

Holy Cross Retreat

## Letter 147



9<sup>th</sup> December, 2022

Greetings,

### Christmas

Our intention is to continue our recent tradition of **Christmas Eve Mass** amid the trees. **Christmas Carols will begin at 7.00pm and Mass at 7.30pm.** It helps if those who can bring a chair, do so, please. It would be wise to bring warm clothing, Mass on **Christmas Day is at 10.00am** in the chapel.

### Come Away Day – review

The Come Away team had their annual review yesterday and we will report on that next week. The attendance at the final Come Away Day was the highest for the year so we hope others will join in these days next year.

### Passionist Companions

The Passionist Companions will hold their final meeting for the year on Wednesday (2pm-4pm). If there seems to be some attraction of the Passionist charism for you in terms of your spirituality, we'd hope you feel free to come along and see what Passionist Companions are about.

### Visitors

**Tony Simbel** undertook his formation at Holy Cross and was ordained in May 2021. He has been in PNG for some months this year attempting to renew his visa, and part of that process is a requirement to update his English IELTS score. For that purpose he will be spending some time at Holy Cross from next Thursday, before he returns to Glen Osmond, Adelaide. Two days later on December 17<sup>th</sup>, **Pat McIndoe** will arrive to spend a few days of his holidays with us. Pat is working as formator of students in Boroko, Port Moresby and he is having a well deserved break.

### Dr Noel Smyth



We want to acknowledge Dr Noel's retirement from medical practice on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Noel and his family have had a long association with the Passionists and his own generous and professional care of so many of us over the years is deeply appreciated. Noel has served Donvale Rehab for over thirty years and will be greatly missed. They regard his as 'part of the family'. He has conducted over 300,000 consultations during his medical career so he has well and truly earned his retirement. We wish him well and express our gratitude and admiration for such distinguished service.

## Cracked Pots – a parable



A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house.



Of course, the perfect pot was proud of his accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was only able to accomplish half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to only deliver half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value for your efforts." the pot said.



The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these

beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral: Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots, but the cracks and flaws we each have make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what he or she is, and look for the good in them.

Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.



## PROVINCE HISTORY: 13. AGEING, DIMINISHMENT AND GROWTH (Part 2)

The 2020 novitiate was temporarily transferred to Holy Cross Templestowe, because entry into South Australia was impossible. After seven months there was a brief 'opening up' period that allowed the 'Vincent Strambi' class of novices to travel to Adelaide. These same five novices, when newly professed, were unable to return to Vietnam for three months, so they took up online studies in Vietnam back in Templestowe.



There was no 2021-2022 novitiate, and it was decided to cease the international novitiate in Adelaide and conduct the next novitiate for our Vietnamese candidates in Saigon from August 2022 and hold a separate novitiate for our Melanesian candidates in Port Moresby from January 2023. The Vietnamese and PNG postulants due in Templestowe for English studies in 2020-2022 were not able to travel to Australia and this helped the decision to be taken for theological studies for our PNG candidates would take place back in PNG.



Our Vietnamese postulants were required to study through our Melbourne based ELSPM programme, via Zoom from Vietnam, including the John Paul 2<sup>nd</sup> class of the postulants who undertook a second year of English studies during which they were joined by the Our Lady of Good Counsel class of six postulants. They have now combined for the Saigon 2022 novitiate.

During the periods of COVID lockdown, churches in Australia were closed so there were no public Masses, Attendance limits were set during other times such as one person per 2 square metres or one person per four square metres. At other times there was a limit of five attendees for any Mass. This drastically reduced weekly Mass attendance and it was necessary to find creative ways, such as newsletters, to keep people connected with each other. Most of our communities in Australia live streamed or recorded Sunday Masses. Some intend to make this a permanent practice especially because some who participate do so from a distance.



During lockdowns, funerals were restricted to a maximum of ten people (and in some periods, only five people). As a result of these experiences, funerals and Sunday Masses continue to be live-streamed.



Some old or unwell people remain satisfied with this level of participation since restrictions have been lifted. This will certainly be a feature of liturgy for the foreseeable future. COVID-19 will have a huge effect on many aspects of life around the world. By the end of 2022, the general opinion is that on average attendance at Sunday Mass in Australia and New Zealand is 70% of what it was pre-COVID. The

experience in Vietnam and in Port Moresby, PNG Australia has been similar to Australia.

The history of Passionist life in Australia is filled with examples of great challenge and creative initiatives. COVID-19 has been and will remain another challenge. Many of the Passionists in England, including the novices of the time, became infected with plague in 1846. Dominic Barberi and his fellow Passionists responded with generous pastoral care among plague victims and their families. Australian Passionists did the same during the flu epidemic of 1919 which resulted in fifty million deaths worldwide. Vietnamese Passionists responded to the call to assist in COVID infected areas during 2021 in Saigon.



A significant challenge of the next decade and beyond in Australia will involve dealing with the cynicism and lack of interest in Catholic life, much of it caused by the sexual abuse crisis. This includes the failure of Church leaders to report, discipline and suspend or dismiss priest abusers. The failure of the Church to adapt in many areas to the changing values of society, including the demand

for significant roles in the Church for women. Is also critical. The immediate future of Australian Catholicism will be influenced by Asian migrant cultures especially Indian, Filipino and Vietnamese, and their Asian pastors.

Young church-attending Australian Catholics tend to be more traditional in their thinking and practice. Many parishes in Australia and New Zealand are amalgamating and people are losing their sense of Catholic belonging. This was a challenge the Passionist Family Group Movement set out to meet.

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 the Province joined in celebrating 300 years since Paul of the Cross took his vows. That date in 1721 is credited as the date for the founding of the Congregation.



Holy Spirit Province celebrated being a Province for 100 years during 2022. The Province began with one country – Australia, and 34 years were spent with English and Irish Passionists, before Australia became a separate Province. Many men from the home Province continued to assist for several years.

New Guinea was added as a Mission of the Province in 1956. New Zealand was added to the Province in 1966, six years after it was founded as part of the St Joseph's Province. Vietnam was added in 2015 after ten years of Passionist presence there.

There have never been enough members for New Zealand to stand alone. The community in Hamilton, was closed in 1988 so Passionist presence for 25 years was a lay presence together with regular visits for parish missions and PFGM ministry and the Brisbane-based, Passionist Youth team. A new community was created in Blenheim in 2013 which included care of Marlborough parish. This community was closed in February 2022.

The PFGM and Passionist Companions are very strong in Aotearoa (the Land of the Long White Cloud'). Catholics make up only 12.5% of the population, just half of the percentage in Australia. The most recent Kiwi Passionist to be ordained, in 1971, is Pat McIndoe who originally joined when New Zealand was part of St Joseph's Province.

In the period 2016-August 2022, thirteen Vietnamese Passionists were ordained and two were ordained deacons. Six of these men had their ordinations delayed for some months by COVID-19. The first Burundian-Australian Passionist was ordained, a South African-Australian was ordained and two Papua New Guinean men were ordained.

As of November 2022, Holy Spirit Province had  
**38** finally professed members from **Australia and New Zealand**  
There was **1** temporary professed and no novices nor postulants.

**4** finally professed members from **Papua New Guinea**  
There were **4** temporary professed, no novices, **2** postulants and **2** aspirants

**18** finally professed members from **Vietnam**.  
There were **13** priests, **2** deacons, **9** temporary professed, **9** novices, **6** postulants and a number of aspirants who are engaged in preparatory or university studies.

-----

The history of the Province must acknowledge the many and varied people who assisted us in all four countries. There have been so many lay people as well as religious sisters and brothers, priests and bishops who have been of incredible assistance.

Among the lay people who have assisted, are parish, community and Province employees as well as those engaged for particular Province or local community ministries, committees and Boards.

There have been a host of volunteer assistants at the various levels (community, Province, parish, youth, PFGM, mission office etc, as well as our Companions.

There have been very helpful business assistants, builders, local tradesmen, decorators and financial benefactors. Some have been most generous in offering day-to-day help, some have donated generously in their will, which has enabled to Province to continue or to take up particular works.

Without them, the Province would never have been sustained, In particular, it is timely to acknowledge the many generous brothers who came from St Joseph's Province enabling us in time to be self-supporting.

We thank also the brothers from many Provinces who have served or still are serving in the Province.

Finally, we thank the brothers who, over one hundred years and more, served the Province quietly, as well as those who took on difficult and challenging responsibilities, to enable us to keep the Passion of Jesus alive in the hearts of so many people.

On 16th December 1922, Fr Silvio di Vezza wrote to the Provincial of St Joseph's Province Fr Malachy: *"After mature reflection, the General Curia has decided to put into effect the rescript of the Holy See by which the Australian houses were erected in the Province. Consequently, the houses of Australia cease to belong to JOSPEH Province; however, the suffrages for the deceased will continue to be common"*. This date, December 16<sup>th</sup> 2022 marks the end of the Centenary year.

**There is one Chapter of the Province history to follow (next week)**



## Creating a new path



Vince Celestino brought his excavator and his expertise to the task of clearing the area where the sheoak tree was removed so that we can create a 'short cut' pathway from the second carpark to the chapel. The trunk was huge and the roots were very large and very expansive. It was because the roots were damaging the building that

we had the tree removed.



Vince managed to remove the huge trunk, sever the roots and begin a pathway. He had the assistance of his protegee, Chris, who is already skilled at manoeuvring that large equipment.

Vince will fill in the pathway with loose gravel later in the week or early next week. The track is 40 metres and will go from a point immediately in front of where people exit the carpark across to the gap between the hedge and the bollard adjoining the central driveway.

(see the photo to the left)



Bruno and Vince

## Flowers



A very big thank you to Joe and Anne Toscano and their family for their generous donation of the weekly flowers for our Holy Cross altar. They are very much appreciated. Thank you to Peter Norman for his weekly pick-up and delivery of the flowers. Thank you to the



ladies who arrange the flowers so beautifully each week.

If anyone (male or female) would like to join the flower roster, you would be very welcome. There is no need to be a florist, just getting the flowers to stay in the vase would be great! Rostering is once every 6-8 weeks, so it is not often and you can swap and change if necessary. Please call Kay Lewis on – 9846 5363 or 0412 815 528.

### **Urban Theory- Italian Hand Dancing grou**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDk3u0UQFrw>

### **Pilobillius Ballet**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXLFD1yeCmw>

<https://www.gct.com/community/the-inside-scoop/the-buzz/video-inspiration-the-circle-of-life>

### **Humour**

1. An engineer could not find a job, so he opened a clinic, and put a sign outside that said "Get treatment for \$50; if not cured, get back \$100". A doctor thought this was a good opportunity to show up the engineer and earn a quick \$100. And so he visited the clinic.

Doctor: "I have lost my sense of taste".

Engineer: "Nurse , bring the medicine from Box # 22 and place 3 drops In the patient's mouth".

Patient (Doctor) spits out the medicine and says "This is not medicine. It's gasoline".

Engineer: "Congrats.. You have your taste back ..That will be \$50".

The doctor was annoyed and returned after several days to recover his money.

Doctor : "I have lost my memory and can't remember a thing..."

Engineer: "Nurse , bring the medicine from Box # 22 and place 3 drops in the patient's mouth".

Doctor: "Wait...that medicine is for the sense of taste"

Engineer : "Congrats. Your memory is back.. ..That will be \$50"

After several the doctor returned angrily for one last try.

Doctor : "My eyesight has become weak".

Engineer : "Well I don't have any medicine for that. Take this \$100".

Doctor : "But this is only a \$50 note"

Engineer : "Congratulations, Your eyesight has gotten better. ..That will be \$50!"

2. A determined man asked the lady behind the desk at the bank, “tell me how much money my wife drew from this account last week”. “I’m sorry sir, but I cannot disclose that kind of information” she said. The man responded, “But you are the paying teller” are you not? “Yes’ the woman said, “But I am not the telling payer!”
3. It is odd that boring people dull us and blunt people come to the point!
4. “Why are those bees buzzing about?” a lady asked. “Because”, a friend said, they put the new ape in apiary!”
5. “Please keep your head inside the window”, the train guard said to the youth. “I can look out the window if I want to”, the youth replied. “Yes, you can” the guard said, “but if you damage any of the ironwork on the bridges you will have to pay for that!”

## Family



There are eleven siblings in our Traynor family and getting everyone together is near impossible. It was good therefore that four of us were together for a few days this week.

From right to left (Peter, from Comboyne, NSW), Anne-Marie (from Sans Souci (Sydney), Paul (from Greytown, NZ) and myself.

The photo was taken at Warrandyte.

## Prayers

We remember those whose anniversaries occur around this time especially Chris’ mother, Merna Monaghan (December 10<sup>th</sup>) and his brother, James (December 16<sup>th</sup>), Frank Jordan (December 11<sup>th</sup>) Rosa Mandile (Cathy Hardinge’s mother) December 11<sup>th</sup>) and Laurie Sheehan (December 12<sup>th</sup>)



We pray for all of our Holy Cross family who are unwell especially Cathy Petrocco's sister, Maree Bartoli, Maeve Reardon, Michael Doyle, Paul Darbyshire Jim Molan, John Lazzari, Alexander Lim, Des Grisell, Lynda Chin, Gerry Bond, Helen McLean, Peter Owen, Greg Agosta, Dominic Isgro, Errol Lovett, Lesley Yang, Marg Casey, Norm Heyhorn, Chris O'Toole, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Jim Monaghan, Peter DeMarzi, Anne Jenkins, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Peter McNamara, Patricia Keeghan, Mary Hackett, Margaret Wright, Mary and Kate Dunn.

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

Have a good weekend.

Brian