

## Holy Cross Retreat



### Letter 72

2nd July, 2021

#### Locked down



This week I am writing from Brisbane, where we are in lockdown until 6pm on Friday, and maybe beyond that. For the past sixteen months Ray Sanchez and Paul Mercieca have not seen another Passionist in Brisbane. At the present time, Chris Monaghan, Kevin Hennessy, Justin Durai-Raj and myself are all here in lockdown. Our visit has been very welcome for Ray and Paul and we are enjoying it too. For them it has gone from famine to feast for a few days. Chris expected to stay just one night and be back in Melbourne on Wednesday. I had planned to be here for a Mass with Luke on Wednesday and returning to Melbourne today. Kevin and Justin had planned to return on Monday after the Passionist Youth Team weekend, so that might still happen for them.

Being mindful of travel uncertainties these days, I have not purchased a ticket, but it was my hope to be present for the profession of our five novices in Adelaide on July 10<sup>th</sup>. Our Provincial Council has had three unsuccessful attempts to have a face-to-face meeting, and we planned for a two and a half day meeting after the profession. Our last face-to-face meeting was in mid-February last year.

The restrictions call for Chris, Kevin and myself to have a COVID test within 72 hours of arrival back in Melbourne and self-isolate until we get a negative result. Chris has not rebooked yet. I have rebooked for Tuesday evening. The same restrictions are likely to apply for Justin returning to Hobart. We heard just a while ago that the lockdown which was due to end at 6pm tonight has been extended for 24 hours. At this stage, a trip to Adelaide seems highly unlikely.



Meanwhile in Saigon non-essential businesses have been suspended along with the prohibition of gatherings of more than three people in public spaces and a requirement imposed of maintaining at least 2 metres distance between people in public. For all of the past month social events have been suspended, no more than 20 people can gather in one place, and these other requirements are to be observed. Some easing is expected next Tuesday. Many of the normally busy streets and markets are empty.

It is a challenging time. Any planning has to consider possible cancellation, and a great deal of patience and tolerance is required. Some would suggest this is all very good spiritual practice and a chance to practice living our charism!



suffering and this belief  
his experience of the

Paul of the Cross always advised that *"everything comes from the loving hand of God"*. He believed (like Paul the



apostle) that *"everything works together for good for those who love God"*. Paul was totally trusting that God would reshape the setbacks, trials and gave him hope. It was born of Passion of Jesus.

In nature we see the pattern of life/death/rebirth everywhere around us. It is also happening inside us. One billion cells in our human bodies die every second of every day and are replaced – our life goes on despite that dying.

Spiritual growth comes from letting go and trusting in God. Paul wrote, *"The best way to live your life is to hand over to God's will, as much in good times as in bad times."* Often he wrote using the image of a ship at sea. *"Abandon yourself into the*



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

As we try to negotiate the setbacks, disappointments and frustrated plans that COVID-19 brings, some of Paul's advice in letters he wrote may encourage us to 'let go' and trust that in the end 'all will be well'. Some of the things we have to let go of are not of ultimate importance in the end – a missed football match, a planned holiday, a delayed wedding or a 'small' funeral. Certainly, they mean a lot to us and our disappointment is real, but if we widen our perspective and consider what COVID is costing people in poor countries, these losses become less dramatic. These experiences can invite us to recognise that the most important things in our lives are with us every day, with or without lockdowns or lost opportunities. Hopefully too, when opportunities return, we appreciate them more, and we remember to give thanks for life and love.



Here are some quotes from letters Paul of the Cross wrote.

*"Place yourself in the hands of God and all abandoned in him as a ship without oars or sails"*

*"Abandon everything into the hands of God and wait in*

peace

*“Let us not worry about what will happen and leave things in the hands of God who knows the great need we have”*

*“Let us put it in the hands of God and let him act for all will come out well”*

*“Make frequent acts of abandonment into the hands of God”.*

### **Profession of Justin Durai-Raj**



Some people have commented on the moving profession ceremony last Sunday, so beautifully led by Tom, our Provincial. The atmosphere in St Joseph’s church was very special. It felt intimate, enthusiastic and faith-filled. It marked the end of a significant formation period for Justin who is already a mature man who has served in India as a parish priest. It is exciting to have him as a member of the Congregation and our Province. Justin had never met Ray or Paul

until he arrived here from Hobart on Friday.

The small Passionist community in Hobart is a special group of men most capably led and cared for by Peter Addicoat, who has a very demanding role. The community has had few Passionists spend time there since COVID-10 began, but they did benefit from and appreciated time spent there by Kevin Dance and Giltus Matthias. Tom has stayed on there this week to offer assistance, while Justin was away in Brisbane for Luke’s ordination. From Hobart, Tom will be able to travel to Adelaide for the profession of the five novices.

### **Ordination of Luke Bulley**



The month leading to Luke’s ordination was filled with uncertainty. When Melbourne went into lockdown, the big question was, ‘would Luke be able to get to Brisbane?’ Options were considered, such as driving through NSW, but that was not possible. Finally, last Friday Luke was allowed to leave Melbourne and travel to Brisbane. All seemed resolved at last. Then there were COVID outbreaks and restrictions were put in place. The question now was, “Will the ordination go ahead?”

By Monday June 28<sup>th</sup> there was unease as the suggestions of a lockdown grew louder. Surely not! Surely not one day before June 29<sup>th</sup>? Although I only learned about it at 12.15pm on June 29th, the premier had announced an hour earlier that

there would be a three-day lockdown starting at 6pm. The ordination was set for 7.00pm!

A Zoom meeting was held at 12.30pm involving the key 'players' including the four men who were to be ordained, and it was decided to move the ordination to 3.30pm. That was a very sensible decision even though it involved an incredible amount of readjustment to so many people's plans.

On Monday morning **Ray Sanchez** awoke with a sniffle after contact with a father and his two sons the previous day who admitted they had a cold. Being the man he is, Ray went for a COVID test around 9.30am. By the time we left 'the Fort' at (2.15pm) for the ordination, he had not received notification of the results, so he was unable to attend. Ray is a fellow Queenslander and having known Luke since he first came to Australia sixteen years ago and having had close association with him over the subsequent years, this was a big disappointment.



Ray has been suffering from painful bursitis and has been using two calipers to get around for the past twelve weeks. When we returned from the ordination ceremony, Ray had everything prepared for an evening meal.



Many of you will have watched the ceremony held at St Stephen's cathedral. Luke has had a close relationship with the three diocesan candidates and has shared the diaconate programme with them this year. Before the ceremony a number of priests who have met Luke expressed their appreciation of him and his giftedness and he was warmly welcomed as a

Passionist throughout the liturgy.

Although big liturgies are not everyone's favourite, they have their place and the ritual and symbols for ordination are sacred and significant. There was the laying on of hands, the anointing of hands, the investiture of the stole and chasuble, the presentation of the sacred vessels, the prayer of consecration, the litany of saints and more.

Ray and Tom were missing. Other men who had planned to be there like David King, Tony Simbel and Erick Niyiragria who have had a close relationship with Luke during his formation, were unable to travel. Paul Mercieca, Kevin Hennessy, Chris Monaghan and myself were delighted to be there to witness this 'moment' in Luke's life, to support him and to represent the Province.



### Profession of our novices

The five Vietnamese novices (**Thang, Cau, Tri, Toan and Phuc**) who spent 18 months at Holy Cross, will be professed in Glen Osmond, Adelaide. There will be more information about them next Friday before the profession.



### Passionist Youth team



This coming weekend the Passionist Youth team will celebrate 20 years of their life and retreat ministry. The team was established by Ray Sanchez and it has been carried on by **Jo and Tim McDade**, parents of four children. Some would think having a young family and carrying out that ministry would be incompatible, but with passion and dedication, Jo and Tim have proven otherwise.

Luke was a member of the PYT before he joined the Passionists, and he, Erick and Joey (Joseph Liaia) served on the team during their years of formation. Luke will celebrate his Mass of Thanksgiving with the past and present team members this weekend. A mixture of the COVID restrictions and wet weather is likely to curtail the anniversary celebrations, but it is important to acknowledge this great milestone.

The news this morning of an extension to the lockdown has severely affected the PYT's plans for this weekend, and once again forced Luke into 'tentative planning' mode. His Thanksgiving Mass was to be celebrated at 4.00pm tomorrow.

Now he and everyone else has to wait to learn whether the lockdown will end at 6pm tonight. If so, the plan is to have a 10.00am Mass here at 'The Fort' on Sunday, and a shared lunch. This is not the same kind of celebration the Team would have had on Saturday tonight, but maybe they will feel better the following day than they would have!

### 9.00am Holy Cross Mass

Since Holy Cross opened in 1965, with the permission of the Archbishop we have celebrated a late morning Sunday Mass. Initially the Mass was at 11.00am, and from 1968, on the last Sunday of the month, the students provided music and singing for 'The Folk Mass'. This gradually was replaced by 'The Family Mass', still on the last Sunday of the month, and the time moved to 10.30am, as it still is today.

In 1990 Fr Charlie McCann, the founding parish priest of St Kevin's Templestowe, requested of us to have a 9.00am parish Mass at Holy Cross. This saved the parish the cost of building a church at the south-eastern end of the parish where St Charles Borromeo school had been established in 1983. To facilitate this request, some the original chapel seating was removed and long pews were installed in the chapel. Unfortunately, removing the original seating required the removal of central heating from the chapel. We still miss that. The 9.00am Mass was stopped for two years and reintroduced in 2002 by Fr Chris Toms. Now, with the departure of Fr Gerry McKearnan and the announcement that St Kevin's and St Greg's Doncaster will share a priest, it has been decided by the St Kevin's pastoral council to cease the 9.00am Mass as a parish Mass from last Sunday.

The 9.00am Mass will continue to be celebrated by a Passionist each week. We will continue to make the St Kevin's parish newsletter available and pass on any important parish news and notices. Given the COVID-19 restriction on numbers (only 66 people for last week and this coming Sunday), it is good that we can offer an alternative time to the 10.30am Mass. That need is likely to last for many months. When the new parish priest takes up his duties, he may ask us to discontinue the 9.00am Mass. We will keep you advised of these developments.

### **Pat McIndoe**



This week, Kiwi born **Pat McIndoe** arrived in Papua New Guinea. Pat is currently in quarantine. He has spent the last few years in Blenheim, New Zealand and very generously at age 75 agreed to take up the student formation role in Boroko, Port Moresby. We currently have seven students there. Dalset (Dougie who is well known at Holy Cross), Noel Selbo, the senior by age who was professed in 2019, Edward

Wairoa and Walter Enep who were professed a year ago and three postulants, Edward Liden, Chris Kaire and Jerome Mangurei.

We have been seriously understaffed and especially lacking someone for this student role in Boroko. Bro Jerome kept the home fires burning for several years. Pat has been trying to acquire a visa and the necessary COVID-19 clearance for fifteen months. He spent many years in PNG in his younger days, located in the Vaimo diocese. He will have to reacclimatise to very different weather, geographical surroundings and much more. Please keep Pat in your prayers.

## 45 years



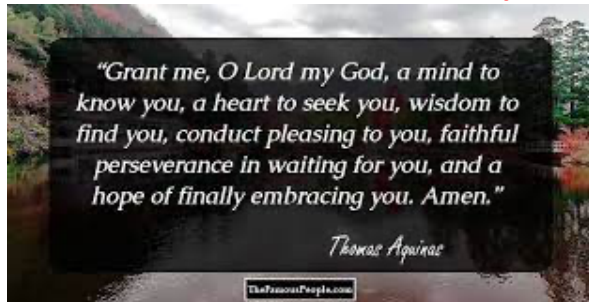
Tomorrow, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, **Tiernan Doherty** will celebrate his 45 years since ordination. Tiernan is fondly remembered at Holy Cross. In fact it was Tiernan who negotiated the return of the 9.00am parish Mass. Tiernan is renowned for his personal sense of joy and his wonderful hospitality. He brought those gifts together with his compassion and so much more, to Holy Cross.

We send our greetings and best wishes to him and for his ministry in St Joseph's, Highgate.

## Pasionist Family Groups New Zealand

My brother Paul officially commenced his new role as National Coordinator of the PFGM in New Zealand yesterday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. In fact he's already been quite involved in various activities over the past two weeks. He inherits a sound structure with competent and committed regional teams and the strong support of the two couples who have shared the Coordinating role for the past five years.

## Quotes attributed to St Thomas Aquinas OP



Be careful of the person who has read only one book.

The things that we love reveal who we really are.

There is nothing more seek than true friendship.

It is better to show light than it is to shine; better to share truths about which we have contemplated than only contemplating.

To a person who has faith, it is not necessary to explain. To a person who does not have faith, it is not possible to explain.

Love finishes what knowledge has begun.

By nature all people are equal in freedom, but not all are equal in their gifts.

Our faith is mocked by unbelievers if any Catholic, who does not have the necessary scientific learning, presents as truth what science can show is false.

We should not consider material possessions our own, but as belonging to everyone, that we share them without hesitation when others are in need.

To relax the mind, it is necessary from time to time, that we engage in playful actions and share jokes.

### **Kahlil Gibran – some thoughts**



### **Humour**

A man decided to go on a safari and took his faithful pet dog along for company. One day the dog started chasing butterflies and before long he was lost. Suddenly he noticed a leopard heading rapidly in his direction intent on having a meal. The dog noticed some bones on the ground close by, and immediately settled down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat. Just as the leopard was about to leap, the dog exclaimed loudly, "Wow that was a delicious leopard. I wonder if there are any more around?"

Hearing this the leopard halted his attack slinked off into the trees. A monkey had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, and figured he could put his knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the leopard.

The dog saw him heading for the leopard and figured that something must be up. The monkey caught up with the leopard, and told him what the dog had done. He struck a deal for his own protection. The leopard invited the monkey to hop on his back. The dog saw the leopard coming with the monkey on his back, and thinking quickly, he sat down with his back to his attackers pretending he hasn't seen them yet. Just when they got close enough to hear, the dog says, "Where's that monkey. I can never trust him. I sent him off half an hour ago to bring me another leopard, and he's still not back!"

### **Humour: The Biblical book of records**

Q. Who was the fast runner in the Bible?

A. Adam. He was first in the human race



Q. What did Adam say on December 24<sup>th</sup>?

A. It's Christmas, Eve!

Q. How long did Cain hate his brother?

A. As long as he was Abel!

Q. Who was the greatest financier in the Bible?

A. Noah. He was floating his tock while the rest of the world was in liquidation!

Q. When is tennis first mentioned in the Bible?

A. When Moses served in Pharaoh's court.

Q. How do we know Moses used to go to a barber

A. Because sometimes he had 'Ar-on and sometimes he didn't.

Q. Who does the Bible say made the tea.

A. He brews!

Q. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

A. Samson. He brought the house down.

Q. What was Boas like before he got married?

A. Ruth-less

Q. Why was everyone so poor in biblical times?

A. Because there was only one Job!

Q. What kind of car did the early disciples drive?

A. A Honda. Because they were all in one accord!



**A thought from William Shakespeare**

"We, ignorant of ourselves, beg often our own harms, which the Wise Power denies us for our good; so we find profit by losing of our prayers" [Anthony & Cleopatra]

**Mass link.** Chris will record the Mass in Brisbane this week, and the link for (for this Sunday -14<sup>th</sup> Week Year B) will be sent tomorrow afternoon.

**Note**

**Chris Mithen** celebrated his 65<sup>th</sup> ordination anniversary on Wednesday June 30th

**We remember**

**Thomas Shannon** who died this week - too soon.



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

Keep moving and shaking, and let's hope the COVID breakouts can be controlled

Brian