

# *Into the Deep*

Issue 252

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

December 2024

## Prepare

**Pope Francis, Angelus address, 03-12-2023**

[We] want to prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus: - at Christmas, which we will celebrate in a few weeks; - at the end of time, when he will return in glory; - every day, as he comes to meet us in the Eucharist, in his Word, in our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need. ...

Dear friends, it will be good for us today to ask ourselves how we can prepare a welcoming heart for the Lord. We can do so by approaching his forgiveness, his Word, his Table, finding space for prayer, welcoming him in those in need. Let us cultivate his expectation without letting ourselves be distracted by so many pointless things, and without complaining all the time, but keeping our hearts alert, that is, eager for him, awake and ready, impatient to meet him.

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## God Comes to Us

**Pope Francis, General Audience 18-12-2019**

Always make a small nativity scene at home because it is a reminder that God came to us; he was born among us, he accompanies us throughout our lives. He is man like we are. He became man like us.

In everyday life, we are no longer alone. He abides in us. He does not magically change things, but if we welcome Him, everything can change.

I hope that setting up the nativity scene will be for you all an opportunity to invite Jesus into your lives.

When we make the nativity scene at home it is like opening a door and saying: "Come in, Jesus!". It is making this closeness concrete, this invitation to Jesus to come into our lives.

Because if he abides in our lives, life is reborn. And if life is reborn, it is truly Christmas. Happy Christmas to everyone!

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## It Centres Life

**Pope Benedict XVI, 15-10-2005, with children who had received their First Holy Communion during the year**

**Q:** *What good does it do for our everyday life to go to Holy Mass and receive Communion?*

**A:** It centres life. We live amid so many things. And the people who do not go to church, do not know that it is precisely Jesus they lack. But they feel that something is missing in their lives. If God is absent from my life, if Jesus is absent from my life, a guide, an essential friend is missing, even an important joy for life, the strength to grow as a man, to overcome my vices and mature as a human being.

Therefore, we cannot immediately see the effects of being with Jesus and of going to Communion. But with the passing of the weeks and years, we feel more and more keenly the absence of God, the absence of Jesus. It is a fundamental and destructive incompleteness. I could easily speak of countries where atheism has prevailed for years: how souls are destroyed, but also the earth. In this way we can see that it is important, and I would say fundamental, to be nourished by Jesus in Communion. It is he who gives us enlightenment, offers us guidance for our lives, a guidance that we need.

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

# His Little Baby Hand

**Pope Francis, Urbi et Orbi message, Christmas 2023**

The message of Bethlehem is indeed “good news of great joy” (Lk 2:10). What kind of joy? Not the passing happiness of this world, not the glee of entertainment but a joy that is “great” because it makes *us* great.

For today, all of us, with all our shortcomings, embrace the sure promise of an unprecedented gift: the hope of being born for heaven. Yes, Jesus our brother has come to make his Father our Father; a small child, he reveals to us the tender love of God, and much more. He, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father, gives us “power to become children of God” (Jn 1:12). This is the joy that consoles hearts, renews hope and bestows peace. It is the joy of the Holy Spirit: the joy born of being God’s beloved sons and daughters. ... Brothers and sisters, let us exult in this gift of grace!

Rejoice, you who have lost confidence in your certitudes, for you are not alone: Christ is born for you!

Rejoice, you who have abandoned all hope, for God offers you his outstretched hand; he does not point a finger at you, but offers you his little baby hand, in order to set you free from your fears, to relieve you of your burdens and to show you that, in his eyes, you are more valuable than anything else.

Rejoice, you who find no peace of heart, for the ancient prophecy of Isaiah has been fulfilled for your sake: “a child has been born for us, a son given to us, and he is named...Prince of Peace” (Is 9:6). Scripture reveals that his peace, his kingdom, “will have no end” (Is 9:7).

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## Let Us Rediscover Worship

**Pope Francis, Midnight Mass 24-12-2023**

Christ does not look at numbers, but at faces. However, who looks at him amid the many distractions and mad rush of a bustling and indifferent world? Who looks at him? In Bethlehem, as crowds of people were caught up in the excitement of the census, coming and going, filling the inns and engaged in petty conversation, a few were close to Jesus: Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and then the Magi. Let us learn from them. They stood gazing upon Jesus, with their hearts set on him. They did not speak, they worshipped. Tonight, brothers and sisters, is the time to worship.

Worship is the way to embrace the Incarnation. For it is in silence that Jesus, the Word of the Father, becomes flesh in our lives. Let us do as they did, in Bethlehem, a town whose name means “House of Bread”. Let us stand before him who is the Bread of Life. Let us rediscover worship, for to worship is not to waste time, but to make our time a dwelling-place for God. It is to let the seed of the Incarnation bloom within us; it is to cooperate in the work of the Lord, who, like leaven, changes the world. To worship is to intercede, to make reparation, to allow God to realign history. As a great teller of epic tales once wrote to his son, “I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament... There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth” (J.R.R. TOLKIEN, *Letter 43*, March 1941).

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## As Privileged As They Were

**St Teresa of Calcutta**

We are as privileged in being called to adore Him today as were Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and Magi then, because here Jesus continues His incarnation on earth. Here Jesus loses His Heart to us in love. Love expresses itself to the object of its affection; the Eucharist is the continual expression of God’s perfect, unselfish love for man. The Word again becomes flesh and dwells among us, veiled under the Species of the Sacred Host, where the same Jesus born two thousand years ago as a little babe in Bethlehem is truly, really, bodily, and personally present to us in this Most Blessed Sacrament.

# Complained to ACU

Thank you again for a very informative issue last month. I have only just got to the Joe Du Bruyn article (Nov ITD, p.4,5) and was so disappointed at reading of his experience that I have complained to ACU [Australian Catholic University] directly.

However I am not surprised as years ago when my children were in a Catholic high school many of the teachers had degrees from ACU and I had a few run-ins with some Religious Education Coordinators and some CCD leaders [Confraternity of Christian Doctrine catechists]. One told me I was out of date with church teachings – they had been to ACU? Thankfully when Cardinal Pell came he worked hard in changing key positions to bring back solid Catholic teaching to our Sydney Archdiocese. Obviously he couldn't change the ACU, but did bring in Notre Dame as a Catholic alternative. It is good to know that men like Joe Du Bruyn are still brave enough to speak out. His advice to students at the end is so important. A pity a lot didn't stay to hear it.

I loved reading Pope Francis's quotes, especially his one on the saints (Nov ITD, p.3). He gets a lot of flak from some Catholics who have, among other reasons, concerns about what is happening with the synod. Maybe this is because what has actually been discussed during the synod has not reached us, in the pews. Archbishop Anthony Fisher wrote an informative article in the Catholic Weekly about it. The Pope's final synod document and his encyclical on the Sacred Heart should be widely circulated and explained to us by our bishops. The quotes of Pope Francis that you present are so important for us to help us on our journey to holiness, which is offered to us at our Baptism. I like to think of our life as a journey to learn how to love like Jesus.

I am sorry to read that you are thinking of ending Into the Deep, but can appreciate your reasons and can only thank you for the years of great Catholic reading – so easily delivered to my iPad – which you have enabled. May God continue to bless you.

**Maureen Wright, Lurnea, New South Wales**

## Prayer for Good Humour

**St Thomas More**

Grant me, O Lord, good digestion,  
and also something to digest.

Grant me a healthy body,  
and the necessary good humour to maintain it.

Grant me a simple soul  
that knows to treasure all that is good  
and that doesn't frighten easily at the sight of evil,  
but rather finds the means  
to put things back in their place.

Give me a soul that knows not boredom,  
grumbings, sighs and laments,  
nor excess of stress, because of that obstructing  
thing called "I."

Grant me, O Lord, a sense of good humour.  
Allow me the grace to be able to take a joke  
to discover in life a bit of joy,  
and to be able to share it with others.

## No January Issue

As usual for recent years, there will be no January issue of ITD, returning in February with a combined Jan/Feb issue. Wishing everyone a meaningful Advent, a joyous Christmas, and a happy New Year!

**Ed.**

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

## 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.**

# The Thief with No Name

Pope Francis, Homily, 04-11-2024

"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom". These are the last words spoken to the Lord by one of the two men crucified with him. They were not the words of one of Jesus' disciples who had followed him along the roads of Galilee and shared bread with him at the Last Supper. On the contrary, the man who spoke those words to the Lord was a criminal, someone who met him only at the end of his life, someone whose name we do not even know.

Yet, in the Gospel, the last words of this "outsider" initiate a dialogue full of truth. Even as Jesus was being "numbered with the transgressors" as Isaiah had prophesied, an unexpected voice is heard, saying: "We are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong". So it was.

That condemned criminal represents us all; each of us can replace his name with our own. Yet even more importantly, we can make his plea our own: "Jesus, remember me". Keep me alive in your memory. "Do not forget me".

Let us meditate on that word: *remember*. To remember (*ricordare*) means "to lead back to the heart (*cor*)", to carry in the heart. That man, crucified alongside Jesus, transformed his dire pain into a prayer: "Carry me in your heart, Jesus". His words did not reflect anguish and defeat, but hope. This criminal, who died as a disciple of the last hour, desired only one thing: to find a welcoming heart. That is all that mattered to him as he found himself defenceless in the face of death. The Lord heard the sinner's prayer, even at the end, as he always does. Christ's heart – an open, not closed heart – pierced by pain, was laid open to save the world. Dying himself, he was open to the voice of a dying man. Jesus dies with us because he died for us.

Crucified despite his innocence, Jesus answered the prayer of a man crucified for his guilt: "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise". ... The one who was condemned is now redeemed. The outsider becomes a fellow-traveller; a brief encounter on the cross leads to eternal peace.

This makes us reflect a little. How do I encounter Jesus? Or better still, how do I let myself be encountered by Jesus? Do I allow myself to be encountered or do I close myself off in my selfishness, in my pain, in my self-sufficiency? Do I have a sense of my sinfulness that allows me to be encountered by the Lord, or do I feel righteous ...? ...

Dear brothers and sisters, by turning to the heart of God, the men and women of today and of every age can find hope for salvation, even if "in the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died" (Wis 3:2). All of history is kept in the memory of the Lord. Memory is safekeeping. He is its compassionate and merciful judge. The Lord is close to us as judge; he is close, compassionate and merciful. ...

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## Inside vs. Outside

When we watch the Paralympics, or documentaries, or read stories in the media, we are rightly in awe of what people with disabilities are able to achieve and are instinctively proud of their perseverance. Their stories inspire us, their courage amazes us, and their attitudes humble us.

Yet at the same time we see relentless 'marketing' of abortion as a necessary evil when it comes to unborn children with disabilities. Diagnoses are made in utero, and mothers are told they have to abort for medical reasons. Most mothers go along with this thinking it's the best – or only – thing to do.

How do we reconcile these two realities? On the one hand we are inspired by those with disabilities and work for their just inclusion in society, and on the other, we maintain that any babies with disability must be prevented from being born at all, and we work for easy, cheap and legal access to being able to kill them in the womb.

On the outside we fight for their inclusion in society, but on the inside we fight for their removal from society.

Ed.

# New Encyclical on the Sacred Heart

From a summary by Alessandro Di Bussolo, Vatican News 24-10-2024

"Dilexit nos," Pope Francis' fourth Encyclical, retraces the tradition and relevance of thought on "the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ," calling for a renewal of authentic devotion to avoid forgetting the tenderness of faith, the joy of serving, and the fervour of mission. ...

## The importance of returning to the heart

Opening with a brief introduction and divided into five chapters, the Encyclical on the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus incorporates, as announced in June, "the precious reflections of previous Magisterial texts and a long history that goes back to the Sacred Scriptures, in order to re-propose today, to the whole Church, this devotion imbued with spiritual beauty." ...

## The Sacred Heart of Jesus is a synthesis of the Gospel

The Pope clarifies that the visions of some saints, particularly devoted to the Heart of Christ, "are rich sources of encouragement and can prove greatly beneficial," but "are not something the faithful are obliged to believe as if they were the Word of God."

At the same time, he reminds us, along with Pope Pius XII, that this devotion "cannot be said 'to owe its origin to private revelations.'" Rather, "devotion to Christ's heart is essential for our Christian life to the extent that it expresses our openness in faith and adoration to the mystery of the Lord's divine and human love" and "in this sense, we can once more affirm that the Sacred Heart is a synthesis of the Gospel" (83).

The Pope calls for renewing devotion to the Heart of Christ, especially to counter "new manifestations of a disembodied spirituality" that are multiplying in society (87). It is essential, he says, to return to "the incarnate synthesis of the Gospel" (90) in the face of "communities and pastors excessively caught up in external activities, structural reforms that have little to do with the Gospel, obsessive reorganization plans, worldly projects, secular ways of thinking and mandatory programmes" (88). ...

## Therese of Lisieux, Ignatius of Loyola and Faustina Kowalska

Pope Francis also asks "that no one make light of the fervent devotion of the holy faithful people of God, which in its popular piety seeks to console Christ" (160). God, he says, "offers us consolation 'so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction, with the consolation by which we ourselves are consoled by God'" (162). ...

## Devotion to the Heart of Christ sends us to the brethren

The fifth and final chapter of the Encyclical, "Love for Love," develops the communitarian, social, and missionary dimension of any authentic devotion to the Heart of Christ, which, as it "leads us to the Father," also "sends us forth to our brothers and sisters" (163). Indeed, love for one's brothers and sisters is the greatest gesture we can offer Him "to return love for love" (166).

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## Don't Confuse Christmas

### Pope Francis, Angelus address, Christmas Eve 2023

I wish you all a happy Sunday and a Christmas Eve in prayer, in the warmth of affection, and in simplicity. Allow me to offer some advice: let us not confuse celebration with consumerism! We can – and as Christians we must – celebrate in simplicity, without waste, and by sharing with those who lack necessities or lack companionship.

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## Common Witness

### Pope Francis, Ecumenical vigil 11-10-2024

Today, too, we express our shame at the scandal of division among Christians, the scandal of our failure to bear common witness to the Lord Jesus. ...

Let us focus on the *common ground* of our *shared Baptism*, which prompts us to become missionary disciples of Christ, with a *common mission*.

The world needs our *common witness*, the world needs us to be faithful to our *common mission*.

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# Before the Nativity Scene

**Pope Francis, General Audience, 20-12-2023**

Eight hundred years ago, at Christmas in 1223, Saint Francis organized the living Nativity scene in Greccio. While Nativity scenes are being prepared or completed in homes and other places, it is good for us to rediscover their origins.

How did the crib come about? What was Saint Francis' intention? He said: "I want to depict the Child born in Bethlehem, and in some way see with the eyes of the body the hardships in which He found Himself for want of the things necessary for an infant, how He was laid in a manger and how He lay on the straw between the ox and the donkey". Francis does not want to create a beautiful work of art, but rather to arouse amazement through the Nativity scene, at the extreme humility of the Lord, at the hardships he suffered in the poor grotto of Bethlehem for love of us. In fact, the biographer of the Saint of Assisi notes, "In that moving scene, evangelical simplicity shines forth, poverty is praised, humility is related. And Greccio has become like a new Bethlehem".

I've emphasized one word, "amazement". And this is important. If we Christians look at the crib as a beautiful thing, as something historical, even religious, and pray, this is not enough. Before the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, before the birth of Jesus, we need this religious attitude of amazement. ...

And the Nativity scene was created to bring us back to what matters: to God who comes to dwell among us. ...

Dear brothers and sisters, the Nativity scene is like a small well from which to draw the nearness of God, the source of hope and joy. The Nativity scene is like a living Gospel, a domestic Gospel. Like the well in the Bible, it is the place of encounter where we bring to Jesus the expectations and worries of life, just as the shepherds of Bethlehem and the people of Greccio did. Bringing to Jesus the expectations and the worries of life.

If, before the Nativity scene, we entrust to Jesus all we hold dear, we too will experience "great joy", a joy that comes precisely from contemplation, from the spirit of amazement with which I go to contemplate these mysteries. Let us go before the Nativity scene. Everyone, look, and allow your heart to feel something within.

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## Countering Satan's Malice

The Gospel According to Saint John opens with the intriguing declaration, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God". A word is the means by which a person passes personal thoughts to another person. So, God is more than one person. The Church has proclaimed the doctrine of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So, God is a family. Indeed, God created man in the image of himself – male and female he created them. God then chose the family formed by the man and the woman to continue the process of creation.

Sadly, the process of creation included Satan, and he succeeded in introducing Adam and Eve to sin. The temptation to be like God resulted in our first parents being driven out of Eden because of their personal choices made even though they each had personal contact with God. Indeed, the choice of God can be challenging because the choice of God does not exclude Satan. For Satan is subject to God's will which includes personal freedom for people created by God. In short, personal freedom comes with personal responsibility.

Satan continues to achieve notable success corrupting the personal freedom that each of us has received from the Word. God has given us commandments to counter Satan's malice but these commandments are subjected to extensive explanation and interpretation; including that of Satan. Pope Francis reminds us that Jesus founded a Church which offers sacraments as the best means of gaining our salvation. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available for anyone who has fallen a victim to Satan's defiance of God's will.

**John Cooney, Cowwarr, Victoria**

# What Passes and What Remains

**Pope Francis, Angelus address 17-11-2024**

In the Gospel of today's liturgy, Jesus describes a great tribulation: "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light" (Mk 13:24). Faced with this suffering, many might think of the end of the world, but the Lord seizes the opportunity to offer a different interpretation, saying: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Mk 13:31).

We can take a closer look at this expression: *what will pass and what will remain*.

First of all, *what will pass*. In some circumstances in our life, when we are going through a crisis or experience some failure, as well as when we see around us the pain caused by wars, violence, natural disasters, we have the feeling that everything is coming to an end, and we feel that even the most beautiful things pass away. Crises and failures, however, though painful, are important, because they teach us to accord everything its due weight, not to attach our hearts to the realities of this world, because they will pass: they are destined to fade away.

At the same time, Jesus talks about *what will remain*. Everything passes away, but His words will not pass away: Jesus' words will remain for eternity. He thus invites us to trust in the Gospel, which contains a promise of salvation and eternity, and not to live under the anguish of death. For while everything passes away, Christ remains. ...

Brothers and sisters, even in tribulations, in crises, in failures, the Gospel invites us to look at life and history without fear of losing what ends, but with joy for what will remain. Let us not forget that God is preparing for us a future of life and joy.

And so, let us ask ourselves: are we attached to earthly things, which pass away, which pass quickly, or to the words of the Lord, which remain and guide us towards eternity?

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## Visiting Priests

**Pope Francis, 04-11-2024**

At times I am sorry when I ask a priest, "How is your parish?". "Good, we have a lot of Masses". "But how many people in total come on a Sunday?". "Around 1000, 1200". "Ah, good. And how many people are there in your neighbourhood?". And then he hesitates before saying 200,000, 250,000. Or rather, we must be aware that few people come to Church. We have to go and look for them ourselves.

Bear witness to welcoming people by actions more than by words. A first principle: welcome. And also go to visit, which is another form of welcome. And continue to see in each one of them, vulnerable people, in that vulnerability, the face of Christ. In this way, you proclaim Christ as He who always walks with them ...

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## Preparing for Christmas

**Pope Francis to sick children, 17-12-2023**

We must prepare ourselves for a great feast, which will be next week, Christmas: the feast in which we all think about and remember when Jesus came, he came to be with us. Let us think, let us prepare our heart for Christmas, to receive Jesus.

Each one of you, think: what will I ask Jesus? What will I ask of Jesus this Christmas? ... In silence, with your eyes closed, and think: what will I ask of Jesus? Have you already thought about it? Good. Now ask him. And I wish you a happy Christmas, a happy Christmas to all of you! Always with a smile, and may the Lord give you everything you want.

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Mary is truly "Mother of God" since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

**Catechism of the Catholic Church, 509**

# Housekeeping

**Pope Benedict XVI, 15-10-2005, with children who had received their First Holy Communion during the year**

**Q:** *Holy Father, before the day of my First Communion I went to confession. I have also been to confession on other occasions. I wanted to ask you: do I have to go to confession every time I receive Communion, even when I have committed the same sins? Because I realize that they are always the same.*

**A:** I will tell you two things. The first, of course, is that you do not always have to go to confession before you receive Communion unless you have committed such serious sins that they need to be confessed. Therefore, it is not necessary to make one's confession before every Eucharistic Communion. This is the first point. It is only necessary when you have committed a really serious sin, when you have deeply offended Jesus, so that your friendship is destroyed and you have to start again. Only in that case, when you are in a state of "mortal" sin, in other words, grave (sin), is it necessary to go to confession before Communion. This is my first point.

My second point: even if, as I said, it is not necessary to go to confession before each Communion, it is very helpful to confess with a certain regularity. It is true: our sins are always the same, but we clean our homes, our rooms, at least once a week, even if the dirt is always the same; in order to live in cleanliness, in order to start again. Otherwise, the dirt might not be seen but it builds up. Something similar can be said about the soul, for me myself: if I never go to confession, my soul is neglected and in the end I am always pleased with myself and no longer understand that I must always work hard to improve, that I must make progress. And this cleansing of the soul which Jesus gives us in the Sacrament of Confession helps us to make our consciences more alert, more open, and hence, it also helps us to mature spiritually and as human persons.

Therefore, two things: confession is only necessary in the case of a serious sin, but it is very helpful to confess regularly in order to foster the cleanliness and beauty of the soul and to mature day by day in life.

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## To Jesus Through Mary

**Pope Francis, General Audience 13-11-2024**

Among the various means by which the Holy Spirit implements His work of sanctification in the Church – the Word of God, the Sacraments, prayer – there is one in entirely particular, and it is *Marian piety*. In the Catholic tradition there is this motto, this saying: "*Ad Iesum per Mariam*", that is, "to Jesus by means of Mary". Our Lady lets us see Jesus. She opens the doors to us, always! Our Lady is the mother who leads us by the hand towards Jesus. Our Lady never points to herself, Our Lady points to Jesus. And this is Marian piety: to Jesus by the hands of Our Lady. The true and only mediator between us and Christ, indicated as such by Jesus Himself, is the Holy Spirit. Mary is one of the means the Holy Spirit uses to bring us to Jesus.

Saint Paul defines the Christian community as "a letter of Christ administered by us, written not in ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets that are hearts of flesh" (2 Cor:3:3). Mary, as the first disciple and figure of the Church, is also a letter written with the Spirit of the living God. Precisely for this reason, she can be "known and read by all" (2 Cor 3:2), even those who do not know how to read theology books, those "little ones" to whom Jesus says that the mysteries of the Kingdom, hidden to the wise, are revealed.

By saying her "Yes" – when Mary accepts and says to the Angel, "Yes, let the Lord's will be done" and accepts to be the mother of Jesus – it is as though Mary said to God: "Here I am, I am a tablet to be written on: let the Writer write what he wants, make of me what the Lord of all wishes" [*Comment on the Gospel of Luke*, fragment. 18..]. At that time, people wrote on waxed tablets; today we would say that Mary offers herself like a blank page on which the Lord can write whatever He wants. Mary's "Yes" to the Angel – as a renowned exegete wrote – represents "the apex of all religious behaviour before God, since she expresses, in the highest manner, passive availability combined with active readiness, the deepest emptiness that accompanies the greatest fullness" [H. Schürmann...].



# The Beginning of the Jubilee Year

**Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the year 2025**

5. ... *Pilgrimage* is of course a fundamental element of every Jubilee event. Setting out on a journey is traditionally associated with our human quest for meaning in life.

A pilgrimage on foot is a great aid for rediscovering the value of silence, effort and simplicity of life. In the coming year, *pilgrims of hope* will surely travel the ancient and more modern routes in order to experience the Jubilee to the full. ...

Journeying from one country to another as if borders no longer mattered, and passing from one city to another in contemplating the beauty of creation and masterpieces of art, we learn to treasure the richness of different experiences and cultures, and are inspired to lift up that beauty, in prayer, to God, in thanksgiving for his wondrous works.

The Jubilee Churches along the pilgrimage routes and in the city of Rome can serve as oases of spirituality and places of rest on the pilgrimage of faith, where we can drink from the wellsprings of hope, above all by approaching the sacrament of Reconciliation, the essential starting-point of any true journey of conversion. In the particular Churches, special care should be taken to prepare priests and the faithful to celebrate the sacrament of Confession and to make it readily available in its individual form. ...

6. ...I hereby decree that the Holy Door ... of the Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican will be opened on 24 December 2024, thus inaugurating the Ordinary Jubilee. ...

I further decree that on Sunday, 29 December 2024, in every cathedral and co-cathedral, diocesan bishops are to celebrate Holy Mass as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year, using the ritual indications that will be provided for that occasion. ... A pilgrimage that sets out from a church chosen for the *collectio* and then proceeds to the cathedral can serve to symbolize the journey of hope that, illumined by the word of God, unites all the faithful. ...

The Ordinary Jubilee will conclude with the closing of the Holy Door in the Papal Basilica of Saint Peter in the Vatican on 6 January 2026, the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord.

During the Holy Year, may the light of Christian hope illumine every man and woman, as a message of God's love addressed to all! And may the Church bear faithful witness to this message in every part of the world!

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## We Can See The Effects

**Pope Benedict XVI, 15-10-2005, with children who had received their First Holy Communion during the year**

**Q:** *In preparing me for my First Communion day, my catechist told me that Jesus is present in the Eucharist. But how? I can't see him!*

**A:** No, we cannot see him, but there are many things that we do not see but they exist and are essential. For example: we do not see our reason, yet we have reason. We do not see our intelligence and we have it. In a word: we do not see our soul and yet it exists and we see its effects, because we can speak, think and make decisions, etc. Nor do we see an electric current, for example, yet we see that it exists; we see this microphone, that it is working, and we see lights. Therefore, we do not see the very deepest things, those that really sustain life and the world, but we can see and feel their effects. ...

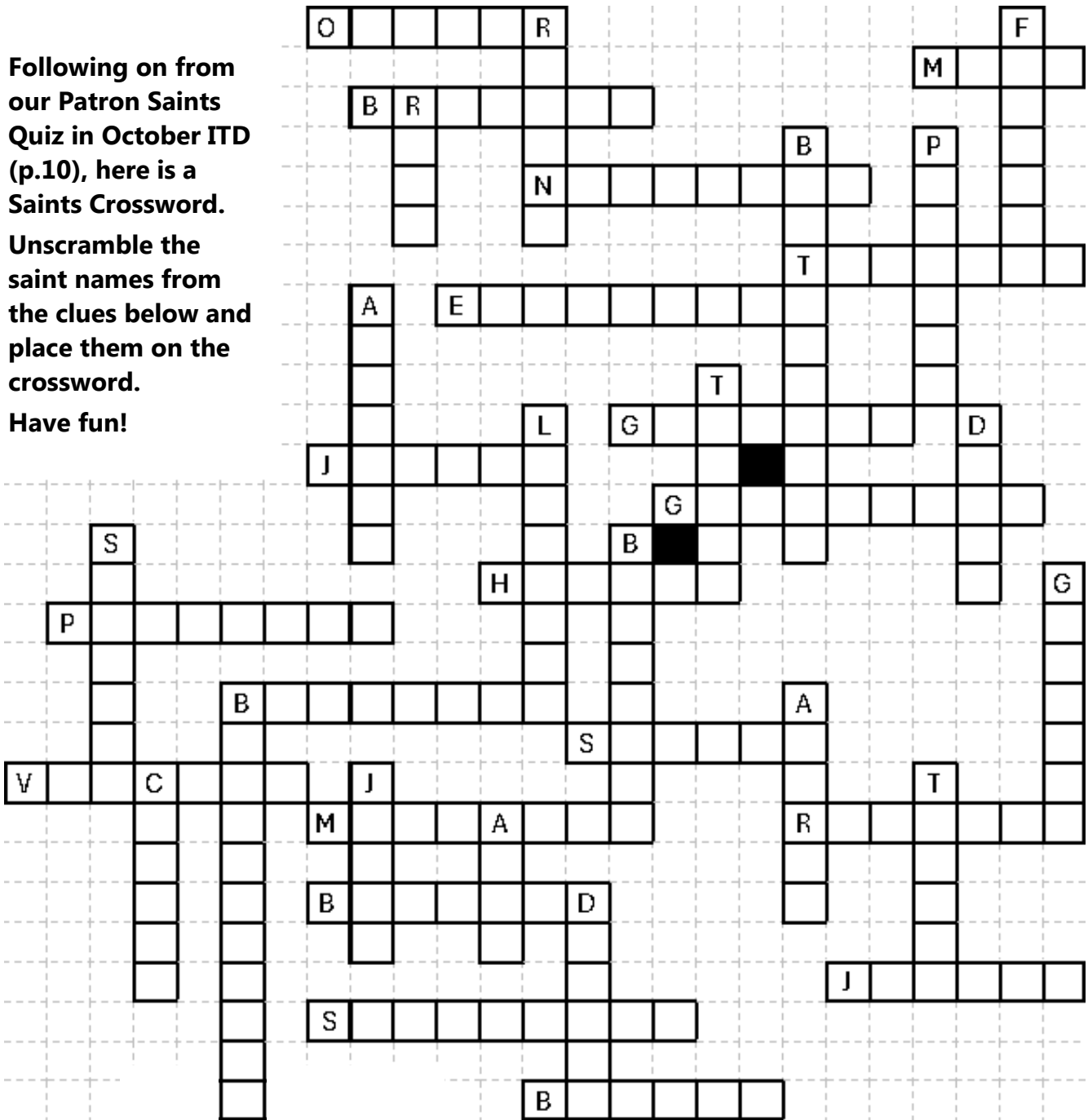
So it is with the Risen Lord: we do not see him with our eyes but we see that wherever Jesus is, people change, they improve. A greater capacity for peace, for reconciliation, etc., is created. Therefore, we do not see the Lord himself but we see the effects of the Lord: so we can understand that Jesus is present. And as I said, it is precisely the invisible things that are the most profound, the most important. So let us go to meet this invisible but powerful Lord who helps us to live well.

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# Saints Crossword

From Fidelity magazine, July 2024 issue, p.26. Reprinted with permission. [www.fidelitybooks.com.au](http://www.fidelitybooks.com.au)

Following on from our Patron Saints Quiz in October ITD (p.10), here is a Saints Crossword. Unscramble the saint names from the clues below and place them on the crossword. Have fun!



**CLUES:** ARMY MADA SORE SAMEJ VADDI WANDER OUASJH STEERA ANHEEL  
 EARING MOSSCA SPEJOH SEBIAL REVOIL MNOISE NAILED ATMOSH CARFINS RESHEET  
 TARPICK ERNBARD HAYNNOT BETGRID GRYERGO BALERIG ALEHARP NNEVICT PETHENS  
 INBEDETC UPPERATE ABCEFINO TRAMRAGE BANESSTIA EVENEGIVE LEANCREW LOCHAINS  
 ITBLAZEHE NOVEANTUBER WHALEBOTROM

# Starting Afresh from Christ

From the book *Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime*, by Fr John Speekman (p.84-86)

I made a little change in the parish bulletin header some years ago which took most people a long time to notice. The phrase *Striving for holiness...* was replaced with *Starting afresh from Christ...*

The inspiration for this change was twofold.

Firstly it was a response to the awareness that Advent is a special time of beginning. Not only the season of Advent, not only a new liturgical year (Year A), not only a new three-year liturgical cycle, but also the first Sunday of the rest of our lives. We are being called to start afresh and what better way to do that than from Christ?

The second inspiration for this change is Pope John Paul II. In his Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio Ineunte, At the Beginning of the New Millennium, he exhorted the whole Church to start afresh from Christ and to begin our 'starting' by contemplating the Face of Christ. What a wonderful task he set us!

To contemplate the face of Christ is not just to contemplate the physical details of his face, his external appearance, his 'looks' as they are suggested to us from images such as the Shroud of Turin or the Veil of Veronica.

Nor is it just to contemplate his 'look' – the way he looks at me. It is both of these things but even more.

To contemplate the face of Christ is to contemplate, as deeply as we can, his truth, his inner being, the inner reality of the man who is God.

To contemplate the face of Christ is to contemplate the human face of a man but also the human face of God.

To contemplate the face of Christ is to contemplate the face of one who loves us. The face of one who loves us is always a special face. Notice the way young couples in love look at each other. Jesus loves us with the very love of God. We contemplate not just love on the face of Jesus but we contemplate 'the face of Love'.

To contemplate the face of Christ is to contemplate one who contemplates us. How we long to see this face – the face of one who never grows tired of 'gazing' at us – the face of one who wants us, who desires us so passionately that he gave his very life for us!

Moreover, to contemplate the face of Christ is to begin to contemplate *ourselves*.

As we contemplate the Word made Flesh we are contemplating the Word by whom and through whom and for whom we were made. In contemplating him we begin to see our own meaning, dignity and value, and the more we do this the more we penetrate this mystery of who we ourselves are.

Finally, to contemplate the beautiful face of Christ is to, ourselves, become more beautiful. As a husband and wife often take on each other's characteristic features so we begin more and more to resemble the one we contemplate. And surely this is the very goal of our contemplation – ultimately to be transformed into him.

So this year let us start afresh from Christ by longing for, searching for, and contemplating his face.

## ***Pre-Christmas Special – Free Postage!***

Stock up on Fr Speekman's book for Christmas presents! This little book makes a perfect gift for family, friends, priests, parishioners, colleagues, neighbours, patients in hospitals, the housebound elderly, those in prison, the sick and the suffering, those who need hope and inspiration, those who need to see and hear and feel the presence of God in their lives.

From now until Christmas, all orders will be sent with ***free postage!*** No matter how many you order! Or where you are in the world! I'll even gift wrap and send to a different address if you want to send them as gifts with a message from yourself. ***Take advantage of this special offer and place your orders now!***

Ed.

# Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland, Victoria

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 10am - 11am Mass
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

## What is Adoration?

**Pope Benedict XVI, 15-10-2005, with children who had received their First Holy Communion during the year**

I would say: adoration is recognizing that Jesus is my Lord, that Jesus shows me the way to take, and that I will live well only if I know the road that Jesus points out and follow the path he shows me.

Therefore, adoration means saying: "Jesus, I am yours. I will follow you in my life, I never want to lose this friendship, this communion with you".

I could also say that adoration is essentially an embrace with Jesus in which I say to him: "I am yours, and I ask you, please stay with me always".

Vatican.va

## Silence

**Pope Francis, Angelus address 10-12-2023**

We can ask ourselves: What place does silence have in my days? Is it an empty, perhaps oppressive, silence? Or is it a space for listening, for prayer, for guarding my heart? Is my life sober or filled with superfluous things? Even if it means going against the tide, let us value silence, sobriety and listening. May Mary, Virgin of silence, help us to love the desert, to become credible voices who testify to her Son who is coming.

Vatican.va

## Contact *Into the Deep*

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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**