

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 89

29th October, 2021

Greetings,

Mass attendance

The government announcements this week allow us to have **66 fully vaccinated** people at a Mass from this coming weekend. (one per 4 square metres) until the end of November. After that we hope to be able to have a minimum of 127.

Nearly everyone is aware of the need to register with Tim Horlock via email: horlocktim1@gmail.com to attend 10.30am Mass. The numbers are now full for that Mass this coming weekend. Another option is to attend 9.00am Mass. This is no longer a parish Mass and there is no need to register your attendance. If you cannot attend either of those Sunday Masses you are welcome to attend 9.00am on Saturday October 30th which is the recorded Sunday Mass. It is important at that Mass to avoid background noise, so as not to disturb the recording, so please leave your barking dog at home!.

Air-conditioning

This week we began installing air-conditioning in the rooms on the top floor of the Holy Cross Centre and in five other rooms used by the Centre. We are able to do this because of the generosity of one of the couples who belongs to our Holy Cross community. We are incredibly grateful for this incredibly generous gift. Because those rooms get very hot in the summer, we hope to be able to attract bookings that we otherwise might not, and certainly the rooms will feel far more pleasant than they have in previous years.

Pool and Labyrinth area



Work is continuing (except as the result of wet weather) on the area between where the pool used to be and the labyrinth that Luke created. Our good friend Vince Celestino has secured over 70 truckloads of fill so far and smoothed it out, raising the level of the ground to make what will be an attractive area for relaxing and providing easy access to the labyrinth.

Vince has an apprentice (who is also a beekeeper) who was out on the bobcat when he had a chance this week, adding some finesse to the job.

Lucy Burlini....and Passionist community friends



Holy Cross community has benefited from the long-standing love and generosity of many people. We are tremendously grateful, and we feel humbled that we can give so little in return. This generosity comes in every possible form and our other communities experience the same loyal commitment and kindness from many wonderful people. We now have formal

Companions who identify with our spirituality and try to live and express the same charism in their daily life. Others are informal companions who share the Passionist spirit or are drawn to it. This makes us feel both blessed and grateful.

Sometimes the association of benefactors begins with a meeting of one individual Passionist with another individual; a couple or a family, and it develops into a friendship with the community. This has been the case since the times of Paul of the Cross. In the middle of an intensive time of growth in the early days of the Congregation, Paul was struck down with sciatica. He attempted to return to Monte Argentario, but the steep climb was impossible for him and he was forced to stay with the Grazzi family in Orbetello for five months. The family became regular hosts for Passionists travelling to or from Monte Argentario for mission.



In 1748 in response to a request from the people of Toscanella (now called Tuscania) where Paul had preached a mission, a Passionist community was founded, 25 kilometres from Vetralla, where Paul had founded a community four years earlier.

When Paul arrived for the official opening with the Bishop and local civil authorities, he was distressed when he saw the condition of the house we had been donated. He wanted to leave immediately. The Bishop pressured him to stay and celebrate Mass with the people. After Mass Paul declared to the Bishop, "We will stay". After the opening ceremony, the men had nothing to offer the visitors except sardines. They did not even have bread. Worse, was that they had no roof or windows in their house. The doors did not reach the bottom, thereby allowing rats to enter the house. They had no oil or blankets. On the second day Paul was there, a benefactor brought some macaroni for them, but on the following day they had nothing. Paul decided to leave and the community leader he had appointed said "Father Paul, you cannot leave us here like this".



Paul said, “someone will come to take care of you”. One can imagine what the community might have been saying as Paul left!



However the following day Lucia (Lucy) Burlini came from Cansano ten kilometres away, looking for Paul . She was told he had gone. Lucy had come across Paul 12 years earlier when she was 24 years of age. There are no existing letters of Paul to Lucy, until he wrote to her via her spiritual director with advice for Lucy in July 1848. Paul knew that Lucy could not write. When asked later, Paul revealed that he had hoped Lucy would be the ‘someone’ to come and help the community, and she certainly was the right person.

She asked the community leader if anything was needed. When she learned of the resources they lacked, she returned home immediately and quested (a religious term for begging alms for a religious community) for blankets and oil and returned with her mule laden with goods. Then she learned they lacked food so she did this journey back home and returned the same day with food. Lucy was a weaver and was herself poor, however she began two or three times a week to bake bread and quest (beg) for other provisions for the Toscanella community and then took the long journey to deliver the goods to the Passionist community.



At this time Passionist religious themselves did not quest because some other religious Orders objected. They claimed, that the presence of a new community made it more likely that their own questing would be reduced. To assure them that the Passionists would not deprive them of their living, Paul ordered in the early days of the Congregation, while it still lacked official status from Rome, that the men not quest. Paul described Toscanella as “our poorest house” yet despite this great poverty, with Lucy’s help, ‘the Oak’ became the mission centre of the Congregation from 1750 until 1765. Lucy continued her charitable assistance for many years and Paul insisted her relics be placed in the Passionist church when she died.

Lucy is one model of Passionist lay life. She herself was poor, but she was a woman of great faith and commitment to her parish life and to those in need. The letters Paul wrote to her directly and to her spiritual director, reveal that she had a deep sense of prayer and a great willingness to assist the Passionist community. She made incredible sacrifices to care for them and assist their growth and mission. Without her, the community quite literally would have starved.

In remembering Paul and his dream of Companions, Lucy serves as a symbol for all those Passionist Companions official or otherwise, who support Passionist religious in our life and mission and she is a reminder to the professed of the extreme generosity we receive in a variety of forms. Without such people, most, if not all of our communities would shrivel in ministry and common life, and perhaps disappear.



That Paul wanted Lucy's relics (the memory of her) placed in the Passionist church after her death, is a reminder of how Paul expressed his gratitude to those who assisted the community. Paul asked for the same favour to be given to Agnes Grazzi, at Monte Argentario. Anthony Frattini was the first lay financial administrator of the Passionists. Paul granted he and his family special benefactor status, and Anthony was present with the community gathered around the bedside when Paul died. Anthony is buried in St. John and Paul's Basilica and his portrait still hangs in the Generalate in Rome.



For all our benefactors, we offer a prayer of sincere gratitude, and we pray that the Passionist spirit that sustains us, will also remain alive in you. The generosity we have received during the pandemic has been humbling, and has meant so much because our main income stream is the Centre which has been closed for most of the year. Thank you. PS. We did think of some ways to halve the air-conditioning costs, but decided against it!



Gerard Glynn CP

We give thanks for the life of Gerard Glynn CP who passed away quietly in Sydney on Wednesday afternoon last week a few days short of turning 89. Gerard was born in Auckland, New Zealand and joined the Passionists and came to Australia when New Zealand was part of the English Province. He was a very bright happy man who radiated joy wherever he went. He was appointed a leader of our communities several times, conducted many parish missions and laboured as a hospital chaplain.



Sr Anne Cunningham CP

Brigid advised us this week that Anne had a bad fall and has broken her hip and leg. That will require quite some recovery and uncomfortable weeks, and she is unable to have visitors at this time. Anne was living with Brigid Joan and Karen at Endeavour Hills. Anne then went to assist in Vietnam and only returned to Ireland a few weeks ago. Please keep Anne in your prayers.

The hummingbird....how extraordinary!

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/FPRswRWZ23Q>

Old expressions

Mergatroyd ! Do you remember that word? Heavens to Mergatroyd!

It was the catchphrase of the character Snagglepuss in the Yogi Bear cartoon, and it is mentioned in this very brief cartoon video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Fwpj27hIP4>

A lady said something to her son about driving a Jalopy; he looked at her and said, "What is a Jalopy?" He had never heard of the word!

Well, I hope you are Hunky Dory after you read this and chuckle. There are many old expressions that have become obsolete, such as: Don't touch that dial; carbon copy; you sound like a broken record; hung out to dry. There are also Heavens to Betsy! Gee whillikers! Jumping Jehoshaphat! Holy Moley!

We were in like Flynn and living the life of Riley. We were too smart to be called a knucklehead, a nincompoop or a pill. Not for all the tea in China!

We'd wake up from a short nap, and before we can say, "Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle!" or Jack Robinson or, "he's the cat's pyjamas", or "This is a fine kettle of fish!"

Long gone: Don't forget to pull the chain; Knee high to a grasshopper; Fiddlesticks! I'll see you in the funny farm; wake up and smell the roses. Leaves us to wonder where Superman will find a phone booth...See ya later, alligator!

No more "monkey business"!! Okidoki?

CREATION 9: THE ENVIRONMENT (Part 2)



Our appreciation of the relationship between the human species and the rest of creation has revised theological thinking in the past thirty years. This partly arose as the result of an accusation that the Bible endorsed permissions for humans to believe they could do whatever we liked to our

planet. The part that was blamed was a command in the Genesis story. *"And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air*

and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Genesis: 1:28)

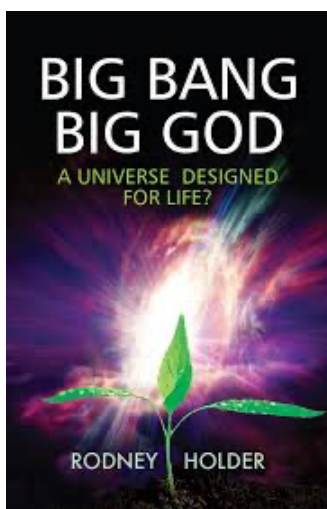
This text of Genesis reflects the experience of an ancient people trying to survive under difficult conditions. Urban people today mostly find it difficult to appreciate the context and therefore the appropriateness of the language that was used. It is the words "*subdue*" and "*have dominion*" that have been problematic. The Hebrew word translated into English as "subdue" suggests English equivalents such as conquer, subjugate or force, and the Hebrew term translated as "have dominion over" has equivalents such as tread down and reign over. Such a verse does not say what environmentally concerned people today, wish it did.



In its original context, however, it had a quite positive meaning. Israel faced a natural world that was mysterious, powerful and threatening. Within that setting, the text was liberating. It sees nature as good, and as a part of a God directed world, not to be feared. The natural world is to be engaged with and it is used for human

purposes. People who have cleared and prepared new ground for a garden or farmers who have ploughed a rocky ground, know that 'subdue' is the proper word to describe this experience.

Both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures teach that God is good and has made a good world. In the first chapter of Genesis after every stage in creation, we are told that God looked at what had been made and saw that it was good. The heavens and the earth and the sea; the plants and the animals, are all 'good'. All of this is said before humanity entered the scene. The world before and without people is good in and of itself, and is seen to be good in God's eyes.



Another significant theme of Genesis, is the fall of creation. The original goodness of creation is seen to have been corrupted by the sinfulness of humanity (Adam and Eve). Some suggest that we abandon this symbol because we know that a perfect paradise never existed in any literal sense. The theory of cosmic and biological evolution teaches us that the universe emerged from a flaring of light ("big bang") 13.8 billion years ago, and expanded and developed into the present world. Death and transformation has been an ongoing part of that expansion and development both in the heavens and here on earth. Earth formed from a star that died!

Another way Original sin can be viewed is not as a fall from some primordial perfection (in Eden) but a recognition that we are still developing, still evolving; that we have not yet achieved what God is inviting us to become. We have failed to rise to the heights of which we are capable. We have failed to actualise the potential provided for goodness, justice, and love. We have achieved much good, but rather than reduce evil as we might have done, 'we' have introduced massive evils and deep suffering throughout the history of human life on earth. We have spoiled our natural environment by ruthless and reckless exploitation in quest of wealth, power, and glory. That one hundred million people died in wars in the last century is proof of the misuse of our human giftedness and vocation.

We have noted before the words of Chief Seattle, *"How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us?"* These opening words of Chief Seattle's address in 1854 were spoken in a situation similar to the signing of New Zealand's Treaty of Waitangi fourteen years earlier, where the principles of partnership with Maori, participation in and of Maori life and protection of culture were enshrined. Seattle spoke about the concession of native lands to white settlers. In his speech, he highlighted the close connection his people had with nature. This is a connection our culture seems to never or rarely understand, and is challenged to appreciate in this time when we face an ecological crisis.



St. Francis of Assisi died in 1226. He is renowned for his deep appreciation of the divine presence in all creation and much of his appreciation resonates with that of Chief Seattle. Francis said, *"If you have people who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellow men."*



Like Chief Seattle, Francis saw the interconnection between the human and animal world. Francis said, *"These creatures minister to our needs every day; without them we could not live and through them the human race greatly offends the Creator every time we fail to appreciate so great a blessing."* Because Francis saw that everything comes from the same source, he called all created

things, no matter how insignificant, his brothers and sisters.

This is well highlighted in his famous 'Canticle of the Sun'. *"Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the*

day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendour!"

Francis continues in this Canticle to refer to other 'brothers and sisters'. *"Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon, Brothers Wind and Air, Sister Water; Brother Fire, Mother Earth, Sister Bodily Death"*. Francis saw God's providential love expressed in and through all creatures: the beauty of a forest, the simplicity of a solitary leaf, the wondrous complexity of a human hand. All of them shouted to Francis that "God is here". For Francis, the world around him drew him to God and was a display of divine love. Francis understood that the root causes of environmental destruction are found in attitudes of greed, ignorance and pride. He knew that much of human misery came about because of these same sins.



The wealth of the developed world is built on the poverty of the undeveloped world, the downside of globalisation and excessive greed. Multinationals 'buy-off' the resources they need in order to expand. Pride and arrogance go hand in hand, and this is a challenge to any of us who destroy the environment or its creatures carelessly or ruthlessly for our own convenience, profit, comfort or pleasure.

Francis, the medieval mystic, had the innate sense that he was intimately connected with every other being, especially his fellow human being. He crossed the borders that separated rich from poor, Muslim from Christian, Crusader and Arab, men from women and the outcast from the insiders. Francis was deeply in communion with his own environment and that led him to the firm belief in the oneness of God: that only in and through God, is the whole of creation united and connected.

To be continued....

'Come Away Day'

The final 'Come Away Day' will be held on **Thursday 11th November**. You are welcome to invite friends who might enjoy some quiet, reflective time in the beauty of Holy Cross' surrounds. The theme of the day is "New Life- Encounter" and it falls on Remembrance Day, a special time to remember with thanks those who gave their lives in the service of their country. We will mark this special event at 11am. Lest we forget.

We are most fortunate to be able to meet in person at Holy Cross, but attendees must be doubly vaccinated. More detail will be provided next week, but to assist with our planning you may wish to express your interest in attending 'the day' by emailing Frank Burke: burke.frank942@yahoo.com.au

Humour

- I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.
- To write with a broken pencil is pointless.
- The short fortune teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
- A thief fell and broke his leg in wet cement. He became a hardened criminal.
- Thieves who steal corn from a garden could be charged with stalking.
- When the smog lifts in Los Angeles , U. C. L. A.
- The math professor went crazy with the blackboard. He did a number on it.
- The professor discovered that his theory of earthquakes was on shaky ground.
- If you take a laptop computer for a run you could jog your memory.
- Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
- A backward poet writes inverse.
- In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your Count that votes.
- A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.
- If you don't pay your exorcist you can get repossessed.

A noted psychiatrist was a guest speaker at an academic function where a well known politician happened to appear. The politician took the opportunity to try to impress the doctor a bit and asked him a question with which he was most at ease. 'Would you mind telling me, Doctor,' he asked, 'how you detect a mental deficiency in somebody who appears completely normal?'

'Nothing is easier,' the doctor replied. 'You ask a simple question which anyone should answer with no trouble. If the person hesitates, that puts you on the track.'

'What sort of question?' asked the politician

"Well", the doctor responded, "you might ask , 'Captain Cook made three trips around the world and died during one of them. Which one?'"

The politician thought a moment, and then said with a nervous laugh, 'You wouldn't happen to have another example would you? I must confess I am not an expert on history.'

Masses on Monday and Tuesday

One Monday we celebrate **All Saint's Day** and on Sunday "**All Soul's Day**. We will have Mass at Holy Cross at 10.00am on both days. Please register with Tim if you wish to attend Mass on Tuesday.

If you want a Mass celebrated for a relative during November, please send us the name, or write it on paper and hand it to one of us. Thank you.

Upcoming events

Congratulations to **Mardi Doyle** who celebrates her 90th birthday today.

Sr Margaret Bentley celebrated her birthday yesterday (October 28th)

Denis Cogle's birthday is on Tuesday November 2nd. He would not wanting to be batting against England on his score!

Sam Climi's anniversary is November 1st. We remember Sam and his wife Marilyn at this time.

We remember: Jacki Tomm, Maree Bartoli, Peter Owen, Bronwyn Burke, Anne Cunningham CP, Richard Gibbs, Brenda Rodrigues, Mary Coburn, Graham Hille, Jim Molan, Sr Stella Gleeson, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Michael O'Callaghan, Mary Hackett, Anne Jenkins, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Pam Stretch, (NZ) Patricia Keeghan, Maeve and John Reardon, Pam Grehan, Jim Monaghan, Michael and Mardi Doyle, Kate and Mary Dunn, Ray Carmel King, Sanchez CP, Jim Coucher CP and all who seek or need our prayers.



May you have a good week
Brian