

“We are all Gnostics now”

Lepanto's perspective on Fr Peter Kennedy and his Catholic Community of St Mary's, also known as the “People's Republic of St Mary's”, was outlined in February: that Fr Kennedy's sense of “oneness” represents a world view in which we are all “God”, the Christian God no longer being understood as separate from and above the universe; that Fr Kennedy's view amounted to a denial of the central Christian understanding of the Trinity and Jesus Christ and was a classic statement of the neo-Gnostic, New Age position. *Lepanto* identified a parallel between Fr Kennedy and the dismissed American Dominican Fr Matthew Fox and Fox's New Age, Goddess-friendly, effectively pagan spirituality.

Naturally, *Lepanto* offered Fr Kennedy a right of reply: “Should Fr Kennedy have an interest in further clarifying his position or in responding, *Lepanto* is prepared to print whatever he may have to say.”

There has been no response from Fr Kennedy. No surprises there. Nonetheless, in a still unfolding process of public self-revelation, Fr Kennedy has progressively been placing more of his worldview on the public record, and in so doing has rendered further confirmation of the view taken by *Lepanto*. For more on this, see the companion presentation on page 4 in this issue, “More on Peter Kennedy and Gnosis: Jesus as ‘myth’ and ‘symbol’ of the ‘journey’”.

Fr Kennedy's public references to and favourable view on Gnosticism, Advaita Hinduism and the Kabbalah represent nothing less than an endorsement of esoteric traditions and, for that matter, paganism.

Fr Kennedy's increasingly more explicit Gnosticism, neo-Gnosticism if you like, has been neither unexpected nor surprising. A significant body of evidence from St Mary's had previously pointed in that direction:

- the St Mary's baptismal signifiers “creator”, “liberator” and “sustainer” were open to a wide range of interpretation, pagan as well as Christian;
- the meditation approaches on offer at St Mary's were drawn from Gnostic and pagan

traditions;

- the books being promoted and sold at St Mary's were of a Gnostic and pagan character;
- the St Mary's Liturgy of the Eucharist reference to “communion with the earth”, printed weekly in the St Mary's newsletter, was open to a range of Gnostic and pagan interpretations; and
- the culture at St Mary's reflected a rejection of biblical and Christian morality.



There was also the matter of the Buddhist statue, famously installed in St Mary's in the period leading up to the Pope's trip to Australia for World Youth Day. As Archbishop Bathersby subsequently advised Fr Kennedy,

“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.”

What may perhaps surprise is how little of the above, Buddhist statue aside, translated into the official pronouncements of the archdiocese. The letters from the archbishop spoke of matters of faith, liturgy, governance and authority. The detailed explanations on offer in the Catholic Leader by Fr Tom Elich and Fr David Pascoe concerned respectively, liturgy and authority. The archdiocesan Chancellor Fr Adrian Farrelly referred to the archbishop's having “lost confidence in Fr Peter's willingness to present Jesus to his people in the Catholic way”. Sir Humphrey could not have expressed it more delicately or in more minimalist terms.

In the archdiocese of Brisbane, a spade is not necessarily the proverbial shovel; a spade can sometimes be more like a trowel. On the archdiocesan side, the dispute with Fr Kennedy was managed almost as if it were simply an in-house disagreement among like-minded members of a friendly society. Fr Kennedy knew he had broken the rules of, as he put it, the “club”. The decision to leave was his choice; both for him and for the archbishop,

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arguably more a matter of practice than belief.

There is a clearly discernible pattern in the archdiocese's message management. In avoiding reference to the New Age and the Gnostic, the Archbishop and his various spokespeople maintain their longstanding practice of not naming and not dealing with the New Age and its many and various manifestations in the archdiocese of Brisbane. There are few Vatican documents as little mentioned in this archdiocese as 2003's "Jesus Christ, The Bearer of the Water of Life: A Christian reflection on the 'New Age'". That, of course, raises the wider issue relating to St Mary's: that Fr Peter Kennedy was not such a great exception.

The fault lines within the archdiocese have been very much in evidence in the range of reactions to the exodus of Fr Kennedy and his followers from St Mary's. As we are all aware, there is no shortage of Catholics, priests included, who were sympathetic to or supported Fr Kennedy in his dispute with the archbishop. By way of example, see the statement circulated by Fr Wrex Woolnough of Caboolture, reproduced in full on page 5.

Fr Woolnough's statement may verge on the intemperate but it is far from unrepresentative. There are others around the archdiocese with even more clearly defined, if more discreet views. As for the Catholic Gnostics in residence, they see their ranks continuing to increase, Fr Kennedy's departure notwithstanding. The Gnostics around the archdiocese remain outwardly relaxed and comfortable, some almost establishment figures despite their extra-curricular activities. Just as Peter Kennedy once did, Womenspace,



Earthlink and other groups continue to operate openly and without fear. "We are all Gnostics now ..."

There is more to the story, however. The publicity associated with St Mary's and Frs Kennedy and Fitzpatrick has had an impact. People are generally more aware. They know that St Mary's did not happen by accident; that it was the product of how the archdiocese has been led and managed over the longer term. They saw and heard Fr Kennedy and the Fitzpatricks, father and son, on Australian Story. They watched

Q&A. They saw Fr Kennedy walking away to the TLC building. People understood these two priests had ceased being Catholic a long time ago.

A club without boundaries is no club at all; a church without boundaries is no church either. The boundaries of the Catholic Church are well known. The boundaries of the archdiocese of Brisbane can be somewhat more difficult to detect. Infra-red glasses may assist.

Fr Kennedy left some time-fused calling cards behind on his way out of the Catholic Church. One of them concerns the Buddhist question and the Archbishop himself. In an interview with ABC Radio National, Fr

Kennedy said:

"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 (Fr Fitzpatrick) and many people to Buddhism, John Bathersby did."

A response to this claim has been sought from Archbishop Bathersby. There has been no reply.

Catholic Seminaries Full as Religion Resurges

By Lisa Mayoh
in Herald Sun, August 09, 2009

AFTER years of decline, the number of priests in the Catholic Church in NSW is on the rise.

Sydney seminaries are full of holy hopefuls for the first time in 10 years, as 60 men prepare for a life in the priesthood - three times as many as there were in 2000.

Eighty per cent of them are under the age of 30.

While some cite World Youth Day as their inspiration, others describe a calling they just couldn't ignore.

The youngest is 19, and the majority are in their early or mid-20s. They may be young, but they are determined to be part of a revolution bringing people back to the Catholic Church.

Homebush's Seminary of the Good Shepherd is one of two seminaries in Sydney and houses 40 of those in the midst of their seven-year learning curve. Of those enrolled, 31 are under the age of 30.

Father Anthony Percy, who runs the seminary, said having the younger generation aspire to be priests was

encouraging, and would help resolve the problem of Sydney's priest shortage.

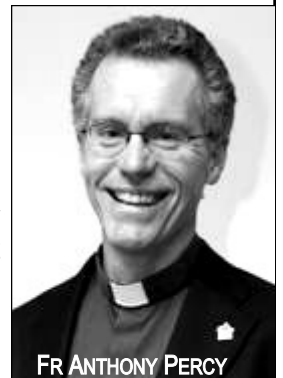
"There is definitely a renewed interest in the Church and the priesthood," Father Percy said.

"We had the ordination of four priests a few months ago - that hasn't happened since 1983."

He said one reason for the shift in attitude was a reaction to a post-modern world with fluid values.

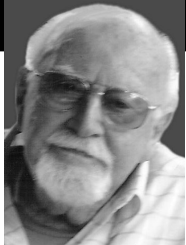
Blacktown 19-year-old Mark Aarts told *The Sunday Telegraph* he was accepted into the seminary when he was 18, and couldn't be happier.

"As difficult as it is, there is something very firm about my desire because I see it as a gift from God," he said. "My parents were very accepting."



FR ANTHONY PERCY

<http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,25901051-662,00.html>



Max Lynch died of heart failure, with which he had struggled for some years, about 3pm on the 18th March 2009. He was in Wollongong, visiting a long-standing friend, Gladys Ryvers, for her birthday.

It is somewhat poignant that on the 23rd March, his funeral was conducted in the very church that was the subject of his last editorial - St Joseph's, Bulli - under the Stations of the Cross that he had restored. He would have been greatly touched that so many of his Nambour friends, including the RSL President, travelled to Wollongong for the service. Max's ashes are being placed in a columbarium in the grounds of St. Joseph's in a few weeks time with a military plaque to mark his final resting place.

Max, the eldest of four children, was born in Lorne, Maitland, NSW in the second house across the Hunter River Bridge, to Austin Lynch and Greta (nee Collins), on 24th May 1917 (then known as Empire Day). His mother told him the fireworks every year were for his birthday!

Jane Pemberton, Max's great-grandmother, was his first Australian-born ancestor. Born to Irish convicts in Parramatta in 1806, she married John Lynch (a former Irish convict) in 1825. When the convict-built road to the Hunter Valley reached Wollombi in 1830, her family moved there and was granted 100 acres which still remains with family descendants.

Max's parents moved to Newcastle about 1920 and to Sydney shortly after, where Max attended Marist Brothers Mosman (Primary) and later St Josephs College, Hunters Hill. During the late 1930's Max was an active member of the Campion Society (a lay Catholic association dedicated to the intellectual apostolate) in Sydney.

On leaving school, Max commenced work in an advertising agency, and spent most of his career in advertising and marketing in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

In August 1939, Max married Marie (nee Abreu). The first of their 6 children, Mark, was born in Sydney in August 1941 – followed by John, Peter, Therese, Maxine and Patrick with the latter two born in Brisbane. (Marie pre-deceased him in 1999.)

In August 1940, Max enlisted in the Citizens Military Force (CMF). He was called up for fulltime service in December 1941 and transferred to the AIF in October 1942. He served in Papua and New Guinea for the next 3 years, initially with the 73rd Australian Anti-Aircraft Company and then with ANGAU, where he served on the Papuan north coast, on the Bulldog Track from the Papuan Gulf to Wau, and on the New Guinea north coast. He returned to Australia, with the rank of Sergeant, on 16th September, 1945.

In the mid-seventies Max was able to return to PNG when he and Marie visited son Mark in Port Moresby. In 1980 they flew to Bougainville via Honiara and stayed with son John (a teacher in Arawa) and was given a tour of the Panguna mine.

The RSL, of which Max was a longstanding member, played an important part of his life, through which he met and

maintained strong friendships, particularly in Nambour where he lived his later years. He was specially blessed and grateful for the friendships he acquired at Nambour through the Lepanto League and the RSL.

Max was also a passionate follower of the NRL (even rallying on his deathbed to 'watch the game') and an unwavering supporter of the Manly Sea Eagles for many decades.

On moving to Nambour, Max joined the Knights of the Southern Cross and in due time became president. In this capacity, in 1997, Max organised a public meeting to protest the proposed 'wreckovation' to St Joseph's Church, Nambour. From this meeting emerged the "Sunshine Coast

Catholics Advocacy League" known as SCCAL (or, as one annoyed modernist priest jibed - much to Max's amusement - 'SCCALiwags').

SCCAL's newsletter was christened *Lepanto*, and as the 'wreckovation' went ahead, other groups joined and demand grew, SCCAL became the "Lepanto League of Australia", with the main focus being this journal. Although unsuccessful in Nambour, Max was pleased to be able to help other parishes prepare their defences and defeat plans for 'wreckovations'.

No one was more surprised than Max that *Lepanto* grew steadily, with subscribers across Australia and overseas. As president of SCCAL, then Lepanto League, and editor of *Lepanto*, Max was the driving force until his death at 91 - even,

while suffering many heart attacks, organising a successor and putting strategies in place to ensure the continuance of *Lepanto*. Max Lynch was not tall, but he was a great man.

It wasn't until he was 85 that Max first acquired a computer. With help from Gladys, he quickly became adept at using it for writing his articles and a range of Lepanto

administrative tasks, for extensive research via the internet, and considerable email correspondence with people and organizations around the globe. Visitors became used to sudden beep and chatter noises at ungodly hours as faxes arrived from far-flung locations in different time zones.

Remarkable in many ways, Max was very sociable and articulate, wrote well, could sketch skilfully and enjoyed debating issues. He had a remarkable memory and level of energy and was mentally sharp right up until the end. His cardiologist often asked Max when he was going to start behaving like a 90-year-old.

Max enjoyed travelling and read widely, with a particular interest in Australian history. One of his favourite authors was G.K. Chesterton. Not long before he passed away he said he hoped that, in the next life, he would be able to have conversations with Chesterton, Edmund Campion and St Aloysius.

Max is survived by his 6 children, 18 grand children and 12 great grand children.

Eternal rest grant unto Maxwell, O Lord, may Perpetual Light shine upon him and may he rest in peace. Amen



MORE ON PETER KENNEDY AND GNOSIS:

Jesus as “myth” and “symbol” of “the journey”

In a past *Lepanto*, we examined the books on sale at St Mary's and their New Age, Gnostic character. Of the more recent evidence, perhaps nothing is more confirmatory of the Gnostic flavour of Fr Peter Kennedy and his St Mary's than the internet videos:

- “Peter Kennedy, Rebel Priest”, an interview with Cameron Reilly, and
- “Interview About Spirituality”, with Fr Peter Kennedy.

In the videos, Fr Kennedy talks about his approach to spirituality and its relation to Gnosticism, Advaita Hinduism and the Kabbalah. He also recommends Freke and Gandy's book “The Laughing Jesus: Religious Lies and Gnostic Wisdom”, which has been examined previously in *Lepanto*. From what Fr Kennedy has to say, it would appear that he is in agreement with the *Lepanto* view that his position is essentially Gnostic. The below comes from Fr Kennedy's Pentecost Sunday homily:

“According to Freke and Gandy, the original Christians were Gnostics who understood Jesus, not as an historical person, who “suffered for our sins,” but as the mythical hero of a symbolic teaching story which represents the spiritual journey, which leads to the experience of awakening - gnosis or knowing - awakening to the truth of Ultimate Reality. Awakening to the truth that all is One - that there is only God.

“The literalist church that began with Constantine did all it could to suppress the teachings of the Gnostics/mystics and the image of the laughing Jesus. It succeeded so well that it now seems strange to even suggest that Christianity

was originally about awakening to the truth of Ultimate Reality - that all is Oneness - that there is only God. But in the middle of the 20th century some of the texts of the original Christians (the Gnostic Gospels) were found in a cave near Nag Hammadi in Egypt. In these texts the message of awakening is proclaimed loud and clear.

“O'Murchu in his book ‘Catching up with Jesus’ speaks of the Holy Spirit as an awakening presence that breathes where she wills, ever generating new breath thoroughly in human and planetary consciousness. Literalist Christianity created by Constantine gave source to the Holy Roman Empire, a totalitarian regime that would rule Europe with an iron-fist for over a thousand years. In the Western world the institutional authority of the church became the principal means whereby the state created political and social order. Gnostic spirituality throughout history has ceaselessly exposed literalist religion as a pernicious source of ignorance and division.”

The above might raise any number of questions, such as why Fr Kennedy wanted to remain in the Catholic Church. And what kind of “journey” he's been on.

The videos referred to above are accessible at the following internet links:

- Peter Kennedy, Rebel Priest:
<http://gdayworld.thepodcastnetwork.com/2009/04/03/gday-world-video-peter-kennedy-rebel-priest-part-one/>
- Interview About Spirituality:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFgh20A17tc>



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 & to defend them with vigour from all attacks no matter from what source they may arise, & to provide mutual support & assistance amongst members.

✠ PRAYER FOR WAYWARD PRIESTS

*Lord Jesus Christ,
as You gazed down from the Cross in Your bitter
agony upon the beloved and faithful Apostle, St
John, Your anguish was increased by the desertion
of the traitor and the other Apostles. In spite of this
desertion, Your love embraced them and all those
consecrated men who would forsake You.*

*We therefore confidently beseech You now to rain
abundant grace on shepherds who have gone
astray. Where there is present groping uncertainty,
let there be light; Where there is present
overshadowing gloom, let there be joy; Where
there is present mounting struggle, let there be
peace.*

*Guide, O Lord, the straying shepherds back to the fold
and assist them to walk surely and lovingly in Your
sight, for only in union with You will the shepherd
find true light, joy and peace.*

*Give to all priests inspiration in time of doubt,
patience in time of adversity, fortitude in time of
weakness, that with Your love ever pressing them
on, they may lead others ever closer to You.*

Amen.

South Brisbane and All That

by Father Wrex Woolnough, in Caboolture Parish Newsletter

One of the worrying things that I can see coming out of all the hoo-haa surrounding The South Brisbane saga is that it will be all put down to a runaway parish doing weird things which is stomped on and all will be well again. That would be tragic, not just for all the injustice it would allow to take place at the moment, but also because of the implications for the future. For there is not just one or two, but FOUR key players in the mess as it unfolds.

First, there is South Brisbane and Peter Kennedy and the crew. South Brisbane was a dying inner city Parish when Peter went there, with the fatal blow delivered with the clearing of the South Bank for Expo. It was a Parish without parishioners, and over the past twenty years it has attracted a significant number of people, a number of whom were somewhat disaffected with Church. Peter has been willing to listen to their concerns and give the community a significant say in decision making. You may not agree with the solutions they have come up with (e.g. replacing the words Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Baptismal formula), but hopefully we are aware of the problem (we are burdened with an overabundance of masculine words in such formulae), and see the need in a more sensitive world to search for more inclusive alternatives.

Secondly, there are those who run around looking for something to report. There is a very small, but strong, group of right wing Catholics who will go round from church to church searching out things to report to authorities. They attend services in bad faith, at no time attempting to participate fully or reverently, but to take notes and pick the service to pieces. We had experiences of that in this area 8 years ago when it was openly declared by one of the leaders of this group that their intention was to FORCE Catholics back into the Confessional box. In actual fact, their concern is not to be able to worship as they prefer, but to impose their preferred ways of living their faith onto everyone. Sadly, they have often found an ally, hopefully unwittingly, in the Courier Mail, from within through significant staff with similar tendencies and also information fed to them from without.

Thirdly, there is the Vatican which sometimes seems to put its trust in the above group, rather than its appointed Bishops and priests. For those of you who follow Church news, it may not come as a surprise to hear that the Vatican is facing a crucial time, with major disagreements between key consistories. One of the most recent gaffes had to do with one of the Congregations having a swipe at Cardinal Kaspar, the head of the Congregation for Inter-faith Relations. They publicly demanded that he retract his oft stated credo that the primary aim of Christian Mission was no longer to win over converts, but to live a Christian life in their presence. Within days Kaspar himself had to come to the defence of the Church when the Jews said if the primary aim of Christians was to proselytize they would not be welcome in the Holy Land. There are a number of significant persons in key positions in the Vatican who would like to wind back on the Second Vatican Council and move towards the status quo prior to the Council. As a result, you might have heard that the Vatican recently lifted the excommunication of the four Le Febvre Bishops, who don't recognize the validity of the Council, one of whom turned out to be a Holocaust denier, much to Rome's embarrassment.

Fourthly, there is the Bishop who I suppose is caught between a rock and a hard place. While he says that he is acting on his own behest, he has himself stated that he was unaware of the things that were happening at South Brisbane until it was brought to his attention by certain Roman Cardinals. He would be one of the few.

So the whole situation is a lot more complex than a parish out of control. It is about the way we will be able to be Church in the future.

*Father Wrex Woolnough
Parish Priest Caboolture Parish
From Caboolture Parish Newsletter
14/15 February 2009*

† O Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God and our Mother, Mary, you see the attacks that are everywhere made by the devil and the world upon the Catholic Faith, in which, by God's grace, we intend to live and die, in order that we may obtain eternal glory.

Do, O Help of Christians, renew your ancient victories and save your children.

We entrust to you our firm purpose never to enrol in societies hostile to our holy religion; all-holy and Blessed Mother, present to your Divine Son our good resolutions and obtain for us the grace we need to be unshaken in their observance, even to the end of life.

Console the visible Head of the Church, sustain the Catholic Episcopate, protect the clergy and people who proclaim you Queen; by the power of your intercession hasten the day when all nations shall be gathered at the feet of the chief Shepherd.

Amen.

Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us!



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*

APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY DECREE

Special Indulgence for the Year for Priests

... During the Year for Priests which will begin on 19 June 2009 and will end on 19 June 2010, the gift of special Indulgences is granted as described in the Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, published on 12 May.

Shortly the day will come on which will be commemorated the 150th anniversary of the pious departure to Heaven of St John Mary Vianney, the Curé d'Ars. This Saint was a wonderful model here on earth of a true Pastor at the service of Christ's flock.

Since his example is used to encourage the faithful, and especially priests, to imitate his virtues, the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI has established that for this occasion a special Year for Priests will be celebrated, from 19 June 2009 to 19 June 2010, in which all priests may be increasingly strengthened in fidelity to Christ with devout meditation, spiritual exercises and other appropriate actions.

This holy period will begin with the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a day of priestly sanctification on which the Supreme Pontiff will celebrate Vespers in the presence of the holy relics of St John Mary Vianney, brought to Rome by the Bishop of Belley-Ars, France.

The Most Holy Father will likewise preside at the conclusion of the *Year for Priests* in St Peter's Square, in the presence of priests from across the world who will renew their fidelity to Christ and the bond of brotherhood.

May priests commit themselves, with prayer and good works, to obtaining from Christ the Eternal High Priest, the grace to shine with Faith, Hope, Charity and the other virtues, and show by their way of life, but also with their external conduct, that they are dedicated without reserve to the spiritual good of the people something that the Church has always had at heart.

The gift of Sacred Indulgences which the Apostolic Penitentiary, with this Decree issued in conformity with the wishes of the August Pontiff, graciously grants during the Year for Priests will be of great help in achieving the desired purpose in the best possible way.

A. Truly repentant priests who, on any day, devoutly recite at least morning Lauds or Vespers before the Blessed Sacrament, exposed for public adoration or replaced in the tabernacle, and who, after the example of St John Mary Vianney, offer themselves with a ready and generous heart for the celebration of the sacraments, especially Confession, are mercifully granted in God the *Plenary Indulgence* which they



may also apply to their deceased brethren in suffrage, if, in conformity with the current norms, they receive sacramental confession and the Eucharistic banquet and pray for the Supreme Pontiff's intentions.

Furthermore the *Partial Indulgence* is granted to priests who may apply it to their deceased confreres every time that they devoutly recite the prayers duly approved to lead a holy life and to carry out in a holy manner the offices entrusted to them.

B. The *Plenary Indulgence* is granted to all the faithful who are truly repentant who, in church or in chapel, devoutly attend the divine Sacrifice of Mass and offer prayers to Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest, for the priests of the Church, and any other good work which they have done on that day, so that he may sanctify them and form them in accordance with His Heart, as long as they have made expiation for their sins through sacramental confession and prayed in accordance with the

Supreme Pontiff's intentions: on the days in which the Year for Priests begins and ends, on the day of the 150th anniversary of the pious passing of St John Mary Vianney, on the first Thursday of the month or on any other day established by the local Ordinaries for the benefit of the faithful.

It will be most appropriate, in cathedral and parish churches, for the same priests who are in charge of pastoral care to publicly direct these exercises of devotion, to celebrate Holy Mass and to hear the confession of the faithful.

The *Plenary Indulgence* will likewise be granted to the elderly, the sick and all those who for any legitimate reason are confined to their homes who, with a mind detached from any sin and with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three

usual conditions, at home or wherever their impediment detains them, provided that on the above-mentioned days they recite prayers for the sanctification of priests and confidently offer the illnesses and hardships of their lives to God through Mary Queen of Apostles.

Lastly, the *Partial Indulgence* is granted to all the faithful every time they devoutly recite five *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys* and *Glorias*, or another expressly approved prayer, in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to obtain that priests be preserved in purity and holiness of life.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/tribunals/apost_penit/documents/rc_trib_appen_doc_20090425_indulg-anno-sacerd_en.html

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.

There is nothing so great as the Eucharist. If God had something more precious, He would have given it to us.

- Saint Jean Vianney

OBSERVATIONS Pope Benedict XVI

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON THE PASTORAL CARE OF VOCATIONS

Clementine Hall
Saturday, 4 July 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I meet you with great pleasure, aware of the precious pastoral service that you carry out in the context of the promotion, animation and discernment of vocations. You have come to Rome to take part in a congress of reflection, comparison and sharing among the Churches of Europe on the theme: *"Sowers of the Gospel of Vocation: a word that calls and sends forth"* and it aims to imbue your commitment to vocations with new dynamism. The fostering of vocations is a pastoral priority for every diocese which assumes even greater value in the context of the Year for Priests that has just begun. ... At the heart of your labours is the Gospel Parable of the Sower. The Lord scatters the seed of the word of God freely and with abundance but knowing that it may fall on poor soil, which will not allow a seed to mature because of dryness, or that its vital force may be extinguished, choked by thorn bushes. Yet the sower does not lose heart, for he knows that part of this seed is destined to find "good soil", namely, ardent hearts capable of receiving the word with willingness to help it mature through perseverance and yield fruit generously for the benefit of many.

The image of the soil can evoke the reality of the family, on the whole good; the sometimes arid and harsh environment of work; the days of suffering and tears. The earth is above all the heart of every person, especially of youth, to whom you address your service of listening and guidance: a heart that is often confused and disoriented, yet capable of containing unimaginable powers of generosity. It is like a bud ready to open to a life spent for the love of Jesus, able to follow him with the totality and the certainty that comes from having found the greatest treasure that exists. It is always and only the Lord who sows in human hearts. Only after the abundant and generous sowing of the word of God can one progress further along the paths of companionship and education, of formation and discernment. All this is linked to that tiny seed, the mysterious gift of divine Providence which releases from within an extraordinary force. In fact, it is the Word of God who brings about in himself what he says and desires.

There is another saying of Jesus' which uses the image of the seed, and which can accompany the Parable of the Sower: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (Jn 12: 24). Here the Lord insists on the connection between the death of the seed and the "much fruit" that it will yield. The grain of wheat is he, Jesus. The fruit is having "life abundantly" (Jn 10: 10), which he acquired for us through his Cross. This is also the logic and

the true fruitfulness of every vocations ministry in the Church. Like Christ, the priest and the animator must be a "grain of wheat" who sacrifices itself to do the Father's will; who lives hidden from the clamour and the noise; who renounces the search for that visibility and grandiose image which today often become the criteria and even goals of life in a large part of our culture and which attract many young people.

Dear friends, be sowers of trust and hope. The sense of being lost that the youth of today often experience is indeed profound. Human words are frequently without a future or prospects, and also lack meaning and wisdom. The attitude of frenetic impatience and of the inability to live through a period of waiting is spreading. Yet, this could be God's hour: his call, mediated by the power and efficacy of the word, generates a path of hope towards the fullness of life. The word of God can truly become light and strength, a spring of hope, it can plot a path that passes through Jesus, the "path" and the "way"; through his Cross, which is the fullness of love. This is the message that comes to us from the Pauline Year which has just ended. St Paul, won over by Christ, inspired and formed vocations, as can be seen clearly from the greetings of his Letters, in which dozens of proper names appear, that is, the faces of men and women who worked with him in service of the Gospel. This is also the message of the Year for Priests

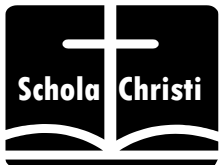


that has just begun: the Holy Curé d'Arns, John Mary Vianney who is the "beacon" of this new spiritual itinerary was a priest who devoted his life to the spiritual guidance of people, with humility and simplicity, "tasting and seeing" God's goodness in ordinary situations. He thus proved to be a true teacher in the ministry of consolation and vocational guidance. The Year for Priests therefore offers a beautiful opportunity to rediscover the profound sense of the vocations ministry, as well as the fundamental decisions on its method: simple and credible witness, communion, with itineraries organized

and shared within the local Church, the daily routine which is a lesson in following the Lord in everyday life; listening, guided by the Holy Spirit, to orient youth in their search for God and for true happiness; and lastly truth, which alone can give rise to inner freedom.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the word of God become in each one of you a source of blessing, of consolation and of renewed trust, so that you may help many to "see" and "touch" that Jesus whom they welcomed as Teacher. May the Word of the Lord always dwell within you, renew in your hearts the light, love and peace that God alone can give, and make you capable of witnessing and proclaiming the Gospel, source of communion and love. With this hope, which I entrust to the intercession of Mary Most Holy, I warmly impart the Apostolic Blessing to you all.

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2009/july/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20090704_pastorale-vocaz_en.html



What is a Vocation?

In the simplest terms, "vocation" means a "call." So, in general terms your vocation is what God calls you to do with your life.

Everybody is called by God to know, love and serve him. The difference is how each one does this.

Individual vocations vary between being single, married, consecrated, religious or a priest. However, we usually use "Vocation" to mean a call to the consecrated, religious or priestly life. That is what we do on this website, but the principles and much of the advice are also applicable to the married and the single life.

In the one life God gave you to live, you have one overriding purpose, to fulfill the will of God, because this is the key to your true destiny, eternal happiness.

God gives each one of us a particular mission in life. As we grow and life progresses, he makes it known to us, usually in indirect ways, more as an invitation than an imposition.

Discovering and ultimately following your vocation gives the greatest glory and praise to our Creator. It is what we were meant to do.

"Take up your cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34). ...

God tells us an amazing thing: that even before he created us he knew us and called us. However, this does not mean that we always automatically know for sure what we are called to do in life. God reveals his will gradually, we can always make a mistake and we can even say no to him. Fortunately, God always takes us where we are and so our concern should be only where does he want me to go from here, and not anguish over the past. God is always with us as long as we keep close to Him through prayer and do our best to live up to His will in the present moment. ...

What is a priest?

A priest is a man who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, which confers on him certain powers of Christ, principally the power to consecrate bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, and the power to forgive sin in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. When he does these things he acts in the Person of Christ. ...

What is religious life?

The people who live religious life are called "Religious". Religious seek to follow Christ more closely by publicly professing the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in a recognized religious order, giving public witness of their consecration by wearing a religious habit, and they live in community.

There are religious orders or communities of men and of women. Women religious are nuns and male religious can be either priests or brothers. Religious communities often refer to themselves as "religious families". Each has its own Founder and mission, and its own "family spirit" or spirituality. That is why if you are considering religious life it is necessary to get to know particular communities.

What is a religious priest?

A religious priest is a member of a religious community who has received the Sacrament of Orders. He is under the

authority of his own superiors, and he serves the local diocese through the works of his order or congregation located there. However he is not limited to serving in one diocese but can be assigned elsewhere by his superiors. Everywhere he serves he does so with the permission of the local bishop. Some religious priests serve in parishes, but the majority have more specialized apostolates, such as education, retreats, communications, etc.

What is lay consecrated life?

Lay consecrated are people who consecrate themselves to God through promises of poverty, chastity and obedience, while still remaining lay people. They are usually associated with some group or Movement. As lay people they remain "in the world" and often exercise careers while giving a priority in their lives to prayer, witness and service.

What is a consecrated virgin?

From the beginnings of the Church there have been those who felt the call to consecrate themselves exclusively to Christ in a private manner. In recent times there has been a revival of this vocation, by which a woman makes her private consecration in the presence of her bishop.

What is contemplative or monastic life?

The contemplative dedicates much time to prayer each day, lives mostly in silence and also is dedicated to manual labor. There is a great tradition in the Church of both female and male monastic and contemplative life. Their hidden prayer and sacrifice is of major importance for the overall good of the Church. ...

How can I tell if I have a Vocation?

If you have a vocation there are two signs that you have found where you are supposed to be.

One is that you feel "at home" there. This is logical, since your vocation is what God meant you to be when he created you, so obviously when you are where he wants you to be you have the feeling of being made for there, which you were.

But I think it is also very important that you feel like it is just a little too much. If you don't you are either in the wrong place or you haven't understood what it is all about.

You see, God always calls us higher. When you are where God wants you to be you realize that you are not going to be able to do this on your own. You need his grace, it is going to cost you, you are going to have to die to yourself, you are going to have to make choices, there are things you like that are now going to have to take second, third or fourth place, or have no place at all.... The second sign then is that tremor of fear. You could say it another way, you could say that you have found your call when you discover that you are really going to have to work to make it a reality. Your vocation is not something you discover and slip into comfortably and effortlessly. It is going to take all the qualities you have (both spiritual and human) and make you stretch and develop and use them beyond what you ever thought possible. Because God wants you to be a saint, and that is the challenge of a lifetime.

For the entire text and more information, follow the "Vocations Basics" links at <http://www.vocation.com>

Eucharistic Adoration

Perpetual Adoration at Villa Maria

If ever the Church and the world were in need of that prayer it would seem to be now in our present moral, spiritual and socio-economic crisis. Make it so now.

For lent this year a young couple, Brendan and Judy Wong, decided to jump in boots and all and organise "40 days of prayer for life". This is a growing movement in USA where vigils are kept outside abortion clinics for 40 days 24hrs/day, twice a year, lent being one of those times. Near the end of lent this year some faithful servants from Bray Park parish brought Fr Hugh Thomas over from Perth to run a few retreats on Eucharistic Adoration. Buoyed by the response to 40 days of prayer for life held in Brisbane, and inspired by Fr Hugh Thomas, a few of us gathered together to look at possibilities of having Perpetual Adoration in Brisbane.

Perpetual Adoration is not new to Brisbane. The Sisters of Perpetual Adoration at Villa Maria, 123 Warren St, Fortitude Valley, have been faithfully adoring Our Lord perpetually for over 100 years. In the 1990s they invited lay people to become co-adorers with them. However in recent years, the long-serving Sisters of Perpetual Adoration at Villa Maria, due to age and infirmity, were no longer able to cover or organise the 24/7 period of Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Adoration has continued, but not perpetually.

Some of the co-adorers with the Sisters decided to make contact and propose the idea of the laity forming an organisation to coordinate a roster etc. I am sure that being able to share the enthusiasm people had with making the "40 days of prayer for life" was a contributor to the Sisters welcoming our proposal.

The Sisters reminded us that good organization is necessary, but that given, they would be overjoyed to have their work again live up to its name.

After a few more meetings Perpetual Adoration Association was born and Pentecost Sunday was fittingly chosen as a date to begin. With Benediction at 6pm, 31st May, 2009, Our Lord was once more being adored perpetually in Brisbane.

The Sisters wisely requested we have two people to adore at every hour we take care of. The Sisters are still being responsible for about 40 hours every week. At first the question was asked "What if we don't get enough response?" The answer of course was " 'We' will adore perpetually!" But of course our small group has not had to play " tag team adoring". Our Lord continually draws adorers to him, and our numbers are building. Adoration has been perpetual again for almost three months now, and we continue to be blessed with more adorers.

So many people have been generous with their time. Many adorers have come forward to share the more difficult hours to

fill, midnight to 7am. For those involved, it has been a joy and a strengthening of our faith to have so many others also keen to do whatever it takes to have Brisbane be blessed by the graces that Perpetual Adoration brings. Many comment on how many different people are coming, not just the usual groups: the old, the young, singles, families - a varied group from all over the Archdiocese.

We always welcome new adorers. The best way to contact us is

email: www.adoration24.7bris@gmail.com or
phone Keiran & Kate Hobbs: 0414 258 996; 07 3278 1404
or Roy & Fiona Pires: 0402 408 786.

Then we can send you a roster of the hours not yet filled for you to see where you can help. The more people who take

responsibility for an hour the lighter the load becomes for organisation. So we do try to encourage this first, but we understand not everybody is in a position to be responsible for a particular hour. We have people on a list who help out where they can each week. The day-to-day running is shared between the Hobbs' and Pires'. The Hobbs' take care of the 1st – 15th of the month and the Pires take care of the 16th to the end of the month. Technology makes communication much easier. We use a lot of emailing and texting. Don't be afraid though if you are not "high tech", we still have people who only use the phone!

For Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration we are

very fortunate to have the relatively new Chapel of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration to carry out this Apostolate. Fortitude Valley is centrally located. There is very secure parking under the Chapel and the Chapel itself is also secure. All adorers coming after daytime hours must have a swipe key to access the car park and then the lift and finally to the Chapel. The Chapel itself is spacious with high ceilings, and though it is quite modern, one senses a real intimacy with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament exposed and so close. The Sisters are taking care of all the sacristy obligations, and during winter we have heaters and summer newly installed fans. We really are blessed.

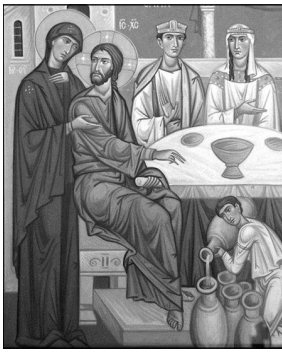
Eucharistic Adoration really has results. Where there is Eucharistic Adoration vocations soon flow, and our need for religious vocations at this very hour is acute.

Our Father is longing to listen to us and speak to us through his Son. In the Blessed Sacrament He looks at us and we look at Him as lovers do. Words aren't always necessary. "Come and see".

As Jesus invited the disciples in the Agony in the Garden "Spend one hour with Me." He now invites us. Eucharistic Adoration is a love affair where God is dating you. Don't stand Him up!

- Kate Hobbs





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

A Wedding at Cana in Galilee.

The second mystery of light can best be prepared for by a close and careful reading of St John's second chapter, verses 1-11. Recalling the fact that this Gospel has been given to us by the Beloved Disciple who took Mary into his home (Jn 19:27),

we notice something quite extraordinary. Mary is mentioned only twice in this Gospel. First at the wedding and then at the foot of the Cross. In each case Mary is portrayed as essential to the full understanding of what is going on at the time so that her being there is no mere chance but an integral part of the predestined plan of God. This leads us to recognise what is, in effect, a deliberate literary device employed by St John who is, among other things, the greatest poet of the New Testament - for most of his Gospel is actually written as poetry. And this device can be likened to the use of brackets. When we use brackets we signify that everything enclosed between them must be treated as a whole. In other words, St John is telling us that from the time of Jesus' first manifestation of Himself publicly while at the wedding until the time He dies for our sins on the Cross and thereby is glorified by the Father, Mary was an inseparable companion. Nothing that Christ did for us was done without Mary's full cooperation and consent! And so it is that the Holy Father has urged us to see in Mary a 'school' at which we can learn not only about her Son, our Saviour, but also how we must listen to Him and obey His commands.

It is at the wedding that Mary also manifests her power as an intercessor. In wanting to spare the embarrassment of the bride and groom, Mary approaches her Son and says simply "They have no wine."

In what seems to be a brush-off, Jesus replies "Woman, what is that to you and to me?"

In fact, it is anything but a brush-off. The next expression that He uses tells us this: "My hour has not yet come."

To begin to understand what is going on here, we need to know that in the culture to which Our Blessed Lord belonged - reminding ourselves at the same time that He is the kingly descendant of David - the monarch was subject to one and only one human being: his mother. The queen mother could approach the king at any time to make demands of him.

Now, on one level, the possible embarrassment of the bride and groom seems almost a petty matter, yet the Blessed Mother sees in it the moment when her Son must manifest Himself, even if this means putting the clocks forward, so to speak. It could be said that when Mary and Joseph questioned Jesus concerning His staying behind in Jerusalem as a twelve year old boy, they were puzzled and questioned Him as to why He should have caused them such grief (Lk 2:48). Now, for a moment, it looks as if Jesus is puzzled as to why His Mother should want to urge him, before His hour, onto centre stage.

That Mary knew her Son as only a mother can is revealed by her next words: "Do whatever He tells you." These words are later on to be echoed by the Father in heaven when at the Transfiguration he tells us "Listen to Him" (Mk 9:7). She also acknowledges in that use of the word "Woman" a Scriptural

echo that indicates the universal level at which Our Blessed Lord is now beginning to work. The "woman" of the Old Testament is Eve - the name given her by Adam because she was the mother of all the living (cf Gn 3:20). Mary is recognised by Jesus as the Second Eve, the Woman who is to be the Mother of all who live in the Spirit of her Son - Mother of the Church.

From what followed Mary's simple statement "They have no wine", we know that Jesus, Whom we must listen to, was Himself capable of listening to His Mother. He "manifested his glory" as St John tells us by performing a remarkable miracle. The Light of the World shone out, "and His disciples believed in him" (cf Jn 2:11).

St John calls this miracle a "sign". Perhaps one of the first casualties in the modernist war against a correct interpretation of Sacred Scripture was belief in the miracles of Christ. That the miracles of Christ are 'signs' is certainly no reason for saying they are not also real miracles. To state the obvious, if we see a signpost pointing, say, towards Sydney we do not stop by the signpost in the odd belief that we have already reached Sydney. Of course not! We have to follow the direction indicated in order to reach the destination named.

On the other hand, we ought not to follow the stupidity of the modernist who claims the miracle is nothing but a metaphor - as if something that does not exist in itself can be a sign! If there is no physical signpost with the physical word 'Sydney' painted on it, then we cannot know the direction to Sydney. If there were no miracle at Cana in Galilee then the Gospel would be a mere vapour of words.

So, having accepted that Mary's noticing the embarrassment of the bride and groom has called forth the miraculous powers of Jesus, we need to look beyond the marvel of water changed into wine to the greater event, accepting the fact as proof of the claims of Jesus to be Who He claimed to be: the Son of God.

It is in our reading of the Bible as a whole and of the New Testament in particular that we begin to understand that the relationship of God to His People (His Church) is that of the Groom and His Bride (cf Eph 5:32; Rev 21:1-9, etc) - that the two become one flesh (Gn 2:24) and we, the spiritual children of Mary, become the brethren of the Lord and heirs with Him to the Kingdom of God. To achieve this objective, which is the destiny of every man, we must "heed Him".

That is, we must hear what He says and do it. For "he who loves me will keep my commandments" (cf Jn 15:10). In choosing to manifest His glory through the miraculous changing of water into wine He also draws our attention to the mystical meaning of every marriage. St Paul reminds us that marriage is a sacrament — a sign of the unity between Christ and His Church, and in this episode of the wedding at Cana, St John certainly points to something which is very much greater than a mere social contract between a man and a woman.

If we are to become co-lights with the Light of the World, then as children of the Bride we must also manifest in our lives — especially in our family lives - the miraculous power of God's grace and love by becoming also signs to those who do not as yet know Him!



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_latin_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

"To be saved for all eternity, to be damned for all
eternity, and to not make *your every effort* to avoid one
and make sure of the other, is something inconceivable."
- St. Leonard of Port Maurice.

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, Valambree 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 ...

SPEAK ILL OF THE DEAD!

- Kathleen Ashworth

My sister has instructed us that no-one is to say anything nice about her at her wake or funeral, or she will haunt them. Her rationale is that if people only say nice things, everyone will assume she is already a saint, and she'll be stuck in purgatory with no-one praying for her. She says we are to only remember the bad things - how terrible she was - so that we will pray fervently for her sure-to-be suffering soul.

This is probably part of the reason that Max Lynch was absolutely adamant there was to be no eulogy at his funeral; so much so, that his son was a little hesitant to give me information I sought for his obituary.

Of course, I'm not really suggesting that we should speak ill of the dead. I don't think congregations should be - as does happen - regaled with totally inappropriate tales in an eulogy. I also think that using the eulogy as a soapbox for personal agenda is tacky and tactless. Early this year, a Newcastle woman used the eulogy at her father's funeral to complain about a priest who died in 2007. (<http://www.theherald.com.au/news/local/news/general/newcastle-womans-eulogy-for-dad-offends-catholic-church/1593196.aspx>) So he's already getting his just desserts - whatever they are. It shows how little she understands about her Catholic faith that she felt such an action was warranted. She went on to make a formal complaint about the celebrating priest who turned off her microphone before she had finished her outburst! Not much of an eulogy.

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines eulogy as:

1. a commendatory oration or writing especially in honor of one deceased <she delivered the eulogy at his funeral>
2. high praise

(Etymology: Middle English euloge, from Medieval Latin eulogium, from Greek eulogia praise Date: 15th century)

In our secular society, where this life is seen as the be-all and end-all (literally!), funerals are geared to 'celebrate the life' of the deceased: empty, shallow services where balloons are released in a pathetic attempt to give meaning. Secular funeral services consist of little more than eulogies: Sadly, many Catholic funerals seem to be heading this way. It seems to be politically incorrect *not* to assume that everyone who dies goes immediately to heaven. If everyone is already a saint, there's no need to pray for their soul at their funeral.

"Sometimes, I must say, they become almost like canonisation ceremonies. But our Catholic tradition has always been that we certainly honour the deceased but we also pray that the mercy of God be with the deceased."

(Christopher Prowse, Catholic Auxiliary Bishop, Melbourne, on ABC radio, 23 February, 2007)

And this is the crux of the matter. By concentrating on the minutiae of a person's worldly life, their eternal life and happiness may be neglected. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is quite explicit:

1688 ... The homily in particular must "avoid the literary genre of funeral eulogy" and illumine the mystery of Christian death in the light of the risen Christ.

We've got to keep our eyes on the prize!

Now, it is lovely to read a brief biography of the deceased, for example, in the order of service. Particularly if you only knew the dearly departed in their old age, it is nice to discover things and see a photo of when they were younger. Such things can help keep them in our minds, and consequently our prayers.



And the suffering souls in Purgatory need our prayers.

"Maria, do the souls in Purgatory have, nevertheless, joy and hope in the midst of their suffering?"

Yes. No soul would want to come back from Purgatory to the earth. They have knowledge which is infinitely

beyond ours. They just could not decide to return to the darkness of the earth.

Here we see the difference from the suffering that we know on earth. In Purgatory, even if the pain of the soul is just terrible, there is the certitude of living forever with God. It's an unshakable certitude. The joy is greater than the pain. There is nothing on earth which could make them want to live here again, where one is never sure of anything.

Maria, can you tell us now if it is God who sends a soul into Purgatory, or if the soul itself decides to go there?

It is the soul itself which wants to go to Purgatory, in order to be pure before going to Heaven.

Maria, at the moment of death, does one see God in full light or in an obscure manner?

In a manner still obscure, but, all the same, in such brightness that this is enough to cause great longing."

Maria Simma *"had been asked to find out if a woman and a man were in Purgatory. To the great astonishment of those who had asked, the woman was already in Heaven and the man was in Purgatory. In fact, this woman had died while undergoing an abortion, whereas the man often went to church and apparently led a worthy, devout life.*

So Maria searched for more information, thinking she'd been mistaken — but no, it was true. They had died at practically the same moment, but the woman had experienced deep repentance, and was very humble, whereas the man criticized everyone; he was always complaining and saying bad things about others. This is why his Purgatory lasted so long. And Maria concluded: "We mustn't judge on appearances." ("THE AMAZING SECRET OF THE SOULS IN PURGATORY" 1997, QUEENSHIP, GOLETA, CA, USA)

"... Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required ..." Luke 12:48

To conclude: Max Lynch was a terrible, awful man - please pray that his soul, *and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*