



Greetings,

Mother's Day

SENDING LOVE TO ALL OF YOU

@rachgarrett



those yearning to be mothers



those who are mothers



those who have never had a mother



mothers who have lost children



those who have lost their mother



mothers and children with love-filled relationships



mothers and children with strained relationships



those who have chosen not to be mothers



those who love children that are not their own

Once again this Sunday we acknowledge and give thanks for our mothers – those present amongst us and those who have gone.

Mother's Day is an opportunity for us to remember and pray with thanks for our own mothers and the mothers in our extended families and our faith community

We also remember those reflected in this accompanying image.

Sydney meeting

We had a very positive meeting of our Community Leaders in North Sydney from Friday til Monday. Unfortunately, temporary health issues prevented Brendan Connell and Ray Sanchez from attending, and John Curtis from Port Moresby was unable to attend. This was an opportunity to share experiences and challenges so that our communities and the Passionist Family that surrounds them can be nurtured and supported in our mission. For me it was nice to be back in my old district (three kilometres from our childhood family home) and we stayed on site where the Mary McKillop chapel is located. Unfortunately there was no time to catch up with family or our Marrickville community. On Sunday we went to Mass at St Mary's North Sydney where I first attended Mass over seventy years ago, and where Tom McDonough and I were altar boys. It was an amazing feeling reflecting back on those early years.

Pope Francis fears self-righteous perfect Christians

April 28th, 2022 *Source: Catholic News Agency*

Pope Francis says the Lord does not expect us to be “perfect Christians,” and he (the pope) is afraid when he sees righteous and self-assured Christians.

Francis told a crowd at the Vatican on Sunday that the Lord would prefer us “to seek him, to call on him or even, like Thomas, to protest, bringing him our needs and our unbelief.” Thomas “represents all of us,” Francis says.

“We too struggle at times like that disciple: How can we believe that Jesus is risen, that he accompanies us and is the Lord of our life without having seen him, without having touched him?”

“How can one believe in this? Why does the Lord not give us some clearer sign of his presence and love? Some sign that I can see better. “Here, we too are like Thomas, with the same doubts, the same reasoning. “But we do not need to be ashamed of this. By telling us the story of Thomas, in fact, the Gospel tells us that the Lord is not looking for perfect Christians.”

Attitudes of righteousness and self-assurance aren’t the way to go either, Francis warns. “I tell you: I am afraid when I see a Christian, some associations of Christians who believe themselves to be perfect. The Lord is not looking for perfect Christians; the Lord is not looking for Christians who never doubt and always flaunt a steadfast faith.

When a Christian is like that, something isn’t right,” he says. “No, the adventure of faith, as for Thomas, consists of lights and shadows. Otherwise, what kind of faith would that be? It knows times of comfort, zeal and enthusiasm, but also of weariness, confusion, doubt and darkness.

Crises are not sins, they are part of the journey, we should not fear them, Francis explains. He says in many cases they make us humble because they strip us of the idea that we are better than others.

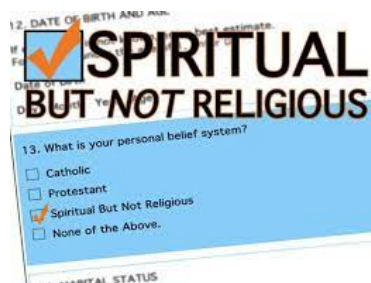
“Crises help us to recognise that we are needy: they rekindle the need for God and thus enable us to return to the Lord, to touch his wounds, to experience his love anew as if it were the first time.”

What has happened to spirituality....Part 4

Statistics in England claim that the greatest percentage of people who do not believe in God belong to the towns of Oxford and Cambridge. Modern intellectual culture has remained strictly secular, and this has driven a wedge between those who think about 'this' world and long to change it (the social reformers) and those who reflect on the 'other' world and long for improvement. This separateness of our spiritual and social world is false, and a desire to change the world quickly runs out of steam if it is not replenished or directed by the spirit. We do not have the mental

capacity to bring about lasting change in this world until we have opened ourselves and our culture to the possibility of transformation. Nothing great or lasting can be achieved with purely secular motivations.

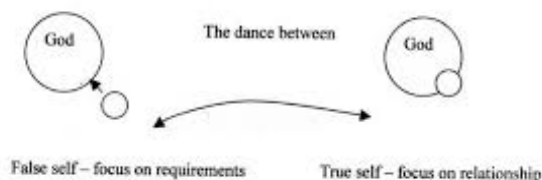
Spirituality is definitely alive. The cartoons, drawings and prayers of Australian artist Michael Leunig have had an amazing influence on people’s attitudes. Many people are switching from 'seeing is believing' to a more ancient, essentially religious position that 'believing is seeing'. Australian author David Tacey suggests that the areas that appear to be giving rise to a new spirituality in Australia include the experience of nature and landscape, the environment, Aboriginal reconciliation, the visual arts, popular life-history and story-telling, public interest in Eastern religions, the therapeutic and mental health professions, human resources and industry leadership, the natural health movement, and a general hunger for personal and cultural renewal.



Some people argue that Australians and New Zealanders are naturally reluctant to talk about religious matters, that we are shy about spirituality. Behind this attitude is a fear that too much talk about religion will prove to be divisive or that a group will suddenly become ‘religious’, whereas it is already that! There is, as we know so well, a real crisis of meaning in the general community, and the

problems associated with constant social change, the erosion of a once clear and valued public morality, the breakdown of family structures, high levels of unemployment and instability in the workplace, and the public emergencies created by drugs, alcohol, mental health issues, crime and increasing suicide urge us to take stock of 'what really matters' and talk about this with one another.

Our culture is very secular but if we seek to change the world without being directed or refreshed by the spirit, we will run out of steam. We need first to open ourselves to the transformative possibilities of the sacred. Mystical Christianity is about ‘Who I



am’. It involves intimacy, surrender, love and communion. It has nothing to do with technique, method, performance or ‘what should I do?’” **As Franciscan Richard Rohr says,** “The true self (one’s soul) cannot be destroyed. The false self (reputation, title, ego, image, education etc) is when we don’t know that there is a true self.”

Ronald Rolheiser suggests in ‘The Holy Longing’: The Search for a Christian Spirituality that there are four pillars which underpin Christian spirituality. This first

pillar is our private prayer and morality. Jesus said “If anyone loves me he or she will keep my commandments.” In past eras, this dimension was emphasised above any others and sometimes to their exclusion.

Fear of fundamentalism or piety leads many people to put little emphasis on a personal relationship with the sacred, with God. If we lack an intimacy with God and a morality that flows from this, we will be left with an ideology and no core tradition to pass on to another generation. We need to be intense in our efforts to live a morality that is integrated with our personal relationship with the sacred, and faithful to it. If we do not, we may well find as Henri Nouwen described his own depression, “just when I was being praised for my spiritual insights, I felt devoid of faith.”



A second pillar is social justice. Jewish prophets taught that quality of faith depended upon a sense of justice and this could be gauged by how the vulnerable groups such as the widows, orphans and the poor were treated. Sincerity of heart and prayer were not enough. Jesus took this further, by suggesting how we treat the poor is how we treat God. In its quest to know the sacred or to deepen self-awareness, modern spirituality can

overlook this vital dimension that identifies with the needy among us.

Although we can feel powerless in the face of systems that alienate and disadvantage the poor, it is a feeble excuse to claim the church should never be involved in politics, for true religion is involved in life as it is lived. The issues of our fellow humans must always be the issues that concern us, or else our spirituality is unbalanced. The secret is to be women and men of compassion. As we become more aware of the invitation to balance our spirituality we will see how we must respond to the issues of the integrity of creation, justice and peace.

The third pillar is to have a grateful heart. We often see Christians doing good out of duty, with a bitter or unpleasant disposition. Some of the religious elders of Jesus' time were scandalised that Jesus and his disciples were not continually fasting. He advised them that one does not fast while the wedding feast is still being celebrated. Jesus was vitally concerned for the poor, but he still managed to earn the reputation of a 'drunkard and a glutton'. Celebrating with friends and family was obviously a significant way of keeping a thankful heart. Jesus did not dream of everyone having little, rather he often spoke of a banquet at which everyone would be satisfied. Celebrating is a wonderful sign of God's presence.

The fourth pillar is to belong to a faith community. Modern spirituality tends to see the church as irrelevant. Many people seek the sacred but say they do not want religion. They seek God, but not church. However we need a faith community. We need fellow faith travellers with whom to share and celebrate. Unfortunately our religious culture makes us wary of both sharing our faith experiences and celebrating them, but a true faith community does both.



The challenges of our time are critical and for many of us, the time ahead is brief. Many ask, 'who is coming behind us?' We must be serious in discerning what the next generation needs so that we can pass on something of value. At the same time, we should not fall into the trap of living ahead of ourselves. It may be that something different will emerge. That we cannot identify it does not mean it cannot happen. We have our own lives to lead, our own

faith to live. Parish structures as we have known them are collapsing, so the spirituality that underpins our Christian life must reflect what we truly seek. The sacred is present in all our interpersonal encounters and celebrations, drawing us on to the greater Christian challenge of inclusion, compassion and justice for all.

Interesting (no guarantees, but genuinely recommended)

Spray a bit of perfume on the light bulb in any room to create a lovely light scent in each room when the light is turned on.

To clean artificial flowers, pour some salt into a paper bag and add the flowers. Shake vigorously as the salt will absorb all the dust and dirt and leave your artificial flowers looking like new!

Wrap celery in aluminum foil. Putting in the refrigerator and it will keep for weeks.

Cure for headaches: Take a lime, cut it in half, and rub it on your forehead. The throbbing will go away.

Humour

Son: Dad do you know the difference between a packet of cookies and a pack of elephants?

Dad: No

Son: Then it's a good thing Mum does the shopping.

Son: Why is a computer so smart?

Mother: It listens to its motherboard.

Sunday school teacher: Tell me, Johnny. Do you say prayers before eating?

Johnny: No, Miss, I don't have to. My Mum is a good cook.

Mother to son: I'm warning you. If you fall out of that tree and break both legs, don't come running to me!

Mum, what's it like to have the greatest daughter in the world?

I don't know, ask your grandma!

Silence is golden. Unless you have kids. Then silence is suspicious.

A police recruit was asked during the exam. What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother? He said, call for backup.

Mum: "Get up out of bed or I will eat something with gluten in it!"

I was struck by a bottle of omega 3 pills. Luckily, my wounds were only super fish oil.

- Water is heavier than butane because butane is a lighter fluid.
- Taking a dog named Shark to the beach is a bad idea.
- When I get to work, I first hide. Because a good worker is hard to find.
- BREAKING NEWS! Man gets hit by a rental car. Said it Hertz.
- Carrots may be good for your eyes but booze will double your vision



Religious profession

Sr Emily will make first profession this coming Saturday in Vietnam. Emily is the fifth woman to be professed as a Cross and Passion sister.

Sr Brigid has been heavily involved in Emily's formation although this has had to be done by Zoom through regular weekly classes. We congratulate Emily and ask you to please support her with your prayer.

Mardi Doyle funeral

You can view Mardi's funeral from 10.30am Friday May 6th, via this link:

<http://www.vividstream.net/margaret-doyle>

Prayers

We remember Mardi, and Anthony Smyth (brother of Dr Noel) whose funeral will be held at St Kevin's at the same time as Mardi's funeral.

We remember Angelina Petrocco whose anniversary is May 8th, and Rose Zammit (mother of Maree Bartoli whose anniversary is May 11th

This weekend we remember:

Maree Bartoli, Dominic Isgro, Di Baker, Gerry Bond, Jacki Tomm, Peter Owen, Barry Wong, Errol Lovett, Pam Grehan, Mary Corkoren, Lesley Yang, Graham Hille, 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.



Please refer this message to anyone you think may be interested. The two pages contain very similar information.

Have a good weekend and may each Mother be truly celebrated.

Brian

