

## Holy Cross Retreat



### Letter 71

25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021

#### Some good news



We learned on Monday evening that Tasmania would open its borders to Victorians the following day. Tom McDonough is already there and I am travelling there today to be present for the religious profession of Justin Durai-Raj. Justin is from Bangalore, India and was ordained there in 2011. He felt called to the Passionist way of life but was advised that he was 'too old' to join the Passionists in India. They suggested to him that if he felt really called, the Holy Spirit Province might accept him. After a discernment process he came to Australia in September 2015 and completed a period of postulancy in Adelaide and then began his novitiate. After three months he did not think this was the right time for him. He returned to India in December 2016, but asked his diocesan bishop if he could continue to discern a vocation to the Passionists.

Justin returned to Australia after Easter 2019 and has undertaken twelve months postulancy and twelve month's novitiate under the direction of Peter Addicoat, who spent thirteen years as Province Novice Master. Peter has guided Justin through this important stage while allowing him the opportunity to continue some pastoral ministry. Having come to the Province in this unusual way, Justin has a bit of catching up on to do on 'who is who' in the Passionist family here and in PNG and Vietnam. We congratulate Justin, commend him on this new commitment and look forward to his ongoing contribution to the Province.

#### More good news

We also learned on Tuesday that Queensland will open its border to Victorians from today. This will allow Luke to travel to Brisbane today in time for his ordination. Having had such a fortunate role in Luke's formation as a Passionist I am really glad that I can be present for this occasion next Tuesday.

#### Not so good news

The Queensland government announced on Wednesday that anyone residing in Sydney's inner-west over the past 14 days is unable to enter Queensland. Maybe this is a ploy to keep NSW supporters from attending the State-of-Origin game there this Sunday! David King has been the spiritual director for three of the men to be ordained with Luke and he recently led their pre-ordination retreat. David also guided Luke's vocational discernment the year before he joined us when he was a member of the Passionist Youth Team in Brisbane. Since Marrickville is in

the 'inner-west' of Sydney, David will be unable to attend the ordination next Tuesday. Likewise, unless this decision is revised before then, Tom will not be able to travel to Brisbane from Hobart. This is very disappointing. Erick too, who spent some years as a student with Luke, is based in Marrickville.

### Links

Justin's profession will take place at St Joseph's Hobart at 1.00pm this Sunday and it will be livestreamed. I hope to provide the link tomorrow afternoon when I send the Sunday Mass link.

Luke's ordination will be shared with four diocesan men from Brisbane Archdiocese. The ceremony will begin at 7.30pm at St Stephen's cathedral. The link for the livestream is: <https://brisbanecatholic.org.au/multimedia/web-cast/>

### Masses

The revised government regulations allow us to have only one person per 4 square metres, so we can only have 66 people at Mass for the next two weekends. Four more could sit in the enclosed foyer. There is no need to register for 9.00am Mass, but it will be **necessary to register** for 10.30am Mass with Tim (0419319003) or Tina (0439034116).

### Golf news

For those who know Vin Molloy, Vin carded a net 87 on Wednesday, two strokes under his age, which is a fantastic achievement.

### Hunza people



The Hunza Valley in Northern Pakistan is a high altitude fertile valley that supports agriculture. Villages are isolated and travel from home to and from their farmable land is often very demanding, so even the elderly population are very fit and healthy.

The people cannot easily cook food because of the lack of resources, and there are few animals available for eating, so they gather and eat fruits and grains, and eat plants and chapati bread. While there are myths about their people living to excessive ages, those who have visited them repeatedly comment on how happy they are and that they are virtually free from disease. There might be something enviable about their lifestyle.



## Our dinner tables: the Christian new normal

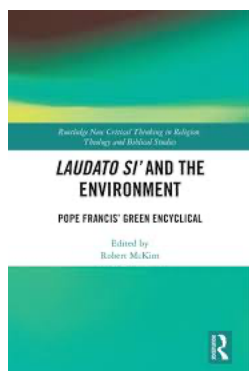
*Below is edited article written by Thomas O'Loughlin a professor of Catholic liturgy.*

Most religions make a very clear distinction – running right through the cosmos – between the holy and the plain, between the sacred and the profane, and between religion and mundane, the ordinary. The religious has a character of permanence and solemnity, the world about us is tatty even if it is where we work and live. It is akin to the way we treat clothes: there is ordinary everyday working clothes that might be smart and practical, and then there are our special clothes – our glad rags, "best suit", or formal wear (which you hope you can still fit into) - that we get out for special occasions.



The ancient religions of Greece and Rome – focused on the city – are perhaps the best expressions of this distinction. For them, temples represented the holy and their precincts were marked off from the ordinary. This was the area where the priests functioned: they worked inside the holy area on behalf of "the great unwashed". The gods were to be appeased, their help and protection sought. The priests acted as "go-betweens".

Into this world came Christianity with a very different vision – a vision far more radical than most of the converts to Christianity at the time seem to have realized. For Christians the whole of the cosmos – every last bit of it from the sun, moon and stars to the stones one stubs one's toe on – was the handiwork of God. God had created it in freedom and God was infinitely more than the creation. All is ordinary in comparison with God. Only God is Holy. Put another way, the whole creation is a sacred space because it is God's handiwork.... and climate change?



That is why, when Pope Francis talks about the ecological crisis he is engaging in a religious topic. This may cause great annoyance of the climate change deniers who do not see this as any of his business. But it his business, and the business of everyone (Jew, Christian and Muslim) who proclaims that God is not one more being in the universe, but the ineffable cause of all being.... and liturgy? This also means that wherever I am I can be as close to God as anywhere else.

The creation is our temple. Wherever a human being is, there God is present and there that person can be present to God. The divine love extends to each person, so each person is able, and has the dignity, to stand there in God's presence and offer

worship. We can all, not just a specially selected few, enter the divine presence. This is what "we are a priestly people" means.

It is the reason why the early Christians never referred to their leaders as priests but as elders. By the time Christians started to use the word sacerdotēs (priests) meaning presiders at the Eucharist, they were already thinking in the pagan way of a "chosen someone" who worked on their behalf in the "sacred area". Christians had by then forgotten the cry of Irenaeus: "Christian



be aware of your dignity" and that there is only one chosen one, one priest in the New Law: Jesus. He is the "great high priest over the house of God" (Heb 10:21), and we all "are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pet 2:9) who pray through him.

If all the creation comes from God, and all depends on God, then trading with God is blasphemous, and the attitude of love to love is that of gratefulness. We are to be a grateful people. We are to recall what God has done for us in the creation and in the Christ and return thanks through our High priest. Hence the name of our great assembly is "the thanksgiving", the Eucharist. That we gave it another name by accident, "the Mass", is one more parallel to the pagan model. That it is more a symptom of forgetfulness!



We do not need to go to a special place; our thanksgiving takes place in the ordinary world of tables and chairs in our everyday life. It is at every meal that we are called to make Eucharist happen. Then having been thankful alone or in families, we can appreciate our gathering as a larger family, sisters and brothers in the Lord, who celebrate the great meal of thankfulness. Even the most plain table can become a Christian sacred space if the baptized gather around it, and in union with the Christ, offer than to our heavenly Father.

**BE**  
thankful  
**FOR**  
**EVERYTHING**

We have just come through a weird fifteen months with limited opportunities to stand around the Lord's table and to share his loaf and his cup with our sisters and brothers. But if we have not been eucharistic at our own table and have not seen thanksgiving as a fundamental feature of our lives – thankful for our lives, our health, our loved ones, our neighbours, all who care for the sick, those who make life liveable – then we just might miss the fundamental Christian vision. God is here, the risen one is among us in our lives. And it is from out of the ordinariness of our lives that through Jesus, with Jesus and in Jesus that we must act

eucharistically. The Christian "new normal" is that we can engage in the fundamental expression of our attitude to God – thankfulness – at our shared tables.



At the table we can be present to one another. These days, many people are distracted by social media and their phone takes precedence over the people right in front of them. A shared meal can be a time to switch off from everyone except those we are sharing with. We can bring that spirit and attitude to our community eucharistic meal.

## Humour

Q if you have 13 apples in one hand and 10 oranges in the other, what do you have?

A Big hands

Q What do you do with epileptic lettuce?

A You make a seizure salad.

Q What is a frog's favourite drink?

A Croak-a-cola

Q Why are frogs always so happy?

A They eat what ever bugs them.

Golfer: I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course.

Caddy: Try heaven; you've already moved most of the earth.

Teacher: Clyde, your essay on "My Dog" is exactly the same as your brother's.  
Did you copy his?

Clyde: No sir, it's the same dog.

Teacher: How old is your father?

Child: He is 6 years

Teacher: What? How is this possible?

Child: He only became father when I was born.

Teacher: Maria, go to the map and find North American.

Maria: Here it is, sir.

Teacher: Correct. Now, class, who discovered North America?

Class: Maria!

Patient: "I get a terrible pain in my eye when I drink a cup of coffee."

Doctor: "Maybe you should try taking the spoon out!"

Teacher: Tony, how do you spell crocodile?

Tony: K R O K O D I A L

Teacher: No, that's wrong.

Tony: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spelt it.

Teacher: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

Donald: HIJKLMNO

Teacher: What are you talking about?

Donald: Yesterday you said it's H to O.

Advice: If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you!

### Hidden miracles

This brief (7.5 minute) video reveals some of the hidden mysteries of life that deepen our appreciation of this wonderful gift we have been given. Letter 68 offered a few short videos by expert time-lapse photographer Louie Schwartzberg. This video is also presented by Louie. <https://youtu.be/FiZqn6fV-4Y>

### Upcoming birthdays

**Graeme Newcome** a member of our 'A Team' is 80 on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June

**Peter Owen** is 89 on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June.

### RIP

We were advised that Barry Mernagh passed away in hospital on Wednesday night. after an illness lasting several months. Barry was a school teacher, and later a school Principal. and finally was leader of the Heidelberg Support Centre for older people.. Barry was very well known and keenly involved in Sts Peter & Paul parish, East Doncaster. He was one of the editors of the Parish Newsletter 'Aspect'. He used his writing skills to write a history of the parish and of the first 25 years of the Support Centre. Barry's association with Holy Cross began when he and Carole joined Team 29 (in Teams of Our Lady) in 1985 when Fr Tom McDonough was team chaplain. Subsequent chaplains were Denis Travers, myself and Kevin Hennessy.. Barry, Carole and Team 29 attended Retreats at Holy Cross and the annual Entertainments Nights at Holy Cross. Barry will be missed by many in his community, his parish, the Holy Cross community and of course, his loving wife Carole, and family. May he rest now in peace in God's care.

We remember Carole, along with Carmel Chubb and Jenny Kearney who have lost husbands recently.



Please remember Maree Bartoli, Peter Owen, Jim Molan, Graham Hille, Anne Jenkins, Pam Grehan, Maria Robson, Daphne Chamberlain, Jan Mulally, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Maeve and John Reardon, Brian Tresseder Michael and Mardi Doyle, Jim Monaghan, Ray Sanchez CP Kate and Mary Dunn, and all who seek or need our prayers.

The three photos below are from the New Zealand National Passionist Family Group Movement weekend.





*Commissioning of Paul Traynor*

**Be happy and enjoy the weekend**

Brian