

Into the Deep

Issue 60

Newsletter of orthodox Catholics of Gippsland

September 2007

Prayer

*From a reflection on Saint Gregory Nazianzen
by Pope Benedict XVI*

Gregory teaches us, before all, the importance and necessity of prayer. He affirms that "it is necessary to remind oneself of God more frequently than one breathes", since prayer is the encounter of the thirst of God with our thirst. God thirsts that we thirst for him.

In prayer, we have to direct our heart to God to surrender ourselves to him as an offering that should be purified and transformed. In prayer, we see everything in the light of Christ, we let down our guard and we submerge ourselves in the truth and in listening to God, nurturing the fire of our love.

Not Our Mate

*From Archbishop Charles Chaput's homily to the Australian
Catholic Students Association, Canberra, 07-07-2007*

In God's economy, all men and women have equal dignity and freedom. All men and women have something important to contribute. All of us are called to be leaders at times. But in the Christian scheme of things, leadership is not collective. According to Scripture, in the family and the Church, someone must be the pastor. Someone has the duty to lead for the sake of others. And this is why the virtues of obedience and faithfulness also play such an important role in both the Old and New Testaments, and in every Christian life. Only God is God, and only Jesus Christ is the true path to His Father. This is beautiful and true because it leads to eternal life. But it's not democratic. Pope John XXIII called the Church our "mother and teacher" – not our grandmother, not our mate, and not facilitator, enabler, or accommodator. When the Church speaks, she teaches with the voice of Jesus Christ. She teaches with God's authority, in the name of the Lord. And when we ignore her voice, we ignore Jesus Christ who speaks through her.

A Sign of Division

Pope Benedict XVI

The peace that Christ came to bring is not synonymous with the simple absence of conflict. On the contrary, the peace of Jesus is the fruit of a constant struggle against evil. The battle that Jesus has decided to fight is not against men or human powers but against the enemy of God and man, Satan.

Those who desire to resist this enemy, remaining faithful to God and the good, must necessarily deal with misunderstandings and sometimes very real persecution. Thus, those who intend to follow Jesus and commit themselves without compromises to the truth must know that they will face opposition and will become, despite themselves, a sign of division among persons, even within their own families.

Example of a Leader

St Cyprian on the martyrdom of Pope Fabian

"For just as the ruin of a leader can lead to the danger of the falling away of his followers, so on the other hand is it a valuable and salutary thing when the bishop sets an example to his brethren by the firmness of his faith."

Christ is Light

Pope Benedict XVI

"Christ is light, and light cannot darken but can only illuminate, brighten, reveal. No one, therefore, should be afraid of Christ and his message! And if, down through history, Christians as limited people and sinners have sometimes betrayed him by their behaviour, this makes it even clearer that the light is Christ and that the Church reflects it only by remaining united to him."

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

Correction

Please note that the address given for the Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy in last month's issue of ITD (p.5) was incorrect.

The current address of the Secretariat is Box 8004, North Road LPO, Brighton East, VIC 3187.

Please contact them at this address if you have any queries about stray mail, or phone/fax (03) 9596 4343.

Associate membership for lay people is minimal – only \$20 per year, or \$10 for pensioners or retirees – and for this you receive two issues of the confraternity journal *The Priest* and a couple of newsletters in-between. The next issue of *The Priest* will have various addresses given at the recent ACCC conference, including Archbishop Chaput's talks.

The ACCC gladly accepts donations, which cover seminarians' membership fees and attendance at conferences. This is a great way to support orthodox clergy in Australia!

Ed.

Authentic Communion

From the address of Pope Benedict XVI to bishops of Puerto Rico on their "Ad Limina" visit

I would like to recall that all, especially Bishops and priests, are called to an inalienable mission which strongly binds you to ensuring that the Church is a place where the mystery of divine love is taught and lived. Only an authentic spirituality of communion, visibly expressed in mutual collaboration and fraternal life, will make this possible.

Priests constitute a sector that demands your prime pastoral attention. They are in the front line of evangelization and are especially in need of your care and personal closeness. Your relationship with them must not be merely institutional. Rather, as your true sons, friends and brothers, it should be inspired above all by love as an expression of episcopal fatherhood. This must be expressed in a special way to priests who are sick or elderly, as well as to those who are in difficult circumstances.

Priests, for their part, must remember that they are first and foremost men of God. Thus, they must nurture their own spiritual life and their continuing formation.

All their ministerial work "must begin effectively with prayer", as St Albert the Great said. Every priest must find in this encounter with God the strength to exercise his ministry with greater devotion and dedication, setting an example of availability and detachment from all that is superfluous.

www.zenit.org 27-07-2007

Different Views Preferred

Those of us who believed that Catholic schools were established to teach students the teachings of the Catholic Church have apparently been under a misapprehension, at least as far as Victoria is concerned. Responding to Cardinal Pell's action in writing to Catholic schools in NSW and the ACT urging them to maximise enrolment of Catholics, Victorian schools have rejected the idea. Principals praised the role of non-Catholic students in exposing Catholics to different views.

Brother Tony Paterson, principal of MacKillop College in Swan Hill (Herald Sun 10/8/07) said non-Catholic students offered an important and healthy balance of perspectives. "It's healthy to have another group of people in the school who support the Catholic ethos but also represent the society we live in – a very mixed society." Don't Catholic students live in that 'very mixed society' every day of their lives?

Given that some 97% of graduates from Catholic schools no longer practise the Catholic faith (several surveys show they have little knowledge of Catholic teachings), it would seem more productive to give students a much greater knowledge of Catholic teaching and less concern about 'balanced perspectives'.

Pat O'Brien, Sale

Universal Problems

A friend of mine gave me issues 57 & 58 of *Into the Deep* to read. As a regular reader of *AD2000* and *Fidelity* I am well informed that all is not straight-sailing for the Catholic Church. There are many obstacles in the way, and often from within, and your newsletter points these out as well.

I would like to be added to your regular email list, even though most of the news is from Gippsland way. I belong to St Brigid's Parish in Mordialloc, but after all we all belong to the one Catholic Church.

As I was born in the Netherlands and have already lived 50 years in Australia as an Aussie, I read also on a regular basis the *Katholieke Nieuwsblad* at www.katholieknieuwsblad.nl as reading the Dutch language is not a problem for me. They are trying very hard in Holland to get the people back into the Church, but the older generation feels they have been let down by the hierarchy after Vatican II. The grandparents who thought they were good Catholics, are now weeping over the heathenism of their (grand)children. Isn't that the same over here.

God bless you and keep up the good work.

Cathy Smit, Mordialloc

Putting the Catholic Back into Catholic Schools?

The Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory (17 signatories) recently released a Pastoral Letter called *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads*. In it, they “invite reflection on the implications of our changing educational and cultural context, of the rising proportion of nominally-Catholic and other-than-Catholic enrolments, and of the under-participation of students from poorer families.” They ask all involved in schools, as well as the broader Catholic community, to join them in recommitting to Catholic schooling and to ensuring that schools are “truly Catholic in their identity and life.”

The rest of the document sets out specific recommendations in detail, in various categories, regarding how to achieve this practically. The following are some examples quoted from the document (the full document is available from the various diocesan websites). Let’s hope these good words are followed up with real action. Ed.

In order to ensure the identity of the catholic school, it is essential that:

- + leaders and staff understand, and are solidly committed to, the Catholic identity of the school
- + schools continue to be places of prayer, including prayer at assemblies, in classes and in other staff and student meetings, and places where practices are encouraged such as Scripture reflections, the Angelus, Eucharistic adoration and prayerful silences
- + schools are places cultivating a Catholic imagination, where prayer and liturgy are supported by a Catholic visual culture, including crucifixes and pictures of Our Lady and the saints
- + schools are connected to their local parish(es) and diocese, through inviting the periodic presence of the bishop, clergy, religious and parents in the school, and through active collaboration with the wider Catholic community.

If Catholic schools are to be centres of the new evangelisation:

- + all those involved in our schools would appreciate their roles in receiving and proclaiming the Good News by word and deed, and by the example of their lives
- + special programs would be developed for students who first enter a Catholic school later than Kindergarten (for instance in Year 7) and may not have received much prior religious education
- + schools would work with their local parish(es) to establish programs for initiating children and young adults into the Church
- + consideration would be given to the desirability of establishing Catholic pre-schools, with catechesis appropriate to this crucial stage in faith formation.

If Catholic schools are to succeed in passing on the Catholic faith to the next generation:

- + RE curriculum, methodologies, texts and other resources will be chosen to ensure that by the end of their schooling students know the core teachings of our faith, our Scriptures, history and tradition (‘Catholic religious literacy’) and how these are to be lived in the world
- + RE classes will be given priority with regard to the school curriculum, time and space allocation and the choice and recognition of staff
- + our schools will also seek to involve parents and families in the process of evangelising and catechising their children, seeking in the process also to educate those families in the faith.

Leading and staffing our schools in this new era:

If Catholic schools are to succeed in the mission articulated above it will be essential that:

- + as far as possible only practising and knowledgeable Catholics are charged with the task of teaching RE in our schools
- + all teachers are committed to the mission of the school and teach and live in accordance with the teachings of the Church
- + vocations to the priesthood, religious life and Christian marriage are actively promoted in our schools
- + Catholic tertiary institutions and those providing inservice and other support are thoroughly informed of the identity and mission of the Catholic school and effective in providing our leaders and staff with the knowledge and skills they need.

How will we know if we have achieved or are at least making progress towards these goals? **Critical indicators of progress** might include:

- + progress towards an increase in the proportion of students in our schools who are Catholic
- + the provision, in conjunction with local parish(es) and diocese, of programs for students wishing to join the Catholic Church
- + systematic external assessment of Catholic religious literacy
- + maximum involvement by students and younger staff in religious events such as World Youth Days
- + progress toward significantly increased attendance at Sunday Mass, and deeper involvement in the life of the local Church by students and ex-students.

Full and Balanced Appraisal

The following is a letter I sent to our Sale diocesan newspaper, Catholic Life, in January. It was never acknowledged. I had hoped that the Decree from the Congregation for the Clergy might rate an appraisal. Not so. One wonders what they are afraid of.

Keep up the good work – everyone has the right to both sides of the story.

John Gibbons, Labertouche

To the editor of Catholic Life (dated 20-01-2007):

I am writing to you with a request that your paper devote space in your next issue to effect a full and frank presentation of the saga re Bishop Coffey and Father John Speekman.

I draw your attention to an article in The Age 12-01-07 by their religion editor Barney Zwartz. The Age article gives background briefing, followed by what seems a well-balanced coverage of the positions of both the Bishop and Father Speekman. It concludes with the observation that the Bishop's proposed appeal to the Signatura would take at least another year, by which time Bishop Coffey would have retired.

I have obtained a copy of the latest Decree of the Congregation for the Clergy 20-11-2006 from the internet. It deserves widespread attention, containing matters and directions of a most serious nature. I do not think it should be necessary to go to the internet, the secular press, or pick up pieces of gossip from fellow parishioners, in order to be informed of serious events in the diocese extending over 3½ years or more.

In the spirit of Journeying Together, and considering the old saying 'justice delayed is justice denied' could you open up the pages of Catholic Life to a full and balanced appraisal of this tragic event in our diocese?

Yours sincerely, John Gibbons

How Many?

Here are two simple questions:

1. How many ministers of the Eucharist do you think most parishes would have, on average, over a period of, say, a year?
2. How many do you think you have in your parish?

Choose your answers from the following options for each question, then read page 10 of this ITD.

- (a) 1-3
- (b) 4-12
- (c) 12-30
- (d) More than 30

Evolution is Not Enough

During a question-and-answer session with 400 priests of the dioceses of Belluno-Feltre and Treviso, while Pope Benedict XVI was on holiday:

The Holy Father spoke about young people's search for meaning, acknowledging that many youth act as if they do not need God, "even thinking that without God, we would be freer and the world would be broader. But after a while, in our new generations, we see what happens when God disappears."

He explained: "The major problem is that if God is not there and the Creator of my life is not there, in reality life is a simple part of evolution, nothing more, it does not have meaning in itself. But I must try to give meaning to this life."

The Pontiff said that today in Germany, and also in the United States, there is a "fervent debate between so-called creationism and evolutionism, presented as if one of these alternatives excluded the other: whoever believes in the Creator cannot think about evolution and whoever affirms evolution must exclude God."

However, Benedict XVI called this apparent conflict an absurdity.

"Because on one hand," he explained, "there is a great deal of scientific proof in favour of evolution, which appears as a reality that we must see and that enriches our knowledge of life and of being as such. But the doctrine of evolution does not answer everything and does not answer the great philosophical question: Where does everything come from? And how does everything take a path that ultimately leads to the person?"

"It seems to me that it is very important that reason opens up even more, that it sees this information, but that it also sees that this information is not enough to explain all of reality. It is not enough."

The Pope urged a broader understanding of reason and the recognition of its vastness: "Our reason is not something irrational at heart, a product of irrationality. And reason precedes everything, creative reason, and we are truly the reflection of this reason.

"We are planned and wanted and, therefore, there is an idea that precedes me, a meaning that precedes me, which I must discover, follow and which, in the end, gives meaning to my life."

This vision, the Holy Father continued, is necessary to understand the meaning of suffering as well.

"I would say that it is important to help youth discover God," he concluded, "discover true love that becomes great through renunciation, and therefore to help them discover the interior goodness of suffering, that renders me freer and greater."

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Accept the Responsibility

The article in the August edition of ITD on the paper written by canon lawyer Fr Ian Waters on the authority of parish priests provides interesting reading. It concludes that the parish priest has full responsibility for his parish and school.

One wonders what canonical advice Fr Waters gave Bishop Coffey in the saga with Fr Speekman. Did he advise Bishop Coffey that Fr Speekman was within his rights and that the process of removal would prove fruitless?

The article has widespread implications. It categorically states the canonical rights that are vested in the parish priest. This is an important statement, particularly when the power and authority of the parish priest have been eroded. Considering the importance of this report, dated 16 June 2006, why has it not been published? If it had not fallen off the back of a truck we would be no wiser.

Perhaps, as has happened so often, we the laity are being treated as fools. Why are the bishops not transparent? Is the truth so hard to take? How often are we told that parents are the primary educators of their children. True, but how are they treated when they complain about the content of the religious programs their children are taught? They are treated as being ignorant and their children more often than not are discriminated against.

If the bishops are really interested in how religious education has been corrupted, they would immediately publish this report. They would instruct and support their priests in exercising their God-given right in running the parish and school. They would advise the various Catholic Education offices that their primary function is merely a clearing house for government funding and that they have no authority over the running of schools. Given most bishops' reluctance to exercise the authority given to them, we should not hang by the thumbs waiting.

We the laity also have rights, one of which is the expectation that our priests and bishops will provide for our spiritual good.

A final observation concerns the determination of parish priests to accept the responsibility they all have. How many of them will be prepared to do what they were ordained to do? We should all pray that they will do all it takes to lead us all to salvation. We should also ensure that they have our moral and material support.

John Henderson, Morwell

“Dissident Catholics are more worrying than atheists.”

Cardinal Bertone, Vatican Secretary of State

Year of St Paul

From a homily by Pope Benedict XVI, 28-06-2007

St Paul knew he was “called to be an apostle”, that is, that he had not presented himself as a candidate, nor was his a human appointment, but solely by a divine call and election. [...]

From his Letters, we know that Paul was far from being a good speaker; on the contrary, he shared with Moses and Jeremiah a lack of oratory skill. “His bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account” (II Cor 10:10), his adversaries said of him.

The extraordinary apostolic results that he was able to achieve cannot, therefore, be attributed to brilliant rhetoric or refined apologetic and missionary strategies.

The success of his apostolate depended above all on his personal involvement in proclaiming the Gospel with total dedication to Christ; a dedication that feared neither risk, difficulty nor persecution.

“Neither death, nor life”, he wrote to the Romans, “nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (8:38-39).

From this we can draw a particularly important lesson for every Christian. The Church's action is credible and effective only to the extent to which those who belong to her are prepared to pay in person for their fidelity to Christ in every circumstance. When this readiness is lacking, the crucial argument of truth on which the Church herself depends is also absent.

Dear brothers and sisters, as in early times, today too Christ needs apostles ready to sacrifice themselves. He needs witnesses and martyrs like St Paul. Paul, a former violent persecutor of Christians, when he fell to the ground dazzled by the divine light on the road to Damascus, did not hesitate to change sides to the Crucified One and followed him without second thoughts. He lived and worked for Christ, for him he suffered and died. How timely his example is today!

And for this very reason I am pleased to announce officially that we shall be dedicating a special Jubilee Year to the Apostle Paul from 28 June 2008 to 29 June 2009, on the occasion of the bi-millennium of his birth, which historians have placed between the years 7 and 10 A.D.

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Truly Ourselves

“To convert ourselves to love is to pass from bitterness to ‘sweetness’, from sadness to true joy. Humans are truly themselves, and realize themselves fully, in as much as they live with God and of God, recognizing and loving Him in their fellow man.”

Pope Benedict XVI

The Gift of Confession

Two books on the Sacrament of Reconciliation written by Fr Michael de Stoop were released in August. Fr de Stoop is the Vocations Director for the Archdiocese of Sydney. Both books are available from your Catholic bookshop or from the publisher.

The Gift of Confession – A positive approach to the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Our consumer society has conditioned us to ask ourselves such things as, “What do I get out of it? What is in it for me?” Rather than fight against this mentality, why not use it in our efforts to help people have a renewed interest in Confession? Surely the best way to help people appreciate this sacrament is to elucidate the many benefits we receive from it. To that end, this book focuses upon 25 striking things Confession affords. It demonstrates that Confession gives us much more than it takes away! Taking “negative” things (sin) away is one thing for which this sacrament is well known, but how many people think of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in terms of the “positive” things it provides for us? The book is informative and entertaining as it is illustrated with interesting analogies, true stories, Church teaching, quotes from the saints and answers to popular questions.

The Gift of Confession – Abridged Edition in Q&A Format

Also available is a pocket edition which features selections of material from the original work in Q&A format. It answers the questions, “Why do I need to confess my sins to a priest?”, “But can’t God forgive me without this sacrament?”, “What will the priest think of me if I confess this or that sin?”, and many other frequently asked questions. So doing, it emphasises the benefits we receive which is a welcome alternative to presenting this sacrament as a spiritual equivalent of a trip to the dentist!

Connor Court Publishing www.connorcourt.com.au (03) 5368-2570

Reviews

“Father Michael de Stoop is to be congratulated for producing this 145 page book, easy to read by young and old, by the learned and the less educated. In a word the book is ‘Catholic’, i.e. embracing everyone who can read. That the wide practice of Confession in times prior to the Ecumenical Council of Vatican II (1962-1965) can be restored will be disputed only by the pessimists.”

Most Rev Luc Matthys, Bishop of Armidale

“I would have heard more confessions than Fr de Stoop has had hot meals, but he has taught me so much, reminded me of so much, and shown the way to yet more in my use of this Sacrament both sides of the grille. Yes, this book is truly a gem.”

Rev Fr Gregory Jordan, SJ, Chaplain of St Leo’s College at the University of Queensland

“This book could be titled Confession in a Nutshell or Confession for Dummies. It contains all the basic information about sin and grace which holy nuns once imparted to children. However it is accessible to all age groups and will be of value for those who missed out on this kind of intellectual content in their sacramental programs when they were children. The work is up to date with references to Scripture and to the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It is a presentation of the Church’s official teaching as it stands in the Pontificate of Benedict XVI but with the addition of Fr de Stoop’s personal reflections on the value of the sacrament based on his own pastoral experience.”

Dr Tracy Rowland, John Paul II Institute, Melbourne

Gifts of The Gift of Confession!

Fr de Stoop has kindly donated a signed copy of each of his books on Confession, that we will be giving away as a gift to two lucky readers next month, to celebrate ITD’s 5th birthday!

Anyone who writes to ITD, gives a donation, becomes a new subscriber, or introduces a new subscriber, between now and the 26th of October 2007, will be in the running to receive one of these wonderful gifts! Just make sure that your letter or email contains your name and mailing address! Refer to the back page of ITD for our contact details.

Am I a hypocrite if I confess the same sins?

You would be a hypocrite if you were not sorry for the sins you confess. However, if you are confessing the same sins time and time again – not through any lack of contrition or desire for amendment on your part, but through human weakness and the power of habit – rest assured that you are not a hypocrite. A hypocrite is someone who knows what is morally good but does not try to live up to it. The mere fact that you want to be reconciled with God most likely means that you are *not* a hypocrite because by confessing your sins you are distancing yourself from what is wrong and aspiring to what you know to be good.

An excerpt from The Gift of Confession - Abridged Edition, by Fr Michael de Stoop (p.39).

Young People – This is Your Time

From Archbishop Charles Chaput's homily to the Australian Catholic Students Association, Canberra, 07-07-2007

God has reached out to His people from the earliest chapters of Genesis through the life of Jesus His son. And He does not stop there. He never grows tired. And each generation of faith has the task of keeping and passing on that story of His love.

Young people, you have the gifts of energy, zeal, hope, joy and confidence. God needs you. This is your time. Twelve men changed the world because they loved Jesus Christ more than they loved their own lives. Do you have that kind of courage? Do you have the capacity for that kind of radical love? The Church is always new because her children are always new. Your passion for God is the new wine in the new wineskins Christ talks about today.

So if you want your life to matter; if you want to make a difference with the time God gives you, give your whole mind and whole soul and your whole heart and whole strength to the Lord. That's the only kind of revolution that lasts.

Faith in the Holy Spirit

[In his message for World Youth Day 2008], the Holy Father presents three objectives to the young people, both those who will be in Sydney and those who are unable to attend.

He invites them to “recognize the true identity of the Spirit by listening to God’s word in the revelation of the Bible.”

He suggests they “learn about his continuous and active presence in the life of the Church, in particular rediscovering that the Holy Spirit is the ‘soul,’ the life-giving breath of the Christian life, thanks to the Christian sacraments of initiation – baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist.”

Finally, he exhorts them to “deepen their understanding of Jesus and at the same time to implement the Gospel at the dawn of the third millennium.”

The Pontiff says that preparation for Sydney should be an opportunity to “verify the quality of our faith in the Holy Spirit, to find it again if we have lost it, strengthen it if it is weakened, to savour it as a companion to our faith in the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ.”

He added: “Never forget that the Church, rather, all of humanity, all that which surrounds you and what awaits you in the future, expects much from you, young people, because you have in you the supreme gift of the Father, the Spirit of Jesus.”

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Political Meeting at Church

On Saturday 11 August I went to this forum at St Eugene’s in Burpengary. It was arranged by the Catholic Justice and Peace movement. Four speakers had been advertised, and it appeared that all were from the side of politics opposed to the government. About 40 attended. I recognised one or two parishioners, but it seemed that most of the rest had come as a party. Some were wearing messages opposing the government’s legislation on Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs).

The first speaker, a university professor, put up some statistics which seemed to indicate that things were better when the workplace was unionised and all labour was regulated as a whole. That is, where all people received the same award, regardless of individual ability and effort.

The second speaker announced herself as a nun, with many qualifications and lots of experience in social work. She quoted documents from the Vatican and bishops. None of these documents would appear to side with the government or the opposition, but the implication was there: Church teaching is against individual agreements or AWAs. She spoke approvingly of ‘liberation’ theology.

A third speaker began talking about the injustice of expecting partly-disabled people to find suitable jobs. Again, the implication was that no matter how minor the disability, the worker is entitled to a pension. The term ‘disability’ was extended to a lack of public transport in urban areas. The term ‘rights’ was stressed, as if open-ended.

During the third speech, I joined a conversation with the nun outside the church. The Church, according to this nun, approves liberation theology; Christ was a revolutionary and against those who oppressed the people. There were many statements of this nature. The implication was that Christ would have opposed AWAs.

Several points I’d like to make:

- The meeting was held in the church. Not one of the audience made a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Not even the nun. The noise before the meeting and during the coffee break was quite significant. I cannot think of anywhere I have lived overseas where God’s house would be treated with such disdain. It is hard to believe that those who attended were Catholics at all.

- Why was a political meeting being held in a Catholic church? There are absolutely no Catholic teachings which would reflect on workplace agreements. In fact, it could be argued that they are more in accordance with biblical traditions than the activities of bully unions.

- There are many issues of justice to be involved in, far more urgent than any workplace agreement issue. Things like abortion and the iniquitous taxation system in Australia which is used for outrageous purposes such as to pay for ‘gay’ rights’.

I got the impression that we had been visited by a travelling circus. If so, it may be travelling next to a parish near you.

Richard Stokes, Brisbane

Annual Worldwide Children's Holy Hour

*Gather the Children of the World
Before the Tabernacles of the World
For the Families of the World*

Pope Benedict XVI has granted an Apostolic Blessing on the upcoming Annual Worldwide Children's Holy Hour, on First Friday, October 5, 2007.

"I am deeply grateful for the many good efforts of the World Apostolate of Fatima and in particular, I think of the many graces that come to so many young people through the Children's Programs. ... It is my hope and prayer that each of the children who participate in this Holy Hour will be ambassadors of Jesus Christ to other young people and to the world..." - Pope Benedict XVI

The World Apostolate of Fatima's program, Children of the Eucharist, is inviting school children and all children around the globe to gather before the Most Blessed Sacrament and follow along with a simple program of prayer for peace in our families and world, thus spiritually uniting the prayers of children around the world. We invite and encourage bishops, parish pastors, school principals and families around the globe to plan "little pilgrimages" to their local shrines, diocesan cathedrals, parish churches, and chapels.

The Worldwide Children's Holy Hour will be broadcast live to over 40 different nations by EWTN from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC where Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, Bishop of Kansas City, will lead the Children's Holy Hour at 10:00am EST.

On this upcoming First Friday of October, let us gather children of the world before the Most Blessed Sacrament, giving them the unique opportunity to pray for their own families and all the families of the world.

This children's movement is rapidly growing. The fruit of the Global Holy Hour is Children's Eucharistic Adoration in our parishes, schools, and families. Visit www.childrenoftheeucharist.org for more information. Please join in and help, and send this website around the world!

*Connie Schneider, National Chair of Children's Programs,
World Apostolate of Fatima, USA
Public Association of the Faithful under the Pontifical Council of Laity*

Society Loses Its Bearings

Pope Benedict XVI

"A society where Christian conscience is no longer alive loses its bearings; it no longer knows where to go, what it can do, what it cannot do, and ends up in emptiness, it fails. Only if a living awareness of the faith illumines our hearts can we also build a just society."

Given Back What Was Taken

Fr Speekman was not content with the way the interior of our parish church had been physically set up since drastic changes allegedly inspired by Vatican II. Father was not alone in his discontent. Many parishioners and visitors could not understand why the interior layout of the church was so out of keeping with the architecture and more importantly, so out of keeping with the whole purpose of a Catholic church.

The altar had been placed along the side of the church with the pews around it in a semicircle. The Blessed Sacrament remained in the tabernacle where it had always been, i.e. facing east, and at the top of the church. The Blessed Sacrament was at a 90° angle from the altar and was so far removed from the altar that even though there was a sanctuary lamp burning, people used to come into the church and genuflect to a wall behind the altar in the middle of the church.

Was the church interior layout assisting the expression of a sense of numinosity* or community? Clearly the architecture screamed out numinosity. But the layout of the fixtures screamed out community/meeting house. The altar was a mere couple of inches higher than the pews. The front pew was about eighteen inches or so away from the celebrant, resulting in him being almost eyeball to eyeball with those in the front pew.

Down in the semicircle in the middle of the church we found a very friendly atmosphere. It all appeared very egalitarian. Where was the atmosphere of majesty and mystery? We could see and were distracted by the choir, and we could all see everyone coming and going through the main door.

After ascertaining, in writing, that His Eminence Cardinal Pell did not object to his plans, last week Fr Speekman changed the pews around to face the tabernacle, and the altar is now in the sanctuary. We are no longer distracted by the choir which is now behind us. We can no longer see the activities at the main door. Once again, the interior of the church looks like a church. When people come in they genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament instead of genuflecting to a wall.

Having watched people coming into the church at all four Masses this weekend, I was greatly heartened by the genuine joy on their faces when they saw the new arrangements. Even the young and early middle-aged who cannot remember pre-Vatican II days were joyful. Some parishioners said they had been waiting more than 20 years to see this day.

Thanks to Fr Speekman we have been given back what is rightfully ours, i.e. the right to worship in a correctly oriented church. To Fr Speekman we express our sincere thanks and say "ad multos annos!"

Moiria Kelly, Camperdown NSW

*Numinous – the combined feeling of attraction and awe characteristic of man's sense of communion with God and religion [Concise Oxford Dictionary] (for those who also didn't know! Ed.)

Parish Priest Governs in His Own Right

When Bishop Coffey publicized his intentions to appeal to the Apostolic Signatura against the Congregation for the Clergy's second decree in favour of Fr Speekman (The Tablet 20-01-2007), he lamented that he never got a good hearing but that the Congregation accepted every word of Fr Speekman's report without question.

Now it has come to light (ITD August '07) that Bishop Coffey's canon lawyer Rev. Ian Waters JCD prepared a paper for the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, in June 2006, on the relationship between canon law and school governance. This paper clearly reveals at least one of the reasons why the Congregation ruled in favour of Fr Speekman in spite of the bishop's 240 pages of 'evidence'.

Fr Waters explains that the office of parish priest is an ecclesial and canonical one. As such it has real rights, and the exercise of the office as well as the tenure of it, is strictly regulated by the provisions of canon law.

Under the bishop's authority the parish priest exercises his office of teaching, sanctifying and governing. He exercises this power in his own name. Thus he is quite independent of the bishop, and as the canonical guardian of the juridical rights of his parish he may even proceed against his bishop by having recourse to the Holy See. Fr Waters notes that being under the authority of the bishop does not mean the parish priest is an agent, a deputy, an employee or delegate of the bishop.

The parish priest's office cannot be terminated or revoked by the bishop and neither can he be dismissed by him for personal reasons or expediency. The parish priest is an office-holder in the Church in the same manner as the bishop. He can only be removed

after the initiation of an administrative or judicial process in strict adherence to the processes and procedures required by canon law.

Firstly, this information vividly illustrates that Bishop Coffey exceeded the limits of his power, intruded upon Fr Speekman's office, repeatedly violated his rights and the rights of his parishioners, and deprived him of his sacred authority to teach and govern in his parish.

This strident abuse of power started when Bishop Coffey came to Morwell parish in Fr Speekman's absence and issued a decree to remove the primary schools from his authority. This opened the way for the Catholic Education Office and parish administrator to continue the abuse and to act way beyond the limits of their mandates in the schools and the parish after Fr Speekman's removal.

Secondly, this information shows the absurdity of Bishop Coffey's claim that the Congregation for the Clergy was biased in adjudicating the case and that they violated the law.

When Fr Speekman is returned to his parish he would be justified in taking civil action against the Bishop, the CEO and the parish administrator, Fr Cleary. Over the last four years, the Congregation for the Clergy has shown itself impotent in protecting Fr Speekman (except in words) against his abusive bishop. The American sexual abuse scandal has shown that sometimes the most effective way to stop evil from being repeated, is to take civil action. Perhaps in this country, the way to stop the abuse of parish priests by rogue bishops and power-drunk CEOs, is to do the same.

Gregory Kingman, Morwell

True God and True Man

Raymond de Souza's first series, "Good or Evil: Who Decides?" reaches millions of homes worldwide via satellite, cable and internet (and now available on DVD from www.SaintGabriel-International.com).

His brand new second series, "Jesus Christ, true God and True man", masterly defends the divinity of Jesus in the face of the growth of secularism, agnosticism and Islam. It is Logic at the service of the Faith.

Brazilian by birth, Catholic by grace and Australian by choice, Raymond is a speaker of international renown, who has given more than 2000 talks on Catholic Apologetics and related topics, in person, on radio and television.

Over the years, his work has assisted religious education programs at parishes, schools, and lay organizations in Brazil, Canada, the United States, South Africa, New Zealand, Fiji and Australia. Recently, he has also addressed Catholic audiences in Singapore, Great Britain, Austria, France and Portugal.

See his new series on EWTN online at 7:30am on Tuesdays and 8:00pm on Thursdays (Sydney Standard time) or via satellite on Tuesdays at 8:00pm, Wednesdays at 1:00am, Thursdays at 4:00pm and Saturdays at 11:30am (Sydney Standard time).

Kenneth Skuba, Secretary, New Evangelization Office, National Shrine of the Sacred Heart, Pennsylvania

How Many?

On page 4 were questions about how many ministers of the Eucharist there would be on average in a parish over a year, and in your parish specifically.

The answer should be (a) for both questions. Ministers of the Eucharist are, of course, priests and deacons only. If you chose more than 3, you were probably thinking of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

Redemptionis Sacramentum reminds us of the correct terminology, but sadly we continue to hear the distortions being used in parishes far and wide.

[154.] ...the name “minister of the Eucharist” belongs properly to the Priest alone. Moreover, also by reason of their sacred Ordination, the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are the Bishop, the Priest and the Deacon, to whom it belongs therefore to administer Holy Communion to the lay members of Christ’s faithful during the celebration of Mass. In this way their ministerial office in the Church is fully and accurately brought to light, and the sign value of the Sacrament is made complete.

[155.] In addition to the ordinary ministers there is the formally instituted acolyte, who by virtue of his institution is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion even outside the celebration of Mass. If, moreover, reasons of real necessity prompt it, another lay member of Christ’s faithful may also be delegated by the diocesan Bishop ...

[156.] This function is to be understood strictly according to the name by which it is known, that is to say, that of extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and not “special minister of Holy Communion” nor “extraordinary minister of the Eucharist” nor “special minister of the Eucharist”, by which names the meaning of this function is unnecessarily and improperly broadened.

Belong to the Truth

Pope Benedict XVI

Christian freedom is, then, anything but arbitrariness. It is to follow Christ in the giving of self even unto sacrifice on the cross. It may seem a paradox, but the high point of the Lord’s freedom was on the cross: the pinnacle of love. On Calvary they cried: ‘If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!’ Yet He demonstrated His freedom ... by remaining on that scaffold to fulfil the Father’s merciful will.

This experience has been shared by so many other witnesses of truth: men and women who have proven their freedom even in a prison cell or under threat of torture. ‘The truth will make you free.’ Those who belong to the truth will never be slaves of power, but will always know, freely, how to serve their brothers.

Vatican Information Service 02-07-2007

A Bad Example

The Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* explains that extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must not be routinely used. They may be used of necessity only. They may not be appointed if priests are able to distribute Communion themselves.

The Instruction goes on to say that the diocesan Bishop should ensure that any errors in this area are corrected. Our Bishop Coffey, on the other hand, continues to be part of the problem. At a recent Mass, he sat down – and allowed his priest concelebrants to sit down – while extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion distributed Communion. Can he really be ignorant of liturgical norms? Does he know them and choose to disregard them? Does he believe he knows better? Whichever way it is, he’s a bad example to priests and laity alike.

Redemptionis Sacramentum says:

[151.] Only out of true necessity is there to be recourse to the assistance of extraordinary ministers in the celebration of the Liturgy. Such recourse is not intended for the sake of a fuller participation of the laity but rather, by its very nature, is supplementary and provisional. ...

[157.] If there is usually present a sufficient number of sacred ministers for the distribution of Holy Communion, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion may not be appointed. Indeed, in such circumstances, those who may have already been appointed to this ministry should not exercise it. The practice of those Priests is reprobated who, even though present at the celebration, abstain from distributing Communion and hand this function over to laypersons.

[158.] Indeed, the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion may administer Communion only when the Priest and Deacon are lacking, when the Priest is prevented by weakness or advanced age or some other genuine reason, or when the number of faithful coming to Communion is so great that the very celebration of Mass would be unduly prolonged. This, however, is to be understood in such a way that a brief prolongation, considering the circumstances and culture of the place, is not at all a sufficient reason.

Competing for Enrolments

In the Latrobe Valley Express of 9 July 2007 there was a feature on primary school enrolments in the area. Each primary school had an article about itself, and an advert. Not a single one of the articles or adverts of the Catholic primary schools, nor the general article on Catholic schooling, made any reference to the Catholic faith. Maybe they don’t even know what a Catholic school is anymore.

Ed.

Give us Priests Who Promote Reverence

We have gone to Mass at St Joseph's West Brunswick since the parish priest was Father Denis Hart. At that time it was one of the few parish churches in Melbourne where you could go to Mass and feel that you really had been to Mass. Father Hart was then – as he still is – insistent on reverence in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament. There were, in fact, little signs at the church doors and about the church reminding people “My house is a house of prayer”, and gently telling people that they must not distract other people who are saying their prayers. He promoted Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The “Adoration Chapel” was alongside the sanctuary. It really was a lovely parish. The parish school was well run. There was a copious supply of altar boys. Father/Archbishop Hart has always had a great understanding of liturgical music – he is a fine pianist and has an excellent singing voice – so there were no dreadful hymns or songs sung in church. There was a good parish choir, though, as is the case just about everywhere, it was hard to attract young singers.

The influence of Father Hart does still have an effect in the parish. But a couple of weeks ago, by accident rather than by design, my wife Margaret and I encountered a Mass attended by the children from the parish school. They occupied a good half of the beautiful church. Their teachers were with them. It was wonderful to see so many children at Mass, but things were not as they should have been. Many of the children talked and laughed throughout the whole of the Mass – except for the two or three minutes it took them to leave their seats and go to receive Holy Communion. I would be surprised if most of the children said even one prayer throughout the Mass. Clearly, few of them paid any attention to Father's homily – except when he asked them a question about the latest Harry Potter book, contrasting it with the Book of Revelations. It is hard to believe that anyone in authority ever said anything to those children about how to behave in church and, especially, during Mass. The children, simply, did not hear Mass. Most of them displayed no interest in or understanding of what went on at the altar.

Afterwards, Margaret and I could not help but think back to our schooldays. We were taught by nuns and brothers. To behave like that in church and, especially, at Mass would have been utterly unthinkable. What has gone wrong? Clearly, the parents and the teachers of those children are letting them down very badly. But I think that most of the fault lies with many of our parish priests and with the bishops over them. Our parish priests must see to it that the Faith is taught as it should be taught in our parish schools, and insist on the cooperation of the teachers and of the parishioner parents. There are simply not enough Father

Speekmans in this country nor in all of the other countries where the Faith is struggling.

The August issue of “Into the Deep” is top class. I earnestly hope that your article about parish priests and parish schools comes to the attention of every bishop in Australia and of a great number of parish priests. Most solicitors and most barristers, at one time or another, appear in court to make a plea for leniency on behalf of a client charged with a criminal offence. Given that Father Waters was or is Bishop Coffey's canon lawyer, I don't think that anything can be said in Coffey's favour. He must have decided years ago that he will never relent, that he will disobey all orders of Church authorities and that, when he reaches the end of the road, he will resign. I am utterly unable to understand why the Signatura has failed to deal with this matter long ago.

Michael Ryan, Rosanna

Hardened in Sin

From a homily by St John Vianney, Curé d'Ars

We read in the Gospel that our Lord always treated people with great tenderness, except for one type of people whom he treated with severity; these were the Pharisees, and they were so treated because they were proud and hardened in sin. They would willingly have hindered, if they could, the accomplishment of the will of the Father. What is more, our Lord called them “whited sepulchres, hypocrites, brood of vipers, offspring of vipers, who devour the breasts of their mothers.”

We can say the same thing on the subject of devotion to the Blessed Virgin. All Christians have a great devotion to Mary except those old and hardened sinners who, for a very long time, having lost the faith, wallow in the slime of their brute passions.

The Devil tries to keep them in this state of blindness until that moment when death opens their eyes. Ah! If they had but the happiness to have recourse to Mary they would not fall into hell, as will happen to them! No, my dear children, let us not imitate such people! On the contrary, let us follow the footsteps of all those true servants of Mary. Belonging to this number were St Charles Borromeo, who always said his Rosary on his knees. What is more, he fasted on all vigils of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin. [...]

Now then, my dear brethren, why should not we imitate these great saints who obtained so many graces from Mary to preserve them from sin? Have we not the same enemies to fight, the same heaven to hope for? Yes, Mary always has her eyes upon us. Do we suffer temptations? Let us turn our hearts towards Mary and we shall be delivered.

Hours of Eucharistic Adoration

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	Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat in the Church: (9.30 Mass) 10am – 11am Adoration Chapel accessible 24 hours by PIN available at parish office.
Drouin	Thursday 10am – 11am First Fridays 4pm – 8pm (alternating months, December onwards)
Lakes Entrance	Friday 9.30am – 11am
Moe	Wednesday (9am Mass) 9.30am – 10.30am
Morwell	<i>CANCELLED</i>
Orbost	Friday 10am – 11am
Rosedale	First Wednesday 10.30am – 11.30am
Sale	Friday 11.30am – 2pm First Friday 11.30am – 6pm
Trafalgar	Tuesdays 10am – 11am First Saturdays 10am – 11am
Traralgon	Wednesday 11am – 12 noon
Warragul	Saturday 10am – 11am First Fridays 4pm – 8pm (alternating months, January onwards)

Please contact us to update and extend this list with hours of Adoration throughout Gippsland.

Mass for Vocations

Sale Saturday 9am

“Holy Hour of Power” for WYD08

*Bishop Anthony Fisher, co-ordinator of World Youth Day
2008, on preparing for the WYD one year away:*

We ask every parish, school, university and other chaplaincy to hold a “Holy Hour of Power” each week in the lead up to WYD. For those that already have such an hour, we challenge them to increase their time and fervour in adoration. This will allow us an intimate encounter with Jesus Christ as we pray with and for all our young people, for WYD, and for the future of our Church and country.

Spend a weekly Holy Hour of Power with Christ and Mary and the saints, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit at WYD. It will give you the quiet time, the thinking time, the praying time, the emptying-your-head time, the pouring-out-your-heart time, that you need. It will give you the encouragement and inspiration and support that you need to go out to all the world, and to build a new civilization of justice, peace and reconciliation, of truth, life and love.

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

Contact Into the Deep

www.stoneswillshout.com

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.
- Donations are welcome! (Cheques made out to John Henderson please)

ITD is released on or around the first day of each month by email and on the website; printed copies up to 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, our diocesan newspaper,
- 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.