which sparked a major walkout by staff, students and families from the audience and faculty members from the stage.

Initially when I read about this, I wasn't perturbed at all, because for decades the majority of Catholic educational institutions, be they primary, secondary or tertiary, have been anything but Catholic.

Interestingly however, what struck me about this so-called 'shock horror' story was that it sounded very similar to the one in the Gospel according to St John, in his 'Bread of Life discourse' in Chapter 6, where Jesus confronted his audience and disciples with the absolute command to eat his flesh and drink his blood if they want his life to remain in them; and when some of his audience and disciples walked away in disgust, he didn't call them back or water down his command, but doubled down on it.

And this is what annoyed and disappointed me the most about the Joe de Bruyn incident. Instead of the university apologising publicly to Mr de Bruyn for the rude and uncharitable behaviour shown by students and faculty members, the student union demanded an apology from him. Two days later the university offered some lame statement of regret and offered a refund of ticket fees and free counselling for those offended! Furthermore, there have been few in the Church who have come to Mr de Bruyn's aid and defence publicly, or have commended him for his courageous witness to the truths of the Gospel and evangelising efforts. After all, Mr de Bruyn was echoing Church teaching publicly, which is far more than they have done collectively when it comes to abortion, same sex marriage and IVF. But once again, this fiasco highlights the serious crisis that Catholic education is in and has been in for decades now.

Not only have the majority of Catholic educational institutions lost their identity and morals, but their souls as well; and when it comes to the Church's evangelising mission, the majority of them are absolutely useless. They have become nothing but monuments of failure, and no one has the intestinal fortitude to shut them down and start again.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria

"On 21 October, Australian Catholic University (ACU) awarded an honorary doctorate to Mr Joe de Bruyn AO. A prominent figure in Australian trade unionism who has served on the Board of Campion College, Sydney, Mr de Bruyn received the honour for his 'outstanding support of the Catholic Church in Australia, particularly in the promotion of liberal arts education, and his outstanding contributions to the general wellbeing of the Australian community through a lifetime of serving and representing the interests of Australian workers, and thereby supporting the mission of ACU'." melbournecatholic.org

Civil Engagement Expected

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli's comment:

'The unborn, the sick and dying, the elderly, those with disability, people experiencing homelessness, in fact all those on the margins or who have no voice, are owed the upholding of their lives and dignity.

'In a diverse, pluralistic society like Australia, it is important that we are able to engage respectfully in dialogue with those with whom we disagree. It is in this dialogue that trust, harmony and peace are built.

'A Catholic university is such a place where civil engagement on questions of the most vulnerable among us can be, and should be, entered into.'

melbournecatholic.org

Catholic University Graduation Speech

The conclusion of Mr Joe de Bruyn's speech at the Australian Catholic University graduation ceremony, Melbourne 21-10-2024

... There have been many other controversial issues in which I have been involved over the years but time does not permit me to detail them here. Suffice it to say that I always tried to put the position of the Catholic Church informed as it is by the teaching of Jesus Christ.

May I conclude with a word of advice to the graduates here today.

As happened to me, you will be faced with issues in your professional and personal lives where the general opinion of the majority of the population is at odds with the teaching of the Church.

My experience is that many Catholics cave in to peer pressure. They think their professional lives will be harmed if they promote the teaching of the Church. My experience is that this is not so.

Despite my view on some issues being at odds with the views of my contemporaries over the past 50 years, it never affected my career at all.

The key determinant is how you present your case. If you do it in a manner offensive to others, they will respond in a hostile manner. If, however, you use logic in a persuasive way, others may still disagree but they will respect you for your point of view.

In the Gospel, Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' God has made us in his image and likeness and, as St Augustine said, our hearts are restless until they rest in him. So, if you put God's truth in front of people in a respectful way, they will know in their hearts that you are right.

The full speech is available at the Archdiocese of Melbourne website melbournecatholic.org

Not Going to Be Censored

Mr de Bruyn, to ABC News:

"I would admit obviously that a majority walked out but some did stay and they gave me a standing ovation at the end of the speech," he said. "I was surprised that at a Catholic university, when you are talking as a Catholic layman about how you have tried to inject the teachings of the Catholic Church into public debate that there would be such a response. If a person walked out because they disagreed with what I was saying, they were obviously disagreeing with the teachings of the Catholic Church because this is what I was conveying in my speech."

A spokesperson for the university... said he was asked "to reconsider a speech that was better aligned to the occasion and more directly celebrated the achievements of our students". ... Mr de Bruyn defended his decision not to make changes to the speech, saying the university didn't specify which changes to make. "They asked me to make some changes to the speech which were not precisely identified, and I thought about that, and I said to myself, 'They have asked me to give a graduation speech – so I am not going to be censored as to what I can and cannot say.'"

ABC News, abc.net.au 22-10-2024

Mr de Bruyn, to The Age: "Universities are meant to be places of debate. Someone was invited to give a speech and reflect on his life as a Catholic, and when people walk out, that is disappointing," de Bruyn said. "I wouldn't do anything differently. My views are not peculiar views, they may not have majority support, but they are the views of the Catholic Church. I thought it was an entirely appropriate venue."

National Catholic Education executive director Jacinta Collins said it was appropriate for the ACU to bestow de Bruyn with an honorary doctorate, given his contribution to Australian public life. "Joe gave a personal testimony of his contribution, acting in integrity with his religious beliefs with respect to some challenging social matters, and it is saddening that there is decreasing tolerance and respect for a diversity of views in Australia," she said.

theage.com.au 22-10-2024

The Glory of the Lord

I recently attended a wedding in an Anglican church. A beautiful, old, stone building, surrounded by stately old trees, standing proud amidst the city bustle. As I entered the church I expected the familiar cool hush of a Catholic church, but how wrong I was. There was much chatter and laughter and conversation going on, people walking, talking, sitting, chatting, moving around, getting along happily together.

With no Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament present, it made sense that the church was a gathering place, where people came to praise God and celebrate. But to me it felt so empty. The Master of the House was missing.

The celebrant preached well, the happy couple exchanged vows solemnly, the prayers and singing was heartfelt and moving, the faith of the young people obvious, and impressive. But I couldn't help feeling the loss, the missing, the not-quite, the wish-you-were-here. It is such an honour and a privilege that as Catholics we have the Real Presence of Christ in our churches, the "glory of the Lord"; and hence our churches are places of quiet, reverence, respect and honour, for we are in the presence of the Lord, on holy ground.

A few days later it was reinforced for me when, in Ascension's Bible in a Year, I came across this beautiful reading from 2 Chronicles (v.7) at the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem:

"When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. When all the children of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord upon the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the earth on the pavement, and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord..."

Magnificent! And now we have the very Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in our churches! What a great joy and blessing it is to be Catholic!

Ed.

Minority Christianity

Pope Francis, to clergy, consecrated persons and pastoral workers, Brussels, 28-09-2024

The changes in our time and the crisis of faith we are experiencing in the West have impelled us to return to what is essential, namely the Gospel. The good news that Jesus brought to the world must once again be proclaimed to all and allowed to shine forth in all its beauty.

This present crisis, like every crisis, is a time given in order to shock us, to make us question and to change. ... Indeed, when we experience desolation, we must always ask ourselves what message the Lord wishes to convey to us. And what does this crisis show us? It demonstrates that we have moved from a Christianity located within a welcoming social framework to a "minority" Christianity, or better, a Christianity of witness. This requires the courage to undertake an ecclesial conversion for enabling those pastoral transformations that concern our habitual ways of doing things, and the language in which we express our faith, so that they are truly directed to evangelization. ...

[T]he synodal process must involve returning to the Gospel. It is not about prioritizing "fashionable" reforms, but asking, how can we bring the Gospel to a society that is no longer listening or has distanced itself from the faith? Let us all ask ourselves this question.

Vatican.va

"When we have nothing to give, let us give that nothing.
And remember, even if you reap nothing, never tire of sowing".

Saint Teresa of Calcutta

The Prayers of a Pope

VaticanNews 03-10-2024

Pope Francis pens the preface to the book, "As Jesus Taught Us: The Prayer of Pilgrims of Hope" (Edizioni San Paolo), which will be released on October 9. The text is a collection of the Pope's reflections on prayer, some unpublished.

By Pope Francis

I learned to pray from my grandmother. She is the one who taught me to pray and also instilled in me a devotion to Saint Joseph. Then, the spiritual fathers I had, both in the seminary and in the Society of Jesus, helped me grow in my experience of prayer. ...

Even as Pope, nothing has changed: I pray as I always have, with the same rhythm. Sometimes I say vocal prayers, sometimes before the Blessed Sacrament, I endure moments of dryness. My prayer continues through beautiful things and not-so-beautiful things. Sometimes I think I need to pray more, that's true. There's no time, but I need to pray more. I always stick to the Liturgy of the Hours; I never abandon it: in the afternoon, Vespers; later, the Office of Readings; in the morning, Lauds; and then Mass. And then there's mental prayer, the prayer of meditation; when I have a little time, I try to have a conversation and ask the Lord something, but I fear He might respond...

And then there's the Our Father, the prayer of Jesus. It has everything! When the disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray, He didn't call a catechist to instruct them on some methodology of prayer or a specialist in the art of oration. He said: "Say this: Our Father" (cf. Luke 11:2). The Our Father is the universal prayer, the prayer of children, the prayer of trust, the prayer of courage, and also the prayer of resignation. It is the great prayer.

And there are prayers to Mary: I also have great trust in the Madonna; I always pray the Rosary. I like to feel her close because she is a Mother and she guides us. ...

Prayer opens the heart to the Lord, and when the Spirit enters, it changes your life from within. That's why we must pray: to open the heart and make space for the Spirit. We pray to Jesus, the Father, and Our Lady, but we don't often converse in prayer with the Holy Spirit. Yet it is the Holy Spirit who changes our heart, enters our heart, and transforms it. The Father doesn't anoint us; the Son doesn't anoint us. It is the Spirit who anoints us with His presence, and it is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that helps me understand the reality of the Church and the mystery of God.

This is a working translation. VaticanNews.va

Don't Forget!

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience 11-01-2006

It is important in our time that we do not forget God, together with all the other kinds of knowledge we have acquired in the meantime, and they are very numerous! They all become problematic, at times dangerous, if the fundamental knowledge that gives meaning and orientation to all things is missing: knowledge of God the Creator.

ITD readers

Please remember to pray for the souls of ITD readers who have died over the years. Many found themselves surrounded by children and grandchildren who no longer practised the faith, and were worried that there would be no one to pray for their souls after death. As fellow ITD readers, it's the least we can do for them. Thank you!

Ed.

Eternal rest, grant unto
them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine
upon them.

May they rest in peace.

Amen

Walk in Hope

Pope Francis, Message for World Youth Day, to be held 24 November 2024

"Those who hope in the Lord will run and not be weary" (cf. Is 40:31)

... Our life is a pilgrimage, a journey that pushes us beyond ourselves, a journey in search of happiness. The Christian life in particular is a pilgrimage towards God, our salvation and the fullness of every good thing.

Our goals, achievements and successes along the way, if they remain only material, will, after an initial moment of satisfaction, still leave us hungry, longing for something greater. They cannot completely satisfy our soul, because we were created by One who is infinite; as a result, we have an innate desire for transcendence, a constant restless drive towards the fulfilment of higher aspirations, towards "even more". That is why, as I have often said to you, "looking at life from a balcony" is not enough for you young people. ...

[W]alk in hope! Hope overcomes all weariness, every crisis and every worry. It gives us a powerful incentive to press forward, for it is a gift received from God himself. The Lord fills our life with meaning, sheds light on our path and shows us its ultimate direction and goal. ...

Even for those who are believers, the pilgrimage of life and the journey to our ultimate goal can prove tiring, as the journey through the desert to the Promised Land was for the people of Israel. And for all of you! Those who have received the gift of faith know happy moments when we can feel God's presence and closeness, but other moments too, when we experience the desert. It can happen that our initial enthusiasm for school or work, or for following Christ – whether in marriage, the priesthood or consecrated life – can be followed by moments of crisis, that make life seem like a difficult trek in the desert.

Those times of crisis, however, are not wasted or useless: they can become important times of growth. They are moments when hope is purified! In crises, many false "hopes", hopes too small for our heart, fade into insignificance; they are revealed for what they are and we find ourselves alone in facing the fundamental questions of life, with no illusions. And in those times, each of us can ask: what are the hopes on which I have based my life? Are they real hopes or simply mirages?

At those times, the Lord does not abandon us. Like a father, he draws near to us and constantly gives us the bread that renews our strength for the journey. Let us remember that to the people in the desert he gave manna and to the prophet Elijah, weary and discouraged, he twice offered bread and water, so that he could walk for "forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God". In those biblical stories, the faith of the Church has seen prefigured the precious gift of the Eucharist, the true manna, the true food for the journey, that God gives us to sustain us on our way.

As Blessed Carlo Acutis said, the Eucharist is the highway to heaven. Carlo made the Eucharist his most important daily appointment! In this way, in union with the Lord, we can walk without tiring, for he is walking alongside us. I encourage all of you to rediscover the great gift of the Eucharist! ...

Vatican.va

Only Fair

St Alphonsus Liguori

Many [Doctors of the Church] affirm with great probability that we should believe that God reveals our prayer to those holy souls so that they may pray for us. The souls in Purgatory, being beloved of God and confirmed in grace, have absolutely no obstacle to prevent their praying for us. If we desire the help of their prayers, it is only fair that we should remember to help them with our prayers and good works.

O Eternal Father,

I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with all the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in Purgatory and for sinners everywhere – for sinners in the universal Church, for those in my own home, and for those within my family. Amen.

St Gertrude

Life Everlasting

Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (refer Catechism 1020-1041)

207. What is life everlasting?

Eternal life is that which begins immediately after death. It will have no end. It will be preceded for each person by a particular judgement at the hands of Christ who is the Judge of the living and the dead. This particular judgement will be confirmed in the final judgement.

208. What is the particular judgment?

It is the judgment of immediate retribution which each one after death will receive from God in his immortal soul in accord with his faith and his works. This retribution consists in entrance into the happiness of heaven, immediately or after an appropriate purification, or entry into the eternal damnation of hell.

209. What is meant by the term "heaven"?

By "heaven" is meant the state of supreme and definitive happiness. Those who die in the grace of God and have no need of further purification are gathered around Jesus and Mary, the angels and the saints. They thus form the Church of heaven, where they see God "face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12). They live in a communion of love with the Most Blessed Trinity and they intercede for us.

210. What is purgatory?

Purgatory is the state of those who die in God's friendship, assured of their eternal salvation, but who still have need of purification to enter into the happiness of heaven.

211. How can we help the souls being purified in purgatory?

Because of the communion of saints, the faithful who are still pilgrims on earth are able to help the souls in purgatory by offering prayers in suffrage for them, especially the Eucharistic sacrifice. They also help them by almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance.

212. In what does hell consist?

Hell consists in the eternal damnation of those who die in mortal sin through their own free choice. The principal suffering of hell is eternal separation from God in whom alone we can have the life and happiness for which we were created and for which we long. Christ proclaimed this reality with the words, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire" (Matthew 25:41).

213. How can one reconcile the existence of hell with the infinite goodness of God?

God, while desiring "all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9), nevertheless has created the human person to be free and responsible; and he respects our decisions. Therefore, it is the human person who freely excludes himself from communion with God if at the moment of death he persists in mortal sin and refuses the merciful love of God.

214. In what does the final judgment consist?

The final or universal judgment consists in a sentence of happiness or eternal condemnation, which the Lord Jesus will issue in regard to the "just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15) when he returns as the Judge of the living and the dead. After the last judgment, the resurrected body will share in the retribution which the soul received at the particular judgment.

215. When will this judgment occur?

This judgment will come at the end of the world and only God knows the day and the hour.

"How great will your glory and happiness be, to be allowed to see God, to be honoured with sharing the joy of salvation and eternal light with Christ your Lord and God, ... to delight in the joy of immortality in the Kingdom of heaven with the righteous and God's friends."

St Cyprian (quoted CCC 1028)

Vocations in Indonesia

LiCAS.news, October 16, 2024

The Diocese of Ruteng has earned the reputation as the “promised land” of Catholic vocations, according to *Agenzia Fides*. With a Catholic population of 800,000 out of one million inhabitants, Ruteng stands out as the largest Catholic diocese in Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim nation of 17,000 islands. ...

In an interview with *Agenzia Fides*, Bishop Ciprianus Horvat of Ruteng highlighted the vibrant seminary life in the region. “In the minor seminary of Ruteng, we have 450 boys, while in the nearby diocese of Labuan Bajo, recently separated from Ruteng, there are 350. Many boys want to enter every year,” the Bishop said. He noted that although the seminaries are primarily strong middle schools, they remain “a place where faith is cultivated and vocational discernment is done. ... [T]hose who continue the journey from the minor seminary to the major seminary is 40 or 50 percent...”.

The diocese’s pastoral landscape is equally impressive, with 85 parishes, 212 diocesan priests, and over 200 religious priests, as well as more than 1,000 consecrated women from around 50 congregations of female religious. “Faith is alive here, and for that, we thank the Portuguese and Dutch missionaries who brought and preached the Gospel in all the villages,” said Bishop Horvat, adding that the local Church has been self-sufficient since 1991.

In addition to its religious impact, the Catholic Church in Ruteng is also a major player in education. “There are 265 elementary schools and 20 high schools in the diocese attended by thousands of students, in addition to many other educational works...” the Bishop remarked. The recent completion of the Catholic University of San Paolo is seen as a key milestone. ...

The diocese [sends] priests to under-served regions such as Papua, Sumatra, and Borneo. “We put this wealth at the service of the Church in Indonesia and the universal Church,” the Bishop said. Ruteng priests also serve in Europe, including Switzerland, Austria, and Italy. ...

“The gift of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life is always a mystery: it is God who calls,” Bishop Horvat emphasized. ... “The memory of the good work done by the last Dutch bishop is still alive in our hearts. We express our gratitude today by continuing the work of these missionaries,” he said.

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I Believe in the Holy Spirit

Pope Francis, General Audience 16-10-2024

In the first three centuries, the Church did not feel the need to give an explicit formulation of her faith in the Holy Spirit. For example, in the Church’s most ancient Creed, the so-called Symbol of the Apostles, after proclaiming: “I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born, died, descended into hell, rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven”, adds: “I believe in the Holy Spirit” and nothing more, without any specification.

But it was heresy that drove the Church to define this faith. When this process began – with Saint Athanasius in the fourth century – it was precisely the experience she had of the sanctifying and divinizing action of the Holy Spirit that led the Church to the certainty of the full divinity of the Holy Spirit. This occurred during the Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in 381, which defined the divinity of the Holy Spirit with the well-known words we still repeat today in the Creed: “I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets”.

To say that the Holy Spirit “is the Lord” was like saying that He shares the “Lordship” of God, that He belongs to the world of the Creator, not to that of creatures. The strongest affirmation is that He is due the same glory and adoration as the Father and the Son. It is the argument of equality in honour, dear to Saint Basil the Great, who was the main architect of that formula: the Holy Spirit is the Lord, He is God.

Vatican.va

From Darling to Father

From the book *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*, by Fr John Speekman (p.72,73)

As soon as I entered the room I was bowled over by the thick perfume. Before me, in the bed, sat a woman in her late sixties/early seventies finishing off her lunch.

Come in, darling. Oh my, what a beautiful aura you have.

Taken aback I asked her to describe it for me and she happily obliged. I no longer recall what she answered but there were blues of various shades and some gold (of course).

You are Mrs Loffley aren't you? You are on my list as a Catholic.

Oh, that was a long time ago, darling. Now I don't talk about such things.

So how would you describe yourself now? New Age?

If you like.

I thought it wise to steer away from the auras and such, and asked about her medical condition. It was not serious and she would soon be going home.

Not wanting to risk her going home without a bit of a challenge I spoke to her about a return to the Church and a good Confession. *Then I could give you Holy Communion and you could go home with the double blessing of good physical and good spiritual health.*

She said she would think about it and I departed.

Next day she heard me in the corridor and called out: *Oh, Father, Father.*

I popped my head into her room and said: *I'm here, at your service.*

Come in, would you? You can put me down as a conquest because I want to make my Confession.

Closing the door behind me I went and sat by the bed, pulled out my stole and began: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

She made a sincere confession and I made an act of thanksgiving. What a miracle!

We talked for quite some time and I left full of gratitude.

The next day I was lucky enough to catch her as she left the hospital. I mischievously asked how my aura was today?

She said: *Oh, I don't see them anymore.*

Fr Speekman's book *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*, can be purchased through ITD for \$15, with postage starting at only \$3. For more information about the book and for excerpts from the book, see each previous issue of ITD from Jan/Feb 2023. Contact ITD to place your order. - Ed.

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Ed.

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 |

“Man should tremble,

the world should quake,
all Heaven should be deeply moved
when the Son of God appears on the altar
in the hands of the priest.”

St Francis of Assisi

Forgiveness

If my conscience were burdened with all the sins it is possible to commit, I would still go and throw myself into Our Lord's arms, my heart all broken up with contrition. I know what tenderness He has for any prodigal child of His that comes back to Him.

St Therese of Lisieux

“God knows

that we can all *make mistakes*,
but that *no one is a mistake*.”

Pope Francis, 28-09-2024

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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.

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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