

Holy Cross Retreat

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Letter 241

20th September, 2024

Greetings everyone

Tri Preaches publicly for the first time and in front of a whole school

Yesterday, Tri preached to approximately 1,000 staff and students at Our Lady of Mercy College's biggest feast day, Mercy Day. Joey was the main celebrant at the Eucharist while Tri delivered the reflection. Having spent over a year in pastoral experience at OLMC, some in the school attended his final profession a few months ago.

We have two images: one of Tri with students at his profession at Holy Cross and another of Catherine McAuley, the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. Tri's preaching is a step toward his diaconate, anticipated next year, as guided by the Holy Spirit



and the Provincial. We continue to pray for his vocation.

Chris, Kevin, Luke, Joey, and I have also participated in various Eucharistic celebrations at the school, marking the growth of our Passionist ministry. Tri shared that he had never preached publicly before, having only given short reflections at community masses recently. I asked him to share his reflection with us (see below). Thank you, Tri, and congratulations on your first public preaching!

“You have heard Fr. Joey, Fr. Erick and Fr. Kevin preaching many times. The difference between their homilies and mine is that, they preach from their hearts, but for me, I preach from my paper. Mr. Taylor gives me only five-f-f-fi-five minutes. I understand that it is five times five, equal to twenty-five minutes. Therefore, the first ten-minutes is about theology of mercy, which is God’s love for all people. That love wasn’t a mere ideal but had been carried out in human history, especially in the person of Jesus. The next ten minutes is reserved for the theology of today's Gospel, which

expresses that the criterion of our lives is LOVE. The last five-minutes is an invitation to each of us to love and care for ourselves and the people around us. Please, bear with me in this long homily (giving many smiles at this time)

We heard from today's Gospel about the judgment of the nations on the basis of love. The Son of Man sits on the throne. He separates people as the shepherd separates sheep from goats and puts them on his sides, right and left. He then states 'those who feed the hungry, give thirsty drinks, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, and visit the prisoner; "come and inherit the Kingdom of heaven." For 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me,' he explains. What we can learn from this Gospel is that God does not judge on our mistakes. Instead, God calls us to love all people, especially those in need. It is important; that we are not judged on our sins, nor our limitation or shortage, but on love. Therefore, LOVE is the criterion of our lives.

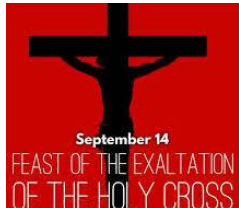
Next we should focus on 'who is the least?' The Gospel listed the hungry, thirsty, the stranger, the naked, and the prisoner. The common idea about these people is that they are wounded and in need of care. The world we are living in is wounded. What I mean here is your world and my world, which is yourselves, myself and the people around us. There is always something that we worry about and suffer from. As for me and you the students, we are under pressure of study and assignments. We suffer from being different, from being treated unfairly, from loneliness in the midst of our family, class, school and society. Even teachers suffer from a range of human imperfections. They suffer from being good mums and dads to their children. Their heart is torn into pieces when seeing the unhappiness, unhealthiness, and loneliness of their children. Yes, each of us suffers from something and deserves to be loved and cared for.

We learn from first reading how Catherine McAuley let the mercy of God flow into her world. She was lively, cheerful, and always kind, caring for each sister. She was delighted and loved seeing everyone around her feeling joyful. She removed anything that could upset others and add to the fun. Even though she had a lot of responsibilities, she joined in with the fun, joking, telling funny stories, and making everyone laugh. By being true to herself and making life better with a simple and happy life, Catherine modelled being a merciful disciple of Jesus in her world. What about us? Are we willing to let God's mercy flow into our world by turning it into a better one? Are we willing to leave behind the sad faces which might upset others and come to our friends with happy faces? Are we ready to smile, to tell jokes, and to make others happy? These are questions and invitations to each one of us. Let's become merciful disciples of Jesus by our own life. Let's make this day and every day into mercy days for you, for me, and everyone. Amen."



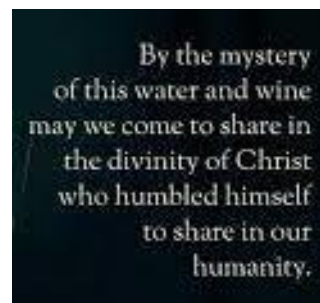
Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, last Saturday 14th, September:

On the afternoon of Friday 13th, Brian sent our community the following nice reflection (on the cross and 'holiness'), as he could not be with us physically to celebrate such an important Passionist Feast Day. I thought we should also share it with you all. Thank you, Brian.



"As tomorrow we celebrate our feast it's notable that we used to call it the 'Triumph of the Cross' or the 'Exaltation of the Cross'. Neither term speaks to people today in a meaningful way, despite the wisdom and truth behind these terms.

We are not exactly comfortable with the term 'holy' either, mainly because 'we' tend to associate 'holiness' with piety or being removed from our everyday life. Although Vatican 2 called the Church to holiness, we can tend to think we are not worthy. That happens when we put the emphasis on ourselves, rather than on what God can and does do through us, because "we share in his divinity as he has shared in our humanity". We recall that at every Mass.



The Israelites pitched the tent of meeting outside the camp, because they believed God should be separated from ordinary, everyday life. In contrast, John (1:14) says that 'the Word' (Jesus) 'pitched his tent' amongst us. Jesus showed through his life how the holy infuses the human. This makes every ordinary and everyday action and all life, 'holy'. A person or a place is holy because God is there. "Where two or three are gathered in my name", Jesus said, "I am there".



Our community, both our fraternal community and the wider Holy Cross family, is holy when and because God is present and acting in and through our efforts to respond to God's invitation to create a community of love and service.



For all those who have gone before us, all those who have and do now sustain us, we give thanks on this feast, and dedicate ourselves anew to bring God's holiness; God's sacred presence, to each of our everyday interactions.

Happy Feast Day, Brian."

Coffee Cart 22nd September



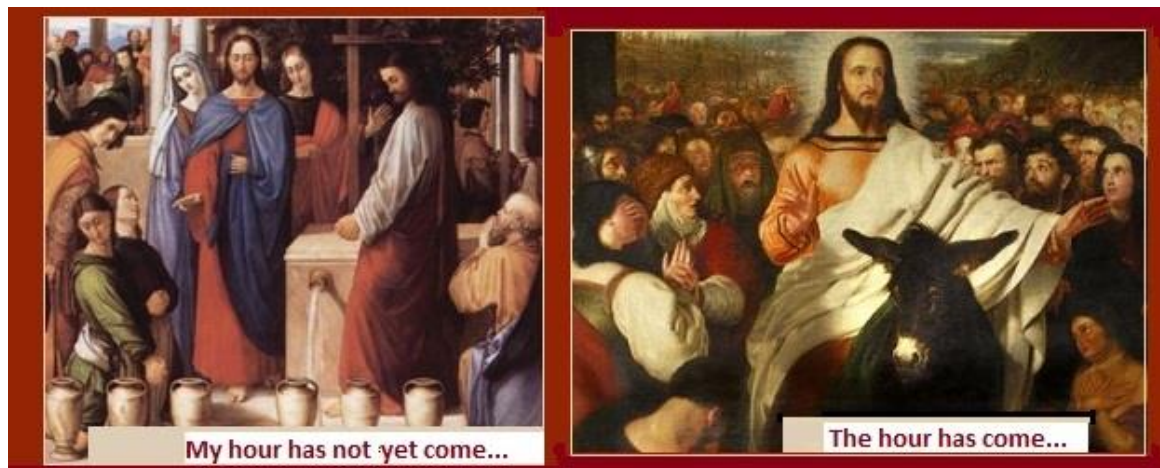
The next Coffee Cart will be held at Holy Cross this weekend, September 22nd, after 10.00am Sunday Mass. All are welcome either to mass, to hot drinks or to both. After a long homily, I believe there will be some needed treats to go with the hot drinks.

The notion of Jesus' 'hour' in John's Gospel -Part 2/4 (JD)

Fr. Joseph Dominic Tan CP (JD) is advancing his studies at YTU, focusing on the Gospel of John. He hopes to pursue a Doctorate in this area upon completing his Master's. We are reading one of his essays in four parts, drawing inspiration from his insights and scripture research. The concept of Jesus' 'hour' resonates deeply with our Passionist Charism. This academic paper includes footnotes for further reference, and I have added images for those of us who enjoy some visual content! Below is the second part of four parts.



The Notion of the 'Hour' of Jesus



From the enumerations of the hour with different possible meanings, the audience may wonder about its final notion and how it contributes to the formulation as a significant pattern in the Fourth Gospel. To best determine the content of the 'hour', Brown suggests lining up the passages in two categories of the hour, as has been done above. They are (1) the 'hour' has not yet come or is coming and (2) the 'hour' has come.¹

With the enumeration of the coming of the hour, the author foreshadows "the major part of Jesus' ministry", which is unfolded step by step across the Gospel.² From the first point, the hour refers to the hour of return to the Father in Jesus' life (cf. 8:1). The hour carries on into the last section of the Fourth Gospel (cf. 13:31) and elucidates the hour that Jesus goes through to return to the Father (cf. 13:1, 32; 17:5).³ The hour can point to a time of distinct importance or a new situation for Jesus' disciples arising from his departure (cf. 4:21; 5:25; 16:2, 25, 32). These examples demonstrate that Jesus' return to his Father is



¹ Brown, *The Gospel*, 517.

² Moloney, *John*, 71.

³ Moloney, *John*, 71-72.

achieved in the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, which spans from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday.⁴

The second signification of the 'hour' focuses on the enumeration of the hour that has come, meaning Jesus' 'hour' finishes in his death.⁵ Still, most scholars agree that it

includes or extends to the resurrection.⁶ In John's Gospel, Jesus' 'hour' is not "the dark aspect of the Passion" like the synoptic Gospels (cf. Mk 14:41, Luke 22:53)⁷ but is associated with departure and returning to the



Father (cf. 13:1) and includes the glorification of not only the Son but also the Father (cf. 12:23; 17:1). John does not emphasise a significantly suffering Jesus but an exaltation when Jesus is "lifted up" on the cross (cf. 3:14-15; 8:28; 12:32, 24). John's concept of when the 'hour' of Jesus has come deals with understanding his Passion, particularly in

⁴ Brendan Byrne, *Life Abounding: A Reading of John's Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), 356.

⁵ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 507-8. Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary*, 1st ed., The New Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 61, 349. Craig R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 2008), 42. Edward W. Klink III, *John: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, Zondervan, Volume 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 165.

⁶ Brown, *John*, 517-8. Jo-Ann A. Brant, *John*, Paideia: Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 57. Jörg Frey, *The Glory of the Crucified One: Christology and Theology in the Gospel of John*, trans. Wayne Coppins and Christoph Heilig, The Baylor-Mohr Siebeck Studies in Early Christianity Series (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018), 87. Donald Senior, Paul J Achtemeier, and Robert J Karris, *Invitation to the Gospels* (Mulgrave, VIC: John Garratt, 2002), 342. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (London: S.P.C.K, 1955), 159. Francis Martin, and William M Wright, *The Gospel of John*, Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), 58. Richard Alan Culpepper, and Gail R O'Day. *The Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John*, NIB, Vol. 9 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995), 458. Sandra Marie Schneiders, *Written That You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, Rev. and expanded ed. (New York: Crossroad Pub, 2003), 25. Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John*, New Century Bible (London: Oliphants, 1972), 427. D. Moody Smith, *John*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 84. Deolito V. Vistar, *The Cross-And-Resurrection: The Supreme Sign in John's Gospel*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament, 2, Reihe, 508 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 81. J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament Grand Rapids, MI: (William B. Eerdmans Pub, 2010), 687-88. Koester, *The Word of Life*, 218. Klink III, *John*, 171.

⁷ de La Potterie, *The Hour*, 3.

the concept of death, exaltation, and glorification.⁸ In the ‘hour’, the cross is precise in indicating death, but exaltation and glorification should be considered further in the light of the resurrection. Jesus has not returned to his Father as he says, “I have not yet ascended to the Father” (20:17). Jesus cannot be exalted and glorified so that the Father will be glorified in the same way without recognising the resurrection. In the light of the resurrection, the fulfilment of love is central in clarifying the exaltation and glorification as Jesus acknowledges it and proclaims aloud (cf. 19:28-30). The sense of fulfilment continues with his side being pierced (cf. 19:34-37). In terms of remembrance, Jesus’ ‘hour’ can only be understood when he is raised from the dead (cf. 2:22, 12:16). The ‘hour’ continues after his death with the echoing question during his arrest, “Whom are you looking for?” (20:15, cf. 18:4, 7); the giving of the spirit, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (20:22, cf. 19:30); and the appearance as the resurrected body wounded by his crucifixion, especially in the invitation for Thomas to put his hand in Jesus’ wounded side (cf. 20:24-29).

In the Fourth Gospel, the ‘hour’ connects with all events of the last hours of Jesus’ life in the physical body in his arrest, trial and death. It also extends into the resurrected body in the resurrection, the ascension and the giving of the Spirit.⁹ The resurrection is testified by the empty tomb and Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene and his



disciples (cf. 20:1-29, 21:1-14). The ascension is not apparent except for his message, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God” (20:17). The giving of the Spirit is revealed by Jesus’ words as he “breathed on them” saying “Receive the Holy Spirit” (20:22). It is

⁸ Coloe, *John 1-10*, 57.

⁹ Frey, *The Glory*, 87.

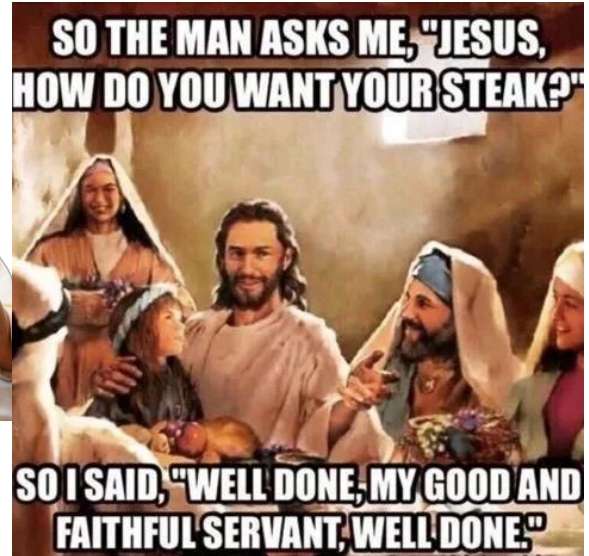
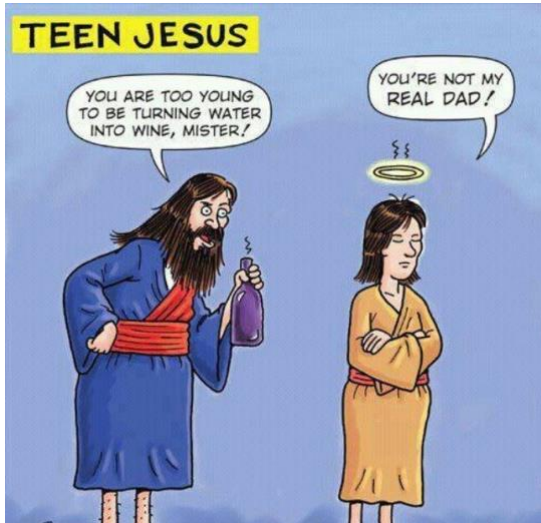
followed by his instruction for forgiveness of sin (20:23). In concepts of exaltation and glorification, the giving of the Spirit can be witnessed in Jesus' death and resurrection when he gives up his spirit on the cross (cf. 19:30) and bestows the Holy Spirit on the disciples (cf. 20:22-23). The ascension can be included in the culmination of the 'hour' when Jesus returns to the Father in the glorification of the resurrection. Agreeing with most scholars, the notion of the hour is revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, with the primary goal of exaltation and glorification, comprising a deeper understanding of the fulfilment of love.

To Be Continued...

Humour

The following quote might be true or not but in case it is, let's try to laugh at Jesus' jokes even if they may not be as funny. "The secret to happiness is a good sense of humour and a bad memory." Ingrid Bergman. I think if God made us, God has a sense of humour too.





Prayers

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

Michelle Reardon - 21/9

Kevin Lee - 23/9

Adrian Day - 26/9

Salvatore Musumeci - 27/9

**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.

Doris Castro, Julia Castro, Caroline Meade, Sophia Chung, Zoe Chung, Michael O'Callaghan, Peter McNamara, Pam Storey, Lorraine Gill, Adrian

Woon, Maree Bartoli, Ann Burke, Sandra Street, Paul Darbyshire, Luke Norden, Carol Battistella, Monique Hardinge, Kaya Lenic, Robyn Burns, John Reardon, Alexander Lim, Agnes Mumburi, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Gerry Bond, Mary Dunn, , Bronwyn Burke, Greg Agosta Helen McLean, Phil Drew, Anne Jenkins, Pam Gartland, Patricia Keegan, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Errol Lovett, 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

Erick