

Holy Cross Retreat

<https://holycrosscentre.com/community/>



Letter 236

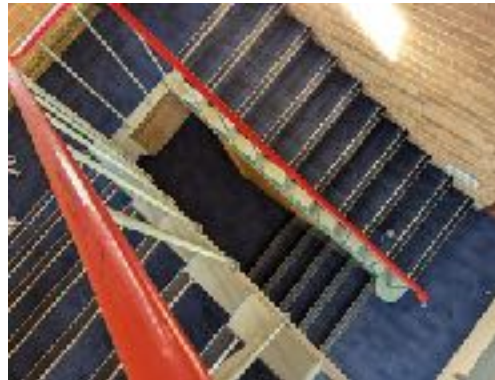
August, 2024

16th

A lot going on



Over the past two weeks we have undertaken a lot of maintenance tasks which will stretch our finances, but they were necessary and an ongoing challenge for us. First up was



carpeting the 70 metre long top corridor of the Holy Cross Centre, 24 bed rooms, 2 flights of stairs as well as 3 rooms in the student section of the community corridor and another flights of stairs. There was a lot of furniture moving required to undertake this.



Next was the replacement of our **hot water system**, which was 15 years old. Three of the eight units had given up the ghost, and the others were fading.

Providing heating and hot water around such a large building is quite a task and because it runs on gas, it is very expensive.. A couple of Groups using the Centre a few weeks ago were not impressed when the system was only operating at about 75% capacity. Had the entire system broken down at that time, we would have lost clients for the time it took to book and arrange replacement units.

Painting



Early this past week, thanks to the generosity of the Mattioli family, the 47 upstairs and downstairs bedrooms in the Holy Cross Centre, were painted at a fraction of the

normal cost. More furniture moving was required.

IT upgrade

The requirements of Groups using the Holy Cross Centre, reflect the changing technology we all have to adjust to, time and time again, and doing this is costly. We once provided slide projectors, then Kodak carousel slide projectors, then data projectors, then HDMI with Smart TV's, and now streaming. Likewise, sound systems have changed from cassette players, to DVD units, to internet with wi-fi sound. These changes are expensive but unavoidable.



A recent report suggests we will see “more sophisticated systems offering higher resolution video, better sound quality, and enhanced reliability. Integration of AI and voice enhancement will make virtual meetings more efficient and lifelike”. Digital signage will continue to evolve. We

will never be able to keep up, but at this stage we are increasing the size and capacity of the TV in the main dining room because some Groups who use the Centre like that space as a working area and this requires updated equipment. We also will update the A-V in the Morris room to upgrade it for Zoom and other Conference calls and for small group interactions.

Legal again



Our six Vietnamese novices were required to extend their visas in order to remain in the Philippines.

The photo displays that they had achieved this task and are pleased about it.

Thang, Thang, Hau, Cu'ong, DJ and Hi are the happy six!

Earthworks

Vince Celestino has crafted a decent pile of rocks to make an attractive area when the works are finished in our main carpark and down by the St Gabriel shrine. Vince's skill is nothing short of amazing. Thanks to Bruno and Pino for their help with the positioning of the rocks. We will need to concrete the path from the carpark to the Shrine and investigate the cost of concreting the path from the second carpark across to the main driveway.



Sabbatical



In our Province we are granted a two month sabbatical on the occasion of our 50th profession. For me, that occurred in 2018 but I've been unable to fit in a sabbatical with my various commitments. I decided 2024 was the year and set in place some plans. A few months ago I realised I needed to spend some weeks organising files and arranging material related to Province ministry. I will still attend to some of that work beginning on August 28th for most of September in New Zealand.



My overall plans have been changed this past week, because I will now be attending the General Chapter in Rome. I had been a reserve delegate. From 1775, every General Chapter (held every six years) has taken place at St John and Paul's in Rome, except in 1790, 1796, 1802 and 2000. Chris Monaghan will also attend as a delegate of the Province. Attendance involves two short pre-meetings and the Chapter itself, taking up all of October. Joachim will complete his term as General of the Congregation so it will be good to be there at such a time.

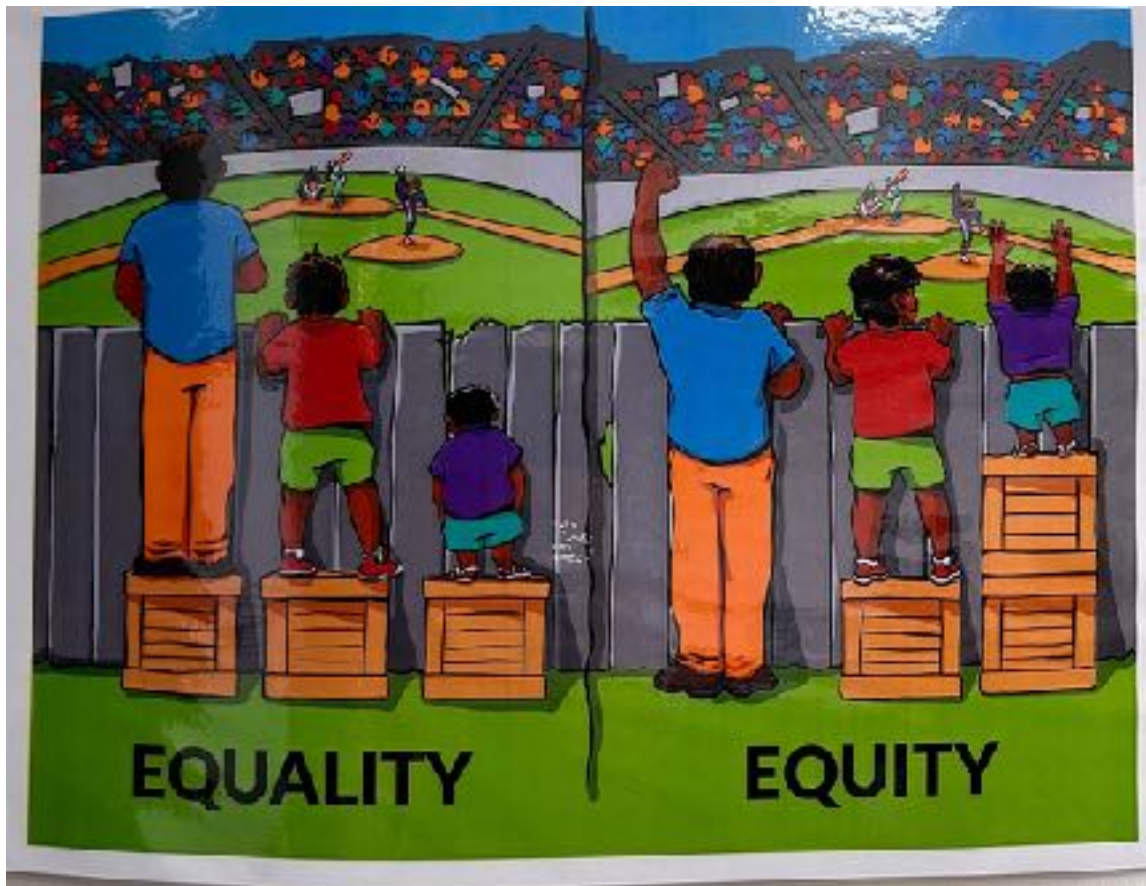
I will be back at Holy Cross for a couple of days towards the end of September and again in mid-November for two weeks including the Passionist Institute, then away for another Passionist meeting before returning to New Zealand for some Passionist Family Group ministry until the second week of December.

Erick will be acting community leader during my absence and he will appreciate support. He will edit the newsletter, but it will be concise.



The Temple of Claudius to the right of the Colosseum in the photo above, is the site of St John and Paul's, the Passionist house in Rome

In last week's newsletter, I included this image



This week I was sent this improvement!



Pearls



Most jewellery is fashioned out of precious metals and jewels that are found buried in the Earth, but pearls are found inside a living creature, an oyster. Pearls are the result of a biological process - the oyster's way of protecting itself from foreign substances. Oysters are not the only type of mollusc that can produce pearls. Clams and mussels can also produce pearls, but that is a much rarer occurrence. Most pearls are produced by oysters in both freshwater and saltwater environments.

An Oyster is a bivalve, which means that its shell is made of two parts, or valves. The shell's valves are held together by an elastic ligament. This ligament is positioned where the valves come together, and usually keeps the valves open so the oyster can eat. As the oyster grows in size, its shell must also grow. The organ that produces the oyster's shell is a mantle which uses minerals from the oyster's food. The material created by the mantle is called nacre. Nacre lines the inside of the shell.



The formation of a natural pearl begins when a foreign substance slips into the oyster between the mantle and the shell, which irritates the mantle. The oyster's natural reaction is to cover up that irritant to protect itself. The mantle covers the irritant with layers of the same nacre substance that is used to create the shell. This eventually forms a pearl!



So a pearl is a foreign substance covered with layers of nacre. Most pearls seen in jewellery stores are nicely rounded objects, which are the most valuable ones. Pearls come in a variety of various colours, including white, black, grey, red, blue and green. Most pearls can be found all over the world, but black pearls are indigenous to the South Pacific.

Perhaps one lesson from pearls, is that irritations, when responded to positively can lay the foundation for true beauty to unfold.

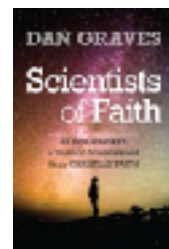


Faith and science

experience and spiritual maturity led him to realize that science and faith are two distinct and parallel paths, which are not in conflict. Indeed, the two paths prove complementary, inasmuch as, for the believer, science and faith are grounded alike in the absolute truth of God," he said.

"Lemaître's journey of faith led him to the awareness that 'creation' and 'the Big Bang' are two different realities, and that the God, in whom he believed, can never be reduced to an object neatly catalogued by human reason," he said. The pope encouraged the scientists "to continue to investigate, with sincerity and humility, the important topics that you are presently discussing," adding that he hoped they may continue to "advance in your various fields toward that truth which is surely a reflection of God's eternal love."

Jesuit Br. Guy Consolmagno, who is a planetary scientist and director of the Vatican Observatory, told reporters at the June 11 news conference that he was a scientist for 20 years before he entered the Jesuits. "The most common reaction I had from my fellow scientists was not horror that I had become part of the church, but rather a freedom that they now felt they could tell me about the churches they belonged to," he said.



Scientists, especially in the field of cosmology, he said, are very aware "of how much we do not know that there is a great openness to the need to accept a way of



addressing the fundamental question from Leibniz, why is there something instead of nothing?" St. John Paul II provided an image "that faith and reason are the two wings that bring us to the truth," Bro Consolmagno said. "And that image reminds us that faith is not the goal, reason is not the goal, the church is not the goal, science is not the goal, truth is the goal," he said.

The next instalment of **Contextual theology (7)** will be held over til next week. There is enough reading already for this week.

From 'Every Cloud has a silver lining'

- Happiness often sneaks through a door you did not know you left open
- Life can be like a shipwreck, so sing in the life boats
- If the wind will not serve, take up the oars

Humour

At the wedding ceremony, the priest asked if anyone had anything to say concerning the union of the bride and groom. "Speak now, or forever hold your peace". The

silence was broken by an attractive young woman holding a child who was walking towards the priest.

Everything quickly turned to chaos. The bride slapped the groom and the groom's mother fainted. The groomsmen started giving each other looks and wondering how best to save the situation.

The priest asked the woman why she had come forward. She replied, "Because we can't hear you at the back".

Church Bulletins - as they appeared

Scouts are saving aluminium cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

Visitors are asked to sing their names at the church entrance

Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience

The class on prophecy has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances

When parking on the north side of the church, please remember to park on an angel.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What is hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice

The 'Over 60s Choir' will be disbanded for the summer with the thanks of the entire church

- The difference between in-laws and outlaws? Outlaws are wanted.
- Alcohol is a perfect solvent: It dissolves marriages, families and careers.
- A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.
- Archaeologist: someone whose career lies in ruins.
- There are two kinds of people who don't say much: Those who are quiet and those who talk a lot.



DON'T WASH YOUR HAIR IN THE SHOWER

(It's so good to finally get a health warning that is useful)

Why didn't we figure this out sooner!

Washing your hair in the shower involves shampoo running down your body..... and yet printed very clearly on the shampoo label is this warning,

"FOR EXTRA BODY AND VOLUME."

No wonder we gain weight! Get rid of the shampoo and start showering with Dawn dishwashing soap instead. Its label reads,

"DISSOLVES FAT THAT IS OTHERWISE DIFFICULT TO REMOVE."

Prayers

We remember all the recently deceased especially and those whose anniversaries occur this week, especially

Mary Corboy (Joan O'Callaghan's mum -16th August)

Eileen Agnes 'Bab's Cogle – Dennis' mum (16th August)

Rosemary Sandham (18th August)

Alma Hall (18th August)

Elvira Curcio (Joe's mother - (19th August)

Joan Hardinge (23rd August) Cathy's mother-in-law

**I thank my God each time I think
of you!
And when I pray for you,
I pray with joy.**

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

Lorraine Gill, Adrian Woon, Maree Bartoli,
Michael O'Callaghan, Pam Storey, Ann Burke,
Tony Tome, Sandra Street, Paul Darbyshire, Mary Dunn, Luke Norden, Carol
Battistella, Monique Hardinge, Robyn Burns, John Reardon, Gerry Bond, Ann
Burke, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Alexander Lim, Agnes Mumburi, Greg Agosta,
Peter McNamara, Bronwyn Burke, Phil Drew
Helen McLean, , Anne Jenkins, Pam Gartland, Patricia Keeghan, Errol Lovett,
Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Chris O'Toole and baby Alfred Theodore in London.

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

Thank you

Brian