

Into the Deep

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Never Gloomy

Pope Francis, Brazil, 24-07-2013

Always know in your heart that God is by your side; he never abandons you! Let us never lose hope! Let us never allow it to die in our hearts! The 'dragon', evil, is present in our history, but it does not have the upper hand. The one with the upper hand is God, and God is our hope! ...

If we walk in hope...we have joy in our hearts and we cannot fail to be witnesses of this joy. Christians are joyful, they are never gloomy. God is at our side.

We have a Mother who always intercedes for the life of her children. ... Jesus has shown us that the face of God is that of a loving Father. Sin and death have been defeated. Christians cannot be pessimists! They do not look like someone in constant mourning.

If we are truly in love with Christ and if we sense how much he loves us, our heart will 'light up' with a joy that spreads to everyone around us.

Vatican Information Service, 24-07-2013

A Simple Prayer

Pope Francis to youth of Lithuania, 21-06-2013

I would like to underscore the beauty of a simple contemplative prayer, accessible to all, great and small, educated and not very educated; it is the prayer of the Holy Rosary.

In the Rosary we address the Virgin Mary, so that she will lead us to an ever closer union with her Son Jesus to be conformed to Him, to have his sentiments, to act like Him. In the Rosary, in fact, by repeating the "Hail Mary," we meditate on the Mysteries, the events of the life of Christ to know and love Him ever more.

The Rosary is an effective instrument to open ourselves to God, because it helps us to overcome our egoism and to have peace in our hearts, in our families, in society and in the world.

Zenit.org 01-07-2013

Our Patience, His Patience

Pope Francis, Morning Mass, 28-06-2013

When the Lord intervenes, He does not always do so in the same way. There is no 'set protocol' of action of God in our life. Once he intervenes in one way, another time in a different way, but He always intervenes. There is always this meeting between us and the Lord. ...

For some, God may act slowly; sometimes so slowly that we are in danger of losing our patience. ...

The Lord takes his time. But even He, in this relationship with us, has a lot of patience. Not only do we have to have patience: He has! He waits for us! And He waits for us until the end of life! Think of the good thief, right at the end, at the very end, he acknowledged God.

The Lord walks with us, but often does not reveal Himself, as in the case of the disciples of Emmaus. The Lord is involved in our lives – that's for sure! – but often we do not see. This demands our patience. But the Lord who walks with us, He also has a lot of patience with us. ...

Life's troubles at times become so dark that it makes us want to come down from the cross.

This is the precise moment: the night is at its darkest, when dawn is about to break. And when we come down from the Cross, we always do so just five minutes before our liberation comes, at the very moment when our impatience is greatest.

... Patience until the end, because He has patience with us. He always enters, He is involved with us, but He does so in His own way and when He thinks it's best.

He tells us exactly what He told Abraham: 'Walk in my presence and be blameless', be above reproach. ... We ask this grace from the Lord, to always walk in His presence, trying to be blameless.

Zenit.org 28-06-2013

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Using Stubbornness

Pope Francis, Morning Mass 03-07-2013

Before he could believe, Thomas wanted to place his fingers in the wounds. He was stubborn. But that was what the Lord wanted – a stubborn person to make us understand something greater.

Thomas saw the Lord and was invited to put his finger into the wounds left by the nails; to put his hand in His side. He did not merely say, 'It's true: the Lord is risen'. No! He went further. He said: 'God'. He was the first of the disciples to confess the divinity of Christ after the Resurrection. And he worshipped Him.

Zenit.org 03-07-2013

Do We Believe?

One of the fruits of the Second Vatican Council was The Catechism of the Catholic Church promulgated in 1992. In addition, numerous seminars have been held, books written and a variety of ministries, more in some parishes than others, established.

Despite this Sunday Mass attendance has plummeted. Why is this?

Along with Mr Chesterton, it is therefore not unreasonable to ask: "Is Catholicism one religion not studied, even by Catholics?"

Do we not profess at Mass, in one article of the Nicene Creed, "I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church"? Does not 'active participation' involve not only uttering words but actually meaning and believing what is uttered?

May it be only the Holy Spirit who guides us and may St Michael guard and protect us.

John Royal, Bundaberg West, Queensland

Young and Old

Pope Francis, to journalists on the flight to Brazil, 22-07-13

Young people are the future of a people: this is true! But not only them: they are the future because they have the strength, they are young, they will go forward. But also the other extreme of life, the elderly, are the future of a people. A people has a future if it goes forwards with the two points: with the young, with strength, because they lead it forward; and with the elderly because they are those who give the wisdom of life. And I often think that we do an injustice to the elderly, we leave them aside as if they had nothing to give us; they have wisdom, the wisdom of life, the wisdom of history, the wisdom of the homeland, the wisdom of the family. And we are in need of this!

Zenit.org 23-07-2013

Remove Us From the Centre

Pope Francis, Homily, Brazil 26-07-2013

"Bota fé – put on faith". The World Youth Day Cross has proclaimed these words throughout its pilgrimage in Brazil.

"Put on faith": what does this mean? When we prepare a plate of food and we see that it needs salt, well, we "put on" salt; when it needs oil, then you "put on" oil. "To put on", that is, to place on top of, to pour over.

And so it is in our life, dear young friends: if we want it to have real meaning and fulfilment, as you want and as you deserve, I say to each one of you, "Put on faith", and your life will take on a new flavour, it will have a compass to show you the way; "put on hope" and every one of your days will be enlightened and your horizon will no longer be dark, but luminous; "put on love", and your life will be like a house built on rock, your journey will be joyful, because you will find many friends to journey with you. Put on faith, put on hope, put on love!

But who can give us all this? In the Gospel we have just heard the answer: Christ. "This is my Son, my chosen one. Listen to him!"

Jesus is the one who brings God to us and us to God. With him, our life is transformed and renewed, and we can see reality with new eyes, from Jesus' standpoint, with his own eyes. For this reason, I want to insist with you today: "Put on Christ!" ...

Today, I would like each of us to ask sincerely: in whom do we place our trust? In ourselves, in material things, or in Jesus? We are all tempted to put ourselves at the centre, to think that we alone build our lives or that our life can only be happy if built on possessions, money, or power. But it is not so. Certainly, possessions, money and power can give a momentary thrill, the illusion of being happy, but they end up possessing us and making us always want to have more, never satisfied.

"Put on Christ" in your life, place your trust in him and you will never be disappointed! You see how faith accomplishes a revolution in us, one which we can call Copernican, because it removes us from the centre and restores it to God; faith immerses us in his love and gives us security, strength, and hope. To all appearances, nothing has changed; yet, in the depths of our being, everything is different. Peace, consolation, gentleness, courage, serenity and joy, which are all fruits of the Holy Spirit, find a home in our heart, and our very being is transformed; our way of thinking and acting is made new, it becomes Jesus' own, God's own, way of thinking and acting. ...

Zenit.org 26-07-2013

Stumbling Blocks, or Servants of Communion

Pope Francis, to bishops and archbishops, 29-06-2013

Whenever we let our thoughts, our feelings or the logic of human power prevail, and we do not let ourselves be taught and guided by faith, by God, we become stumbling blocks.

... each of you, new archbishops and bishops, have the same task: to let yourselves be consumed by the Gospel, to become all things to everyone. It is your task to hold nothing back, to go outside of yourselves in the service of the faithful and holy people of God. ...

The pallium, while being a sign of communion with the Bishop of Rome and with the universal church, with the Synod of Bishops, also commits each of you to being a servant of communion.

Zenit.org 30-06-2013

If You Love Jesus, Love the Church!

Pope John Paul II, World Youth Day Toronto, 28-07-2002

If you love Jesus, love the Church! Do not be discouraged by the sins and failings of some of her members. The harm done by some priests and religious to the young and vulnerable fills us all with a deep sense of sadness and shame. But think of the vast majority of dedicated and generous priests and religious whose only wish is to serve and do good! There are many priests, seminarians and consecrated persons here today; be close to them and support them! And if, in the depths of your hearts, you feel the same call to the priesthood or consecrated life, do not be afraid to follow Christ on the royal road of the Cross! At difficult moments in the Church's life, the pursuit of holiness becomes even more urgent. And holiness is not a question of age; it is a matter of living in the Holy Spirit...

You are young, and the Pope is old, 82 or 83 years of life is not the same as 22 or 23. But the Pope still fully identifies with your hopes and aspirations. Although I have lived through much darkness, under harsh totalitarian regimes, I have seen enough evidence to be unshakably convinced that no difficulty, no fear is so great that it can completely suffocate the hope that springs eternal in the hearts of the young. You are our hope, the young are our hope.

Do not let that hope die! Stake your lives on it! We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures; we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of his Son.

Obligation-Free!

Is there still a Sunday Mass obligation for Catholics?

It would really help if Bishop Prowse could clarify for us in his diocese once and for all, if the Sunday Mass obligation still holds. I know it sounds silly, but it's necessary to know. Just because the Catechism says the Sunday Mass obligation hasn't changed, doesn't mean that in our diocese, our bishop may believe and expect otherwise. And if that is the case, he should make it known, loud and clear, so that we all know where we stand and a whole lot of worrying things wouldn't be cause for concern anymore.

For example:

- Babies are happily baptised without any requirement that their parents come to Sunday Mass every week.
- Children in Catholic schools routinely make their First Holy Communion without any expectation that Sunday Mass is part of being Catholic.
- School Masses are considered suitable alternatives for Sunday Mass.
- Schools are considered suitable alternatives for parishes.
- Confirmation is conferred by the bishop in full knowledge that children do not come to Sunday Mass and so do not practise their Catholic faith.
- Couples are married in the Church in the priest's full knowledge that they've been living together, don't come to Sunday Mass, and have no intention of returning to the practice of the faith.
- The Director of Catholic Education can publicly scoff at the expectation that Catholic school children should come to Sunday Mass, and be supported by the bishop.
- In Morwell parish recently, when a priest was unavailable for Sunday Mass at the last minute, he had time enough to arrange for Communion Services to be held rather than have a list drawn up of Mass times in nearby parishes that parishioners could still attend. Communion services don't fulfil the Sunday obligation.
- Priests don't, won't or can't preach about Sunday Mass obligation.
- All are welcomed to Holy Communion at weddings and funerals and Christmas and Easter, when the priest knows full well that many do not come to Sunday Mass.

The thing that would explain all of these issues simply and easily, would be that there is no longer a Sunday Mass obligation. Maybe that's what's happened and no one has told us? Otherwise, why are our bishops and priests too scared to confront the issue, too scared to teach us, remind us, encourage us, demand anything of us?

- Ed.

Looking Forward to Change in Catholic Education

A report on a meeting to present a petition to Bishop Prowse, by Pat O'Brien, Sale

On July 14, 2013, the petition about the Director of Catholic Education's article in the March edition of Catholic Life was presented to Bishop Prowse.

The petition was signed by 104 people from around the diocese, from Berwick to Orbost.

The Bishop asked me to explain why people were upset so I told him that the comment in her article that "according to the unknown person who penned the article, the main indicator of whether these schools are real Catholic schools, and therefore to be commended, is if there are multitudinous young faces at Mass on Sundays," was both disturbing and offensive; and her comment about the "unknown person who penned the article in Into The Deep" was in fact both wrong and unprofessional, as the article in Into The Deep was signed Ed., and the Editor's name was printed on the back page of the publication.

I then asked why the Catholic Life article was so scathing of the idea that non-attendance at Sunday Mass was anything to do with the Catholic education being received in our schools. He replied that the director believed that the Fairy Floss article in ITD was very flippant, and she wanted to respond, but in a flippant way. So I objected and said that she did not reply to ITD, but to another publication, where there was a different audience and no right of reply. The Bishop said that Maria Kirkwood had been very upset by the Fairy Floss article and very disturbed by it. This comment did not sit well with her final paragraph in Catholic Life where she proclaimed that she and her family had had "a great laugh at the Fairy Floss bit..."

I commented that a number of people had asked whether the Director was a Catholic or not. Bishop Prowse reacted strongly to this by assuring me that she was an excellent Catholic, well known and respected by Melbourne Bishops, and that he was delighted when she applied for the job. He added that like he and I, she was committed to real Catholic education, to which I replied that her article in Catholic Life did not inspire confidence.

Turning to Catholic education generally, I quoted from an address in 1988 by Bishop D'Arcy to a plenary session of the Roman Secretariat for non-believers on behalf of the Australian Bishops – "Since 1970 many Australian pastors, parents and teachers have been expressing strong and constant dissatisfaction about the "Experiential Model Catechetics" which became dominant in Catholic High Schools. As that system became entrenched, great numbers of young Catholics were coming away from twelve years of Catholic schooling, ignorant of

the Church's specific doctrines, both on faith and morals; ignorant of the reasons that support those doctrines; vulnerable to even the most elementary and hackneyed secularist objections to Catholic beliefs," Bishop D'Arcy said.

I commented that it is now twenty-five years later and the situation had not improved. The Bishop readily concurred with Bishop D'Arcy's comment and said that the whole situation was being looked at. I then commented that in 2005, a new curriculum was introduced under the auspices of the Catholic Education Office, and that this curriculum was based on Thomas Groome's 'shared Christian praxis.' Groome is a laicised priest and therefore under Canon Law is not permitted to have any teaching role in the Church. In his book, *Sharing Faith*, he denies that Jesus ordained the Apostles at the Last Supper, (page 512) and said the notion that presiding at Eucharist as an exclusively priestly function did not become widespread until the beginning of the third century. He structures his 'Shared Christian praxis' to what he calls a "hermeneutic of suspicion" to Catholic doctrine, given "how much untruth is in every statement of faith." The Bishop did not challenge my assessment of the curriculum called "Journeying Together in Hope" but said the Groome era was passing. When? Why not July 2013?

Finally, I said that I would be reporting to those signing the petition and offered the Bishop the opportunity to write something along with my report, an offer he declined. He assured me that there would be changes. So we will watch with interest.

The Light of Faith

Lumen Fidei, para 57

Faith is not a light which scatters all our darkness, but a lamp which guides our steps in the night and suffices for the journey.

To those who suffer, God does not provide arguments which explain everything; rather, his response is that of an accompanying presence, a history of goodness which touches every story of suffering and opens up a ray of light.

In Christ, God himself wishes to share this path with us and to offer us his gaze so that we might see the light within it. Christ is the one who, having endured suffering, is "the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (Heb 12:2).

Jesus on Holidays?

On any 'normal' Wednesday morning after the 9am Mass in my parish of St John Vianney, Springvale North, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed until 11am. However, throughout the year there are exceptions to the 'norm'.

On a recent Wednesday I attended 9am Mass expecting to spend some time afterwards in the company of Our Lord in the monstrance on the altar. When I entered the church, I was surprised at not seeing the monstrance and candle holders on the cruets table in readiness for Exposition. On asking someone after Mass if there was to be Exposition, I was told, "It's school holidays". I suddenly realised it was a long time since I had attended the Wednesday morning Mass as well as other times (for reasons too long to explain here).

Then I wondered why we don't have Exposition because of school holidays, and yet the priest is still present to offer Mass. Whenever I was present at Exposition in the past, a small group of lay adults always attended for the whole duration. As far as I could tell, this has not altered. The celebrant doesn't go away on holidays to coincide with the school, and I know Jesus definitely never "goes on holidays".

Maybe I'll never find the answer, like so many other "unresolved matters" in my parish.

Peter Phillips, Springvale

But Beware

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 07-07-2013

Jesus is not an isolated missionary, he does not want to fulfill his mission alone, but involves his disciples. Today we see that, in addition to the Twelve Apostles, He calls seventy-two others, and sends them into the villages, two by two, to announce that the Kingdom of God is near. This is very beautiful! Jesus does not want to act alone, He has come to bring to the world the love of God and wants to spread that love with communion and fraternity. For this reason, he immediately forms a community of disciples, a missionary community, and trains them for the mission.

Beware, however: the purpose is not to socialize, to spend time together – no, the purpose is to proclaim the Kingdom of God, and this is urgent! There is no time to waste in small talk, no need to wait for the consent of all – it is necessary to go out and proclaim. The peace of Christ is to be brought to everyone, and if some do not welcome it, then you go on. Healing is to be brought to the sick, as God wishes to heal man from all evil. How many missionaries do this! They sow life, health, comfort in the peripheries of the world.

Vatican Information Service 08-07-2013

We Risk Serving Ourselves

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 21-07-2013

"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is the need for only one thing." ...

So why does Jesus rebuke Martha? Because she considered only what she was doing to be essential; she was too absorbed and worried about things to 'do'.

For a Christian, the works of service and charity are never detached from the principle source of our action: that is, listening to the Word of the Lord, sitting – like Mary – at Jesus' feet in the attitude of a disciple. And for this reason Martha is rebuked. ...

In our Christian life too prayer and action are always profoundly united. Prayer that does not lead to concrete action toward a brother who is poor, sick, in need of help ... is a sterile and incomplete prayer.

But, in the same way, when in ecclesial service we are only concerned with what we are doing, we give greater weight to things, functions and structures, forgetting the centrality of Christ; we do not set aside time for dialogue with Him in prayer, we run the risk of serving ourselves and not God, present in our brother in need.

Vatican Information Service 21-07-2013

That Pain May Not Break It

Prayer of St Faustina, (Diary n.315)

Mother of God, Your soul was plunged into a sea of bitterness; look upon Your child and teach her to suffer and to love while suffering. Fortify my soul that pain may not break it. Mother of grace, teach me to live by [the power of] God.

People Can Change

Pope Francis, Brazil, 25-07-2013

Dear young friends, you have a particular sensitivity towards injustice, but you are often disappointed by facts that speak of corruption on the part of people who put their own interests before the common good.

To you and to all, I repeat: never yield to discouragement, do not lose trust, do not allow your hope to be extinguished. Situations can change, people can change. Be the first to seek to bring good, do not grow accustomed to evil, but defeat it. The Church is with you, bringing you the precious good of faith, bringing Jesus Christ, who came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Zenit.org 25-07-2013

Nothing More Compelling

*From a column by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput,
Archbishop of Philadelphia*

In the past year – in fact, in *every* year now, according to the Holy See – more than 100,000 Christians are killed worldwide for reasons related to their faith. That’s the real cost of discipleship. That’s a measure of heroic character.

I’ve spoken many times about the importance of religious freedom and the need for all of us to actively witness our Christian faith not only in our private lives but also in the public square. The sacrifice of Christians in other countries, who write their Gospel witness in their own blood, places an obligation on all of us to live our faith with courage and zeal, endurance and hope, and to begin every new day by grounding our hearts and our actions in the wisdom of the Church.

Nothing is more compelling than a good man, or a good woman, in an evil time. Wisdom is the pursuit of the true, the right and the lasting. In the record of Scripture and the witness of the Church, all these things find their source in God, and nowhere else but God. ...

In his great work, *The City of God*, St Augustine created a portrait of the world divided into two cities – the City of God with its eyes set on heaven, and the City of Man rooted in pride and sin. Life consists in choosing one or the other. It’s a choice we can’t avoid. And each of us faces that choice right here, today, *now*. The wisdom which the Church offers the world is for the humble, not the proud, and it’s the only wisdom that counts: the path to salvation.

But this salvation is not a philosophy or an ideology, an idea or ideals. No one can “love” an idea, and yet the heart of real wisdom is the ability and willingness to love. Augustine says that all of the wisdom in the Old Testament literally takes on flesh in the New Testament. The reason is simple. Jesus Christ is the Word of God – the Wisdom of God – God as love incarnate. Jesus himself says, “I am the bread of life.” He says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

No one can love an idea. But we can love and be loved by Jesus Christ. We can meet and be met by God’s Son. The true, the right and the lasting meet in a Man. Our task is to follow him, no matter what the cost, and to lead others to do the same.

CatholicPhilly.com 11-07-2013

“To love is not to speak, to love is to live. One can speak about love all day long and not love even once.” *Blessed Teresa of Calcutta*

Prepared to Get Involved

In response to your article from Pope Francis “Be Involved in Politics” (July ITD, p.10), I would like to ask for your support in the upcoming federal election. I agree wholeheartedly with Pope Francis’ statement “To be involved in politics is an obligation for a Christian.”

For many years I have been involved with lobbying politicians at State and Federal level about upholding the dignity of human life at all stages and protecting the traditional institutions of marriage and family, but often with no successful result. A lot of the parliamentary representatives often have good intentions but they are restricted by the official policies of their parties, and can be threatened with expulsion or disendorsement if they don’t vote on these important moral issues as dictated by their leaders.

There is no point in continuously complaining about the state of politics in Australia if I am not prepared to get involved, work hard and support people who do have policies and principles that agree with my Christian beliefs. I have been impressed by the constructive contribution that our Victorian Senator John Madigan has been making to the political debate in Australia.

That is why I will be standing as a candidate for the Democratic Labour Party in the election for the federal seat of Holt (south east Melbourne including Narre Warren, Cranbourne, Hampton Park, Doveton, Endeavour Hills and Lyndhurst).

I have been a regular reader of *Into the Deep* for a long time and I know that your readers have great concerns about the future of our nation with the current lack of respect that is shown by the “political class” for human life, the Christian faith, the traditional family and marriage, and the importance of farming, manufacturing and small businesses to our economy.

The DLP’s policies of developing sensible and realistic solutions to the many challenges facing our families, communities and nation, and its unwavering commitment to supporting small business, the traditional family unit and the dignity of human life from conception to natural death, set it apart from the other political parties of today.

Therefore I ask your readers to consider becoming more involved in politics and support parties, such as the DLP, that do have good policies in regards to the above issues. Any practical support that you can offer for the coming election will be much appreciated as will your prayers for an election outcome that will help to re-establish, in the minds of the leaders of our nation, the principles and values that have been responsible for the development of Australia as a peaceful, fair and great nation.

Michael Palma, Hampton Park, Victoria

A Bishop Who Gets It – And Does Something About It!

From an interview by ZENIT with Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, archbishop of Colombo. Cardinal Ranjith was previously Secretary at the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

You have been the Archbishop of a large Archdiocese in Asia for the past four years. What liturgical initiatives have you introduced? Why were these priorities?

When I arrived I found much liturgical disorder so I started from the very beginning, insisting on certain things. We have declared a Year of the Eucharist in order to put everything in order. Now all the priests are using the vestments because, before, they were not using all of them when they celebrated Mass. Now everybody's following that, showing that the celebration of the Eucharist is something special, not like any other activity. And there is greater devotion in the celebration of the Eucharist. Communion is given on the tongue and kneeling. This has become common practice everywhere and more and more people are returning to the Church. Those who have resorted to fundamentalism, for example, are returning to the Church because they find that the liturgy is something formative, enriching. It's not this "show" that they had been used to. So we've changed the liturgical life of the diocese a lot.

The Constitution on the Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium, was [the Second Vatican Council's] first fruit. Would you care to comment on some of the successes and some of the problems of its implementation in the post-conciliar Church?

... [The reform] is to turn the liturgy into that to which it has to become – to be an instrument of communion with the Lord, allowing the Lord to take hold of you, and the Lord absorbing you into his divine mission, and making you experience what a great and privileged moment of communion this is. And it enriches the Church and every single individual. The liturgy of the Catholic Church is unique and special.

I go around the parishes in my diocese and explain to them what the beauty of the liturgy is and say: "What are you people trying to do? Why go to the sects to look for something? You have the treasure here. You have the Eucharist. The Lord is there, present for you. He's inviting you into communion with him, divine communion, eternal communion. Why are you leaving this and going away?" That is what is important for us to show.

And the reforms of the Second Vatican Council have, in some instances, got out of control. It has caused harm to the inner life of our people. But the Second Vatican Council itself didn't say that and didn't want that. It wanted a true renewal, but renewal means deepening.

But it didn't happen because unfortunately we made everything look like cosmetic changes here and there. Some people said the Council changes were to take the candle from the left side of the Mass and put it on the right side of the altar. That's [taken to be] the reform, but that's not the reform. The reform should be more profound, more spiritual. From the celebration of the Eucharist, for example, comes a transforming experience of union with the Lord. That is what the reform should achieve.

Fifty years later, what do we need to do in order to be faithful to the liturgical vision the Council set out in Sacrosanctum Concilium? Do we need a reform of the reform?

We need to be very much involved in the formation process of our people. Most people don't understand what the liturgy is all about. We've got to tell what it is. We've got to educate them, to prepare the materials necessary to educate them in that.

Then we have to reform the reforms, we have got to also tell our priests how serious they should become when they go to the altar. It's not a day-to-day eating and drinking exercise. It's something very special. If you are a priest, you're placed in the noble company of Jesus. You become another Christ at the altar. Are you aware of this?

So you've got to educate and form them, and tell the people what is happening at the altar, and make the full part of the sacrament take hold of these people. That is what is necessary.

People talk about a widespread loss of the sacred in society – would you say that is the main problem?

Yes, because we have kind of converted it [the sacred liturgy] into a social gathering, like the assemblies they had in Russia, for example, where they sang songs of heroism, of ideas, and had parades. It's like a liturgy but it doesn't bring any transformation in the inner life of our people.

Zenit.org 27-06-2013

Arrogant, Presumptuous and Judgmental

“Beware the virtuous man” cautioned my mother when I was growing up, and after reading the blistering tirade of Richard Stokes (June ITD, p.6) against the failings of all and sundry I now understand why. Never in my whole life have I had the misfortune to read such arrogant, presumptuous and judgmental sentiments as expressed by Mr Stokes in his letter. One wonders how someone so pure can bear to live with us lesser creatures.

He berates the sinful state of souls, behaviours in church, modern women and all the rest of it with threats of hell and eternity thrown in, but nowhere has he provided statistical or empirical evidence to substantiate his claims.

Take contraception and abortion for starters. With the greatest respect Mr Stokes, may I point out that whatever goes on between a husband and wife in the intimacy of marriage is a matter between themselves and God. No one else. Not you, nor me nor the man next door, just themselves and God. There are many reasons why a couple does not produce five or more children and it does not involve contraception. Bearing in mind that ‘good’ men are hard to live with, it would be interesting to know how many children, if any, Mr Stokes has fathered?

Also there are many reasons why a woman resorts to abortion – one, of which I am personally aware, is pressure from her husband or ‘partner’. It is not uncommon for the male concerned to insist the woman “get rid of it”, not only for financial reasons but because he can’t abide “crying kids”. Whilst I abhor abortion for any reason, I understand why some women take this course of action. There is a difference, you know! Whatever the reason, such a decision and its consequences are matters between the woman and her God. Judgment is for Him alone. The same sentiments apply to those receiving the Blessed Sacrament at Christmas and Easter. How do we know what goes on in a person’s heart? It is gross presumption to try and guess.

This is the 21st century for those who are not aware of it. It is a time when young women are encouraged to further their education and reach their full potential. How cruel it is for us to educate our daughters and say that once they are married and have a family their place is at the kitchen sink! As for marriage, I believe this is a partnership between a man and a woman with equal rights and responsibilities. Assuming it ever existed, the notion that the father holds such an extravagantly exalted position in the family as postulated by Mr Stokes saw its demise eons ago, never to be resurrected.

I concede that many abuses have crept into the church and I, too, deplore the lack of respect and sense of the sacred and wonder why our leaders do not lead but as we all know it is easy to be brave when one has nothing to lose.

M. P. Emerson, Murchison, Victoria

Editor’s Clarification

Into the Deep will not promote dissent from Church teaching. While I have no need or desire to defend Richard Stokes, I cannot publish M.P. Emerson’s letter (alongside) without clarifying that her opinions contradict Church teaching.

Catholics are obliged to live according to the teachings of the Catholic Church. This *includes* teaching on contraception and abortion – both of which we believe are according to the revelation of God, and in order to protect and respect life and love. So in a sense, yes, it’s between them and God – but as Catholics we accept that God is represented by his Church on earth.

The Catholic Church teaches that abortion is intrinsically evil, the intentional killing of an unborn child. This means that while there are certainly heart-wrenching circumstances that can be behind a woman’s decision to abort her baby, it doesn’t (ever) make it a “non-evil” action.

Receiving Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin is sinful. The Church teaches this. What is in a person’s heart does not change the facts of their past (e.g. missing Sunday Mass) – but Confession changes their present and is always open to them.

How sad to suggest that women can only achieve their full potential through careers, and that being a mother and housewife somehow makes them less of a woman. The Church has the most beautiful and powerful teaching on the value of womanhood – and it certainly doesn’t exclude education or motherhood.

Emerson concludes by wondering why our leaders don’t lead – I clearly often wonder the same – yet at the same time Emerson demonstrates how even when the highest authority of the Church leads with absolute clarity and understanding and compassion, with the truth of Christ himself, (e.g. on contraception and abortion), Emerson is entirely comfortable and confident in claiming that her own opinions rank higher than that!

So where does that leave you? Back to the basics. If you want to be Catholic, then respect and follow the teachings of the Catholic Church. If you don’t believe them, then be honest and leave the Church (or learn how wonderful and coherent and true they are and believe them!). But you can’t have it both ways.

- Ed.

“Do not be depressed.

Do not let your weakness make you impatient.

Instead, let the serenity of your spirit shine through
your face.

Let the joy of your mind burst forth.”

St Peter Damian

The Faith to be Believed

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2032 The Church, the “pillar and bulwark of the truth,” “has received this solemn command of Christ from the apostles to announce the saving truth.”

“To the Church belongs the right always and everywhere to announce moral principles, including those pertaining to the social order, and to make judgments on any human affairs to the extent that they are required by the fundamental rights of the human person or the salvation of souls.”

2033 The Magisterium of the Pastors of the Church in moral matters is ordinarily exercised in catechesis and preaching, with the help of the works of theologians and spiritual authors. Thus from generation to generation, under the aegis and vigilance of the pastors, the “deposit” of Christian moral teaching has been handed on, a deposit composed of a characteristic body of rules, commandments, and virtues proceeding from faith in Christ and animated by charity. Alongside the Creed and the Our Father, the basis for this catechesis has traditionally been the Decalogue which sets out the principles of moral life valid for all men.

2034 The Roman Pontiff and the bishops are “authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach the faith to the people entrusted to them, the faith to be believed and put into practice.”

Abortion

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2270 Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. ...

2271 Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law...

2272 Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life. ... The Church does not thereby intend to restrict the scope of mercy. Rather, she makes clear the gravity of the crime committed, the irreparable harm done to the innocent who is put to death, as well as to the parents and the whole of society.

No circumstance, no purpose, no law whatsoever can ever make licit an act which is intrinsically illicit, since it is contrary to the Law of God which is written in every human heart, knowable by reason itself, and proclaimed by the Church.

Evangelium Vitae, n. 62

Contraception

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2368 ... For just reasons, spouses may wish to space the births of their children. It is their duty to make certain that their desire is not motivated by selfishness but is in conformity with the generosity appropriate to responsible parenthood.

...the morality of the behaviour does not depend on sincere intention and evaluation of motives alone; but it must be determined by objective criteria, criteria drawn from the nature of the person and his acts criteria that respect the total meaning of mutual self-giving and human procreation in the context of true love; this is possible only if the virtue of married chastity is practiced with sincerity of heart.

2370 Periodic continence, that is, the methods of birth regulation based on self-observation and the use of infertile periods, is in conformity with the objective criteria of morality. These methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them, and favour the education of an authentic freedom. In contrast, “every action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible” is intrinsically evil:

Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. ...

Where We Listen To Truth

Pope Francis, Angelus address, 30-06-2013

Jesus wants us to be free, but where is this freedom found? It is found in dialogue with God in our conscience. If a Christian does not know how to speak with God, does not know how to listen to God in his own conscience, he is not free.

For this reason we must learn how to listen more to our conscience. But be careful! This does not mean following our own “I,” do that which interests me, is convenient for me, that I like... It is not this!

Our conscience is the interior place where we listen to truth, to goodness, where we listen to God; it is the interior place of my relation to him, the one who speaks to my heart and helps me discern, to understand the road that I must take, and once the decision is made, he helps me to go forward, to remain faithful.

Zenit.org 30-06-2013

Frequent Confession – What to Confess

Answered by Fr Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy and dean of theology at the Regina Apostolorum university

Q: We are constantly being directed to go to confession frequently, and I subscribe to that teaching. I have been puzzled, however, for a long time as to what one confesses on a frequent basis in reconciliation. I certainly know mortal sin and venial sin. I attend Mass every Sunday and receive the Eucharist as often as possible and try to keep myself in check, to avoid sin. But I frequently find myself not knowing what to confess in the confessional, in wanting to go to confession on an ongoing frequent basis of at least once per month. This might sound like a silly inquiry, but if I am thinking it, there must be others who think it too. - J.C., Miami, Florida

A: While this is not, strictly speaking, a liturgical question, our reader is correct in that it is a difficulty faced by many who practice frequent confession.

There are many possible ways to address this question, although the personal nature of each person's relationship with God means that any answer will inevitably come up short.

I have found that, for me at least, Matthew 21:28-31 is of great assistance in understanding the motives and impulses behind the desire to confess regularly. In the passage, a father tells his two sons to go work in the vineyard. One accepts but does not go; the other initially refuses but later repents and toils away. Both sons have to ask the Father's forgiveness, the first for hypocrisy and disobedience, the second for not obeying with the spontaneity and desire to please that are proper to a son.

Frequent confession, above all when there are no grave sins to confess, is like the situation of the second son. We have not responded to the Father's love as we should. And we desire that there should be nothing between us, not even the lesser discordance brought about by reluctance, dourness and a host of other attitudes that sully the beauty of our relationship with him. This is why confession is fundamentally an act of love: We ask forgiveness of those we love. Grudging apologies are reserved for rivals or enemies, not for those we love.

In the light of this desire to maintain the splendour of a filial relationship, there is no great difficulty in having to confess the same faults frequently. These often reflect our habitual weaknesses which are overcome only over time.

A distinction is in order, however. There can be an imperfect repetition when a person has learned in youth a typical list of sins and repeats them without really entering into the depths of his relationship with God. There is also a healthy repetition which

precisely recognizes the habitual weaknesses and strives to overcome them.

In this latter case it is also true that as the soul progresses, the sin is only apparently the same, or rather it is the same root but not the same matter. For example, a person might confess to laziness because he flees anything smacking of physical or mental exertion. Yet that person is working under the impulses of grace to overcome this vice. A year or so later the person continues to confess laziness, but by this time it means not putting in all the effort he can and occasionally slipping up. A few years later the same hard-working and hard-praying person confesses to laziness because of an awareness of not making the best use of the time available or of becoming too set in one's way, so as to resist new initiatives of the Holy Spirit. The awareness of progress within apparent monotony is thus one source of comfort in making regular confession a part of one's spiritual life.

One useful method for avoiding routine, above all when a person has a regular confessor, is to concentrate each time on one type of habitual sin and examine it more closely than the others. This can help us grow in delicacy of conscience. At the same time, the penitent must be careful not to convert the sacrament of reconciliation, oriented toward absolution of actual sins, into spiritual direction. Direction is more wide ranging and covers such elements as motivations, attitudes, impressions, personal reactions to grace and the like. Both are good but, as a general rule, should be kept separate.

Zenit.org 16-07-2013

Upcoming Retreats

You are invited to a Country Retreat at The Ark in Marlo. We have booked two excellent orthodox Catholic priests:

- Fr Michael Corriveau (formerly of the Fathers of Mercy), assistant priest at St Paul's, Kealba. 23-27 September, Monday afternoon to Friday morning.
- Fr Terry Hoare, retired priest living in Queensland. 14-17 November, Friday to Monday morning.

Payment is by anonymous donation. Everything is provided: home cooking, talks, Holy Mass, rosary, Stations of the Cross walks, beach walks, shrines, adoration, prayer and daily Benediction.

For booking and further information, phone 5154 8419.

Richard Earle, Marlo, Victoria

***Sensus Fidelium* is Not Public Opinion**

Pope Benedict XVI, address to the International Theological Commission

The Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* thus teaches us on the subject [*sensus fidelium*]: “The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One, cannot err in matters of belief. They manifest this special property by means of the whole peoples’ supernatural discernment in matters of faith when “from the Bishops down to the last of the lay faithful” they show universal agreement in matters of faith and morals.” (n. 12). ...

Today, however, it is particularly important to clarify the criteria used to distinguish the authentic *sensus fidelium* from its counterfeits.

In fact, it is not some kind of public opinion of the Church, and it is unthinkable to mention it in order to challenge the teachings of the Magisterium, this because the *sensus fidei* can not grow authentically in the believer except to the extent in which he or she fully participates in the life of the Church, and this requires a responsible adherence to her Magisterium.

Grandparents

Pope Francis, Angelus address, Brazil, 26-07-2013

Today the Church celebrates the parents of the Virgin Mary, the grandparents of Jesus, Saints Joachim and Anne. In their home, Mary came into the world, accompanied by the extraordinary mystery of the Immaculate Conception.

Mary grew up in the home of Joachim and Anne; she was surrounded by their love and faith: in their home she learned to listen to the Lord and to follow his will. Saints Joachim and Anne were part of a long chain of people who had transmitted their love for God, expressed in the warmth and love of family life, down to Mary, who received the Son of God in her womb and who gave him to the world, to us. How precious is the family as the privileged place for transmitting the faith!

Speaking about family life, I would like to say one thing: ... How important grandparents are for family life, for passing on the human and religious heritage which is so essential for each and every society! How important it is to have intergenerational exchanges and dialogue, especially within the context of the family.

The Aparecida Document says, “Children and the elderly build the future of peoples: children because they lead history forward, the elderly because they transmit the experience and wisdom of their lives”. This relationship and this dialogue between generations is a treasure to be preserved and strengthened!

Zenit.org 26-07-2013

The Apostasy is Upon Us

In our parish, Mass is attended by 400-500 each Sunday, out of a population of more than 11,000.

Of those who attend, about twenty go to confession during the course of a year. Perhaps the rest are saints, but the lack of interest in the grace provided by confession does not inspire confidence.

Of those who go to Mass, the overwhelming majority, perhaps 95%, turns up to spend an hour each week with its divine Creator dressed in a manner more suited to a caravan park. That is, they surely cannot believe that they are really in God’s immediate presence. Would they show this contempt for a human dignity?

We have a situation where just one Catholic in 400 or 500 takes eternity seriously. How much worse does it need to get before we suspect that we are in a time of apostasy (2Thess2).

How did this happen? Some of us remember a time when 80% of Catholics went weekly to Mass, wore their Sunday best (and not their weekend worst) as a sign of respect for their God, and kept silent in the church; when priests taught the faith (you know, sin, Hell, contraception, abortion and all those other forbidden topics) and Catholic schools had Catholic teachers; when bishops ensured that priests earned their pay, and did not leave the running of moral issues to politicians.

When Christ returns, will He find faith on earth? Apparently not too much in Queensland.

The apostasy is here. What are we doing about it?

Richard Stokes, Burpengary, Queensland

The Angelus

Pope Francis, Angelus address, Brazil, 26-07-2013

The Angelus prayer is a beautiful popular expression of the faith. It is a simple prayer, recited at three specific times during the day. It thus punctuates the rhythm of our daily activities: in the morning, at midday, and at sunset. But it is an important prayer. I encourage each of you to recite it, along with the Hail Mary. It reminds us of a luminous event which transformed history: the Incarnation, the moment when the Son of God became man in Jesus of Nazareth.

Zenit.org 26-07-2013

Quotable quote

“Don’t worry so much about the kind of world you are leaving for your kids. Worry much more about the kind of kids you are leaving for the world.”

(Used by Fr Stan Fortuna, CSR, at a conference)

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 st Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 st Friday alternately: Cwr 7.30pm–8.30am Heyfield 10am – 4.30pm
Churchill	Saturday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Cranbourne	Friday and Saturday in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	Friday 10am – 6pm (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 12.30pm First Friday 11.30am – 4pm
Trafalgar	Wednesday and First Saturday: (9.30am Mass) 10am – 10.45am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Friday 4pm – 8pm (every second month, January onwards)
Wonthaggi	First Friday 7pm – 8pm

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

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- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
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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. Deadline for contributions is one week before the end of the month (but preferably by the 15th of the month).

Editor - Janet Kingman

The purpose of ITD is to provide a forum for those who:

- no longer have a voice in Catholic Life, and other 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 or articles. We cannot guarantee that all will be published, and we reserve the right to edit letters. The purpose of sharing letters is to pass on relevant information and suggestions for making positive changes, that is, in line with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We live in joyful hope that the diocese we love can be faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church. As such, Into the Deep aims to be a messenger of hope and not of doom. 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.

Confirmed By Faith

Faith and Reason, n.13

In the Eucharist, Christ is truly present and alive, working through his Spirit; yet, as Saint Thomas said so well, "what you neither see nor grasp, faith confirms for you, leaving nature far behind; a sign it is that now appears, hiding in mystery realities sublime". He is echoed by the philosopher Pascal: "Just as Jesus Christ went unrecognized among men, so does his truth appear without external difference among common modes of thought. So too does the Eucharist remain among common bread."