



April, 2024

**Letter 219**



Having spent several hours in hospital Emergency last Friday, I could not help but reflect on the difference between accompanying a brother or friend, as I have done before, visiting a patient as a priest as I have done many times, or waiting for medical attention as I did many years ago having arrived with a broken leg and dressed in a Rugby jumper! I was reflecting on that last Friday. A few days later I recognised another kind of Emergency arrival, as the Bondi Junction shooting unfolded. And people told of women arriving, already covered in blood.

Our own experiences are valid, but often they pale in comparison to more critical or tragic experiences happening just around the corner. In a similar way, our personal experiences can attract our focus so much that we can forget or overlook the similar struggles of people not just around the corner, but next door!

These are occasions to reflect – on all the people in a hospital system who contribute to treatment, healing and recovery. There are admin personnel, some of whom are welcome at the entrance. There are hidden people, like orderlies who transport patients around the hospital, cleaners, caterers and the variety of medical staff such as ambulance personnel, nurses and doctors. Some professional personnel are also hidden, performing blood tests and diagnosing throughout every day.



Some people have rare need for a hospital; others are regular visitors. Certainly we need to be deeply grateful for all the personnel who serve us as hospital personnel.

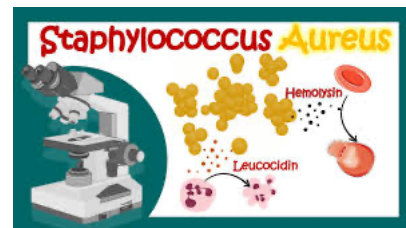


When I arrived at Emergency, it was at the recommendation of my doctor. He acknowledged that there was something significantly wrong and that this was the best place to undertake the necessary tests. It had become obvious that I had a fever and within two hours of arrival I was on an IV saline drip. That was followed immediately by an IV penicillin drip.



Had you seen my face at that time you'd have wondered how I could have acquired such a high degree facial suntan. It was a mystery to me too! This was the infection revealing itself. Having been unable to eat for three days and being dizzy and unsteady on my feet, I was puzzled. After a few hours I was advised that I was to be admitted to the hospital and the form said 'Cellulitis'.

As I had only known of this being associated with legs, I now learned that it is a skin infection, and I had the opportunity to learn something of the consequences of contracting staphylococcus aureus. The marvel is that I had avoided this totally throughout my life. What I went on to learn was the power of anti-biotics, as I underwent IV treatment four times a day for 40 minutes.



As my face started to lose its red glow and its heat, it was replaced by scaling, such as happens with the peeling of skin after sunburn. In Biblical Israel, I'd have been



classed as a leper! This scaling was a part of healing and I was kept in hospital until the doctors agreed that home antibiotic treatment could continue the management of healing they had begun. I came home on Wednesday.

I needed so many personnel (some of whom I never met) to assist me, and this included so many who sent messages of care, prayer and loving support. It has been a valuable experience, and I will follow the advice from so many people to 'take it easy'. Full healing takes time and rest. This is an Easter experience.

On Monday I watched a fascinating programme on [Jayavaman 11](#), who founded the Khmer empire in Cambodia, unifying the civilization which remained dominant in mainland Southeast Asia from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Jayavaman combined



guiding principles of compassion and care for all, to achieve an amazing society. Recent archaeological discoveries have revealed the amazing building programme he undertook including highways, temples and rest houses for travellers. What struck me was that all that time ago, his successor Jayavaman V11 continued what he began and built 102 hospitals across thousands

of square kilometres, where monks and other trained experts assisted in physical or mental healing. Any citizen or traveller could seek free treatment, including accommodation from these hospitals and they were referred to as a place that 'cures disease'.



When the Angkor Wat temple was built 900 years ago at every gate of the city, there was a hospital. These hospitals consisted of a medical-care building where a physician could stay, a healing centre, and administration centre. In every hospital compound, there was a temple (or shrine), built for people or doctors to worship and for the sick to pray, The overall structure and architectural design of each

hospital was identical. Where the temple stood, the hospital stood.

The hospital or doctor's house was not a place to teach. It was a place to heal the sick and cure diseases. There were 102 such places that cured illness across Khmer Empire during the reign of King Jayavarman VII. Each hospital had to have two doctors, around eighteen nurses and medical assistants, guards, people in charge of boiling water, people who grinded medicine, rice and other materials. There were approximately 90 people engaged at a single hospital.

Because of the inscriptions from King Jayavarman VII's years that have survived, more is known about the hospitals of his time, including the medications, their origins and management. Most of the medicines were imported from India. Others came from China, and some were grown locally. These medicines would go to the government. who distributed them.



Medicinal plants and herbs could be grown around the hospital. Some ingredients were formed into small tablets, and carefully stored. Since these medicines were organic, they could only be kept for a short period of time. Each hospital had to visit the royal storage in Angkor City every three months to get fresh medicine.

The hospital was not only a place to cure diseases. It was also a charity-and-rescue centre like the present-day Red Cross. People prepared food and water at the hospital for the poor and needy who were allowed to eat there if they could not find food. The poor could also seek medicines. The hospitals provided shelter for the homeless who needed to stay.



Higher degree of learning up to the university level for doctors, engineers, architects, and astrologists was available at the temples. The teachers or professors who taught at the temples were sponsored by the government and could support themselves from their salaries.

That is just a brief description of what was an amazing medical-religious system, all those years ago. We are often surprised at the knowledge of people in various cultures in earlier eras. The Khemer had a medication and a practice for treating leprosy. All of this inclines us to be grateful for the advances in medicine and technology that we benefit from today and the training of medical personnel who provide the expertise and care.

### Holy Cross

I don't have much news on home happenings having not been home since Friday morning. Everyone is alive and can be accounted for!

### Photos



I have not been able to gather other photos yet, to follow up on the four in last week's newsletter, except the above photo of Tri (pronounced (Chee)). He is studying theology at YTU and you see him most Sundays at the chapel desk operating the Power Point. Tri will make his final profession on Friday July 12<sup>th</sup>. You are invited!

### Coffee Cart Sunday



Here is **Maurice Molan** and **John Hogan** preparing for the Coffee Cart (and Ross the barista, in the background).

This Sunday is again, 'Coffee Cart Sunday'. We have been blessed by the generosity of people willing to provide this to the rest of us 'gratis', each month. Maybe a small group can combine resources one month to do what they have done and share the load?

In the meantime, the purpose is to enjoy the fellowship and outreach. A good clear name-tag helps that.

### Anzac Day - Thursday



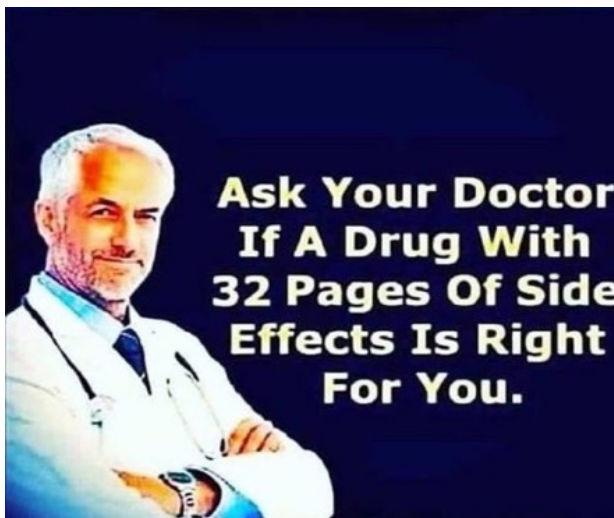
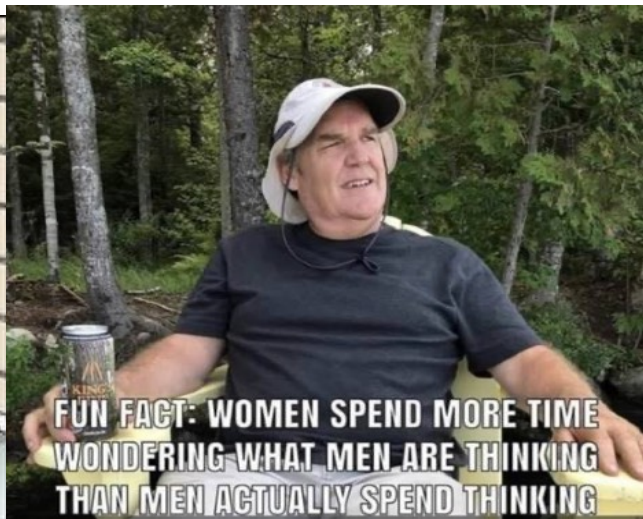
For those who have not attended before, the 8.30am Anzac Day service at Templestowe is very impressive with a good number of people in attendance. The service is held at the War Memorial (Cnr High St & Parker Street). The chaplain representative is a Passionist!

## Humour

The frantic young blonde calls out a May Day. "My pilot has had a heart attack and is dead and I don't know how to fly."  
She hears a voice over the radio saying: "This is Air Traffic Control and I hear you loud and clear. I will talk you through this and get you back on the ground. Everything will be fine! What is your height and position?"  
The blonde says, "I'm 5'4" and I'm in the front seat."  
(After a long pause)  
"O.K." says the voice on the radio...  
"Now, repeat after me."  
"Our Father Who art in Heaven... .."



## When parents start to crack during lockdown



If you ever feel like your brain is inadequate... Think of this guy!



**Guess who kept everyone awake last night?**

## Prayers

We remember **Fr David Wilkie CP** who died in Adelaide on April 12<sup>th</sup>, His funeral Mass led by Chris, was livestreamed on Thursday, at:

<https://livestream.com/accounts/8710393/events/11135014>

We remember those celebrating memories of loved ones, including

**Mardi Doyle** (April 19<sup>th</sup>) Michael's wife

**Kath Jordan** (April 19<sup>th</sup>) Sue McMahon's mother

**Terry Carrigg** (April 24<sup>th</sup>) PFG's husband of Val RIP

**Linda Williams** (April 23<sup>rd</sup>)

**Nancy Haward** (April 25<sup>th</sup>)

We remember all others in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially.

I thank my God  
every time I  
remember you.  
In all of my prayers  
for all of you,  
I always pray with joy.  
Philippians 1:3-4

Margaret Enriquez, Maree Bartoli, Carol Battistella, Peter Barns, Maeve (COVID) & John Reardon, Pam Storey, Tony Tome, Peter McNamara, Alexander Lim, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Michael O'Callaghan, Gerry Bond, Shirley Barnes, Bronwyn Burke, Helen McLean, Phil Drew, Monique Hardinge, Mary Hackett, Pam Gartland, Greg Agosta, Patricia Keeghan, Anne Jenkins, Errol Lovett, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Mary Dunn, Chris O'Toole, Gerald Quinn CP, and baby Alfred Theodore in London.

The **Mass link** for this Sunday will be sent on Saturday by Chris.

Brian