



PREGNANCY  
ASSISTANCE  
SERVICE OF LIFE

# Abundant Life

*"I have come so that you may have  
life and have it more abundantly."*

*John 10:10*



March 2008

Vol. 12 No. 1

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## *Have no Fear*

Have no Fear of moving  
 into the unknown.  
 Simply step out fearlessly  
 knowing that I am with you,  
 therefore no harm can  
 befall you.  
 All is very, very well.  
 Do this in complete faith  
 and confidence.

Pope John Paul II

Front Cover: Baby Shannon  
 See story page 6

## Abundant Life

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 Volume 12 Number 1

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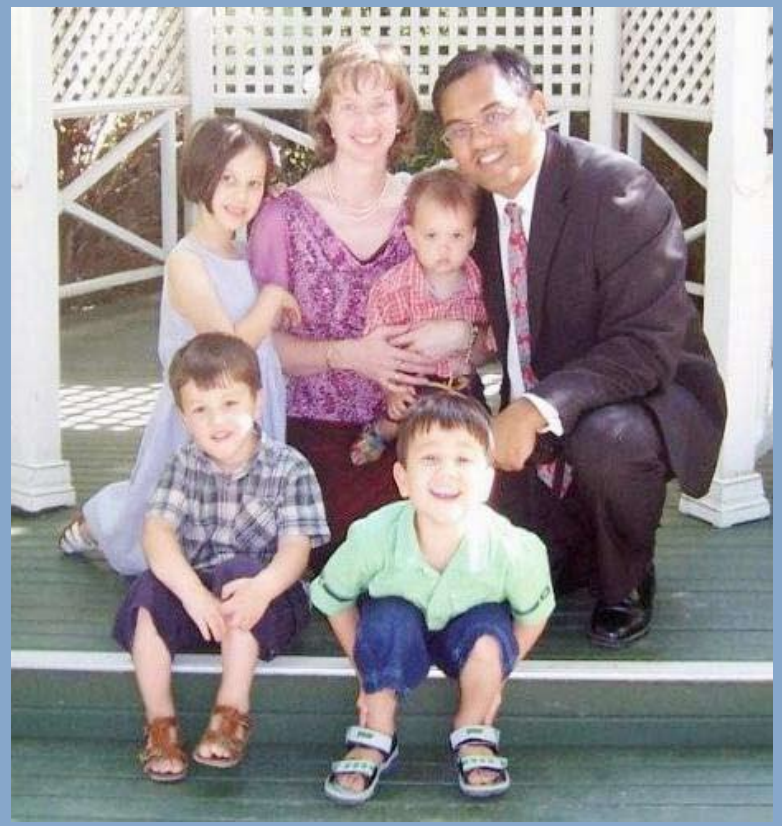
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Therese and Suryan Chandrasegaran with their children  
 Maria (6), Joseph (5), William (3) and Patrick (15mths)

# Letters

from our friends

As I read your wonderful newsletter (Abundant Life) I was inspired to write and tell you this victory story of a town in Russian occupied Europe. In this town the Russians tried everything to stop faith in Christ growing – they tried everything but the people resisted – steadfast in the Faith!

The people had erected a cross on a particular hill and then the Russians bulldozed it, but the people didn't give up – one by one they came back to the hill to put new crosses.

Eventually the Russian occupation passed and the soldiers left but the hill of the crosses prevailed – because Christ Is Risen!

Don't give up Pregnancy Assistance because the Lord Jesus Christ will provide.

Please find enclosed my donation. I recently sang at the wind-up party for St Vincent de Paul in Scarborough/City Beach/Woodlands Conferences and sold quite a few CDs with the proceeds going to Pregnancy Assistance.

Thank you for all the tremendous work you do. God Bless.

Carmel Charlton.

(For information, bookings and copies of this CD, 'Christmas in Australia', please contact Carmel on (08) 9446 1558

God Bless you all for the work you do throughout the year in your vital ministry.

Please accept our donation. From the Friday Morning Bible Study Group at Our Lady of Lourdes, Rockingham.

Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity in giving me the pram, clothing and baby food. I was so touched by the way you gave without asking me for all my details.....you trusted me and I was blessed.

The mum I gave the pram to was so happy and extremely grateful; it is being put to good use. The baby food really helped two mums - their kids are loving it, which makes mums happy.

May God bless you all and use you to touch the lives of many women and their families as you have touched me and my friends.

Baby and family would like to let you know that we appreciate very much the work that you do.

The help and support you give to women and their families is invaluable.

May God bless and reward you abundantly.

Warm regards.

Nguyen Family



**Baby Nguyen 3/11/07**

Thank you for all your help and support this year, best wishes to you all in the years to come.

Thank you so much for your support, laughter, tears and happiness. I couldn't ask for anything else than you, coz you are the best help I have ever had! Thank you and God bless.

This is to sincerely thank your organisation for the tremendous help that you rendered my family last week. I cannot find the right words to thank you enough but please accept my thanks.

I still attend hospital and I just hope things will be well with me that I can go full term and have a healthy baby. I will definitely keep in touch.

Thank you so much and may God bless you all, Patricia.



Noah's Ark quilt donated to Pregnancy Assistance

The editor welcomes letters and emails to Abundant Life. Letters and emails should be addressed to:

Abundant Life  
195 Lord Street  
East Perth WA, 6004  
or e-mail:

[info@pregnancyassistance.org.au](mailto:info@pregnancyassistance.org.au)

The editor reserves the right to shorten, edit, or not publish letters.

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## Editorial

### Tragic Tenth Anniversary

We are approaching the tenth anniversary of that black day in the history of Western Australia when the Parliament legalized the killing of the most innocent of human beings. In the early hours of 21 May 1998, after an all-night sitting The Parliament of Western Australia passed the Bill. Only nine very honorable and courageous Members of the Legislative Council voted against what was the worst piece of legislation ever enacted by the Parliament.

#### *One child every hour*

Although abortion numbers are difficult to know accurately, because some are performed privately without a claim on medicare it can be said with certainty that since the passing of the Bill medical professionals -doctors and nurses- have killed as many as 80,000 innocent children in the womb. This is approximately one child killed each hour of every day.

Andrew Lansdown in his excellent article, Signs are everywhere on page 7 writes "Our conscience is responsible for our intuitive knowledge of right and wrong, good and evil. Even without a "book of rules", we know that it is evil to lie, steal, lust and kill. We do not need to be taught that it is wrong to be cruel, dishonest or disloyal. In addition to providing moral insight, our conscience provides moral censure."

Not so long ago this was the case with abortion. The great majority would have intuitively considered the killing of the child in the womb to be intrinsically evil and in the Criminal Code of Western Australia from 1902 until 1998 it was a serious offence with a penalty of

"imprisonment with hard labour for 14 Years"(s199,200,201)

The proclaiming of the Acts Amendment (Abortion) Act1998 changed all that. Abortion became legal on demand. But the educative power of the law has also distorted the consciences of the majority, who now accept that the killing of the unborn child is evil.

#### *Lambs among wolves*

This is being written on the Feast day of Saints Timothy and Titus, helpers and companions of Saint Paul. In the Gospel of the day (Lk10:3-9) Jesus says "I am sending you out like lambs among wolves." That had a powerful impact. Another interpretation is that God, the creator of all human life is saying this to his most fragile and defenseless of His creatures and that many will be poisoned or hacked to death in clinically clean surgeries by highly educated medical practitioners, whose consciences have been changed.

It is a tragic that Doctors of Medicine who once took an oath to preserve human life are now doing the killing. The doctors of course are assisted by graduate women nurses, whose role was the care of the sick and injured. We assume that they also have to dispose of all the discernable human parts.

The question has to be asked: why did this happen? The answer is: because the majority of the "good people" did little or nothing to stop it and have continue to re-elect those who voted for the Acts Amendment (Abortion) Act1998

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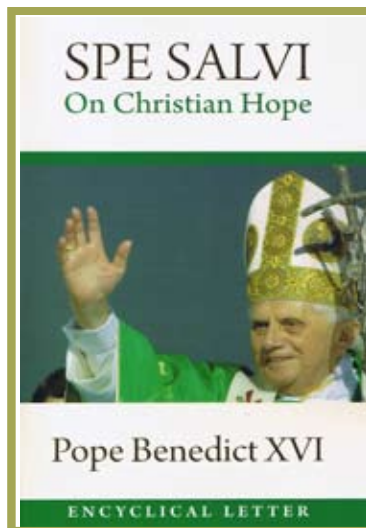
## *SPE SALVI*: POPE'S NEW ENCYCLICAL

*The love of God is revealed in responsibility for others.*

Benedict ends his encyclical with three reflections on what he calls "settings for learning and practising hope": prayer as a school of hope; action and suffering as settings for learning hope; judgment as a setting for learning and practising hope.

The reflections address the question of how we build genuine hope. He has some interesting things to say on the problems caused by identifying suffering as the main problem of the human condition: "It is when we attempt to avoid suffering by with one word drawing from anything that might involve hurt ... that we drift into a life of emptiness, in which there may be almost no pain, but the dark sensation of meaninglessness and abandonment is all the greater".

Indeed, Benedict suggest that we must be prepared to suffer: "Truth and justice must stand above my comfort and physical wellbeing, or else my life itself becomes a lie". He also urges us to



recover a sense of a 'last judgment' on human history where justice will finally reign. Indeed, he notes "I am convinced

that the question of justice constitutes the essential argument, or in any case the strongest argument, in favour of faith in eternal life".

As with *Deus Caritas Est*, this is not the encyclical we expected. A year ago Vatican officials spoke of a new encyclical that would be in the tradition of the great social encyclicals, dealing with issues such as globalisation. We are now told to expect a third encyclical in the near future.

Perhaps it is a matter of getting back to basics. Benedict is focusing our attention on central Christian truths. He is drawing us to a deeper level of reflection, building a solid foundation.

What he builds upon this foundation we are yet to see.



### Pat Lilleyman Chapel

### at Pregnancy Assistance

195 Lord Street,  
East Perth

### Mass Times:

Monday 11:00am  
Thursday 12:30pm  
Friday 11:00am

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ALL AREAS

There could be no  
great ones.....  
.....if there were no  
little ones.

Thomas Fuller

# The Love Story of Ken, Sue and baby Shannon

By Angela Spina

As a volunteer at Pregnancy Assistance for more than 8 years, I have experienced the tensions, the difficulties and the sadness of women who are pregnant and in crisis (emotional, financial, physical and spiritual). But with a firm belief that all life, from conception to a natural death, is a sacred gift from God, I have experienced the great joy that comes from having encouraged women who are considering abortion to stop, think about the consequences and receive all the emotional and material support available before making that decision, always praying that they will not go through with it.

The story of Sue and Ken (not their real names) is one of the great joyful experiences. They were brought into PA from an abortion clinic by one of the group of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants, who pray outside the clinic. I was asked to talk to them. This is always a very emotional moment saying "yes" because I fear their response when I ask them to keep their baby out of love for each other and the baby.

As I walked into the room I allowed myself to surrender to what ever God wanted out of this situation, whilst hoping for them to hear and understand the words I would say.

Sue was a 19 year old overseas student from China, probably the fourth generation of Chinese to grow up with the one child policy and abortion as a natural consequence to a pregnancy. She herself was an only child, as was her mother. She was trembling and holding onto Ken.

Ken was a 21 year old overseas student, a non practicing Buddhist, from Malaysia. He was very reserved but did all the talking. He responded

to Sue's touch by holding her closer. They were both frightened of what their parents would say. Her mother would have taken her for an abortion anyway if she was in China and his parents would be very angry.

*...Sue was hugging me and thanking me for being there and letting her have her baby.*



*Shannon at 3 months*

They were too young, they were only half way through their studies. Financially they were not ready, though they were self financed by part-time employment and were not dependant on financial support from parents.

I tried to find a place where I could touch their hearts. I was slowly seeing them in another light – one of unconditional love. I started loving them, I wasn't doing my job anymore, I was loving them. This is when the Holy Spirit took over. I remember vaguely talking about love, something Buddhists understand very well. I asked them to allow this baby to have life as it was conceived by the

love that they shared for each other, which was so evident. I spoke about parental love, then God love and they understood.

*Amazing miracle*

What an amazing miracle. A few minutes later Sue was hugging me and thanking me for being there and letting her have her baby.

Praise God, their baby boy, Shannon was born on 1st July. They are wonderful parents and very soon were married.

Because of the pregnancy and the birth, Sue was unable to continue her part-time work, which meant that Pregnancy Assistance advanced an amount of money to cover a bill for university semester fees in addition to providing some of their material needs.

In recent times they have returned to their homelands and have been reconciled with their respective families who immediately fell in love with Shannon. I can understand this because when Sue went back to her studies and work, at times I cared for this lovely baby in my home and miss him greatly now he has gone.

Every time I have this experience, I accept it as God asking me to live this unconditional love in my own life, with my family and friends. It is so easy to love some one who is hurting but much harder to love some one who has hurt you. Volunteering at PA is God's gift to me, to see it as part of the experience of unconditional love in action, so I can bring it home and try to live this experience of being the first to love where ever I can.

A somewhat sad part of our work is that people like Ken and Sue will become like ships that pass in the night as they build their own lives. But they, and what God achieved, is etched deep in my heart and my memory.

## Do you want to become a pregnancy support volunteer?

The next information day will be held on  
Wednesday, 27th August 2008.

If you are interested in attending or want to find out more about  
Pregnancy Assistance before this date,  
please contact Lydia on Tel: (08) 9328 2926



On Wednesday 27th February eight women attended the  
Pregnancy Assistance Information Day.  
Angela Spina (left) shared Pregnancy Assistance's "vocation to love"  
Angela said that to her, "Love is a language. Just like a spoken  
language, the more you speak it, the better you are at it.  
At Pregnancy Assistance the love we give to the women, is the way  
we practise our love language. This love comforts them in their  
time of distress.

So....we believe that God is Love and when they are touched with our love, they are touched  
by God!

*"Authentic love is not a vague sentiment or a blind passion. It is an inner attitude that involves the whole human being. It is looking at others, not to use them but to serve them. It is the ability to rejoice with those who are rejoicing and to suffer with those who are suffering. It is sharing what one possesses so that none may continue to be deprived of what he needs. Love, in a word, is the gift of self..."*  
(Pope John Paul II, Angelus, Feb 13, 1996)



Charlie



Mercia and Charlotte



Seth - first grandson of  
Kath & Collin Russell

# PREGNANCY ASSISTANCE TO RECEIVE PROCEEDS OF ROCKINGHAM CHARITY HOME

Integrity Developments is building a two storey luxury charity home in Flinders Lane in Rockingham. The House will be sold by public auction when it is completed in April.

The founding directors of Integrity Developments, Kevin Ledger and Stephen Burns are dedicated family men and desire to give something back to those less fortunate.

Pregnancy Assistance has been chosen to receive a portion of the profits from the sale of the home. None of the profits will go back to Integrity Developments.

Other charitable organization that will also receive a share are:



Sids and Kids, Children's Leukaemia and Cancer Research, Uni Camp for Kids, Fresh start Recovery Programme, Hearts of Hope Canteen. Make a Wish Foundation, Alzheimer's Australia and Scoliosis Kids Australia.

Various suppliers of building product and services have also generously given lower rates and prices. They are Midland Brick, Cullity Timbers, National Steel, DCF electrics Refresh Air Conditioning, Fielders, Johns Hardware, Kervac Industries, Jason Windows and Arnold Schiebaan.

*An artist's impression of the charity home.*

## ***Family is the principal Agent of Peace***

### ***Pope Benedict XVI***

VATICAN CITY, (Zenit).- The family is the principal agent of peace, and whoever disrupts the family, disrupts peace, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope said this at the beginning of 2008 before reciting the midday Angelus together with the crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square on the World Day of Peace.

"We have begun a new year," he said,

"and I wish that it will be for all peaceful and prosperous."

#### *Solemnity of Mary*

The Holy Father spoke first of solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, which the Church celebrated on First January: "In Bethlehem, in the fullness of time, Jesus was born of Mary. The Son of God was made man for our salvation, and the Virgin truly became Mother of God. This immense gift

that Mary received was not reserved only for her, but for us all.

It is in the name of Mary, Mother of God and of mankind," continued the Holy Father, "that for the past 40 years, on the first day of the year, the Church has celebrated the World Day for Peace."

## ***"The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath."***

"It is particularly urgent nowadays to remember that the day of the Lord is also a day of rest from work. It is greatly to be hoped that this fact will also be recognized by civil society, so that individuals can be permitted to refrain from work without being penalized.

Christians, not without reference to the meaning of the Sabbath in the Jewish tradition, have seen in the Lord's Day a day of rest from their daily exertions.

This is highly significant, for it relativizes

work and directs it to the person: work is for man and not man for work. It is easy to see how this actually protects men and women, emancipating them from a possible form of enslavement.

As I have had occasion to say, "work is of fundamental importance to the fulfilment of the human being and to the development of society. Thus, it must always be organized and carried out with full respect for human dignity and must always serve the common good. At the same time, it is indispensable

that people not allow themselves to be enslaved by work or to idolize it, claiming to find in it the ultimate and definitive meaning of life." It is on the day consecrated to God that men and women come to understand the meaning of their lives and also of their work.

Pope Benedict XVI  
Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 74

# New strategy aimed at reducing Australia's high rate of abortion

By Lydia Fernandez

In response to the high abortion rate in Australia, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has initiated a National educational symposium titled 'Walking with Love'. A symposium will be held in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Brisbane, Adelaide, Darwin and Canberra over a few months.

The aim of the symposium is to educate people to help women who are facing an unexpected pregnancy to regain control over their lives by empowering women to embrace pregnancy and motherhood. With one in four pregnancies ending in abortion, 'Walking with Love' seeks to support women and family members already suffering the effects of abortion by helping them find healing and reconciliation.

A practical guide has been produced by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference which briefly outlines some responses that one could say to help a family member, friend or any person that may be facing an unexpected pregnancy or is suffering the effects of abortion. This booklet covers the issues of:

- supporting a woman who is facing an unplanned or difficult pregnancy;
- supporting a person whose child has been diagnosed with a disability; and
- supporting a woman who has had an abortion (or another person who has been closely affected by abortion).

When facing the choice of keeping their baby or not, many women experience a feeling of isolation and abandonment. Of their friends and family members, many think that they are helping the woman in saying "whatever decision you make I will support you". For the woman that already feels distressed and alone, this response instils a feeling of abandonment. A feeling of 'you're on your own!' For this reason, our response is so crucial to women who are pregnant.

**An example from the practical guide on 'what do women say?' -**

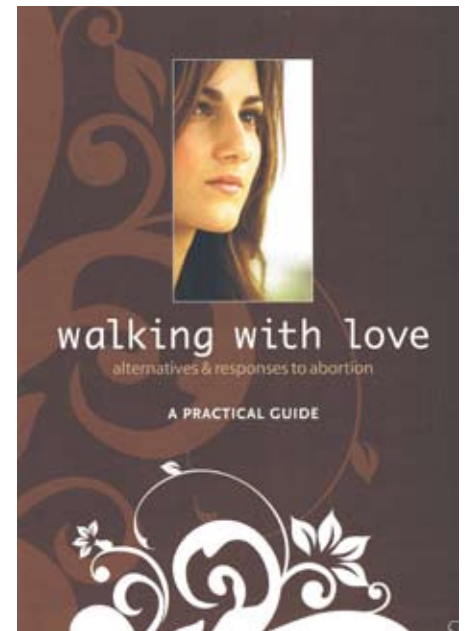
*'Lots of people told me it was my choice. I needed someone to tell me they would support me to have my baby.'*

*'He said it had to be my choice, but it was his baby too, how is that fair?'* Leanne

In the moment of distress and confusion simply having someone to listen to them without any judgement can bring great comfort to the woman. That person that they could turn to does not have to be working at a pregnancy support agency or on a telephone counselling line. That person could be someone like you. Ask her how she is feeling. Simply just holding her hand and saying to her "I'm listening" could change her 'pregnancy crisis' to a 'pregnancy happiness'!

The Chairman of the Bishops' Commission for Pastoral Life, Bishop Eugene Hurley, said, "Motherhood is a profoundly beautiful and significant moment in anybody's life and no-one should be left alone in that moment. The mother shouldn't be left alone, and nor should the father, or indeed, the baby. The Church is wanting to be close to women, to provide them with every possible support, both practical and spiritual, in carrying their baby to full term."

If you would like a 'Walking with Love' practical guide, please contact Pregnancy Assistance on 9328 2926.



## BABY ITEMS NEEDED

We need:

- cots
- cot bedding
- prams
- bassinets
- nappies (cloth & disposables)
- baby wraps
- baby bath, wipes, soap
- baby formula
- baby clothing (size 0000-0)
- baby seats (0-4yrs)



**Your donations to Pregnancy Assistance will help families and mums and bubs who come to Pregnancy Assistance for help.  
Phone 9328 2929.**

# HOMESCHOOLING?

By Philip and Lorraine Haydon

Before we married, Lorraine said she hoped to have three children. I boasted that I hoped to have six children. Well, we both got what we wanted; three beautiful girls and six active boys. Lorraine jokes that if anyone had suggested that she would be the mother of nine children, she would have considered them mad. But that's what homeschooling does – it opens the hearts of parents to inculcate the virtues in their children such that they truly want to have more

*We asked for grace and were given it*

Accordingly, our family had grown beyond the two children norm. Michael was in Year 6, David was in Year 4, Melissa had just started school and we had two babies. Was our life full? You bet! Huge doses of persistence were needed to just sit down and pray the rosary each evening. But God is good. We asked

Matthew. Both are happily married to beautiful Catholic ladies and intend homeschooling their children.

Melissa has just completed her 2nd year of nursing, Tim is an apprenticed carpenter. That still leaves Lorraine with 5 more little darlings to homeschool. They all still come and pray with us each 1st Saturday at St Anne's Church in reparation for abortion and at the pro-life holy hour each Sunday evening.



The Haydon family at the wedding of Michael and Catherine, November 2007

What sort of people begin homeschooling? All sorts. Those who do more than just try it for a while are parents who are strongly motivated to seek the best for their children. Are they perfect parents? No, but they become better through the extraordinary graces given to parents whose hearts are turned increasingly toward their children. When should I start homeschooling? How wonderful to never have the education of your children interrupted. You already teach them to walk, talk and understand the world. Homeschooling simply continues that task of parenting.

children. This is why it is common to find homeschooling families with five or more children.

Our homeschooling adventure began in 1993. Several years before, we had embraced the prayer life called for by Our Blessed Mother and soon discovered the Church's teachings about marriage.

for grace and were given it – that pretty much sums up the rest of our lives.

We continued to educate our children at home through to the end of high school. Michael is now 25 and a lawyer. David is 23 and a financial planner and gave us our first grandson,

Although Lorraine is rightly acknowledged as a homeschooling guru by the locals, she has no formal teaching experience. Her official education ended when she left school at the end of Year 10. Her vast knowledge and wisdom has all been acquired 'on the job' – children are such wonderful teachers.

We do not use one of the many prepared programs that are marketed. Our program has developed from using many of the resources available. Our aim is to encourage our children to read and discuss the very best that the world has to offer by way of historical and literary adventures. We have continued to use the excellent 'Faith and Life' series of books to teach the Catholic faith.

### Homeschooling simply continues that task of parenting.

We began homeschooling before the numerous tapes and books become available i.e. before there were 1,000,000 American children doing it. It is now an industry - a formidable part of the educational movement that picks out the best and avoids the pitfalls of sex education and dummed down schooling. We have access to the best books, methods and tutors available without having the battles and frustrations of a school system that clashes with some of our most cherished desires.

Family troubles do not cease when you homeschool, they are simply more obvious. You grow with your children and help them handle problems. It is simply so much easier to do this when you homeschool.

The key is to have children who practice the virtue of obedience. One of our friends suggested that her decision to homeschool was made while she was visiting us one day and we asked our daughter to make us all a cup of tea. Without any fuss, Therése immediately did this, much to the surprise of our visitor.

Find out more. Check out <http://www.motherofdivinegrace.org>, <http://www.setonhome.org>, <http://kolbe.org>. Come along to the



Nana Haydon with grandson Matthew, son of David and Lisa

Catholic homeschoolers gathering on the 1st Friday of each month. On special feast days we get together at a church hall. The families really look forward to these days. All Saints Day is a particular favourite. The children dress up as a saint then give a short talk about who they are. Over the last few years this has sent many of the older children searching for "little known" saints.

There are many other gatherings of homeschoolers for sports, art, academic and social activities. There are hundreds of homeschoolers in Perth and thousands across Australia.

Oh yes, homeschooling is legal – it is officially recognised in the W.A. Education Act. We see our homeschooling moderator for a chat once each year - the children always enjoy showing off their recent projects.

May Our Lord and His  
Blessed Mother guide you in  
raising children for  
His Kingdom!



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*I am the resurrection  
I am the life.  
Even if you die  
You shall live for ever*

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With exposure throughout WA in parishes and schools it makes sense to advertise in Abundant Life. Find out how to reach your target audience by contacting the editor today.

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# Scripture Discussion

## Reflecting on St Matthews' Gospel

*We provide this for the many and varied prayer groups and also for families at the table.*

This is the time when we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. Ask someone to read from Saint Matthew's Gospel.

*"Do not be afraid."*

Mt : 28,8-15.

Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage.

Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

While they were going, some of the guards went into the city and told the chief priests all that had happened.

They assembled with the elders and took counsel; then they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole him while we were asleep.' And if this gets to the ears of the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." The soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has circulated among the Jews to the present day.

*Now ask another person to read from the Acts of the Apostles*

Acts 2,14.22-33.

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, "You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you, and listen to my words. You who are Israelites, hear these words. Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs, which God worked through him in

your midst, as you yourselves know.

This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God, you killed, using lawless men to crucify him. But God raised him up, releasing him from the throes of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it.

For David says of him: 'I saw the Lord ever before me, with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. Therefore my heart has been glad and my tongue has exulted; my flesh, too, will dwell in hope, because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'

My brothers, one can confidently say to you about the patriarch David that he died and was buried, and his tomb is in our midst to this day. But since he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that neither was he abandoned to the netherworld nor did his flesh see corruption. God raised this Jesus; of this we are all witnesses. Exalted at the right hand of God, he received the promise of the holy Spirit from the Father and poured it forth, as you (both) see and hear.

### Discussion

- If Jesus had not risen from the dead, what would the Church be like today?

- Why would it be different?
- The Resurrection of Jesus obviously gave Peter courage. Should it not do the same for us?

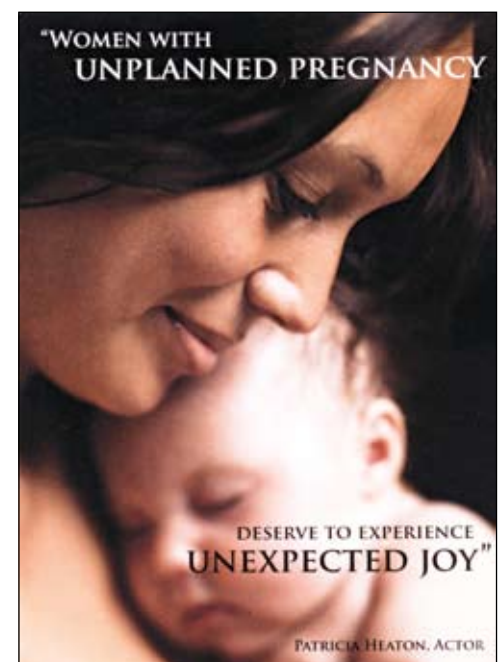
### Comment

By Saint John Chrysostom 345-407, bishop of Antioch.

"Jesus met them on their way and greeted them" "Come and see the place where he lay" (Mt: 28,6)...

Come and see the place where the act that guarantees your resurrection was composed. Come and see the place where death was buried. Come and see the place where a body, a seed not sowed by man, produced a multitude of spikes for eternal life..."Go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and they will see me. Tell my disciples the mysteries you have seen." This is what the Lord told the women. And now once again, he stands at the edge of the baptismal pool, invisible, near the faithful, he hugs the newly baptized as his friends and brothers...He fills their hearts and their souls with jubilation and joy.


He washes their sins in the fountains of his grace. He anoints with the perfume of the Spirit those who have been regenerated. The Lord becomes the one who feeds them and he becomes their food. He provides for his servants their part of spiritual nourishment. He tells all the faithful: "Take and eat the bread from heaven, receive the source that comes out from my side, the one from which one can always draw without it ever drying up. You who hunger, satisfy your hunger; you who thirst, get drunk with a sober and healthy wine".



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## *WHAT HAPPENS IN HEAVEN*

I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels.

My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, 'This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received.'

I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section.

The angel then said to me, 'This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them.'

I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very

small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. 'This is the Acknowledgment Section,' my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed 'How is it that there is no work going on here?' I asked. 'So sad,' the angel sighed. 'After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgments.' 'How does one acknowledge God's blessings?' I asked

'Simple,' the angel answered. Just say, 'Thank you, Lord.'

'What blessings should they acknowledge?' I asked. 'If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy'

'And if you get things on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity.'

'Also if you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the many who will not even

survive this day'.

'If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 700 million people in the world.'

'If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by, and more blessed than, three billion people in the world.'

'If your parents are still alive and still married, you are very rare.'

'If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm, you're unique to all those in doubt and despair.'

Ok, what now? How can I start?

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

Have a good day, count your blessings, and pass this on to remind everyone else how blessed we all are.

# STANDING AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

By Mgr Philip Reilly

The spirituality of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants is based on the reality that the Mystical Body is commissioned to continue the work of Jesus. When Jesus came He wanted to do His Father's Will. His Father's Will was to go out to Golgotha, to go to Calvary and to lay down His Life for the world that needs Him, that is broken. When He went to do that you remember that Peter tried to stop Him. Peter said **"It's dangerous, you're crazy; you're going to get killed."** And Christ said, **"You don't understand. I am going to Calvary to die for the very people who are going to kill me. I am a Priest and this is the new Sacrifice being offered for the world estranged from God. It's called loving your enemies."**

And Almighty God gives us the example and He tells us to go and do likewise.

## GOD ASKS OF US TWO PERMISSIONS

Jesus says you cannot change this world, you cannot change hearts with violence and hatred. You have got to do something that will be different. You must love your enemies. You must continue the sacrifice of Calvary. Yes, but we alone are too weak to do that. And that is why God asks two permissions. When Almighty God came into the world he asked Our Lady for two permissions. First God said: "May I live within you?" and Mary said: "Yes," and the Word took Flesh! And then God said to Mary: "I want another permission: Will you give me to the world?" And she said "Yes." Standing at the foot of the Cross, she gave us her Son, as her Son gave His life for our salvation.

Almighty God now asks us for two permissions. You understand Christ in His risen state no longer acts on earth. The mystery of Christianity is that Christ has entered into a mystical union with the People of God, which we call the Church, the mystical Body of Christ. Thus the risen, living Christ asks us for permission to enter into a union of life and love with you and me. And so it is through His Body the Church that the risen Christ continues to do His Father's work. In other words, Christ depends upon us even though we totally depend upon Christ to do what He asks us to do.

## WE ALL NEED TO BE LOVED

So He asks us for two permissions, the first being: "May I live within you?" It's

called Holy Communion. "Why do you, Jesus, want to come to me?" Jesus says: "I want to abide within you and you in me. I want to give you my Life and my Love."

Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, in his first Encyclical 'Deus Est Caritas', spoke of two types of Love: Eros and Agape. He said Eros is a self-love. The Pope said something very interesting. He said we all need self-love, namely, we need to be loved. This is very important, for our hearts are made for love. It is incredibly important that you know that God loves you.

The Holy Father said that Agape is the love of the other, the love of God. The Pope stressed that Jesus' two commandments to love God and to love thy neighbour become one because the Church is the Mystical union between ourselves and Jesus. Our Lord said what ever you do to others, you are doing it to Jesus. And so in the new economy of salvation, it is impossible to say you love God if you are not loving your neighbour.

## WILL YOU BRING ME TO THOSE MOST IN NEED

So Almighty God is saying to us that we are called to love Christ and serve Christ in others, in those most in need. Who is more in need of our help than a defenceless unborn whose life is being unjustly taken? And what we bring to the other is Christ. We bring Christ to Christ. We go out with all of our weakness but with the power of Christ, of God within us. "May I live within you?" is God's first request to us. And the second request is similar to Mary's. Almighty God says, "May I, through you, with you and in you, go out to the World?"

**And most especially Lord, where do you want to go? And Jesus says "I want to go once again to Golgotha, to Calvary. I want to go where it is midnight. I want to go to the people who are caught, entrapped in the darkness of sin, in the Culture of Death. I love them. I love the abortionist. I love the people who are doing the abortions. I love not only the unborn children, I love them all. I want them to see and understand that love. Will you bring Me to those most in need?"**

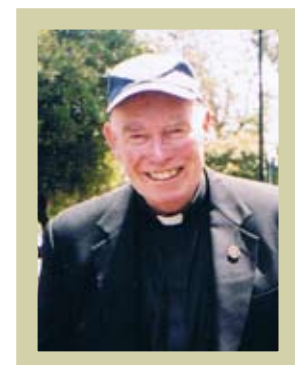
## THERE ARE NOT TWO SIDES

The media likes to speak about pro-life verses pro-choice; anti-abortion verses

pro-abortion. The media likes to project an image of confrontation, of controversy, namely that there are two sides battling with each other. Get this image or way of thinking out of your mind. The Helpers' approach is profoundly different. There are not two sides, for God has no enemies. We, creatures, may turn away and become enemies of God but God never turns away from that which He has created and redeemed by His Precious Blood. **We are today called to make present to the people of our times this everlasting, unconditional Love of God. More than just saving the unborn babies, to be pro-life is to make Christ present, to bring His Spirit and Life, and Light to the darkness. The Person, Jesus Christ, is to be made present through us, through God's Holy People.**

## NOTHING LESS THAN CHRIST WILL DO IT

So our responsibility, our obligation is to understand that God desires to save all those who are caught in the Culture of Death and Darkness. He loves them, and He wants their eternal salvation and so must we. We must not go to these places of death in a self-righteous attitude. We do not go there to picket or protest. We do not go there, as if they are the enemy and we are the righteous ones. We go there with Jesus as Mary and John were present at the foot of the Cross of Jesus. We go there with love that is stronger than hate. We don't go there to curse the darkness. We understand that the only way to remove and dispel the darkness of the Culture of Death is to bring the light of the Culture of Life that is Christ. **Where there is error we bring Him who is the Truth. Where there is despair we bring the hope that comes with trusting in Christ's mercy. This is what pulls the people from the Culture of Death into the Culture of Life. Nothing less than Christ will do it. And nothing more than Christ is needed.**



Mons. Philip Reilly, founder of "The Helpers of God's Precious Infants."

## DAY OF THE UNBORN CHILD

**Sunday, 13th April 2008**  
11.00am Mass and Holy Hour

**St Joachim's Pro-Cathedral**  
Shepperton Road, Victoria Park  
Principal Celebrant Most Rev B J Hickey  
(to be confirmed)

On this day, we celebrate the sacredness of every human life and the blessings of motherhood.

We pray for the life of the unborn child who is in danger.  
We pray for hope and healing for men and women who have lost a child.  
We commend them to God's tender care.

We invite all to attend this annual event being celebrated throughout Australia.

## The Infant of Prague Novena Prayer

*O Jesus, who has said, "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened," through the intercession of Mary, Your Most Holy Mother, I knock, I seek, and I ask that my prayer be granted.*

*(Make your request) O Jesus, who has said, "All that you ask of the Father in My name, He will grant you," through the intercession of Mary Your Most Holy Mother, I humbly and urgently ask your Father in your name that my prayer be granted.*

*(Make your request) O Jesus, who has said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but My word shall not pass away," through the intercession of Mary Your Most Holy Mother, I feel confident that my prayer will be granted.*

*Amen.*

## Join the Helpers of God's Precious Infants to witness for life



**Mass and Rosary Procession on the first Friday of each month at**  
St Brigid's Church, St Brigid's Place, Midland  
Commencing at 9:30am  
Led by The Franciscan Friars of The Immaculate  
And

**Mass and Rosary Procession on the first Saturday of each month**  
at St Anne's Church,  
Hehir St, Belmont, commencing at 8:30am  
Led by Fr Paul Carey SSC

**She walks among the  
Loveless she made**

**Between the  
apple-blossom and  
the water-**

**Each flower her son  
and each tree her daughter.**

**..... Vita Sackville-West**

## Saints of the month

# Sts. Perpetua and Felicity

### Feastday: 7 March

With the lives of so many early martyrs shrouded in legend, we are fortunate to have the record of the courage of Perpetua and Felicity from the hand of Perpetua herself, her teacher Saturus, and others who knew them. This account, known as “The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity,” was so popular in the early centuries that it was read during liturgies.

In the year 203, Vibia Perpetua made the decision to become a Christian, although she knew it could mean her death during Septimus’ persecution.

Her father was frantic with worry and tried to talk her out of her decision. At 22 years old, this well-educated, high-spirited woman had every reason to want to live -- including a baby son who she was still nursing. We know she was married, but since her husband is never mentioned, many historians assume she was a widow.

Perpetua’s answer was simple and clear. Pointing to a water jug, she asked her father, “See that pot lying there? Can you call it by any other name than what it is?”

Her father answered, “Of course not.” Perpetua responded, “Neither can I call myself by any other name than what I am -- a Christian.” This answer so upset her father that he attacked her.

Perpetua was arrested with four other catechumens including two slaves Felicity and Revocatus, and Saturninus and Secundulus. Their catechist, Saturus, had already been imprisoned before them.

She was baptized before taken to prison. Perpetua was known for her gift of “the Lord’s speech” and receiving messages from God. She tells us that at the time of her baptism she was told to pray for nothing but endurance in the face of her trials.

The prison was so crowded with people that the heat was suffocating. There was no light anywhere and Perpetua “had never known such darkness.” The soldiers who arrested and guarded them pushed and shoved them without any concern. Perpetua had no trouble admitting she was very afraid, but in the midst of all this horror her most excruciating pain came from being separated from her baby.

The young slave, Felicity was even worse off for Felicity suffered the stifling heat, overcrowding, and rough handling while being eight months pregnant.

Two deacons who ministered to the prisoners paid the guards so that the martyrs

would be put in a better part of the prison. There her mother and brother were able to visit Perpetua and bring her baby to her. When she received permission for her baby to stay with her “my prison suddenly became a palace for me.” Once more her father came to her, begging her to give in, kissing her hands, and throwing himself at her feet. She told him, “We lie not in our own power but in the power of God.”

When she and the others were taken to be examined and sentenced, her father followed, pleading with her and the judge. The judge, out of pity, also tried to get Perpetua to change her mind, but when she stood fast, she was sentenced with the others to be thrown to the wild beasts in the arena. Her father was so furious that he refused to send her baby back to Perpetua.

*“Stand fast in the faith and love one another.”*

While praying in prison, she suddenly felt “gifted with the Lord’s speech” and called out the name of her brother Dinocrates who had died at seven of gangrene of the face, a disease so disfiguring that those who should have comforted him left him alone. Now she saw a vision that he was even more alone, in a dark place, hot and thirsty -- not in the eternal joy she hoped for him. She began to pray for Dinocrates and though she was put in stocks every day, her thoughts were not on her own suffering but on her prayers to help her brother. Finally she had another vision in which she saw Dinocrates healed and clean, drinking from a golden bowl that never emptied.

Meanwhile Felicity was also in torment. It was against the law for pregnant women to be executed. To kill a child in the womb was shedding innocent and sacred blood. Felicity was afraid that she would not give birth before the day set for their martyrdom and her companions would go on their journey without her. Her friends also didn’t want to leave so “good a comrade” behind.

Two days before the execution, Felicity went into a painful labor. The guards made fun of her, insulting her by saying, “If you think you suffer now, how will you stand it when you face the wild beasts?” Felicity answered them calmly, “Now I’m the one who is suffering, but in the arena Another will be in me suffering for me because I will

be suffering for him.” She gave birth to a healthy girl who was adopted and raised by one of the Christian women of Carthage.

The officers of the prison began to recognize the power of the Christians and the strength and leadership of Perpetua. In some cases this helped the Christians: the warden let them have visitors -- and later became a believer.

There was a feast the day before the games so that the crowd could see the martyrs and make fun of them. But the martyrs turned this all around by laughing at the crowd for not being Christians and exhorting them to follow their example.

The four new Christians and their teacher went to the arena (the fifth, Secundulus, had died in prison) with joy and calm. Perpetua in usual high spirits met the eyes of everyone along the way. We are told she walked with “shining steps as the true wife of Christ, the darling of God.”

When those at the arena tried to force Perpetua and the rest to dress in robes dedicated to their gods, Perpetua challenged her executioners. “We came to die out of our own free will so we wouldn’t lose our freedom to worship our God. We gave you our lives so that we wouldn’t have to worship your gods.” She and the others were allowed to keep their clothes.

The men were attacked by bears, leopards, and wild boars. The women were stripped to face a rabid heifer. When the crowd, however, saw the two young women, one of whom had obviously just given birth, they were horrified and the women were removed and clothed again. Perpetua and Felicity were thrown back into the arena so roughly that they were bruised and hurt. Perpetua, though confused and distracted, still was thinking of others and went to help Felicity up. The two of them stood side by side as all five martyrs had their throats cut.

Perpetua’s last words were to her brother: “Stand fast in the faith and love one another.”

#### Prayer:

*Saints Perpetua and Felicity, watch over all mothers and children who are separated from each other because of war or persecution. Show a special care to mothers who are imprisoned and guide them to follow your example of faith and courage. Amen*

(Taken from [www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org))

# MEDITATE AT EASTER

By Brian Peachey

This Year Good Friday falls on 21 March. It is the day that we should meditate, to the best of our ability, on the pain and humiliation that Jesus suffered.

Jesus was betrayed and arrested in the early hours of Friday morning, soon after midnight and taken to the house of Caiphas to be tried by the Sanhedran, the supreme Jewish authority.

Dawn had broken by the time he was taken to the Antonia, the palace of Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor. The Jews handed Jesus to the Roman guards and demanded that Pilate have him executed for blasphemy. Pilate was confronted by what he feared most, a fanatical hostile crowd.

He ordered that Jesus be scourged by the Roman soldiers. They used thongs with metal weights two centre metres long. His flesh was not lacerated but painfully bruised; in some places the skin was broken and blood oozed out. From the Turin Shroud it would seem that the arms of Jesus were tied above his head to a pillar and he was beaten over the whole of his naked body.

Then followed the Roman humiliation of him as 'King of the Jews'. They dressed him in a scarlet cloak and hammered a crown of thorns into the sensitive skin of his scalp, put a stick into his hand as a sceptre and lead him back to Pilate and the crowd who shouted "crucify him" during the failed attempt to release Jesus instead of the criminal Barabbas. A weak, stressful Pontius Pilate, the politician, afraid of the masses and also of Caesar announced: "Ibis ad crucem"(You shall die by crucifixion).

Jesus was forced to carry the heavy cross on which he was to die by Rome's most barbaric form of execution. His journey, during which he stumbled three times was about 600 metres to Golgotha or as we know it today, Calvary, a bare limestone hillock outside the west wall of the city. He was stripped of his clothing except for a loin cloth.

First his hands were nailed to the cross-beam. Nails were driven through a space in the wrist. It is difficult to imagine the pain and the shock to the body as each nail was hammered through nerves and flesh. The impact would have been even greater when one huge nail was driven through both feet.

(according to the Shroud the left foot was over right and there was no foot-support)

By mid-day Jesus was hanging from the cross. His body would have sagged causing excruciating pain in his hands and dislocating his elbows and shoulders. Those who were crucified died from suffocation and fell into a coma, unable to get sufficient oxygen

the pain in his feet held by the huge nail. He did this when he promised the 'good thief' that he "...would be with me in paradise" and at the end when he said to his Blessed mother "woman this is your son" and then to John "this is your mother" (John 19-27). Finally in a loud gasp he cried "Father into your hands I commit my spirit."



Resurrection of Jesus, Giovanni Bellini 1475-9

into the lungs But Jesus did not lapse into a coma for some three hours he suffering the slow torture of nauseating pain, cramp and tension in the chest, reducing breathing in short gasps. To enable him to speak he had to straighten his legs to suck in air, worsening

## Triumph

This seemed to be the end of Jesus for many including some of his disciples. The Sanhedrin had succeeded. They had killed Jesus who claimed to be the Christ. His disciples had forgotten or could not understand what Jesus meant when he said "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2-19) Jesus was referring to himself.

It was four women (not the Apostles) who discovered that the great stone over the tomb where Jesus was laid had been rolled back and he was not there. And it was to Mary Magdalene that Jesus first appeared. He then appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus and on the evening of the same day he appeared to ten of his chosen eleven in the cenacle and later to Thomas, who doubted that he had risen. He spent the days until

his ascension teaching and instructing them how they should spread the good news.

The Resurrection was then and is now the dominant part of the Christian message to the world. It proves that Jesus was God, the divine Saviour, who accomplished the redemption of mankind.

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# Signs are everywhere

By Andrew Lansdown

Alex and Isabel meet unexpectedly and have an affair. Isabel falls pregnant. Alex feels obliged to marry her. The marriage breaks up before the baby is born.

Fools Rush In is a typical Hollywood lust story that turns into a love story. Its title is, perhaps, a little more insightful than other romance movies. But even here, I suspect the film producers have probably missed the mark, viewing the two main characters as fools not because they rushed into sex, but because they rushed into marriage.

After their separation, Alex and Isabel are utterly miserable. But somehow they cannot manage to get back together.

One day, just before the divorce is finalised, Alex passes a priest in a crowded street. The priest looks at Alex and, quite without warning, says, "There are signs everywhere." Alex is startled. "What did you say?" "You look lost," the priest replies. "There are signs everywhere to help you find your way." Soon afterwards, ordinary sights become signs that remind Alex of Isabel and motivate him to seek her and to be reconciled to her.

There are signs everywhere. The moment I heard them, these words seemed to have an application far beyond their context in the movie. They seemed charged with spiritual significance. They reminded me that there are signs everywhere to help us find our way to God.

Because God is Spirit, we are unable to perceive him directly with our physical senses. And because he is holy, we are unable or unwilling to perceive him with our spiritual senses. He is hidden from us by our natural limitations and our moral imperfections. Yet the signs for his existence—more than that, the signs for his goodness and greatness—are everywhere.

One sign of God's existence is the natural world. The order, complexity, variety and beauty of nature testify to a Creator who is wise, powerful, imaginative and delightful.

Another sign pointing to God is human nature. Human beings possess spiritual capacities that cannot be explained apart from God. Language, reason, ambition, creativity, humour, wonder, worship—these things have no counterpart in the natural world. They are supernatural, and must therefore have a supernatural origin. That origin is God, who made us in his image.

A particularly telling sign within human nature is the conscience. Our conscience is responsible for our intuitive knowledge of

right and wrong, good and evil. Even without a "book of rules", we know that it is evil to lie, steal, lust and kill. We do not need to be taught that it is wrong to be cruel, dishonest or disloyal. In addition to providing moral insight, our conscience provides moral censure. It makes us feel bad when we violate it. The standard our conscience sets and the guilt it inflicts point us to God, who is himself the source of all good and the Judge of all evil.

Another sign that directs us to God is our fear of death. Given that death is the destiny of all people, why do we instinctively feel that it is unnatural? And why do we dread and resist it? Surely it is because death is an

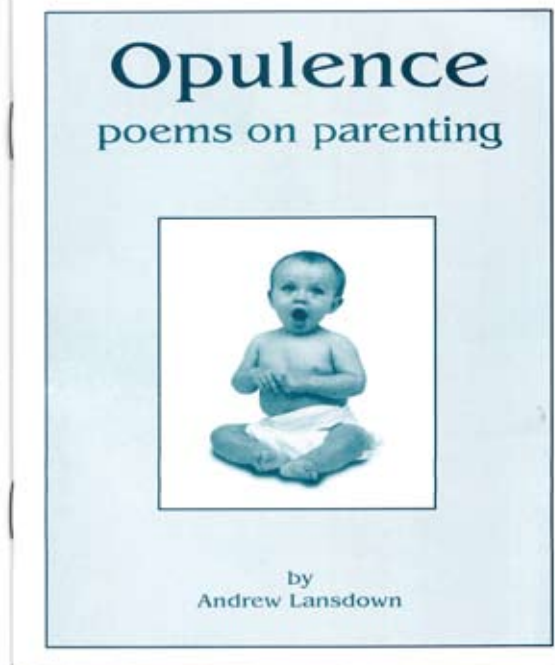
sense of longing itself. This is a powerful signpost to God. We long for meaning. We long for purpose. We long for permanence. We long for perfection. We long for ... What? Sometimes we are just filled with longing—sheer longing—without the slightest understanding why. It comes upon us in times of solitude and quietness. It comes upon us in times of grief—and even in times of gladness. This longing! It is like grief, and yet it often has a sweetness about it. It is like homesickness. And indeed, that is precisely what it is. For God is our home, and our hearts yearn for him, even when they do not know it. The true object of our longing is God. The writers of the Bible understood this, which is why they could say, "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" (Psalm 42:1-2).

The Bible is another sign that points to God, a vivid and vital sign. Still the world's best seller, the Bible has challenged and changed the lives of billions of people throughout the centuries. Those who read it with humility discover in it a supernatural wisdom and power. The Bible's existence, integrity and impact are plain pointers to God.

The major subject of the Bible is God's Son, Jesus Christ. And Jesus is the plainest and most compelling witness to the existence and excellence of God. The Bible makes extraordinary claims about him. It says that "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3). It says that "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shines "in the face of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). It says that "no one has ever seen God," except Jesus, who "has made him known" (John 1:18).

There are signs everywhere to help us find our way to God. And of them all, Jesus is the clearest and best. If we will look to him, he will not only point us in the right direction, but also take us there.

Andrew Lansdown's book  
Opulence, poems on parenting,  
Cost \$4.50 plus postage  
Available from  
Pregnancy Assistance,  
9328 2926



enemy that has conquered us because of our sin. Death points us to the living God, who never intended us to die when he first gave us life.

And this alerts us to another, related sign. Our longing for eternity is an intimation of God. Given that death is a universal and inescapable experience, how is it possible for us to have a concept of, and longing for, eternity? Where does such a concept and longing come from? It cannot come from nature and the physical universe, because there is no evidence for eternity there. Nature, the universe, is full of transience and change. Our longing for eternity must arise from the fact that the eternal God has given us eternal souls. Or as the Bible expresses it, God has "set eternity in the hearts of men" (Ecclesiastes 3:11, NIV).

Related to a longing for eternity is the



# WOMAN IS TRULY AMAZING

**B**y the time the Lord made woman, he was into his sixth day of working overtime. An angel appeared and said, "Why are you spending so much time on this one?" And the Lord answered, "Have you seen my spec sheet on her? She has to be completely washable, but not plastic, have over 200 movable parts, all replaceable and able to run on a diet of coke and leftovers, have a lap that can hold four children at one time, have a kiss that can cure anything from a scraped knee to a broken heart - and she will do everything with only two hands."

The angel was astounded at the requirements. "Only two hands!?" No way! And that's just on the standard model? That's too much work for one day. Wait until tomorrow to finish." But I won't," the Lord protested. "I am so close to finishing this creation that is so close to my own heart. She

already heals herself when she is sick AND can work 18-hour days." The angel moved closer and touched the woman. "But you have made her so



soft, Lord." "She is soft," the Lord agreed, "but I have also made her tough. You have no idea what she can endure or accomplish." "Will she

be able to think?" asked the angel? The Lord replied, "Not only will she be able to think, she will be able to reason and negotiate."

The angel then noticed something, and reaching out, touched the woman's cheek. "Oops, it looks like you have a leak in this model. I told you that you were trying to put too much into this one." "That's not a leak," the Lord corrected, "that's a tear!" "What's the tear for?" the angel asked. The Lord said, "The tear is her way of expressing her joy, her sorrow, her pain, her disappointment, her love, her loneliness, her grief and her pride."

The angel was impressed. "You are a genius, Lord. You thought of everything! Woman is truly amazing." And she is!

Author unknown.

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