

Holy Cross Retreat

Letter 144



18th November, 2022

Greetings,

Anointing Mass

This Sunday (November 20th) is the feast of Christ the King. At the beginning of 10.00am Mass, there will be a communal celebration of the Sacrament of 'Anointing of the Sick'.

Chris Mithen – 90

Fr Chris is residing at Nazareth House, Camberwell. He will celebrate his 90th birthday on Saturday November 19th. We are having a morning Tea in the dining room at Holy Cross on Tuesday November 22nd at 10.30am-12.00pm. You are most welcome to call in and have a cuppa and celebrate with Chris.

When I was a novice, Chris was the Novice Director and during a conference and conversation in his office, he challenged me to find out his birthday. I told him I already knew. Next he asked, what about the date of my ordination? It was unlikely I would know the answer, but I told him June 30th, 1956. The tables were turned as I invited him to work out how I knew because I did not know when I entered his office. I had noticed a pen on his desk which had engraved on it italic script: 30-06-1956. In the end, I had to tell him about the pen. It was very rare to get one up on such a canny character.

During that same year one Saturday morning, two of the novices knocked on Chris' door and sheepishly said, "Fr Chris. We had an accident in the cars". "Cars?" Chris asked with an emphasis on the question mark! "Yes", was the reply. "We were washing the two cars and when we drove them back to the garage we hit each other". Chris was about to leave his room when they stopped him with the news, "April Fool's Day". In a flash, Chris said "No it is after 12 o'clock". They both looked at their watches (it was around 10.00am) and Chris said, "April Fool's Day!"

Institute

The **Centenary Province Institute** will be held over the weekend of November 19th-20th. A group will gathered at Holy Cross on Saturday from **10.50am-2.45pm** and again on Sunday from **1.30pm-5.30pm**. See full details on the following pages. There will be a **BYO BBQ** from 6.00pm to celebrate 100 years of Holy Spirit Province (Australia, New Zealand, PNG and Vietnam). You are most welcome to join us for the BBQ whether you participate in the Institute sessions or not.



Holy Spirit Province

Centenary Zoom Institute

(Local Companion groups may be able to gather for one or both days)

Saturday Nov 19th: "100 Years: The Journey continues"

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82322092440?pwd=MVdZa2RqRStMVzdwK0E0amJjLzdhdz09>

Meeting ID: 823 2209 2440

Passcode: 443465

10.50am- 2.45pm AEST

9.50am- 1.45pm PNG and Brisbane

12.50am- 4.45pm New Zealand

6.50am- 10.45am Vietnam

10.50am: Login

11.00am: Welcome & Prayer:

11.10am: **Lessons from our history**

(Jeff Foale)

35 minutes

11.45am: Chat room: (or local group sharing)

35 minutes

12.20pm: Break

12.40pm: **Lessons for younger CP's**

(Erick Niyiragira)

35 minutes

1.15pm: Chat room: (or local group sharing)

35 minutes

1.50pm: **Passionist life in PNG**

25 minutes

2.45pm: Closing Message

Sunday Nov 20th: "100 Years: The Journey continues"

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87481204217?pwd=aDFiWnF3b0hDTjhNVHBuTjdoWk5FQT09>

Meeting ID: 874 8120 4217

Passcode: 496148

1.25pm -5.30pm AEST
12.25pm -4.30pm PNG and Brisbane
3.25pm -6.15pm New Zealand
9.25am -1.30pm Vietnam

1.25pm: Log in

1.30pm: Welcome

1.35pm: Centenary prayer (Karen Engelbretsen CP)
Message from Fr General (Joachim Rego)

2.00pm: Lessons from our history for Vietnam
(Vietnam team) 25 minutes

2.25pm: Chat room: (or local group sharing) 30 minutes

2.55pm: Break

3.15pm: Our history and our 2023 Chapter
(Tom McDonough) 35 minutes

3.50pm: Chat room: (or local group sharing) 30 minutes

4.20pm Break

4.35pm: Centenary video (Luke Bulley)

4.05pm: Ritual - (Auckland Companions)

5.25pm: Farewell message

Final blessing: (Brigid CP)

5.30pm: Finish

Ruby Tui

How times have changed for women and sport and the ever increasing interest from spectators! Last Saturday in Auckland, over 42,000 people watched New Zealand defeat England in the Women's Rugby World Cup final. In a very moving gesture Former sevens player, Ruby Tui quietly gave away her winning medal to a young girl recovering from leukemia. In her post-match interview, Ruby said, ““If you like sport, take away the gender; ask yourselves what’s entertaining them. “Because I guarantee you, that semi and that final – that was entertainment, baby. That’s what sport is.”

Ruby then led the crowd in an impromptu Maori song Tūtira mai ngā iwi (Come Together as One). The excited crowd responded with a roar: ‘tātou tātou e!’ (‘all of us, all of us!’)

<https://7news.com.au/video/sport/ruby-tui-whips-crowd-into-a-frenzy-with-epic-song-bc-6315476895112>

Pearls



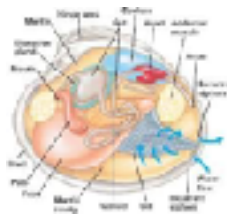
Most jewelry is fashioned out of precious metals and jewels that are found buried in the Earth, but pearls are found inside a living creature, an oyster. Pearls are the result of a biological process -- the oyster's way of protecting itself from foreign substances.

Oysters are not the only type of mollusk that can produce pearls.

Clams and mussels can also produce pearls, but that is a much rarer occurrence.

Most pearls are produced by oysters in both freshwater and saltwater environments.

Oysters are bivalves, which means that the shell is made of two parts, or valves. The shell's valves are held together by an elastic ligament. This ligament is positioned where the valves come together, and usually keeps the valves open so the oyster can eat. As the oyster grows in size, its shell must also grow. The mantle is an organ that produces the oyster's shell, using minerals from the oyster's food. The material created by the mantle is called nacre. Nacre lines the inside of the shell.



The formation of a natural pearl begins when a foreign substance slips into the oyster between the mantle and the shell, which irritates the mantle. It's like the oyster getting a splinter. The oyster's natural reaction is to cover up that irritant to protect itself. The mantle covers the irritant with layers of the nacre substance that is used to create the shell. This eventually forms a pearl.

If it wasn't for the irritant, there would be no pearl.

Is there an irritant in your life that is a gift for you?

PROVINCE HISTORY: 11. VIETNAM (Part 1)



Jeff Foale and Thomas Anamattathil CP arrived in Saigon, Vietnam on 12 October 2005. Francisco, Murray arrived on 1st March 2006, having made a previous brief visit in November 2005. Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio CP, the General of the Congregation, had commissioned the new mission team in Glen Osmond on 21 September 2005.

Francisco served in Vietnam for 6 years, and was the formator of aspirants, postulants and newly professed during his stay in Vietnam. Thomas served an impressive fifteen years during which he was ordained in 2009. Thomas was the director of vocations from the beginning, as well as coordinator and manager with responsibility for the finances and the extensive building construction that was undertaken. He coordinated the formation team.

Jeff was 72 when he arrived in Vietnam and in November 2022 made a compulsory 'visa' return to Australia, hoping to be back in Saigon before the end of the year. Having been appointed Mission Superior, Jeff had heavy responsibilities, including fund raising for the mission in Vietnam. He translated the life of Bishop Lambert De La Motte, the first Bishop of Vietnam, from French to English, in order to understand the Church in Vietnam, its culture, and the perception of the people. Fortunately for the enterprise, Jeff had a fierce missionary spirit.



Three other PASPAC men served in Vietnam, [Augustine Jun-Su Kim](#), from Korea. He replaced Francisco in 2012 and stayed for 3 years. He was formator for the professed students. [Orven Gonzaga](#) from the Philippines, arrived in 2012 and stayed until July 2017. He was the formator of the aspirants and the pre-philosophy students. [Paulus Jasmin](#), from Indonesia, arrived in December 2015 after completing English language studies in Melbourne. He was formator for the professed students until he returned to Indonesia in January 2019.



During his term in Rome as General Consultor (1994-2006), Jeff Foale was looking for ways to support missionary work, so he went to China with the Korean Passionists. He was present when the Bishop of Guying invited the Korean Provincial, Augustine Kim, to bring Passionists to China. He hoped that the Passionist Congregation would have a mission in China, in Myanmar and Vietnam.

Jeff had worked closely for many years with Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees when they began arriving in Australia in 1975 and he secured permission to use the Retreat house in Glen Osmond to assist refugees.



Sr Tran Thi Nien a refugee from Vietnam, from the Congregation of the Lovers of the Holy Cross (second from the left in the photo) joined the Sisters of Mercy in Australia. When Jeff celebrated Mass in English for the refugees, Sr Nien translated the relevant parts into Vietnamese. In 1979, a Vietnamese Jesuit, Fr. Augustine

Nguyen Duc Thu, joined them. Twenty years later in 1999, during a conversation between these three, Jeff was asked: “Why don’t you go to Vietnam?”

In October 2002, Jeff suggested to the General Fr Ottaviano that the time had come for them to make a new foundation in Vietnam. Jeff was encouraged to go to Vietnam and report on the situation which he did in June 2003. He met a number of archbishops and bishops, priests and sisters. He met Cardinal John Baptist Phạm Minh Mẫn who told him that he was welcome and that he would bless his community if they would come here. After three weeks, in July, Jeff returned to Rome and reported to the General and the Consultors.



Jeff was accompanied on his trip to Vietnam by a Theresa Anh Sang Luu, a former Vietnamese refugee who had been living in the USA and had been volunteering with the Passionists when Jeff visited the community in Orlando, Florida in 2002. On meeting Theresa, Jeff said to her “I hope to bring our Congregation to your country.” She said, “I will help you”. The Passionists in Vietnam have since considered her their greatest benefactor. She made all the arrangements for three

preliminary visits Jeff made to Vietnam, booking travel, arranging meetings and translating etc.

Initially the three missionaries stayed in a mini-hotel. In March 2006 they rented a very suitable house referred to as St Paul’s, in Street 15, Hiep Binh Chanh Ward, Thu Duc District. The Visitation Sisters lived opposite the house and Fatima Church was three hundred meters away. They were able to live there for 9 years until the house was sold on April 30, 2015.



It was important at that time not to advertise one’s identity. Nothing in the

newspapers and no public notices! Religious dress nor titles were not to be used in public.



In order to foster vocations, in August 2006 a house was rented for students. It was referred to as 'the 1st house'. There were four students, including Thomas Nguyễn Thành and Peter Hoàng Trục, the first Passionists to be ordained in Vietnam. These



students came to St. Paul's to learn English and they gathered for vocation accompaniment on Sundays, twice a month. Later, the Passionists rented 'the 2nd house'. The three foreigners always lived away from the students, as required by the police.



In 2007, land was purchased in Thu Duc District for what became St Gabriel's and built in 2009. The more senior students moved there that same year while the remaining students moved to Binh Loi where they lived until October 2017.

The foundations for a new house (St Paul of the Cross) were laid at the end of 2015 and much work was involved in completing this project, including extensive fund-raising. It is located near the Saigon River with a nice view of the city looking out from the balconies and the terrace, and with fresh and cool air from the river.



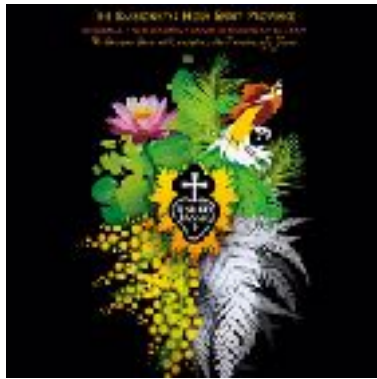
The official opening occurred on October 19th, 2018, thirteen years after the mission team arrived in Saigon. The final part of the building was the rooftop chapel which was officially opened on April 5th, 2020. The rooftop cross was added in 2021.

From the establishment of the mission of Our Lady of La Vang in Vietnam in 2005 until 2015, Vietnam was attached directly to the Generalate in Rome and there was no host-Province.

Because ELSPM had been established in Adelaide, the men who joined after Thanh and Truc were able to study English in Adelaide, and remain



there, to join the PASPAC novitiate, which was conducted in English. Six more Vietnamese and Chinese men were professed in Adelaide between 2012 and 2014.



These men had been introduced to Australian culture and that contributed to the decision that Vietnam should become part of Holy Spirit Province. This formally occurred on March 25th, 2015. A beautiful new logo was produced for the occasion (see the front cover) which was the work of Anthony (Tone) Bullen from St Brigid's parish, and John Pearce CP.

Eleven years earlier, back in January 2004, Tom McDonough visited Vietnam. At that time, Tom was parish priest of St Brigid's Marrickville. He knew that 25% of his parishioners were of Vietnamese origin and Marrickville was the first place of arrival for the boat people that came from Vietnam after the fall of the Saigon in 1975.

The parish had provided an office for Fr. Joseph Vu, the first chaplain to the Vietnamese community, and made available the facilities of the Church and parish to the Vietnamese community which had become one of the five centres for the Vietnamese Catholic Community in Sydney.



Tom hoped to experience the life and culture of the Vietnamese people so that the parish could better serve its Vietnamese parishioners whose faithfulness and generosity were such a source of life to the whole parish community. Tom also hoped to help the Congregation in its wish to establish a foundation in Vietnam.



The establishment of the International house of formation (novitiate) in Adelaide was a positive response to the needs of PASPAC as has been mentioned, but there was no specific contribution to PASPAC identified in our 2011 Provincial Chapter. Discussion continued in PASPAC and there was a great keenness in Australia to assist. Unfortunately, this interest in Vietnam was interpreted by some PASPAC

members as a colonial take-over and there was an accusation of secret meetings and a 'done-deal' regarding the future of Vietnam.

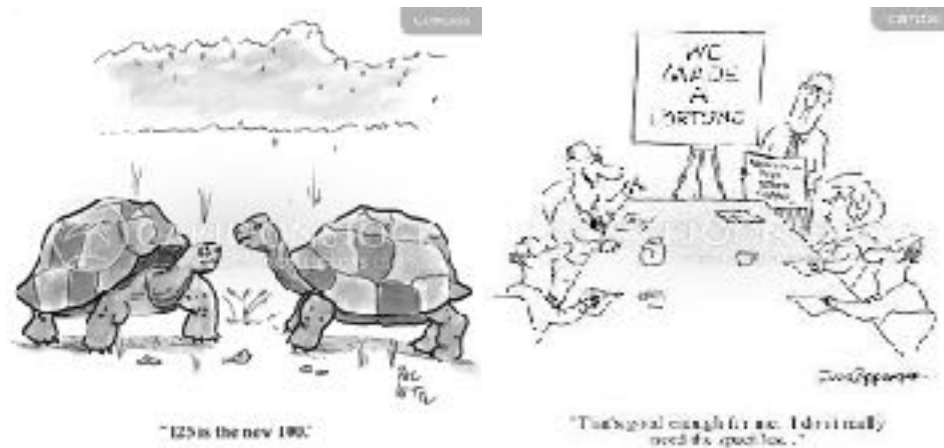
In March 2014, Tom wrote to the PASPAC leaders. He referred to a recent letter from the General, Fr Joachim regarding PASPAC solidarity with the Vietnamese Mission and invited dialogue about how we might give expression to our solidarity with that



Mission, through governance and canonical support, personnel and finances. Tom named the fears, concerns and accusations that he had heard about.

Tom wrote, “We know the next 10 years are crucial to shaping the future of a Passionist presence in our Province. The key premise to our discerning **is that** given we will be so dependent on our sisters and brothers in Asia Pacific, how can we in the coming ten years contribute to our configuration? **(To be continued)**”

Humour



1. A guy is sitting at home when he hears a knock at the door. He opens the door looks down and sees a snail. He picks up the snail and throws it as far as he can. Three years later he answers the door to a knock and he sees the same snail who says, “What the hell was all that about?”

2. A man makes his way to his seat for the Grand Final. He leans over and asks man if anyone will be sitting next to him. “No”, says his neighbour. The man is amazed that there would be a spare seat at such an event. “Actually the seat belongs to me,” his neighbour says. “My wife was supposed to come but she passed away. We’ve never missed the final ever since we were married.”

The man expressed his sympathy and added, “Couldn’t you find anyone else to come – a relative, friend, work colleague?”

No, the neighbour said, “They’re all at the funeral”.

3. Two dog owners were arguing about whose pet was smarter. The first owner said. “My dog is so smart that every morning he goes to the shop and buys me a sesame seed bun bagel with chive cream cheeze. He then stops off at the café and picks up a mocha latte, comes home, turns on the TV, all before I get out of bed.”

“I know”, said the second owner.

“How do you know?” asked the first owner.

“My dog told me” he replied

Only in Ireland

John Bradford, a Dublin University student, was on the side of the road hitch-hiking on a very dark night and in the midst of a big storm. The night was rolling on and no car went by. The storm was so strong he could hardly see a few feet ahead of him. Suddenly, he saw a car slowly coming towards him and stopped. John, desperate for shelter and without thinking about it, got into the car and closed the door .. only to realise there was nobody behind the wheel and the engine wasn't running.

The car started moving slowly. John looked at the road ahead and saw a curve approaching. Scared, he started to pray, begging for his life. Then, just before the car hit the curve, a hand appeared out of nowhere through the window, and turned the wheel. John, paralysed with terror, watched as the hand came through the window, but never touched or harmed him.

Shortly thereafter, John saw the lights of a pub appear down the road, so, gathering strength, he jumped out of the car and ran to it... Wet and out of breath, he rushed inside and started telling everybody about the horrible experience he had just had. A silence enveloped the pub when everybody realised he was crying ... and wasn't drunk.

Suddenly, the door opened, and two other people walked in from the dark and stormy night. They, like John, were soaked and out of breath. Looking around, and seeing John Bradford sobbing at the bar, one said to the other...

‘Look Paddy ... there's that bloody idiot that got in the car while we were pushing it!’

Come Away Day

Our final Come Away Day this year at Holy Cross will be held on Wednesday 30th November. The theme of the day is **“Welcoming the Light.”** All are welcome. Please BYO lunch. Registration is at 9.30am. For further details contact Frank Burke, 0407998781 or burke.frank942@yahoo.com.au

Passion Play 2023

The Passion Play will be performed at the Holy Cross on **Palm Sunday** 2nd April 2023 at 1.30pm & **Good Friday** 7th April at 10.00am. Anyone interested in assisting either as an actor in some other capacity, please contact Gino Gammaldi: (0422662451) this week.

The Passion Play web site is: www.passionplay.info

Provincial Council

Our Provincial Council will meet here at Holy Cross next week. We will be pleased to have the opportunity to farewell our wonderful business manager, [Symon Scott](#).

Prayers

We remember Margaret Doust (sister of Lynn Hill) who passed away in Christchurch on Thursday afternoon after a long illness. We also remember those whose anniversaries occur around this time especially Bev Barry (Nov 19th) and Helen Dennis (25th Nov).

Fr Chris Mithen for his 90th birthday on Saturday and Bro Ed Braden for his 82nd birthday next Friday. Both are in aged care (Chris in Camberwell and Ed in Geelong).



We pray for all of our Holy Cross family who are unwell especially Maree Bartoli, Maeve Reardon, Michael Doyle, Paul Darbyshire Jim Molan, John Lazzari, Alexander Lim, Des Grissell, Denise Glasgow, Barry Wong, Helen McLean, Peter Owen, Greg Agosta, Dominic Isgro, Errol Lovett, Lesley Yang, Marg Casey, Norm Heyhorn, Chris O'Toole, Gerry Bond, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Mary Hackett, Jim Monaghan, Peter DeMarzi, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Anne Jenkins, Peter McNamara, Patricia Keeghan, Margaret Wright, Mary and Kate Dunn, Ray Sanchez CP and those who seek or need our prayers.

The [Mass link](#) will be sent by Chris on Saturday afternoon.

Have a good weekend

Brian

