



24th March, 2022

A message from Pastor



Dear all at Holy Cross Community

It was an opportunity for me of great transformation and to rediscover new ways to live a faith-filled life. Holy Cross is so visionary, bold, and creative in a prophetic way, respecting the work of the Spirit in each other. I really enjoyed living in Templestowe which for me is based on relationships, not on our ministerial roles or duties but fraternal friendships and charity. Templestowe welcomed me with a warm heart and open arms, making space for me to enter and experience your culture and the vast treasure of who you are.

Of all the things that I learned from you, I can assure you nothing today will be the same in my future ministry here in Tanzania. Because you have shaped my whole life specifically spiritually in a way that is very creative and inspirational. And that is what I am taking home with me in my ministry.

Templestowe has been about weaving fraternal relationships together so that life for all of us is more deeply rooted in love, justice, and fairness. Thanks, Brian.

Templestowe has been a community with shared talents, stories, and jokes in all spheres of life but more so in Sacred Scriptures in a professional and prophetic way. Thanks, Chris.

Templestowe has been a lively and welcoming community, full of smiles and laughter. Ready to help, direct and pray for. Thank you, the Holy Cross family.

I really miss you all at Holy Cross Centre. I pray for you all that God's love and Spirit may continue to shine upon you and your loved ones. Greetings from my family at the slopes of mt. Kilimanjaro. As usual, I would like to finish with a joke!

A frustrated motorist parked his car in a no-parking zone and attached the following message to the windshield. *I have circled this block fifteen times. I have an appointment to keep. Forgive us our trespasses.* When the owner of the car returned, he found this reply attached to his own note: *I have circled this block for fifteen years, if I don't give you a ticket, I lose my job. Lead us not into temptation.*

Perhaps my stay with all of you including my ministry at Holy Cross might have caused trespasses in one way or another or even created some kind of temptation! And because we don't want to lose our jobs (the bonds we have created), I ask for pardon.

With blessings and love

Pastor



Eddie Murphy



Pastor Mumburi

Pasta Night

On Saturday April 2nd there will be a pasta night held at Holy Cross. During the heights of COVID, these popular nights were cancelled or reduced in size. You are most welcome to book a seat or a table to enjoy a nice meal in a very friendly atmosphere. Please contact Mayrose on 0423804555 (Mon-Friday 10am-3pm)

An update on Northern NSW floods

Sue McMahon's daughter Fiona, provided some valuable insight into the reality of life for so many people after the recent floods. Here is some further information from Fiona.

“So far we've bought a week's groceries (and some Lego) for a family relocated to Byron Bay (the mum cried when she saw it). At the moment it's hard to buy people the things they need as no one has anywhere to store anything yet. This week some of the money is going into buying food containers to feed people – a group of mums in Byron are cooking meals every Wednesday and delivering hot meals and healthy snacks to inland regions. They became limited in how many meals they could cook as locally our shops have run out of packaging.

The drive to Coraki was quite surreal. The farms we passed were devastating. Every field brown. Plastic wrapped hay bales lined the river where they'd obviously been washed away from their farms and come to rest up against the trees on the river banks. Farm machinery everywhere that had obviously gone under. Only one farm had animals that we saw. Eerily no other animals in sight - whole herds of cows disappeared without a trace from this region. Every farmhouse on the way and every house in the town had all of their belongings out on the street.

In Broadwater it was like a war zone. Army (thankfully) present at every house (although it's taken a few weeks for them to get the support they need), caravans upside down by the side of the road, cars sticking vertically out of the muddy earth, shipping containers thrown up against houses, houses, fences, bowling club all collapsing. This is a sugarcane town that is located really low and right on banks of a huge river. The devastation is enormous.

Towns further south of us are in lots of strife and still limited fresh food, The road to recovery for these towns will be very long.

What I have witnessed in the last three weeks will never leave me. The scale of the water, the height it went, and the vast area it covered is completely unfathomable. There is a mud line metres high up every tree as you drive for miles out of Lismore. There is the stench of muddied possessions; the stench of our ocean polluted with it all. The people impacted seem amazingly resilient. They need so much but aren't even ready to accept things yet as many have nowhere to go and nowhere to put anything.

People can't think straight, they are still in shock. They don't know what they need, as they need absolutely everything. I've witnessed the most complicated and needy people in society all living together on a basketball court, along with all of their animals, their mental illness, their withdrawal symptoms and their shock. It's very full

on, but they continue to smile. Mostly they want to share their stories and some of those are utterly harrowing.

The most frightful things happened in the pitch black, middle of the night, faster than anyone could ever have predicted. Stories of calling the authorities for help and having it explained to them that they are on their own from here on in as it's impossible to help them all. Stories of being rescued by strangers they'd never seen before and unlikely to ever see again. Stories of being in full rescue boats and hearing screaming of others as they passed. Stories of being reunited with pets they were forced to leave in their roofs as boats wouldn't or couldn't take them. Stories of many more deaths that for some reason the authorities are telling everyone to keep quiet about. So many amazing stories of survival. But the recovery from here is mammoth and will take a very long time.

Many people have loaned their campervans, caravans and even holiday homes to families who have lost homes. This is wonderful generosity and these little examples are just the tip of the iceberg of what has been done. I could have included Fiona's personal actions which are inspirational, but they were described for her parents in a way of accounting for how she had used donated funds. She is a true daughter of her parents, who devote themselves to helping people in need.

We can only be thankful to Fiona and her husband Tony who no longer own a home, but like some others have forgotten their own needs and gone to the coal face to assist those in dire need. They deserve our prayers of gratitude, as do so many generous neighbours and those who have contributed financially, because that is all they could do.

Thanks

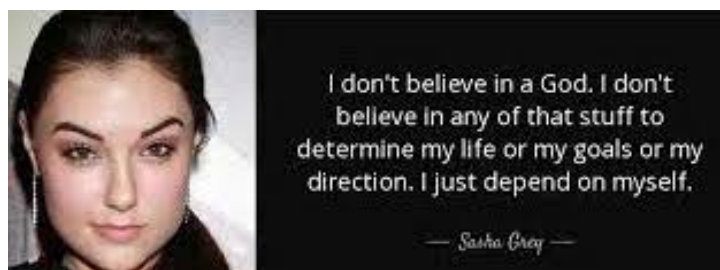
Jerome wishes to thank the generous people who have left small supplies of various coins and stamps for him to sort and add to his collection. I guess that means he would welcome more if anyone has them.

Quotes

- Don't worry if people do not recognise your merits. Worry that you may not recognise theirs (*Confucius*)
- In ceremonies prefer simplicity to lavishness; in funerals prefer grief to formality (*Confucius*)
- Biology enables, culture forbids (*Yuval Noah Harari*)

God and religion: Part 6

One definition of an atheist is “a person with no invisible means of support”. You may have heard of the dyslexic atheist who said he did not believe in a dog!



Belief in gods has been a part of civilization for as long as we know. We know from history that the way people understand their god, even if they belong to the same tradition, can vary greatly. Sometimes people who

say “I don't believe”, do not clarify what it is that they do not actually believe in. A good question to ask someone who says “I don't believe in God”, is “what kind of God don't you believe in?” Chances are you will agree with them!

People within common faiths have believed very different things, about their god or gods, and what the gods want, demand, call for or promise. Exploring what this means for us today can be challenging, but it does not have to be unsettling. Throughout history people have had to make big shifts in their thinking about their god or gods. This happened whenever their culture was challenged by new discoveries and especially when they encountered the gods of other cultures. What seems secure and to make sense at one moment, can suddenly be exposed as insufficient.

We are living in an age when science has made so many huge discoveries that offer explanations for ‘how things work’, that we can sometimes be overwhelmed. Our own Catholic tradition underwent enormous upheaval following the 2nd Vatican Council (1962-1965). While many felt excited, others felt rudderless and even betrayed.



If we can appreciate just a little of the journey our fellow humans have travelled in seeking to understand their world, who or what created it and sustains it, and how they have expressed this, we can more bravely face the issues of this generation, and how the message of Jesus calls us to recognise his God among, around and within us. In turn this can help us live our faith in the God of Jesus in a unique and meaningful way. Since the period when humans moved from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to agricultural settlements around 11,000 years ago, belief in gods has been ‘recorded’ (carvings, pottery images, funeral rites etc). Particular gods reflected the

physical or geographical world that surrounded people and what they needed to survive. In different eras and at different times of need, particular gods dominated.

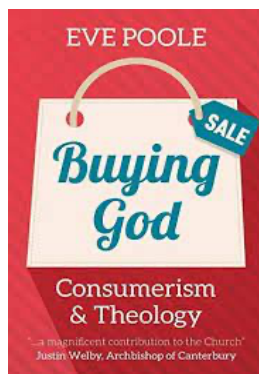


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At one time, nearly every culture worshipped the sun (or suns) and in fact Christianity borrowed the December 25th festival of the sun from Roman civilization. Although many people still reverence the sun, no modern culture worships the sun because while scientific discoveries have revealed the amazing capacities of the sun and

proven that it sustains life on earth, we know it is a star.

Belief in gods has led to organised religions and cults. Opposing cultures often mocked each other's gods (beliefs), fought battles against them and sometimes destroyed them. As mentioned in Part 2, the story of Elijah and the 850 Priests of Baal in 1 Kings 18 is a wonderful example of what can happen when one's image of the divine changes. In this case, Elijah came to discover that his god could be found not only in power and destruction, but in silence.



When belief about a god changes, weakens or is lost, it affects the religion and its adherents, and the church is experiencing something like this today. This has been partly caused by the new god of global consumerism, the many questions of science that challenge traditional beliefs and the irrelevance for many people of some church teachings and of our liturgy. Younger people schooled in science and the Big Bang also question the relevance of the Biblical God. These realities invite us to reflect on some fundamental questions and re-examine how our everyday faith can be lived and witnessed

Every culture has sought to address the fundamental questions of life that they have experienced. (Who am I? How did I get here? Why am I here? Where am I going?). People of the land have different interpretations from people of the sea.

All of them experience suffering and death and seek to explain it to themselves and especially to their children. They live around a natural landscape and they seek to explain how it formed. They seek to understand the place of animals and their relationship with them. The snake was despised in Biblical Israel yet considered sacred by Aboriginal Australians. It is a symbol of healing for the medical profession.





People have always sought to clarify their obligations with one another and towards their neighbours or enemies. Religious traditions are being challenged by modern science to reconsider their understanding of the divine, and theology needs to re-examine its obsessive focus on the human, and consider instead, the interconnected

relationships of all life. In the twelfth century, Thomas Aquinas suggested that “A mistake about creation will necessarily result in a mistake about God”. Belief is affected by our worldview and this affects everything we do and why we do it.

Developmental psychologist James Fowler proposed that our development in faith undergoes changes according to our human development and that this is usually related to our age. The first stage is fantasy or vibes (until around age seven) where

IT'S NOT
FAIR

we pick up or believe what we feel, sense or are told by adults. or a typical child of this age God is like a magician. Between age seven and twelve we become literal and see things in a black and white manner. It is common at this stage of life to see things in terms of fairness, so at this stage of life one usually expects God to be fair. Many adults never grow out of this expectation.

Between ages twelve and seventeen or slightly older, we go through a stage of conforming as we seek to build our identity. As friendship becomes a real part of our lives many begin to experience God as a friend, and a relationship with Jesus can make this more real. Throughout these stages, faith develops outside of our own reflection, and in fact many adults (e.g. fundamentalists and literalists) never grow past this or the earlier stage.



	Known to Self	Not known to Self
Known to Others	Open	Blind Spot
Not known to Others	Hidden	Unknown

Many older adolescents and young adults adopt a single model form of faith to which they become committed. They can be intolerant of other models, and risk becoming single minded or fundamentalist. They might be like this within their own tradition or they are excited by something new. Evangelical Christianity aided by an emphasis on

music attracts young people like this.

At an age of life when maturity starts to suggest simplistic options are not adequate, a person can take up a broader 'many models' stage which involves flexibility and respect for other view points. God then can be truly appreciated as both close and personal as well as ultimate mystery and a person can truly respect and understand how other people see things differently.



No one person has all the answers. There is a well-known parable that tells of several blind men who had never come across an elephant before. They were invited to feel a part of the elephant and explain what it was. The one who felt the trunk said, an elephant is like a snake. The one who felt the tusk said, an elephant is like a spear. The one who felt the ears said, an elephant is like a fan. The one who felt the tail said an elephant is like

rope. The one who felt one of the legs said an elephant is like a tree trunk. The ones who felt the body said an elephant is like a wall. None of them separately, could describe an elephant.

If we reflect on where our ideas of God came from, they are a mixture of what we learned from within our traditions(s), the influence of others and our own experience. Throughout history, life events have led many people to take up a totally new belief. Unless we choose to be close-minded, this always happens when our worldview changes and traditions are forced to update to reflect the changes. We are living in such a time. Pope Francis calls it "not an era of change, but a change of era".



Perhaps we have never thought about it, but before any humans existed, what was God's relationship with

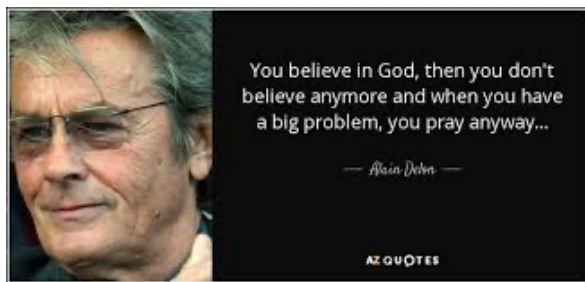
life? There are several periods to consider. First, the long period of 13.8 billions years ago when the first flaring of light occurred (Big Bang) until Earth came into being 4.5 billion years ago. Then it was not until 460 million years ago that life on land appeared. What about all that time when Earth was a cauldron of molten magma? 245 million years ago, eighty-five percent of species on the earth (most of them in the sea) were extinguished. The first birds appeared 160 million years ago and the dinosaurs became extinct 67 million years ago.



It was less than 250,000 years ago that Homo Sapiens appeared. What was God's relationship with earth at these various stages? How might God be imagined before humans existed? How might God be imagined during the early times of human existence: of ancient hunter gatherers ; of agricultural humans; of the first urban humans; of early and large civilizations; of

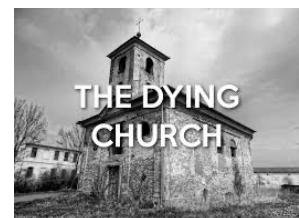
the aboriginal people of Australia tens of thousands of years ago, of the people of Israel; of early Christianity; of 19th century scientific humans; of modern humans; of future technological humans? Perhaps it would be like the blind men and the elephant?

While we cannot be religious in the same way as early peoples, we can identify with their experiences. There have been significant changes in humanity from hunter-gatherer, to agricultural, to village and then city dwellers, to scientific-technological and ecologically minded humans. Throughout these changes, it has not been possible to retain the same views of God.



We know there have been changes in the beliefs of various peoples. As they developed new forms of life, their need for a particular god lessened and became weaker or more remote. Sometimes their god was abandoned. That is still happening today.

Our Church as we have known it, is dying. To put this in perspective, the forty thousand churches in France were reduced to one hundred and fifty following the French revolution! Dying always leads to transformation. Something new will emerge as it did in France.



Our younger generation is becoming religionless. Their desire for community is strong but their sense of the sacred as been dulled by secularism. They live in a technological and consumerist age that promises many of the things that religion either once promised or has failed to satisfy. Religious language and belief systems do not resonate with their worldview, which seeks pluralism, inclusion and lacks the commitment to and experience of community.

To be continued

General Chapter (Assembly) Sisters of the Cross and Passion



We invite you to pray for our sisters gathered in Chapter from March 30th to April 10th. We would normally gather every six years but this time, after a Covid delay of two years, our gathering will be virtual by Zoom. We have been having regular international meetings over the last two years via zoom in preparation which has helped us connect across continents. Our theme on this journey is 'walking together with hope'. The

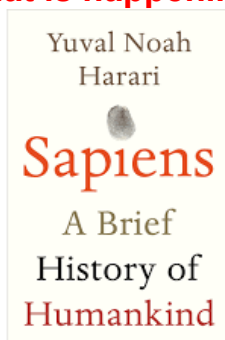
delegates and ex officio members will meet to consider proposals and also the election of a leadership team. The leadership team results will probably not be known before the assembly ends as the ballots have to be sent by courier from each country.

This is all the more challenging as we are a very small and ageing group of women. However we still have a strong desire to be Passionists for our time and we have signs of life and hope here with Karen and in Vietnam and other places. We believe there is a future but it will be very different and we need to trust that God has a plan for us. We know we are still being called to respond to the pain and passion of the world in which we find ourselves, with a compassionate heart, called to listen for the cries of people and our earth so as to be a healing presence on the journey of life. As always we appreciate your support and prayers.

Brigid & Karen

Participation for Brigid and Karen will involve nightly Zoom meetings beginning around midnight, so it will be a very draining experience for them. Please remember them in your prayers.

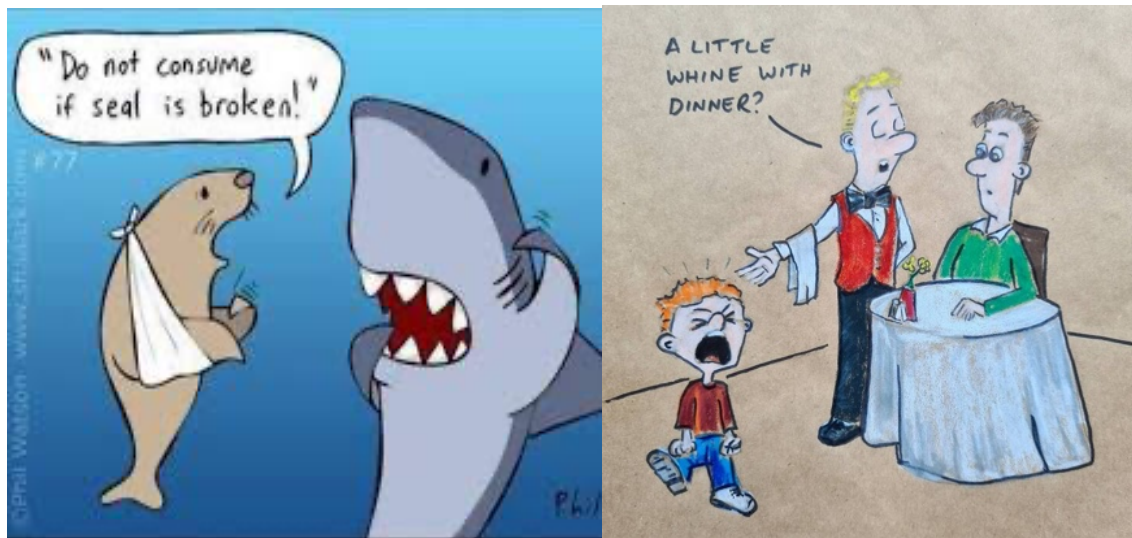
What is happening in Ukraine



Yuval Noah Harari wrote a book that I found very interesting. It is titled "Sapiens". In a 50 minute talk(which is in fact an interview) Harari provides a very interesting reflection on some wider effects and possible consequences of the Ukraine war. I think it is really worth listening too, because he provides insights and details most of would not be aware of. The link to the talk is:

https://www.ted.com/talks/yuval_noah_harari_the_war_in_ukraine_could_change_everything

Humour



Elderly stories

Hospital regulations require a wheel chair for patients being discharged. While working as a student nurse, Cathy found one elderly gentleman already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet, who insisted he didn't need her help to leave the hospital.

After a chat about rules being rules, he reluctantly let her wheel him to the elevator. On the way down the nurse asked him if his wife was meeting him.

'I don't know,' he said. 'She's still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown.'

A senior citizen named said to his eighty-year old buddy: 'I hear you're getting married?

Do I know her?' 'Nope!' was the reply.

'This woman, is she good looking?'

'Not really.'

'Is she a good cook?'

'Nah, she can't cook too well.'

'Does she have lots of money?'

'Nope! Poor as a church mouse.'

'Well, then, has she got some special abilities?'

'I don't know.'

'Why in the world do you want to marry her then?'

'Because she can still drive!'

With talk of elections, the joke below was told about one of the candidates. To avoid 'taking sides' we'll call him, Mr Smith or Smitho.

John Smith walked into a bank to cash a cheque. When he was called over to the teller, he said, "Good morning, could you please cash this cheque for me?" The teller replied, "It would be my pleasure sir. Could you please show me your ID?" John Smith said, "Truthfully, I didn't bring my ID with me as I didn't think there was any need to. I'm a well-known politician and party leader.

The teller said, "Yes sir, I know who you are... but with all the regulations and monitoring of the banks because of impostors, forgers, and requirements of the legislation etc., I must insist on seeing ID." Smitho said, "Just ask anyone here at the bank who I am and they'll tell you. Everybody knows who I am." The teller said, "I'm sorry, Mr Smith, but these are the bank rules and I must follow them." Getting a bit agitated, Smitho snapped, "C'mon woman, I'm urging you, please, to cash this cheque.." The teller said, "Look Mr Smith, here is an example of what we can do. One day, Tiger Woods came into the bank without ID. To prove he was Tiger Woods, he pulled out his wedge and chipped a ball into a waste basket on the other side of the bank floor. With that shot we knew him to be Tiger Woods and cashed his cheque.

"Another time, Nick Kyrios came in without ID. He pulled out his tennis racket and smashed it against the counter. Because of that action we cashed his cheque. So, Mr Smith, what can you do to prove that it is you, and only you?" Smitho stood there thinking, and thinking, and finally said, "Honestly, my mind is a total blank... there's nothing that comes to my mind. I can't think of a single thing. I have absolutely no idea what to do... and I don't have a clue." With a big smile, the teller said, "Will that be large or small notes, Mr Smith?"

Some punny ones...

My best mates and I played a game of hide and seek. It went on for hours. Well, good friends are hard to find.

You're not completely useless, you can always serve as a bad example.

I broke my finger last week. On the other hand, I'm okay.

Someone stole my Microsoft Office and they're gonna pay. You have my Word.

Don't spell part backwards. It's a trap.

And the Lord said unto John, "Come forth and you will receive eternal life."
But John came fifth, and he got hell.

What is the best thing about living in Switzerland?
The flag is a big plus.

A guy got hit in the head with a can of soda. He was lucky it was a soft drink!

Q. How did I escape Iraq? A. Iran.

To the mathematician who thought of the idea of zero. Thanks for nothing!

Son: "Dad, can you tell me what a solar eclipse is?"
Dad: "No sun."

My math teacher called me average. How mean!

Clinic Receptionist: "Doctor, there's a patient on line that says he's become
invisible".
Doctor: "Well, tell him I can't see him right now."

The link for **Mass** for **4 Sunday of the Lent Year C** will be sent on Saturday

Tony and Madelaine Brooks celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Friday 25th March. We have been praying for Tony and he is making a very good recovery.

Prayers



Di Baker developed a blister on her cornea late last week, which required urgent treatment. This Friday 25th March, she will have a partial cornea transplant. Following the surgery Di will spend 72 hours lying on her back looking at the ceiling!. She must keep her head still in order for the donor graft to take. Then there will be a period of time in which she will be able to do a few small things, but no lifting or carrying. It will be four weeks before she fully recovered.

John Lazzari is having back surgery on Friday 1st April

Tony Mazzei is awaiting prostate surgery. Milly will join him in Brisbane where he has been working, on March 30th. We remember Tony.

Mary Norden remembers the anniversary of her husband Peter Norden on Friday 25th March.

Olive Murphy suffered a major stroke in Ireland. She is Sr Brigid's sister-in-law.

Rex Cambry had successful surgery and is home recovering

Gerry Bond was feeling quite unwell last Sunday. Please remember him

We remember **James Zammit** whose anniversary is April 1st.

We remember

Tony Brooks, Jacki Tomm, Maree Bartoli, Peter Owen, Barry Wong, Errol Lovett, Anne Jenkins, Brenda Rodrigues, Pam Grehan, Margaret Titteringcom, Mary Corcoran, Mary Coburn, Mary Hackett, Graham Hille, Bronwyn Burke, Patricia Keeghan, Peter McNamara, Michael & Mardi Doyle, Pam Gartland, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Angelo Vigilante, Maeve and John Reardon, Jim Monaghan. Pam Stretch, (NZ), Dominic Isgro, Carmel King, Kate and Mary Dunn, Ray Sanchez CP, and all who seek or need our prayers.



It is quite a long newsletter this week.

If you are having trouble with your eyes, enjoy this:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x41phyz>

God bless and have a good weekend

Brian