

# *Into the Deep*

Issue 110

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

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## **Evil is No Small Matter**

*Pope Benedict XVI, Erfurt 23-09-2011*

*Address to the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany*

“How do I receive the grace of God?” The fact that this question was the driving force of Martin Luther’s whole life never ceases to make a deep impression on me. For who is actually concerned about this today – even among Christians? What does the question of God mean in our lives? In our preaching? Most people today, even Christians, set out from the presupposition that God is not fundamentally interested in our sins and virtues. He knows that we are all mere flesh. And insofar as people believe in an afterlife and a divine judgment at all, nearly everyone presumes for all practical purposes that God is bound to be magnanimous and that ultimately he mercifully overlooks our small failings. The question no longer troubles us. But are they really so small, our failings?

Is not the world laid waste through the corruption of the great, but also of the small, who think only of their own advantage? Is it not laid waste through the power of drugs, which thrives on the one hand on greed and avarice, and on the other hand on the craving for pleasure of those who become addicted? Is the world not threatened by the growing readiness to use violence, frequently masking itself with claims to religious motivation? Could hunger and poverty so devastate parts of the world if love for God and godly love of neighbour – of his creatures, of men and women – were more alive in us? I could go on. No, evil is no small matter. Were we truly to place God at the centre of our lives, it could not be so powerful.

The question: what is God’s position towards me, where do I stand before God? – Luther’s burning question must once more, doubtless in a new form, become our question too, not an academic question, but a real one.

*www.zenit.org 23-09-2011*

## **Say Yes!**

*Pope Benedict XVI, Freiburg, 25-09-2011*

There are theologians who, in the face of all the terrible things that happen in the world today, say that God cannot possibly be all-powerful.

In response to this we profess God, the all-powerful Creator of heaven and earth. And we are glad and thankful that God is all-powerful. At the same time, we have to be aware that he exercises his power differently from the way we normally do. He has placed a limit on his power, by recognizing the freedom of his creatures. We are glad and thankful for the gift of freedom. However, when we see the terrible things that happen as a result of it, we are frightened.

Let us put our trust in God, whose power manifests itself above all in mercy and forgiveness. Let us be certain, dear faithful, that God desires the salvation of his people. He desires our salvation, my salvation, the salvation of every single person. He is always close to us, especially in times of danger and radical change, and his heart aches for us, he reaches out to us. We need to open ourselves to him so that the power of his mercy can touch our hearts. We have to be ready freely to abandon evil, to raise ourselves from indifference and make room for his word. God respects our freedom. He does not constrain us. He is waiting for us to say “yes”, he, as it were, begs us to say “yes”.

*www.zenit.org 25-09-2011*

*“It is not enough that I recognise Christ as ‘Saviour of the world’; it is necessary that I recognise him as ‘my Saviour’.”*

*Fr Raniero Cantalamessa*

*Pontifical Household preacher*

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

## To Those Who Want to Leave the Church

*From the question-and-answer session Pope Benedict XVI conducted with journalists who accompanied him en route to Berlin, 22-09-2011*

Q: Holy Father, in the last years there has been an increase in those who have abandoned the Church, in part because of the abuses committed against minors by members of the clergy. What is your feeling about this phenomenon? What would you say to those who want to abandon the Church?

Pope Benedict XVI: First of all, we must distinguish the specific reason for their feeling scandalized by these crimes, which have happened in recent times. I can understand that, in the light of this information, especially if they are persons who are close, one can say: "This is no longer my Church. For me the Church was a force of humanization and moralization. If the representatives of the Church do the opposite, I cannot live with this Church." This is a specific situation.

Generally, the reasons are many in the context of the secularization of our society. In general, this abandonment is the last step in a long chain of estrangement from the Church. In this context, I think it is important to ask oneself: "Why am I in the Church? Am I in the Church as in a sports association, a cultural association, etc., in which I find an answer to my interests and if it's no longer like this I leave? Or is being in the Church something more profound?"

I would say that it is important to recognize that to be in the Church does not mean to form part of an association, but to be in the net of the Lord, who catches good and bad fish from the waters of death to lead them to the land of life.

It might be that in this net I am with bad fish, but it's true that I'm not here for this one or that one, but because it is the Lord's net, which is something different from all human associations, a net that touches the foundation of my being. Speaking with these persons I think we must go to the bottom of the question: What is the Church? What is her difference? Why am I in the Church, even if there are terrible scandals?

Thus one can renew one's awareness of the specific character of being Church, people of all peoples, which is the people of God, and thus learn also to endure scandals and to work against the scandals, forming part precisely of this great net of the Lord.

*www.zenit.org 22-09-2011*

## Nothing Wrong

If your readers know the English language they will know that the word crap means nonsense, ridiculous and rubbish. It is how people's minds act as to whether it is a so called gutter word. I have no doubt that many people throughout the diocese call your paper "crap" – ridiculous nonsense, rubbish, As for one Catholic attacking another what do you do? You attack Bishop's, priests, schools whatever seems to be your flavour of the month and you never apologise to anyone. I have been very involved at St Thomas' for many years and I once asked Pat O'Brien if he had ever been to one of their masses and his answer was No! So how can he judge Principal, teachers or even the school? And yes I do want this printed without any changes to it.

*Gwen Thomas, Sale*

## Something Wrong

I was very surprised to read "A Catholic School Principal's Response" in your September issue of ITD (p.2), on the Fr Speekman story and Catholics who read your publication.

Our boys attended St Thomas' Primary School, Sale, many years ago and I had always thought well of the school. I was shocked by the present Principal's comments and offensive language towards fellow Catholics and readers of ITD. He may hold his opinion privately but it is not professional in his position to announce them publicly.

Therefore I think a public apology would be in order from him to all readers of ITD, and one from the "Captain of the ship" of the Catholic Diocese of Sale, so we all can be assured that professional standards of language and behaviour are not being diminished or downgraded in Catholic Education in Victoria.

*Wendy Harrap, Brisbane*

## Don't Hold Your Breath

Regarding John McMahon's letter in your October issue regarding "Not What a Catholic Would Expect" (p.3) – I have had my own personal dealing with the Catholic Education Office and the diocese in Melbourne. I wouldn't hold my breath for an apology. I take great comfort that God knows all things, and ultimately we will all be made accountable for what we have and have not done.

May Christ's peace be with you all.

*Pat Bayliss, Gladstone Park, Vic*

*"As Christians, we are convinced that the most precious contribution we can make to the cause of peace is that of prayer." Pope Benedict XVI, 26-10-2011*

## Behaviour Approved

Mr Jason Slattery's email has caused quite a ripple among faithful Catholics. Whatever his intention, he has exposed an attitude which does not square with Christianity. Certainly one which is not compatible with a position of authority in a Catholic organisation.

Over the past month I have not seen an expression of regret on the part of the authorities at Sale. Does this mean that Mr Slattery's behaviour meets with approval?

It is no secret that many of the "Catholic" teachers in the system around Australia no longer practise their faith, and this may well be coupled with some shortfall in belief in the truths of the Church. Certainly, the followers of Father Kennedy at South Brisbane, who included many Catholic teachers and principals, shared Fr Kennedy's lack of orthodoxy. It is not impossible that we have a situation somewhat similar in Victoria.

Given the performance of the Catholic Education Offices around Australia, we appear to have a system in which marginal Catholics train children to become marginal Catholics. With a 97% success rate.

I don't know if this is true in Mr Slattery's area, but it might be interesting to find out how many of Mr Slattery's pupils actually attend Mass *every* Sunday. It might also be useful for Bishop Prowse to seek from Mr Slattery an indication of how many of his teachers also attend Mass every Sunday. And what sort of teaching they provide on the truths of the Church, in season and out of season. Or do they instead teach the children about other religions and sex education?

*Richard Stokes, Caboolture, Qld*

## Birthday Books

To celebrate Into the Deep's 9<sup>th</sup> birthday last month we had a few books to give away.

❖ Congratulations to Cathy Smit of Parkdale, Victoria, who will receive the autographed copy of Father John Flader's latest book, *The Creed (Volume I of a Tour of the Catechism)*!

The following readers will each receive a copy of one of Fr Flader's booklets, *Why go to Confession?* or *Understanding the Rosary* (handy little Christmas gifts for family or friends perhaps!):

- ❖ Anne Lastman, Vermont South, Vic
- ❖ Peter Phillips, Springvale, Vic
- ❖ Mary Ross, Seymour, Vic
- ❖ Richard Earle, Marlo, Vic
- ❖ Leo Morrissey, Sandringham, Vic
- ❖ Margaret Regan, Brighton, Vic

(all Victorians, co-incidentally!)

Thanks to Anthony Cappello of Modotti Press for providing these books. And thanks to all ITD readers for your birthday wishes last month and your support over the years.

- Ed.

## Truth Can Wound

*Pope Benedict XVI, Homily 6-10-2011*

In front of St Peter's Basilica there stand two great statues of Sts Peter and Paul, which are easily identifiable: St Peter holds keys in his hands, and Paul instead holds a sword.

One who is unfamiliar with the story of the latter might think he is a great captain who commanded powerful armies and subjected peoples and nations with the sword, procuring for himself fame and riches by others' blood.

Instead it is exactly the opposite: The sword he holds is the instrument with which Paul was put to death, with which he underwent martyrdom and shed his own blood. His battle was not one of violence and of war but of martyrdom for Christ. His only weapon was the proclamation of "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified" (1Cor2:2). His preaching was not based "on plausible words and wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power" (v.4). He dedicated his life to spreading the Gospel's message of reconciliation and peace, spending all his energy in order that it might resound to the very ends of the earth.

And this was his strength: He did not seek a tranquil, comfortable life, far from difficulties and contradictions; rather, he wore himself out for the sake of the Gospel, he gave himself entirely and without reserve, and in this way he became the great messenger of Christ's peace and reconciliation.

The sword that St Paul holds also recalls the power of truth, which can often wound, can hurt: the Apostle remained faithful to this truth to the end; he served it; he suffered for it; he gave over his life for it. This same logic holds true also for us if we want to be bearers of the kingdom and peace announced by the Prophet Zechariah and fulfilled by Christ: We must be willing to pay personally, to suffer in the first person misunderstanding, rejection, persecution. It is not the sword of the conqueror that builds peace, but the sword of the sufferer, of he who knows how to give his very life.

*[Translated by Diane Montagna] www.zenit.org 26-10-2011*

## Doing God's Will

*Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen*

Give your heart to God as if it were yours no longer, for your will is yours only to make it His. Pray not to change God's will; pray rather to change your own. Measure not God's Goodness by His readiness to do your will.

Shall we call Him "Father" and still not believe He wills what is best for His children? Think not that you could do more good for souls if you were well, or if you had another position. What matters in life is not where we are but whether we are doing God's will.

*You, p.74*

## Deeply Distressed by ITD and Cardinal Pell

I feel compelled to respond to the piece from your journal that is doing the rounds entitled “Authentic Catholicism vs Cafeteria Catholicism”. You describe it as “excerpts from a delightful talk by our beloved Cardinal Pell”. That description says more about you and your sect members than anything I have ever read.

It is not “delightful” in any way, shape or form, and surely even you would see that! It is an insult to his listeners, to the Australian Church [*sic*], and to the people he defames by innuendo. It is nothing more than a ‘stream of consciousness’ about nothing in particular but insulting generalisations and insinuations in general. As a highly-qualified scholar, Cardinal Pell should be ashamed of such an embarrassing performance.

The second paragraph about the seminarian is nonsensical. The part where he talks about the staff at the seminary in Melbourne does not tell the full story so is totally unjust and unfair. The sentence about “people in the liturgy office who don’t believe in priests or the sacrifice of the ministerial priesthood” is cowardly because it impugns and insults everyone who works in liturgy offices in Australia, including the people appointed by Cardinal Pell.

The story that is most concerning and dishonest is the one about the so-called “witch’s broom” hanging in the women’s religious centre. The “witch’s broom” was in fact an arrangement of dried flowers! Cardinal Pell knows full well that the lady who made this claim was demented and is now in care. She is the same lady who claimed that the clay-pot symbol chosen for the Brisbane Archdiocese Synod was a witch’s cauldron. The person most responsible for choosing this symbol is a devout Catholic who belongs to a very conservative, orthodox group in the Church. The accuser’s completely unjustified and unwarranted allegations caused him and all concerned great distress. Yet Cardinal Pell chooses to regurgitate them to an international audience. And you choose to publish it.

I have no idea how you and your followers can lie straight in your beds at night let alone label yourselves as Christian!

In deep distress and frustration,

*Liz Ladlay, Milton, Qld*

## Conscience

*Cardinal John Henry Newman*

“Conscience is not a long-sighted selfishness, nor a desire to be consistent with oneself, but it is a messenger from him, who, both in nature and in grace, speaks to us behind a veil, and teaches and rules us by his representatives.”

## IN MEMORIAM

Fr Roger Ryan, Parish Priest at Holy Family Parish, Mount Waverley; formerly of St Gerard’s, North Dandenong.

Died on 17 October 2011 after suffering an initial stroke in July. He was only 68.

Fr Ryan was a strong orthodox priest and a great man. He will be sorely missed by many.

May perpetual light shine upon him and may he rest in peace.

From a parishioner and friend of Fr Ryan’s:

“I reflect that Father would be rather pleased right now – to be so very much closer to God. Every living day was his preparation for that day when he would face God. Father would, I know, ask for our prayers now (because this humble man was the first to ask us to acknowledge that we are all sinners – including him). He used to say, “When we are dead – we *all* need prayers – even me when it is my turn! So, please remember me.””

## Summed Up in Love

*Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, 23-10-2011*

The Word of the Lord...reminds us that the Divine Law can be summed up in love.

Matthew the Evangelist tells how the Pharisees, after Jesus had silenced the Sadducees with his response, conspired to put him to the test (Mt 22:34-35). One of them, a doctor of the law, asked Jesus: “Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus responds with complete simplicity to the deliberately crafty question: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and the greatest commandment.”

Truly, the main requirement for all of us is that God be present in our lives. As the Scriptures say, he ought to permeate all the levels of our being and to fill us completely: Our hearts should relish him and be touched by him, as well as our souls, our wills, our minds and our thoughts. We should be able to say with St Paul, “It is not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 1:20).

And right away Jesus adds something that the doctor of the law hadn’t even asked for: “The second is similar: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” By saying that the second commandment is similar to the first, Jesus implies that loving our neighbour is as important as loving God. In fact, love for our brothers and sisters is the visible sign of God’s love that a Christian can show to the world.

*www.zenit.org 24-10-2011*

## Secure in the Dark

*Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience on Psalm 23  
05-10-2011*

He who goes with the Lord even into the dark valleys of suffering, of uncertainty and of every human problem feels secure. You are with me: this is our certainty, this is what sustains us.

The darkness of night frightens us with its moving shadows, with the difficulty it brings in distinguishing dangers, with its silence filled with indecipherable sounds. If the flock moves after sunset, when visibility is lessened, it is normal for the sheep to become restless, since there is a risk of stumbling or of going astray and becoming lost – and there is the added fear of possible aggressors, who conceal themselves under the cover of night.

In speaking of the “dark” valley, the psalmist uses a Hebrew expression that evokes the shadows of death. The valley to be crossed is therefore a place of anguish, of awful threat and of mortal danger.

And yet the man who prays proceeds securely and without fear, for he knows that the Lord is with him. His “you are with me” is a proclamation of unwavering trust and sums up the experience of radical faith; the nearness of God transforms reality, the dark valley loses its danger – it is emptied of every threat. Now the flock can walk in peace, accompanied by the familiar sound of the staff hitting the ground – the sign of the reassuring presence of the Shepherd.

*www.zenit.org 05-10-2011*

## Persuade With Love

*Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, 1997 National Prayer  
Breakfast in Washington*

How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love, and we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts. Jesus gave even his life to love us. So the mother who is thinking of abortion, should be helped to love – that is, to give until it hurts her plans, or her free time, to respect the life of her child. The father of that child, whoever he is, must also give until it hurts. By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. That father is likely to put other women into the same trouble. So abortion just leads to more abortion. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching the people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. That is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.

## The Difference Between Here and There

I am teaching Catholic religious instruction in an Indonesian private school. The school I teach in has a Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian (the Indonesian term for ‘protestant’) and Catholic Religion teacher. Even though the school is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school, where religion is not part of the curriculum, it must provide religious instruction to be registered and function as a school in Indonesia.

At present I am teaching pupils from Kindergarten to Grade 7. What happens in class? First I taught them how to make the Sign of the Cross, ‘like St Bernadette did’. Slowly and beautifully. We begin each class this way and then say the Hail Mary. Then we sing a hymn. The Lourdes Hymn or Firmly I Believe and Truly.

Back in Australia when I was teaching RE in a Catholic school I was taken to task for teaching the students ‘all that stuff. It’s pre-Vatican II.’ Pre-Vatican II? I hadn’t been told the Church had experienced a rupture in its development and discarded the past – I always thought it was a continuum and a divine and sublime recapitulation. No – I was haughtily informed – “We don’t do all that ‘stuff’ here.” Needless to say I was the only teacher who began his classes with prayer.

Here in Indonesia the children tell me what happened at Mass on Sunday. You see they go with their parents. Every Sunday. First Communion in Indonesia is not Last Communion. In Australia when I would ask on Monday morning, “Who went to Mass on Sunday?”, not a hand would go up.

Here in Indonesia, when I hand out Holy Pictures the children will tell me – “We have a statue of Mary exactly like that at home.” Or, “We have a statue of St Therese at the back of our Church. Why is she carrying roses and a crucifix, Mr Phil?”

Here in Indonesia, a little boy in Grade 1 asked me yesterday, “How does the death of Jesus on the cross save us?” Here in Indonesia, parents will wait for me after class and, sometimes with tears in their eyes, thank me for teaching their children the Faith.

Here in Indonesia, I have to tell the students in Grade 6 and 7 – the teenagers who have their class after school when all their friends have already left and gone home – that time is up, in fact we have gone on for 30 extra minutes, so we need to finish, but they say, “No, can’t we stay longer? We want to ask some more questions.” These are teenagers.

Here in Indonesia, no Catholic student has said to me, “Religion is a load of crap”, or “All religions are the same”, or “This is boring”, or “Who cares!”

It’s not always easy or always safe being a Catholic in Indonesia, yet there is something lively about practising the Faith here that I did not experience in Australia.

*Phillip Turnbull, Java*

## Marginalised Priests

*Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, in an address to priests in Los Angeles, 26-09-2011*

If we wished to question the most widespread culture, we would realize that it is dominated and impregnated by systematic doubt and a suspicion of everything that refers to faith, reason, religion and natural law. ... In this context, the life and ministry of the priest acquire decisive importance and urgent validity. Better still – allow me to say it – the more marginalized he is, the more important he is, the more he is regarded as outdated, the more he is timely. The priest must proclaim to the world the eternal message of Christ, in his poverty and radicalism; he must not reduce the message ...

Healthy doctrine, but also historical documentation show us that the Church is able to resist every attack, all the assaults that political, economic and cultural powers can unleash against her, but she cannot resist the danger that comes from forgetting this word of Jesus: “You are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world.” Jesus himself indicates the consequence of this forgetfulness: “But if the salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?” Of what use would be a priest so like the world that he becomes an imitation priest and not transforming leaven?

In the face of a world anæmic of prayer and adoration, the priest is, in the first place, the man of prayer, of adoration, of worship, of the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. ...

He does not belong to himself but to others. He does not live for himself and does not look for what is his. He looks for what is Christ’s, what is his brothers’. He shares the joys and sorrows of all, without distinctions of age, social category, political membership, religious practice. He is the guide of that portion of the People of God that has been entrusted to him. ...

The priest will not hesitate to give his life, either in a brief but intense period of generous dedication without limits, or in a daily, long donation in the drop-by-drop progression of humble gestures of service to his people, tending always to the defense and formation of human greatness and of the Christian growth of each of the faithful and of the whole of his people.

A priest must be simultaneously little and great, noble in spirit as a king, simple and natural as a peasant. A hero in overcoming himself, sovereign of his desires, a servant of the little ones and weak ones; who is not humbled in the face of the powerful, but who bends down to the poor and the little ones, a disciple of his Lord and head of his flock.

No more precious gift can be given to a community than a priest according to the heart of Christ. ...

Friends, if the ideals are lofty, the way difficult, the terrain perhaps less mined, the misunderstandings are many, we can do all things in him who strengthens us.

*[Translation by ZENIT] www.zenit.org 04-10-2011*

## Not Bigotry But Biology

All societies have believed that marriage is the permanent union of a man and a woman in mind, heart and body for the birth and education of children, for their own mutual satisfaction, and the building up of the community.

The State has the duty to promote and support natural marriage for the good of society, and has no right to redefine or deny this right. It also has the duty to guard the exclusiveness and permanency of marriage which are needed to guard the identity and status of the children and to preserve their right to know and be cared for by both biological mother and father.

Marriage is about a man and woman and their children living in a family, the basic building block of society. It is not about the ‘natural’ pleasuring of any two or more people deliberately not open to or able to produce life.

All testing and experience show a child’s relationship to its biological parents provides the security of identity it needs for best emotional health for its familial and sexual development and the behaviour it needs to learn to maturity.

For many States already, same-sex couples, or any sex groupings, can be registered for basic needs despite not being open or able to have children naturally. Even if children are adopted, donor, or artificially produced later by such groups, this does not constitute a natural family in marriage, the basic cell of society as 192 U.N. members, except 6, agree. If States were to be able to claim any “right” to redefine marriage there would soon be claims for equal “rights” for polygamy, or polyamory etc.

It is not discrimination to defend the traditional, natural, time-tested and religious concepts of marriage. It is self-defence and justice to defend the truth, the integrity of democracy and the freedom of religion against the present grave threats to the irreplaceable institution of marriage and to the future generations of our children, already seriously depleted by a selfish and anti-life mentality.

No one or group has the right to decide morality arbitrarily. It’s in the nature of all things. Would anyone dare defy gravity? Morality (like medicine) is doing good and avoiding harm. Only true marriage is the basis of happy families. This is not bigotry but biology. God help us all!

*Fr Bernard McGrath, Bendigo*

## Go Figure

I don’t get it – Cardinal Burke is travelling around the world telling the faithful we need priests like Fr Speekman, yet doesn’t stand behind him; go figure.

*Mark Gross, Idaho, USA*

## The Powerful Dragon

Over the years there must have been many cases where a parish priest and school principal did not see eye to eye. Up to the time of the Vatican Council the school was truly a parish school – i.e. part of the parish, which was run by the parish priest. It was not just a branch office of H.Q. But the Vatican Council set about enlarging the extent of episcopal control over much of church life, and this has diminished the power of priests within the parish.

Furthermore, and most significantly, governments since that time have been making financial grants to private schools, particularly Catholic ones, and the amount of this money has grown so much that each diocese has set up an office to receive and administer the funds. So whereas you might think that a Catholic Education Office is about teaching faith to children, its real role is financial.

Any parish priest who finds he has a problem with a teacher also has a problem with the Education Office, which sponsors teacher training and effectively controls who goes where. This is the same office in control of millions of dollars each year, and no bishop would want that upset.

When I think of why no parish priest can win in this situation, the reason is fairly obvious. As a result the priests have deserted the schools and Catholic teaching in droves, because the dragon is just too powerful where it matters most – the ear of the bishop.

This leaves a lot of priests at something of a loose end, so I ask myself whether their current obsession with themselves, their consciences and causes is because they don't have enough to do.

The Faith was well established in the early days of this colony when priests were prepared to travel a lot, even to small communities of the faithful. Often there was no church, so use was made of somebody's home, or even a local hall. When the priest arrived there would be confessions first, often a couple of baptisms, a marriage or two, then Mass. When all was over the priest would set out for his next port of call. Can we imagine the priests of today doing this, or do we need priests from Africa, India or wherever to teach us? The parish is the coalface of faith for most people. If the clergy find themselves powerless there, there will be no reform of Church life.

*S.C., Melbourne*

## “As long as we are lambs

we will conquer; even if we are surrounded by many wolves, we will succeed in overcoming them. But if we become wolves, we will be defeated, because we will be deprived of the help of the Shepherd.”

*St John Chrysostom*

## Protestant Catholicism

It was refreshing to see an archbishop showing true leadership by giving a frank account of the state of the Church and making a sobering diagnosis of the blight on it in this country. Cardinal Pell's observation in his talk 'Authentic Catholicism vs. Cafeteria Catholicism' (ITD Sept 2011, p.4) that there are a remarkable number of Catholics who think of the sacraments in a Protestant way, hits the nail right on the head. This lies at the root of the decaying state of the Church in Australia.

The seven sacraments of the Church form the very heart of Catholicism. In order to make sense of the Catholic religion one has to understand the Church's sacraments. It is what makes Catholicism unique. Yet, it is often the least understood reality among Catholics in this country.

A protestant way of understanding the Church has not only infected the sacraments but also the way we relate to God.

Protestant Christianity makes religion a private individual affair. It places a premium on the individual's conscience and sets it over and above the Good News of God, the authority of His Church and the primacy of His Grace.

For over 40 years this Protestant understanding has been infecting diocesan sacramental and catechetical programmes as well as pastoral plans, practice and theology. It expresses itself in the dysfunctional way some Catholics claim that they can love Christ while denouncing His Church. They relate to Jesus as a symbol, an historical figure to be imitated rather than a personal God to be encountered in His Church and lived in the world today.

The logical outcome of this Protestant way of understanding our Catholic faith is that we have produced Catholics who prefer a comfortable form of social Christianity, one which leaves sin, guilt and conscience untouched, and leaves out Hell; a Christianity which concerns itself mainly with doing works of charity, fighting poverty, social injustice and inequality. We have Catholics who would rather a Jesus who would save people from economic, natural, political and social disasters, than souls from Hell.

This Protestant perception and vision has produced Catholics who want to be saved, but in their own way, according to their own idea of God and religion – and not at the price of the cross. They fear that the gift of God's friendship will make excessive demands on them. Consequently we have produced a generation of Catholics who don't want a religion that imparts truths that would impinge on their lifestyle. They want a religion that will renew and remake the Church, the world and everything in it, but not themselves.

*Gregory Kingman, Morwell*

## Faithfulness is Possible

*Pope Benedict XVI to seminarians, 24-09-2011*

In today's world, which is changing in such an unprecedented way and in which everything is in a constant state of flux, in which human ties are breaking down because of new encounters, it is becoming more and more difficult to believe that I will hold firm for the whole of my life. Even for my own generation, it was not exactly easy to imagine how many decades God might assign to me, and how different the world might become. Will I be able to hold firm with him, as I have promised to do? ... It is a question that demands the testing of the vocation, but then also – the more I recognize that he does indeed want me – it demands trust: if he wants me, then he will also hold me, he will be there in the hour of temptation, in the hour of need, and he will send people to me, he will show me the path, he will hold me. And faithfulness is possible, because he is always there, because he is yesterday, today and tomorrow, because he belongs not only to this time, but he is the future and he can support us at all times.

*www.zenit.org 26-10-2011*

## Persecuting the Church

*Pope Benedict XVI, Berlin, 22-09-2011*

In the parable of the vine, Jesus does not say: "You are the vine", but: "I am the vine, you are the branches". In other words: "As the branches are joined to the vine, so you belong to me! But inasmuch as you belong to me, you also belong to one another."

This belonging to each other and to him is not some ideal, imaginary, symbolic relationship, but – I would almost want to say – a biological, life-transmitting state of belonging to Jesus Christ. "Such is the Church, this communion of life with him and for the sake of one another, a communion that is rooted in baptism and is deepened and given more and more vitality in the Eucharist. "I am the true vine" actually means: "I am you and you are I" – an unprecedented identification of the Lord with us, his Church.

On the road to Damascus, Christ himself asked Saul, the persecutor of the Church: "Why do you persecute me?". With these words the Lord expresses the common destiny that arises from his Church's inner communion of life with himself, the risen Christ. He continues to live in his Church in this world. He is present among us, and we are with him.

"Why do you persecute me?" It is Jesus, then, who is on the receiving end of the persecutions of his Church. At the same time, when we are oppressed for the sake of our faith, we are not alone: Jesus is with us.

*www.zenit.org 22-09-2011*

## Rosary Crusade in Sydney

December 11<sup>th</sup> – mark this date on your calendar. Imagine this ... a stadium with seating capacity for 20,000 people. Imagine a celebration of the Mass and a Crusade like never before in Australia, a Rosary Crusade. What better tribute for our Blessed Mother of the Immaculate Conception.

Telepace Australia Inc. will conduct a Rosary Crusade to be held at the Parramatta Stadium in Sydney on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup> starting at 5pm and finishing at 10pm.

You may remember the Maronite contingent at World Youth Day 2008 where 18,000 attended that gathering. The Maronites will also be present at this Rosary Crusade with their beautiful icons. We are expecting a large gathering.

We invite all those attending to bring their own icons (Holy pictures) of Our Blessed Mother to hold during the proceedings.

The proceedings will be filmed by Telepace Australia Inc. and presented to the public via Telepace Catholic Television during prime viewing time. We feel that the present style of secular television and lifestyle places an obligation on us to place such an event as the Rosary Crusade in a public arena and on Catholic television.

Our Blessed Mother is Patron of Australia caring for all Australians – let us show we care! Let's get Australia and the world back into the protection of our Blessed Mother and her son Jesus Christ.

Will you help Australia to start an annual World-Wide Rosary Crusade? Sponsorship from businesses, corporate bodies, individuals is required for this venture to start in Australia the beginning of a World-Wide Rosary Crusade. Contact me on 1300 663 502 or [info@telepaceaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@telepaceaustralia.org.au).

*Ernesta Sculli*

*Executive Director Telepace Australia Inc.*

## Good Will Prevail

Another year has gone by and I want to thank you for all your work and effort in producing *Into the Deep*. I and my friends enjoy reading it and it keeps us aware of things and events happening even if it's not in my diocese. I certainly support your views and those of so many contributors especially with the precarious state of so many things happening in the Church and our country. All the writings and quotes of our Holy Father the Pope give it a good balance. It's so sad that we have so many dissenters to the Church's teaching among the very ones who should be leading and guiding us. But we must keep trusting in God and His mercy and that He always brings good out of evil. We know that there is a time and a place and that good will prevail.

*Mary Ross, Seymour*

## Fear is the Core Issue

*From an article by Father Shenan J. Boquet,  
President of Human Life International*

Words and “good intentions” are necessary, but they can be cheap and easy if they are not acted upon.

What is needed is action within the Body of Christ: witness of faith, preaching the Good News, teaching Gospel-based morality, voting pro-life candidates into office, supporting the Culture of Life on every level, supporting the traditional family and promoting openness to life from conception to natural death. ...

Silence and fear do nothing. How many more innocents have to die; how many more elderly have to be euthanized; how many more women have to be forcibly sterilized before we think it demands our attention?

... Fear is the core issue. Many of our clergy are afraid of upsetting their congregations; many Catholics are afraid of speaking up because it might cause friction within families and work environments; many Catholics and Christians don't challenge public policy and politicians because of fear of retribution; many good people don't get involved in the defense of life because it may place them at odds with neighbours, friends, colleagues, the media, etc.

Whatever the reason, the effect of silence and inaction is that the Culture of Death gains headway and more innocents die.

Together we can bring an end to this horrible stain upon our world. We can build a Civilization of Love when we stand together and witness the Gospel of Life. Do not be afraid of encouraging and challenging your brothers and sisters to join this cause. Help them to see the importance of active participation. Try this week to add one more person to the great line of pro-life witnesses, the Church Militant.

*Spirit and Life e-column, 07-10-2011*

## Less Than 1%

Marriage is generally frowned upon in secular society today, and ‘living together’ is seen as so much more common and practical. This makes it all the more surprising that there is such intensity about the gay lobby's demands for homosexual ‘marriage’. They are hard at it telling us that homosexuality is normal and that society needs to change to accept it and to redefine marriage for their sake.

Interesting then to see what percentages we're talking about. According to the 2010 census figures of the United States Bureau of Statistics, same-sex households make up only 0.55% of U.S. households. - Ed.

## Causing Bitterness

I could not help but smile at your heading, “No Liturgical Abuses Here” (ITD Oct 2011, p.5). When *Redemptionis Sacramentum* was published a few years ago, it was followed by a report that at a priests' meeting in Brisbane, they had discussed the text. This generated comments like: “What on earth is he (the Pope) talking about?”, and “Surely he is not referring to us.” Not a single priest was prepared to admit to any deviation from the straight and narrow. Yet for more than 20 years the archdiocese has wallowed in clerical creativity so deep that it seems to use the list of forbidden practices as inspiration.

The problem is that the Roman documents are available to the laity, thanks to the internet. And priests can no longer get away with their misdeeds. This seems to cause endless bitterness, but little in the way of repentance.

I don't know if Fr LaVolpe performs abuses in the Mass. Mr Phillips has reported an activity which would appear to be an abuse. What Fr LaVolpe needs to do, instead of launching an attack on Mr Phillips, is to explain why this is not such. Any other “abuses” can be addressed the same way.

As far as justifying the use of Extraordinary Ministers goes, numbers are not enough by themselves. Some of us can remember the days before (the spirit of) Vatican II when priests had larger congregations (*much* larger congregations) and the Mass was not delayed by more than a few minutes. Indeed, they did not feel delayed at all. It is not easy to imagine a Catholic priest who would object to another three to five minutes in the presence of his God. It should be the hope of all Catholics that they can one day spend an eternity with Him.

*Richard Stokes, Caboolture, Qld*

## Forthcoming Retreats

We will be holding the following retreats at The Ark in Marlo, Victoria in coming months:

2-5 December 2011:

“Only She can help you” – Fr Des Byrne.

10-13 February 2012:

“The Little Way” – Fr Emmanuel Adami.

5-10 May 2012:

Fathers of Mercy – Fr Wade Menezes (for this five day Retreat we require a non-refundable deposit of \$50 per person).

For further details and booking ring (03) 5154 8419.

*Richard and Kate Earle, Marlo*

*“Our Virgin Mother, Victorious Queen of the World, show us your power.”*

## Are We Under Obedience?

In this instance, I am treating the subject just as you would approach a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. In fact the consequences of mishandling this are much graver because they can affect our eternal salvation, or damnation.

First, gratitude and admiration to Fr Speekman for his conduct throughout the whole Sale saga, and even moreso at its climax. His instantly complete obedience to his canonical superior reminds me of Cardinal Mindszenty's similar acceptance of Paul VI's OstFront policy and ban on the Cardinal commenting on Communist activities. It was a prudential, not theological, decision which nevertheless was obeyed to the letter.

The following questions are not rhetorical. This a genuine request for information. The affair started, as I understand, over the content and manner of religious education in the parish school. Has it ever been decided that the parish priest's authority was null? Has it ever been decided that his judgement on the suitability of the teaching was in error? It would seem clear that the relevant Congregation(s) did not rule so.

Did the Signatura reverse or explain its findings on those points? Were there other points to which it gave weight, without mentioning them? Did it explain how its decision was reached?

Is that really the finish, or could the Pope intervene?

Is that canonical obedience owed by a priest to his bishop exactly the same as for a lay person? Here is an instance where that may not apply. A priest in 1997 informs his congregation that the use of the Third Rite of Reconciliation in normal circumstances is illicit. Shortly afterwards he announces that the Third Rite will still be administered generally. A parishioner asks, "Why the U-turn?" His reply, "I don't want to talk about it." Very shortly after that was the unique occurrence in Rome where our Australian bishops were instructed to sign the Statement of Conclusions, explicitly disavowing certain practices. The subject of the Third Rite was never again mentioned in the parish.

My question is this: Would a lay person have the same obligation to partake in, or at least refrain from criticising, an illicit sacramental celebration as that priest obviously did under pressure from his bishop? Is it still legitimate to discuss in public the pros and cons of our present puzzle?

The Lefebvrists started off with the best will in the world to oppose errors under the banner of "the spirit of Vatican II". However they finished up outside the Church just as surely as the modernists. I leave you with all these questions.

*Don Gaffney, Tarragindi, Qld*

## Looking for Reasons

*Attempted answer to Don Gaffney's questions, opposite:*

To clarify, it wasn't exactly about R.E. in the school. The original incident was at a parish Sacramental team meeting where Fr Speekman was alleged to have raised his voice in an argument with principals/R.E. teachers. The 'disagreement' was about whether or not we have to confess *all* our sins we can remember in Confession, or just those we feel *comfortable* confessing. Fr Speekman's behaviour was considered bullying and hurtful and Bishop Coffey had the allegations solemnly investigated (by the C.E.O.), and it was found to constitute "psychological harassment".

Bishop Coffey removed the governance of the parish schools from Fr Speekman (by public Decree, without first telling Fr Speekman). He later claimed that there had been previous complaints by the school about Fr Speekman's behaviour, although Fr Speekman has never been made aware of these complaints.

The removal of Fr Speekman as Parish Priest a year later, was officially because "his ministry had become ineffective because of his manner of acting and speaking". It was mentioned that there was "disturbance and confusion" in the parish and that Fr Speekman was so aggressive that he left people "frightened and hurt". Nowhere was there actual evidence provided.

And then of course it just went on from there. Fr Speekman appealed the removal. The Congregation for the Clergy upheld his appeal, saying there was no evidence of ineffective ministry, but that a small number of employees disagreed with his legitimate Catholic leadership. Bishop Coffey refused to reinstate him, but instead began a new removal process. This may or may not have been influenced by a letter from the General Secretary of the Victorian Independent Education Union to Bishop Coffey 'reminding him' of potential legal implications in the area of "occupational health and safety and staff well-being" should he return Fr Speekman to governance of the schools.

Bishop Coffey's second removal claimed that Fr Speekman's manner of acting had caused grave harm or disturbance to communion; that Fr Speekman had lost his good name and people had an aversion to him; and that he had an inability to relate to many people in a normal and courteous way. Fr Speekman appealed this Decree as well, and the Congregation for the Clergy again upheld his appeal, noting that Bishop Coffey had not provided any new causes or arguments (with proof) for his decision to remove Fr Speekman.

In the end, the Apostolic Signatura, to whom Bishop Coffey finally appealed, found otherwise. We do not know how or why. Yes, I presume only the Pope could intervene. But perhaps it would be more fruitful now if those who grieve the injustice offer their sufferings for the renewal of the Church.

- Ed.

# Open Letter to His Lordship, the Bishop of Sale

My Lord,

With all the respect due to you – that is, due to one who is in the Apostolic Succession – may I ask leave to lay before you my concerns about certain reports in your Diocesan publication, *Catholic Life*, August 2011?

Although I am not among the “parishioners” to whom you address your Letter, I am a member of the One Holy Roman Catholic Church and, therefore, “at liberty to make known... my wishes to the Pastors of the Church” (canon 212.2). I even have a duty – “the duty to manifest to the sacred Pastors (my) views on matters which concern the good of the Church” (canon 212.3), always keeping in mind Canon 227 – that I must be “on guard against proposing (my) own view, as the teaching of the Church.”

His Holiness Pope John Paul II often repeated the words of the great Pope, Pius XII – “Lay people are the front line of Church life.” His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has made many appeals to the laity “to do their part” in these difficult times, difficult for Bishops, no doubt, as for the rest of us.

I, therefore, respectfully draw to your attention the fact that some Catholics who are not “parishioners” are scandalised by the treatment of the Rev. Father John Speekman. In the first place, My Lord, there are those who find unjust your reference to the matter as a “dispute”. For most English speaking people a “dispute” is an argument between disputants who believe that they have equal rights to state their case with equal chances of a successful outcome. Such a situation could not exist between a Bishop and his Parish Priest. Here we have, not a ‘dispute’, may I respectfully suggest, but the use by two Bishops of Sale of their almost unlimited power over a priest who is under an oath of obedience – from which he apparently does not seek to be absolved, though I would argue that he could, or even that he should (Canon 1194 – A vow ceases...by a substantial change in the matter promised”).

I would also argue that one thing that has not changed is that the matter is not “between Bishop Jeremiah Coffey and Father John Speekman” (*Catholic Life*, p.8) – that it is between the Bishop of Sale, regardless of who the present incumbent is, and one of his Parish Priests. Those of us who hold that view were bitterly disappointed when you did not, My Lord, immediately reinstate Father Speekman, ending the injustice of his removal as twice ordered by the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy.

Of all the concerns that some Catholics have about the “removal” of Father Speekman the most serious is their realisation that his reputation has been damaged, perhaps beyond repair. He has been publicly

humiliated by his two Bishops finding him unfit to be a Parish Priest, leaving everyone to speculate about the nature of the unworthiness.

From the full text of (your) Statement published in your Diocesan publication, we learn that “the highest judicial authority in the Catholic Church” has upheld “the removal by Bishop Coffey of Father Speekman” – the “removal” that a lower Vatican court, the Congregation for the Clergy, had twice swept under the carpet in order to find in favour of Father Speekman. Once more there is no transparency. We are not told what these crucial reasons are. Once again, rumour is left to do its worst.

There are Catholics, My Lord, who are not able to accept that “the Signatura is the Supreme Apostolic Tribunal”, nor that “there can be no appeal from its judgments.” The Catholic Church in Australia used to teach, in the days that my beliefs were formed, that Our Lord Jesus Christ gave that supremacy to Peter and to each of the Popes who came after him. Appeals to His Holiness directly have not been unknown as the lives of Saint Catherine of Sienna, Saint Birgitta of Sweden, Saint Mary of the Cross, and many others tell us. They are still possible though the passage of time has multiplied the obstacles.

I pray for you, My Lord, as I hope that you may pray for me.

Molly Brennan

To ITD readers: I encourage those concerned to write to His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Palace, 00120 Vatican City, and to His Excellency Archbishop Lazarotto, Apostolic Nuncio, PO Box 3633, Manuka ACT 2603, asking for Church justice in the Father Speekman case.

*Molly Brennan, Bendigo*

## Worth the Effort

*Pope Benedict XVI, Croatia, 04-06-2011*

Dear young people: if you are rooted in Christ, you will fully become the person you are meant to be. ... As you grow in friendship with the Lord through his word, the Eucharist and life in the Church, you will be able, with the help of your priests, to testify to the complete joy of having encountered the One who always stands at your side and enables you to live in confidence and hope. The Lord Jesus is not a Teacher who deceives his disciples: he tells us clearly that walking by his side calls for commitment and personal sacrifice, but it is worth the effort!

*www.zenit.org 04-06-2011*

## Hours of Eucharistic Adoration in Gippsland

Bass	Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Bairnsdale	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday after 9.10am Mass
Cowwarr-Heyfld	1 <sup>st</sup> 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	6pm Thursday – 6pm Friday (Sacred Heart Church)
Orbost	Wednesday (9.30am Mass) 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 9.30am – 10.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
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*

*“It is our sweet duty to honour and  
adore, in the Blessed Host, which our  
eyes see, the Incarnate Word Himself  
whom they cannot see.”*

*Pope Paul VI*

*Credo of the People of God, 1968*

## Contact *Into the Deep*

[www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com)

[stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au](mailto:stoneswillshout@yahoo.com.au)

**PO Box 446, Traralgon, VIC, 3844  
Australia**

- Please notify by email if you would like to be added to the regular emailing list.
- There is no subscription fee.
- We rely on donations (cheques made out to John Henderson please).
- Donate to ITD via Ritchies Supermarkets Community Benefit program by nominating Into the Deep as your group, with CB number 81799, and shopping at your local Ritchies Supermarket (56 supermarkets throughout Eastern Australian) with your Community Benefit Card.

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 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Easier to Understand

“When we participate regularly and with devotion in Holy Mass, when we spend a sustained time of adoration in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, it is easier to understand the length, breadth, height and depth of his love that goes beyond all knowledge.”

*Pope Benedict XVI, Message for WYD 2007*