

Letter 113



Holy Cross Retreat

13th April, 2022

Greetings,

The Easter ceremonies at Holy Cross are:

Holy Thursday (13th April)

Mass: 7.30pm

Good Friday (14th April)

Way of the Cross: 10.00am

Also available in small groups at any time

Solemn Commemoration of the Passion 3.00pm

Easter Sunday (16th April)

Mass 6.00am: St Gabriel's shrine (and breakfast)

Mass 10.00am: Chapel

Good Friday

If you wish to make the 'Way of the Cross' privately, there are copies of a script available outside the community garage, opposite our carport. These are also available for the 10.00am group service.

We intend to hold the afternoon Good Friday liturgy in the same area as Christmas Mass – under the trees. You are welcome to drive down the community driveway and park on the oval (or in the second car park). If you have an outdoor chair it would be a help to bring that with you. There will be a voluntary collection.

Easter Sunday at dawn (6.00am)

The early Mass will be celebrated in the St Gabriel shrine. You are welcome to drive down the community driveway and park on the oval in the area close to the Shrine. Breakfast will follow Mass and a donation for that will be appreciated.

Easter Tuesday eggs

For those who would normally arrange an order and collection of eggs from Holy Cross, delivery will be on Tuesday, not Monday. Please note that Holy Cross **will not be available** for placing an order on Easter Monday after 11.00am.

What has happened to spirituality....Part 1

It is suggested that in England one thousand years ago, most people never travelled more than fifteen kilometres from their place of birth. The roads were poor, the hospitality inns were run down and means of travel were limited. People's lives were tied up with their nearby neighbours and there was little awareness of happenings 'in the outside world'. This reality us how different modern life is from every previous generation that has lived on earth.



Admittedly, a thousand years is a long time ago, but even just one hundred and thirty years ago in 1893, the first private motor vehicle was unveiled in Sydney. Ten years later, the Wright brothers flew their plane one hundred metres! One hundred years after that primitive flight,

the Sojourner spacecraft landed on Mars and began collecting and photographing rocks and soil matter and sending the photos back to earth!

Most people who have ever lived have done so without electricity or home sanitation, and for them heating or cooling a house has been limited to primitive methods. Communication a little over a century ago were restricted to the postal service, as the telephone was not yet in common use, and radio, television or the internet were not invented. Ninety percent of the then Christian world lived in rural communities largely unaware of events in other towns, and certainly unaware of life in other countries. There was little social change, although the effects of the industrial revolution were becoming clear as people began to migrate to cities for work. Authority figures were respected and those with literacy skills were appreciated for their competence. The church was a binding factor in the values and ethics of new Christian countries such as Australia and New Zealand



Sociologists speak today of three 'worlds': developed (industrial and information dominated), developing, and under-developed (basic agrarian). Many people within the cultures that have become 'developed' are experiencing social alienation and isolation. Young family members who leave their villages or small towns seeking further education or employment in

large cities, become lost in the maze of people and the lure of fast living, and they suffer a lack of true belonging.

Often family members left behind have rare physical contact with their children and even rarer contact with grandchildren. In large cities people's relationships are impersonal. They are often anonymous cut off from people they once knew and devoid of meaningful relationships.



Generations: MAKING A PACT

In the past, each generation had an unspoken 'pact'. They knew they owed their living space to the previous generation. People planted trees knowing another generation would harvest them. This 'pact' also applied to religion. Parents involved children in the religious rites they had experienced themselves. They may not always have agreed with the actions, but they did not break the 'pact'. Often this meant that Christian faith was reduced to exterior rites and customs while the inner side was barren or never properly developed. This system began to change some centuries ago, but it has become obvious in the past forty years. Two significant influences in this change have been privatisation and consumerism.

Privatisation has its roots in the weakening of faith as a binding force in society. The religious wars of the Reformation brought society to the verge of disaster. An idea arose that society could be established, not on religious principle, but on human nature and reason. As this has taken root more and more with advances in scientific discovery, the importance of religion has been lessened and increasingly come to be considered a private matter. In agrarian society a person's life is not segmented. The extended family is a productive and vibrant community, living, working and learning together. Recreation and basic schooling are done in the local village where the family lives. No one can be anonymous because the community is relatively small.



THE SEGMENTED SOCIETY

Modern society, by contrast, is widely segmented (work, media, culture, education, religion, economy, transport, health care, sports, entertainment etc). These different areas are independent sub-systems. The Church is one segment among others (not the integrating factor it once was). Meaning, values and norms that used to come through particular religious traditions are shifting. Religion is taking different shape in different social contexts. In some Islamic countries, religion is still the integrating factor of society, governing civil practice, while other countries have a constitution that guarantees pluralism and respect, but views religion as a private affair.



In Australia there were no motor vehicles in 1900. By 1962 there were two million vehicles and the number had increased to more than thirteen million in 2006. In Australia and New Zealand 65% of residents own a car. In a developing country like Korea, there were only thirty thousand privately owned motor vehicles in 1970. This grew to five million by 1995; to

sixteen million by 2006 and twenty-five million by 2021!

General mobility has made it easier to escape the pressure to conform to religious laws that were 'stifling'. Today it is easier than in the past, to be non-religious. In earlier centuries non-believers went to church because it was the 'norm to conform'. In those times it was easily observable if one did not attend church in a small town. In contrast, Church goers today often feel lonely! This is especially true of the young, who find themselves a minority.

Secular groups today form to create support and community, whereas this was once a natural reality in local villages or towns and found expression in the local church. Many parishes in the 1960's had tennis and football clubs, weekly dances and other social activities. Past pastoral strategies aimed at fostering a culture that pressured people to conform to particular religious conduct and churches generally discouraged ecumenism.

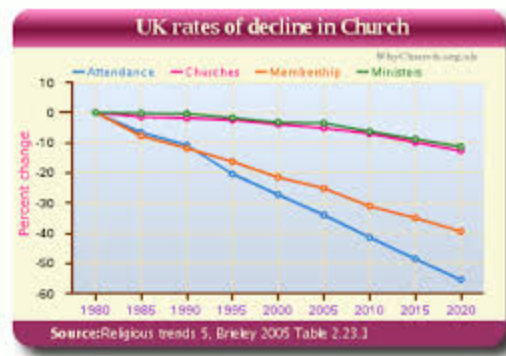


This was easy to do when people's lives were interconnected and fear contributed to bigotry. Tight like-minded groups were common. Today with so much focus on the individual and a general fear of difference despite the presence of people from diverse cultures and traditions, natural community is more difficult to achieve.

The temptation now is to join society's push to appeal only to the individual and his or her needs, but integral to Christian faith is that it has social consequences. Convinced or committed believers are a minority now, and around them are circles of less convinced believers, together with genuine seekers and doubters. It is important that this small group of believers be encouraged, supported and inspired to live a faith that is vitally connected with their everyday life. Unless it is, it is not really Christian faith. There are many who still ignore social responsibility or try to separate this from their personal relationship with God. This is religion, but not faith.



In the past thirty years, churches in most European countries have steadily declined in numbers and in France, Germany, Belgium and Holland it has been an 'accelerated reversal'. Australia and New Zealand have both experienced a steady decline in church attendance and built on the experience of COVID, a rapid greying of those who worship on Sundays.



The disappearance of Christian traditions handed down from one generation to the next, has not happened 'overnight'. It is the end point of an evolution. If present and future generations focus increasingly on the 'now', with little appreciation of the gift of their ancestors and even less on the needs of their descendants, the passing on of religious tradition will be minimal. The traditions that are passed on need to be open to new world views so as to be relevant, while at the same time emphasising that mystery is at the heart of true faith.

**“YOU BETTER START SWIMMIN’
OR YOU’LL SINK LIKE A STONE FOR
THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’.”**

BOB DYLAN, THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’

LYRICS TO LIVE BY:
#236
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the 1960's in everyday living have been dramatic. This is particularly true of the past decade. In our lifetime we have seen the collapse of the Berlin wall (1989) and of communism, the unification of Europe, the move by China into the political and economic world and so much more. We've been introduced to globalisation and consumerism as never before, driven by instant communication around the world.

Technology continues to threaten human choices, even as it provides so many new products and advances in every field of endeavour. People's ideas about marriage, morality, authority, leisure and religion have become far more subjective. Simple issues such as Sunday trading and 'festive greetings' at Christmas, challenge the notion that we are a 'Christian country'. There was a time when football would never have been played on Good Friday.



Within the church, authority and credibility have been eroded, and a younger generation express near total disinterest in the religious rites of organised religion. Different churches struggle with extreme diversity of viewpoint



over issues such as women priests and gay ministers. Among the young, criteria for moral choice today is often based on what others choose to do, rather than on principle, and among the young, reference to 'the church' for moral decision-making is almost non-existent. These realities point to the

truth that we are living in a different world than when many of our religious formulas were first expressed or our own religious practices introduced to us.

The vast discoveries of science and a limited appreciation of how to read the Bible have led many to discredit the foundations on which much of our faith tradition is based. At the core, there is a challenge to consider our very image of God. Those who imagine God as a strict judge who is ready to punish us and wants us to 'make satisfaction' for our sins, will have a very different way of relating to God and others, and how they pray and worship will be quite different from those who imagine God as ever loving, merciful, compassionate and inviting us into fellowship with others.

Many people remember that the mystery surrounding church worship forty years ago was enhanced by the design of the church, the atmosphere of silence, the use of candles, incense and drama and particularly the use of Latin language. With the changes directed by Vatican 2 we were invited to recognise that the great mystery we celebrated was not limited to the elements of bread and wine, but to ourselves; that we, though many, are united into a single 'body' and called to be Christ for others. Every time we gather for Eucharist, this is the mystery we celebrate and are sent out to live.



We know now that many traditional practices did not come from the Scriptures, but from the proclamations of recent centuries, and not surprisingly, they reflect the world view and morality of that era. Are totally irrelevant for today's worldview.

To be continued

'Come Away' Day

The next 'Come Away Day' is on 26 April. The theme is: **"He is not here"..... What is unfolding?** This theme will enable a gentle, personal exploration of the space we are in after the momentous events of Easter. There will be more details next week.

Ukraine assistance

It was inspiring to see the response to the Ukraine appeal last Sunday. The 'envelopes' we were sent were all snapped up and requests for more were being made. The generosity of this community is amazing and we are so grateful to be a part of it. Thank you.

Humour



'...And is this an Essential Work Journey Sir?'



A lawyer cross-examining a doctor on the stand.

Lawyer: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

Doctor: No

Lawyer: Did you check for blood pressure?

Doctor: No

Lawyer: Did you check for breathing?

Doctor: No

Lawyer: So, then is it possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

Doctor: No

Lawyer: How can you be so sure?

Doctor: Because his brain was sitting in a jar on my desk.

Lawyer: But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?

Doctor: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law somewhere!

One Sunday a preacher who was normally known for mundane sermons, did a fire and brimstone sermon that got a lot of favourable comments from the parishioners as they left the church. The next Sunday, he used exactly the same sermon. Word for word! This drew some quizzical looks, but no one mentioned it to him. The next Sunday he did the same sermon—word for word—again! And the next, and the next!

Finally, thinking he was losing his mind, someone asked him if he was aware that he was doing the same sermon over and over. He said that he was aware of what he was doing, and he intended to keep doing the same sermon until his parishioners started following the advice"!

Q What do you call a retired vegetable?

A A has bean.

Q Why did the puppy do so well at school?

A Because she was the teachers pet.

Q What cookie flavour do monkeys love?

A Chocolate Chimp!

Q How do porcupines kiss?

A Carefully.

Q What kind of fish loves going to war?

A A swordfish.

Q What did the clock ask the watch?

A Hour you going?

If you think swimming with dolphins is expensive you should try swimming with sharks....
It cost my friend an arm and a leg!

Quotes

There are two ways of spreading the light: be a candle or the mirror that reflects it

Some days you are the bug; some days you are the windshield

The link for **Mass** for Easter Sunday will be sent on Saturday afternoon:

Health updates

Mardi Doyle

Mardi's health has declined over the last weeks and she is doing a lot more sleeping, She can only take soft food mixed in with a warm-or hot liquid, so sustaining her food intake is a challenge. Michael is managing well. Their son Patrick is full time carer and has been doing a marvellous service. **His** sisters Marianne and Kathryn are also wonderful in their assistance.

Diane Baker: Di had cornea surgery recently and fortunately, the donor graft was a perfect match. Di's vision has improved but she needs further rest and recovery. She is wearing protective eye wear to undertake general duties around the house..

Maree Bartoli: Maree has virtually no use of her legs now, but her spirit remains bright, as always.

Tony Brooks: Marilyn reports that Tony is making very encouraging progress

Rex Cambry: Rex is recovering well from major surgery

Helen Norman had successful surgery. Now she awaits things to settle down hoping there will be sustained relief from the constant pain and discomfit.

Tony Mazzei is awaiting surgery after a COVID delay put back the operation date by six weeks.

Gerry Bond remains upbeat but has up and down days

Prayers

You will have noticed that for both the recorded Mass and 10.00am Mass, the list of those we want to remember in our prayer is being displayed rather than spoken.

This weekend we remember:

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



The Holy Cross community extends Easter greetings to you and expresses our gratitude for the community we create – both near and far

Jerome CP, Chris CP, Erick CP, John CP, Tri CP, Brian CP
And from our brother, Pastor CP

