

Holy Cross Retreat

Letter 85

3rd October, 2021



Greetings

Daylight Saving.

Please remember to put your clocks forward at or before 2.00am this Sunday.

Lockdown

It is too soon to be able to predict when and what kind of opening we can have, but as this becomes clearer we will provide the necessary information. There are differing opinions about admittance to church services for those who are not double vaccinated. No doubt the government or Chief Health Office will have an opinion or policy about this in the early stages of opening up.

A strange comment

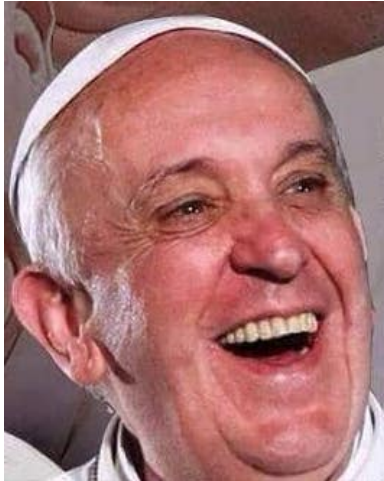
I do not express my opinions on any public social media platforms, but I wanted at least to express my surprise at two comments made by an Australian Cardinal that were reported by National Catholic reporter, Christopher White. The first is that the Cardinal "has never approved of Pope Benedict's resignation". The choice of the word 'approved' is interesting. It is different from 'not agreeing'. It seems strange also to not respect an individual's brave decision, when the person (Pope Benedict) came to the recognition that he could no longer exercise the role adequately. Would that more people could be as responsible and 'let go' after coming to this recognition!

The second comment is more puzzling. During the interview, the Cardinal said that Pope Francis has the "great gift of empathy and sympathy." When asked to respond to why some conservative Catholics are hostile to Francis, the cardinal said he believes some "wonder just what is being taught" at the moment, although he did not elaborate on specific issues. **"Pope Francis has a great gift, like Jesus did, of reaching out to those on the peripheries and sinners," Pell said, "and that can and has confused people."**

Really? Is it a concern to him that Jesus confused people because of his compassion and welcome of sinners? To me it is a fundamental concern that a cleric who has led Archdioceses, does not yet seem to have 'got' that Jesus did not just turn money changer's tables over, he turned over legalism and being closed-hearted. For such a person to be confused or worried by Pope Francis' being like Jesus, is a sad comment as I see!.

Happiness (From a talk on December 30th, 201)

*You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but do not forget that your life is the greatest enterprise in the world. Only you can stop it from going bust. Many appreciate you, admire you and love you.



Remember that to be happy is not to have a sky without a storm, a road without accidents, work without fatigue, relationships without disappointments. To be happy is to find strength in forgiveness, hope in battles, security in the stage of fear, love in discord. It is not only to enjoy the smile, but also to reflect on the sadness. It is not only to celebrate the successes, but to learn lessons from the failures. It is not only to feel happy with the applause, but to be happy in anonymity.

Being happy is not a fatality of destiny, but an achievement for those who can travel within themselves. To be happy is to stop feeling like a victim and become your destiny's author. It is to cross deserts, yet to be able to find an oasis in the depths of our soul. It is to thank God for every morning, for the miracle of life. Being happy is not being afraid of your own feelings. It's to be able to talk about you. It is having the courage to hear a "no". It is confidence in the face of criticism, even when unjustified. It is to kiss your children, pamper your parents, to live poetic moments with friends, even when they hurt us.

To be happy is to let live the creature that lives in each of us, free, joyful and simple. It is to have maturity to be able to say: "I made mistakes". It is to have the courage to say "I am sorry". It is to have the sensitivity to say, "I need you". It is to have the ability to say "I love you".



May your life become a garden of opportunities for happiness ...
That in spring may it be a lover of joy. In winter a lover of wisdom.
And when you make a mistake, start all over again.

For only then will you be in love with life. You will find that to be happy is not to have a perfect life. But use the tears to irrigate tolerance.



Use your losses to train patience.
Use your mistakes to sculptor serenity.

Use pain to plaster pleasure.
Use obstacles to open windows of intelligence.

Never give up Never give up on people who love you.
Never give up on happiness, for life is an incredible show.*

Do you want to connect?

This Sunday from 11.15am-12.15pm Chris and I are going to host an open 'meet and greet' via Zoom. Anyone who would like to get online and say hello to a few people, is most welcome. It might be chaotic, but who cares?

The link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82139092724?pwd=OHkzK3d1bkY0ZEhPam5Ya0trNUh0QT09>

Meeting ID: 821 3909 2724 Passcode: 317971

25 million years ago



If you are starting to feel old, you can put it into perspective, given the find of an eagle fossil that died 25,000,000 years ago! At that time, as Belinda Smith from ABC reports, the Australian continent had just broken away from Antarctica and was creeping north. That meant the climate in Australia was much wetter and cooler than it is today. The fossil was found in the now dry Lake Pinpa region of South Australia, about 400 kilometres north of Adelaide. *Archaehierax* was a little smaller and leaner than a wedge-tailed eagle.

Plenary Council

Every night from Sunday October 3 to October 10 at 7.30 AEDT, respected former ABC presenter Genevieve Jacobs will speak with Plenary members and insiders summarising, highlighting, and discussing each day's events.

You can Register for Plenary Tracker. There is no charge.

[Simply fill in your details here](#) to receive the one web link that allows you to join each night. By registering you will also receive daily emails with a video recording of the previous night's session, and a link to Emeritus Professor John Warhurst AO's daily blog. John is a Plenary Council member. This service is offered by the Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform in partnership with Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn, and with the support of Garratt Publishing.

Creation 5: RESONANCE....Part 1

As a scientist, might explain it, our capacity to love and to give to others, is only possible because of the ongoing self-giving of the universe. A religious person identifies the source of this capacity as God.

Our sun emerged from the death of a star. From the birth of the sun, earth was formed and our own lives became possible. It just took 13.8 billion years!

This paradigm of life, death and rebirth is written into the ongoing pattern of life



throughout the universe. It is the centre of our Christian story, and has to be retold with vigour and relevance to a world, disillusioned with materialism but trapped by it. The story cannot be truly told simply by recounting amazing facts. Rather, we need to awaken to the spiritual significance of these profound events.

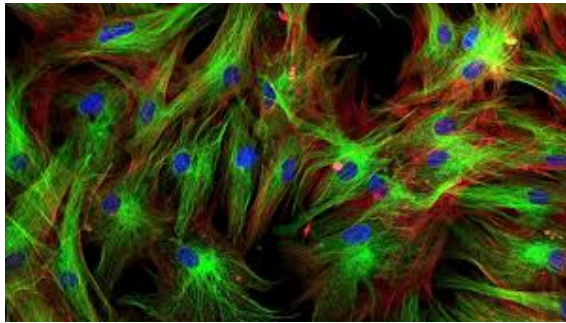
Every adult responds with deep joy at the sense of wonder a small child displays even at the simplest appreciation of natural wonder. It might be a resting butterfly, a flock of seagulls, a crawling ant or a budding flower. Sadly, while as children we have this great sense of wonder, it often is diminished by familiarity, or by allowing the beauty of the natural world to be traded for those of the technical world. Humans are created for creativity! The Chinese thinker “Mencius” suggested, “The entire purpose of education and human existence is to recapture the mind of the child”. Highlighting something of this same insight, Jesus said “Unless you become like a little child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God”. (Mt 18:3)



There are many physical and genetic similarities between chimpanzees and humans. In young chimps and in young mammals of all types, there is a period when they give themselves over to play and exploration. They are genetically programmed to move into the adult stage. Biologists suggest that humans retain childlike characteristics and remain in

that period of play even as adults. This is called neoteny. Children become deeply curious and fascinated, and we remain like that throughout our lifetime. Chimpanzees walk, but humans dance!

Scientists suggest that people who are more fun loving, are closer to the essential nature of what it means to be human! This relates to Jesus’ call for us ‘to become like children’. We have to remain open and simple – and we can! It is in our nature to have fun, to enjoy ourselves, to laugh and to play. Life and religion are as much about these aspects as about ‘the serious stuff’.



American environmentalist Paul Hawken explains that “*within each of us are 1,000,000,000,000,000 (one quadrillion) cells, 90% of which are not human cells! Each of our bodies is a community, and without the other microorganisms, we would perish in hours. Each human cell has four hundred billion molecules conducting*

millions of processes between trillions of atoms.

The total cellular activity in one human body is a staggering, 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 (one septillion), actions at any one moment”. In a millisecond, our body has undergone ten times more processes than there are stars in the universe - exactly what Charles Darwin foretold when he said science would discover that each living creature was a “little universe, formed of a host of self-propagating organisms, inconceivably minute and as numerous as the stars of heaven.”

Few of the three hundred billion stars of our Milky Way galaxy are visible, especially in cities, but on any night, enough are on display to cause great delight. In reality they are rarely even noticed. Instead, people are looking at their computers or watching television!



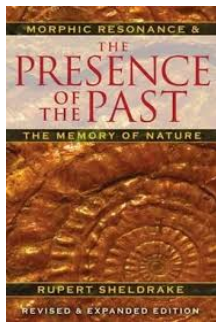
It is good to be reminded that we do not look up at the stars, rather we look out at them. The nearest of these stars, apart from our sun, is 38,000,000,000,000 kilometres away. We are floating in an immense galaxy 100,000 light years across. Such a figure is hard to comprehend when we appreciate that light travels at 9,500,000,000,000 kilometres in one year!



It is one thing to know this, but it now more important than ever to experience it. There is nothing permanent ‘up there’. The blessings we commonly use and the references to ancestors we frequently make, imply an ‘up there’ God. This is not where God is. God is ‘out there’ and ‘in here’. The earth is not the centre of all life. We are part

of a communion of life and everything on this planet is ‘kin’. We are only slowing coming to an awareness of this inter-connectedness..

When we can fully appreciate that neither humans nor earth are at the centre of the universe, and appreciate that 'everywhere' is the centre, we will be better able to revel in the mystery and grandeur of life. It is inspiring to appreciate that this huge Milky Way galaxy to which we belong, is swinging our entire solar system around, at a speed of two hundred and ten kilometres per second! Can we capture a sense of wonder and awe at this mystery of life and appreciate the interconnectedness of life? Others who lived in a different age seemed more capable of it than we are.



In 1854 Chief Seattle wrote to General Washington, *“Every hillside, every valley, every plain and grove, has been hallowed by some sad or happy event in days long vanished. Even the rocks, which seem to be dumb and dead as they swelter in the sun along the silent shore, thrill with memories of stirring events connected with the lives of my people. Our departed braves, fond mothers, glad, happy hearted maidens, and even the little children who lived here and rejoiced here for a brief season, will love these sombre solitudes and at eventide they greet shadowy returning spirits.”*

In an era, devoid of modern skyscrapers, artificial lighting or bustling towns, it was far easier to appreciate the myriad stars at night and the rhythms of each day and each season. When requested to travel from one place to another, we would have relied on natural geography for directions. Today it would be almost impossible to direct another person to a location twenty kilometres away, without referring to manufactured landmarks.

Interconnectedness brings with it a new understanding of nature, a new understanding of ourselves and our role in the web of life.



Any normal conversation, gossip, light hearted banter or detail about sporting results can engage us for hours. It is not as easy or as usual to engage in conversation about the life species around us, not only because we don't think about it, but because we rarely even notice, let alone appreciate them! Awareness and observation of nature is mostly left to farmers. Contemplation of nature is less and less practised; the

victim of busyness. With such an attitude, we cannot expect to appreciate the interconnectedness of life, nor tell this story to children.

Most of us have spoken with someone who has had psychic experiences that are difficult to explain, such as uncanny coincidences, 'sixth sense', déjà vu, phantom pains, telepathy, clairvoyance, memories of past lives etc. We know that twins even when physically separated, frequently respond in the same way at the same time, to particular experiences.



A friend of mine was awakened one night by her dog barking. 'Henry' stayed indoors, so Elise and her husband were puzzled as to what had disturbed him. Barking was something he rarely did, and never at night. Before returning to bed Elise asked 'What time is it?' Michael replied '1.25am"! Elise said, "I'll bet Mum has died". She returned to bed reciting a prayer for her Mum who was in a nursing home about six kilometres away. Around 6.30am, the phone went with news from the nursing home that Elise's mother had died. When she enquired, "What time did she die?" she was told "Around 1.30 this morning!"

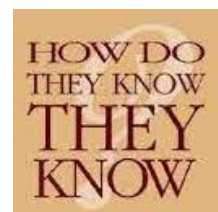
It is common in some nursing homes, where there is a pet cat, that the cat has a way of 'knowing' when a person's life is about to end. Usually within the last two hours of life the cat that will never have climbed on to a particular bed, will do so, and remain there. Naturally, if you were in such a facility and feeling quite well, having the cat jump up on the bed is not something you'd be looking forward to!

Regularly, when a person is in palliative care at home, their pet dog outside the house will begin howling at the moment of death. What do they sense? Owners of dogs who have a definite routine have often been puzzled as to how their pet dog knows the exact time to await the master's return. Without a clock or the capacity to 'read the time', they can do so as accurately as any human.



Hidesaburo Ueno a university professor in Tokyo, was the owner of a dog named Hachiko. They used to travel to Shibuya railway station every morning. Ueno would then pat his dog and head off on the train. Hachiko would be looked after by local vendors until Ueno returned to the station in the afternoon and they would walk home together. One afternoon in 1925, Ueno did not come home on his usual train. He had suffered a brain hemorrhage and died. Hachiko returned to the station every day and waited for Ueno to come home on his usual train. He did this for 9 years until his own death!

What sort of intelligence and communication is at work among animal species? When a period of drought is coming, kangaroos know not to breed. How? Experiments have shown that some breed of butterflies have learned to mimic the 'talk' of ants. While in their cocoon, they are able to 'tell' the ants outside, how and when to extract them. Similar phenomena occur all through the natural world. Because we cannot 'see' it, we can overlook or fail to appreciate the significance of this contributing to our cosmic worldview. **(To be continued)**



Humour

Dog Food Diet. A man reported this experience

"Yesterday I was at the supermarket store buying a large bag of dog food for my loyal pet, Sensi. I was in the checkout queue when a woman behind me asked if I had a dog. I wondered did she think I had an elephant, I I had dog food? ?

I decided to have her on, so I told her "No, I don't have a dog, I said I had started the Dog Diet again. I added that I probably shouldn't, because last time I ended up in hospital, but I did lose 10 kilograms before I woke up in intensive care.

I told her that it was essentially a perfect diet and that the way that it works is to load your pockets with My Dog nuggets and simply eat one or two every time you feel hungry. The food is nutritionally complete so it works well and I was going to try it again. By now practically everyone in the queue was now enthralled with my story. She looked at me horrified and asked me, "Did you end up in intensive care because the dog food poisoned you"? I said "No, I stepped off the kerb to sniff an Irish Setter and a car hit me". The reaction in the queue – well you can image!"

To get rid of his old fridge, a man put it in his front yard and hung a sign on it saying: 'Free to good home, you want it, you take it.' For three days the fridge sat there without anyone looking twice. He eventually decided that people were too mistrustful of this deal. He changed the sign to read: 'Fridge for sale £50.' The next day someone stole it!

A man reported that he was walking down the beach with some friends when someone shouted.....'Look at that dead bird!' One of his friends looked up at the sky and asked...'where?'

While looking at a house, a man asked the Real Estate agent which direction was north because he didn't want the sun waking him up every morning. The agent asked, 'Does the sun rise in the north?' The man explained that the sun rises in the east and has for quite some time. She shook her head and said, 'I don't keep up with all that stuff.....

'People who wonder whether the glass is half empty or half full are missing the point, which is; The glass is refillable.

They say every piece of chocolate eaten shortens your life by two minutes. I've done the maths. Seems I died in 1903.

There was a report of a dwarf climbing down a prison wall. I thought to myself, That's a little condescending.

There is a new seniors' GPS. Not only does it tell you how to get to my destination, it tells you why you wanted to go there. . . .

Some people say if they had known before lockdown in that it was the last time they would be in a restaurant, they would have ordered dessert.

No matter how much you push the envelope, it's still stationery.

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.

Rest In Peace to boiling water. You will be mist.

That's a pretty good ceiling. It's not the best, but it's up there!

Waiter, will my pizza be long? No sir, it will be round.

I have a fear of speed bumps. But, I'm slowly getting over it.

I can't believe someone broke into my garage and stole my limbo stick. Seriously, how low can you go.

If you ever get an email about ham, pork, salt and preservatives, don't open it. It's spam.

A boy asked his father, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?"
His dad replied, That's disgusting. Don't talk about things like that over dinner.
After dinner the father asked, "Now, son, what did you want to ask me?"
"Oh, nothing," the boy said. There was a bug in your soup, but it's gone now."

A woman reported that she could not find her luggage at the airport baggage area. She went to the lost luggage office and reported the loss. The woman at the desk smiled and told her not to worry because she was a trained professional and assured her the problem would be solved.

'Now,' she asked me, 'Has your plane arrived yet?'

Footy finals



After 57 years



Again



2014

V



2003

Passionist spirituality

In 1921, Pope Benedict 15th wrote on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of the Passionist foundation, “The outstanding nature of the virtues of your Founder is known to all; he to whom the name of Paul is truly given, since he seems to have become one with the Apostle of the Gentiles in both loving and preaching Christ Crucified.”

Bride kidnapping

One night last week our Vietnamese brothers were talking about various practices among ethnic tribes in Vietnam, where child kidnapping and ‘pull in love’ is practised. This is despite kidnapping being illegal in Vietnam. The ‘pull in love’ occurs when a young girl who might not yet be a teenager, is pulled of the street at a public market and forcibly removed to become a bride, to a boy who might not be much older than her. The process involves a boy kidnapping a girl without her or her family’s consent. Once the girl is at the hopeful husband’s home, his parents are obliged to contact the girl’s family, who can either demand her release or accept the marriage. A bride price, to be paid by the boy’s family, is then negotiated.

I decided to learn a bit more so I watched a few videos and read some articles. I found myself crying. It is cultural and has been part of some cultures for centuries. It is not always as disastrous or objected to as it might first seem. Some girls have to play hard to get to reassure the other party (which could be an extended family) that she is of good character. But to think this what you have to undergo as a young girl to find a husband is unthinkable for us.

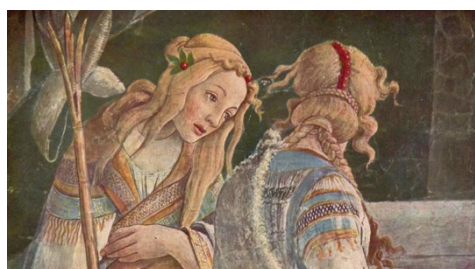
10,000,000 girls around the world each year are forced into marriage before they are 18. One in every three girls in the developing world is married by the age of 18; one in seven by the age of 15. One Vietnam 12 year old girl said, “Now I’m married, I will live a life like other married girls in the village: taking care of the family, working on the field and giving birth. Her new husband, the boy who kidnapped her, is also 12 years old and works across the border in China as a labourer. May didn’t know him before the kidnapping!

<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/articles/the-burden-of-being-a-child-bride-in-vietnam/>

https://youtu.be/g4Z_jd4SDnI

<https://youtu.be/dQagT1KEEms>

Called to be dangerous women



This four-session series ‘ are generously offered by YTU at no cost. Each session is one hour. have exercised significant roles.

The women explored in Weeks 1-3 have been [Judith](#), [Mary of Magdala](#), [Mary of Egypt](#).

[Esther](#), the woman who anointed Jesus (in Mark and Matthew), [Radegund](#), [Hannah](#), [Mary](#) and [Elisabeth](#) (visitation) and [Dorothy Day](#).

The women explored in Week 4 are **4. Ruth, Phoebe, Teresa of Avila**

The link is: <https://vimeo.com/618458116>

Some inspirations

An Ethiopian church

The priest: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1QXpmv-y2E>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJCy64adY3Y>

A baptism: <https://www.facebook.com/bbcnews/videos/the-most-hardcore-baptism-youll-ever-see/10155951875655659/>

Fastest man on two hands!

https://youtu.be/cElmb_a20M

The link for Sunday's recorded Mass will be sent on Saturday afternoon:

Congratulations to Michael and Mardi Doyle who celebrate 50 years of marriage next Thursday, October 7th.

We remember [Jan Mullaly](#) whom we have been praying for over quite a long period. Jan was a great PFGM stalwart. She passed away on September 23rd.



We remember: Michael O'Callaghan, Mary Hackett, Bronwyn Burke, Richard Gibbs, Maree Bartoli, Bill Davies, Peter Owen, Mary Coburn, Graham Hille, Jim Molan, Anne Jenkins, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Pam Stretch, Pam Grehan, Patricia Keeghan, Maeve and John Reardon, Jim Monaghan, Michael and Mardi Doyle, Carmel King, Kate and Mary Dunn, Rose Sanchez (Ray's mother) Ray Sanchez CP, Jim Coucher CP and all who seek or need our prayers.

May you have a good weekend
Brian