

## Holy Cross Retreat



### Letter 163

31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023

Greetings and welcome to Holy Week beginning on Sunday.

### Daylight saving ends at 2.00am Sunday



You will be able to have an extra hour of sleep!

## Easter

Looking ahead, these are the dates and times for liturgical events at Holy Cross

**Palm Sunday** (2<sup>nd</sup> April): **Mass:** 10.00am

**Passion Play** 1.30pm

**Holy Thursday:** (6<sup>th</sup> April): **Mass:** 7.30pm

**Good Friday:** (7<sup>th</sup> April): **Passion Play** 10.00am

**Commemoration of the Passion:** 3.00pm

**Easter Sunday Recorded Mass:** Available Saturday afternoon

**Easter Sunday:** (9<sup>th</sup> April): **Dawn Mass:**

6.00am followed by breakfast (donation)

**Sunday Mass:** 10.00am

Note: **The Passion Play** will take place adjacent to and including part of the oval.

Parking will be a challenge, so come early. Foot entry only down the community driveway.

**The Friday afternoon liturgy** will take place 'among the trees' (where we celebrate Christmas Eve (if the weather permits)). Please bring a chair if you are able to do so. Thank you.

There will be no '**Stations of the Cross**' on Good Friday on account of the Passion Play, but individual copies of the Stations can be borrowed from the plastic bin in front of the garages, for use during Holy Week.

## The Seven Last Words'

This reflection was created by Sr Brigid Murphy CP and illustrated and music added by Sr Karen Engelbretsen CP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07nSsA5gtFw>

### **Come Away days at Holy Cross**

The Come Away Day programme continues at Holy Cross on **Wednesday 19 April**. The theme of the day is, “The Spirit empowering us.” The day’s program provides opportunities for prayer, reflection and group interaction in the peaceful grounds and facilities of Holy Cross. All are welcome. BYO lunch. Registration is from 9.30am. The day concludes at 2pm with a celebration of the Eucharist. For further details contact Frank Burke, [burke.frank942@yahoo.com.au](mailto:burke.frank942@yahoo.com.au) or 0407998781.

### **Being an apostle**



During his general audience in St Peter’s Square on March 14th, Pope Francis explained that apostleship as understood by the Second Vatican Council produces an equality – rooted in service – among laypeople, consecrated religious, priests and bishops. “Who has more dignity in the Church? The bishop? The priest? No, we are all Christians at the service of others,” he said. “We are all the same, and when one part (of the Church) thinks it is more important than the others and turns its nose up (at them), they are mistaken.”

Vatican II, the Pope said, did not focus on the laity’s relationship with the Church’s hierarchy as a “strategic” move to adapt to the times, but as “something more that transcends the events of that time and retains its value for us today”. The Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity states that collaboration between the hierarchy and the laity is essential for the Church to fully live out its mission.



Viewing Christian life as a chain of authority “where the person on top commands the rest because they were able to climb up (the ladder)” is “pure paganism”, the Pope said. Reflecting on the passage from Luke’s Gospel in which Jesus sends out 72 apostles ahead of him two-by-two, Pope Francis said that service is the vocation



Jesus gives to all, including “to those that seem to be in more important positions”. “Listening, humbling yourself, being at the service of others: this is serving, this is being Christian, this is being an apostle,” he said.

The Pope encouraged Christians to pray for members of the Church’s hierarchy who appear conceited since “they have not understood the vocation of God”.

## Good Friday

The focus of every Good Friday is Jesus' death, but we would not gather to remember his death 2000 years after the event, if we were not aware that his death was a gateway to new life.



Unfortunately a lot of the language used about Jesus' death is not so helpful today because it is built around the idea of ritual sacrifice. It was common in ancient cultures to offer gifts to please the gods. Incense was burned, food crops were offered and animals and birds were slaughtered and then offered to give thanks to the gods for what had been received such as a new child, a good harvest, winning a battle etc. Another reason was to ask for forgiveness for failures or sins, or to request ongoing blessings.

Israel too, practiced sacrificial worship. Bulls, lambs, goats, pigeons and turtledoves were offered depending on what people could afford. These animals were killed as painlessly as possible, and burned or offered as atonement for sins. There was a great awareness that blood was the supreme life force, so the shedding of blood was central to important sacrifices. We know that the blood of the original Passover lamb was used as a sign of the deliverance of the people from Egypt because if a door post had that lamb's blood painted on it, there would be no death of the eldest son from that household.



The lamb used in that Passover meal had to be male; only one year and without any blemish – spotless. This action was remembered every year at the Passover meal. Every Jew was familiar with the significance of the blood of the lamb.

After Jesus' death some New Testament writers transferred the symbolic meaning of that sacrificial lamb, to him. He was described as a

spotless lamb who shed his blood as an offering to God for the atonement of people's sins.

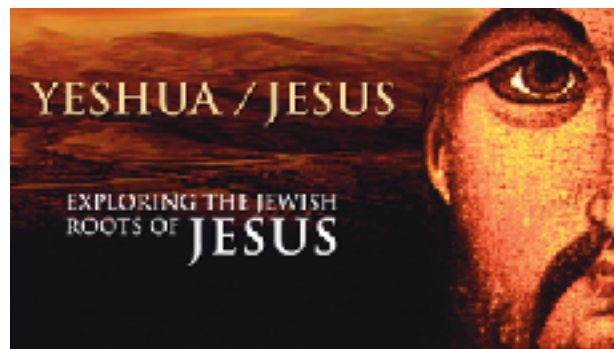
This imagery does not make much sense to our younger generation who live in a world in which ritual sacrifices have no part. As well as that, there are now particular laws and values that recognise and protect the rights of animals.



Many young people cannot see that God would want animals killed just to give God thanks or to atone for or make up for people's sins. Nor can they easily see that God would want or demand, that anyone, let alone Jesus, should undergo the same cruel fate as those animals that were

slaughtered. So although Jesus' death as a sacrifice has a scriptural and traditional foundation, we need to find other ways as well to understand or speak of Jesus' death and what it means for us today. After all, any language about faith cannot capture the full reality. So there are two important questions to ask 'Why did Jesus die?' and 'What does Jesus' death mean for us?'

Once we unravel the gospels it is clear that rather than the Romans being blamed for Jesus' death, it is his own Jewish people who are blamed by Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. We know only too well that this resulted in terrible anti-Semitic attitudes throughout history. Among the realities of this tragedy is the curious fact that for centuries, Christians persecuted Jewish people, and yet overlooked the fact that Jesus himself, was a Jew. He never became a Christian!

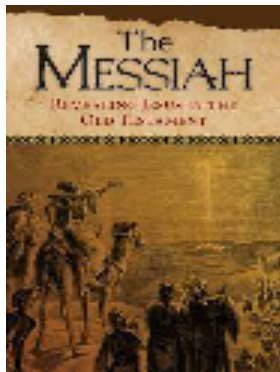


In the dangerous Roman world in which the early Christian church developed it seemed wise to the gospel writers to minimize the part the Romans played in Jesus death. Despite this, the truth is that Jesus was not executed in a Jewish way such as by stoning. Crucifixion was a Roman punishment and Jesus died at the hands of the Romans. He had attracted a following and this was seen as dangerous.



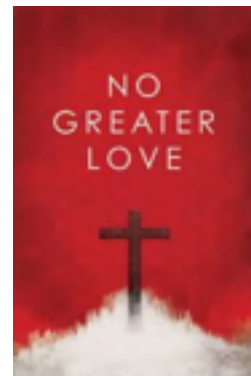
The Romans crucified people in public places. It was a torturous death. The victim was naked so he was shamed. This together with the horrific pain of crucifixion was used to deter people from challenging Roman rule. Each gospel explains the mocking sign that Pilate had placed above Jesus head on the cross. "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". That statement was clearly used as a reason why Pilate approved of Jesus death.





We can never know how the scenario actually played out. What we do know is the interpretation that St Paul and the gospel writers gave to Jesus' death. They considered his death was a sacrifice. Imagery from the Hebrew scriptures was used to connect Jesus to the long awaited Messiah. Jesus, by his death became the new Moses, the new deliverer of the people. This deliverance was achieved because Jesus overcame sin and the ultimate sign of sin - death. How might we express or understand this today.

What is clear is that Jesus was faithful throughout his life. Whatever it cost him to love others and proclaim God's kingdom above earthly kingdoms, he was prepared to do. If that meant accepting death, then he believed this was the right and only response he could make. This was the ultimate cost of love. There was no holding back. This is not the kind of love that is foreign to us. We hear of it every day, as parents seek what is best for their children, either by making sacrifices to provide the best education possible or refugees taking the risk to leave home and travel to somewhere new usually so their children can have a better life. Parents risk their own life for their children. Brave soldiers sometimes willingly stand in front of danger to protect someone else and give up their life.

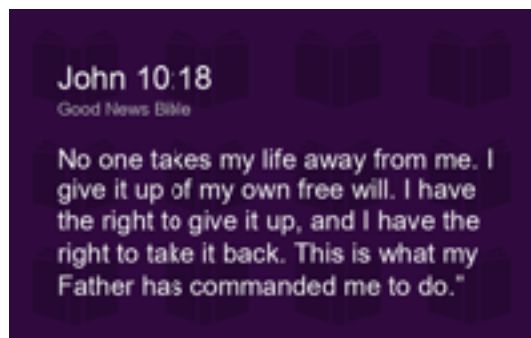


Jean Donovan was a young lay missionary who worked in El Salvador with an Ursuline sister, providing help to refugees, from 1977-1980. They provided food, shelter, transport to medical care, and they buried the bodies of the dead left behind by the military death squads. She was greatly inspired by Bishop Oscar Romero and stayed by his coffin the whole night after he was assassinated.

In September 1980 she took a six week vacation to Ireland and visited her fiancée who was concerned for her safety. She was warned by many friends that it was unsafe to return and she knew it was true. She thought about not going back to El Salvador, but said "I must". It is what God is asking of me". Soon after her return she wrote to a friend, *"The Peace Corps left today and my heart sank low. The danger is extreme and they were right to leave. Now I must assess my own position, because I am not up for suicide. Several times I have decided to leave El Salvador. I almost could, except for the children, the poor, bruised victims of this insanity. Who*



would care for them?"



In early December 1980, Jean and her Ursuline co-missionary met two other religious sisters returning to the mission, at the airport. None of them ever arrived home. All four women were raped and shot at close range. Jean's face was completely destroyed. She was only 27 years of age! Jean Donovan came to experience or inherit Jesus' spirit of nonviolent love which empowered her to stand with the

powerless, and as she knew it might, it cost Jean her life. Like Jesus, she said, "No one takes my life from me; I give it up of my own free will".

**TO FIND YOURSELF,  
YOU MUST FIRST  
LOSE YOURSELF**

This is the meaning of Jesus' death. Jean recognised that to find the fullness of love we have to be empty of self. She had written just weeks before she died, "*People in our positions really have to die to ourselves and our wealth to gain the spirituality of the poor and oppressed.*" The mystery of love is that to truly receive, we have to give; to find true life we have

to die!

Jesus' promised that through personal sacrifice we will find deliverance - freedom. He showed us how. This is not a sacrifice of animals or crops, but of ourselves. It is the true nature of love. For Jesus, there was no holding back. He died the way he lived. Jean Donovan followed his example. The greater our loving, the more deeply we experience God, because God is love. Jesus reminded people they we must love God with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul and all our strength. 'All' "Everything" – no holding back!



For Jesus there were no enemies; everyone was a neighbour. We can't say, "I love God", but at the same time, ignore our neighbour. Good Friday reminds us that Jesus prayed for those who executed him. He lived what he preached! Celebrating Good Friday today is a call from Jesus – Do you believe that if you let go of your fears and hesitations, if you let go of your reservations and doubts, if you do not put any limits on your love or on who can receive it – that you will find the source of life?



This, we believe is what Jesus found. He was empty of self and filled with God. His call to us is: Will you take up your cross and follow me? Will we? With no holding back?

## GOD'S LOVE DISPLAYED

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.  
– ROMANS 5:8 NIV

### Drawings like real life

This is an example of true talent: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=t5LTgvcXpcw>

### Golf ruling

If you are a golfer, what would be your ruling on this 'action'?

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=sC4Bv2UYAJM>

### Power messages from observing life

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOEYZodg\\_U0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOEYZodg_U0)

### Humour

#### Truth is funnier than fiction

I caught up with my brother Kevin a few days ago. Among other stories he told me of a Rugby **lunch** he went to in Brisbane some years ago when he was younger and less mature!. He got home from the lunch sometime between 3am and 4am and walked around the back of the house and fell asleep in an outdoor lounge chair. He was wakened by his wife Shelley who said to him, "You told me you'd be home by 8 o'clock".

He looked at his watch and noted it was around 7.30am and said “Yes, I’m a little early!!!!”







**Q** What happened to the Easter bunny at school?

**A** He was eggspelled.

**Q** What do you call a rabbit with fleas?

**A** Bugs bunny

**Q** Where does the Easter bunny get his eggs?

**A** From eggplant

**Q** Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke?

**A** It might crack up.

**Q** What is Easter Bunny's favourite kind of music?

**A** Hip - hop!

**Q** What do you get if you pour boiling water down a rabbit hole?

**A** A hot cross bunny.

**Q** Why was the Easter bunny upset.

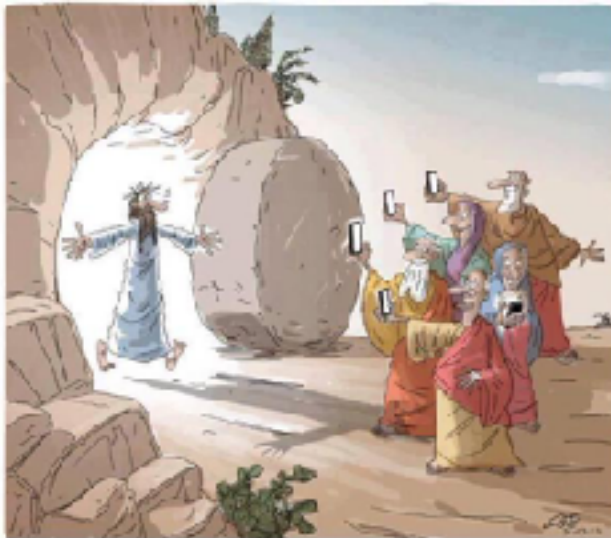
**A** He was having a bad hare day.

**Q** How does the Easter bunny keep fit.

**A** Eggs-ercise.

**Q** What do you call ten rabbits marching backwards?

**A** A receding hairline



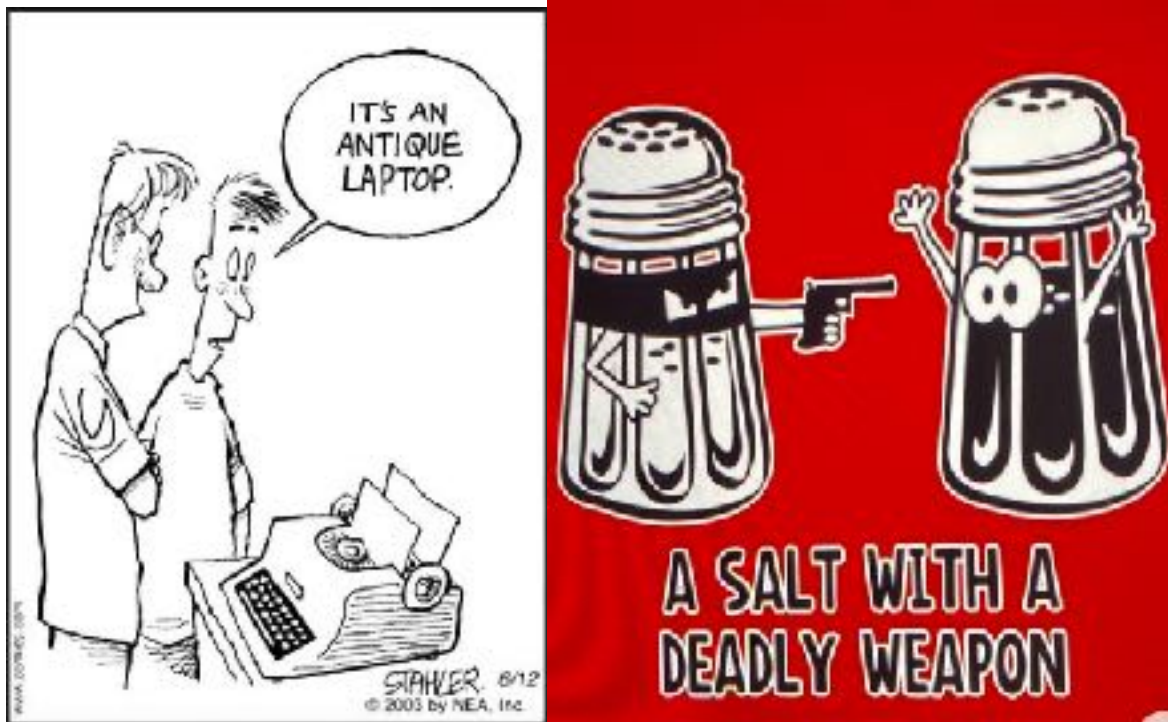
A parishioner was leaving the church on Easter Sunday when the priest stopped him and said, “Andrew, you’ve got to join the Lord’s army”.

Andrew replied, “I have Father, I am in His army”.

“But”, said the priest, how come we only see you marching at Christmas and Easter?”

Andrew whispered back, “I am in the Secret Service!”

**Q.** Would February, March? **A.** No, but April May!



1. An elderly gent was invited to an old friends' home for dinner one evening. He was impressed by the way his buddy preceded every request to his wife in endearing terms (honey, my love, darling, sweetheart, pumpkin, honey child, etc.)

The couple had been married for almost 70 years, and clearly they were still very much in love. While the wife was in the kitchen, the man leaned over and said to his host, I think it's wonderful that, after all these years, you still call your wife those loving pet names. The husband hung his head. "I have to tell you the truth. I forgot my wife's name about 10 years ago".

2. An optimist (Jim) and a pessimist (Bill) went duck shooting. After the first shot Jim sent his dog off to retrieve the duck. The dog ran across the top of the water and brought back the duck. Bill said nothing. This happened three times. Each time the dog just skimmed across the top of the water. Jim was amazed that Bill made no comment on his dog's incredible performance, so he said, Bill, don't you see anything unusual about my dog?" "Yes", said Bill. "He can't swim!"

3. And what is the difference between a hunter and a fisherman? The hunter lies and waits. The fisherman waits and lies!

4. A man entering a sports stadium was balancing a long pole on his shoulder. A young boy asked him, "Are you a Pole vaulter?" "No", the man replied, "I am German, but how did you know my name?"

5. In considering correct grammar, is it "complete", "finished", or "completely finished"? No English dictionary has been able to adequately explain the difference between these two words - "Complete" or "Finished" In a recent linguistic competition held in London and attended by supposedly, the best in the world, Samdar Balgobin, a Guyanese man, was the clear winner with a standing ovation which lasted over five minutes. The final question was: 'How do you explain the difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED in a way that is easy to understand? Some people say there is no difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED.'

Samdar's astute answer was "When you marry the right woman, you are COMPLETE. "When you marry the wrong woman, you are FINISHED. "And when the right one catches you with the wrong one, you are COMPLETELY FINISHED!" He won a trip around the world and a case of 25-year-old Scotch.

6. In the spirit of Kevin Traynor, after spending a whole day watching football matches, Peter asleep in front of the television and spent the whole night in the chair. In the morning his wife woke him and said "Peter is twenty to seven". Peter replied, "In whose favour?"

### Happy Birthday Tim



Best wishes to Tim Horlock whose birthday is today, March 31<sup>st</sup>. The Beatles sang a song about someone reaching this age!

It is a good opportunity to thank Tim for his significant contribution to our life and ministry at Holy Cross

### Prayers



We remember those celebrating anniversaries, and those of our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially Pam Storey, Maree Bartoli, Michael Doyle, Bronwyn Burke, Lynda Chin, Gerald & Margaret Wright, Joan, and Michael O'Callaghan, Gerry Bond Carol Battistella, Alexander Lim, Ted Hallam, Cathy Petrocco's sister, Marissa, Fr Brian Gleeson CP, Maeve Reardon, John Lazzari, Des Grisell, Peter Owen, Helen McLean, Greg Agosta, Errol Lovett, Peter DeMarzi, Chris O'Toole, Angelo Vigilante, Paul Darbyshire, Pam Gartland, Sr

Gen Walsh RSC,

Jim Monaghan, Peter McNamara, Marg Casey, Mary Hackett, Patricia Keeghan, Anne Jenkins, Mary and Kate Dunn.

The **Mass link** will be sent on Saturday, by Chris.....*Brian*