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Editorial:

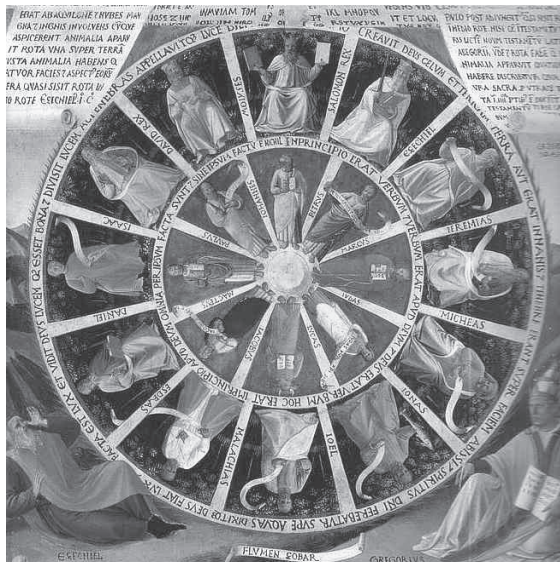
Wheels Are Turning ...

As 2009 recedes into the past and 2010 progresses apace, it must be acknowledged that last year was a not uneventful year for the archdiocese of Brisbane. Among the events and occurrences of significance from 2009 may be mentioned:

1. The choice of Frs Peter Kennedy and Terry Fitzpatrick and much of the "St Mary's Community" to move from the South Brisbane St Mary's parish Church to their "St Mary's in Exile" accommodation in the TLC building, (previously reported in Lepanto);
2. Apparent cessation - for now - of the controversial Womenspace operation towards the end of 2009, (see "Behind The Scenes at Womenspace" article in this issue, dealing with the notice of closure; excerpts from a restricted circulation "Women-Church" article on Womenspace by Sister Anne McLay; and our reproduction of a message from behind the scenes at Womenspace concerning their - as they put it - "Goddess theology or New Age Catholicism" and sponsorship by "Wicca friendly priests and bishops"). Whether Womenspace's demise is permanent remains to be seen. It seems, however, that the Presentation sisters will no longer be providing this occult front group with a base for their operations. Womenspace, of course, would not exist without the resources and support of female religious orders;
3. The lay-led restoration of perpetual adoration at Villa Maria (reported in Lepanto previously); and
4. Claims by Frs Peter Kennedy and Terry Fitzpatrick that John Bathersby, was personally instrumental in leading Terry Fitzpatrick (and others) into Buddhist practice, (see "Book Review: Fitzpatrick Challenges Bathersby" in this issue). The archbishop has on a number of occasions been asked to

respond to the claims. At time of writing, he has not responded.

While 2009 may ultimately prove to have been something of a landmark year for the Catholics of Brisbane, much remains to be done. The archdiocese of Brisbane, following many years of not-always-easy-to-fathom leadership, is in need of a Catholic recovery strategy. The situation and the legacy are far from satisfactory. Despite some positive signs, too many indicators are negative: historically low mass attendances, generalised doctrinal and moral confusion, the on-going and long term failure of the Catholic religious education system, Catholics aborting their children at much the same rates as the rest of the community, bloated Catholic bureaucracies pursuing their own perceived self interests, long standing failure to effectively project Catholic influence at the political level, a largely - and with honourable exceptions - demoralised clergy and a number of religious orders in apparently terminal decline. Altogether, a sobering report card to accompany the recently concluded 150th year anniversary celebrations for the diocese.



FRA ANGELICO: EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE MYSTICAL WHEEL

If St Mary's and Womenspace were dealt with in 2009, there remains at least one other neo-Gnostic front group still ostensibly operating as a Catholic organisation - the Sisters of Mercy's Earth Link / Four Winds operation, (see "Earth Link: Business as usual" article in this issue). This organisation continues to present a challenge to the local Church and to the archbishop. Of the events and happenings in the archdiocese in 2009, wondrous and ordinary, ethereal and mundane, public and obscure, there was another at the very end of 2009 which remains fresh in the memory - the appearance of what may be described as a "puff" piece by Des Houghton in the Courier-Mail,

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“Brisbane Archbishop John Bathersby prepares to retire” (<http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,,26524413-3102,00.html>). In the story, we find that Archbishop Bathersby, “known affectionately in the community as The Bat”, has been “mates with the past three popes” and that the 73 year old Archbishop fondly anticipates that the Pope will accept his resignation when he turns 75. While the past year was the “toughest of his life”, it was nonetheless “one of the most spiritually rewarding”. Also, almost in passing, “A row in the South Brisbane parish resulted in a (un-named) malcontent priest banished from St Mary’s for unorthodox teachings.” The former friendship, it seems, is well and truly over.

Experience has shown that when such coverage occurs – “soft propaganda”, by any standard – there can be some confidence that the Archbishop is under pressure and that the popular mood requires a little fine tuning. In any case, this article was brought to *Lepanto’s* attention by an interested observer via an email message titled, rightly or wrongly, “Damage Control”.

As the focus turns to 2010 and 2011, more than a little discussion centres on the succession to the leadership of the archdiocese. One or two of those considered in certain quarters to be potential successors appear to have already put their personal campaigns into high gear. Needless to say, the next appointment will be a matter of no small significance for the archdiocese. It is difficult to imagine anyone who has lived comfortably with this administration or who has gained preferment in this administration being an acceptable candidate. Rome’s questions to possible candidates should include:

1. How have you lived with the current administration of the archdiocese?
2. How did you make your disagreement known? Please

- provide evidence.
3. Bearing in mind your vow of obedience, what did you do about the state of things? Please provide evidence.
4. Where did you stand on St Mary’s? Please provide evidence.
5. Where did you stand on Womenspace? Please provide evidence.
6. Where did you stand on Earth Link? Please provide evidence.
7. What have you done over the longer term to promote the Gospel of Life and the victory of “the culture of life” over “the culture of death”? Please provide evidence.
8. How over the longer term have you made your position known on the questions of abortion and contraception? Please provide evidence.
9. Most critically, what have you done over the longer term to demonstrate that you are prepared to accept unpopularity in the service of Christ? Please provide evidence.

Those who have in recent times scaled up their orthodox profiles and who have been, subtly and not so subtly, working the Roman connection should be seen as opportunistic. Those who hold or have held senior or “insider” positions in the archdiocese should be evaluated with particular rigour, as should those who have been favoured by the archdiocese with opportunities for advanced study and overseas travel.

Only a candidate conspicuous for his humility, orthodoxy and courage would have any prospect of reforming this archdiocese. Rome would do well to look not so much at the more obvious candidates but rather to look for those who are not in favour, who do jobs others do not want and who perhaps may even be quietly despised for their catholicity. The right material is unlikely to be found in candidates who lack scar tissue.

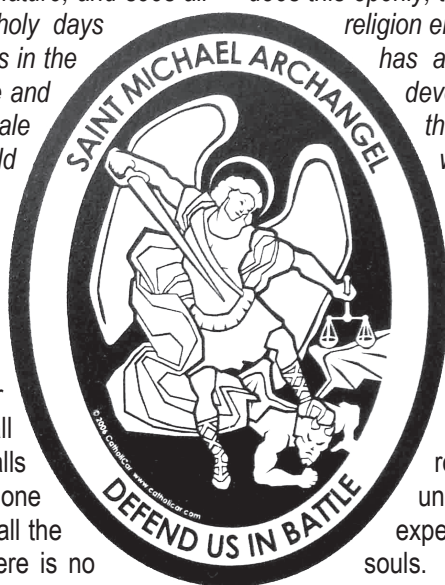
- Tim Pemble-Smith

“When witchcraft is practised as a religion, it is called by the Old English term for witch, Wicca. This term is used to counter all the negative stereotypes that society has given witchcraft. Wicca is primarily a religion that worships nature, and sees all creation as sacred. In fact, all Wiccan holy days follow the cycles of nature and the changes in the seasons. Wicca also worships both a male and female deity, a female Goddess and a male God, who had together created the world and everything in it.”

(<http://www.witchcraft.com.au>)

“To Israel, his chosen, God revealed himself as the only One: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” Through the prophets, God calls Israel and all nations to turn to him, the one and only God: “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other... To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. ‘Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength.’”

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #201)



“It is common knowledge, even amongst those unfamiliar with the true practice of Wicca, that some Wiccans practice magick. ... Wicca actively embraces the idea and use of magick, and does this openly, though it is often difficult to determine where religion ends and magick begins. ... In Wicca, magick has a very specific role: to improve our lives, develop a relationship with the Goddess and the God, and to return energy to the earth which sustains all life.”

(“Wiccan Magick Explained”

<http://paganismwicca.suite101.com>)

“Catholic theology defines magic as the art of performing actions beyond the power of man with the aid of powers other than the Divine, and condemns it and any attempt at it as a grievous sin against the virtue of religion, because all magical performances, if undertaken seriously, are based on the expectation of interference by demons or lost souls. Even if undertaken out of curiosity the performance of a magical ceremony is sinful as it either proves a lack of faith or is a vain superstition.”

(“Occult Art, Occultism”, Catholic Encyclopedia <http://www.newadvent.com>)

Book Review: Fitzpatrick Challenges Bathersby

- Tim Pemble-Smith

**“Peter Kennedy: The Man Who Threatened Rome”,
by Martin Flanagan and others**

is effectively the collective response of the “St Mary’s Community” to the events which led them into “exile” from the Catholic Church. The two major portions of the book are 60 pages of “The People Speak” by Michele Gierck setting out the personal “stories” of a dozen or so people from the community and 21 “Reflections and Essays” of 130-odd pages by a range of writers from near and far. There is a 10 page introduction by dissenter and former priest Paul Collins. The journalist Martin Flanagan contributes all up only 11 pages. There is little pretence at balance overall, the token exception being a short piece by theologian Neil Ormerod.

For the mainstream Catholic reader, a major interest will be exploring the group mind of a community which ultimately and overwhelmingly chose to be other than Roman Catholic. Given so many of the community appear to have been protestant and otherwise non-Catholic in the first place, the ultimate outcome of the St Mary’s showdown is perhaps not such a great surprise. The book confirms among other things that Fr Peter Kennedy’s St Mary’s was not a typical church based on the local parish model but was largely comprised of people from further afield who shared Kennedy’s reservations about Catholicism. Among the otherwise non-Catholic may be listed, for example, the Aboriginal activist Sam Watson who says, “I am not a Christian. I am a Murri Buddhist, but I feel comfy being part of St Mary’s.”

The “Reflections and Essays” section is of interest. There is a short, reprinted article by the seemingly mandatory Hans Kung, titled “If Obama Were Pope”. Frances Devlin-Glass questions “the role of vigilantes” in the Church, including Richard Stokes and the interstate Stones Will Shout group. Reference to Max Lynch and Lepanto is somehow avoided. Mention is made of “the public censuring of Fr Bill O’Shea”, of “Bishop John Gerry’s public and private humiliation for his support of the decriminalisation of homosexuality in Queensland”, of Christopher Pearson who “sneeringly mocks ‘cafeteria’ Catholicism” and of Archbishop John Bathersby who “could no longer avoid taking action against a person who was and is, tragically, no longer a close friend”.

Ross Fitzgerald writes, “Indeed around 1000 a week currently attend ‘St Mary’s-in-Exile’ ... In contrast, the official St Mary’s ... currently attracts less than 100 worshippers a week.” Fitzgerald further notes Pope Benedict’s “adverse reference” “to Buddhism as a form of autoeroticism”. Justin Coleman notes that “St Mary’s attracted more Catholic independent school principals, deputies and religious coordinators than any other parish in Brisbane, although most, understandably, kept their heads down as the publicity gained momentum”. Veronica Brady, Joan Chittister and John Shelby Spong are also included. Marian Aboody Thacker writes “The

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Brisbane Lesbian and Gay Pride Choir have been at St Mary’s for over ten years now, you know’.”

Sometime Uniting Church minister Noel Preston writes “The hallmark of this community led by Fathers Peter and Terry was empowerment of those exploring the boundaries of belief ... Many times since have I preached at St Mary’s, acted as a eucharistic minister, exercised pastoral care in the community and been on its leadership team, and yet, I remain too Protestant, or shall I say too non-denominational, to have formally become a Roman Catholic ... So it is that Catholic writers like Rosemary Radford Ruether, Leonardo Boff, Thomas Berry, Diarmud O’Murchu and Paul Collins have informed and inspired me in embracing an eco-theology appropriate in the 21st century.”

In his concluding piece, Martin Flanagan confirms where Fr

Peter Kennedy is spiritually and, in doing so, perhaps unwittingly corroborates the view advanced in Lepanto. “What does Peter Kennedy mean?” He’s now into ideas which more or less obliterate the notion of personal identity in favour of human awareness. He’s like a monk steeped in a discipline which is as severe in its way as Zen ... It owes a good deal to Hinduism and the concept of Advaita.” The “acknowledgements” section refers to the odd interesting individual, including a number of usual suspects. It is clear that this book reflects collaboration between the St Mary’s community and sympathetic interstate neo-Gnostic and “liberal-progressive” networks, including Church insiders apparently held in good odour.

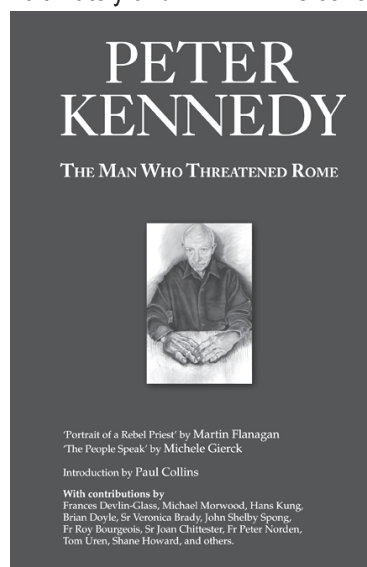
The book powerfully re-confirms that Peter Kennedy’s St Mary’s “community” was not philosophically Catholic and that the “community” is well aware of this fact - all the while demanding accommodation within the boundaries of the institutional Church. No amount of dissembling can escape this basic internal contradiction in the life of the St Mary’s “community”. Ultimately, this contradiction appears to reflect a form of collective intellectual and spiritual schizophrenia. Some might unkindly refer to the phenomenon as unresolved “Catholic guilt”.

For Archbishop Bathersby personally, the most challenging aspects of the book are contained in Michele Gierck’s chapter on Fr Terry Fitzpatrick, where Fitzpatrick elaborates on comments previously made to ABC radio by Fr Peter Kennedy, “John Bathersby himself, as spiritual director in the seminary, some of the Masses he said with them, today he would say that they’re wrong. He introduced Terry and many people to Buddhism, John Bathersby did.”

In her chapter on Terry Fitzpatrick, Gierck writes “A week-long Zen Buddhist retreat for seminarians. Fitzpatrick sat on his mat, incense wafting, listening to the eastern bells being rung, and bowed as he had been taught. The sacredness of the practice enthralled him. He was immediately drawn by the

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March, 2010



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contemplative aspect of Buddhism, captured by its beauty. It was unlike anything he had experienced.

But perhaps what is more surprising, in the light of recent events at St Mary's, is that the man he sat next to for eight days on that retreat was the spiritual director of the seminary, Fr John Bathersby, now the archbishop of Brisbane.

After the retreat, Fitzpatrick set up his own Zendo place in the seminary, in a spare room downstairs – a place used for private Masses. The Zen practice had opened a door to contemplation, to being present in any given moment. He learnt how to really sit for meditation, how to empty the mind. He also discovered the concept of embracing paradox. He couldn't help reflecting on it, and continues to do so decades later. The Zen experience also taught him to respect diversity."

What Terry Fitzpatrick is claiming here is that John Bathersby's Zen Buddhist involvements went beyond mere use of Buddhist spiritual techniques and included:

1. involvement in Buddhist ritual;
2. an initiatory and/or transformatory aspect - the retreat being "unlike anything" Fitzpatrick "had experienced" before;
3. acceptance in a seminarian of Buddhist philosophy and belief; and
4. Fitzpatrick being allowed to set up his own Zendo place in the seminary.

Fitzpatrick's claims clearly present John Bathersby as instrumental in the genesis of his own Buddhist practice and ultimately in the destruction of his own vocation as a Catholic priest, with his transformation from Christian to syncretic Buddhist practitioner being directly traceable back to his formation under Bathersby in the seminary. Further, Peter Kennedy has separately gone on the record stating that John Bathersby "introduced Terry and many people to Buddhism".

In lodging these allegations in the public domain, Kennedy and Fitzpatrick appear to be responding at least in part to Archbishop Bathersby's own comment concerning the famous Buddhist statue at St Mary's, "A Buddhist statue in a Catholic Church or sanctuary just does not make sense ... only extreme recklessness would place a Buddhist statue in a Christian Church. No matter where that takes place there is every possibility it would arouse angry feelings, particularly with Christians from different religious cultures."

Fitzpatrick and Kennedy no doubt fully understand the import of their claims. The words they have used appear carefully chosen. If true, they would amount to a damning indictment of the archbishop.

Response to Fitzpatrick's and Kennedy's claims has been sought from Archbishop Bathersby. There has been no reply.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS:

Please offer Masses and pray the Rosary for our Bishops, Priests and religious; for our organisations; and for more vocations to the Priesthood and religious life.

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

YEAR FOR PRIESTS - JUNE 19, 2009 - JUNE 19, 2010

Dear Lord,

We pray that the Blessed Mother wrap her mantle around your priests and through her intercession strengthen them for their ministry.

We pray that Mary will guide your priests to follow her own words, "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2:5)

May your priests have the heart of St. Joseph, Mary's most chaste spouse.

May the Blessed Mother's own pierced heart inspire them to embrace all who suffer at the foot of the cross.

May your priests be holy, filled with the fire of your love seeking nothing but your greater glory and the salvation of souls.

Amen.

O, Mary, Queen of priests, pray for us.

Saint John Vianney, pray for us.



LEPANTO LEAGUE OBJECTIVES :

- 1 Uphold & promote the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- 2 Be Loyal to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and to the teachings of the Holy Father.
- 3 Oppose the teaching of the so-called Personal Development/Sex Education in the class room environment.
- 4 Foster vocations to the Priesthood and to the religious life by personal and formal group devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and by the support of seminaries, whose formation and training is in accord with the guide-lines and directions of the Holy See.
- 5 Foster devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and daily praying of the Holy Rosary.
- 6 Provide active support for other groups and organisations who are loyal to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.
- 7 Support parents as the prime educators of their children.
- 8 Insist that Catholic schools teach the full content of the Catholic Faith without compromise.
- 9 Foster love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to actively work for the fulfillment of the legitimate aspiration of having the traditional Latin Rite (Tridentine) Mass available regularly.
- 10 Advance these objectives and to defend them with vigour from all attacks no matter from what source they may arise, and to provide mutual support and assistance amongst members.

Behind the Scenes at Womenspace - Tim Pemble-Smith

Brisbane Catholics have been observing the Womenspace saga for a decade now, waiting patiently for a resolution to the many issues that Womenspace raises. Womenspace has in its day been extensively covered in the Courier-Mail and to some extent the Catholic Leader. Evidence on Womenspace has been sent to the archbishop and to Rome, much of it compilations of what Womenspace says of itself. There has never been any doubt that Womenspace is or perhaps was an occult, Goddess-focussed front group nor that Womenspace was very largely the creation of rogue Catholic nuns.

Womenspace appears to be all but closed and non-operational, for the moment at least. Nonetheless, Womenspace operated for a decade. In that time, large number of women, Catholic and otherwise, have been introduced to spiritual activities which until recent times were widely considered unacceptable and indeed illegal.

Lepanto has in recent times come into possession of materials which provide fresh insight into the public and behind-the-scenes Womenspace story.

Womenspace Item 1: Closure of Womenspace Property

The following notice appeared on the Womenspace website late in 2009:

"CLOSURE OF WOMENSPACE PROPERTY

2 Oct 2009

In 1998 the Presentation Sisters purchased the property at 12-14 Homebush Rd, Kedron, Brisbane with a view to leasing it to Womenspace. Since then, they have continued to lease the property to us rent free and for this we are always grateful. Without this support and that of the Mercy Sisters, Womenspace would never have become a reality.

Over recent years, the building has gradually become structurally unsound to the point that now it has been declared unsafe for occupation. The Presentation Sisters have made the difficult decision to demolish the buildings and therefore our lease cannot be renewed. Unfortunately, all events scheduled for Womenspace have had to be cancelled. We apologise for the inconvenience caused, however this situation is unexpected and beyond our control. We thank you for your understanding.

There is a great sense of enthusiasm, passion and hope among our members as we embark on the next stage in our journey where we are looking for new premises. Meanwhile, we will be meeting in various venues until we find a new home. During this time, we appreciate your continuing support as we enter a new phase in the life of Womenspace."

Womenspace Item 2: Anne McLay - Women-Church Article

An item of interest is an article titled "Womenspace" by Ann McLay, which was published in the semi-underground ecumenical "Women-Church" publication in 2007. The bi-line says. "ANNE McLAY is committed to re-claiming the feminine as a Sister of Mercy. She is currently retired though working hard through her engagement with Womenspace and to a lesser degree with Earth Link (an ecospirituality centre). She has been part of Womenspace since its beginnings and continues to try to hold its vision."

In her article, Anne McLay writes that Womenspace "is a

gathering centre for women from all spiritual traditions. It is a place of Beauty, Earthiness, and Sacredness...". "How did Womenspace come about? It began with some conversations among a group of Mercy women during 1997, often over breakfast at The Coffee Club." It was agreed to hold "an open meeting", which was attended by "around eighty women". "A co-ordinating committee was set up from volunteers at the meeting. The Presentation Sisters offered to buy a place and lend it, rent free, until they would need to re-claim it." "With financial help from the Sisters of Mercy, a co-ordinator was appointed; a newsletter was begun; a tradition of ritualising the four seasons annually was established, and also a meal and ritual to begin meetings, and finally – in November 2000 – an official opening and a ritual of consecration on successive days."

"Women played a key role in all this. Setting up Womenspace would have been well nigh impossible without the direct support – through property and money – of the two groups of women religious, the Presentation and the Mercy Sisters. Venues for the seasonal rituals before we opened at Kedron were given us, cost free, by the Franciscan Missionary Sisters at their retreat centre and then by the other Franciscan Sisters at Mt Alvernia College... A few other groups of women religious gave initial donations...".

Sister McLay proceeds to outline how "Fundamentalist Catholics initiated a campaign against us in both media and church. We were – and still are in some quarters – branded as witches and pagans (with the highly derogative sense of those words) and, to a lesser degree, lesbians. ... We were still being formally investigated, however, by the Catholic Archdiocese which was insisting that we were a Catholic organisation...". ... "The *Catholic Leader* wrote a very damaging article about us. This was the official stance until a year or so later when another derogatory piece appeared in the *Courier-Mail*. By then, the archbishop had decided that we were not a Catholic organization and that he had no responsibility in the matter."

... "Currently, we have around seventy paid members of the formal Women's Space Association Inc. from which the co-ordinating committee is formed ... We distribute a ten-page newsletter three times a year and send out a weekly email update. We have become more widely known and formed networks with groups and individuals with similar values and concerns. We have one thousand two hundred women on our database, nine hundred of whom receive the update."

... "One aspect almost universally commented on is the atmosphere of Womenspace, especially in the Bakery. There are two buildings, a former bakery and a former shop. The Bakery is truly a welcoming, sacred place. It is where we hold most of our events and the magical atmosphere has built up more and more. I have a fantasy (without any historical corroboration, as yet) that it was originally a Women's Business sacred site..."

... "Women come at different stages of allegiance or non-allegiance to a church or faith tradition. Some are exploring

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traditions other than their own. We are learning to respect whatever name we wish to give to the Sacred Mystery, whether it be God, Goddess or Allah or Source, or whatever. However, when some women are outspoken about their anger with the institutional church, and are continuing to hurt from past history, it can be difficult for those who still belong to a religion or faith tradition to maintain this allegiance openly."

... "The experience of Womenspace has shown, among other things, the value of women's associations such as religious orders that have some continuity and, through pooling of resources, the financial ability to sponsor a non-profit group such as Womenspace. With the apparent decline of religious orders, one must wonder what will take their place in this. Womenspace got off the ground because of such help..."

... "Hildegard of Bingen, on whose feast we held our initial public meeting, talks about needing to keep our souls moist and green. Hildegard writes of the air living in its green power; the waters flowing as if they were alive; the sun shining in its own light; and every living thing being rooted in the Holy Spirit. At Womenspace we keep our souls moist and green as we honour the four elements of earth, air, fire and water. We are rooted and breathe and flow and burn in our mutual search for the sacred."

Womenspace Item 3: "Wicca friendly priests and bishops"

Below is an excerpt from an internet based communication from behind the scenes at Womenspace, dated November 2007. Apologies for the spelling and grammar, which have been left in their original state. The emphasis has been added by *Lepanto*.

"Right now I'm active in political agendas and promoting *feminist Goddess theology or New Age Catholicism*, we will have an upcoming Womenspace conference and believe it or not the *Sisters of Mercy, yes they [are catholic nuns]* will be there and Sr. Anne McLay, RSM *promoter of goddess spirituality, witchcraft, and other pagan New Age occultic practices*. The co-chair of Womenspace is Patricia Rose, who holds a doctorate in "goddess worship." Little by little *progress is being made in Goddess Theology within the Catholic faith*, there are some *Wicca friendly priests and bishops*. Womenspace is growing rapidly last year almost 5000 women showed up this year it may be almost double. Women are so tired of a male dominated patriarchal dictatorial misogynistic form of catholicism, we are now *angry and demanding priestesses and Goddess worship be inclusive at least strides are being made at the local levels and there may be risks involved for the clergy, but I see the movement as a strong one.*"

Womenspace Item 4:

Recent Notice on Womenspace Website

From: <http://www.womenspace.org.au/web/index.php>

"THE NEW WOMENSPACE - INVITATION TO MEMBERS
2010! A new year and a new start with Womenspace!

We are inviting all members to join an open discussion about Womenspace in the next phase of her life. We would like to discuss with members our vision for the new Womenspace and strategies for implementing this, including the format of Womenspace, programmes, activities, membership and other related topics. As a member of Womenspace, we value your input.

There will be two opportunities to participate in this discussion - an evening session and a day session. You are invited to either or both of these.

Venue: Holy Cross Church, Woolloowin (corner Chalk & Morris Sts) in the Side Chapel in the old church(Heritage Hall)

Dates: Thursday 18th February 6.30pm and/or Friday 19th February 1.00pm"

Lepanto 13:1

Letter to the Editor:

PERPETUAL ADORATION AT VILLA MARIA

Here is a beautiful reply from one of our Adorers after reading my article.

God is Good!

Blessings,

Kate

Our constant presence before The Lord will allow immeasurable blessings.

PERPETUAL ADORATION ASSOCIATION

What a great article... I must say I think my decision to join in with 40DFL and my prayer time outside the clinic with Judy Wong really bounced me back into the swing of things (after treading water on the outskirts of the Catholic Church for many years)....

It is what prompted me to respond to weekly Adoration – as I had so looked forward my weekly time of standing outside the clinic (once I got used to the abuse of course!) and was sad when it was over!

From there Adoration has led me to the Marian Valley, EWTN is now proudly showing in our home with my kids watching much nicer cartoons than the ABC was offering and my prayer life is slowly renewing itself.

So you are certainly not "false-advertising"!! It is ALL GOOD from where I stand!

I just wish I could put into better words the joy that I am feeling (my friends are all crossing the street when they see me coming! ☺) after all those years of just being a "Sunday Catholic" because I couldn't find the Church that I knew and loved but I loved God enough to persist at least with Sunday Mass.... And here you all are out there!! EWTN is so encouraging just listening to these people all talking common heavenly sense!

I now hope to "slowly" find groups I can become a part of (I am particularly fond of our PAA already!)... but I don't think there is much for middle aged women?? Everything I see seems to be "youth" orientated! (and don't they need it – the stories I am hearing from our Catholic High Schools is making my hair stand on end)

My "currently converting" husband has just bought himself some Christian Rock albums which is a mind blowing move for a man who grew up with "nothing" and with a Mother who actively dislikes Catholicism....

I shall end now – or YOU will start to cross the road when you see me coming!! ☺

At a time when new questions are being put and when grave errors aiming at undermining religion, the moral order and human society itself, are rampant, the Council earnestly exhorts the laity to take a more active part, each according to his talents and knowledge and in fidelity to the mind of the Church, in the explanation and defence of Christian principles and in the correct application of them to the problems of our times.

Decree of the Apostolic of Lay People, 18.11.'65

Earth Link: Business As Usual

- Tim Pemble-Smith

Possibly the three most "out there" neo-Gnostic spiritual operations in the archdiocese of Brisbane in recent years have been Womenspace, St Mary's and Earth Link. As at the end of calendar 2009, St Mary's had chosen to leave the institutional Church and Womenspace was effectively or close to non operational, its property having been withdrawn. Of the three, it's business as usual only at Earth Link.

The article below is reprinted from the February 2008 issue of the national Catholic magazine AD2000. It remains relevant today.

Earth Link Item 1:

'New Age' activities continue in Brisbane Archdiocese

- Tim Pemble-Smith

In February 2006, an article by Wanda Skowronska, titled 'New Age paganism's creeping influence within the Church', was published in AD2000. The article addressed in some detail seriously problematic issues associated with the Mercy Sisters' Earth Link website and Four Winds Centre in the Brisbane Archdiocese. Since then, no discernible corrective action of any significance has been taken.

Meanwhile this writer has approached Archbishop John Bathersby seeking a response to the following queries on Earth Link and Four Winds:

- How is it that this openly neo-pagan, gnostic operation has been allowed to function?
- What is his position as Archbishop of Brisbane in relation to Earth Link and Four Winds?

To date no reply has been received.

'Earth Link' and 'Encouraging deep bonding with Earth' are respectively the title and subtitle of a website publicising the Four Winds Centre in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Earth Link is described as 'a collaborative ministry sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy'.

Earth Link Coordinator, Sr Mary Tinney RSM, sees the website's mission and vision as 'encouraging connectedness between people and the earth ... through education, earth-sensitive spirituality, through promoting sustainability and biodiversity, and through justice for the earth'.

The Four Winds Centre is located in an idyllic rural setting outside Brisbane. It offers an annual calendar of events including a winter solstice ritual and dinner, a spring ritual and dinner, an earth and the sacred residential retreat and a men and earth retreat day.

The Centre's lending library features a range of publications that clearly indicate its focus. They include Carol Christ's *Rebirth of the Goddess*, Berry and Clarke's *Befriending the Earth*, Riane Eisler's *Sacred Pleasure*, Molyneaux and Vitebsky's *Sacred Earth*, *Sacred Stones*, *Spiritual Sites and Landscapes*, RJ Stewart's *Celtic Gods and Goddesses*, *The Earth Path: Grounding Your Spirit in the Rhythms of Nature* by self-proclaimed witch Starhawk and Marija Gimbutas' *The Language of the Goddess: Mythologies of Old Europe*.

The video collection includes *Secrets of the Stone Age* and the usual range of productions by New Age alchemist Brian Swimme, including *The Powers of the Universe: An Exploration of the Powers Coursing through the Universe and Lepanto 13:1*

Each of Us.

The website's reviews are also revealing - such as an unattributed one of Paul Reid-Bowen's book *Goddess as Nature: Towards a Philosophical Theology* (sic). This review states:

'Goddess as Nature makes a significant contribution to elucidating the meaning of a female and feminist deity at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Bridging the gap between the emergent religious discourse of theology - discourse about the Goddess - and a range of analytical concerns in the philosophy of religion, the author argues that theology is a highly coherent system.

'By developing a close reading of the reality-claims embedded within a range of theological texts, one can discern an ecological and pantheistic concept of deity and reality that is both metaphysically novel, and in need of constructive philosophical, theological and scholarly engagement. Reid-Bowen proposes a metaphysical account of the Goddess as nature: Goddess/ Nature. This is true to the experience of most Goddess feminists, and the comprehensive exposition of the principles that shape this naming will be of great interest to practitioners and scholars alike. In addition, Earth Link offers an 'education program' which 'considers the place of humans in the universe'. Its first unit is titled, 'The Universe is my Body; My Body is the Universe'.

It would be difficult to overstate the depth of the superstition inherent in these two statements, reflecting as they do the 'visionary', superstitious, shamanistic, subjective experience of the 'Goddess' which has in recent times led so many spiritually inclined but theologically challenged Catholics into the New Age wilderness.

This is also the phenomenon which was referred to by the then Cardinal Ratzinger as an 'idol' and 'cult of the body' in his 1989 letter to the bishops of the world, 'Some Aspects of Christian Meditation'.

That certain members of religious orders are particularly attracted to this form of New Age narcissism is an open secret among better informed Australian Catholics. Earth Link's Sister Mary Tinney, for one, is on record as having had her own 'Mother Earth' experience.

While these beliefs and practices have taken root in pockets of the Church throughout Australia, mainly via a few members of some religious orders, they seem especially symptomatic of the situation in the Brisbane Archdiocese and in other parts of Queensland.

In recent times, that archdiocese has experienced a range of direct challenges to Church authority which collectively suggest its problems are more endemic in nature, for example, the well known and widely canvassed controversies associated with:

- the occult Womenspace centre at Kedron, supported by the Sisters of Mercy and the Presentation Order;
- the dysfunctional and rebellious parish of St Mary's in South Brisbane;
- the notorious former St Stephen's Cathedral 'Human Search for God' shrine;

(Continued on page 12)

March, 2010

Eucharistic Adoration for Lent: spend

PRAYER TO JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

ALL: On Holy Thursday night, O good Jesus, You gave us the Eucharist, the memorial of Your Passion, which was soon to unfold in all its sorrow and tragedy.

By instituting this Most Blessed sacrament, You made Your love present and effective in the world until the end of time.

You spoke about Your love in most tender terms to the apostles at the Last Supper. Your words ought never be forgotten. You said:

LEADER: "As the Father has loved Me, So I have loved you.

Live on in My love. You are My friends If you do what I command you. I call you friends, Since I have made known to you all that I heard from the Father. It was not you who chose Me, It was I who chose you ..." (John 15:9,14-16)

ALL: Lord Jesus, You have also chosen me and my fellow Christians to go forth and set the world ablaze with Your love by keeping alive the memory of Your Passion, intensively in our own hearts and extensively in the hearts of others.

To that end, we begin this Holy Hour and prayerfully enter into the contemplation of Your sacred sufferings and death. May this Holy Hour bring us closer to You and to one another in love!

JESUS IN GETHSEMANI - MAN OF PRAYER

LEADER: This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Saviour of the world.

ALL: Come, let us worship.

READING: Matthew 26:36-42

PRAYER

ALL: Your entire life, O Jesus, was characterized by constant prayer, an ongoing communion with Your Heavenly Father. Prayer was the air You breathed. And it culminated in the most powerful prayer of all: "My Father, your will be done!"

This prayer is at the very heart of the one You taught us to say: the Our Father. O Lord Jesus, Teach us to pray. For how else can we be brought into the inner life of the Godhead? How else can we glimpse the splendor of the divine Trinity in all its truth, beauty and love? How else can we see our own misery, emptiness, sinfulness and nothingness? How else can we be transformed into the closer likeness of You, O Jesus, if we do not pray to the Father from our hearts at all times and under all circumstances; in the Gethsemani garden of our sufferings; in the joyous, quiet and peaceful surroundings of gardens, hills and countryside; in the lonely places where sorrow, pain, old age and the going forth to die are present; in the sanctuary of our home and family; in the sacred environs of a church.

There is no place where we cannot pray. We need only choose to do so.

With the help of Your grace, O Lord, we choose to do so. We enter with You now into the prayer of Your Passion, the prayer that tested Your obedience to the Father's will.

A GOD-MAN SCOURGED

And purity blooms in all its splendor

LEADER: This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Saviour of the world.

ALL: Come, let us worship.

READING: Mark 15:12-15

PRAYER

ALL: Why did You endure it, Lord? You endured it first of all, to make reparation for sins committed against the body, which is Your living temple. Your apostle Paul was horrified by the very thought of so holy a temple being profaned by sins of the flesh. He said: "Are you not aware that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, and you are that temple." (1 Cor. 3:16). And again Paul reminds us: "Do you not see that your bodies are members of Christ? Would you have me take Christ's members and make them members of a prostitute? God Forbid!" (1 Cor. 6:15) Only by living purely shall we be able to exert a moral and spiritual force that will help cleanse the world of its corruption, sensuality and selfishness.

O Jesus, scourged at the pillar, be our strength as we struggle to keep ourselves pure. Purity is one of the gifts we earnestly desire to give back to You, with all our love. If we have sinned in the past, forgive us. Help us not to sin again.

JESUS CROWNED WITH THORNS

Teaching a fundamental lesson in spirituality

LEADER: This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Saviour of the world.

ALL: Come, let us worship.

READING: Matthew 27:27-31

PRAYER

ALL: O Lord, Your apostle Paul wrote in reference to You: "Though he was in the form of God, he did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at. Rather, he emptied himself and took the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men. He was known to be of human estate, and it was thus that he humbled himself." (Phi. 2:6-8).

This, O Jesus, Son of God, is strikingly affirmed and confirmed in the crowning with thorns. A cap of thorns for a crown, a reed in Your hands for a scepter; a dirty garment for a kingly robe; then being spat at and struck. What could be more humbling? Lord Jesus, crowned with thorns, never let us lose sight of the truth that we are creatures, sinful creatures, creatures who, by Your grace, have been elevated to a supernatural state wherein we partake of Your own life. And never let us forget that we can very easily fall from grace.

O Jesus, take our emptiness and fill it with Yourself!

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts like Yours!

JESUS CARRIES THE CROSS

Through the Cross to Glory

LEADER: This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Savior of the world.

ALL: Come, let us worship.

READING: John 19:17

PRAYER

ALL: The cross of pain and suffering that You carry, O Jesus, on the way to Calvary is the burden of our sins and the sins of the whole world. You carry it willingly and gladly and lovingly because You see it as the instrument of our salvation, the sign of victory over sin and death, & the fulfillment of Your heavenly Father's will. It was a hard price that You paid - a hard, long,

a Holy Hour with Jesus in His Passion

excruciating, and agonizing way that called for the greatest courage and patience.

O Lord Jesus, when we became Catholic at baptism, we also thereby were made crossbearers along the way marked out by Your bloodstained footsteps. You said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, they must deny themselves, take up their cross and begin to follow in my footsteps" (Matt. 16:24).

The cross, which You have given us to carry along the way of life, is the burden of the commandments, the responsibilities of our particular state in life, the pressures and tensions of life, the sufferings, inconveniences, disappointments, bodily weaknesses and mental anguishes, oppositions and misunderstandings, struggles with temptations, and so much more.

Why is it that we are so unwilling to carry the cross, even though we profess to be Your followers? Why are we so bitter at times? Your cross, Lord, was one of love, not bitterness. So may our crosses be from now on. Help us to carry them patiently, courageously and lovingly so to prove that we are Your true followers.

We are determined, with Your help and grace, to make the journey of the cross, trusting in You and in the help You are ever ready to give. Let us clearly see that this is the only way to glory - the glory that You have promised to all those who follow in Your footsteps.

THE PIERCED HANDS OF JESUS

See, upon the palms of my hands I have written your name

LEADER: This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Savior of the world.

ALL: Come let us worship.

READING: Isa. 49:13-16

PRAYER

ALL: We are mindful, Lord, that Your pierced hands were once the baby hands that caressed the sweet, lovely face of Your mother; the carpenters hands that were such strong tools for work and which became rough and hard and calloused from physical use in Your foster-father's workshop in Nazareth; the folded hands that were the symbol of Your union with the Father through prayer and contemplation during Your whole life; the open hands that were always ready to give and bless and cure, and even to raise the dead to life; the beautiful priestly hands that absolved repentant sinners and held the bread and wine at the Last Supper and changed those elements into Your own Body and Blood.

Your pierced hands, O Jesus, are the instruments of a new creation; the source of all blessings; the symbol of forgiveness and deliverance; the expression of Your tremendous love for us. Allow us the privilege to touch and kiss Your pierced hands that we too may be blessed, healed, forgiven and transformed. Thank You, Lord.

In Honor of the Sacred Wounds My Crucified Jesus!

ALL: I adore the wounds in Your Sacred Head

With sorrow deep and true.

May every thought of mine today

Be an act of love for You.

I adore the wounds in Your Sacred Hands
With sorrow deep and true.

May every work of my hands today
Be an act of love for You.

I adore the wounds in Your Sacred Feet
With sorrow deep and true.

May every step I take today Be an act of love for You.

I adore the wound in Your Sacred Heart
With sorrow deep and true.

May every beat of my heart today Be an act of love for You.
AMEN.

IN HONOR OF THE HOLY FACE

ALL: O Jesus, who in Your bitter Passion became 'The reproach of men and the Man of Sorrows,' I venerate Your Sacred Countenance upon which shone the beauty and the sweetness of the Divinity, and which has now become for my sake like the face of a leper. But in those disfigured features I recognize Your infinite love, and I long to love You and make You loved by all. O Jesus, whose adorable Face ravishes my heart, I beseech You to imprint in me Your divine likeness, and to inflame me with Your love, that I may behold Your glorious Face in Heaven. AMEN.

STEPS OF THE PASSION

LEADER: O my most loving Jesus, sorrowful and agonizing in the Garden of Olives, covered with a sweat of blood, praying to Your Heavenly Father:

ALL: Response: Have mercy on us.

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, delivered into the hands of the wicked by a traitor's kiss, seized and bound as a robber, and forsaken by Your disciples: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, condemned to death by the unjust Council of the Jews, led as a malefactor before Pilate, despised and mocked by the impious Herod: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, stripped of Your garments, and most cruelly scourged at the pillar: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, crowned with thorns, beaten with rods, struck with a reed, blindfolded, clothed in mock purple, an object of derision and steeped in opprobrium: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, likened to the infamous Barabbas, rejected by the Jews, and unjustly sentenced to death: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, burdened with the weight of the cross and led to the place of Your execution as a lamb to the slaughter: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, reputed with the wicked, blasphemed and derided, given gall and vinegar to drink, from the sixth to the ninth hour the prey of excruciating torments on the cross: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, who died upon the cross & in the presence of Your most holy Mother was pierced with a lance, so that blood and water issued from Your Sacred Side: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, taken down from the cross and bathed in the tears of Your most sorrowful Mother: *R/.*

LEADER: O most loving Jesus, bruised and lacerated, marked with five wounds, anointed with spices and laid in the tomb: *R/.*

AMEN

from <http://www.confraternityofthepassioninternational.org/>



About the Occult...

<http://www.sacredheartparish.org/flyers/pdf/What%20Does%20the%20Church%20Teach%20About%20the%20Occult.pdf>

Question: Is it morally acceptable for Christians to involve themselves in various forms of fortune telling and divination, including superstition and reading horoscopes?

Answer: No. The Church teaches that all such activities are sinful. Of course, the sinfulness varies depending on the type and intensity of the activity practiced, but all are contrary to the faith. The Scriptures clearly condemn such activity. The Book of Deuteronomy states: "Let there not be found among you anyone who immolates his son or daughter in the fire, nor a fortune-teller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner or caster of spells, nor one who consults ghosts and spirits or seeks oracles from the dead. Anyone who does such things is an abomination to the Lord" (Dt.18:10-11). ... St. Paul reaffirms this prohibition: "... the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness...idolatry, sorcery.... I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21). Finally, the 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church repeats the prohibition on all forms of divination and occult practices: "All forms of *divination* are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretations of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone" (Catechism, 2116).

Why is this so?: Following horoscope, etc. is putting our faith and the authority over our lives in the hands of someone or something other than God. In general, people who are content in their life and at peace in the sight of God do not tend to delve into the occult. People looking for answers to difficult questions, for an end to some pain or suffering, or who are hopelessly curious tend to turn to such activities. Even if they don't intend it at first, once they start to ascribe any power whatsoever to such activities, they begin to question the power of God. They start to find hope in some power outside of God, and if these sources can provide immediate answers to their questions, then why bother going to God at all, since God's way is so difficult and takes so much more effort to discern? Fortune telling is seen as infinitely easier. As a result, their life begins to be governed, not by prayer and following the Gospel, but by tarot cards and psychics. In the end, they become involved in blatant idolatry, sometimes even worshipping false gods (such as in Wicca), and always ascribing the sovereignty over their lives to another power, a sovereignty which is supposed to be given to God alone.

Objection: But I don't really mean anything by it. I read my horoscope and call psychic hotlines just for fun. Is it a sin even if I realize it's not real?

Answer: Yes, it is. Even flirting with such things can be dangerous. Suppose one morning you read your horoscope and it says you will come into a lot of money that day, and just by coincidence you go to work and get a raise, or find \$10 on the sidewalk. You may be tempted to say to yourself, "Gee! My

horoscope said this would happen! It was right!" The next day, you end up reading your horoscope with a little more credibility, and if you should find a second "prophecy" that comes true, you'll start believing it.

What's more, when we start to be convinced of the legitimacy of horoscope, palm reading, psychics, etc., we can even make them come true. We start reading everything that happens as fulfilling the prediction. Getting a parking space in the first row at the mall starts becoming the "good fortune" we were told was coming our way, and then we're hooked! Our lives are now being controlled not by our prayerful actions before God, but by horoscopes, ouija boards, and all types of devices outside our control. It can become addictive just like drugs, and as anyone recovering from a drug addiction will tell you, the best way to break an addiction is to never start!

Question: Are psychics, ouija boards, tarot cards, etc. real? In other words, do they really have these powers, or are they fakes?

Answer: Certainly many of them are frauds. But are all of them? Perhaps no one can truly answer this question definitively. If the power is in fact supernatural, if it comes from God, it is being used in a way God has not instructed, and if it is not from God, guess where it's from! Some have suggested that psychic and clairvoyant powers are not supernatural at all, but merely the ability of some individuals to use part of their brains which most of us cannot. Whether or not this is true, and irrespective of whether their power is real, supernatural, or phony, the end is always the same: we place our trust in something God has forbidden, and that is never to our advantage. ... Would that people put the same effort they put into fortune telling into prayer! They would then see real results!

Conclusion: The bottom line is this: Our fate is not determined by the position of the stars, the lines on our hands, or the patterns in tealeaves; It is determined by our response to the will of our Father in heaven. God has a loving plan for each of us designed to bring us salvation in His kingdom by trusting in Him and in Him alone. He created the world as a perfect place - Paradise - and commanded Adam and Eve simply to obey Him in all things; if they did, all would be fine. Adam and Eve, however, did not obey God, and instead tried to decide for themselves what was right and wrong; they trusted in Satan and gave power over their lives to someone other than God. This disobedience brought sin and death into the world. Jesus, by His total obedience to the Will of God - even to His death on the cross - and by His resurrection, reversed the effects of Original Sin. Our duty now is to follow Jesus' example by learning of God's will for us through prayerful adherence to the teachings of Christ as revealed through the Church and to give our lives in total and complete submission to the Will of God. When we do this, we will learn that, in order to know true peace in our lives, we don't need a 900-number; all we need is prayer!

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Are You Compassionate?

By Abbot Joseph, Sept '05

Abbot Joseph, a monk for 22 years, has for the past five years been the Abbot of Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Redwood Valley, California, a Byzantine-rite monastery in the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

I have nothing but compassion for people who misuse the term "compassion." This does not mean that I tolerate such misuse in the least, as you will see. One of the most beautiful divine qualities, in which we are invited to share - "Be compassionate as my Father is compassionate" (Lk. 6:36) - is all too often twisted into something that is tantamount to offering people a license to sin. "Compassion," in modern parlance, means something like universal tolerance with a dose of sentimentality, which turns a blind eye to evil. In the Byzantine tradition, Christ is often called "The Lover of Mankind" and "The Compassionate One." But He is never referred to as "The Tolerant One," and with good reason.

There are different ways to express compassion, based on the need of those to whom we show mercy. To show compassion to the hungry is to give them food; to show compassion to the homeless and unemployed is to help them find housing and work. If you wish to be compassionate to the sick or elderly, comfort and assist them. But if you want to be like Jesus in showing compassion to sinners, invite them to repent.

Christ came into the world to save sinners. He didn't come to make sinners feel good about themselves or to instruct us on how to blur the distinction between good and evil, based on current trends or personal preference. Some people attempt to justify their (or society's) wrongdoing by saying, for example, that Jesus refused to condemn the woman caught in adultery and that He spent much of His time eating and drinking with sinners. They don't seem to be willing or able to understand why He did that.

Jesus' words to the adulterous woman, "Neither do I condemn you" (Jn. 8:11), are filled with forgiveness, not tolerance. She knew her own sin, and He knew that she did, whereas the would-be stone-throwers weren't reflecting upon theirs. So Jesus had to deal with them first. But after He forgave the woman, notice that Jesus did not say, "Go, follow your feelings, celebrate diversity, and try not to hurt anyone." He said, "Go, and sin no more." To the paralytic, He added a further warning: "Sin no more, lest something worse befall you" (Jn. 5:14). Compassion does not equal tolerance, especially where sin is concerned. If compassion, like genuine love, is not rooted in truth, it is at best misguided emotion, and at worst a refusal to enlighten a soul in danger of damnation.

As for being found in the company of sinners, Jesus also gave His reason for that: Sick people need a physician. He ate with sinners, not to approve their lifestyle, but to call them to

repentance (Lk. 5:29-32). Jesus knew, and the Church has always known - until relatively recently, it seems - that the salvation of souls is the most urgent and essential task that can be undertaken on earth. Therefore, compassion is expressed most perfectly by whatever one does for the eternal benefit of others. The most genuine love is concern for their salvation. Does it occur to anyone that Jesus was being compassionate to the money-changers by casting them out of the temple, or to the Pharisees by His fiery denunciations of their hypocrisy? Everything He said or did was an expression of divine love and compassion, with the goal of leading people to everlasting life in Heaven. If people are unaware that their behavior is sinful, we must make them aware of it - not to hurt, but to heal; not to condemn, but to save.

Sometimes compassion is equated with a sort of nebulous, ineffectual "kindness," one that ends up refusing to let

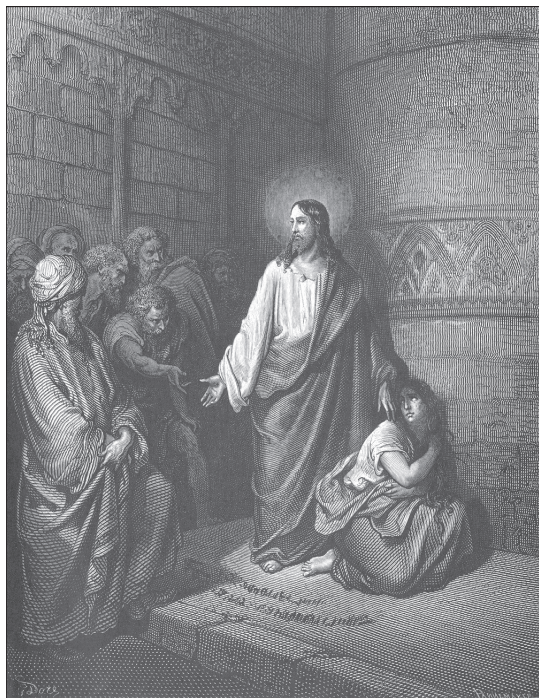
someone know that his soul is in danger. God's kindness is different: "Do you not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4). We are not being compassionate if we allow friends or loved ones to walk the broad path to perdition simply because we are too "kind" to upset them by attempting to awaken their consciences. Today's "kind and compassionate" people say that God loves us as we are, but I once heard a wise and necessary addition to that statement: "but He loves us too much to let us stay the way we are."

A number of years ago, a man who was a caregiver for AIDS patients (he was affiliated with a religious order) visited our monastery. In the course of our conversation I innocently asked

him - not realizing at the time how inflammatory a question this was - if he encouraged the patients to reconcile with God before they died. His face acquired a horrified expression and he exclaimed: "Oh, no! We believe in a nonjudgmental God!" Is it compassionate to deny a sinner a last chance to repent? Is it compassionate thereby to consign him to Hell, with the kindly look on your face the last thing he sees? That is the devil's "compassion," not the Lord's.

The Lord's compassion, however, goes beyond calling sinners to repentance. We have to be careful not to fall into pharisaical self-righteousness by limiting our relationship with public sinners to a perfunctory, even haughty: "You need to repent!" To be compassionate is to be at the service of others' repentance. Jesus went to the Cross to prove the genuineness of His love for sinners and desire for our salvation. "By this we know love, that He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn. 3:16). This does not mean that we literally have to die for sinners - the only One who could effectively do that has done it - but it does mean

(Continued on page 12)



(Continued from page 11)

that we have to pray fervently and make sacrifices for others, to speak the truth in love, making whatever practical efforts we can to contribute to the Church's work of saving souls, that is, of leading souls to the Savior. To paraphrase the Apostle John, let us not be compassionate only in word, but in deed and in truth.

In clerical circles, there's another similarly abused word: "pastoral." It seems that almost any manifest disregard for Church teachings is practiced for "pastoral" reasons. This usually includes tolerance of abortion, homosexual behavior, artificial contraception, or invalid marriages. How is it pastoral for a shepherd to encourage his sheep to walk into the mouth of the wolf? How are we being sensitive and caring by numbing consciences that will be rudely awakened - all too late - on Judgment Day? What kind of physician of souls will offer a temporary palliative when the cure is available? Come on, doc, don't spare us the pain of the needle if the medicine is going to save our lives!

To speak the truth and to call sinners to repentance does not mean, however, to be hard-hearted, unfeeling, or unmoved by the real suffering and struggles of those who are in some kind of moral dilemma or state of sin. To be compassionate is also to listen, to "suffer with," and to carry them in loving prayer to God. But it is not compassionate merely to leave it at that, especially if simply being with others gives them the impression that they need not repent. Repentance requires an inner awakening, an understanding of the state of one's soul, and a desire to do something about it. It is neither regret without amendment nor a ritual sterilized by routine. One must be willing to hear the word of the Lord and respond to it. Repentance is a redirection of our intentions, a change of heart, expressed by a change of behavior. But this will never happen with an "I'm OK, you're OK" approach.

Nothing is impossible with God - not even fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church! But it will cost much. Eternal salvation is not a minor issue, and Christ warned us that the way is narrow and difficult. Ultimately, however, nothing else really matters. If you lose your soul, you lose everything. Salvation is worth the price of faithfulness to the word of God. True compassion is encouragement to pay it.

It matters what we believe and how we behave. The stakes are high in this adventure called human life. Truth is not relative and Hell is not merely a myth or a useful scare tactic for Christian schoolteachers. Aberrant behavior must not be elevated to an unalienable right, and personal opinions must not be put on a par with divine revelation. Don't be so "kind" as to keep silent while others enshrine sin as an acceptable alternative to righteousness.

So you see why I have compassion for those who abuse the term "compassion," especially if they do so for "pastoral" reasons. I'm calling them to repentance. I'm concerned not only for their souls, but also - and especially - for those whom they mislead, whom they lull into spiritual somnolence. If any souls are lost, let it be only because they remained hardened in willful rejection of God until death - not because some "compassionate" person convinced them that they had no need to repent.

<http://www.newoxfordreview.org/article.jsp?did=0905-joseph>

(EarthLink - continued from page 7)

- the aggressive local prosecution of a 'priestless parishes' agenda;
- the widespread and seemingly endless liturgical abuses; and
- the exodus of young men seeking their priestly training in southern states.

Earth Link Item 2: Still in business

It is not as if the Sisters of Mercy's Four Winds / Earth Link operation has drawn any inconvenient lessons from the 2009 year experiences of Fr Peter Kennedy or Womenspace. For Earth Link, it is full steam ahead in 2010, as confident as ever of immunity from the exercise of Church authority. Recent Four Winds / Earth Link activities include:

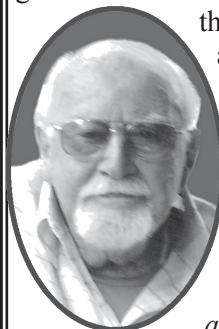
- promoting well known New Ager Barbara Marx Hubbard's "Visions of a Universal Humanity" (per www.visionsthemovie.com) Hubbard's Wikipedia entry (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Marx_Hubbard) includes the following: "Hubbard believes that humanity, having 'come to possess the powers that we used to attribute to the gods', is presently in a critical and dangerous 'Late Transition' to 'the next stage of human evolution' ... The importance of population control is also a recurrent theme in Hubbard's work. In *The Revelation: A Message of Hope for the New Millennium* she writes: [In 1966] *I saw, perhaps most fundamentally of all, that the vast effort of humanity to "be fruitful and multiply" would have to be curtailed in our generation. One more doubling of the world population will destroy our life support system. Our Mother will not support us if we continue to grow in numbers! We must stop.*"
- promoting the esoteric "Awakening the Impulse to Evolve" tele-series on evolutionary spirituality, (per www.evolutionaryspirituality.com); and promoting "Earth, Spirit, Action", a film about Deep Ecology, featuring such people as the dismissed former Dominican priest Matthew Fox, John Seed, Starhawk and others.

Earth Link's planned activities for 2010 include an "Autumn equinox ritual and dinner", "Winter solstice ritual and dinner", "Spring Ritual and Dinner" and workshops on "Earth in Australian literature, art and music".

MAXWELL LYNCH

24.05.1917-18.03.2009

O Lord, the God of mercies,
 grant unto the soul of Thy servant, Maxwell,
 the anniversary day of whose death we
 are keeping,
 a place of solace,
 of peaceful rest,
 of glorious light.
 Through Christ our Lord,
 Amen.



*Eternal rest grant unto Max, O Lord,
 and may perpetual light shine upon him.
 May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed,
 through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

A Voice in the Wilderness *by the late Tim Pickford*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

As we enter this new calendar year, let us look forward in hope and with absolute confidence in God's Providence. He is our Father; and to mistrust Him in such a matter amounts to a gross insult. He not only knows us better than we can ever hope to know ourselves, He knows also what is best for us.

Perhaps we allow ourselves to look at those around us who suffer tremendously in one way or another. We hear of those who meet with violent and sudden death; we hear of those who starve for want of nourishment; we see pictures of terrible floods, fires, wars and terror and we might be tempted to put ourselves in those pictures and to say to ourselves that we could not possibly suffer and endure as those poor people have. Such compassion as our imagining might evoke in us may be meritorious if it leads to our praying for such sufferers; but if it assists us in losing confidence in the Divine Providence, then we ought to remind ourselves that God will never test us beyond our endurance. If we are called on to carry a particularly heavy cross, He will also provide the graces needed to do so. Of that we must be certain – with the certainty that only a true faith can give us.

As we pray our rosaries day by day and especially when we meditate on the fourth of the Mysteries of Light – the Transfiguration of Jesus on the Mountain – then let us also pray that this mystery become our witness of the glory of Christ which will enable us to step into the frightening and unknown with a trust that refuses to contemplate any doubt.

Even as Jesus moved forward unflinchingly towards His death on the Cross, so must we rely on God to succour us in ways that are appropriate to our needs.

The Transfiguration of Jesus on the Mountain

The fourth Mystery of Light centres on the 'transfiguration' (in greek: 'metamorphosis') of Christ – a term which signifies a change in form or appearance. In the context of the Gospels, it refers to that vision which was given to Peter, James and John of Jesus in His glorified form.

The account of the Transfiguration is given in all three synoptic gospels – Matthew 17:1-13, Mark 9:1-9, and Luke 9:28-36. There we are told that Jesus took with Him three apostles: Peter, James and John – the apostles who were chosen to accompany Jesus on three separate occasions: when He raised the daughter of Jairus to life (cf *Mk* 5:35-43); now at the Transfiguration and finally in the Garden of Gethsemane (cf *Mk* 14:33).

The deliberate choice of these three companions has something to tell us of the structure of the Church that Jesus was founding. We know from St Luke's Gospel that Jesus had 72 disciples whom He sent out two by two to prepare for His

coming among the people (cf Lk 10:1). Only twelve of these were chosen to be apostles (cf Lk 9:1-6); and of the 12 only Peter, James and John were chosen to come with Him on those special occasions already mentioned; and of these three, only Peter was chosen to be the foundational Rock of the Church (cf Mt 16:16-20). In other words, Jesus had in mind an hierarchical Church in which the members had varying degrees of responsibility in the Kingdom. All of us, like the 72 disciples, are bound to prepare the way for the Coming of the Lord in our own lives and in the lives of others; but only some of us are chosen to be priests, fewer still are chosen to be bishops, and only one can be recognised as the visible Head of the Church – the Vicar of Christ on Earth.

On this particular occasion of the Transfiguration, Jesus not only manifests His glory but also meets two key Old Testament figures – Moses, who represents the Law, and Elijah, who represents the Prophets (which are the Old Testament equivalents of our Sacred Scripture and Holy Tradition).

In this we find Jesus establishing beyond any doubt the fact that His mission is one of fulfilling the Law and Prophets and not of creating a new religion. Hence it is that the Church's beginnings are to be found in the calling of Abraham. St Peter reminds us that we in our turn are a chosen people (cf 1P 2:9) – the younger sons of Abraham.

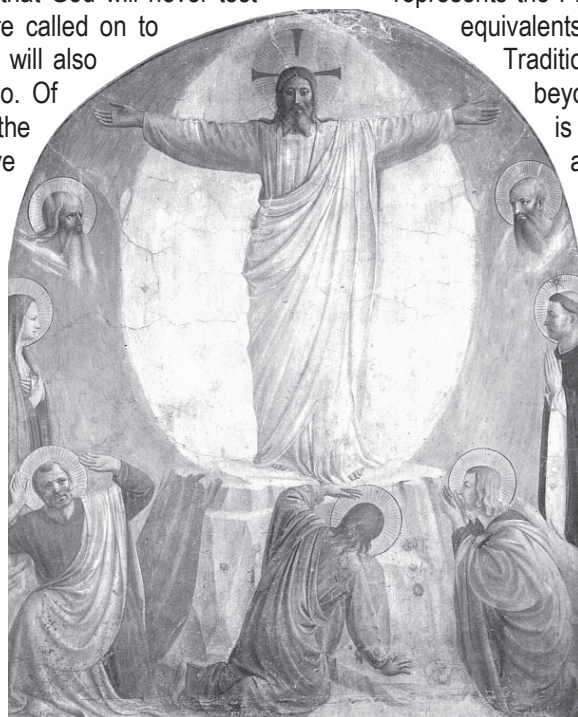
If we examine the three different accounts of the Transfiguration we find that the Gospel writers provide us with three different ways of viewing the same event. St Matthew tells us "He was transfigured before them. And his face did shine as the Sun: and his garments became white as snow" (2). In this, the parallel with Moses is established, for when Moses spoke with God on

the mountain, his face also shone so brightly the people did not want to look at him, forcing him to wear a veil in their presence (cf 2Cor 3:12-16). So also the cloud which covered Jesus and the voice coming from the cloud drive home the parallels so that we can look on Jesus as the Second Moses – the New Leader who will take His people from the wilderness of this life to the Land which flows with Milk and Honey which is Heaven.

If we turn to St Mark, however, we find that this Gospel writer highlights the changed appearance that came over Christ "And his garments became shining and exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller upon earth can make white". In other words, this glorification of Christ is no mundane metamorphosis but something which points to the heavenly glorification of the Lord.

Finally, St Luke speaks of the change which occurred both in Christ's countenance and his clothes but mentions a detail that neither of the other two includes: "And behold two men were

(Continued on page 14)





Lent, a call to turn our lives around

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us understand the appeal the austere rite of ashes addresses to us, one expressed in two formulas: '*Repent and believe the Gospel*' and '*You are dust and to dust you shall return*'.

The first is a call to conversion, a word that must be considered in its extraordinary seriousness. The call to conversion, in fact, exposes and denounces the easy superficiality that often characterizes our life. Conversion means to change direction in the path of our life: not, however, a small adjustment, but a real turnaround.

Conversion is to swim against a current of lifestyle that is superficial, incoherent and illusory, a current that often drag us down, dominates us and makes us slaves of evil or at least prisoners of moral mediocrity. With conversion, instead, we aim for the high standard of Christian life, we entrust ourselves to the living and personal Gospel, which is Jesus. He is the path we all are called to follow in life, allowing ourselves to be enlightened by His light and supported by His strength that

(Continued from page 13)

talking with him. And they were Moses and Elias appearing in majesty. And they spoke of his decease that he should accomplish in Jerusalem" (30-31, my emphasis). In other words, St Luke recognises the essential link between this event and the sacrifice that Christ was about to make in giving up His life for the salvation of the world.

Apart from these finer points of emphasis, we find that in other respects the three Gospels agree remarkably: the three apostles are shown as unable to recognise what is going on – they are afraid, and sleepy and speak without knowing what they're saying, wanting to detain the heavenly visitors and Christ by offering to build them tents. Yet, in all this, Jesus is teaching them a lesson which will take on a great importance in their later lives – and not just for the three but for all of us.

The one unmistakable message that we can all hear, however, is the recognition of the Father of Jesus Who not only tells the apostles that He is well pleased with His Son, but that they (and we) must also **listen to Him**. This "listen" is the root of "obey" (Latin *audire* 'to listen' and *obedire* = *obaudire* 'to obey'). Obedience therefore implies not only listening but also doing what is told.

In this theophany, then, God prepares His bishops and pope for their mission which is to be Christ's continuing presence in the world. He confirms the command of Mary (at Cana in Galilee) to "Do whatever He tells you" and He provides us with a glimpse of the destiny which is ours. In His Transfiguration, He shows briefly the divinisation of our human nature that we can all look forward to – when our own faces will shine, and our own clothes will be made as white as snow (cf Rev 19:8; 22:14). This sight can strengthen us in times of trial; it can become a point of reference when we begin to lose our way and above all, it is a reminder of the coming Passion and Death of Christ which we participate in by taking up our own cross daily and following Him.

moves our feet. Conversion is not simply a moral decision that corrects the way we live, but it is a choice of faith that draws us fully into intimate communion with the living and concrete person of Jesus.

His person is the final goal, He is the deepest meaning of conversion. Repent and believe the Gospel are not two different or casually combined things, rather they express the same reality. Conversion is the total 'yes' of those who surrender their lives to the Gospel, responding freely to Christ who first offers Himself to man as the way, truth and life, as the only one who liberates and saves.

Repent and believe the Gospel is not only at the beginning of Christian life, but it accompanies us at every stage. Every day is a time of favor and grace. Every day, even when there are difficulties and fatigue, tiredness and falls, even when we are tempted to abandon the path of following Christ and close in on ourselves, in our selfishness, without realizing that we need to open ourselves to the love of God in Christ, to live the same logic of justice and love.

In the other words "You are dust and to dust you shall return," the priest says when imposing the ashes, "we are sent back to the beginnings of human history, when the Lord said to Adam after he had committed original sin: *By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground because you were taken from it, you are dust and to dust you shall return!*". Here, the word of God reminds us of our frailty, even to our death, which is the extreme form". "Faced with the innate fear of the end, and even more so in the context of a culture that in many ways tends to censor the human reality and the experience of dying, in the Lenten liturgy, on the one hand, we remember death inviting us to realism and wisdom, but on the other hand, it urges us to understand and live the unexpected news that the Christian faith radiates in the reality of death itself. "Man is dust and to dust you will return, but it is a precious powder in the eyes of God, because God created man destined to immortality." Also the new Adam, Jesus "wanted to freely share with every human the fate of frailty, especially through his death on the cross". But this death was to be "the path to glorious resurrection, through which Christ became the source of a grace given to those who believe in Him and who are made participants of divine life itself. This life without end is already underway in the earthly phase of our existence, but it will be brought to completion after the resurrection of the flesh. The small gesture of Ashes reveals the extraordinary richness of its meaning: it is an invitation to experience the Lenten season as a more intense and knowledgeable immersion into the paschal mystery."

*From the Vatican, 17.02.'10
Benedictus PP XVI*





Date Claimers:

Contact the Editor to have your event listed here
- events must be in accord with Lepanto objectives

LATIN MASS

QUEENSLAND

Buranda: St Luke's, Taylor St - Sunday, 9.30am
Fortitude Valley: Legion House, St Paul's Tce - Wed. 7.30pm
Rockhampton North: St Mary's, Nobbs St - 2nd Sundays, 7.30am
West Mackay: St Francis of Assisi Chapel, 1st Saturdays, 9am
Cairns: Our Lady Help of Christians, 18 Balaclava Rd.
- First Saturday of the month, 10.30am

VICTORIA

Geelong: info at http://www.geocities.com/geelong_latn_mass

ACT

Canberra: John XXIII Chapel at Australian National Uni
- Sunday 11.30am: Missa Cantata

PRAY FOR AN END TO ABORTION

Spring Hill: 383 Wickham Tce, outside clinic - Saturday am
Enquiries: ph. 3324 2575

Bowen Hills: 8 Campbell St, outside clinic - Fridays 7-9am
Also - **40 DAYS FOR LIFE** - 24hrs from 25th Feb - 5th April
details: www.40daysforlife.com/brisbane ; see p.11

Salisbury: Hayling St, outside clinic - Every Friday 7-8 am

Morayfield: 40 Cresthaven Dve, outside clinic - Tuesday am.s
Enquiries: Bob 5496 7884

Rockhampton: 123 Bolsover St, outside clinic
- from 7.30am, alternate Fridays

Cairns: Day Surgery, Cnr Florence & Grafton St.s
- Friday 12.30 - 1.30pm

Red Hill: St Brigid's - Vigil Mass for Life -
- 2nd Saturday of every month, 7.30am
followed by prayer vigil opposite abortuary in Wickham Terrace.

RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMES

EWTN - **Brisbane:** BRIZ31, Sundays, 10-11am *and now*
Monday to Friday 12.30 - 1.30 pm
- **Perth:** TV Channel Access 31, Sundays 1-2pm

"The Gate of Heaven"

on Radio Fremantle, 107.91FM, Sundays, 7.30pm.
Hosted by the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate
- now featuring EWTN Radio Programmes.

GROUPS

Apologetics Study Group

Banyo: Parish Centre, 352 St Vincents Rd
- every Friday night (except school holidays)
Enquiries: Vince McHugh - 3267 0265.

Toowoomba:

four Apologetics Study Groups. Details: Mavis Power
- 4632 5523

"The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because they are generally the same people." - G.K. Chesterton, *ILN*, 7/16/10

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Brisbane: St Stephen's Cathedral - Mon-Fri 10.30am-12.15pm

Dorrington: St Michael's, 250 Bank St
- Mon, Wed 7pm-12mn; First Fridays 7pm-1am Sat.

Fortitude Valley: Villa Maria Chapel, 123 Warren St
- Perpetual Adoration -
enq.: Keiran & Kate Hobbs: 0414 258 996; 07 3278 1404

Geebung: St Kevin's, 251 Newman Rd -
Monday after 8.40am Mass - 10am (except school holidays)

Marian Valley, Canungra: Monday - Friday, 10am - 3pm

Toowong: St Ignatius' - Saturday 7-10pm

Toowoomba:

Sacred Heart Church, 302 North St, Wilsonton,
- every First Friday 11am-12.10pm

'The Shrine', Ruthven St - Mon-Fri 9am-4.30pm

Woodford: St Mary's - Fridays after 8am Mass

Nambour: St Joseph's, Currie St
- 2nd & 4th Sundays, 11am-4pm

Clear Island Waters: Sacred Heart Church

Tuesdays 9.30-11.30am; Fridays 7.30-9.30pm

ALL NIGHT ADORATION: First Friday, 7.30pm - 7.30am Saturday.

Surfers Paradise: St Vincent's Church

Mon, Wed, Fri, 5.20-6.30am; Tues, Thurs, 6-6.30am;

Thursdays 9.45-11am.

Mass and Adoration

New Farm:

Holy Spirit Church, Villiers St

- Every Friday, 8pm

Bray Park: Holy Spirit, Sparkes Rd

- Wed after 8am Mass 'til 9pm;

- 1st Friday after 7 pm Mass until 8 am Saturday

Rockhampton North:

St Mary's, Nobbs St

- Thursday 10.00 am - 10.00 pm weekly

Clermont: St Mary's, Capricorn St

- Thursday 9am - Friday 9am before First Friday each month

Mass, Rosary, Benediction & all night Adoration

Bowen Hills: Our Lady of Victories, Roche Ave

- Every 13th of the month, from 7.15pm

Coorparoo: St James', 165 Old Cleveland Rd

Gordon Park: St Carthage, 115 Beaconsfield Tce

First Friday/Saturday from 7pm in honour of the Sacred & Immaculate Hearts. Also confessions.

Gordonvale: St Michael's, every First Friday - Mass 7pm,

Adoration vigil from 7.30pm through to Saturday 7am Mass.

Jindalee: Twelve Apostles Church, Valambee Rd

- 1st Saturday after 5pm Mass through to 8am Mass Sunday

Contact: Sue Martin 0418 792 021

New Farm: Holy Spirit Church Villiers St - Fridays - Mass 8pm,

followed by Adoration till 6am Mass Saturday

Toowoomba:

Sacred Heart, 302 North St, Wilsonton

- Tuesday 6.30am Mass then Adoration (& Mass 12.10pm)

until Wednesday Benediction 6.20am, Mass 6.30am

- Friday Adoration until Sat. Benediction 8.20am, Mass 8.30am



I reckon ...

SMILE, THOUGH YOUR HEART IS ACHING ...

- Kathleen Ashworth

How's your Lent going? I'd like to tell you I've given up diet coke, my main addiction, and have a whinge about how tough it is, but I'm trying to avoid looking gloomy because, I'm sorry, but your sympathy is not the reward I'm after!

"When you are fasting, do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they go about looking unsightly to let people know they are fasting. In truth I tell you, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put scent on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you." (Matt.6:16-18)

Mother Teresa was big on avoiding looking gloomy. She said: "Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love"; "We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do"; "Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing." And "Peace begins with a smile".

Our current culture, with all the heresy and inhumanity, can be pretty depressing. We know that despair, however, is a sin against hope. We must be careful to avoid this. I'm not suggesting we trip blithely along with the fairy-flossers*, in blissful ignorance of the many offences to God that surround us, but we need to be careful that we don't treat every new project with suspicion and cynicism, just because so many new projects, up to date, have been worthy of suspicion.

I'm sure there are few readers who have not attended some new group activity in their parish only to come away shaking their heads with fear and concern.

With the defensiveness that results from such a common experience, it is easy to develop "... the heart of the proud: like a spy he watches for your downfall, ever on the look-out, turning good into bad and finding fault with what is praiseworthy." (Ecc.11:30,31) We must harden not our hearts, however, because the next new project could be the one where we see the evidence of conversion, of God's work: "... for God everything is possible" (Matt19:26).

In the meantime, we must continue to pray for those misled/malicious protagonists when yet another new project does turn out to be yet another attack on the Magisterium: "bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly" (Luke6:28).

But we also need to be educated and informed, so that we

**Fairy-floss: euphemism for 'warm, fuzzy' modernism: sweet, but has no substance or nourishment, doesn't stand up to close scrutiny and too much makes you sick
Fairy-flossers: generally well-meaning but ignorant people who subscribe to and disseminate fairy floss*

can discern if something is an attack on the Magisterium. Forewarned is forearmed, and we cannot defend our faith if we do not recognise when it is under attack. It is also our responsibility to acquire the knowledge and muster the courage to defend our faith.

If the circumstances require, we must "... be fearless; speak out and do not keep silence" (Acts18:9). Even though I am a reasonably confident public speaker, if the occasion arises where I feel I must 'speak out', I am far from fearless, with the apprehension of impending confrontation. (This is also the time when I'm begging the Holy Spirit for the words.) I know this is even more of an issue for those who are not comfortable with public speaking.

But speak up we must - and offer it up with a smile - and be grateful for the opportunity, for "... this means I have the happiness of suffering more for you, O my God, and for the conversion of sinners" (Sr Lucia, "Fatima in Lucia's Own Words"). Our Father, 'who sees all that is done in secret will reward you' for all that is done in public, too. Bear in mind, "for one pain endured with joy, we shall love the good God more forever." (St Therese of Lisieux).



And keep smiling, because even though "... I command languages both human and angelic - if I speak without love, I am no more than a gong booming or a cymbal clashing" (1Cor.13:1)

Mother Teresa said "Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet especially your family. Be holy - let us pray" and "Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without

leaving happier."

That can be very tough to do. (Not as tough as being scourged and crucified for someone else's sins, though.) It is a great Lenten discipline.

Mother Teresa also said, "I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that He didn't trust me so much."

*God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.*

*Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next.*

Amen.

-Reinhold Niebuhr

March, 2010