

## Holy Cross Retreat

### Letter 150



30th December, 2022

Greetings,

### Christmas



We had a lovely Christmas Eve at Holy Cross. Erick trained a small troupe and had a large contingent of children join them in an African Christmas dance after communion. It was a little like this video by the Masaka kids from Southern Uganda:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzoGE9MUo7o>

Pastor suggested kids from Tanzania are not too bad at this sort of thing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2YmMd1bsxg>

### Holidays

**The Holy Cross Office** is closed until January 12<sup>th</sup>. Erick and the students are away in Adelaide, til January 9<sup>th</sup>.

### Newsletter

Over the next month, the weekly newsletter will be a little streamlined.

## Ongoing works



Our generous friend, Vince is continuing work on extending the main car park and creating a path from our second car park to the chapel. We need some cooler weather! With the build up of material for the main car park the wall that used to surround the pool is now too low for any security benefit,

so Vince has begun to remove it. This will also allow extra carparking space

## Pope Francis puts Matteo Ricci on path to sainthood



Gerard O'Connell reported from Rome on December 17<sup>th</sup>, that Pope Francis has officially put the famous 16th-century Italian Jesuit missionary to China, Matteo Ricci on the path to sainthood.

Pope Francis is known to be inspired by Ricci and the announcement is important for the Catholic Church in China and its 12 million members. Last May, Francis described Matthew Ricci as a "champion" of the "culture of dialogue." He said, the Jesuit missionary is famed not only for his actions and his writings, but for being "a man of encounters, who went beyond being a foreigner and became a citizen of the world."



Ricci began his missionary work in China in 1582 when he arrived in Macau, then a Portuguese colony. Moving to mainland China, he adopted the Chinese style of life and became fluent in the Chinese language. He spent the remaining 27 years of his life in China. He made history in 1601 by becoming the first European to enter China's Forbidden City in Peking (now Beijing).

The Wanli Emperor of China's Ming dynasty had invited him because of his knowledge of astronomy and calendrical science. Known as "Li Madou" to the Chinese, Ricci produced scholarly works in optics, astronomy, music, geography, geometry and numerous other fields.

Ricci subsequently converted several prominent Chinese officials to Christianity, including Xu Guangqi, a Chinese scholar and a high-ranking official in the Chinese government. Xu Guangqi's cause for sainthood is also under consideration and had been hoped to be announced together with the cause of Father Ricci, but that was not possible due to the difficulty of getting access to the necessary documentation in the Diocese of Shanghai.

Ricci cooperated together with Xu Guangqi and others in translating important Confucian texts into Latin. In an unprecedented honour, at his death he became the first Westerner to be buried in Imperial Ground in the capital city by a special decree of the Chinese emperor. (Previously, all foreigners who died in China were taken to Macau for burial). His grave is in the Zhalan Cemetery on the grounds of the Beijing Administrative College, previously the Beijing Communist Party School.



The Chinese recognize Father Ricci as a bridge builder between the East and the West, and have honoured him by commemorating him in the Millenium Monument in Beijing; the only other Westerner so honoured is Marco Polo.



Matthew Ricci was the first person to open China to the West. He tried to adapt Christian thought and culture into Chinese tradition. He was teaching what Copernicus had discovered, that the sun was the centre of the world. China was an old culture. The people venerated Confucius. They practised genuflection to their ancestors and children genuflected to their parents as a sign of respect. They paid respect for the dead and brought food to their graves as an offering. These were acts to show attitude and affection.

Ricci died in 1610 and his successors continued his policy. One of them cured the Emperor of malaria (with quinine) and this helped their profile. A German Jesuit was made President of the board of Mathematics in 1644 under the new Tarta dynasty. For one hundred years after that, the Jesuits played a prominent part in Chinese life, including a mapping of the country. In 1692 there was an edit of toleration issued for the Christian religion. There were 300,000 converts to Christianity. New orders like the Franciscans and Dominicans were welcomed.



However the Vatican was not prepared to adapt Catholic culture to Chinese ways as Ricci and his fellow Jesuits had done and the Jesuits were reported to Rome. Pope Clement 11th appointed nine Italian cardinals to a Commission. Not one of them travelled to see what was happening in China. Pope Clement declared veneration of ancestors

to be superstitious and forbade it.

In 1715 a French bishop was sent to tell the Emperor that missionaries had to sign an oath. Eleven years later Christianity was outlawed in China. Two hundred and twenty four years later, Pius 12th revoked Clements decree. By then, China was lost was to Christianity. Some experts suggest that this failure by the Church to adapt in small and simple Chinese ways has been most costly, because in all likelihood China would today be a Christian country!

### What the shepherds in 2022 might have missed



### Humour

1. Q. What is a New Year's resolution?  
A. Something that goes in one year and out the other.
2. To impress his date, a young man took her to a very fancy Italian restaurant. After choosing a fine wine, he took the menu and ordered "Giuseppe Spomdalucci". The waiter said, "Sorry sir but he is the proprietor".
3. A husband and wife drove for a long time after an argument. Neither would give in. Then the husband pointed to a mule in a paddock. "Is that a relative of yours?" he asked. "Yes", she replied, "by marriage"!





Happy New Year from *Generation*

**Prayers**

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all of my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy.  
Philippians 1:1

We also pray for all of our Holy Cross family who are unwell especially Cathy Petrocco's sister, Marissa, Maree Bartoli, Maeve Reardon, Jim Molan, Michael Doyle, Paul Darbyshire John Lazzari, Jenny Wullings, Alexander Lim, Des Grisell, Lynda Chin, Gerry Bond, Helen McLean, Peter Owen, Greg Agosta, Dominic Isgro, Errol Lovett, Peter DeMarzi, Marg Casey, Norm Heyhorn, Chris O'Toole, Angelo Vigilante, Pam Gartland, Jim Monaghan, 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.



Best wishes for 2023!

Brian