

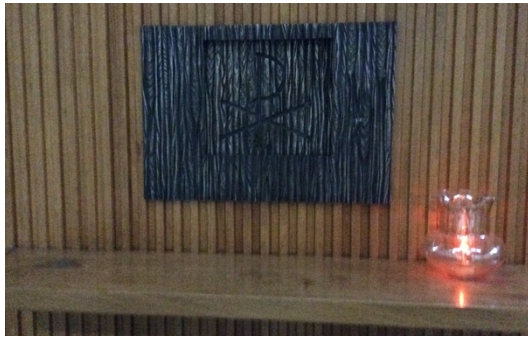


29th April, 2022

Letter 115

Greetings,

**Tabernacle**



The community has discussed a relocation of the tabernacle in the chapel. Its present location is not ideal for the configuration of the chapel, and even less ideal when various non-liturgical groups use the chapel. We don't know whether we can use the same tabernacle when it is dismantled, but our present thinking is to have this

tabernacle or its replacement embedded for security and arranged in a corresponding place to the paschal candle, on the lectern side of the sanctuary.

**Come Away Day**



It was nice to see some new faces for Tuesday's 'Come Away' day. Those present reflected on the meaning for them, of the Empty Tomb in their own spiritual journey. Pam Storey as she always does, provided a beautiful setting to create the image that 'He is risen, he is not here'.



**Anzac Day**

There was an excellent turn out to the Templestowe Anzac Day service. I had been asked to be the 'religious representative' for the occasion and it was good to see some familiar faces in the appreciative crowd, and a warm response to the relaxed and humourous approach of the MC Ron Twining while acknowledging the solemnity of the occasion..

## Sydney

I drove to Sydney to attend a meeting of our community leaders. We start this morning (Friday) and end around midday Monday. Erick is also in Sydney and will follow his time there with a week in Adelaide visiting his family. He will be back at Holy Cross on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

## THE PASSION OF JESUS IS TOTALLY THE WORK OF LOVE. YOU SHOULD NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THIS.

A reflection by Br Cao Van Tri cp

*(Tri is studying theology at YTU and living at Holy Cross)*



At the time of Paul of the Cross, people in his home town had a deep devotion to the Passion of Jesus Christ. However, instead of speaking about God's love through the mystery of the Cross, they spoke about the sufferings of people as being the result of their many sins.

Paul of the Cross said that "the world is sliding into a profound forgetfulness of the most bitter sufferings endured by Jesus Christ our true good of our love, while the memory of his most holy Passion is practically extinct in the faithful." (1747 account Paul wrote to present the life and purpose of the Congregation).

For Paul of the Cross, the Passion of Jesus is totally the work of love and so we should never lose sight of this. Indeed, Jesus the Son of the Living God, chose to live a human life: He chose to suffer as we suffer; to die as we die. Many times, I have wondered why Jesus, the Son of God, had to suffer. He is God and He could save us in many ways, not just by suffering and dying.



### One day I found the answer

One of my friends was involved in an accident while studying at university in Saigon. He was in a coma from that time, for four years before he died. One day, I visited him, I spoke my name and tried to communicate with him.

He could not answer with a word but he did smile.



This experience was a great suffering for him. However, the one who suffered the most was not him, but his mother. I spoke with her about my friend, and from my first words she cried many tears. She could not put anything in words, but her tears told me all about her great love for her son. This was the love that began when she bore her son in her womb. This was her love for him when she gave birth, when she cared for him until he grew up; and the love for how she longed for his return when [he left home to enter university](#).

Sadly, he did return. She could not see her son as the one she loved, but only as one who was comatose. She cared for her son and any time she saw him on the bed, the tears rolled down her cheeks. She loved him so deeply, she bore his suffering. I realised that this is how God loves us, and that is why Jesus suffered.

[The one who loves bears the suffering of the one who is loved.](#)



Over the last two years Covid-19 has caused many millions of people to suffer serious illness. Many people have suffered because their loved ones have died, but they could not care for them; they could not even come close to them or touch them. They too bore the sufferings of their loved ones.

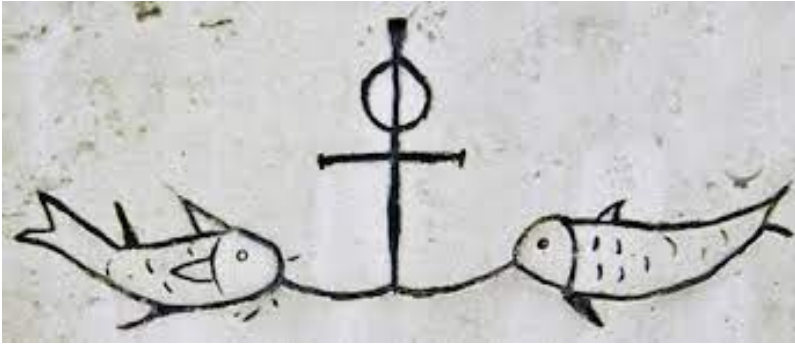
It was because of love that Jesus endured suffering and death. And so, Jesus is there to suffer with those who are suffering today, to embrace them and share their burden. This is an invitation for me to stand alongside people. I may not bring any relief to them, but at least

[I can listen to them and show my love and concern for them.](#)



**What has happened to spirituality....Part 3**





We need to rediscover the meaning that Jesus gave. “The only sign I will give you” he said, “is the sign of Jonah”. This was his image for transformation. The early Christian symbols were of the whale (or ‘big fish’ and the anchor, not

the cross. Jesus had invited people to see that it is necessary to enter that dark place where you can’t fix it or explain something or fully understand it. In such a place we are not in control. Gethsemane is a rich symbol for this place of darkness where we can face and find God. Jesus said “unless a grain of wheat falls in the ground it remains a single grain, but if it dies it produces a rich harvest”. This is not something any of us sets out to do; it happens to us!

It makes sense to seek connection with the deepest realities of life and with our fellow humans, and to seek meaning and well-being in a world of relentless change. Therefore at a time when so many people feel disconnected or alienated, it is not surprising that interest in spirituality is on the rise. There are many diverse forms of spirituality which seek connection with all life, in a way that was often overlooked in the past. Much popular Christian spirituality expressed negative attitudes towards sexuality and nature and seemed to be ‘other-worldly’, private and unrelated to the world. This unhealthy separation of ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ or sacred and secular, does not reflect what Jesus was like. He was content that the weeds grew up with the wheat. Our spirituality needs to be inclusive, outreaching, communal, compassionate, joyful, celebratory and relevant to everyday needs, hopes and dreams.



Western thinking is determined to rationalise and explain everything, but it is a common experience of the mystics to suggest “that if you can understand it, it’s not of God”. Great religion is about **transformation**. The big question is ‘what do we do with our pain?’ If we don’t hold our pain, we pass it on. Jesus’ on the cross, held his pain; he absorbed it and refused to pass it on. Each of us knows people who are in pain. Many have been seduced into thinking that since much physical pain can be dulled or eliminated, that emotional or spiritual pain can also be easily removed or avoided.

Darkness is always present alongside the



light. Pure light blinds. Only the mixture of darkness and light allows us to see clearly. We need not be afraid of the darkness. In many ways this has been a constant dilemma of the Church. It has wanted to live in perfect light, where God alone lives. We can see in Christian history the Eastern Church trying to create heavenly liturgies with little sense of social justice, Luther with his abhorrence for his own darkness, the Swiss Reformers trying to outlaw darkness and the Puritans trying to repress it. The Roman Church has been consistently unable and unwilling to see its own darkness and the typical believer has been afraid of darkness. Fundamentalists turn darkness into a preoccupation with Satan. All of us, it seems, are trying to find ways to avoid the great human mystery, instead of learning how to enter the darkness and live there, as Jesus did.



Going to church seems enough for some, while creating fellowship is considered an accidental and unimportant by-product and social justice an almost forgotten dimension. True spirituality engages with the world and seeks to meet and transform it. Today the popularity of Eastern meditation is being readily mixed with the mystical traditions of the

West, the creation spirituality of North America and other traditions. The fact that it is environmentally friendly, appeals to the young generation.

Sometimes religious knowledge can become a barrier to spirituality, especially if we make the mistake of thinking that our images of the sacred are the divine reality itself. If God becomes too narrowly understood or if our rituals become too mundane, we fail to express the truth of the sacred that is always beyond us. This is a danger for institutional religion which can find itself primarily concerned with ethical living and private morality while being blind to new expressions of the sacred and how to respond.

The history of the western church includes many instances of excommunication or banishment of creative spiritual thinkers who were later proven to be people of wisdom and deep faith. If religion cannot be open to new ways of the sacred being revealed, it resists the creativity of the sacred spirit which 'blows where it wills'.



In our present age, spirituality is being valued for holding our hopes of interconnectedness, while religion is under attack for being an outdated and irrelevant authority, somewhat discredited by the behaviour of some senior



representatives. However we need religion to carry spirituality. Without spirituality we have no truth to celebrate and no contact with the living

sacred presence. Without religion, there is no organised way of communicating or expressing truth, nor sacred rituals to bind individuals into a living community. Since the Christian world has been converted to secularism, if not in theory, certainly in practice, preaching is no longer for the 'converted' for we all need conversion to the gospel message of sharing with our neighbour and serving the less fortunate, the alienated and broken.

A large number of people seem to be running on spiritual emptiness, their spiritual fuel gauge having registered on low for some time. Too many suffer acute or chronic depression, and many young adults and even teenagers suffer from emotional burnout. These are not just personal health problems, but expressions of spiritual unhealth. Many people are confused about the values and visions that give life meaning, often caught in a trap that demands more time at work to pay for an improved lifestyle. Driven by materialism and consumerism, many learn too late that possessions do not of themselves bring happiness. Our quality of life has been eroded by obsessive materialism. We need a new enlightenment, a new language and a new concept of the sacred. Karl Jung declared that religious impulses can lead to health and renewal, but if not understood can lead to personal illness and social pathology

**“CONSUMERISM IS BASED ON THE ILLUSION THAT YOU CAN FILL SPIRITUAL OR EMOTIONAL EMPTINESS WITH PHYSICAL PRODUCTS.”**

Churches do not seem to be speaking a language that the modern world can understand. The family unit is no longer infused with spiritual meaning as one generation fails to pass on its traditions to the next and the extended family has largely been dissolved by changing social conditions. The nuclear family is in crisis with high divorce rates as commitment to a partner decreases in importance, and



personal desires and competing ambitions struggle under the weight of balancing the complex demands of modern life. Modern life is obsessed with youthfulness, and the aged are often considered an inconvenience.

Until recently, the Australian anthem boasted that “we are young and free”. The Aboriginal people are not young. One elder said in 1988 “Australia is too old to celebrate birthdays!” In ancient cultures and still in Aboriginal and Pacific Island cultures, the desires of youth are seen to be self-serving, not cultural or spiritual. Initiation ceremonies terminate the state of youth and mark a transition to take up



responsibility for the community. The elders are the ones who hold on to and pass on traditions. In contrast, modern

western culture some elderly are pitied for no longer being young or useful.

Since people are seen increasingly as a commodity, their usefulness is often seen as their measure of worth, in contradiction to the deepest Christian values which hold a deep and profound respect for human life. Great wisdom can come with age and this is connected in a special way to the sacred, not the passing world. The Jewish people used the term 'wisdom' to describe God.

There is a risk of imposing fundamentalist images of God upon our youth. As we well know, religious groups can easily claim to have sole access to truth and insist on conformity to their ideology. If we are open to religious experience we have to admit to being naïve at times, and acknowledge the growth and change that has followed our new insights. We will never fully know or understand. Spirituality that ignores rationality breeds superstition, wild enthusiasm and emotionalism which is sometimes evident in our Christian youth ministries.



At the same time, rationality without spirituality leads to dryness, inhumanity and lack of meaning, which many suicidal youth experience. These two dimensions need to be blended and balanced, especially if we are to present to our youth a spirituality that is relevant to their world.

**To be continued**

### **Quotes**

- All that I can, I will
- Fall seven times, get up eight!

### **Interesting**

It is impossible to lick your elbow

The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$ 16,400

Q. What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers and laser printers have in common?

A. All were invented by women

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321$

Estimates are that 75% of those who read this ,will try to lick their elbow!

### Humour

Q When is a car not a car?

A When it turns into a driveway.

Q Why can't Dalmatians hide?

A Because they're always spotted.

Q Why was the baby ant confused?

A Because all his uncles were ants!

Q How did the barber win the race?

A He knew a shortcut.

Q What do you say to a slow tomato?

A Come on, ketchup



In a train compartment, there were four companions – A Project Manager, his team member, an old woman, and her young daughter. Then, there comes a tunnel and the train goes through a dark tunnel. Suddenly there comes a smooching sound and then a slap !!!

The train comes out of the tunnel...The women and the assistant are sitting there looking completely baffled. The manager is bending over holding his face, which is Red apparently from a slap. All of them stay diplomatic and no-one says anything...

The old woman is thinking :

**These managers are all crazy after girls. They must have kissed my daughter in the darkness. Very proper that she slapped him...**

The young girl is thinking :

**The manager should have tried to kiss me but kissed my mother instead and got smacked...**

The manager is thinking :

**My junior should have kissed the girl. She might have thought that it was me and slapped me...**

Now what was the assistant is thinking...

**If this train goes through another tunnel I am going to make another kissing sound**



and slap my manager once more...  
The idiot keeps harassing me in the office...!!





**Mardi Doyle funeral**

Mardi's funeral will take place at Holy Cross on Friday May 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be a rosary at 10.00am and Requiem Mass will begin at 10.30am. It is suggested that you arrive early to secure a seat.

The burial will take place at Eltham cemetery.

Anthony Smyth's funeral will be held at the same time at St Kevin's.

**Prayers**

As previously advised, 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.

We remember Sr Brigid's sister-in-law, Olive Murphy who passed away in Ireland on Monday, Madge McFadden (sister to Denis Sweeney) who also passed away in Ireland last week and Anthony Smyth (brother of Dr Noel) who died on Thursday. We also remember Merle Gagliardi whose anniversary is May 1<sup>st</sup>, Mary Maher - 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Antonio Zandegu (first anniversary) - May 3<sup>rd</sup> and John Ryan - May 5<sup>th</sup>.

[Bruno and Cathy Petrocco](#) are 53 years married on Friday April 30<sup>th</sup>

[Tina Minichilli](#) celebrates her birthday the same day.

[Maree and Frank Bartoli](#) celebrate their 51<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary on May 1<sup>st</sup>

[Cathy Winterburn](#) celebrates her birthday on May 3<sup>rd</sup>

[Rob Hill](#) celebrates his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 6th

#### **This weekend we remember:**

Maree Bartoli, Dominic Isgro, Di Baker, Gerry Bond, Jacki Tomm, Peter Owen, Barry Wong, Errol Lovett, Pam Grehan, Bronwyn Burke, Frank Burke, Graham Hille, Mary Corkoren, Brenda Rodrigues, Mary Hackett, Angelo Vigilante, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Patricia Keeghan, Peter McNamara, Pam Gartland, Michael Doyle, Mary Coburn, Maeve and John Reardon, Anne Jenkins, Jim Monaghan, Kate and Mary Dunn, Ray Sanchez and all who seek or need our prayers.



**The link for the recoded Mass** (Easter Week 3 Year C) will be sent on Saturday.

Have a good weekend

Brian



07-20-2013

FIRST OFF, I'M HAPPY TO SEE THAT SO MANY OF YOU ARE ENJOYING THE NEW STREAMING OF OUR SERVICES ONLINE ...