

## Holy Cross Retreat

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



## Letter 244

18<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

Greetings everyone

## St Paul of the Cross Feast Day



Tomorrow, October 19th, is the Feast Day of St. Paul of the Cross (1694–1775), the Founder of the Congregation of the Passionists. His vision unites us, and for that, we honour him with gratitude.

Today, the Passionists consist of over 2,000 vowed religious members, serving in more than 60 countries worldwide. In addition to these vowed members, thousands of lay Passionists are actively involved in their mission and community life, whether through formal roles or as associates, sharing in the Passionist spirituality and mission of commemorating Christ's Passion.

The Holy Cross Community will place special emphasis on celebrating St. Paul of the Cross this Sunday at the 10 a.m. Mass. Happy Feast Day, everyone!

## The A-Team working hard or hardly working?

While the A-team in the photo on the right might look like they're 'hardly working', they have actually been working incredibly hard. Their recent service projects include painting the ceilings and doors of the toilets - a rather difficult and fitly job; building a wooden fence to protect our gas heaters; working on the ramp at the far end of the centre, and much more.

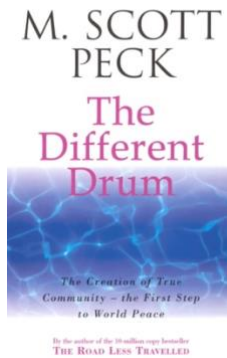


They have often come more than once a week, driven by their care for Holy Cross. Nearly all the time, they've even skipped lunch to continue working. Not everyone is in the photo, but you can see Jack visiting, as their bond goes beyond just the tasks they perform.

We want to thank them for their tireless efforts—it's truly inspiring to see them show up every week with happy faces and a long list of jobs to tackle.



## Troubling Thoughts & Spiritual Growth: Stages of Faith



Most people are familiar with James Fowler's six stages of faith. Similarly, M. Scott Peck introduced four stages of faith in his book *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*. He is the same author of the 10 million bestseller book *The Road Less Travelled*. If you are not already aware of the four stages, I'd like to share a brief introduction. The four stages offer insight into why, despite sharing the same beliefs, we sometimes misunderstand one another's perspectives. The following summary, provided by a website focused on troubling thoughts and spiritual growth, highlights these stages. As we read through the stages it is advisable to think about at which stage of faith each of us might be and why. The images are my addition. This week's newsletter will cover stage one.

### Introduction to M. Scott Peck's Four Stages of Faith of Spiritual Development

Source: <https://eriksholisticcornucopia.wordpress.com/2013/05/04/stages-of-faith-intro-to-m-scott-peck/>

M. Scott Peck offers a four-fold model outlining the development of one's spirituality. This system is loosely based upon our psychological development from children into adulthood. As with most, if not all of these systems, it provides a means of charting individual social-psychological development from an I-centric world, to a We-centric world, and for some into an Us-centric view of the world.

### Stage I: Chaotic-Antisocial

This stage is roughly comparable to Fowler's stage 1 (Intuitive-Projective) and stage 2 (Mythic-Literal).

We all go through this stage as small children. There is little to no respect for authority outside of oneself, and one's greatest concern is only for oneself. It's hall mark traits include chaotic, defiant, disordered, and reckless behaviour.

Persons residing in this stage are egotistic in the extreme, and they have little to no development of empathy for others. Peck observes that many adults who are unable to grow beyond Stage I become criminals. It is easy to see how persons stuck in this early stage have great difficulty thriving in the wider social community.



If transition out of this stage takes place at a late date in one's life, as an adult, it is usually the result of a very dramatic, painful experience. *To be continued...*

## African Choir Visit Holy Cross

Next Sunday, October 27th, at the 10 a.m. mass, a few representatives from the African Choir in Adelaide will join members of the African choir from Melbourne (Melton) to lead us in songs during the Eucharistic celebration at Holy Cross. They have been wanting to visit me as part of a cultural tradition to offer support and encouragement for my vocation. In our culture, as in many others, physically visiting and spending time with one another—whether needed or not—is an important practice that strengthens our personal journeys of life and faith.

I had been delaying this important visit from both choirs and communities due to my own neglect, but I have now decided to invite them all at once so they can meet each other as well. I'm more familiar with the Adelaide choir, as I was a member before joining the Passionists. The Adelaide choir includes people from Sudan, Congo, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and more. The Melton community, which I occasionally minister to, consists mostly of Congolese members, with a couple of Burundians. We don't know exactly how many will attend, but at least eight representatives from both choirs will be visiting. It's expensive for them to travel, but those who can make the trip will represent the others. Nearly all of them from different choirs are meeting for the first time. We warmly welcome them and look forward to celebrating together with joy.

The image below is of some of the Choir members from Adelaide singing. Both African refugees choirs are not professionals, but families that coming together to sing from their hearts, giving thanks and glory to God. I just thought I might tell you that they are not professionals in case you were expecting some spectacular performances!



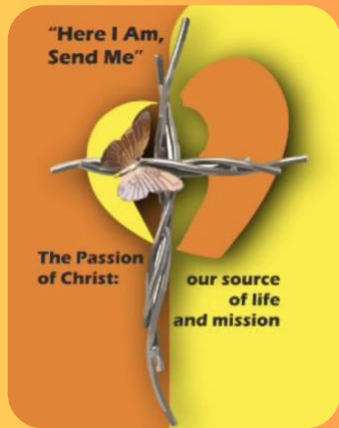




HERE I AM SEND ME

IS 6:8

**PASSIONIST**  
INSTITUTE 2024  
**15-16 NOVEMBER**



**SATURDAY**  
**11AM - 2.45PM**

What it calls from us - Denis Travers  
Reflections Younger CP - Luke Bulley  
What do our companions think???

**FURTHER DETAILS TO COME**

*Including a detailed schedule for both days, along with zoom links.  
Any questions or concerns contact Gerard - gerard.daly23@bigpond.com*

**SUNDAY**  
**1.25 - 5.30PM**

General Chapter - what it calls from us  
Chris Monaghan  
Brian Traynor

Reflection  
Vietnam

Ritual - NZ Companions  
*Those at Templestowe welcome to join the Sunday BBQ*

## Individual / Personal Retreats at Holy Cross Centre in December & January (Mayrose & Cecilia)

December is not far away and is a busy time for most of us as we prepare to celebrate Christmas with family and friends. Amongst the busy-ness, we invite you to take time out for yourself...to check in with your heart, to reflect on your spiritual journey, and to listen to God's promptings. Holy Cross Centre in Templestowe offers you space for an individual retreat, providing accommodation with cooling/heating (some rooms with ensuites), self-catering, a small meditation room, Chapel, and beautiful grounds in which to wander. You can choose the length of your retreat and Spiritual Direction can also be arranged if desired (additional fee would apply). Dates in December and January are available as well as other times of the year. For more information, contact Mayrose on (03) 9846 6014 or email [hcc@passionists.com](mailto:hcc@passionists.com)



## General Chapter news (Brian)

The first three days of this week were set aside to deepen and clarify what has been said across different groups on the five topics we established: Inner Life, Belonging, Leadership, New Ministries and Configurations. Having added and clarified ideas, this material has been sent to small Committees to be formulated in official proposals. It is likely we will add a sixth area, Laity.



The process has been slow, detailed and thorough, resulting in unanimity not only on the main points, but on the thinking behind them. There is a strong desire to improve the quality of community life. This is recognised as arising from a sound, developed inner life (spiritually and psychologically) and a strong sense of appreciating what contributes to true belonging. Consistently linked to this reality and occurring in the other main areas, has been the acknowledged need for appropriate formation and working in partnership and collaboration with our Passionist family.



The matter of Configurations is complex and contentious. The point was made that some members of this Chapter were not yet members of the Congregation when the Configurations were established. To assist, Denis Travers and Italian Luigi Vanetti, both of whom served twelve years on the General Council through the years of the beginning and development of the Configurations were invited to provide a background to the formation of Configurations.

I recall back in 2012 at the General Chapter Chapter there was a review of what was at that stage an experimental structure established to provide solidarity in areas of personnel, formation and personnel. At that time there was concern among some that these six Configurations would become permanent structures. The General of the time Fr Ottaviano D'Egideo, gave assurances that Configurations were free to choose a model most suited to them, but some thought the model others had chosen were unsuitable. Twelve years later, that opinion is stronger.



Denis and Luigi explained that the formal process of Configurations started 20 years ago. At the 2004 General Synod, Fr Ottaviano consulted about restructuring and revitalisation Passionist mission throughout the Congregation. The Synod agreed that it was critical to respond to the urgent needs of the time through the perspective of solidarity, to seek a sustainable future. In studying what other Congregations had done,

two main models were acknowledged. A model based on numbers (e.g. establishing Provinces that had at least 100 members) or common presence in continents. The Synod advised a different model to these. A Commission was established of which Denis Travers was a member.

In response seeking suggestions throughout the Congregation, 300 replies were received. From this, three themes were agreed: 'Our Presence', 'Our Charism' and 'Our Mission'. At the time Ottaviano compared the task to climbing a mountain and "we don't know what we will see when we get to the top".



It was agreed at the General Chapter in 2006 to change our form of government. A new Council was elected, with 4 members not related to the Conferences (like PASPAC) that existed at the time. The 2008 General Synod held in Spain and it was agreed that 'Solidarity' summed up the process and that Solidarity in Formation, Personnel and Finance would be the foundation for the Congregation



Denis explained that at that Synod, members of Provinces were invited to 'walk towards the people you want to work with'. He has said separately, that if that question had been, "who do you want to merge with to achieve this solidarity" the result might have been different and more successful.

In 2008-2010 six new structures were established and called Configurations to test their viability. Some Configurations made small changes to their make-up or membership in the next year or so. Two models emerged. One model chosen by two Configurations was described as a 'united' model, because all the members were merged into a single Province. In one case, this referred to previous Provinces or Vice-Provinces across thirteen countries. The other model was described as Collegial, where several provinces with different judicial entities elected one President and Council of Provincials) to make decisions about solidarity. Our Province is part of the collegial Configuration of PASPAC (Passionist Asian Pacific Configuration).

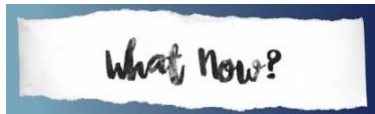


New structures were added such a Congregation wide Solidarity Tax of 2% on income and 7% as the result of property sales. A new office of Formation was established in Rome and an international Commission for Formation, appointed. The Chapter



in 2012 voted in support of Configurations in its two forms (united and Collegial). This resulted in a new structure of Government:

- an enlarged council made up of the 6 presidents of the Configurations who meet with the General Council at least one each year
- the Regulations of the Congregation were modified
- the Constitutions were modified to call for the Synod to meet now, only once between General Chapters



Denis and Luigi left us with this challenge regarding Configurations:

*To create solidarity - to help all configurations to collaborate and work together within the configuration itself and between the configurations for the sake of the Mission of the Congregation*

We spent half an hour in contemplative prayer followed by two hours discerning about Configurations in our language (discerning group). After a half hour break we spent two more hours in total Assembly. From that emerged five points in regard to what needs to put into official proposals.

1. There was no call from any group to abolish the Configurations. We have to go forward
2. There was acknowledgement of a need for some adjustments and this should seek unity not uniformity
3. Our members need information and education concerning the purpose and functioning of Configuration.
4. There should be common Configurational meetings (not just of leaders)
5. We do not seem to have a common idea about solidarity

We will come back to the legislative content next week.

### **Election of General and Council**



When a General or a member of the Council has served two terms (12 years) they cannot be re-elected. There is no doubt that while he has appreciated and enjoyed the role, Joachim is happy to retire from twelve years in the role. He did say "I don't know what it is going to be like, because I've never been through something like this before".

The scan for who will be the new man for the role, is always keen. There is a clear loss of leadership across the Congregation due to ageing and diminishing numbers and Provinces are well aware of the impact of losing a significant leader from a Province despite the importance of the role of General. On Wednesday afternoon we began discernment concerning the most suitable person we should elect for the role of General. In one discernment session we did not name anyone, but simply stated what qualities we believed are necessary.



**The Chapter will meet on Thursday morning Rome time to elect the new Superior General. We are now 9 hours behind Melbourne.**

The photo immediately below was taken after the current General Council were elected in 2018 – one from each Configuration. All of the present General Consultors are completing a first term so they can be re-elected, but we are not concerned with those roles until Friday.



- [1] Fr. Juan Ignacio Villar Cabello (SCOR),
- [2] Fr. Aloysius John Nguma (GEMM)
- [3] Fr. Rafael Vivanco Pérez (REG),
- [4] Fr Jaochim Rego (PASPAC) (General) & Fr. Miroslaw Lesiecki (ASSUM)
- [5] Fr. Ciro Benedettini (MAPRAES) First Consultor,
- [6] Fr. Mario Gwen Barde (PASS)



Fr Juan Ignatio resigned and was replaced by Fr Eddy Alejandro Vasquez Lopez



Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> was **Chris' birthday** and this coincides with a decision taken that the 18 PASPAC members here would share a Chinese meal. which was been ordered in, to save some cost. It was a refreshing sight to look around and see virtually everyone using chopsticks and enjoying a familiar cuisine. Karaoke provided some joyful entertainment and amusing moments. It was a very enjoyable night.

When I reached to turn off my alarm on Thursday morning, my mattress fell through the slats in the bed! It was quite a job to extricate myself up and over the side, without too many more slats separating. We never know what's ahead!

### Election day

I can only imagine how difficult it is for those men who have to can consider themselves having a chance of being elected to the role of General. It calls for a complete change, especially if you are not a native to Italy. It means leaving your current ministry and community and everything you are used to.



Giuseppe Adobati from Italy, was elected General on the second ballot. He secured the exact two-thirds required votes (52) which was a great endorsement. Giuseppe has served on the General Council. He has been Provincial of his Province and until now he has been Provincial and Configuration President of MAPRES (Italy). He speaks Italian (probably Spanish), English and French.



Tue managed to a photo with Giuseppe. Denis Travers secured 18 votes, which was easily the second highest. It is our blessing that neither he nor Chris has been lost to the Province. I hope we can say the same tomorrow (Friday).

Have a good day.  
Brian.

### Thank you for prayers:

Adrian Woon, Teresa Lim's nephew, for whom we have been praying for months, received great news from his recent scan results. His pancreatic tumour has shrunk by 20%, the liver lesions have diminished and are almost gone, and the peritoneum nodules have also reduced in size. This is wonderful news for Adrian and his family, and they extend their heartfelt gratitude for the prayers we've been offering week by week for his healing. Let us continue to keep him in our prayers.

## Humour (Brian's brother Peter)

*I'm pleased to let you know that I have sourced all these jokes from Brian's brother and Brian. As you read them, please imagine Brian or his brother telling them, you will most likely find it funnier than when you think of me telling them. It is good to give them the credit they deserve – thank you both for the jokes.*

Insurance clerk: Where were you born, sir?

Man: In the United States

Insurance clerk: Ok, which part?

Man: My entire body.

My wife is a bit weird. She always starts her sentences with, Michael, are you listening to me?



My friend boasted he had the body of a Greek god. I had to explain where Buddha actually comes from.

Mother: don't get alarmed, but I'm at the hospital.

Son: you've been a surgeon there for 8 years now. Can we start our phone calls differently.



An old guy is driving home from work when his wife rings him on his cell phone. Honey, she says in a concerned voice, please be careful. There was a bit on the news just now, some lunatic is driving the wrong way down the highway. Oh it's worse than that, he replies, there are hundreds of them.

Teacher: Ok class, who can give me the chemical formula for water?

Pupil: HIJKLMNO

Teacher: What on earth are you on about?

Pupil: Well you said yourself yesterday it was H to O.

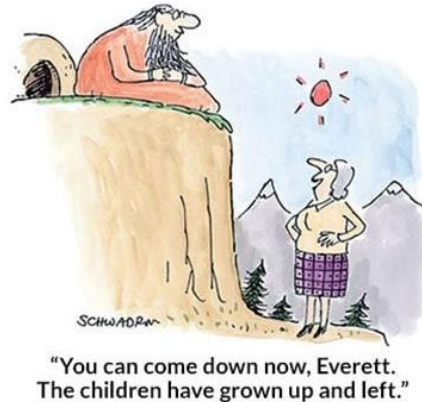
Daddy reads some bedtime stories to make little Johnny fall asleep. Half an hour later mommy opens the door quietly and asks: And, is he asleep? Little Johnny answers: Yes, finally.

An employee complains to his boss. Sorry boss, but the salary doesn't even remotely match the effort I put into my work. The boss nods, I know, but we can't let you starve to death.



After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him..... The moral: when you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it in your pocket.



### Prayers

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

[Carmel O'Brien](#) - 19/10

[Shirley Hanrahan](#) - 19/10

[Beverley Crosswell](#) - 20/10

**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.

[Rex Cambry](#), [Sharon Williams](#), [Doris Castro](#), [Julia Cantone](#), [Caroline Meade](#), [Sophia Chung](#), [Zoe Chung](#), [Michael O'Callaghan](#), [Peter McNamara](#),

[Pam Storey](#), [Lorraine Gill](#), [Adrian Woon](#), [Maree Bartoli](#), [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 Keeghan](#), [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.