

Holy Cross Retreat

Letter 164



6th April, 2023

Greetings,

Holy Thursday Mass tonight is at 7.30pm



Good Friday:

The Passion Play was to have its second performance tomorrow at 10.00am. We will have to await news about that. It will be a big disappointment if it cannot go ahead. Last Sunday's performance was excellent.

We will celebrate the **Commemoration of the Passion** at 3.00pm. This was going to be outdoors but because of the weather, we will hold this **in the chapel**. You are recommended to come early to get a comfortable seat. We will include about 50 extra chairs and some people can spill over into the Corbett room where they will be able to follow the liturgy on screen and actively participate in the Veneration of the Cross and Communion. The liturgy will be livestreamed. The link is: <https://youtube.com/live/wLfbrd8FiDQ?feature=share>

Easter Sunday

If the weather lives up to predictions, the **dawn Mass** (6.00am) will be celebrated in the chapel. This will be followed by breakfast (donation).

Mass will also be celebrated at the normal time: 10.00am

The link for the **Easter Sunday recorded Mass** will be sent on Saturday afternoon



Toan, one of our three postulants, returned home to Vietnam on Tuesday. He has been with the Passionists for several years, and lived at Holy Cross for seven months. It is never an easy decision to leave and it will be a big adjustment for him back in Vietnam. Toan featured in the Passion play last Sunday, as a Roman soldier.

You may remember that **DJ** returned home to visit his Dad who had suffered a stroke. His Dad is recovering well, and DJ is planning to return on April 12th. Our third postulant (Thang) was one of the feared Roman soldiers you can see on Page 3.

Photos from the Passion Play





Toan

Erick

Thang



“You don’t frighten me, Quirinius!”

Easter people



When Paul contracted motor neurone disease I was able to visit him quite often because he lived nearby. I had some idea of the nature of the disease because my Mother had died from it a few years earlier.

On the morning Paul died, Marie phoned to tell me and I went to visit her. She told me that just a few days earlier she had asked Paul to send her a sign that he was OK “when you get to the other side”. He had nodded indicated he would comply. She told me she had already had that sign.

Paul had a favourite LP record of Greek music that had been put on their record player five months earlier (remember record players?). On the few occasions when had tried to play the record, they were unable to do so because the unit was broken. Even the day before Paul died, their daughter Carmel had lamented that it was unfortunate they could not play this music for him.



they

Marie told me that as the undertakers walked through the lounge removing Paul’s body from the house, the recording just began to play. No one had operated the machine. It just started playing! Marie knew he was OK!



It is difficult to explain events like this. You either believe it in the way Marie did or you see it as some unexplainable coincidence. You are either skeptical it happened or you believe it happened. Those are the only choices. There were similar responses to Jesus’ resurrection. It is clear from the gospel accounts that the apostles and the women disciples never expected Jesus to rise from the dead! Although Jesus pointed out to his disciples that this would happen, they did not understand or they did not believe it. When Thomas was told by his friends that they had seen Jesus, he refused to believe unless he could not only see for himself, but touch Jesus’ wounds.



Mary Magdalene knew Jesus well, but she mistook the risen Jesus for the local gardener, even when he spoke to her - until he spoke her name. This was certainly Jesus, but she could not recognise him.



Some of the disciples thought he was a ghost, so he had to ask them to give him some food to eat to show that he was real. The women at the tomb, ran away and said nothing about what they were told and what they saw, despite having been told by the angel to pass on the news that Jesus had risen! They didn't say anything because they were frightened! Perhaps they were afraid that they would

not have been believed and a woman's testimony had no status in the society of the time.

There were other reactions too. Mark wrote his gospel about forty years after Jesus' death, and obviously many questions had been asked about Jesus' resurrection. It seems that some people argued that the disciples stole the body, so Matthew's gospel written fifteen years later, records that Roman soldiers guarded the tomb. Some doubters or opponents argued that Jesus had not really died but that he was unconscious when he was taken down from the cross and he was revived later.



How could the gospel writers explain the Resurrection and respond to the doubters? How can anyone explain an experience in words that they know is real but others will doubt or refuse to believe. How can you explain an experience that changes everything?

The gospel writers had to use language and images that explained the experience of the early disciples. They clearly suggest that Jesus was real, but that he was different from before. They described that Jesus could eat and drink, talk and be seen, highlighting he was the **same** Jesus, but he was not recognised at first. That he could pass through walls, but was not to be touched or held on to. ('Do not cling to me') highlighted that he was **different**.

By the time John wrote his gospel (maybe twenty five years after Mark) all of the disciples had died, so John wrote with encouragement, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29). Thomas became an inspiration for such people.



The gospel writers described Jesus as staying around to teach his disciples before leaving them 'for heaven' through the clouds.

This was a way of explaining what they experienced; that although Jesus had disappeared from physical sight, he was actively present. This was transformation. This was not like Lazarus who was brought back to life, this was a new life. Perhaps like the caterpillar and butterfly, Jesus was the same, but new.

This experience and belief in the resurrection is at the core of our belief and our hope as Christians. We cannot prove it, and like any profound experience, it is impossible to explain in words. Who can explain the experience of true love?

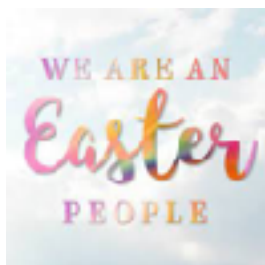
We know there are accounts of the numerous deaths of the early Christians, who refused to give up their belief in the risen Jesus.



Estimates are that one thousand Christians died in the first century after Jesus' death.

There was and is no point in believing Jesus died for you, if you don't believe Jesus is risen and lives in and among you, and that you are promised a share in his risen life.

Last year alone, it is claimed that 350 million Christians suffered persecution and as many as 70,000 Christians were killed either as martyrs or as martyr-victims: They suffered because they believe in Jesus. A similar number of Christians have been killed every year in the past decade. These have been true believers, not interested in rational explanations, but convinced of what they 'know'.

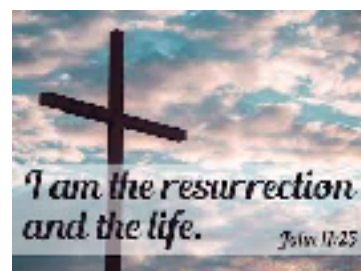


We celebrate this coming Sunday that we are 'Easter people', alive with joy and hope. Let us live Easter in solidarity with those many Christians who suffer persecution or death, simply because like us, they believe Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

When asked to describe the mystery of Easter, author Carl Knudsen responded with the following story. Years ago, an old municipal lamplighter, engaged in putting out the street lamps one by one, was met by a reporter who asked him if he ever grew weary of his work. After all, it was a lonely job and the night was cold and damp.

"Never am I cheerless," said the old man, "for there is always a light ahead of me to lead me on." The news writer asked, "But what do you have to cheer you when you have put out the last light?"

"Then comes the dawn!" said the lamplighter.



Humour

1. I never thought orthopaedic shoes would really work for me. But I stand corrected.
2. I wrote a book on how to fall down the stairs. It's a step by step guide.
3. My son was chewing on electric cords, so I had to ground him. it's ok though, he's doing better and conducting himself properly.
4. My friend claims that he accidentally glued himself to his autobiography, but I don't believe him. But that his story and he's sticking to it.
5. An armed man ran into a real estate and shouted. Nobody move.....
6. I asked the surgeon if I could administer my own anaesthetic. He said, sure. Go ahead! Knock yourself out!
7. I got into a fight today with 1,3,5,7 and 9. The odds were really against me.
8. A man walked into a bar with a chequered flag. The barman said "I hope you're not going to start anything here".
9. A skydiver and instructor peered 3000 metres below. The instructor said "There is nothing to worry about. Jump, count to three and pull the cord. If it doesn't work, pull the reserve cord. A truck below will pick you up". The skydiver took a big breath and jumped. He pulled the cord and nothing happened. He pulled the reserve cord and some large cobwebs flew past. Then he said "Darn. I bet the truck won't be there either".
10. Overheard at the race track. "Horse racing is very romantic. The horse hugs the rails; the jockey puts his arms around the horse and you kiss your money goodbye".
11. A critic called the editor of a newspaper to report his review of a new play. The editor asked, "Did it have a happy ending?" Yes said the reviewer, everyone was happy when it over!"
12. A professor walked into a bar. "I'll have a martinus, please". The barman said, "You mean martini!". "No", said the professor, if I wanted two, I'd have asked for them".



Men over 40 in skinny
jeans.



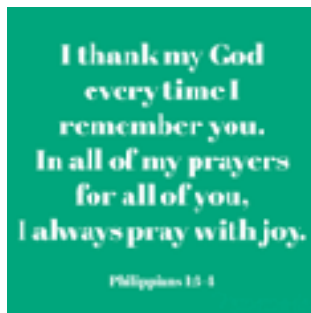
Head out of the car window

At a couples
counseling meeting
the speaker mentioned
that couples are so
disconnected that 85%
of husbands don't
even know their wives
favorite flower.
Mick turned to his wife
and whispered:
"It's self rising , isn't it?"

A biology teacher explained that some plants have the prefix 'god'. He gave the example of dogwood, dog violet and dogbane. He asked, "can anyone name another example?"

One boy raised his hand and said “Collie-flower?”

Prayers



We remember those celebrating anniversaries, especially Anne McCrohan (8th April) and Dominic O’Brien (11th April)

We also remember those in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially Pam Storey, Ted Hallam, Michael Doyle, Maree Bartoli, Bronwyn Burke, Carol Battistella, Gerry Bond, Gerald & Margaret Wright, Joan and Michael O’Callaghan, Lynda Chin, Cathy Petrocco and her sister, Marissa, Alexander

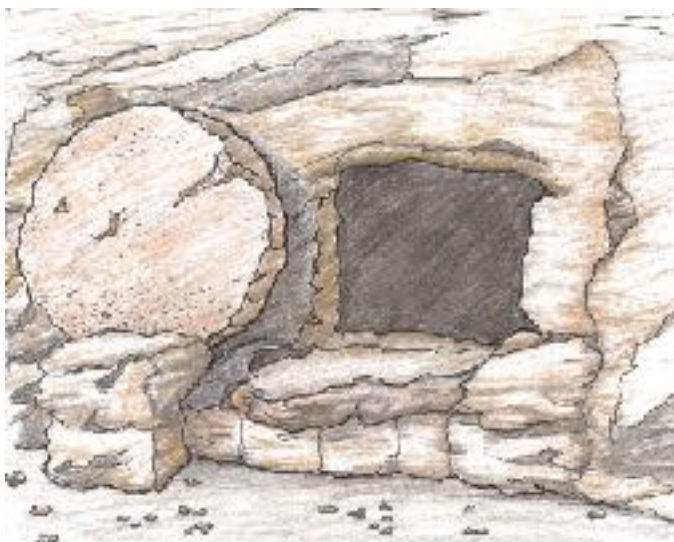
Lim, Maeve Reardon, John Lazzari, Des Grisell, Peter Owen, Helen McLean, Greg Agosta, Errol Lovett, Peter DeMarzi, Chris O’Toole, Angelo Vigilante, Paul Darbyshire, Pam Gartland,

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

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

The community wishes you a very peaceful Easter.

Brian



Happy Easter