

Holy Cross Retreat



13th

Letter 78

August, 2021

Greetings

Further lockdown

Unfortunately as the result of the lockdown extension, Masses at Holy Cross remain cancelled again for this Sunday and next Tuesday. At this stage, we will resume 9.00am and 10.30am Masses on Sunday August 22nd.

The link for the recorded Mass will be sent tomorrow (Saturday) afternoon.

Locks



A woman said to me on Wednesday, “The hardest thing about a seven day lockdown is the first fourteen days”.



Given we in Melbourne are extending our sixth lockdown for a second time, I thought it might be interesting to reflect a little this week on ‘locks’. As we know, a lock is a device that prevents something from being opened. Most locks require a key, combination code or a password to be opened.



In Melbourne we’ve got used to living in **lockdown** over the past twenty months.

A lockdown is a security measure either to keep people where they are or to keep others out. In prisons, a lockdown means prisoners are confined to their cells.

Some people are **locked in** for their safety. It is common in aged care facilities for dementia patients to be locked in. Sometimes children are locked in a classroom for their safety.

Of course Eddie Maguire introduced the term ‘**lock it in**’ with regard to having made a choice, now it is saved and cannot be changed





When Chris and I were in Brisbane last month, we were **locked out** of Victoria. This is a mechanism for keeping people from entering a facility or an area. The mechanism could be a decree or a physical barrier.

A warning sign 'Keep Out' would seek to achieve the desire of locking out.

The term **locked up** is used in reference to correctional facilities to ensure security and safety. When a person is locked up (imprisoned), others in the outside community are protected from them. Some prisoners are 'locked up' for very long periods of time. Some are later found to have been innocent of any crime.



Interestingly, there is movie title for each of these four expressions: 'Locked In', 'Locked Out', 'Locked Up' and 'Locked Down'.

I thought it might be good to hear a brief reflection from five different people.

1. Lockdown

My name is Mary. I am happily married. My husband, Tim works in IT. We have three children aged 9, 6 and 3. I work as a teacher. We have a modest home and a good circle of friends. Unfortunately, all of our relatives live interstate, and we have not seen them in the past two years. During the COVID-19 lockdown time, Tim's father suffered a stroke which he did not recover from. We tried to talk with him by



Facetime but it was very hard. We were not able to attend his funeral which remains a big sadness for Tim. Twice since his Dad's death we made plans to visit his Mum but we have been prevented by a sudden lockdown. I hadn't thought about explaining death to my children but to do so when they could not see their Grandfather was very difficult.

During the Melbourne lockdowns it has been very challenging to find separate space for Tim to work, for me to teach online; for the two older kids to be online for school and for us to keep a caring eye on Erin our youngest who has grown up so far in a semi-lockdown world. We manage well, but at times it is very stressful, and my heart aches for some of the children I teach because I can tell they are not coping.

Some of them come from homes where tension is very high as the result of unemployment, financial struggles or relationship difficulties that have been exacerbated by COVID-19 and lockdowns.



I talk with friends regularly and some are very unhappy either personally or because their children are not coping with lockdown pressures. Some have lost employment and one family have lost their life savings when their business had to close. It is a certainly a tough time. The constant details of cases is hardly a daily good news story, nor are those who refuse to take COVID seriously helping. I don't pretend to have any answers because to some degree I feel powerless. I am thankful for my family and we are determined to continue to find creative activities to keep us united, positive and aware of friends and neighbour's needs.

2. Locked in

My name is Terry. Vicki and I have been married for 56 years. For seven years she has been in a dementia ward at a nearby aged care facility. I visited her twice every day, although I began to miss a few morning visits because it was so difficult for me. That was not long before COVID. We managed at home with her dementia for quite a long time – until I could not look after her properly. The biggest danger was that she would go walkabout either if we went shopping or when we were at home. It was no longer safe for her.

One day stands out – it was two years ago. I could tell when I arrived that she was very confused and like a stab to the heart I realised that she did not know me anymore. All those years and suddenly I was a stranger. Since then, I have felt as locked in and she is. Perhaps it is more like that I am locked out of her life, but she is most definitely locked in to a world of confusion that I cannot understand.



I was advised to see the movie 'The Father' earlier this year and while it was a difficult experience, it helped me understand better that she is locked in a world of unreality for me, but a world of confused sense for her. She can obviously remember some things from long ago, but nothing of yesterday – nothing of me nor her children.

My visits are mostly wordless and very inconsistent now because of lockdown. I miss her, even in her confusion; perhaps even more so because of her confusion. While the staff and others in the aged care facility know of her, I know her. I have loved her – and I always will. Knowing she is locked in and safe is reassuring, but how I ache for a time with her and for her, that would be so different.

3. Locked out



Thank you that I can share my story. My name is Aliaa. I was fortunate to come to Australia from Syria seven years ago. What has happened to our country is so very sad. More than six million people live in refugee camps with no hope of ever having a home or freedom. I lived like this myself for four years. Our family home was a single tent.

But now I live in Australia and I give thanks for that every day. For us lockdown is no trouble because we lived in lockdown all of the time since I was a child. First it was bombing and a ruined house with little food. Then eviction – forced by government soldiers to leave. Even now I feel confused in my feelings towards my homeland. I have friends and family still there. Some have died. There is too much sorrow to try to remember.

Because my husband and I managed to come to Australia, I give thanks every day. I hear many people complain about restrictions, but my people have restrictions of every kind every day, so being locked down is not so bad for me. What I am sorry for is my people who are locked out. Nobody wants them. All these years since I lived in that tent, other families are still living that way. They have nowhere they can go. Being unwanted and having no help makes life so hard. I want to never forget these people, not only in Syria, but in other countries too. I hope for them and I hope for me, that I never lock out people in my life.

Locked up



My name is Warren. I was locked up in prison because of company fraud when I was a young fella. I had to spend three years in goal. Every time there is a lockdown extension, I remember how much I used to hope those three years were three years less. It was easy to feel hopeless, and yet I had it pretty easy compared with many

others who were surrounded by dangerous brutes who strangely, found it hard to cry.



I heard some amazing stories during my time in lock up. I had no excuse for what I did, but these other men did. When I asked one young guy, only nineteen why he had no visitors he simply said “they don’t care about me”. He had nothing to look forward to on his release because he said nobody had ever loved him.

I wondered many days what would happen on my release. Many men in lock up have been there before. Nearly 50% of prisoners are back in goal within two years. One young man said that he felt safe in goal – while it was hard, he knew he would get meals and he knew what he had to do each day. It seemed so sad to settle for so little. Nowadays I help released prisoners find employment because that is one of the biggest consequences of being in lock up. Who will trust you?



I tried for many jobs without success. Some employers were honest. They simply said they could not take the risk. I understood that. Then one day I went for an interview and I told the man straight up about my past before anything else. I told him about all the interviews I’d had. He thanked me for that and asked me straight out, “Can I trust you?” When I told him he could, he said ‘Righto, you’ve got yourself a job. Don’t let yourself down”.

That night I thought about what he said. He didn’t ask me not to let him down. That was a turning point for me. I came to see not only what I must do for myself, but what I must do for others when they go out of lock up.

When I hear people expressing frustration and lockdowns, I know I feel the same way, but I’ve been through something much harder and that helps me. For those who cannot work to secure their income, lockdowns are very hard, but still I cannot get my mind off the many people in prisons who look forward to release, but so often are soon back inside again. For so many of them, no one seems to care that they are locked up. Maybe that’s why for them, release from lock out is not such a good thing!

John Wilkes



Some people go to extreme measures to make their locks effective. Around 1860, English locksmith John Wilkes created an amazing lock.

It had a secret counter that could detect how many times it had been opened.



The man holding the pointer was the key (no pun intended) to everything. A small button by his leg reveals a keyhole when pushed. In the image here to the left, the lifted left leg would normally be grounded covering that keyhole. The door bolt was released when his hat was lifted and this action, coupled with a turn of the knob, enabled the door to unlock quickly. Each time the door was unlocked, the

numbered disk turned, letting the pointer indicate the number of times the lock had been opened. Resetting the counter was done by pushing a button on the man's jacket.

See it explained on video: <https://www.thevintagenews.com/2020/10/09/lock/>

Humour

Seenager

I **JUST** discovered my age group! I am a **Seenager** (senior teenager).

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 55-60 years later. I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance every month. I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew. I have a driver's license and my own car.

I have ID that gets me into bars and the wine store. I like the wine store best. The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant, they aren't scared of anything, they have been blessed to live this long, why be scared? And I don't have acne. Life is Good!

Also, you will feel much more intelligent after reading this, if you are a **Seenager**. Brains of older people are slow because they know so much. People do not decline mentally with age; it just takes them longer to recall facts because they have more information in their brains. Scientists believe this also makes you hard of hearing as it puts pressure on your inner ear.

Also, older people often go to another room to get something and when they get there, they stand there wondering what they came for. It is **NOT** a memory problem; it is nature's way of making older people do more exercise.

SO THERE!

I have more friends I should send this to, but right now I can't remember their names. So please forward this to your friends; they may be my friends, too.

Teacher: "if you had one dollar and you asked your father for another, how many dollars would you have?"

Vincent: "One dollar"

Teacher: "You don't know your arithmetic."

Vincent: "You don't know my father."

People who eat snails, must not like fast food.

Q Why are there no televisions in Afghanistan?

A Because of the Telly-ban!

Q What do you get if you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?

A Pumpkin Pi.

A mushroom walked into a bar. The bartender said, Hey, didn't you read the sign? It says, no mushrooms allowed inside! The mushroom replied, "C'mon mate, I'm a fungi!"

Innkeeper: "The room is \$15 a night. It's \$5 if you make your own bed."

Guest: "I'll make my own bed."

Innkeeper: "Good. I'll get you some nails and wood."

If money doesn't grow on trees, why do banks have branches?

If you need an Ark, I Noah guy.

Q What sort of lights were on Noah's Ark?

A Flood lights

Q At what time of day did God create Adam?

A Just before Eve.

Q How did Darth Vader know what Luke was getting for Christmas?

A. He felt his presents.

Q What do you give a deaf fisherman?

A A herring aid.

Local news

There is not much to report this week except that everyone was home on census night! The students are following classes online. They are very accepting of the COVID lockdowns because they know things are much worse in Vietnam. Not only are there far more COVID cases, but people everywhere are suffering extreme hardship trying to secure basic food and restrictions do not allow for any outside exercise.

Jerome has continued working in the garden and **Pastor** and the students have been doing regular garden maintenance at the end of each week.

We remember

All those affected emotionally, physically or financially by the extended COVID lockdowns throughout Australia and the rest of the world.



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

Have a good weekend

Brian