



CWL Review volume 59 No 6

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**“Be Merciful just as the
Father is Merciful”**



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President's Message

Hello again ladies - it is hard to believe we are into November already! We have had an interesting year though, culminating in our successful Conference.

As we go to press we have arranged a lunch for any southern catholic ladies on 14th November and have 40 booked. I am thrilled that these ladies are joining us for a social day and catching up with friends. Hopefully this will become a regular event and perhaps a similar function could be arranged for our northern ladies!

I was disappointed with some of the wording in our recent Standard article but was not able to edit that before it was printed.

Many congratulations though to the Launceston branch for their wonderful article and lovely photo on the same page.

Thank you all for lots of hard work and wonderful friendship during the year and I look forward to meeting up again next year when hopefully we will encourage new ladies to join with us.

Christmas is only a few weeks away and I wish each one of our members a wonderfully Holy and Blessed Christmas and good health in the New Year.

May God be Glorified in all we do.

Deirdre Reid, President

From the State Secretary

This letter was sent by Judith Gibbens to the members of the Legislative Council on behalf of the CWL.

Dear Member of Legislative Council,

We the members of *Catholic Women's League Tasmania Inc* , wish to convey our deep concern in regard to the "Justice & Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018" that was passed in the Tasmanian House of Assembly this week.

The changes that were passed are deeply troubling and opposed to the human good and wellbeing of the Tasmanian society.

The bill removes the term "mother, father, wife and husband" from a number of Tasmanian laws.

These words have significant meaning and their removal represents a small part of a broader process in which the fundamental difference between men and women is being eroded.

We feel that the way sex is listed on birth certificates is meant to be what it says, a record of the birth of a child. It should record the details of their birth, sex, name, mother & father and place of birth. It is a historic record. It is meant to be a birth certificate not "how I identify certificate".

The bill allows individuals to self-identify as the opposite sex, or as a non-binary gender, with no more than a statutory declaration. This change denies the fundamental differences between women and men.

Consequently organizations offering 'women only' facilities, e.g. women's change rooms, toilets, or services such as domestic violence, crisis and rape centres, will lose any protection from the force of Anti-Discrimination Act, if they choose to refuse the right of entry to these facilities ,or services to a person who is anatomical male, who identifies as having female gender. This legal change also constitutes a fundamental threat to single-sex schooling, medical care, sports competitions, welfare services and religious facilities.

We see the laws, as passed by The House of Assembly, are a radical act of social engineering.

These laws go against our basic biological reality.

This legislation is opposed to basic and inescapable biological facts about the human person.

We therefore plead with you to oppose the bill for the good of, and the future of, our Tasmanian Society.

Kind regards and thank you for your attention.

Judith Gibbens

From the Southern Vice President

As I write this I am reflecting on the wonderful day we've had at Travelodge organised by CWL for a luncheon shared by Catholic women. How fortunate are we to be able to gather together to enjoy each other's company.

Hats off to Deirdre, Judy and Jan for their organisational skills.

As my term as Southern Vice President begins, I am in trepidation that I can live up to the high standard set by those gone before me. Pray the Lord that I will.

Our next project is to raise funds to support some of our Tasmanians taking part in the World Youth Day in Panama next year. Thinking hats on ladies!!

As another year draws to a close, I would like to wish you all a happy and holy Christmas and the best for 2019.

May God be glorified in all we do. Pam Clark.

State Treasurer

Thank You All for calls and cards on receiving my Life Membership it was a great honour.

I have some Scripture Diaries left just give me a ring and I'll post them to you.

Wishing everyone a Holy Christmas.

May God be Glorified in all we Do.

Jan Lawler



Briefing to the Legislative Council, 22 November 2018

On 28th November Pat, Judy and I, attended Parliament to present the Legislative Council with arguments against the amendments to the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Act*.

Ben Smith, the Spokesperson, the Coalition for Marriage Tasmania, represented the Coalition for Marriage and summarised some of the key concerns arising out of the *Justice and Related Legislation (Marriage Amendments) Bill 2018*:

“The new Notice of Intention to Marry form and the Official Certificate of Marriage form developed by the Federal Attorney General’s Department contain three options for each party to the marriage: groom, bride or partner. They use a combination of gender-inclusive and gender-neutral language which has been followed by NSW. In other states such as NSW, Victoria, SA and QLD the terms ‘mother’ and ‘father’, have been retained in the Births, Deaths and Marriages Acts and related laws. This is clearly a genuinely inclusive approach, not removing but adding. It also delivers on the promise given at the time of the plebiscite by those advocating change that there would be no attempt to impose a wider ideological agenda. We strongly advocate that any legislation passed by the Legislative Council leave these terms in the relevant terms in the legislation and instead simply add ‘partner’, ‘spouse’ or ‘parent’ as required.”

“Just over 12 months ago the people of Australia were asked: Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry? They were not asked about removing sex markers off birth certificates, penalties for not using correct gender pronouns, removing everyday language connected to biological sex (such as mother, father, husband and wife), gender recognition certificates for 16 year olds without parental consent, anatomical males entering women only spaces or playing in a women’s AFL competition and a host of other significant changes that will result from the amendments passed in the House of Assembly on Tuesday.

The Bill and the amendments constitute a significant overreach of any mandate that existed from the Marriage Law survey process. Neither the original bill nor the Amendments were put out for extensive public consultation and discussion. This has meant that there has been no adequate consideration of the unintended consequences that may arise from such a change in the law”.

As Pat pointed out, the passage of that original Bill, with the retention of “mother, father, wife and husband, but without amendments added in the House of Assembly, would meet Tasmania's obligation to conform with the Federal law which legalised same-sex marriage, within the required timeframe.

We pray that the Legislative Council heed our objections and we ask for your prayers that these amendments not be passed.

Anna Matuszek, Social Issues Convenor.

REFLECTION

The following reflections have been taken from the latest Notre Dame Priory Newsletter written by Fr Pius Mary Noonan. Fr Pius is the Prior of the Notre Dame Priory, a Benedictan Monastery that was established in Colebrook. The Monks are dedicated to God by means of the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, stability and conversion of life, monks spend their time in prayer and labour. There are currently 5 novices, one of whom is a Priest and 5 postulants, one of whom is also a Priest. They are mainly in their 20s.

Part 1

Dearly Beloved Friends, “The ninth degree of humility is that a monk refrain his tongue from speaking, keeping silence until a question be asked him, as the Scripture sheweth: In much talking thou shalt not avoid sin: and, The talkative man shall not be directed upon the earth.” The Scripture verses here quoted by St Benedict are concerned with two things: avoiding sin and being guided by God in our decisions. The first of the quotations is from the book of Proverbs (10:19) and is worth quoting in full: In the multitude of words there shall not want sin: but he that refraineth his lips, is most wise. The second is from psalm 139, and it refers more to the guidance that one needs in one’s life. So many sins are caused by the tongue. Probably the most incisive description of the evils of speech comes to us from the Apostle St James:

“For we all make many mistakes, and if any one makes no mistakes in what he says he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. If we put bits into the mouths of horses that they may obey us, we guide their horses that they may obey us, we guide their whole body. Look at the ships also; though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So the tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire. And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is an unrighteous world among our members, straining the whole body, setting on fire the cycle of nature, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being

can tame the tongue- a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessings and cursing. My brethren, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening fresh water and brackish? Can a fig tree, my brethren yield olives or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh”.

St Benedict mentions silence in other passages of the Rule. There is of course a whole chapter dedicated to it (ch. 6). But in chapter 4 which treats of the “instruments of good works”, he mentions: “To keep one’s mouth from evil and wicked words. Not to love much speaking”. (instruments 52 and 53). What is most informative is that these two are preceded by two others: “To dash down on the Rock (Christ) one’s evil thoughts, the instant that they come into the heart. And to lay them open to one’s spiritual father” (instruments 50 and 51). What this reveals to us is that silence of the tongue is only possible with silence of the heart, and that our fallen nature is more inclined to speak evil of others than to acknowledge our own sins.

Is it not an effect of diabolical pride that we are so prompt to speak ill of others and to proffer reprehensible words, but so terribly slow to open our mouths to our spiritual guide, to our confessor, revealing our sins and the wicked thoughts that come to us! The evil that we speak should be the evil against ourselves, acknowledging that we have deep down in us so many vices that are continually seeking to boil over and poison the world. If we have the courage and the humility to make such confession to our spiritual guide, then we will be much less prompt to speak ill of others. The other aspect of silence implied by the second citation in the Rule is that silence not only preserves us from sin, it also allows us to discern God’s will in our lives. All spiritual masters agree on this point: the first step to being able to hear God’s voice in our heart is to make silence, to impose quiet on all created voices that come from without, and even on that voice within, which is the voice of the “carnal man” of whom St Paul speaks, and who is regularly drawing us away from the calm, peaceful discernment of God’s will.

Reflection:

How often do I think and speak ill of others and at the same time excuse my own actions?

Part 2

Might we not be here in the presence of one of the major causes, not only of sin in our world, but also of failure of so many, especially among the youth, to hear God's voice in their lives, inspiring them with generous longings to serve others and work for the salvation of souls? Is it any coincidence that the 1960's, which is the period from which the number of priestly and religious vocations dropped drastically in the universal Church, is also the period of the advent of so many devices that for the most part abolished the oases of peace: it became possible to fill the airwaves with human words and song, making it impossible for the soft breeze of the Divine Voice and the sweet melody of the Divine Symphony to be heard? Is there anything more indicative of this than the tragic fact that it is becoming more and more difficult to find public spaces that are not bombarded by continual noise? Or what of the youngsters who go for mountain hikes with their iPod in their ears, or the worker who cannot build a house without the unceasing wave of savage rhythm coming from his radio? Something is seriously wrong here, and St Benedict has an answer: silence is bred of humility. If this analysis rings true, then silence is the first step towards retrieving a more peaceful, tranquil pace of life, devoid of senseless noise. Create spaces of silence in your life. Do not be afraid of silence. Do you know why it is that people are afraid of silence? The principle reason is that they are afraid of being alone with themselves. They do not want to face the voice of their conscience for they know it will be one of remonstrance. These two competing voices are incompatible: the voice of conscience and the voice of the world. The world seeks to drown out conscience, and conscience will have no pact with the world. You must make your choice. If you are continually listening to the world and all it has to say, chances are you are not listening to conscience. And vice versa. If you take time each day to remain in peace with the Lord, not afraid of what He might be saying deep down in the heart, then chances are you are on His side. The Lord is a jealous lover, He will have all of your heart, He will not settle for half, nor will He share you with the world. If you listen to God every day, you are on the right path. You will avoid sin, and you will be guided into the ways of the Spirit, who seeks your true good, your happiness on earth and your eternal salvation in Heaven.

In Psalm 139 quoted above, there is another verse worth mentioning in this context. It reads, referring to evildoers: "the labour of their lips shall overwhelm them". The

labour of their lips! I remember in my early years of monastic life one of the elder priests pointing out in a retreat conference that it's talking that demands effort, not silence. Be that as it may, it is so true that so many souls lose themselves through the hard, unceasing labour of the lips. The devil is a merciless slave-driver, and life with him is more like death. Let's not exhaust ourselves with the labour of our lips. Let us rather imitate the prophet Jeremiah, in a passage we read in Holy Week: "He shall sit solitary, and hold his peace: because he hath taken it up upon himself" (Lam 3:28). The Latin text of this verse reads: "quia levavit super se", which can also be translated: "because he lifted himself above himself". The idea is that by silence the soul lifts itself up above the petty considerations of mundane life, and also above the words of wicked or senseless people who seek to distract it and involve it in their gossip and futilities. Let us remember, in such moments, to rise above ourselves and hold our peace. If we do, we are progressing in that all-important virtue of humility, and are opening ourselves up to the Divine Peace that can resound in our hearts only inasmuch as our passions and emotions are calmed by the tranquility of union with God. Such is my prayer for you. May I ask that you make it for me as well?

Reflection:

Do I set aside regular quiet time for reflection and prayer, be it at home or in a church?



In Memoriam

VALE VERONICA HEPBURN

Launceston Branch has lost one of its most senior members, Veronica Hepburn, who went to her Eternal Reward on the 10th November, just five days after her 90th birthday. She was born in Hobart and educated at St. Mary's College, then at Campbell Town District High School. Veronica married Cliff Hepburn and they had six children, one of whom died from a brain tumour. No-one can remember when Veronica joined CWL but she was a loyal member, who knitted much for the Sudanese refugees and for nursing homes. She had a term as Branch President and also Branch Secretary.

Veronica was a member of the National Council of Women and was a vice-President when we had to go into recess. She also was a member of the Board of the Alzheimers Association, and was made a life member in 2002.

Veronica was a long-time member of the Australian Church Women, Launceston Unit, where she served two terms as Treasurer. Of later years, when she couldn't continue coming by bus and walking to meetings, she would come by cab. Veronica moved into Norwood Haven Retirement Units but still kept up her membership of ACW and liked to be kept informed of what was happening. The ACW ladies were all caring towards her and we were able to hold a meeting at the Norwood Haven. The "backbone" of ACW, Juanita Miller, and her husband David used to visit Veronica and they report she always gave David something she had set aside for him, in the way of old stories or newspaper clippings. Juanita said she was a dear lady.

Last January Veronica found it necessary to move to Mt. Esk (formerly Nazareth House), where she settled in happily. Her daughter said she enjoyed her time there. Unfortunately her health started to deteriorate lately. She wanted to "make it" till her 90th Birthday and the Lord granted her wish. Four members were able to attend her funeral service at Mt. Esk on 16th November. Holy Mass will be offered at our request on Tuesday, 27th November.

May she rest in peace and may God be glorified in all we do.

Social Issues and Bioethics Committee

Adapted from a talk given by Dr Deirdrie Little

When Jesus returned to the Father, he departed with a good deal of preparation to provide for His Church. We were not left to wonder about our own path home. He didn't abandon us to the loudest voices, or to passing popular thinking or dominant personalities. We weren't deserted to drift on a thousand fashionable ideas; not left to wander around in ignorance of what is good and true. Instead we were given direction – clear and spirit-filled directly from the mind and heart and word of God.

Scripture shows Christ laying the foundation for his bride, The Church, during his time on earth. By appointing Peter as the 'Rock' on which the Catholic Church would be built upon, he established a succession of leadership that has continued throughout the last 2,000 years. We were not to be leaderless. Just as Christ lead and handed down his ministry to the Apostles, he also bestowed them with the authority to preserve this apostolic faith themselves, leaving us with the continuous and structured lineage of Catholicism that we see today.

Due to our human nature, leaders of our Church have not always acted according to Christ's teachings and were far from being perfect persons. However, Peter taught us; 'that with the grace of God they rose above their human weaknesses of infidelity and cowardliness'. With Jesus' assurance and with His choice and anointing resting on their souls, Peter and his successors were to feed His lambs and sheep forever. Upon this promise, and on these successors, Jesus has built His Church - our Church - to be the bulwark against evil, and the protection from the gates of hell.

His Church was and has to be the Pillar and Household of Faith (1 Tim 3:15). Jesus promised He himself would remain with His Church 'all through the days that are coming, yes, to the end of time,' we are taught to pray and wait for the Holy Spirit. Nine days of prayer (our modern novena) was followed by the Holy Spirit infusing the faithful gathered around Mary - the birthday of the Church. This spiritual motherhood of Mary is given to the faithful from the lips of the crucified Jesus.

Our Church is a treasure trove, holding the deposit of faith, the prophecy of the Holy Spirit and eternal insight, the gift of Divine Revelation and the promised presence of Jesus Himself. Through her teaching we glimpse the inner mind of God and His vast plan for us – His Gospel of Life. The Lord he says has bestowed on the Church the gifts of scripture, the sacraments, holy places, living communities, the witness of the saints and a multifaceted beauty that proceeds from God's love 'like a bride bedecked with jewels'. His exhortation is a call to holiness in today's broken world.

As civilization progresses, values shift and science evolves. New challenges have arisen around the meaning of human life in its inception, in its perceived value and identity and in its passing. Grounded in the God who loves and sustains us, we respond as a Holy and Missionary Community.

As Bioethics Convenor I often think of the words of the novelist Evelyn Waugh, who once observed,

“The Church has vast boundaries to defend and each generation finds itself called to service on a different front.”

We as Catholic Women we are also 'called to service', from grass roots Australia to the United Nations. We are not silent members of the Church, nor are we meant to be. We are the Marys in our families, parishes and communities. Our words are powerful against the modern challenges to Judeo-Christian morality and to the assaults on our Pillar and Household of faith. These challenges have been rising steadily, there's no denying it, followed now by an assault on our right to *hold* our morality and to defend it, to defend the faith, and to explain it and to pass it on. As challenges to the Church and to Christian morality intensify, we are presented with a front which may be new to us but is not entirely new to Christendom. We will need to dig deep into our treasure trove, because we will be responsible for our positions on this front to God and to future generations and perhaps to civilization itself. As Bishop O'Riley of Kilmore said a few weeks ago:

"Our mission is in radio and television, in hotels and homes, doorsteps and streets."

Our confidence in this comes from Jesus' promise to be with us through all the days that are coming. As we learn in Amos ch. 8 (recently quoted in Anne Lastman's 'Victims of Abortion'):

"The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will send a famine on the land.

Not a famine of bread and water, but of hearing the word"
(Amos 8:11)

At a time in history when public opinion is being anaesthetized, deafness to the Word is increasing. In addition to this famine, freedom to speak the Word and the freedom to live the Word have also been threatened as the Right to freedom of Religion becomes devalued and regarded increasingly as an enemy of the state. This new front at which we find ourselves is at the 'famine in the land' of which Amos speaks, those spaces which cannot see the light of God and can no longer hear Him, or feel His guidance.

At our moment in history we are being shown the appearances – invisible to many - of this self- destructive impulse within humanity. To minister to this impulse, we are asked to take up our roles.

'As salt of the earth and light of the world wherever we find ourselves'. 'Do not be afraid' Pope Francis encourages us 'to let ourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit.' ...'to become a Holy and Missionary Community'. This is not just a saying. Jesus warns us that the path he proposes goes against the flow. Living that path will itself be a challenge to society. It could make us persecuted. When the New Testament tells us that we will have to endure suffering for the gospel's sake it 'speaks precisely of persecution', Pope Francis reminds us. He gives the many references to persecution in scripture:

(Acts 5:41) 'And so they left the presence of the Sanhedrin, glad to have had the honour of suffering humiliation for the sake of His name.'

Phil 1:29, Col 1:24, 2 Tim 1:12

(1 Peter 2:20) 'There is merit if, in awareness of God you put up with the pains of undeserved punishment'

(1 Peter 4:14-16) 'If you are insulted for bearing Christ's name blessed are you, for on you rests the Spirit of God. Rev 2:10'

Freedom of Religion requires freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom to publish and freedom to live out one's faith. Repression of these freedoms is the new 'famine on the land'. The rise of atheism as a world view is now a substitute religion which insists on godlessness and now also insists we take part in and enable the immorality of others - disallowing conscientious objection. For us now there will be penalties for quoting God's word condemning homosexuality and killing of the unborn. Our Catechisms, as Fr Tierney points out, could soon be condemned as 'hate speech'. Parental rights to be first educators of their children has already been sidelined as mere onlookers to Safe Schools Programmes replete with obscenities.

However, in the midst of this 'spiritual famine' Pope Frances also speaks about the 'Genius of woman,' explaining how it can be seen in our feminine styles of holiness. As women, Pope Frances underlines how, our Feminine styles of holiness are an essential means of reflecting God's holiness in this world. How we have the ability through Christ, to profess the gospel and inspire others by not only sustaining and spiritually nourishing our families, but by sustaining and transforming our communities by our witness. In everything we do, in wherever we find ourselves, each of us 'is a mission, planned by the father, to reflect and embody at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the gospel.' Therefore the Christian woman can counteract this growing atheism and godlessness that has swept over so many people. By not only speaking the truth of the Apostles and Church Gospel but also living out these truths harmoniously, we have the ability to mirror Christ and his teaching, spiritually inspiring others to do the same.

HAVE YOUR SAY:

If you wish to contact the members of the Legislative Council regarding the "Marriage Amendment Bill 2018" passed in the Tasmanian House of Assembly last week, contact either:

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