

Holy Cross Retreat

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

Letter 267

Thursday 20th March, 2025

Five years

Yesterday we celebrated the feast of St Joseph. The man who does not speak a word in the gospels! It was five years ago on that same date that the first of these series of weekly newsletters was sent out. Of course for many years before that, Dennis Cogle published a wonderful monthly newsletter.

This week's letter is number 267. Since that same time in March 2020, Chris has celebrated and recorded Mass for each Sunday of those five years, and he has celebrated in a variety of places. When he has not been home he has celebrated in Scotland, Ireland, Rome, Israel at Tarrawarra monastery and various other places in Australia. Thank you to the regular readers who have assisted Chris in this wonderful ministry.

A copy of that first 'letter' is attached.

Michael O'Callaghan



Michael has been mentioned in our weekly prayers since July 2020. He has had a long battle while always retaining his remarkable patience and good humour. Sadly for his family, although a release for him, Michael passed away gently just before 1.30pm on Monday, at Templestowe Bupa. Michael was 93. Most of his family were gathered around his bed. His youngest daughter Cate was driving from Mallacoota and was still about an hour away, but she spoke to Michael by phone, just a minute or two before he passed away..

Erick had anointed Michael around midday and later we all said 'final prayers' which ended just as Michael breathed his last. Kevin Hennessy arrived soon after Erick and I left.

After almost 65 years together, this will obviously be a difficult time for Joan whose own health has suffered greatly in the past two years. Hopefully she can recover without the demands of caring for Michael, including holding on to his wheelchair!

There is nothing Joan would not have done for Michael, as has been the nature of their marriage and family life. They have had an incredibly long association with Holy Cross and are official benefactors of the Passionist Congregation.

Michael's funeral will be held at Holy Cross on **Wednesday March 26th at 11.00am**. There will be a rosary the previous evening at **7.30pm**.

Paul Darbyshire



Paul and Linda Darbyshire were dating as teenagers and married at a young age. They have been at the heart of Passionist Family Groups in New Zealand for 31 years. They began as parish co-ordinators when Paul was 34 and Linda 32 and served for many years as Regional Co-ordinators and with John and Mary-Ellen Leen they served as the National Team for four years. They hosted Passionist youth in

their home on Friday nights, and organised and participated in retreats for PFGM youth for many years. The youth regarded Paul as a legend, as did the members at West End Bowling Club in New Plymouth.

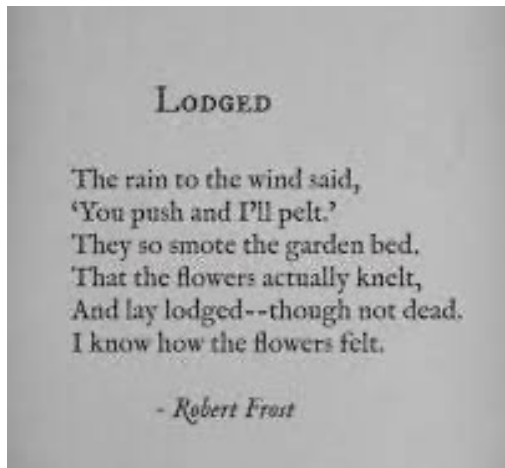
Sadly Paul contracted cancer. Paul managed his treatment remarkably well; with typically good humour and he managed to organise and lead his WE bowls team, while being attentive to his family and his faith, as he always had. In January he contracted pneumonia, and this proved too much. His health declined and he knew the battle could not be won. He was accepting and calm.

Paul died on the morning of March 15th. His funeral will be celebrated tomorrow (Friday) in St Joseph's, New Plymouth at 2pm (midday in Melbourne). The live-stream link is: <https://vimeo.com/event/4996552>

Passion Play

The Passion Play will be performed this year on Palm Sunday at 1.30pm and on Good Friday at 10.00am at: **Catholic Regional College - 380 Sydenham Road Sydenham**. There is plenty of free parking in the grounds, in the street and opposite the train station. Everyone is welcome to attend. The Director is seeking volunteers for particular parts. If you can help, please contact Gino on: 0422662451 or email: surveysglobal@yahoo.com

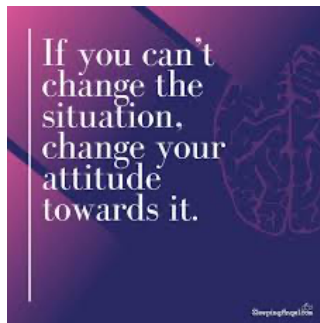
Rain



Last Sunday was a wonderful day. We were able to manage the Coffee Cart after Mass without getting too wet, and during the afternoon, showers (sometimes heavy) continued to give relief to the landscape and bird and animal life. Our back lawn looked like a desert on Saturday, but what a difference after the rain!

I enjoyed sitting on our verandah for a while and just watching and appreciating the rain.

Attitude



“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church....a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes.” (Anonymous)

Stations of the Cross



The community will pray the outside Stations of the Cross, **tomorrow morning at 8 .00am and next Friday April 4th**. You are most welcome to join us. Meet at our carport, please.

Stations of the Cross – Good Friday

We will return to our custom of holding Good Friday morning Stations in small groups, now that the Passion Play will not be held here. We will operate in small groups every 10 minutes from 10.00am. (10.00am, 10.10; 10.20; 10.30; 10.40; 10.50; 11.00)

A note from the Holy Cross Fundraiser Committee

We would like to say a huge thank you to the many people who have offered support for our upcoming Fundraiser, in a whole host of ways. We have received cash donations to offset some of the costs of the event, donations toward the major and silent auctions, and many people indicating their intention to attend the dinner on August the 9th.



Just on that point we would like to encourage people who are planning to attend to book and pay for their tickets as early as possible. We need a clear indication of the final numbers as soon as we can in order to provide that information to the Veneto Club. There are a number of ways that you can book – by paying cash for tickets after Mass on a Sunday, through the trybooking QR code which attracts a fee, or by contacting a member of the committee. We are also able to provide banking details for monies to be transferred directly.



We also invite people to contribute by donating bottles of wine or extra virgin olive oil to be used in a lucky dip on the night of the event. We ask that the bottles be 750ml and to the value of around \$20.00. These donations can be brought along on a Sunday and there will be boxes available for goods to be left, or you can contact Tim on 0419 319 003 for items to be collected. Thank you again for all your support.

Tree trouble



More than twenty years ago, a number of trees were planted by Denis Travers, in a wide circle, in the area that is now the entrée to the extended carpark. The last three of these (pictured above) were removed last Friday.

Two of them as can be seen in the photo, were terminally ill, and the other was beginning the same decline. In this condition, aided by our very dry weather, they served as a serious risk to people and vehicles, so we had to have them removed. There is some work to be done to grind out the base so the carpark will be level.

It is always sad to lose a tree, but it is something we are vigilant about, because many of our trees stand near where people walk and some are near where cars are parked. Once they reach a certain age, almost all trees, carry dead wood in their canopy.

Eucalypts are renowned for this and are often referred to as widow makers, During storms or in strong winds, large branches can

drop, as we see around Holy Cross property quite often. 'Sudden branch drop' can also occur when things are still, so it is important for us to continually be on the lookout, as Peter Norman was with these trees, and it's a good idea to 'watch where you walk'.

There is firewood available where those trees were.



Homeless?

Someone observing out the back of Holy Cross on recent nights might wonder what has led to a change in accommodation.

The tent in the foreground has been erected in line with Biblical proportions, so you can guess who has been sleeping in there. Further along, in premium economy, Mike and JD have shared on different nights (Mike more often than JD). This has been a totally new and joyful experience for Mike. A little out of sight in economy has been Erick, sleeping without a tent! There is no rent being charged, so that may be the attraction. Maybe if a fox or possum visits, the tent will disappear!

Code of Conduct



Our Province has just updated our 'Code of Conduct' to comply with new civil and ecclesiastical requirements. Over the next week or two everyone who has a significant association with us, either by working in or for us as a professed member or student, employee or volunteer, will be asked to become familiar with this new Code. You will receive a

written and/or electronic copy, as well as a link to a video that outlines the meaning and implications of the Code. You will also be asked to sign a declaration that you have read and understand the Code, and answer some questions regarding information in the video or written copy.

This whole area of risk management, professional standards and safeguarding of children, young persons and at risk adults is mandated to achieve good and minimise or eliminate harm. It can seem demanding, but we cannot apologise for keeping people safe. Your cooperation if approached, is very much appreciated.

Give up Yer Aul Sins

Back in the 1960's in Dublin, Mrs Peg Cunningham used to pretend to record her Irish kids telling bible stories. They would stand up and 'perform' in front of a cardboard microphone using her way of story-telling. It was suggested by Passionist Brian D'Arcy, that she actually record the stories. They were so good that with clever animation, 'Give Up Yer Aul Sins' was entered for an Academy Award in 2002 in the category of best animated short film, and made it through to the last three.

This link explains how the recordings were turned into such wonderful animations <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRZBMa2ebaM>

Of course the children's strong Dublin accent can be difficult to 'pick up' but the home made adaptations to the Bible stories are very clever. Perhaps the best example was the story of John the Baptist.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cjeCqPiyOM&themeRefresh=1>

A unique skill

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=4RDSaPzIpio>

Humour

- A man who wants a pretty nurse, must be patient.
- A person who leaps off a cliff, jumps to a conclusion.
- A person running in front of a car, gets tired;
- A person running behind a car, gets exhausted.
- War does not determine who is right. It determines who is left.
- Anyone who drives like hell, is bound to get there.

Q. What did Alexander the Great and Winnie the Pooh have in common?

A. The same middle name.

Bill and his wife Judy went to the local fair every year. Every year, Bill would say, "Judy, I'd like to ride in that helicopter." Judy always replied, "I know Bill, but that helicopter ride is fifty dollars, and fifty dollars is fifty dollars"

Years went by and Judy and Bill went to the fair again. Bill said, Judy, I'm 89 years old now and if I don't ride that helicopter now, I might never get another chance. "Judy replied, Bill, that helicopter ride is fifty dollars, and fifty dollars is fifty dollars"

The pilot overheard the couple. He said, "folks I'll make you a deal. I'll take both of you for a ride. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride and not say a word, I won't charge you! But if you say one word, it will be \$50."

Bill and Judy agreed, and up they went. The pilot did all kinds of fancy manoeuvres, but not a word was heard. He did his daredevil tricks over and over again, but still no word.

When they landed, the pilot turned to Bill. He said, "by golly, I did everything I could to get you to yell out, but you didn't. I'm very impressed!"

Bill replied, "well I was going to say something when Judy fell out, but fifty bucks is fifty bucks!"

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: My name is Susan!

ATTORNEY: What is your date of birth?

WITNESS: July 18th.

ATTORNEY: What year?

WITNESS: Every year.

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess

Birthday

Greetings and best wishes to **Jack Brolly**: 92 next Tuesday (25th March).

Prayers

We remember those who have died recently especially **Michael O'Callaghan** and **Paul Darbyshire, their spouses, Joan and Linda and their family members.**

We also rememembr those whose anniversaries occur around this time, especially **Matt Walsh, Mary-Ellen Boulton, Paul Norden, Winifred Burkett, Arcangelo Facciolo, Judy Frod, Winifred Gonsalvez, Peppino Vigilanti** and for those who grieve for them.

We pray for all of our Holy Cross family who are unwell as well as all who care for them especially

Adrian Woon, Bruno Petrocco, Kata Lenic, Fr Jeff Foale CP, Francis Lôt, Bro Jerome, Robyn Burns, Maureen Barns, Rod Gorfine, Pam Storey, Noel Smyth, Bro Minh Toan CP, Peter Barry, Zoe Chung and her daughter Sophia, Gerry Bond, Pam Gartland, Desley Reynolds, Rex Cambry, Monica Sleeman, Carol Battistella, Alexander Lim, Lorraine Gill, Doris Castro, Julia Cantone, Luke Norden, Peter Owen, Bernadette Owen, Greg Agosta, Bronwyn Burke, Helen McLean, Caroline Meade, Patricia Keeghan, Phil Drew, Anne Jenkins, Errol Lovett, and young Alfred Theodore in London.

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

Brian

19th March 2020

Dear friends of Holy Cross,

We have gathered as many email addresses as we could find so as to communicate some important information to you. If you know others who would like to receive this and subsequent information, please pass it on and/or send their email address to Mayrose in the office: hcc@passionists.com

We are about to enter a lengthy period when our contact with each other will be very different from normal. Not only will we not be shaking hands and hugging each other; most of us won't even be seeing each other!

Along with many other dioceses, Melbourne Archdiocese has imposed a ban on public Masses and liturgical gatherings "until further notice". This could be weeks, but it is more likely to be months.

For the first time in our lives, we will be unable to attend Easter ceremonies next month. Provided physical separation takes place, we invite you to use the grounds to pray the 'Stations of the Cross' or to reflect in the St Gabriel shrine'. We will post some recommended 'Stations' that include thoughts from St Paul of the Cross.

The Holy Cross chapel will be closed until further notice because we need to ensure any public place is regularly sanitized. An exception will be made if there is a funeral or baptism and the numbers are few enough and those present are spatially separated.

During these coming weeks we will continue to look for ways to offer spiritual nourishment, mainly through the Holy Cross website, but perhaps also by email. If you have ideas and requests, please send them to us. We may not be able to meet all of them, but we will do our best. We will advise you of anything significant we have to communicate, or you can check the webpage: www.holycross.com

Chris is hoping we can do a Sunday Mass and homily by video. We will advise of that and send or post particular reflections, especially for Holy Week.

'Come Away' days

The days of spiritual nourishment will continue. The next 'Come Away' day is Monday April 6th. There will be appropriate physical space for and between individuals to comply with the advice from health officials.

Pastoral visits

There are restrictions on visiting many nursing homes and hospitals. Chris is unable to visit his Dad, which is a great sadness for him. There are aged and unwell people who regularly worship at Holy Cross. We want to stay connected especially with them but we need to be careful in arranging visits, to avoid any health risks. We have had offers from people willing to visit and to take communion. If you wish to have a visit and/or communion please contact Mayrose and we will do our best to arrange this.

Passionist Companions

The Passionist Companions will not meet as had been planned. In the meantime, we will post on the webpage and email appropriate reflections.

The Holy Cross Centre

Many groups have cancelled bookings they had in the coming months. The Centre is the community's major source of income so this is a challenge for us. Purchasing food for fourteen males from almost empty shelves, is also a challenge! We did have a few supplies of some items, but we have not been hoarding.

Community

Our **YTU students** will have a week's break from lectures and then continue studies from home by video link.

Our Vietnamese postulants have two more weeks study before undertaking their IELTS exams on April 4th.

Joseph Inaba, our Japanese deacon will return to Japan on Monday 20th March, a little earlier than planned.

Sr Brigid has been advised not to travel to Vietnam yet so she will reside with us in 'The Tavern' for a few more weeks.

Bro Jerome will return next Wednesday from PNG for a month, to monitor his health. During the first two weeks he will be in self-isolation.

Music night (last Saturday)

Information about this will be provided before this note is sent out.

Those who are unwell

It is especially important in the coming weeks that we continue to pray for those who have asked for our prayers:.

Demetria Pesta, Mary Jones, **John Ryan**, (brother of Diane Baker) **Michael Doyle**, Peter Owen, **John Chubb (husband of Carmel)**, Patricia Keeghan, Br John McMahon,

Denis Bergin, Chris Rogers, **Zdenka Little**, **Kevin Anderson** (brother of Len Watson), **Maureen Higby** (sister of Gail Robins Browne), Jose's Tuhanuku, **Mary James** and Kate (Bro Jerome CP sisters), Deidre Mountjoy, **Jim Monaghan**, **Maeve Reardon**, Br Jim Coucher CP, **Kathleen Jordan** (mother of Sue McMahon) and **Maurice Valmorbida (husband of Alida)**.

Note: The names in blue text indicate those we were praying for then, who later passed away. May they rest in peace.

We have had some very kind offers of help ('anything we can do') for which we are very grateful. This is a time to look after others while observing the required health regulations. Those of us who are in the 'senior' or 'elderly' bracket and/or those with particular health concerns, need encouragement and assistance. We are happy to receive and pass on if necessary, requests for assistance. It is often claimed that the measure of a true community is how it cares for the most vulnerable. This is a time when this will be tested. Let us remain calm and patient.

Some quotes from Paul of the Cross might inspire or comfort us at this time. He had much experience of sickness, including five years when he was bedridden. He used a walking stick for the last thirty years of his life.

"If sickness comes, it is a great gift from the Lord; it helps us to know ourselves. It is then that a person can see if they are patient, humble or unselfish"

"Don't be surprised if you cannot explain what God is doing for you. If you could explain, it would not be the work of God"

"Abandon yourself into the hands of God, like a ship with neither oars nor sails, letting go of yourself totally"

With our thanks and our sincere hopes for blessing not suffering during this very challenging time

For the community,

Brian CP