

# ***Into the Deep***

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Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

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## **Every Day At Every Moment**

**Pope Leo XIV, Homily, Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, 29-06-2025**

At the heart of today's Gospel lies the question that Jesus asked his disciples. Today he asks us that same question, challenging us to examine whether our faith life retains its energy and vitality, and whether the flame of our relationship with the Lord still burns bright: "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15).

Every day, at every moment in history, we must always take this question to heart. If we want to keep our identity as Christians from being reduced to a relic of the past, as Pope Francis often reminded us, it is important to move beyond a tired and stagnant faith. We need to ask ourselves: Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What place does he occupy in our lives and in the life of the Church? How can we bear witness to this hope in our daily lives and proclaim it to those whom we meet?

Brothers and sisters, the exercise of a discernment born of these questions can enable our faith and the faith of the Church to be constantly renewed and to find new paths and new approaches to preaching the Gospel. This, together with communion, must be our greatest desire.

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## **A Bang or a Whimper**

As mentioned previously, please remember no more donations for ITD, thank you (I've had to send some back). I will be winding up ITD by October 2025 which will be when we use up our current funds. October will also mark ITD's 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

If ITD has meant anything to you at all over the years, please put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) and send your thoughts to me. I want to publish as many letters as possible in our final October issue. Let's see if ITD goes out with a bang or a whimper! Only one more issue between now and then!

Thank you to those who have written so far. I am grateful for your contributions and look forward to publishing them in October.

Ed.

## **Yes and No**

**Pope Benedict XVI, 08-12-2012**

Sin brings with it a negative sadness that leads to withdrawal into self. Grace brings true joy that does not depend on possessions but is rooted in the innermost self, in the depths of the person, and nothing and no one can remove it. Christianity is essentially an "evangelo", "Good News", whereas some think of it as an obstacle to joy because they see it as a collection of prohibitions and rules.

Christianity is actually the proclamation of the victory of Grace over sin, of life over death. And if it entails self-denial and discipline of the mind, of the heart and of behaviour, it is precisely because in the human being there is a poisonous root of selfishness which does evil to oneself and to others. It is thus necessary to learn to say "no" to the voice of selfishness and "yes" to that of genuine love.

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

# Receiving Our Inheritance

**Pope Leo XIV, Angelus address, 13-07-2025**

Today's Gospel begins with a great question posed to Jesus: "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Lk 10:25). Those words express a constant desire in our life: our yearning for salvation, for an existence free from failure, evil and death.

This hope of the human heart is described as something to be "inherited", not something to be gained by force, begged for, or negotiated. Eternal life, which God alone can give, is bestowed on us as an inheritance, as parents do with their children.

That is why Jesus tells us that, in order to receive God's gift, we must do his will. It is written in the Law: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart," and "your neighbour as yourself" (Lk 10:27; cfr Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18). When we do these two things, we respond to the Father's love. God's will is the law of life that the Father himself was the first to follow, by loving us unconditionally in his Son, Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, let us look to Jesus! He shows us the meaning of authentic love for God and for others. It is a love that is generous, not possessive; a love that forgives without question; a love that reaches out and never abandons others. In Christ, God made himself a neighbour to each and every man and woman. That is why each of us can and should become a neighbour to all whom we meet. Imitating the example of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, we too are called to bring consolation and hope, above all to those who are experiencing discouragement and disappointment.

In order to live eternally, we do not need to cheat death, but to serve life, by caring for others in this, our time together. That is the supreme law that is prior to all society's rules and gives them their meaning.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, to help us to open our hearts to God's will, which is always a will of saving love. In this way, we will become artisans of peace every day of our lives.

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# Take Care of Your Heart

**Pope Leo XIV, to seminarians, 24-06-2025**

As Christ loved with a human heart, you are called to love with the Heart of Christ! ... Remember well the invitation of Saint Augustine to return to the heart, because it is there that we find the traces of God.

Going down into your heart can sometimes be frightening, because there you also find wounds. Do not be afraid to heal them, let yourself be helped: for it is from these wounds that your capacity to be close to those who suffer will be born.

Without an interior life, spiritual life is not possible, because it is in the heart that God speaks to us. [God speaks to us in the heart, we must know how to listen to Him.] This interior work also includes learning to recognize the movements of the heart: not only the quick and immediate emotions characteristic of the soul of young people, but above all your deep feelings, which help you discover the direction of your life. If you learn to know your heart, you will become ever more authentic and you will not need to wear masks. And the privileged path that leads us to interiority is prayer: in an age of hyperconnectivity, it becomes ever more difficult to experience silence and solitude. Without the encounter with Him, we cannot truly know ourselves either. ...

If you take care of your heart, with daily moments of silence, meditation and prayer, you will learn the art of discernment. This too is an important work: learning to discern. When we are young, we carry within us many desires, dreams and ambitions. The heart is often cluttered and we can feel confused.

On the contrary, like the Virgin Mary, our interiority must become capable of conserving and meditating. Capable of *synballein* – as the Evangelist Luke writes (2:19, 51): gathering the fragments. Flee superficiality, and put together the pieces of your life in prayer and meditation, asking yourself: what does what I am experiencing teach me? What does it say about my path? Where is the Lord leading me?

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# Grace

**Pope Benedict XVI, 08-12-2012**

Mary, on the day she received the announcement of the Angel, was in deep recollection and at the same time open to listening to God. In her there was no obstacle, no screen, nothing that separated her from God. This is the meaning of her being without original sin: her relation with God was free from even the slightest flaw; there is no separation, there is not a shadow of selfishness, but perfect harmony; her small human heart is perfectly "centred" in the great heart of God. ...

[T]he world's salvation is not the work of human beings – of science, of technology, of an ideology – but it comes from Grace. What does this word mean?

Grace means Love in its purity and beauty, it is God himself as he revealed himself in salvation history, recounted in the Bible and in its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Mary is called "full of grace" and with her specific identity she reminds us of God's primacy in our life and in the history of the world, she reminds us that the power of God's love is stronger than evil, that it can fill the void that selfishness creates in the history of individuals, families, nations and the world.

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# Intermittent Christians

**Pope Leo XIV, Angelus address 06-07-2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, the Church and the world do not need people who fulfill their religious duties as if the faith were merely an external label. We need labourers who are eager to work in the mission field, loving disciples who bear witness to the Kingdom of God in all places.

Perhaps there is no shortage of "intermittent Christians" who occasionally act upon some religious feeling or participate in sporadic events. But there are few who are ready, on a daily basis, to labour in God's harvest, cultivating the seed of the Gospel in their own hearts in order then to share it in their families, places of work or study, their social contexts and with those in need.

To do this, we do not need too many theoretical ideas about pastoral plans. Instead, we need to pray to the Lord of the harvest.

Priority must be given, then, to our relationship with the Lord and to cultivating our dialogue with him. In this way, he will make us his labourers and send us into the field of the world to bear witness to his Kingdom.

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# The World Needs Marriage

**Pope Leo XIV, Homily, 01-06-2025**

Let us not forget: families are the cradle of the future of humanity. In recent decades, we have received a sign that fills us with joy but also makes us think. It is the fact that several spouses have been beatified and canonized, not separately, but as married couples. ... By pointing to them as exemplary witnesses of married life, the Church tells us that today's world needs the marriage covenant in order to know and accept God's love and to defeat, thanks to its unifying and reconciling power, the forces that break down relationships and societies.

For this reason, with a heart filled with gratitude and hope, I would remind all married couples that marriage is not an ideal but the measure of true love between a man and a woman: a love that is total, faithful and fruitful. This love makes you one flesh and enables you, in the image of God, to bestow the gift of life. I encourage you, then, to be examples of integrity to your children, acting as you want them to act, educating them in freedom through obedience, always seeing the good in them and finding ways to nurture it. And you, dear children, show gratitude to your parents. To say "thank you" each day for the gift of life and for all that comes with it is the first way to honour your father and your mother. Finally, dear grandparents and elderly people, I recommend that you watch over your loved ones with wisdom and compassion, and with the humility and patience that come with age.

In the family, faith is handed on together with life, generation after generation. It is shared like food at the family table and like the love in our hearts. In this way, families become privileged places in which to encounter Jesus, who loves us and desires our good, always.

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# Mary Lives What We Await

**Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 15-08-2010**

Today the Church is celebrating one of the most important feasts of the Liturgical Year dedicated to Mary Most Holy: the Assumption. At the end of her earthly life Mary was taken up, body and soul, into Heaven, that is, into the glory of eternal life, into full and perfect communion with God. ...

This then is the nucleus of our faith in the Assumption: we believe that Mary, like Christ her Son, overcame death and is already triumphant in heavenly glory, in the totality of her being, "in body and soul".

In today's Second Reading St Paul helps us to shed a little more light on this mystery starting from the central event of human history and of our faith: that is, the event of Christ's Resurrection which is "the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep".

Immersed in his Paschal Mystery, we are enabled to share in his victory over sin and death. Here lies the startling secret and key reality of the whole human saga.

St Paul tells us that we are "incorporated" [in] Adam, the first man and the old man, that we all possess the same human heritage to which belong suffering, death and sin.

But every day adds something new to this reality that we can all see and live: not only are we part of this heritage of the one human being that began with Adam, but we are also "incorporated" in the new man, in the Risen Christ, and thus the life of the Resurrection is already present in us.

Therefore this first biological "incorporation" is incorporation into death, it is an incorporation that generates death. The second, new "incorporation", that is given to us in Baptism is an "incorporation" that gives life.

Again, I cite today's Second Reading: St Paul says: "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ, the first fruits, then at his coming, those who belong to Christ" (1Cor15: 21-24).

Now, what St Paul says of all human beings, the Church in her infallible Magisterium, says of Mary in a precise and clear manner: the Mother of God is so deeply integrated into Christ's Mystery that at the end of her earthly life she already participates with her whole self in her Son's Resurrection.

She lives what we await at the end of time when the "last enemy" death will have been destroyed; she already lives what we proclaim in the Creed: "We look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come".

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## Rediscovering Friday Penance

**Decree on the Granting of the Indulgence during the Ordinary Jubilee Year 2025, from the Offices Of The Apostolic Penitentiary**

The Jubilee Plenary Indulgence can also be obtained through initiatives that put into practice, in a concrete and generous way, the spirit of penance which is, in a sense, the soul of the Jubilee.

In particular the penitential nature of Friday can be rediscovered through abstaining, in a spirit of penance, at least for one day of the week from futile distractions (real but also virtual distractions, for example, the use of the media and/or social networks), from superfluous consumption (for example by fasting or practising abstinence according to the general norms of the Church and the indications of the Bishops), as well as by donating a proportionate sum of money to the poor; by supporting works of a religious or social nature, especially in support of the defence and protection of life in all its phases, but also by supporting the quality of life of abandoned children, young people in difficulty, the needy or lonely elderly people, or migrants from various countries "who leave their homelands behind in search of a better life for themselves and for their families" (*Spes non confundit*, 13); it can also be obtained by dedicating a reasonable portion of one's free time to voluntary activities that are of service to the community or to other similar forms of personal commitment.

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# The Robe

A couple of weeks ago, my parish priest mentioned in his homily a book by Lloyd C. Douglas. The Big Fisherman, I think it was. But it reminded me that I have an old book of Lloyd C. Douglas, called The Robe, that I thought I had read in my youth, and loved it, but couldn't remember more. I came home and found the tattered old book on my bookshelf and began reading it. I read chapter upon chapter, sitting there on that Sunday afternoon on the couch in the afternoon winter sun, in front of the heater. Ah, what a joy! I haven't indulged in reading like that for years! The smell of old, yellowed pages, the feel of old bookcloth in my hands, the need to handle it gently because the spine has come loose.

What surprised me is that nothing of what I read was familiar, making me realise that I hadn't read it before after all. I became engrossed in it, in the world it created, and loved getting to know the people I met there. I stopped reading when the sun set and my spot became dark and chilly. I set up later in my recliner under my reading light and continued my adventure.

Real life got in the way, as is inevitable, and it took me a few days to get back to the book. I repeated the delightful afternoon and evening as above, and the more I 'disappeared' into the events on the pages – and shed a few tears – the more I wanted to continue. And yet at the same time I didn't want it to end. As I progressed through the chapters, and my bookmark marked halfway, then past-halfway, then three-quarters... I slacked off a bit on my newly-found reading habit. I let the book sit there quietly, and glanced at it warmly every now and then, like an old friend I was looking forward to spending more time with.

I still haven't finished the book. But I will. Soon. And then I'll look for The Big Fisherman, and other titles of his, to fill the void that finishing this one will leave. It is a powerful book. A beautiful story. A story of the very beginnings of Christianity, as seen through the eyes of people who were there. People who knew Jesus – apostles, disciples, enemies, sceptics, passers-by; but above all, through the eyes of the Roman who crucified him.

Ed.

## Into the Depths of Your Mystery

**St Elizabeth of the Trinity**

"O my God, Trinity whom I adore,  
let me entirely forget myself  
that I may abide in you,  
still and peaceful  
as if my soul were already in eternity;  
let nothing disturb my peace  
nor separate me from you, O my unchanging God,  
but that each moment may take me further  
into the depths of your mystery!  
Pacify my soul!  
Make it your heaven, your beloved home  
and place of your repose;  
let me never leave you there alone,  
but may I be ever attentive,  
ever alert in my faith,  
ever adoring  
and all given up to your creative action."

## Aid to the Church in Need

For those looking for somewhere worthy to donate to, here is what Aid to the Church in Need achieved in 2024 thanks to donations (from ACN Impact Report 2024):

- 1.8 million Mass offerings
- 867 projects supporting religious sisters (e.g. help with novice formation, supply of equipment like sewing machines and host-baking machines)
- Support for training of 9961 seminarians (majority in Africa)
- 805 projects for training of catechists (and supply of 844,200 Bibles and religious books)
- 755 constructions projects (e.g. construction and renovation of churches, convents, presbyteries)
- 1131 vehicles for pastoral support (e.g. cars, busses, motorcycles)
- Aid to suffering Christians in 137 countries.

Learn more at [aidtochurch.org](https://aidtochurch.org)

Ed.

# God Himself Speaks

**"The Gospel Is the Body of Christ": A Call to Participation in the Eucharist, by Bishop Anthony Randazzo  
Bishop of Broken Bay, Apostolic Administrator of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross,  
in preparation for the Solemnity of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Year of Hope, 2025**

Each Sunday, we gather at the altar as one Body in Christ, drawn into the divine mystery where heaven touches earth. We hear the Word proclaimed, we offer our prayers, and we receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet amid the sacredness of the liturgy, a question stirs our hearts: Are we truly participating in the Eucharist, or merely present?

Saint Jerome, one of the greatest biblical scholars of the Church, offers us a striking reflection that pierces through routine and indifference. In his Commentary on the Psalms, he writes:

"For me, the Gospel is the Body of Christ; for me, the holy Scriptures are his teaching. And when he says: whoever does not eat my flesh and drink my blood (Jn 6:53), even though these words can also be understood of the [Eucharistic] Mystery, Christ's body and blood are really the word of Scripture, God's teaching. When we approach the [Eucharistic] Mystery, if a crumb falls to the ground we are troubled. Yet when we are listening to the word of God, and God's Word and Christ's flesh and blood are being poured into our ears yet we pay no heed, what great peril should we not feel?" (cf. Homily 74 on Psalm 147)

Saint Jerome's words bring us face to face with the gravity and beauty of the Eucharist, not only as a sacrament received at the altar but also as a mystery proclaimed in the Word of God. At the celebration of the Mass, both the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist are essential to our communion with Christ. Together, they form one act of worship that draws us into the Paschal Mystery.

## **The Word as Flesh**

In our Eucharistic celebrations, we sometimes unconsciously separate "hearing" from "receiving." We may sit passively through the readings, waiting for the moment of Communion, forgetting that Christ is already coming to meet us in the Scriptures. Saint Jerome reminds us that when the Gospel is proclaimed, it is not merely a story or lesson, it is the living Christ speaking to His people. His Word, like His flesh, nourishes and transforms.

When we listen attentively to Scripture, we open our hearts to conversion. Jesus told Satan in the desert, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4). At Mass, we receive that Word from the mouth of God, poured into our ears, as Jerome says. If we approach the altar with reverence for the consecrated host, how much more should we approach the readings with attentiveness and humility, prepared, and receptive?

## **Reverence Beyond Ritual**

We are rightly distressed if a host is dropped or a chalice spilled. We genuflect, we kneel, we silence our mobile phones. But what of our interior disposition? Saint Jerome's challenge is clear: we should be no less reverent when the Word is proclaimed. If we allow our minds to wander or dismiss the homily as unimportant, we may be ignoring the voice of Christ calling to us.

The Church teaches that when the Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people (cf. Dei Verbum, 21). Participation in the Mass begins with listening deeply, with ears, heart, and will. This is not a passive act, but one that demands intention and openness. Reverence for the Eucharist is not limited to our actions at Communion, it begins the moment we leave our homes setting off towards the church, when we greet our brothers and sisters even in the car park, when we enter the church building, in our singing, in our silence, and it continues through every part of the liturgy.

## **Participation as Transformation**

The Bishops gathered at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) emphasized the need for "fully conscious, and active participation" in liturgical celebrations (cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, 14). This is more than physical presence or everyone 'doing something' during the liturgy. It is the act of allowing ourselves to be drawn into the life

*Continued on p.7...*

of Christ. We bring our lives, our often-unseen joys, our sorrows, and we lay them on the altar in the visible gifts of bread and wine. We are not spectators of a sacred drama; we are participants in a divine offering. Each time we participate in the celebration of the Mass, we are invited into a deeper union with the Blessed Trinity, through the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. This union is not only sacramental but also scriptural. The Word prepares our hearts to recognize Him "in the breaking of the bread" (Luke 24:35). In the encounter with the Word, we are pierced like those who heard Peter's preaching at Pentecost: "they were cut to the heart" (Acts 2:37). Only then can we truly approach the altar of the Lord, changed and ready to be nourished by His real Presence.

#### **A Eucharistic Life**

Our participation in the Eucharist must extend beyond the walls of the church building. If we are truly nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ, both in Word and Sacrament, we are sent forth to live Eucharistic lives. We become, as Saint Augustine says, what we receive: the Body of Christ in the world (cf. Easter Sermon 227). The same reverence and attentiveness we show at Mass shapes our daily lives, in how we think, how we speak, how we serve, how we love, how we forgive.

When the liturgy concludes, we are not dismissed from worship but sent to continue it: "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life." We carry within us the Word we have heard and the Lord we have received. Active participation is not an obligation to be met, but a grace to be lived.

#### **Heeding the Word of God, Honouring the Blessed Sacrament**

Saint Jerome's exhortation is as timely today as it was in the early Church. We are always at risk of becoming too comfortable, too casual, with the sacred. Yet the Eucharist is no ordinary meal, and the Scriptures are no ordinary words. They are Jesus Christ himself, speaking and giving himself to us.

Let us approach every Mass with renewed reverence, not only for the consecrated bread and wine, but for the Word that is Christ's own flesh poured into our ears. May we never treat casually what God offers so lovingly. And may our participation in the Eucharist, in both Word and Sacrament, be fully conscious, and life-changing.

[bbcatholic.org.au](http://bbcatholic.org.au)

## **We Are All Pilgrims, and Always Pilgrims**

**Pope Leo XIV, to pilgrims, 05-07-2025**

A pilgrimage has a vital part to play in our life of faith, for it removes us from our homes and our daily routines, and gives us time and space to encounter God more deeply. Such moments always help us to grow, for through them the Holy Spirit gently fashions us to be ever more closely conformed to the mind and the heart of Jesus Christ.

In a particular way, dear brothers and sisters, young people gathered with us this morning, remember that God has created each one of you with a purpose and a mission in this life. Use this opportunity for listening, for prayer, so that you may hear more clearly God's voice calling you deep within your hearts. I would add that today, so often, we lose the ability to listen, to really listen. We listen to music, we have our ears flooded constantly with all kinds of digital input, but sometimes we forget to listen to our own hearts and it's in our hearts that God speaks to us, that God calls us and invites us to know him better and to live in his love. And through that listening you might be open to allowing God's grace to strengthen your faith in Jesus, so that you might more readily share that gift with others. ...

And finally, when all of you return home, please remember that a pilgrimage does not end, it shifts its focus to the daily "pilgrimage of discipleship". We are all pilgrims and we are always pilgrims, walking as we seek to follow the Lord, and as we seek the path that is truly ours in life. That's certainly not easy, but with the help of the Lord, the intercession of the saints, and by encouraging one another, you can be certain that, as long as you remain faithful, trusting always in God's mercy, the experience of this pilgrimage will continue to bear fruit throughout your lives.

[Vatican.va](http://Vatican.va)

# The Age of the Church

One of the many things I have learned from listening to Fr Mike's Bible in a Year series, is about The Great Adventure Bible Timeline, created by Jeff Cavins. It gives you the "big picture" view of the Bible and God's plan for the salvation of the whole world. The Bible Timeline takes us all the way from Adam through to the Apostles and the early Church, by dividing the story of salvation into 12 ages or time periods.

They are: Early World, Patriarchs, Egypt and Exodus, Desert Wanderings, Conquest and Judges, Royal Kingdom, Divided Kingdom, Exile, Return, Maccabean Revolt, Messianic Fulfillment and The Church.

The Bible in all of its 73 books, from beginning to the end, is a story of love, a story of salvation. This story of salvation is the fundamental story from which all other stories proceed and find their meaning.

As Catholics, it is crucial for us to know and understand the flow of God's communication and interaction with man from Creation, to the Cross of Christ and to his return, and how we fit into that plan and story.

What I have learnt from this timeline, and from Fr Mike of course, is that the Story of Salvation is not finished, and that we are currently living within it, in the final phase known as the age of the Church. It continues with the work of the Holy Spirit through the Church – which can be seen clearly in the reading below from Lumen Gentium.

**Gregory Kingman, Morwell, Victoria**

## The Mission of the Holy Spirit in the Church

When the Son completed the work with which the Father had entrusted him on earth, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost to sanctify the Church unceasingly, and thus enable believers to have access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit.

He is the Spirit of life, the fountain of water welling up to give eternal life. Through him the Father gives life to men, dead because of sin, until he raises up their mortal bodies in Christ.

The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple. He prays in them and bears witness in them to their adoption as sons. He leads the Church into all truth and gives it unity in communion and in service. He endows it with different hierarchical and charismatic gifts, directs it by their means, and enriches it with his fruits.

By the power of the Gospel he enables the Church to grow young, perpetually renews it, and leads it to complete union with its Bridegroom. For the Spirit and the Bride say to the Lord Jesus: "Come!"

In this way the Church reveals itself as a people whose unity has its source in the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The whole company of the faithful, who have an anointing by the Holy Spirit, cannot err in faith. They manifest this distinctive characteristic of theirs in the supernatural instinct of faith ('*sensus fidei*') of the whole people when, from the bishops to the most ordinary lay person among the faithful, they display a universal agreement on matters of faith and morals.

This instinct of faith is awakened and kept in being by the Spirit of truth. Through it the people of God hold indefectibly to *the faith once delivered to the saints*, penetrate it more deeply by means of right judgement, and apply it more perfectly in their lives. They do all this under the guidance of the sacred teaching office: by faithful obedience to it they receive, not the word of men but in truth the word of God.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit not only sanctifies and guides God's people by the sacraments and the ministries, and enriches it with virtues, he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every state of life, *assigning his gifts to each as he chooses*. By means of these special gifts he equips them and makes them eager for various activities and responsibilities that benefit the Church in its renewal or its increase, in accordance with the text: *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for a good purpose*.

These charisms, the simpler and more widespread as well as the most outstanding, should be accepted with a sense of gratitude and consolation, since in a very special way they answer and serve the needs of the Church.

Second Reading from the Office of Readings, Wednesday of the 7<sup>th</sup> week of Eastertide



# Signs of Hope, Whatever Our Age

**Pope Leo XIV, in his Message for the 5<sup>th</sup> World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly 2025 [27-07-2025]**

Augustine asks, "What do we mean by old age?"

He tells us that God himself answers the question: "Let your strength fail, so that my strength may abide within you, and you can say with the Apostle, 'When I am weak, then I am strong'" (Super Ps. 70,11). ...

The life of the Church and the world can only be understood in light of the passage of generations. Embracing the elderly helps us to understand that life is more than just the present moment, and should not be wasted in superficial encounters and fleeting relationships. Instead, life is constantly pointing us toward the future. ...

If it is true that the weakness of the elderly needs the strength of the young, it is equally true that the inexperience of the young needs the witness of the elderly in order to build the future with wisdom. How often our grandparents have been for us examples of faith and devotion, civic virtue and social commitment, memory and perseverance amid trials! The precious legacy that they have handed down to us with hope and love will always be a source of gratitude and a summons to perseverance. ...

The Book of Sirach calls blessed those who have not lost hope (cf. 14:2). Perhaps, especially if our lives are long, we may be tempted to look not to the future but to the past.

Yet, as Pope Francis wrote during his last hospitalization, "our bodies are weak, but even so, nothing can prevent us from loving, praying, giving ourselves, being there for one another, in faith, as shining signs of hope" (Angelus, 16 March 2025). We possess a freedom that no difficulty can rob us of: it is the freedom to love and to pray. Everyone, always, can love and pray.

Our affection for our loved ones – for the wife or husband with whom we have spent so much of our lives, for our children, for our grandchildren who brighten our days – does not fade when our strength wanes. Indeed, their own affection often revives our energy and brings us hope and comfort.

These signs of living love, which have their roots in God himself, give us courage and remind us that "even if our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor 4:16). Especially as we grow older, let us press forward with confidence in the Lord.

May we be renewed each day by our encounter with him in prayer and in Holy Mass. Let us lovingly pass on the faith we have lived for so many years, in our families and in our daily encounter with others. May we always praise God for his goodness, cultivate unity with our loved ones, open our hearts to those who are far away and, in particular, to all those in need. In this way, we will be signs of hope, whatever our age.

Vatican.va

## Pope Leo's Childhood Memories

**Pope Leo has a dialogue with children participating in the Vatican's summer camp who gathered with him [03-07-2025] in the Paul VI Hall. L'Osservatore Romano**

The first question came from Giulia, who asked if the Pope went to Mass as a child. "Of course!" he answered enthusiastically. "Always, every Sunday, with Mom and Dad." He then shared memories from his childhood in Chicago: "Around age six, I was also an altar server in my parish. Before going to school – it was a parish school – we would attend 6.30a.m. Mass. Mom always woke us up saying, 'Let's go to Mass.'"

Serving at Mass was something he truly enjoyed. "From an early age, I was taught that Jesus is always near, that He is your best friend, and Mass was a way to find that friend, to be with Jesus – even before my First Communion."

Pope Leo also recalled that back then Mass was in Latin: "We had to learn Latin for Mass, but then it changed to English for me since I was born and raised in the U.S." However, he emphasized, "What mattered wasn't the language of the celebration, but the experience of being with other kids serving Mass, the friendship, and that closeness to Jesus in the Church. It was always something beautiful."

VaticanNews.va, 04-07-2025

# God's Judgement

**Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the year 2025 (n.22)**

Another reality having to do with eternal life is *God's judgement*, both at the end of our individual lives and at the end of history. ...

We should indeed prepare ourselves consciously and soberly for the moment when our lives will be judged, but we must always do this from the standpoint of hope, the theological virtue that sustains our lives and shields them from groundless fear. The judgement of God, who is love, will surely be based on love, and in particular on all that we have done or failed to do with regard to those in need, in whose midst Christ, the Judge himself, is present.

Clearly, then, we are speaking of a judgement unlike any handed down by human, earthly tribunals; it should be understood as a rapport of truth with the God who is love and with oneself, within the unfathomable mystery of divine mercy.

Sacred Scripture states: "You have taught your people that the righteous must be kind, and you have filled your children with good hope, because you give repentance for sins, so that... when we are judged, we may expect mercy" (Wis 12:19,22).

In the words of Benedict XVI: "At the moment of judgement we experience and we absorb the overwhelming power of his love over all the evil in the world and in ourselves. The pain of love becomes our salvation and our joy" [*Spe Salvi*, 47].

Judgement, then, concerns the salvation in which we hope and which Jesus has won for us by his death and resurrection. It is meant to bring us to a definitive encounter with the Lord. The evil we have done cannot remain hidden; it needs to be *purified* in order to enable this definitive encounter with God's love.

Here we begin to see the need of our prayers for all those who have ended their earthly pilgrimage, our solidarity in an intercession that is effective by virtue of the communion of the saints, and the shared bond that makes us one in Christ, the firstborn of all creation. The Jubilee indulgence, thanks to the power of prayer, is intended in a particular way for those who have gone before us, so that they may obtain full mercy.

Vatican.va

## Witness of the Elderly

**By Linda Bordoni, Vatican News 21-07-2025**

Pope Leo XIV paid a private visit to the *Santa Marta Home for the Elderly* in Castel Gandolfo on Monday morning [21-07-2025], offering words of comfort, encouragement, and spiritual closeness to the women residing there and to their carers.

In a post on Telegram, the Holy See Press Office shared that the Pope was welcomed by the community of religious sisters who run the facility ... Afterwards, the Holy Father took time to personally greet each of the twenty elderly women living in the home, all aged between 80 and 101. ... Then, addressing all those present, Pope Leo reflected ...

"In each of us, there is a part of Martha and a part of Mary," the Pope said, referring to the Gospel account of the two sisters who welcomed Jesus into their home. "This stage of life," he added, "is a precious time to embrace the 'Mary' within us – to sit at the feet of Jesus, to listen to His word, and to pray."

He expressed gratitude for the prayers of the elderly residents, affirming their value in the life of the Church. "Prayer is so important, far greater than we can imagine," he said. "Age doesn't matter. It is Jesus who draws near to us. He becomes our guest and invites us to be His witnesses, whether young or not-so-young."

Encouraging them to persevere in faith and trust, Pope Leo XIV described the elderly as "signs of hope" for the Church and the world. "You have given so much in your lives," he said. "And you continue to be witnesses, witnesses of prayer, of faith, a family that offers to the Lord what it has."

VaticanNews.va

# Whose Sickness is it?

*Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime, by Fr John Speekman (p.10)*

As a hospital chaplain I see sickness all the time. In every bed I visit there lies a story of discomfort, suffering, or even of approaching death.

To a certain extent one needs to detach – actually, to a large extent – and tell oneself: *This is not my sickness, this is not my suffering, this is not my death.*

I have spoken to various people who can't do this, who can't detach. Some of them feel guilty and imagine some sort of *obligation* to suffer along with the patient. Others just won't go into the room for a visit because it causes them too much distress to see someone else's pain.

After all this time I've come to recognise that I experience most distress when called to visit a couple who have lost a child before or at birth. This defeats my best efforts to detach and I often find myself weeping along with the parents.

Having said all this let me share with you an experience I occasionally have when celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

After all the appropriate prayers are said there comes the time for the priest to anoint.

I dip my thumb into the oil and then reaching out my arm and placing my thumb on the forehead of the sick person I sometimes feel I am 'claiming' him as my brother. In fact, more than that, I sometimes have the impression I am anointing *myself*. Isn't that curious?

It's as though the two of us were really 'one' body and my arm, the healthy part of the body, was reaching out and anointing him, the sick part of my *own* body.

For a split second the sick person and I are one. For a split second his sickness is mine and my health is his.

St Paul had a lot to say about us all being part of the one body and maybe this is just a little glimpse into the truth of this reality which is usually hidden from us.

## The Daily Struggle

*Things Serious, Silly, and Sublime, by Fr John Speekman (p.30)*

You know, as a priest I am encouraged by many things but one of the greatest encouragements is hearing the Confessions of simple, humble strugglers who doggedly battle for holiness through the action of God in their life – even if they experience that action mostly as forgiveness.

I think they are wonderful people! So stubborn in their refusal to let sin have the last say in their life, they come time and again to the fount of mercy.

Wonderful people! God must be so pleased with them! He loves sinners who come to him with such simple humility and confident sorrow.

As far as I am concerned they are heroes. Keep coming, people, his mercy is inexhaustible!

## Free Postage!

Fr Speekman's book (see above) costs only \$15. Throughout 2025, all orders through ITD will be sent with free postage! No matter how many you order, or where in the world you want to send them to! Order now!

**Payment:** Cheques to be made out to Janet Kingman, posted to ITD at 12 Vincent Road, Morwell VIC 3840.

Or direct deposit details:

Account name: Janet Kingman

BSB: 013-745

Account number: 2901-63632

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

## Contemplating Christ

**Pope John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, n.9**

"And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun" (Mt 17:2).

The Gospel scene of Christ's transfiguration, in which the three Apostles Peter, James and John appear entranced by the beauty of the Redeemer, can be seen as *an icon of Christian contemplation*.

To look upon the face of Christ, to recognize its mystery amid the daily events and the sufferings of his human life, and then to grasp the divine splendor definitively revealed in the Risen Lord, seated in glory at the right hand of the Father: this is the task of every follower of Christ and therefore the task of each one of us.

In contemplating Christ's face we become open to receiving the mystery of Trinitarian life, experiencing ever anew the love of the Father and delighting in the joy of the Holy Spirit. Saint Paul's words can then be applied to us: "Beholding the glory of the Lord, we are being changed into his likeness, from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2Cor 3:18).

## Contact *Into the Deep*

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ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email and on the website; printed copies about a week later.

**Editor:** Janet Kingman

Subscription is free.

**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.

**\*\* The last issue of ITD will be October 2025 \*\***

## 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 St John Paul II**