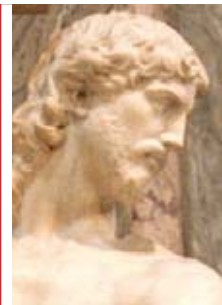


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# The Southern Cross

March 31 to April 6, 2010

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SOUTHERN AFRICA'S NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY SINCE 1920

The editor and staff of *The Southern Cross* wish all readers, associates, advertisers, parish promoters and supporters a joyful and blessed Easter!

## Inside

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### This week's editorial: Mind-blowing news



**NEW LIFE:** A girl displays decorated eggs during Easter celebrations at a French school in Beirut, Lebanon. The early Christians used the egg as a symbol of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. The egg's shell symbolises the protective darkness of the life-giving tomb, and a hatching chick the risen Christ emerging from the tomb on Easter morning. The egg's shape, with no beginning and no end, is a symbol of eternity. New life emerges from an egg as Christ emerged alive from the tomb which before was just a place of death.

PHOTO: MOHAMED AZAKIR, REUTERS/CNS

## More than one way now to read your Southern Cross

**Y**OUR national Catholic weekly newspaper is now available in digital format on the Internet.

Subscribers to the digital version of *The Southern Cross* will have access to the latest edition every Wednesday morning—earlier even than the pope!

The digital version of the newspaper appears exactly as the print edition does, editor Günther Simmermacher said.

"We have introduced this service especially with our international readers in mind," he said. "Because of postage costs, many Catholics who would like to receive *The Southern Cross* cannot afford a subscription, and those who can often are frustrated by the slow delivery. With the digital *Southern Cross*, the subscription price is more than halved and delivery is on the cover date."

Mr Simmermacher said the digital version will also benefit readers who travel. "Many of our readers miss out on *The Southern Cross* when they are travelling. With the digital *Southern Cross* they need not miss a single issue," he said.

The subscription price for the digital *Southern Cross* is R260 (anywhere in the world). A package of the print and digital versions of the newspaper is also available.

The subscriptions department has even made available a short-term subscription for readers who are unable to receive the newspaper for a temporary period, but otherwise prefer the print edition. Short-term digital subscriptions go for R25 per month.

Subscribers to the digital *Southern Cross* will be able to download the newspaper as a PDF document, to store on their computer.

As a gift to readers, the historic memorial edition published after the death of John Paul II is available to all readers (go to [www.digital.scross.co.za/0504-jp2](http://www.digital.scross.co.za/0504-jp2)).

"We are very excited about a new chapter in *The Southern Cross*' progress towards using the modern means of evangelisation," Mr Simmermacher said. "Our website has been praised by experts in the field for its appearance and content; our weekly e-mail newsletter is becoming very popular; and we also have a presence on Facebook. But we are still exploring more ways of reaching Catholics, especially young people."

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# SA Church ready for World Cup

STAFF REPORTER

**T**HE Church in South Africa will celebrate a special World Cup Sunday on June 13 to mark the start of the world's second-biggest sporting event, and has other plans in place, the head of the Southern African bishops' organising committee has said. However, one central project requires the help of funders and donations.

Salesian Father Francois Dufour said the recently launched Church on the Ball website ([www.churchontheball.com](http://www.churchontheball.com)) was attracting "thousands of visitors". The site includes information about the World Cup and the Catholic Church in host cities, including contact details, as well as spiritual and evangelising material.

Fr Dufour said he hopes the site will get support from Fifa, the international football body, and the South African Football Associ-

ation. He called on South Africans "to promote an awareness of the website in their publications, electronic media and networks. The mere name of the website [in] parish newsletters, notice boards, banners on fences, is all that is needed".

Instead of setting up a whole network of World Cup chaplaincies, the South African Church will rely on existing diocesan and parish structures to serve Catholic visitors, Fr Dufour said, noting that many of the participating countries have large Catholic populations.

Participating parishes "will organise celebrations—liturgical, social and sporting—in the days nearest to the games. They will make an effort at being especially welcoming to foreign fans", Fr Dufour said.

The bishops have declared a "World Cup Celebration Sunday" for June 13, the first

Sunday after the opening of the tournament. "In all the dioceses and parishes of Southern Africa special liturgies will be celebrated that day," Fr Dufour said.

The bishops' conference is linking other activities to the World Cup, he said.

The Anti-Human Trafficking Desk has produced a striking "Red Card" poster which is available free of charge from the bishops' headquarters at Khanya House, Pretoria.

The Family Life Desk has introduced the theme "Families Play the Game" for 2010. Monthly sub-themes connected to football "allow for reflection and sharing on topics such as fair play, keeping the rules, and so on", Fr Dufour said. "Families are encouraged to pray and play together, or just watch the World Cup games together, and sometimes switch off the TV" (more infor-

mation at [www.marfam.org.za](http://www.marfam.org.za)).

The priest encouraged the staging of inter- and intra-parish football tournaments for both boys and girls. "This will be an ideal time to organise sports events with a spiritual component included. Soccer fever will peak, and it should be easy to attract participation."

He said some Catholic schools were also organising mini-soccer tournaments in the mornings, with World Cup match screenings in the afternoons, followed by praise and worship moments and guest speakers.

Various youth organisations and diocesan chaplains are planning special youth Masses just before the first matches in each of the host cities are to be played.

A 40-page World Cup booklet, titled *Praying & Playing* has been compiled. It consists

*Continued on page 3*

# Forced removals at Catholic schools

MICHAEL RASSOOL

RESEARCH done by the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) shows that a decision by the Free State Department of Education to forcibly remove students from four Catholic schools have affected them adversely.

The research shows that farm schools were targeted because of the vulnerability of the farming community there. One of the main reasons for the "forced removal" of learners was a lack of funding, which is mainly used for their transport, the CIE's report said.

"Education policies around multi-grade teaching, learner transport and quality in farm schools directly impacted on the right to the education of learners, however problematic the schools were found to be," the report said. Removing learners, the report said, was a direct infringement on their constitutional rights.

The research also found that, in many instances, the parents of learners removed either had limited knowledge of what was happening or did not know at all.

At the Breda Intermediate Farm School, which also houses learners, it was found that the school overspent its transport budget for learners who lived up to 12km away.

Internal problems such as management and maintenance problems, unsanitary conditions, multi-grade teaching and an increase in teacher workload has led to the disintegration of the

Grade 11 and matric classes.

The has meant that 258 learners were not attending school, and only 71 accommodated at a school closer to where they live. Learners were now staying at home and "many who are older were not permitted to register except for Adult Basic Education and Training" the report said.

Despite above-average performances, Grades 10 to 12 learners at Sibonakaliso Combined Farm School were removed and relocated to Sekgutlong in QwaQwa, 120km away. Sekgutlong also housed learners. However, after arriving, the relocated learners were evicted from the hostel because there was no food. Learners decided to hitchhike along the R771 and N3 back to their farm. Some learners called the school's principal who tried to get the police to transport the children back to their homes.

"The situation caused anger and consternation among parents, even leading to public violence and a death threat to a department official," the report said.

At Assisi Primary School, owned by the Franciscan Sisters and situated on a mission station, management was asked by the Department of Education to discharge 45 learners despite their excellent academic performance.

Assisi also boasts a school garden, where parents volunteer, and a feeding programme. Their parents regularly attend school meetings. At one meeting, the report said, parents voiced their concern and objection to their children being sent away "despite promises

from the department that they would be taken care of".

Also in the report, it surfaced that Sotho-speaking learners were being taught in Tswana.

At St Lawrence Primary School Tswana-speaking learners who were sent there were being taught in Sotho. The report found that while some learners were sleeping and disruptive in class and not doing well, some learners were adjusting well even though parents were not able to attend meetings or form part of school governing body (SGB).

The school was still waiting for additional monetary allocations, especially needed for the school's feeding programme.

The CIE recommended that the issue of forcibly removing learners, especially from farm schools, needed to be given immediate attention and necessary action by the Free State Department of Education. It said that the removal of learners from Catholic schools "must be put on hold immediately".

The institute recommended that educators be deployed to schools such as Sibonakaliso, allow Grades 10-12 to continue, and for the removed Grade 10 and 11 learners to be returned to the school.

It said matric learners removed from their school should be given immediate extra tuition to assist them to prepare for their examinations. The report added that the rights and responsibilities of parents, SGB members and school communities should be acknowledged and upheld.



**SHARPENING MINISTRY TOOLS:** The senate of the diocese of Aliwal attended a workshop on the "Seven Habits of highly effective people", run by the Church-based Rural Development Support Programme. The workshop was opened with a concelebrated Mass by Bishop Michael Wustenberg.

## Hundreds attend Joburg Alpha course

BY MICHAEL RASSOOL

ABOUT 380 people from five parishes of the archdiocese of Johannesburg attended a Catholic Alpha weekend in Bryanston.

This number, said archdiocesan coordinator Renato Acquisto, shows that the programme is growing.

Parishes represented included Bryanston, Eldorado Park, those in Soweto, Bez Valley and Malvern.

Alpha is mainly about proclaiming the New Testament as a tool for evangelisation, said Mr Acquisto.

It places emphasis on community building, fostering greater integration or re-integration into Church life, he said.

Catholic Alpha is strongly catechetical with elements of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. It encourages participants to see themselves as missionaries of the Church, said Mr Acquisto.

To date, more than 13 million people have attended the course worldwide. As the course has grown internationally, churches have become involved in teaching individuals to run it, said Mr

Acquisto.

The Catholic Alpha was introduced in the archdiocese in 1996 at Bryanston parish, which has just run its 30th programme.

Shaun Holmwood attended the Alpha course in Bryanston.

"The Alpha weekend was absolutely stunning. I had such an awesome experience in the course, but the prayer session on Saturday afternoon really grabbed hold of me and has changed me for good.

"That hall was definitely filled with something good. I walked out of that hall feeling like a new person," said Mr Holmwood.

Before completing the programme Archie Thema of Bryanston parish described himself as a "churchgoer" who was "decadent and stressed", but thanks to the efforts of his wife, who completed the course two years before, he decided to attend the course and spoke of submitting to the movement of the Holy Spirit within and the effects of group prayers uttered for him and other individuals.

"That night I slept like a baby. My inner turmoil was finally over. I was at peace," Mr Thema said.

## "Life in the Spirit" seminar

MICHAEL RASSOOL

CAPE TOWN'S Catholic Charismatic Renewal group is hosting a "Life in the Spirit" seminar from May 14 to 22.

It will be held at Kensington High School hall and organisers will come along and prepare themselves spiritually for Pentecost, May 23.

Chairwoman Agnus Carolus said the reason for

the seminar is because people encounter many upheavals in their lives, but fail to look to the power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen them in order to face them. "They see the dark clouds and not the light behind them," she said.

■ For more information on the "Life in the Spirit" seminar, contact Mrs Carolus at 084 206 5467 or 021 593 2866.

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**ANTRIM ESTATES**

# Parish mission with a difference

**H**OLY Trinity parish in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, which is staffed by Jesuits, hosted a Lenten parish mission preached by the Redemptorists.

South African-born British-based Redemptorist Fr Cyril Axelrod, who was born deaf and has, in the last ten years gone blind, teamed up with his confère Fr Larry Kaufmann to give the mission.

Through Fr Kaufmann's interpretation, Fr Axelrod preached on his conversion from Judaism to Christianity. He led a service on healing and after preaching laid hands on most of those present.

"This night was, for many, the most powerful evening of the mission, many tears attested to this," said Holy Trinity's pastor, Fr Russell Pollitt SJ.

Fr Axelrod assisted at the penitential service during the mission; people communicated with him by writing on the palm of his hand.

"Another powerful moment was when Fr Cyril returned to his own Jewish roots to conduct a Passover meal for the parish, explaining the symbols and significance of

the Passover," Fr Pollitt said.

Fr Kaufmann developed these roots in the sermon on the Eucharist, which followed Fr Axelrod's explanation.

On the final night of the mission, missionaries focused on the Passion of Christ, choosing seven stations as the basis for their reflections.

Reflecting on the stripping of Jesus, Fr Axelrod told the congregation of a personal incident when he, as a disabled person, was stripped of his dignity by the Church.

"At a Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday he was refused entry on to the sanctuary-even though he was vested, because he was accompanied by a lay person who was his guide and translator," Fr Pollitt related. "He was removed from the procession with all the priests and told to sit in the congregation because they did not want his lay guide, who happened to be a woman, on the altar. This was a particularly painful moment for him."

Fr Cyril was the main celebrant at one of the Sunday Masses to close the mission.

"Many people in the congregation found



Frs Russell Pollitt SJ, Cyril Axelrod CSsR and Larry Kaufmann CSsR at Mass during a Redemptorist parish mission at Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

this to be very moving as they experienced parts of the Mass in silence," Fr Pollitt said.

Fr Pollitt said his parish appreciated what

he called "a parish mission with a difference". It was the first parish mission there since the late 1970s.

## Conference highlights inter-religious dialogue

BY MICHAEL RASSOOL

**A**N OBLATE priest has said that once one has received the universal mercy of God it is essential to show it to others.

Addressing a conference organised by the Western Cape branch of the Turquoise Harmony Institute (THI), entitled "Gülen Movement: Its essentials in thought and practice, and potential contributions to reconciliation in South African society" at Cape Town's Westin Grand Hotel, Fr Garth Michelson OMI highlighted forgiveness, tolerance and dialogue, as central tenets in the philosophy of Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish humanist scholar.

Prof Gülen, who dedicated his life to the service of humanity and whose teachings hold significant lessons for peace and social cohesion, inspired the founding of the THI in Turkey and elsewhere.

The conference, which included South African and Turkish academics, and the former deputy minister of justice Johnny de Lange, was organised to discuss Prof Gülen's teachings and to draw lessons for South Africans, said Halil Yurtsever, the

THI's Western Cape regional director.

Fr Michelson, who has a long history of fostering inter-religious dialogue and intercultural engagement, spoke of the need to take inter-religious dialogue to a local level, expressed in a manner that communities can relate to.

The priest also mentioned how, owing to his direct involvement with Muslims, two young men had asked him to stand in as their father at their weddings, which illustrated the essentials of inter-religious dialogue at local level.

He praised the THI as a witness to Islam and interfaith dialogue in the world. He said it did not make sense to separate Prof Gülen's humanist movement from the rest of Islam, referring to the central place that love, peace and harmony have in the message of the Qur'an.

He said that although the world has much to offer in terms of science, technology and material advances, it is on the threshold of a new era of pessimism with warfare and unsustainable livelihoods.

Using Prof Gülen's collection of addresses on various topics, *Toward a Glob-*

*al Civilization of Love and Tolerance*, which focuses on a need for global reassessment of where civilisation is headed, Fr Michael van Heerden, rector of St Augustine College of South Africa, Johannesburg, related the philosopher's ideas to Christian theology.

He highlighted as significant Prof Gülen's view that love "is ingrained in the soul of a human being". The humanist also said that the human person is the "soul and essence" of the universe.

He said this knowledge, once gained, leads to self-liberation, which enables one to see and feel the beauty, order and harmony in life—a new, "outward" way of viewing reality. But fully realising the inherent dignity of the human person and securing the dignity of others in the community are the outcome of inner struggle, according to Prof Gülen.

This, Fr van Heerden said, resonates with "theistic existentialism" that can be traced back to St Augustine in his *Confessions*, which speaks of real freedom beginning with an inward turn to discover the image of God within.

## SA Church's football fever

Continued from page 1

of traditional prayers as well as some original prayers relating to the event and sport. The booklet will be distributed free of charge.

"Thanks to a Catholic-owned printing company, we have been able to obtain the printing of the 100 000 copies at cost price. However, including the professional typesetting and distribution fees, this project will cost in the region of R125 000," Fr Dufour said. "The trouble is that to fund it we have barely 10% of that in the kitty at present."

He therefore appealed to donors and sponsors "to contribute to this worthwhile investment".

■ Fr Dufour can be reached at 083 951 6522; francoisdufour@iafrica.com; Box 2335, Southdale, 2135

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The Board of Governors of St Theresa's Convent School reserves the right to make no appointment. An application will not itself entitle the applicant to an interview or an appointment.

# Newman beatification confirmed for September



Cardinal Newman will be beatified in September by Pope Benedict, who will break his own rules to do so.

BY SIMON CALDWELL

POPE Benedict will preside at the beatification ceremony of Cardinal John Henry Newman in Coventry, England, during his four-day visit to Britain from September 16-19, British Catholic leaders have confirmed.

The step is unusual because under Pope Benedict's own rules, a beatification is to be performed by a cardinal in the diocese where the candidate for sainthood died.

Cardinal Newman, whose beatification was first expected to take place in early May—was an Anglican cleric who founded the Oxford Movement to bring the Anglican

Church back to its Catholic roots. He became Catholic at the age of 44 after a succession of clashes with Anglican bishops and was made a cardinal by Pope Leo XIII. He died in Birmingham in 1890 at the age of 89.

His beatification was announced in July after the Vatican declared that the inexplicable healing of Deacon Jack Sullivan of Marshfield, Massachusetts, from a crippling spinal condition was the result of Cardinal Newman's intercession.

The announcement of Pope Benedict's decision to beatify Cardinal Newman himself was welcomed by Fr Richard Duffield, provost of the Birmingham Oratory, the com-

munity the cardinal founded in the 19th century, and postulator of the cause for the cardinal's sainthood.

"The Holy Father's lifelong devotion to Newman has made a profound contribution to understanding the depth and significance of our founder's legacy," he said in a statement. "His decision to beatify Newman in person confers a unique blessing upon the English oratories and all who have drawn inspiration from Newman's life and work."

According to Buckingham Palace, the pope will fly to Scotland to be welcomed by Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, at the

Palace of Holyrood House.

During his visit the pope will address an audience in Westminster Hall, London, the site of the trials of such Catholic martyrs as St Thomas More and St Edmund Campion.

Other key events will include a public Mass in Bellahouston Park in Glasgow and a prayer vigil in London. The pope will visit Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace in London and pray with other church leaders at Westminster Abbey.

The exact details of the pope's itinerary will be released at a later date.—CNS

## ST THOMAS CATHOLIC CHURCH, MOSSEL BAY



VINCE RAYNE, PPC CHAIRMAN, WRITES:

I am at present updating the history records of our little Church and all buildings and wondered if any of your readers had any "old" pictures or articles of interest that could perhaps be used by me in the publication. If individuals appear in the pictures kindly, if possible, supply me with their names as well.

I can be contacted at PO Box 10274, Dana Bay, 6510 (082 328 2567)

## Fr Richard Rohr OFM visits Cape Town



From 7-9 May  
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## Vatican to study reported Medjugorje apparitions

BY CINDY WOODEN

AT the request of the bishops of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Vatican has established an international commission to study the alleged Marian apparitions at Medjugorje.

The commission will be led by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, retired archbishop of Rome, and will operate under the direction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Commission members will include cardinals, bishops, theologians and other experts, said Vatican spokesman Fr Federico Lombardi SJ.

He said the commission would have about 20 members, but he did not say if or when their names would be published.

However, Fr Lombardi said the commission is unlikely to make any statements. Their work and recommendations, if any, will be turned over to the doctrinal congregation.

The diocese of Mostar-Duvno, where Medjugorje is located, established a commission in the 1980s to investigate the claims of six young people who said Mary appeared to them daily beginning in 1981.

Because the alleged apparitions were having an impact beyond the diocese, the local bishop asked the national bishops' conference to investigate. At the time, Bosnia-Herzegovina was part of Yugoslavia.

With the break-up of Yugoslavia, "the question did not arrive at a conclusion on whether or not the phenomena were of a supernatural nature", Fr Lombardi said. The bishops' conference issued a statement in 1991 saying "it cannot be confirmed that supernatural apparitions or revelations are occurring here" and asked priests and bishops not to organise official pilgrimages to the town.

Responding to a question from a



A woman touches a cross at a venerated site in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina. An international commission has been appointed by the Vatican to study the alleged Marian apparitions there. PHOTO: DAMIR SAGOLJ, REUTERS/CNS

French bishop in 1996, the Vatican confirmed the position that official pilgrimages should not be organised, but also said individual Catholics who travel to Medjugorje should be given pastoral care and access to the sacraments.

Fr Lombardi said the bishops of Bosnia-Herzegovina asked the doctrinal congregation to study the alleged apparitions. He said the commission's work is expected "to take some time".

The commission was announced just three months after Austrian Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna made a very public visit to Medjugorje and said the Church must recognise that private pilgrimages to the village result in prayer and reconciliation.

But Bishop Ratko Peric of Mostar-Duvno, who repeatedly has questioned the authenticity of the apparitions, said the cardinal's pilgrimage "added new sufferings" to the problems of his diocese and did "not contribute to its much-needed peace and unity".—CNS



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## Bishop's killer set free

BY EZRA FIESER

RETIRE army colonel convicted in the 1998 killing of Guatemalan Auxiliary Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera of Guatemala City has been granted parole.

Byron Lima Estrada was released less than half way through his 20-year prison sentence. He was convicted in 2001 of planning the murder of Bishop Gerardi, who was killed on April 24, 1998, two days after releasing a Church report saying the military was responsible for most of the killings, disappearances and human rights violations during 36 years of civil war.

Lima Estrada's term was cut short for good behaviour, his lawyer said.

Church officials were quick to denounce the decision.

Nery Rodenas, director of the Office of Human Rights for the archdiocese of Guatemala City, called the decision unacceptable. "[Lima Estrada] did not even fulfil the requirements for parole under the law... including community service." He said the Church would urge an appeal of the ruling.

Lima Estrada was one of four men

convicted of the bishop's murder. His son, army Captain Byron Lima Oliva and Fr Mario Orantes Najera, an assistant priest at the church where Gerardi lived, preached and was killed, remain behind bars. The fourth man was killed in a prison riot in 2003.

Lima Estrada was convicted of masterminding the killing. At his trial, prosecutors said he feared the bishop would testify about wartime killings.

Bishop Gerardi was a long-time champion of the country's largely poor indigenous population. As the country's civil war—which pitted peasant guerillas against the state—concluded in 1996, the bishop began an investigation into war crimes.

The investigation found the military and paramilitary death squads were responsible for about 90% of massacres.

During the war, Lima Estrada served as a counterinsurgency commander and head of a military intelligence unit.

The archdiocese will mark the 12th anniversary of Bishop Gerardi's death with the release of a movie titled *Gerardi*.—CNS



A reporter reviews Pope Benedict's pastoral letter to Ireland's Catholics after its release at the Vatican press office. In the letter, the pope apologised to victims of clerical sexual abuse and announced steps to heal wounds of the scandal.

PHOTO: PAUL HARING, CNS

## Pope: I understand anger over abuse

ANALYSIS BY JOHN THAVIS

POPE Benedict's letter to Irish Catholics was a pastoral not a disciplinary document, aimed more at spiritual rebuilding than establishing a chain of accountability for the priestly sex abuse scandal.

Although the pope referenced several factors that led to acts of abuse and their mishandling by Church authorities in the past, his main focus was on the future.

While encouraging continued vigilance over abuse, the papal letter did not unveil any new procedures or penalties. Instead, it announced a programme of prayer and penitence designed to revive trust among Irish Catholics.

"I am praying earnestly that, by God's grace, the wounds afflicting so many individuals and families may be healed and that the Church in Ireland may experience a season of rebirth and spiritual renewal," the pope said in his letter.

Deeper analysis of the scandal, including its causes and levels of responsibility, was left to a team of investigators who will carry out an apostolic visitation in Irish dioceses and religious houses.

The visitation was the most practical initiative announced in the papal letter. But because such investigations are confidential, the move disappointed those who have called for greater transparency by Church leaders on the sex abuse issue.

The reaction to the pope's letter among Irish Catholics appeared to be mixed. In several ways, the pope made a positive impact:

- He specifically said the shame and betrayal justly felt by Irish Catholics was not only about sexual abuse by priests but also at "the way Church authorities in Ireland dealt with them". The bishops' response was "often inadequate", and involved "serious mistakes".

- He put himself in the place of victims to an extent not seen before in a public document. He empathised with their emotional suffering and loss of dignity, their frustration when Church authorities wouldn't listen to their accusations, and the feeling of "no escape" among those who resided in Catholic institutions.

He recognised how deep their resentment still runs when he said, "I know some of you find it difficult even to enter the doors of a church

after all that has occurred."

- He acknowledged that one factor in the mishandling of sex abuse cases was "a misplaced concern for the reputation of the Church and the avoidance of scandal". It was the first time Pope Benedict had spoken about this aspect of the sex abuse crisis, at least publicly.

Critics took issue with some things the letter didn't address, such as whether bishops who protected abusers should resign; the role of the Vatican in oversight of sex abuse cases; and priestly celibacy as a possible factor in the crisis.

Some were upset by a section of the letter that placed sex abuse by priests in a wider context of social transformation, one that included secularisation, a weakening of religious practice, new ways of thinking among priests and religious, and misinterpretation of the Second Vatican Council.

"We are astounded at the pope's assertion that the roots of clerical sexual abuse lie in the secularisation of Irish society, the falling off of religious devotion and failures to adhere to canon law," said Maeve Lewis, executive director of One in Four, a group representing abuse survivors in Ireland.

Ms Lewis and others identify a "culture of secrecy" inside the Church as a primary cause of the scandal. The pope sees the Church weakened by developments that, at least in part, came from the outside.

It's not the first time the pope has explored this theme. In the United States in 2008, he spoke of sex abuse in the Church in the context of "the degrading manifestations and the crude manipulation of sexuality so prevalent today" and the erosion of fundamental moral values in society.

The way the pope views the problem helps explain the measures he outlined for the Church in Ireland, including a year-long period of prayer and penitential practices, and a nationwide "mission" of retreats and spiritual reflection for bishops, priests and religious.

Those initiatives may strike some as beside the point, but they reflect the pope's belief that the damage done by the sex abuse scandal ultimately requires a spiritual remedy, and not just new policies and penalties.—CNS

## Pope will meet with abuse victims

BY CINDY WOODEN

IN his letter to Irish Catholics, Pope Benedict promised to meet victims of clerical sexual abuse, but the Vatican said it would not turn such a meeting into a media event.

Like similar meetings the pope has had with victims in the United States and in Australia, a potential meeting with Irish victims would

occur quietly and in an atmosphere of prayer without a public announcement ahead of time, said Vatican spokesman Fr Federico Lombardi SJ.

"For the pope, these are not media events. They are human and spiritual encounters. While they are significant, you should not expect them to be announced and propagandised," Fr Lombardi told reporters.—CNS

## Vatican: Women still suffer

THE status of women around the world has improved in the last 15 years with better educational opportunities, less discrimination and more laws against domestic violence, but women continue to suffer, Archbishop Celestino Migliore told the United Nations.

The progress of women also can be seen in their promotion as "key to eradicating poverty and fostering development" and the growth of their participation in civil society, the Vatican's UN nuncio told leaders of the world body.

But women and girls remain victims of various forms of violence, including "female foeticide and infanticide", and account for a significant number of those infected by HIV/Aids, he said. They also make up the majority of those who are trafficked across international borders and sexually exploited.

Archbishop Migliore's statement

was delivered during a session of the Commission on the Status of Women, a body of the UN Economic and Social Council which met for a 15-year review of the implementation of the Declaration and Platform for Action approved at the 1995 UN conference on women in Beijing.

Despite more educational opportunities, a majority of girls still do not go to school and females age 15 and over "account for two-thirds of the world's illiterate population," Archbishop Migliore said. More girls than boys suffer malnutrition, stunting their physical and mental growth.

Regarding HIV/Aids, he said a disproportionate number of women and girls are infected and that number is increasing in Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America. He noted that in sub-Saharan Africa, 60% of all adults and three out of four young people living with the virus are female.

Approximately 70% of international trafficking victims are women and girls, he said.

"Around the world girls and women are victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence, including rape as a weapon of war in various parts of the world, not to mention economic abuse."

Reasons for the "precarious situation" of women and girls, he said, can be found in part in "cultural and social dynamics as well as delays and slowness of policy".

However, he said, efforts to achieve equality between women and men in education, employment, legal protection and social and political rights are "increasingly ideologically driven" and delay women's "true advancement".

Many UN documents aim to "dissolve every specificity and complementarity between men and women," hindering serious recognition of women's "inherent dignity and rights," he said.—CNS

## What to do when abusers confess

BY JOHN THAVIS

A PRIEST who confesses sexual abuse in the sacrament of penance should be absolved and should generally not be encouraged by the confessor to disclose his acts publicly or to his superiors, a Vatican official has told the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*.

Likewise, the confessor should not make the contents of such a confession public, said Bishop Gianfranco Girotti, regent of the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican court that handles issues related to the sacrament of penance.

Bishop Girotti spoke strictly about the response of a confessor, and not about the wider responsibility to acknowledge and investigate priestly sexual abuse outside the confessional.

When a priest confesses such acts, "the confession can only have

absolution as a consequence. It is not up to the confessor to make them public or to ask the penitent to incriminate himself in front of superiors. This is true because, on one hand, the sacramental seal remains inviolable and, on the other hand, one cannot provoke mistrust in the penitent," he said.

Other Vatican officials, who spoke on background, said a distinction should be drawn between what a confessor requires of a penitent as a condition for absolution, and what the confessor may strongly encourage the penitent to do.

In the case of priestly sexual abuse, for example, a confessor may want to recommend that a priest discuss the situation with superiors in order to avoid the occasion of future sins. Publicly admitting the sin might even be required of a penitent if it would clear the name of another person unjustly accused

of the same act.

In the interview, Bishop Girotti also explained why the Church reserves to bishops the overall authority for absolution for the sin of abortion, but not for other grave sins like murder or the sexual abuse of minors by priests. Essentially, he said, the purpose is to highlight the gravity of the sin of abortion.

"It's not really correct to say that it's easier to confess a murder or sexual abuse than an abortion. It's simply a matter of two different configurations of sin," he said.

"By placing abortion in the category of sins reserved to a higher competence, the aim was to place the accent on the seriousness of the killing of an individual even before he or she is born. The hope is also to encourage more reflection by those thinking of abortion as a way to resolve a serious personal issue."—CNS

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# The Southern Cross

Editor: Günther Simmermacher

## Mind-blowing news

WITHOUT his resurrection from the dead, Jesus of Nazareth probably would have been a minor footnote in local Jerusalem history, one of many temporary would-be messiahs who came to an inglorious end.

Without the resurrection, there would have been no Church. After the execution of Jesus, the dispirited disciples had started to make plans to return to their old lives in Galilee (the only non-Galilean of the Twelve had by then committed suicide). Some, like Thomas, had already split, receiving the news that Christ was alive later, much to his incredulity.

It was the discovery of the open tomb by Mary Magdalen, Mary, mother of James, and Salome that changed everything. The disciples began to understand the puzzling prophecies of Jesus; with the resurrection, the puzzle fell into place.

The birth and death of Christ are easy to understand. These events, the beginning and the end of a life, are common to every human being that has breathed on this earth. Some may quibble about the details, but it is not far-fetched to believe that Jesus was born in humble circumstances and died a violent death. The resurrection is more difficult to believe. People don't tend to rise from the dead.

Remarkably, the late Jewish-Orthodox Rabbi and theologian Professor Pinchas Lapide argued that of all the extraordinary events described in the gospels, the resurrection is likely to be based in fact—the resuscitation of the dead by God is part of Jewish belief. However, like the noted scripture scholar Paula Frederiksen, also a Jew, he held that the apostles did not link the resurrection to Christ being the Messiah.

Nevertheless, something absolutely staggering must have happened after Jesus' crucifixion to explain the fervour with which those who

believed proceeded to propagate the news of the Risen Christ, at a time when doing so was enormously dangerous.

The new religion grew quickly. Before too long, the Roman occupiers built a pagan temple above Calvary to dissuade the local Christians from praying at the site of the crucifixion and resurrection. Of course, this was a miscalculation: the temple pointed future generations of Christians to the location of the events it was meant to conceal.

We cannot overestimate the awe with which the very first Christians received the news of the risen Christ (never mind of actually encountering him). Indeed, we may be somewhat blasé about it, because for most of us the resurrection is an annual event. But we must not become casual about the meaning of Christ's violent death and resurrection for humanity. Because of it, we have the choice of spending eternity in the presence of God.

That notion is awe-inspiring. Christ died and rose from the dead so that even the most abject of sinners may have the opportunity of being redeemed, as Jesus promised while he was on earth.

At the core of the Church's mission is the mind-blowing knowledge that every human being can attain salvation through Christ. This is good news for those of us striving to live as virtuous a life as we can.

But it is also alarming news because even the most repugnant individuals can be saved. Even Adolf Hitler, with his final breath, might genuinely have sought redemption. In his mercy, the Church teaches, God would have had mercy on Hitler's soul (in the event, it is unlikely that Hitler gave God any thought at all).

Something quite incredible happened in Jerusalem that Passover weekend almost 2000 years ago. And because of it, something incredible is happening every day. That is what we celebrate at Easter.

**Would Catherine Elizabeth of Namibia please get in touch with the Editor.**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right to shorten or edit published letters. Letters below 300 words receive preference. Pseudonyms are acceptable only under special circumstances and at the Editor's discretion. Name and address of the writer must be supplied. No anonymous letter will be considered.

## God is indeed the author of life

MORALITY dialogue is being called for, especially at a political level.

Having partaken in the culture of life campaign of Johannesburg archdiocese, I had time to reflect on morality.

The South African Constitution

of 1996 guarantees the right to life in Section 11. During his homily at Holy Mass prior to the culture of life campaign procession to Constitutional Hill in March, Archbishop Buti Tlhagale reminded Johannesburg Catholics that "God is the author of life".

Many Catholics have expressed deep concern for the lack of morality inherent in the current Termination of Pregnancy Act as promulgated by our parliament.

I wonder if many non-Catholics would also find it in their hearts to respect and accept the dialogue result?

Allan Sauls, Johannesburg

## A time to pray

THE letter of Benedict van Rooyen "No confessions" (March 10-16) refers.

It seems something or someone has created the wrong impression, about confessions during Mass, in the mind of Mr van Rooyen.

People who attend Mass should give 100% attention to their participation in Mass. The movement of people during Mass would be distracting to others. No reading *The Southern Cross*; no saying of "your" rosary—Mass is not the time for personal devotion; and no reading of the parish newsletter.

Maybe the Johannesburg parish Mr van Rooyen visited has a priest in charge who knows and understands the above, good for him!

As for "making a perfect act of contrition", this is no substitute for the sacrament of reconciliation (confession), though it could be a cop-out.

Gus Ratering, Benoni

AS Benedict van Rooyen correctly observed, people do not go to confession during Sunday Mass.

He quotes a senior Catholic as saying some people might make a perfect act of contrition; but if people have committed big sins, how do they repent for them? Would they ever confess them later?

An act of contrition, which is a prayer inspired by love of God or the fear of his punishments, could be part of but not a substitute for the sacrament of reconciliation; neither is the Confiteor, or the penitential part of the Mass.

All serious sins must be confessed, but many people make themselves think that sins are not serious as long as they have not committed murder.

Priests usually keep special times for hearing confessions but few people seem to come. It is the example of Catholics not making use of this sacrament that makes people lose interest in forgiveness.

This also leads to denial of sinful behaviour. Even the risk of hell for all eternity does not frighten them. They free their conscience from any awareness of sin. They think that as long as they receive the Host, God will forgive them. They forget that receiving Holy

Communion while in a state of serious sin is sacrilegious.

There are people who are deprived of the sacraments asking: "Why does the Church not allow me?" They are not anxious about making a good confession, but they would like the privilege of receiving holy Communion; just like the rest.

One should observe that going to confession just to get rid of one's sins is no good either. We must have true contrition, do our penance, and learn to do our best not to repeat our sins.

Bishop emeritus Everard Baay  
SCJ, Port Elizabeth

## BEE is unjust

YOUR front-page report of March 10-16 "Don't dump BEE yet" refers.

I understand that Black Economic Empowerment legislation was promulgated to right the inequalities of the past. The inequalities of the past were race-based, but this legislation is no less so, and cannot be justified.

I served on a university lecturer selection panel. The applicant that had to be recommended as a result of BEE considerations was far from the best applicant for the job, so students were the ones to suffer, and academic excellence took a back seat.

Another instance: a local small businessman does not need municipal or government support and so does not need BEE compliance, but now businesses that do need compliance are saying that they cannot use him. He is facing closure and another 25 black workers will be jobless. These are the real consequences of this unjust legislation.

We need a slogan: "Proudly Non-racist and Non-BEE Compliant."

Dr Bernard Cole,  
Krugersdorp

BROAD-BASED BEE is an essential step towards the goal of achieving economic equality, according to the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office (CPLO).

Obnoxious legislation based on racism (BEE Act of 2003-4) and immorality (abortion) has been passed despite the presence of the CPLO. Is their presence serving any purpose?

Has the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference changed its policy on racism in order to accommodate the ruling party?

Samuel Solomon, Florida  
■ *Parliament's vote to pass the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996, which legalised abortion, preceded the establishment of the CPLO in 1997.—Editor*

## Going backwards is not progress

THANKS to Sr Judith Coyle for her letter, and to *The Southern Cross* for publishing it ("New wording of liturgy examined", March 3-9).

The site mentioned ([www.whatifwejustsaidwait.org](http://www.whatifwejustsaidwait.org)) now provides passages from the ICEL missal and the proposed changes for comparison, an essential contribution to debate.

Sr Judith notes only one response from a bishop. In only a small section of the alphabetical list of signatures—about 20 pages—that I've read, many

priests, religious, lay ministers and others are named, but no bishop. Does this say that an initiative representing English-speaking Catholics worldwide can be disregarded by our bishops?

The proposed texts claim to be faithful to the "original", that is, to the Tridentine liturgy. The vast number of bishops voting at Vatican II agreed that that liturgy was in need of serious reform. Are we now being told to reject the teachings of Vatican II?

The Tridentine liturgy was reformed because it was conditioned by the age in which it arose, the heyday of the Counter-Reformation. In that turmoil, it departed from the more open traditions of the early Church, the Fathers, and the Ages of Faith.

The four centuries following Trent in the Catholic Church have been called by some a "drought of the Holy Spirit". The Reformers spoke very strongly about the role of the Spirit in the living faith of each believing heart, free access to the Scripture, and the unmerited gift of salvation available freely to all.

The counter-reformation concentrated on central authority, obedience, devotions and works. There was no real freedom of scriptural research in the Catholic Church until *Divino afflante Spiritu* of Pius XII.

John XXIII convened Vatican II to "open the windows to the Wind, the Holy Spirit", and its more than 2000 bishops worked in unanimity as never before.

The new liturgists are telling us to reject the changes brought about by opening the windows to this Wind. They are asking us to stop believing that the Spirit of Christ is active today in every believing heart, leading each one to a unique, true, personal relationship with our Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

They want the Church to be again as it was after Trent, before Vatican II. They are telling us to stand back from our rediscovered belief in the baptismal gifts: our priestly, prophetic and royal mission in Christ's Church.

They are verifying again what Chesterton saw in the conservative faithfulness of the 1920s: "Let beliefs fade fast and frequently if you want institutions to remain the same".

Denis Barrett, Boksburg

## 'Ineffable'?

THE new version of the Canon of the Mass refers.

What on earth does "ineffable" mean? Translations seem to have been done by those trained in the archaic and verbose. Why don't they use ordinary English as it is spoken?

Sadly, I am thankful that because of my state of health I am house-bound and no longer able to get to Holy Mass.

Agnes Porteous, Port Alfred

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## Point of Language



## More than words

NOTHING can confuse communication as much as words. One can choose them as carefully as possible, shooting for pinpoint accuracy in its application and investing subtle nuances in its usage—and there will be those who will not only misunderstand a delicately wrought phrase, but denounce the writer for it.

For a journalist this is an occupational hazard. All the writer can do is string together words that convey accurately—and hopefully with some elegance—what is supposed to be communicated. A writer may labour for inordinate lengths of time over a single word or passage. But even when the objective of concise clarity is accomplished, even one word can bring down the whole edifice of sparkling prose.

A recent experience demonstrates what I mean. In relation to the devotions to St Faustina's Divine Mercy revelations and Marian apparitions, I had used the word "cult". A reader sent me an e-mail, just signed "irritated jhb west", in response to my "blasphemous editorial drive", setting me right about the threats to my salvation and my disobedience to Church and God in terms that confirmed the sentiment behind the anonymous signature.

My use of the word "cult" apparently showed my "disrespect, disregard and indifference to the Sovereign God and the entire heavenly court". That must come as bad news to the Catholic Church, which for many centuries has used the word "cult" (or *cultus*) to describe particular types of veneration and devotions.

Of course, in common usage, that specific understanding of the word "cult" has been usurped by a definition that typically evokes notions of weirdly humming, brainwashed maniacs in bizarre sects who will eventually commit mass suicide at the signal of their crazy-eyed leader.

Perhaps those of us who apply the word in its accurate usage within the Catholic context should be more circumspect, keeping in mind that the concepts of the Church sometimes differ markedly from those of the secular world. It certainly is not desirable to plant into the reader's mind a mental image of Divine Mercy devotees as weirdly humming, brainwashed fanatics belonging to bizarre suicidal sects.

Alas, there aren't many suitably precise synonyms for the word "cult" in relation to Catholic veneration and devotions.

Recently I had cause myself to consider shooting off letters about misapplied designations, perhaps signed "irritated ctn nw", to the organisers of an event headlined "Cape Town Carnival"—which was scheduled for March 20, more than halfway through Lent.

Catholics, especially those from countries where Catholicism informs the local culture, will know that the word "carnival" refers to the celebrations preceding the penitential season of Lent. A carnival therefore takes place before Ash Wednesday in February, and never in late March.

The etymology of the word is *carne vale*, Latin for "farewell to meat". So unless the organisers of the Cape Town festival meant to propose that their event should be followed by some kind of fast, the title they gave it betrayed a lamentable ignorance—much as does the nomenclature of "Mardi Gras" to promote any event not taking place on Shrove Tuesday.

Or perhaps the act of calling something a carnival when it patently is not a carnival simply shows how words lose or change their meaning.

For example, when you are in a joyful mood, you probably would not describe yourself as being gay, as people just a couple of generations ago might have done.

If you should time-travel to the 11th century, and people there call you "silly", they are just saying that you are blessed; but if they call you "nice", they think you are stupid (especially if you suggest having a carnival in March).

There were times when boys were girls. In fact, all children were girls, regardless of their gender. We might not think of our politicians as particularly sophisticated, unless we apply the term in its original definition: corrupt.

And nuns used to be buxom long before Page 3 girls were. The word once meant "obedient"; only later did it come to signify a woman's generous endowment of the mammary gland.

Language, and the way we understand it, is changing all the time. There are many people now who use the word "bad" to describe something admirable, even as they use it also to describe something deplorable. Future generations of children might well be puzzled by the story of the huffing and puffing Big, Bad Wolf, wondering exactly what was so good about him.

So with all that in mind, what should the Catholic Church call a cult?



The seven Spanish pioneer nuns of the Free State diocese of Bethlehem after their arrival in South Africa in front of the entrance to the nunciature in Pretoria. Behind them are Bishop Bucher (left) and the then nuncio, Archbishop Joseph Mees (right).

## Free State's Spanish corner

*Twenty-five years ago, seven Spanish Contemplative Dominican Sisters arrived in the diocese of Bethlehem in the Free State and founded a monastery at Senekal. In a four-part series, Bishop*

*HUBERT BUCHER, explains how this foundation came about and how it has developed since.*

WHEN I became bishop of Bethlehem, which covers the whole eastern Free State, on March 27, 1977, I soon discovered that there were numbers of Catholic Portuguese families in all of the diocese's towns who needed to be given greater pastoral attention. Some of them had not been contacted by a priest for years.

In 1982 I finally managed to get the help, albeit for merely three months, of Fr Alberto Coelho, a Portuguese Spiritan Father who was involved in promotion work for his congregation in Spain. Endowed by nature with a mighty voice, and great pastoral zeal, he achieved a lot during the short time he spent among us.

One day after lunch, as we were standing outside, he surprised me with the question: "Bishop, have you ever thought of having a contemplative sisters' monastery in your diocese?" I snapped back: "From where would I get one without stealing?" Hearing this idiomatic German expression he roared with laughter. Then he told me that he had already persuaded a number of contemplative sisters' communities in Spain to found daughter monasteries elsewhere, particularly in Africa. He was prepared to help with finding one for the Bethlehem diocese.

Soon afterwards I visited with Fr Coelho a few monasteries of contemplative Dominican Sisters in Spain which he had found to be interested. It was pointed out to us, however, that none of them was able to undertake a new contemplative foundation in Africa on its own.

Following their advice, even before leaving Spain, I directed a request to their federation of 43 Contemplative Dominican monasteries, most of which exist in that country, begging its leadership to consider the possibility of opening a new foundation in the Bethlehem diocese. A few months later I received word that my proposal had been accepted.

I shall never forget that visit to these monasteries. Meeting these communities, and celebrating the holy Eucharist with them, was for me like one long, refreshing spiritual retreat. Here were nuns who had voluntarily screened themselves off from the everyday outside world, and immersed themselves in a life of deep silence, only interrupted by their beautiful singing during the celebration of the liturgy; long hours spent in private study and meditation of the Scriptures, and prayer, in their cells, communal work, and a daily

Bp Hubert Bucher

## Story of Pioneer Nuns



short period of cheerful recreation in their community room.

Such exuberant joy and quiet peace radiated from their faces, I could not help thinking that their lifestyle—though marked by austerity and a deep desire to offer themselves to God as living holocausts, never mind the cost—was the nearest to one's experiencing the joys of heaven while still dwelling here on earth. These nuns stood in a nearly 800 year-long tradition of committed contemplative life, founded by their compatriot Dominic Guzman in the early 13th century.

The following year the superior of the federation and one of her councillors visited Bethlehem, chiefly to choose the site of their future foundation. Having inspected several offers, their choice fell on Senekal.

Although small in size, this town in the heart of a thriving agricultural area lies on the main route from Lesotho to Gauteng, and is near to the Free State Goldfields where the Dominican friars have been working as missionaries since the early 1930s.

Now the diocese was faced with the difficult task of obtaining a visa for the pioneers to be sent from Spain. What on earth did we want to import seven nuns for, who were going to "do nothing"—no teaching in school, no pastoral work in a parish? What is this anyway: "contemplative"?

Whether a beautiful volume with lots of pictures, taken in contemplative monasteries, which I sent to the director-general in the ministry of Home Affairs had any influence I do not know. I rather suspect that a supportive letter from the late Archbishop of Cape Town, Cardinal Owen McCann, helped the immigration authorities to overcome their fear of yet another manifestation of the *Roomse Gevaar*.

On May 29, 1985 the seven founder Sisters arrived at what was then called Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg. They were volunteers from four monasteries in Spain—Palencia, Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela, and Vivero—each of which had made the sacrifice of releasing one or more members of its community for the daring enterprise in faraway South Africa.

Their arrival coincided with our country's entry into the last and decisive phase in its struggle to rid itself of the destructive apartheid policy. The older ones among the nuns still retained vivid memories of the pain and turmoil the Church and society had lived through, in their own country, during the Spanish Civil War between 1936-39.

■ Bishop Bucher retired as bishop of Bethlehem last year. Next week he will recall how the newly-arrived Spanish nuns settled into life in Senekal.

Michael Shackleton answers your question

## Open Door



## How the rules for sainthood changed

It is my understanding that in the early days of the Church there was no such thing as a cause for canonisation of the saints. Saints became honoured in the Church because of popular acclaim. When did the pope come into the picture and reserve the right to declare who was a saint?

Nicolette

IN the days when the early Church was undergoing the cruel anti-Christian persecutions of the time, it was taken for granted that anyone who was martyred for the faith was immediately rewarded with eternal life in Christ. These martyrs were honoured as true saints and their victory was celebrated in the liturgy and by asking them to intercede for the living.

Later, when persecution came to an end, the Church began to give the same honour to those who had lived significantly holy lives, especially in their suffering for the faith or for making sacrifices for it. Hermits, monks and devout holy men and women, known as confessors, recognised by the Christian community, soon joined the ranks of the saints.

Each diocese or region would have its own particular favoured saints until the 10th century when, in order to prevent unworthy individuals from being presented for saintly veneration, local bishops, usually in their synods, began to impose their authority on the saint-making process in an effort to give it some formal and disciplined structure. This seems to have resulted in the pope being approached for approval in cases that were difficult to settle. Pope Alexander III (1159-81) eventually began to take over the decision of who could be canonised and who could not, and it was under Pope Gregory IX (1227-41) that papal canonisation was declared henceforth to be the only lawful one.

In order to simplify an increasingly complicated way of accumulating material in support of an application for sainthood, Pope John Paul II simplified the procedure in 1983, which was further refined in 1997.

The most relevant points in this ruling are:

- at least five years have to lapse after the death of a candidate before any formal application is made;
- the bishop of the diocese in which the candidate died is responsible for beginning the investigation;
- witnesses must be called to provide evidence of the candidate's holiness of life;
- all documentation must be sent to the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints, which then proceeds with its own investigation and verification.

■ Send your queries to Open Door, Box 2372, Cape Town, 8000; or e-mail: [opendoor@scross.co.za](mailto:opendoor@scross.co.za); or fax (021) 465 3850. Anonymity can be preserved by arrangement, but questions must be signed, and may be edited for clarity. Only published questions will be answered.

# Listen

Are you being called?

**Come and see!**

(Jn 1:39)

**Follow me!**

(Lk 5:27)

**CONTACT DETAILS:**

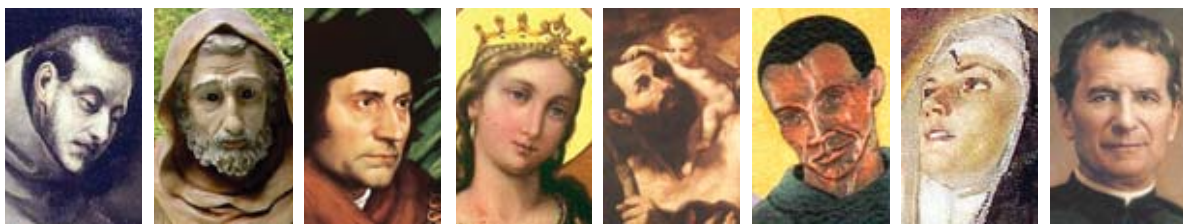
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**Sisters of Nazareth**

# A heavenly hotline for almost every problem

There is a patron saint for virtually every problem; all we need to do is call on them for their intercession, as JOHN COWAN and GÜNTHER SIMMERMACHER explain.



When in trouble, these saints can offer protection: (from left) Antony of Padua, Fiacre, Thomas More, Ursula, Christopher, Martin de Porres, Rita of Cascia, and John Bosco.

IN the days long before telephone hotlines and call centres, ordinary people had to cope with a massive selection of patron saints that they could ask to act on their behalf as heavenly mediators.

In fact, the Council of Trent (1545-63) acknowledged that it was a good and useful thing to call upon these saints because of the benefits everyday folk could obtain from God through their specific patron saint's mediation.

Public veneration of saints is known to have existed since the 2nd century. It developed in local communities and was an outcome of the belief that the martyrs who shed their blood for Christ were certainly in heaven. Because of this, they were able to exercise intercessory prayer on behalf of those who called upon them.

These saints were honoured with a special feast day every year. Over time, universal feast days filled up about two-thirds of the Church's universal liturgical calendar, even though some of these saints had become little more than just a name.

In 1969 Pope Paul VI reduced the number of saints to be venerated on their feast days to 58 (not including the Apostles, the Virgin Mary or St Joseph). These 58 saints were considered to be of worldwide, or universal, significance.

Other saints could still be honoured locally, but their feasts would be not be applied worldwide.

Many saints were deleted from the universal calendar, or suppressed, because they were considered to be legends and there was little evidence that they had even existed. One of these was the popular St Christopher, patron of travellers, whose cult (the term

the Church uses for the devotion to saints and other pieties) could nonetheless continue in local churches.

There are still many people around the world today who have a St Christopher medallion attached either to their car's key ring or dashboard. These medallions are not just there as some form of personal decoration. The owners hold the strong belief that their safety while travelling will be cared for via the intercession of the 3rd century saint whose name means "Christ-bearer".

Legend has it that one day a little boy asked the brawny Christopher to carry him over to the other side of a river. A hermit had assigned Christopher the job of assisting travellers across the river. This time, though, Big Christopher found his small passenger so heavy that he was bowed down by his weight.

Then the little boy told Big Christopher who he was—Jesus Christ himself, who told him: "You have just carried the weight of the whole world and him that created and made all the world upon your shoulders."

Jesus then told Christopher to plant his staff in the ground as next day it would bear flowers and dates as a sign of the truth of the message he had heard. From that day on Christopher is said to have preached Christianity, right up to the time he was beheaded.

Travellers began to carry St Christopher medallions because it has been believed that whoever sees an image of Christopher would not die on that day.

Taxi drivers have their own beneficial hotline number to heaven as well: St Fiacre.

South African motorists who have made the acquaintance of the minibus taxi will be interested to know that St Fiacre is also the patron saint of haemorrhoid sufferers.

St Fiacre was one of many Irishmen who sought their "separation for Christ". In his bid to become a hermit, he journeyed to Meaux in France where the bishop gave him land for his hermitage, located a few kilometres away in a place called Breuil. He settled there as a hermit until he died in 670.

St Fiacre's cult flourished in France. Medieval England also acknowledged him, but in his native Ireland, he was not listed as a saint until well into the 12th century.

St Fiacre's relics were moved from Breuil to Meaux where they rest to this day. During the 17th and 18th centuries, Meaux became the centre of devotion to St Fiacre. Among his devotees were Anne of Austria and the future saint, Vincent de Paul.

So how did this holy recluse acquire the portfolio of taxi drivers, denizens of dense traffic?

Quite by chance, as it happens. In Paris, horse-drawn hackney carriages for hire used to stand outside the hotel Saint-Fiacre. As a result, the carriage came to be known as *fiacre*, a name that still applies to French taxis today.

St Fiacre is also a patron saint of gardeners.

Many saints have acquired their patronages by such arbitrary means. Most patronages were assigned because of their spiritual and religious significance. Some saints are believed to be the bearers of special powers.

But which saint should you call when you have a request for a specific intercessory prayer?

For thousands of children worldwide there is one saint on whom they call, though not necessarily in the form of an intercessory prayer request: St Nicholas of Myra (or Bari, if you prefer).

In many countries children who have been good awake on St Nicholas' feast day, December 6, to find gifts left for them by the saint. In the Netherlands, the exchange of Christmas gifts even takes place on that day, not during the feast of the Nativity almost three weeks later.

And it was a corruption of the Dutch name for St Nicholas, Sinter Klaas, that gave rise to the moniker Santa Claus.

We might not believe in Father Christmas, but St Nicholas was a real person. Living in the 4th century, he was the bishop of Myra in present-day Turkey. His reputation as a bringer of gifts is based on a story according to which he anonymously left a dowry for three sisters whom their desperate, impoverished father was about to sell into prostitution.

Not much is known about his life, but stories tell of his generosity and miraculous powers.

One can almost imagine a celestial call centre operator answering the phone; but surely not an automated voice instructing us: "If you are a florist, press 7 for St Dorothy".

The Heavenly Hotline Call Centre would connect an advertiser with St Bernardino of Siena, a bricklayer with St Stephen the Martyr, a cook with St Martha (hence the title of the lovely German film about a female chef,

Bella Martha), an engineer with St Ferdinand, a grocer with St Michael the Archangel, a ladies' hairdresser with St Mary Magdalen and a men's hairdresser with St Martin de Porres (unisex hairdressers presumably have their pick of any of these), a librarian with St Jerome, a teacher with St John de la Salle, schoolboys with St John Bosco and schoolgirls with St Ursula or St Catherine.

A journalist or author would call on St Francis de Sales to fix a writer's block, and an astronaut would seek the intercession of the levitating Franciscan St Joseph Cupertino, as would airline pilots and their passengers (St Bona of Pisa takes care of the cabin staff).

Even dogs have patron saints. A dog with a wet nose—or its owner—can call on St Hubert; a mad dog will find a willing ear in St Sithney.

Politicians can call St Thomas More, and should consult him liberally on ethics, or they might need the next set of patrons.

Prisoners need protection more than most of us, so they have three patrons to call on: St Dismas, John and Roch.

If you have a toothache, call your dentist, and while waiting for your appointment, call one of Sts Apollonia, Osmund or Medard. In case of a sore throat, call St Blaise. And if your rheumatism is torturing you, St James the Great is ready to intercede. St Peregrine is the patron saint of cancer sufferers.

Unhappily married women have two patron saints to talk to—Sts Rita of Cascia or Wilgefortis—but unhappy husbands apparently have none.

And when your problem seems totally hopeless (possibly because your situation's particular patron saint didn't deliver), get on the hotline with St Jude.

If you have no idea whom to call on the heavenly hotline (and have no reference work or Internet access), then kneel down and seek the aid of St Antony of Padua, who apparently will find the name of the one you seek.

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Blessed Paul Joseph Nardini



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# Bringing the importance of male spirituality to the fore

SERGIO MILANDRI organises courses on relationships for men and women, based on the model of Franciscan Father Richard Rohr, who will visit Cape Town in May. Sergio explains how his ministry started and what it hopes to accomplish.

WHEN asked what work we do at Relating.com, the answer often leaves the questioner puzzled: we help men become men.

This might appear pointless because surely men know how to be men. Yet this is often not the case.

Most men are familiar with the common images of what they should be and try to live up to, but few have a sense of what really moves a man or what state his spirituality is in.

Many men are missing a strong inner authority and serenity and as a result tend to assert themselves aggressively and sometimes abusively.

Our work at Risking Manhood is largely about enabling men to come home to themselves, to engage their inner authenticity and to embark on or continue their spiritual journey.

It is about realising the centrality of the relational emotional self, and especially about deepening their relationship with themselves and God. To this end we run courses, counsel and do various kinds of retreats.

Men's work is about developing men's emotional maturity, about initiating them into manhood (whatever their age). It is enabling them to get in touch with their inner self, their compassion, their soul and spirit, and finding their meaning apart from their work and hobbies.

These are topics men seldom talk about. There is a sense that men should be strong and stable and unmoved by relational or emotional issues. This attitude does nothing to alleviate the fear and alienation many men live with—fearing being found inadequate or weak. Hence the loneliness and shame that many carry.

This shame paralyses many men, causing them to lose their inner power and presence.

Fr Richard Rohr OFM, a specialist on male spirituality, says that when men do not hold their power, they abuse others with it.

All of this falls under the ambit of spirituality—a confusing subject as many people



Sergio Milandri (left) with Franciscan Father Richard Rohr, who will be visiting Cape Town in May.

think of it as the preserve of "super" spiritual people. However, all of us have a spirituality just as we have a physical body. The more compelling question would be: "What is the state of my spirituality?"

If our spirituality is neglected and disengaged, we will find ourselves rootless and anxious. The fact is, our spirituality is like the roots of a tree. The root is hidden but the tree is dependent on its well-developed root system for nurture and strength.

Spirituality is not an optional extra but an integral part of our being; it is the unseen foundation of our lives. And God is to us as the soil is to the roots of the tree—the ground of our being.

In 1987 Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu engaged Francis Cull to start the Institute for Christian Spirituality, to develop a work in spirituality largely to

assist clergy and parishioners to deepen their prayer lives in the face of mounting political crisis and distress. I joined him, developing work in the area of relational spirituality, prayer being essentially about our relationship with God, not dissimilar to any other relationship.

In 1998 my family and I relocated to America. We unexpectedly found ourselves at the Eastern Mennonite University. I completed a master's degree in formation of personhood.

During a vacation I made my way to New Mexico to Fr Rohr's Centre for Action and Contemplation, and did a five-day initiation retreat in male spirituality.

It was a transformative experience and one which convinced me of the necessity of focusing on men's work and particularly on their spiritual formation and development.

This formation goes hand-in-hand with

women's formation because of the interwoven effects women and men have on each other's formation.

Mothers shape their sons and fathers shape their daughters. An added element is that fathers give their children, both boys and girls, their identity, and since this is dependent on fathers being present and emotionally available, this adds a significant part to the necessity of men developing their own relational presence and spirituality. Women, by contrast, give their children relationality and their communal connectedness.

Our society is languishing for a healthy and mature male spiritual presence. If the male and female spiritual components do not work in unison, the whole picture loses its shape. It is for this reason that we are pleased that Fr Rohr is visiting Cape Town for the first two weeks of May. He will be conducting several workshops and events.

His first workshop in spiritual direction is about shaping and encouraging the calling of spiritual direction. It is the art of walking beside a person on their spiritual journey and helping them discern their relationship with God.

His second event entitled "From Wild Man to Wise Man", will be a men's wilderness retreat held in the mountains near Grabouw. This is for men who wish to deepen and root their spirituality in the company of a community of men.

The third event is a three-day workshop on integrating male spirituality in the family, church and society, and is aimed at men, women, community leaders and priests. This will be held at the Schoenstatt Retreat Centre in Constantia.

This workshop is targeted at people who deal with men and who have a need to know how male spirituality is fleshed out and how it can be rooted in their everyday lives.

We have been preparing for his visit by studying his book, *From Wild Man to Wise Man*, on Monday evenings at our retreat centre in Hout Bay. Transcripts of the material and audio clips of these sessions are available at [www.relating.com](http://www.relating.com).

With the coming events which Fr Rohr will be leading we are hoping to broaden the work of spiritual and relational formation.

We are also planning to develop a resource network for mentoring and leadership development based on healthy models of male and female spirituality.

■ For more information and costs of the events and workshops led by Fr Rohr, contact Sergio Milandri at 021 790 1308 or e-mail [sergio@relating.com](mailto:sergio@relating.com)



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# Like Christ, we can conquer death

*As Catholics the world over celebrate Easter, church individuals reflect on the idea of "risen death" and on "Christ, the Lamb". They spoke to MICHAEL RASSOOL.*

**W**HAT does the idea of rising from death to life, a New Life, mean to Christians?

Is death associated with sin and evil that has been conquered in and by Jesus Christ? Or does it mean that true life is about far more than just the natural laws of the world?

Some say that in order for Christ's resurrection to be understood metaphorically, in all its meanings, it had to be experienced literally and understood literally. They say the very idea of resurrection has its first fruits in him.

Deacon Thami Zuma, a priest-candidate in the archdiocese of Durban, said that to reflect on the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus is to reflect on history, especially the history of humanity's salvation and what life was before and after.

He explained that according to Catholic theology death is a mere transit to the beginning of something new. Such a thought remains radical today. Christ is its first fruits, the deacon said.

He said Christ, by his resurrection, taught humanity that life lived in the world is not a complete life. Nor, said Deacon Zuma, can whatever desire one has for a life on earth be completely fulfilled.

He cited St Augustine, who declared to God that one's heart remains restless until it finds rest

in him.

"All humanity is called to one real destiny and exists for one purpose only, which is to live in God's perfection, something that will never happen here on earth," the deacon said.

Worcester Catholic Colleen Constable said she believes that by conquering death Christ set the ultimate process in place for people to define their destiny, citing Jn 19:28-29.

She referred to the story of Lazarus dying and being raised to life by Christ (Jn 11:1-44). Jesus said: "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." (11:4)

**B**ut what does it mean to overcome death in today's world? Is there healing in conquering death? Or does one conceptualise death as only leaving this world permanently, with the hope of rising when Christ comes again? How does all of this resonate with the idea of the "living dead"?

Facing a living death is something everyone has to do, Ms Constable said.

She said one has to face death and conquer it to live life truly, for it is in such dying that one rediscovers oneself, and in rising from death in Christ one conquers and truly lives life.

Ms Constable, a former deputy police chief of the City of Cape Town and a policy and leadership consultant, who actively promotes devotion to the Divine Mercy, said the modern trend is to reject biblical beliefs and the teachings of Christ. She said there is a lack of respect for God's creation, whether human, animal or environmental.

"Individuality, materialism, greed, corruption, exploitation,



The risen Christ is portrayed in artwork by Robert Falcucii at St Pius X basilica in Lourdes, France.

PHOTO: CROSIERS VIA CNS

dishonesty, loss of moral compass and distorted principles flourish inequality," she said, "the gap between rich and poor increases. Lack of leadership is visible in various spheres of life, whether personal, professional, or spiritual, and especially in South African political life and spheres of government."

It is in the midst of all this ambiguity that each person has

to discover their own destiny and reconnect mind, body and soul to God, Ms Constable said.

It begins with the choices one makes, decisions one takes and the thoughts that influence one's actions.

"If we choose to live a life where we are already dying, or in fact 'dead' while walking around, shall we rise again after our last breath is gone?" she asked.

"Christ lived a life of obedience following the will of God, a mere 33 years of which three were spent promoting his Kingdom."

In those three years he preached, taught, healed, loved and prayed, fasted and exercised leadership, Ms Constable said.

He suffered death, and in rising showed the glory of God, she said.

"So it is in the sorrowful passion of Christ that we find inner healing. How ready are we to die now, so that we can begin a life risen in Christ, while living in the world?"

**R**etired Cape Town priest Fr Ralph de Hahn believes that it is in the symbol of the lamb—Christ, the Lamb of God—that the Paschal Mystery of New Life is revealed to the world.

He also refers to scripture—the prophet Isaiah's reference to the coming Messiah as being like a lamb to the slaughter and Revelation's to the "Lamb on the Throne", which tells of the role of the Lamb in the drama of the Resurrection, meek and humble yet a sign of infinite power, a very important lesson for all Christians especially.

New Testament teaching, Fr de Hahn said, sees great power in meekness and humility.

It is this power, he said, which broke through the wall of Christ's tomb and which is central to the Father's work, a culmination that was predicted hundreds of years before.

To this day, the priest said, the whole idea destroys the very foundations of earthly pride and many of the values the world holds dear.

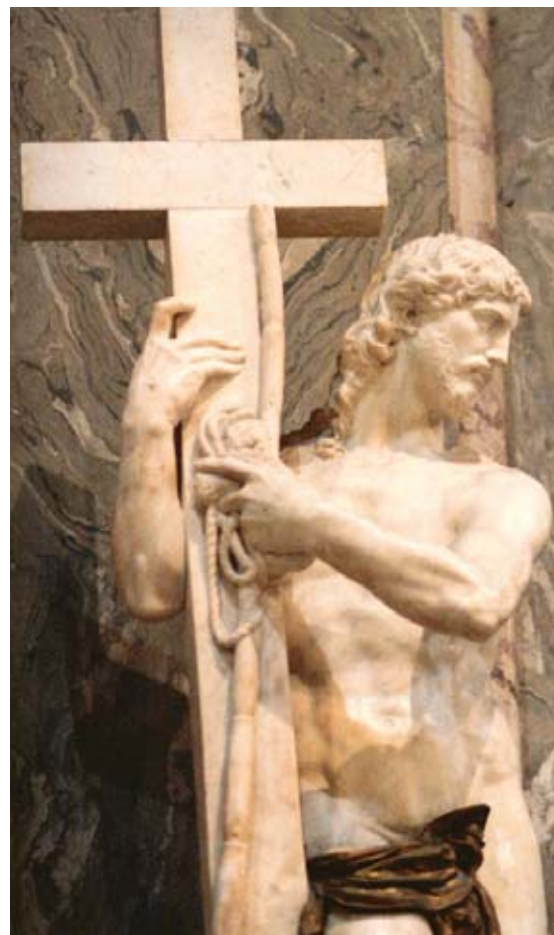
"For me the Resurrection means that as a member of the risen Church I too will experience resurrection," he said.

"I believe we are an Easter people, alive, in the air. Anyone who believes in Christ as the Lamb of God will see his risen form in the hereafter, experiencing, first hand, the mystery and wonder of Easter."

The events of Holy Week, Fr de Hahn continued, are all part of this mystery, starting with the Lamb offering himself at the Last Supper, a total giving ("this Body, this Blood...shed for you"), where he told his disciples he would not be with them on the following day, when he was delivered for their redemption.

Thus the events of Holy Thursday, he said, are a wonderful preparation for Good Friday, a time of deep expectation, of something truly great taking place afterwards—the highest possible reward for major sacrifice.

This, Fr de Hahn said, is supremely important, because it fully expresses the true meaning of love and redemption. "For love to be possessed it must also be given. In the case of the Easter mystery it goes to the very extremities of sacrifice," he said.



A statue of the Risen Christ, started by Michelangelo but completed by an assistant in 1521, in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome. The figure shows Christ's conquest over suffering and death.

PHOTO: NANCY WIECHEC, CNS

## MONASTERY RETREAT HOUSE

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### MARCH 27 - APRIL 4

**HOLY WEEK**, from supper Mar 27 (Saturday before Palm Sunday) to breakfast Apr 4 (Easter Sunday):

#### 1. The Paschal Mystery

English: Fr Chris Neville OFM

Zulu: Fr Michael Gumede OFM

#### 2. Dives in Misericordia: On "The Mercy of God" by John Paul II and St Faustina

Presented by Fr Urs Fischer CMM

### APRIL 30 - MAY 2

Mgr Paul Nadal: "Jesus Christ I" Son of

God, Son of Man, Sign of contradiction.

Weekend from supper Apr 30 to lunch May 2.

### JUNE 4-6

Mgr Paul Nadal: "Jesus Christ II" Risen and

alive. Lord today and for ever. Weekend

from supper June 4 to lunch June 6.

### JUNE 25-27

Mgr Paul Nadal "Caritas Veritate" Papal

Encyclical Letter of Pope Benedict XVI.

Love as personal gift, love as social gift.

Weekend from supper June 25 to lunch 27.

### JUNE 27-JULY 05

Fr Urs Fischer & Team: 7-Day Guided

Retreats, from supper June 27 to breakfast July 05

### JULY 16-18

Fr Pierre Lavoipierre: "The heart of the Mat-

ter" Lord, you know me, see me, and my heart is in your hands. Weekend from sup-

per July 16 to lunch 18

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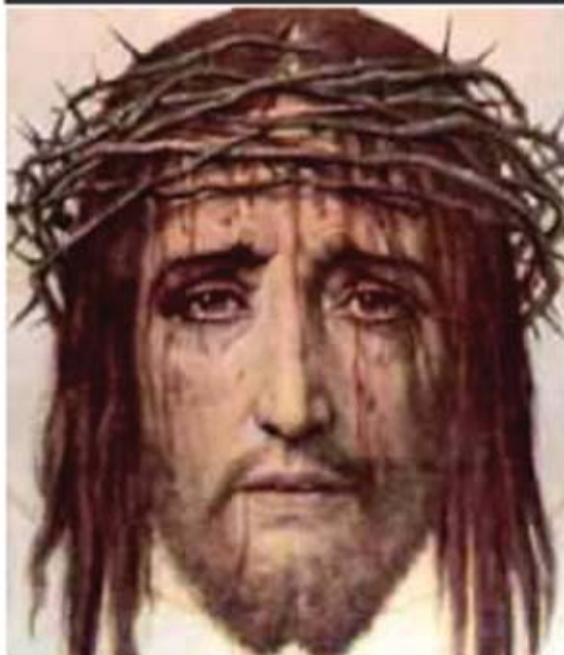
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# The GIFT of "MERCY SUNDAY" - GOD'S PLAN to heal His children!

"Help Me, My daughter, help Me to save souls.."



"Souls perish despite My bitter Passion...#965  
The loss of each soul plunges Me into mortal sadness.... The prayer most pleasing to me is the prayer for the conversion of sinners."  
#1397

## THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY

Jesus said:

"Write that when they say this chaplet in the presence of the dying, I will stand between My Father and the dying person, not as the Just Judge but as the Merciful Saviour. # 1541

Pray using ordinary rosary beads-begin with:  
Our Father....Hail Mary....Apostles Creed.

On the large beads before each decade pray:

Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

On the ten small beads of each decade pray:

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Conclude with:

Holy God, Holy Mighty one, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world. x 3

**JESUS I TRUST IN YOU!**

"MANKIND WILL NOT FIND PEACE UNTIL IT TURNS WITH **TRUST** TO MY MERCY!"

"Let all mankind recognise My unfathomable Mercy. It is a sign of the end times; after it will come the day of justice. While there is still time, let them have recourse to the fount of My Mercy; let them profit from the BLOOD and WATER which gushed forth for them."

**HAPPY EASTER!**  
He is Risen! He is truly Risen!  
**ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA!**

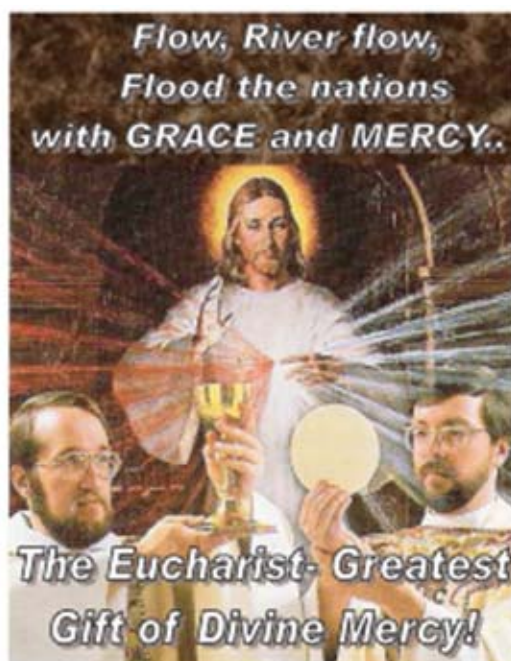
Let us now continue to give thanks to God for the great **GIFT** of the **RESURRECTION** throughout the Octave of Easter and prepare our hearts to receive the unimaginable **GRACES** that Jesus desires to grant us on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of our Easter celebration.....

The total **FORGIVENESS** of all **SINS** and **PUNISHMENT** - an extraordinary **GIFT** that is comparable to a **NEW BAPTISM!**

**THE FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY**  
11 April, 2010

I desire that **priests** proclaim this great mercy of Mine towards souls of sinners. #50

Our Lord said "I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and a shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. The very depths of My Mercy will be opened on that day. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My mercy. The soul that will **go to Confession** and **receive Holy Communion** will obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day are opened all the divine floodgates through which graces flow. # 699



From the pierced side of the Risen Lamb, comes the flow of **BLOOD** and **WATER**, the sacramental life of the Church!

"Look, I come to make the whole of creation new!" Rev 21:5



**"Jesus, I Trust in You!"**

## THE IMAGE OF DIVINE MERCY

Jesus said... "I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the Fountain of Mercy...that vessel is this image with the signature **"JESUS I TRUST IN YOU"**...the graces of My Mercy are drawn by one vessel only, that is **TRUST**." By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls, so let every soul have access to it" (742, 570).

**Pope Benedict XVI** supports such an image in all the churches to prepare us in hope for the Second Coming of Jesus! (in his book "Spirit of the Liturgy.")

"..To **priests** who will proclaim and extol My mercy, I will give wondrous power, and I will anoint their words and touch the hearts of those to whom they will speak". (Diary 1521)

For more info on Jesus Message of Divine Mercy, please e-mail [educare@lantic.net](mailto:educare@lantic.net) or Tel: 031 7852925

## WHAT JESUS ASKS OF US FOR HIS FEAST OF MERCY

The spiritual good of the faithful demands they know what great graces they can obtain by the Holy Communion received on the Feast of Mercy and **the conditions for obtaining this grace:**

- The Feast should be preceded by a **Novena of Chaplets to the Divine Mercy** beginning on **Good Friday**. (God's time is not our time - pray extra for days gone by)
- The Sermon by the **priest** - should be on Divine Mercy - that is the mercy which God the Father bestows on us through Jesus Christ, His Son.
- The Image of Divine Mercy is to be ceremoniously blessed by the **priest** on this day.
- The Image should be exposed to all taking part in the celebration and is to be **publicly venerated**. (ie Cross on Good Friday) all touch say "Jesus I trust in You)
- **Confession** - a good confession. (close to the day- 7 days either side) The Plenary Indulgence granted by the Church has extended this to 20 days.
- **Holy Communion** on the day - as always should be a worthy one and should be accompanied by complete trust in Divine Mercy.
- That an **act of Mercy** should take place in our lives, as part of our preparation for the feast. We are to be merciful in our words, deeds and prayers.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- The Feast of Mercy is an official feast of the Church plus the Holy See issued on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2002 a special Plenary Indulgence for Divine Mercy Sunday

Our Lord has provided us a perfect way to **EVANGELIZE** and bring our lost sheep back home and this great Feast has everything we need to **restore our Church!!**

**"Do whatever is within your power to spread devotion to My mercy. I will make up for what you lack."** (1074)



**RELAXING GETAWAY:** The Empangeni branch of the Catholic Women's League enjoyed a relaxing few days at the sea resort village of Mtunzini.



**PAYING TRIBUTE:** Theo Adams in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin at St Theresa's parish in Welcome Estate, Cape Town, soon after the statue was completed.

PHOTO: THERESA LOUW



**CATHOLIC CULTURE:** The Pietermaritzburg branch of the KwaZulu-Natal Catholic University held a cultural Mass which more than 100 students from all over Africa attended.

SUBMITTED BY FR NORONHA AQUIN

**IN FOCUS** Edited by Nadine Christians

Send photographs, with sender's name and address on the back, and a SASE to: *The Southern Cross*, Community Pics, Box 2372, Cape Town, 8000 or email them to: [pics@scross.co.za](mailto:pics@scross.co.za)

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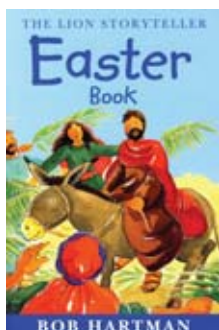
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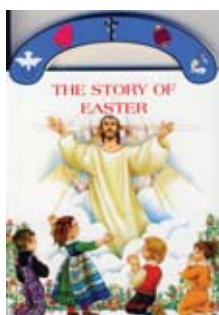
A list of current pilgrimages can be viewed by clicking on the Valley View Travel icon at [www.catholic-friends.com](http://www.catholic-friends.com)

## FOR CHILDREN



**THE LION STORYTELLER EASTER BOOK** Bob Hartman

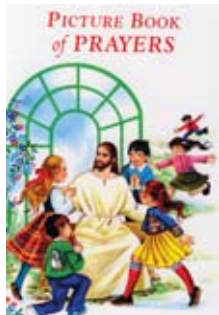
23 memorable short stories for children—share in the excitement of the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to the joy of his friends on the first Easter morning and more! 2005 pb 96pp R79.95



**PRAYING WITH THE FIRST CHRISTIANS**

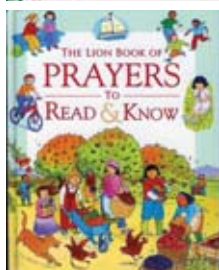
Juliette Leivier Children aged 5 - 8 can pray with Ss Stephen and Barnabas, St Monica and her son St Augustine and many others 2008 colour illus hc 44pp R103.00

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**THE LION BOOK OF PRAYERS TO READ & KNOW** Sophie Piper & Anthony Lewis

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**SINGING TO THE HEAVENS:** Members of the St Joseph's Marist College foundation and intermediate phase choirs enjoyed a fun moment with the Three Tons of Fun divas, Dorothy Engelbrecht, Stella Magaba and Lillian Khumalo. Pictured with the divas are choir members Lebuhang Gqotso, Sethu Luthuli, Odwa Bukani, Wanda Bassie, Neo Carolissen, Marzia Barry and Zoë Leeuwendaal.

SUBMITTED BY SHERYL GELDERBLOEM



**SIX DECADES:** A special thanksgiving Mass was celebrated for Mijo and Bernard Dufour for their 60th wedding anniversary. They are parishioners at St Francis of Assisi in Standerton.

SUBMITTED BY ANSELM NJOKU



**PLANNING TOGETHER:** The Mthatha Diocesan Animation Team (DAT) attended a workshop and prayer session at Port St Johns parish. The workshop was facilitated by Fr Gabriel Afagbegee SVD from the Lumko Institute in Johannesburg, and included the evaluation and planning of DAT ministries.

SUBMITTED BY FRANCIS NGADI

# The Christian struggle for justice

**JOURNEYING FOR JUSTICE: Stories for an Ongoing Faith-based Struggle.** Jive Media, Pietermaritzburg. 2009. 144pp.

Reviewed by Chris Chatteris SJ

THIS attractively produced and illustrated book recounts the 30-year history of the Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness (PACSA), a small, ecumenical NGO dedicated to the struggle for social justice.

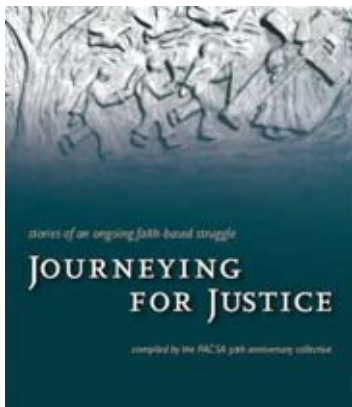
Small but always punching well above its weight, PACSA played a key role in the Natal Midlands during the transition to democracy. As a young priest in Elandsdorp from 1985-92, I can testify to PACSA's effectiveness in standing for the truth, and I recall its support with gratitude.

The key figure in PACSA's history was Peter Kerchoff, after whom a street has been named in Pietermaritzburg and to whose memory a mosaic portraying him as the Good Samaritan was created outside the Anglican cathedral by Dina Cormick. A married man with four children, he quit his job as the chief chemist for the aluminium company Alcan in 1978 to become PACSA's organising secretary.

Peter and his wife Joan set up an office in a room in their backyard with little more than an old typewriter. They approached Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban for funds, and his good offices brought them their first overseas financial support, from the German Catholic funding agency Misereor.

It was from these mustard-seed beginnings that the organisation began and, as one contributor remarks, at the time the task before them was "almost laughable in its enormity".

PACSA's first project was to



throw a spotlight on forced removals by documenting the plight of the people of KwaPitela, who had been banished to a bleak and remote place with the Orwellian name of Compensation Farm. In word and in photo-image, PACSA exposed the suffering of this community.

Since these early courageous beginnings it has never flinched from telling the truth. Reliable information was an important weapon, which PACSA gathered through a local ecumenical network.

In its factsheets and *agape*-based liturgies, PACSA's initial aim was to challenge white South Africans to take the social gospel seriously in the raw context of what turned out to be the dying days of apartheid. At the time, of course, there was no guarantee that apartheid's days were numbered. The state of emergency in 1986 suggested otherwise. This, however, did not deter the growing number of PACSA members, black and white, who expanded their activities into ever greater areas of need.

The well-informed PACSA

became a thorn in the side of the security forces in the days of the "total onslaught", and it suffered much harassment. Peter Kerchoff himself was detained in 1986, and some members paid the ultimate price, most notably peace monitor S'khumbuzo Mbatha, who was assassinated after a PACSA workshop on February 8, 1992.

After 1994, PACSA sought a new direction for itself. Peter Kerchoff's dictum, "It's not the new South Africa, it's the *real* South Africa", expressed the organisation's sober assessment of the new situation. There was much yet to do—in monitoring future elections, in the fight for gender equality, in combating the "new apartheid" of poverty and Aids, and in countering xenophobia.

As a study in how an NGO adapts after successful radical change, this book makes very interesting reading, and also in how an organisation survives the departure of its founder member, for Peter Kerchoff was tragically killed in a car accident in 1999.

This is a beautiful book, evocatively illustrated with press photographs, maps, artwork, cartoons and symbols. It is a "democratic" book, in which much space is given to moving quotations from ordinary people and PACSA's workers.

There appears to be no single author or editor. The collective and inclusive production method portrays the organisation's underlying community-based values.

*Journeying for Justice* is a nourishing blend of local history, liberation theology and spirituality in action.

■ The book is available from [www.clusterpublications.co.za](http://www.clusterpublications.co.za)

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## The roots of the 'liturgy wars'

**A CHALLENGING REFORM: Realizing the Vision of the Liturgical Renewal 1963 – 1975,** by Archbishop Piero Marini (edited by Mark R Francis CSV, John R. Page, Keith F. Pecklers SJ). Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota. 2007. 205pp

Reviewed by Paddy Kearney

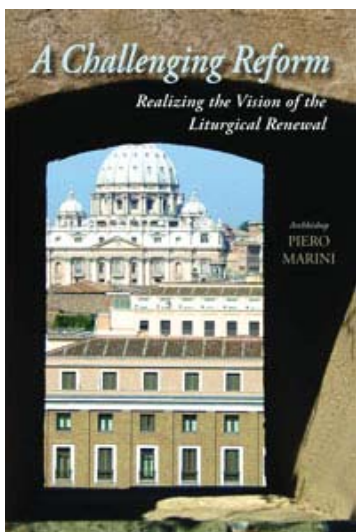
THE author of this scholarly study, Archbishop Piero Marini, was Papal Master of Ceremonies from 1987 to 2007. I had the pleasure of interviewing him in his Vatican office during that time, and seeing the spectacular view he had of St Peter's Square. He must have often looked down into that square as he choreographed splendid outdoor liturgical celebrations during John Paul II's pontificate.

Piero Marini is of course not to be confused with another Marini, his successor as papal MC, Mgr Guido Marini. Not only are they not related, but they appear to have little in common.

Archbishop Piero is steeped in Vatican II theology and liturgical reform, while his namesake is part of the move to turn the clock back, introducing a much more extensive use of Latin in the liturgy, going into the "Vatican attic" to bring out vestments of an age when lace was all the rage, re-instating kneeling for Communion on the tongue, and so on.

Already at the time of my interview in 2005, Piero Marini made the telling remark about the state of liturgical reform: "We are in a time of difficulties."

The roots of those difficulties are the subject of this book which documents the great struggle from 1963-75 to implement the Vatican II vision of a reformed liturgy. Though the decree on liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) had been passed by



2 147 votes, with only four opposed, according to Archbishop Marini "the more traditionalist members of the curia would try to circumvent the process of implementation by opposing real liturgical change and maintaining the status quo", a stance resoundingly rejected by the council.

Pope Paul VI who knew very well what obstacles there would be in the path of thorough reform, instituted a new structure known as the Consilium to ensure that *Sacrosanctum Concilium* would be implemented despite stiff opposition. He placed the Consilium under the presidency of the ardent reformer, Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro of Bologna, with another notable progressive, Fr Annibale Bugnini, as its highly efficient and effective secretary. Pope Paul gave them his full backing, but was not always able to counter resistance from the Sacred Congregation of Rites which was distinctly unhappy that it had been side-lined in the process.

This book recounts the power

struggle between these two bodies and how sometimes the battle was won by the Consilium and sometimes by the Congregation of Rites.

Eventually both structures were scrapped in 1972 and replaced by one body, known as the Congregation for Divine Worship. This time the tension was not between two bodies but within one because Paul VI used what was apparently a favourite strategy, appointing a conservative president (Archbishop James Robert Knox of Melbourne) and a progressive secretary (Annibale Bugnini), hoping that would satisfy both conservatives and progressives. More often it led to a kind of paralysis. In this case, after Bugnini found himself increasingly marginalised, he gave up the unequal struggle.

Piero Marini, who was Bugnini's secretary for several years, is well placed to tell the inside story. But what he has produced, though meticulously researched and accurate, is not exactly a "page turner"—more like a text book for advanced liturgical studies. The reader needs to be well versed in Latin because of the numerous untranslated quotations and titles of documents, and to have a taste for regurgitated minutiae of innumerable meetings.

If one manages, with Gandhian self-discipline, to cut a swathe through dense thickets of detail, one will emerge with important insights that will help in understanding the liturgical wars currently raging, for example about the new English text for the Mass.

It's clear that the Roman curia is now calling the liturgical shots almost without opposition. In this era, Archbishop Marini's role is limited to organising eucharistic congresses and writing books.



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# First ever African-American priest may become a saint

*The United States' first black diocesan priest was born into slavery and faced much racism before and after his ordination. Now the archdiocese of Chicago has opened his sainthood cause, as*  
JOYCE DURIGA and DANIEL SMITH report

FATHER Augustine Tolton was the first priest in the United States of African descent—and he may one day be canonised a saint.

The archdiocese of Chicago is introducing the priest's cause for canonisation.

"It is appropriate that, during this Year for Priests, we recall our forebears who were holy men in the presbyterate" of the archdiocese, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago told the *Catholic New World*, the archdiocesan newspaper.

"First of all, saints intercede," he said. "We need his prayers and his help, especially to become a more united Church. Secondly, his example of priestly dedication, his learning and preaching, are great examples for our seminarians and priests and should inspire the laity."

Fr Tolton was born into slavery in Brush Creek, Missouri, according to *From Slave to Priest*, a biography of the priest by Sr Caroline Hemesath, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

His parents, Peter and Martha Tolton, were married in a Catholic ceremony. The couple had two sons and a daughter.

During the American Civil War in the 1860s, Peter Tolton escaped to St Louis to serve in the Union Army. Shortly afterwards, when Augustine was 9, Martha Tolton bundled up her three children and escaped across the Mississippi River and hiked to Quincy, Illinois, a sanctuary for runaway slaves. After the war ended, Martha learned her husband had died soon after his arrival in St Louis.

In Quincy, Martha and her sons began working in a cigar factory. They attended Mass at St Boniface church with other black Catholics. Augustine attended St Boniface School for a brief time, then went to public school.

Later he went to school at St Peter's parish, where he became an altar server and began to feel he had a vocation to the priesthood. Franciscan Father Peter McGirr, St Peter's pastor, encouraged his vocation, though there would be many roadblocks to ordination.

According to *From Slave to Priest*, no US seminary would accept him. Neither would the Franciscans or the Josephites. Meanwhile, several local priests educated Augustine for the seminary.

Years later he was accepted to the Pontifical College of the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, which trained seminarians for ordination and missionary work around the world. After six years of study there, Augustine was

ordained on April 24, 1886, in Rome's St John Lateran basilica.

College officials felt he should be a missionary in his own country, not in Africa.

Father Tolton was uneasy about returning to the US, knowing the racism he would face. But he returned to Quincy, celebrating his first Mass on July 18, 1886, at St Boniface church. He was named pastor of St Joseph church, a black parish affiliated with St Boniface.

Racism and anti-Catholicism hindered his ministry in Quincy. He asked his superiors if he could accept an invitation from archbishop Patrick Feehan in Chicago to minister to black Catholics there. His appeal was granted in December 1889.

By all accounts Fr Tolton worked tirelessly for his congregation in Chicago, even to the point of exhaustion. On July 9, 1897, he died of heat stroke while returning from a priests' retreat. He was 43.

Chicago's Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Perry is organising Fr Tolton's cause for the archdiocese. He said he is now poring through archival material to prepare a report about his life that will go to Cardinal George and then on to the Congregation for Saints' Causes at the Vatican.

In Fr Tolton's case, this will be termed an "ancient" cause because there are no living witnesses to the candidate's life and all research comes after the fact, Bishop Perry explained, but he thinks there will be "enough material for Rome's initial examination".

Bishop Perry's office is putting



Fr Augustine Tolton was born into slavery in Missouri and ordained a priest in Rome in 1886. The canonisation cause of Fr Tolton, the first US diocesan priest of African descent, was opened in Chicago in March.

PHOTO: ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO ARCHIVES AND RECORDS CENTER

together a holy card with a prayer that God intervene on behalf of Fr Tolton's cause that will be distributed throughout the archdiocese.

"We are trying to find out what devotion to Fr Tolton exists," the bishop said.

Fr Tolton is an example for all

Catholics because he represents the highest ideal they wish to see in priests, Bishop Perry said.

"His quiet witness is a challenge to our prejudices and narrow-mindedness that keeps us insulated from the variety in the kingdom of God," he said.



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|               |            |                      |
|---------------|------------|----------------------|
| Good Friday   | 2nd April  | after 3.00pm Service |
| Holy Saturday | 3rd April  | 08.00am              |
| Easter Sunday | 4th April  | 11.15am              |
| Monday        | 5th April  | 08.15am              |
| Tuesday       | 6th April  | 06.30pm              |
| Wednesday     | 7th April  | 7.00pm               |
| Thursday      | 8th April  | 7.00pm               |
| Friday        | 9th April  | 6.30pm               |
| Saturday      | 10th April | 10.15am              |

### Feast of Divine Mercy on Sunday 11th April

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Holy Hour | 2.00pm |
| Mass      | 3.00pm |

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For wherever your treasure is, there will be your heart too. Mt. 6: 21

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### JOHANNESBURG:

- ☐ First Saturday of each month rosary prayed 10:30-12:00 outside Marie Stopes abortion clinic, Peter Place, Bryanston. ☎ Joan Beyrooti, 782 4331

### PRETORIA:

- ☐ First Saturday: Devotion to Divine Mercy. St Martin de Porres, Sunnyside, 16:30. ☎ Shirley-Anne 361 4545.

### CAPE TOWN:

- ☐ Quiet Day of Prayer at Springfield Convent, Wynberg, last Saturday monthly 10.00-16.00. ☎ Jane 021 790 1668 or Veronica 083 254 6174.

- ☐ Adoration Chapel, Corpus Christi church, Wynberg: Mon-Thur 6am to 12pm; Fri-Sun 6am to 8pm. Adorers welcome. ☎ 021-761 3337

- ☐ Holy Hour to pray for priests of the diocese, 2nd Saturday monthly at Villa Maria shrine Kloof Nek Rd 16:00-17:00.

- ☐ Blessed Sacrament exposed daily Monday to Friday 09:00-22:00 in Holy Redeemer church, Bergvliet Rd, Bergvliet. Visitors welcome.

### RUSTENBURG

- ☐ Eucharistic adoration every Thursday at St Peter's, Tlhabane, 18:00. Tel ☎ 014 565 5152. All welcome

### BETHLEHEM:

- ☐ Shrine of Our Lady of Bethlehem at Tsheseng, Maluti mountains; Thursdays 09:30, Mass, then exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. ☎ 058 721 0532

Entries in the community calendar, which is published as space allows, are free of charge. To place your event, call Gene Donnelly, 021 465 5007, or email [gened@scross.co.za](mailto:gened@scross.co.za)



## Thoughts for the Week on the Family

### FAMILY CALENDAR:

#### 2010 FAMILY THEME:

"Families Play the Game."

#### APRIL THEME: God's game plan

#### INTRODUCTION

God's plan goes back a very long way and involves the whole of creation. It evolved over many millions of years and continues to evolve. We human beings were given the task of being custodians of God's plan when it comes to the world around us as well as within us.

During this special Easter month, reflect on God's plan of salvation; give thanks for the wonderful world God created, and resolve to look into God's game plan for you, and so to build up your own little world, starting at home.

**April 3, Easter Vigil.** As people renew their baptismal vows, have some fun together; look up all your baptism photos, and talk about the meaning of your baptism for you.

**April 4, Easter Sunday.** The joy of the Resurrection is God's joy and ours. It is his plan of salvation that has reached its fulfillment. Find some special ways to celebrate that Easter joy at home, using appropriate symbols, like lamb and eggs.

**April 5, Easter Monday, Family Day in South Africa.** It is not easy to get a family together at the end of a long weekend, but do whatever is possible to help family members celebrate the gift of family life as part of God's plan.

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### DEATH

**McNALLY**—Norman. Passed away peacefully on March 9, 2010. With gratitude for and in celebration of a life lived with deep compassion and faithful service to many, especially those in Contemplative Outreach South Africa. We bid farewell to a fellow pilgrim, friend, leader and wisdom teacher.

### PRAYERS

**HOLY St Jude**, apostle and martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke you, special patron in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg you to come to my assistance. Help me now in my urgent need and grant my petitions. In return I promise to make your name known and publish this prayer. Amen. CMC

"**HOLY St Jude** Apostle and martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, near kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg you to whom God has given such great power, come to my assistance. Help me in my present urgent petition. In return I promise to make your name known and cause you to be invoked. Three Our Father's, three hail Mary's, three Glory be's. St Jude pray for us and all who invoke your aid. Amen." Say this novena for nine consecutive days Publication promised. ML

"**HOLY St Jude**, apostle and martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke you, special patron in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg you to come to my assistance. Help me now in my urgent need and grant my petitions. In return I promise to make your name known and publish this prayer. Amen." RCP

### THANKS

GRATEFUL thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Mother Mary, Ss Joseph, Anthony, Jude and Martin de Porres for prayers answered. RCP

THANKSGIVING to Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; to Our Lady, St Joseph, St Christopher and St Martin de Porres. ML

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### Mass readings for the Week

**Sundays year C, weekdays cycle 2**

**Sun April 4, RESURRECTION OF THE LORD:**

Acts 10:34-37-43; Ps 118:1-2.16-17.22-23;  
Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8;  
Jn 20:1-9 or Lk 24:1-12

**Mon April 5, Easter Octave:**

Acts 2:14.22-33. Ps 16:1-2.5.7-11; Mt 28:8-15

**Tue April 6, Easter Octave:**

Acts 2:36-41; Ps 33:4-5.18-20.22; Jn 20:11-18

**Wed April 7, Easter Octave:**

Acts 3:1-10; Ps 105:1-4.6-9; Lk 24:13-35

**Thur April 8, Easter Octave:**

Acts 3:11-26; Ps 8:2.5-9; Luke 24:35-48

**Fri April 9, Easter Octave:**

Acts 4:1-12; Ps 118:1-2.4.22-27; Jn 21:1-14

**Sat April 10, Easter Octave:**

Acts 4:13-21; Ps 118:1.14-21; Mk 16:9-15

**Sun April 11, 2nd Sunday of Easter:**

Acts 5:12-16; Ps 118:2.4.22-27; Rv 1:9-13.17-19; Jn 20:19-31

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Published independently by the  
Catholic Newspaper & Publishing  
Company Ltd, Cape Town

Opinions expressed in this newspaper do  
not necessarily reflect those of the editor,  
staff or directors of The Southern Cross.

**ABC**  
The Southern Cross is a member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations of South Africa. Printed by Paarl Post, 8 Jan van Riebeeck Drive, Paarl. Published by the proprietors, The Catholic Newspaper & Publishing Co Ltd, at the company's registered office, 10 Tuin Plein, Cape Town, 8001.

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# The Southern Cross

March 31 to April 6, 2010

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**2nd Sunday of Easter, Year C (Apr 11)**

**Readings: Acts 5:12-16; Psalm 118:2-4.22-27a; Revelation 1:9-13.17-19; John 19-31**

**W**E are into the Easter season now, and it is important to examine how we are to respond to the Resurrection, the heart of our faith.

In the readings for next Sunday, we find a variety of possible responses. In the **first reading**, from Acts of the Apostles, which we shall follow on Sundays throughout the Easter season, we have one of the "summaries" in which Luke specialises, painting a picture with a broad brush.

We read that God, through the apostles, brought about "many signs and portents among the people", that outsiders were scared to join them, but that "the people held them in high esteem", and at the same time "believers in the Lord grew in number, crowds of men and women", and healings and exorcisms went on apace.

The **psalm** remind us that resurrection also implies crucifixion; it is the hymn they sang when Jesus made his fateful entry into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. The first few verses have the refrain:

## How does the resurrection strike you?

**Fr Nicholas King SJ**  
**Scriptural Reflections**



"[God]'s love is forever". Then we leap ahead, to the line: "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone", and we cannot help reading this as a reference to what happened to Jesus. God is in charge, however, and so we sing: "This is the day the Lord made; let us rejoice in it and be glad!"

But we also sing "Hosanna" ("Save us, please!"), meaning that we realise our joy cannot be naïve, before reverting to the joyous acclamation of Christ's coming: "Blessed is the one who comes in the Lord's name...the Lord is God; he has given us light".

In the **second reading** we start the reading from the Book of Revelation that will accompany our journey through the Easter season. We meet "John" the vision-

ary who dictates this remarkable text. Like the psalmist, he is well acquainted with trouble, for he describes himself to his hearers as "your brother and partner in suffering and in kingdom, and in enduring in Jesus".

He is an exile, we learn, on the island of Patmos, and is reporting the vision he had on "the Lord's day", presumably Sunday. The vision is hard to pin down: it is "like the sound of a trumpet", and "seven golden lampstands", within which he beholds "one like a Son of Man", at which he prostrates himself. But he is told: "Do not be afraid: I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, I was a corpse, and look! I am living forever, and I hold the keys of Death and of Hell." Notice how death is part of resurrection, even in this vision, which John is then instructed to write down.

The **gospel reading** is always the same on the second Sunday of Easter. Like the other readings for the day, it recognises that things are not as simple as we might wish. The story is told in two parts. In the first, Jesus appears to the disciples

through locked doors. He wishes them "Peace", and proves his identity by showing them "his hands and his side", at which "the disciples rejoiced, having seen the Lord". The peace greeting is repeated, followed by a sending, and a "breathing on" them, which is described as "receive the Holy Spirit", along with an instruction about forgiving and holding on to sins.

In the **second part** we discover that Thomas, who is more of a character in this fourth gospel than in the others, was not present for Part 1. The other disciples gloat, and Thomas is driven to a brutally crude demand for evidence: "Unless I see in his hand the mark of the nails, and thrust my finger into the mark of the nails and my hand into his side, no way am I going to believe."

Eight days later, he gets his wish; we are not told whether he actually inserts his hand or finger. Instead, he goes way beyond the evidence and breathlessly proclaims in the climax of John's Gospel: "My Lord and my God!"

What is *your* reaction to the Resurrection, this week?

## Believing beyond seeing

**M**ANKIND'S propensity to believe in perception rather than truth never ceases to amaze me.

Certainly, the media and communications industries are frequent victims to perception playing a far more powerful role than facts. The advertising industry has long homed in on this anomaly by using perception as a way of managing the attention of consumers. Politicians, especially in this country, seem to have no idea of the power of perception.

Market research is a wonderful business tool, but sometimes opportunity arises out of perception rather than the cold hard facts that are born out of reality.

This is so particularly concerning marketing services, such as short term insurance.

Whoa! Hang on—don't turn the page! This isn't going to be an article on how to buy that necessary evil i\*n\*s\*u\*r\*a\*n\*c\*e (heaven forbid I should completely ruin your Sunday).

No, it's all about management of perceptions. The dreaded I-word is coincidental, trust me.

About 30 years ago I was fortunate enough to spend a couple of years in Europe doing a lot of skiing and the occasional bit of research into international trading. Having had city life in chunks, I chose as a base of operations the tiny village of Dingy-St Clair in the mountains

**Chris Moerdyk**  
**The Last Word**



of south-eastern France, not far from Annecy and about an hour's drive from Geneva. At the end of our valley was the chateau in which St Bernard of dog fame was born.

**T**he first thing I noticed about the house I rented in a five-hectare meadow just outside the village was that the doors sported myriad locks, deadbolts and security chains. The windows all had steel shutters. Strange indeed for a place that on the face of it was the epitome of idyllic peace.

Either the inhabitants of that part of France were unaware that World War II had been over for 30 years, or house-breaking was a popular regional sporting activity.

The intensity with which my landlord insisted that windows and doors be locked at night and when leaving the house empty, for even a minute or two, prompted me to put my first skiing sortie

into the mountains on hold and drive into Annecy to buy some insurance cover.

The manager of the insurance agency listened to what I had in mind and smirked that particularly Gallic smirk reserved for Anglophones who try to give the impression that they were born and bred in France.

Before giving me an estimate of what the premium would be, he told me I would have to go to my nearest police station and get from them statistics of housebreaking and theft in my village. Quite clever!

I popped in to my local *gendarmerie* and was assured I would have the information within days. Two days later I went back and didn't even manage to get through the door when an excited *gendarme* came bolting out, waving a piece of paper.

"I've found it, I've found it," he exclaimed. "Found what?" I asked.

"A case of house-breaking in your village...it was on June 24, 1765."

I didn't bother to go back to the insurance agent, but phoned him instead. "Forget the insurance—there hasn't been a single case of housebreaking in my village for the past 212 years. I'll take my chances, thanks."

The place was peacefully idyllic, after all. So why the locks, bolts and steel shutters? I asked the local bistro owner, a Swiss who had married a local girl.

He laughed: "Oh don't take any notice of that; it's all because of television."

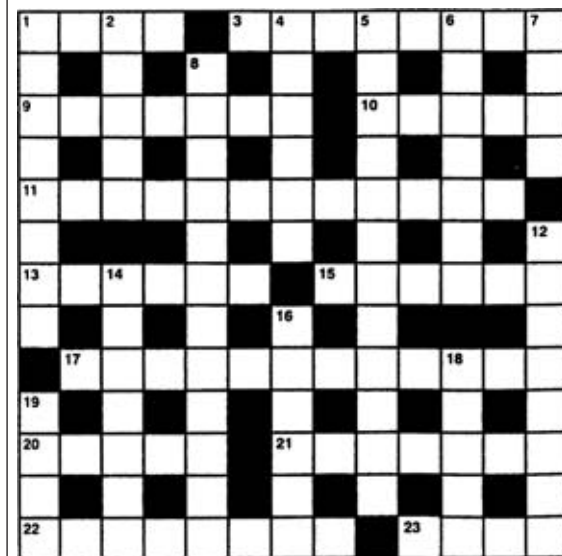
Apparently the locals avidly watched all the American cops-and-robbers programmes on TV, which scared the daylights out of them. They believed that if that kind of crime could happen in America, it could happen anywhere. After all, McDonald's had come from America and proliferated at an astonishing rate, so why not crime?

Now, the insurance agent had shown a laudable streak of honesty by suggesting I get police crime statistics. But was he being a good businessman? If it was the perception of the local population that they needed protection, and if insurance would have given them even more peace of mind than the locks, bolts and shutters, wasn't he entitled to make an honest killing instead of putting them off?

Is making a mint out of perceptions good management or bad business?

Of course, if that had been any big city in South Africa in 2010, I know exactly what would have happened.

## Southern Crossword #384



### ACROSS

1. White lies (4)
3. Lady mops around Old Testament hymns (8)
9. Town of the Little Flower (7)
10. Recognised (5)
11. He works in association (12)
13. They own lands in the Highlands (6)
15. I was in... and you came to see me (Mt 25) (6)
17. They're of prime importance to architects (12)
20. Row of bushes at church edge (5)
21. Eastern co-heir mixed up saying goodbye (7)
22. Has spire in church regions (8)
23. Looks at dioceses (4)

### DOWN

1. And maybe shivered (4,4)
2. Aromatic plant for the saint (5)
4. So, next old sacristan (6)
5. How the male religious might treat you? (4,1,7)
6. Giving off a smell (7)
7. Are they desires for money in Japan? (4)
8. They sang at the Nativity (6,6)
12. Stains on the scribe's fingers (8)
14. In the convent and in good shape (2,5)
16. Nativity scene in the nursery (6)
18. She's mostly in hospital (5)
19. One off the old block (4)

SOLUTIONS TO #383. ACROSS: 3 Chock-full, 8 Agog, 9 Converted, 10 Enfold, 11 Anger, 14 Oscar, 15 Sion, 16 Ethos, 18 Eras, 20 Their, 21 Nomad, 24 Clinic, 25 Principal, 26 Flee, 27 Pertinent. DOWN: 1 Latecomer, 2 Confucian, 4 Hood, 5 Coven, 6 Furies, 7 Lies, 9 Clare, 11 Ached, 12 River Nile, 13 Unfrosted, 17 Still, 19 Sonnet, 22 Alien, 23 True, 24 Cain.

CONRAD



"Could this be the eternal battle between light and darkness?"

## CHURCH CHUCKLE

**O**NE of the opossums was St Matthew, who was also a taximan. St Paul cavorted to Christianity. He preached holy acrimony, which is another name for marriage.

*From examination reply papers of a Catholic primary school. More to come!*

Send us your favourite Catholic joke, preferably clean and brief, to The Southern Cross, Church Chuckle, PO Box 2372, Cape Town, 8000.