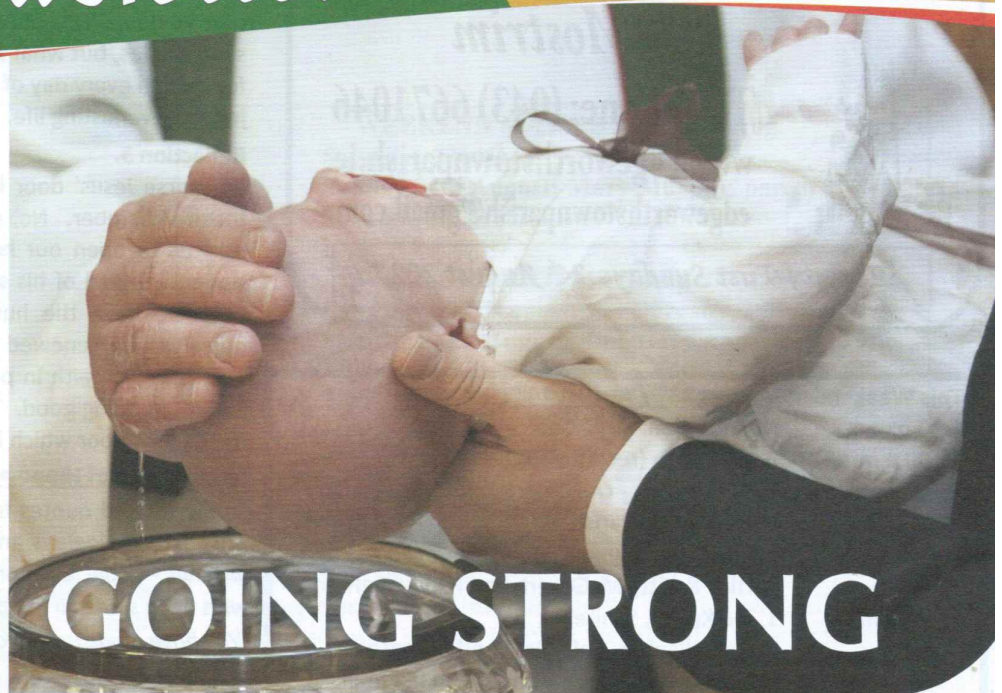


There are times, as a priest, when the gap seems too wide between the faith asked for in sacraments and the reality on the ground. There is a widening gulf. We are perhaps in a third generation of non-practice, where even the grandparents at a baptism have no familiarity with the liturgy, just a fading comforting memory of Baptisms, First Communions, Confirmations and Weddings. But a priestly whine on this topic is neither advisable or of any benefit to anyone. *Nemo dat quod non habet* is the old Latin legal saying — 'You cannot give what you do not have.' It applies to property — but equally to faith. Is transmission of faith something like osmosis for a plant, drawing it in from the surrounding environment? Does 'hanging around' the sacraments count? Do you 'hand on' faith or is it more a matter of 'nurturing' faith? God is a God of mercy, to be sure, but is he not also a God who looks for real fruit?

There is more and more evidence to show that — particularly among young people — if you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything. There is still time. With God, the contents are more important than the package. And, as you age, you need to make peace with the wrinkles and remember that, ultimately, it's not the amount of days in your life that count



GOING STRONG

but the amount of life in your days — it's about quality of life.

Summertime is concert time and we all know how highly valued a ticket can be. They are in limited supply and eagerly sought. But what about the best ticket of all — to life with God? Not for a turnstile at Croke Park or some concert venue but to heaven itself? Wouldn't that be something!? It's worth the effort. Some new generation 'smart' watches coach you on everything you consume, the activity you take or do not take — even telling you to rest when you are ill or tired. But we have this every Sunday in God's Word — a word to console, challenge and comfort as needed, if we but have the ears to hear ...

So, the Lord's first response to the question about numbers saved is not to bank on who you are, but work like heck; 'try' to come in through the narrow door.

There is a story of a mountain climber, who narrowly failed to reach the peak of Mount Everest. He was last seen in the 'death zone' — where you have to go it alone — heading strongly for the top. On his memorial, his friends inscribed the words, 'He died climbing.' What would be your epitaph?

— Tom Cox

Lord Jesus Christ, ... **Amen.**
The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And with your spirit.

The priest may invite the people to exchange a sign of peace and Christian fellowship. As the priest breaks the consecrated Host the following is sung or said:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins ...

Showing the Eucharist to the people, the priest says:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,**

**but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon (Cf. Ps 103:13-15)

**The earth is replete with the fruits
of your work, O Lord;
you bring forth bread from the earth
and wine to cheer the heart.**

Prayer after Communion

Complete within us, O Lord, we pray,
the healing work of your mercy
and graciously perfect and sustain us,
so that in all things we may please you.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reflection

What lessons have you learned from missed opportunities?

Lesson

Jesus was purposeful and determined on his journey to Jerusalem. True followers of his will also be purposeful and determined

Prayer

Give me this day my daily bread,
all that I need to cope with this day.