

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 177

7th July, 2023

Greetings,

New arrivals



Our ELSPM (English learning students) arrived early on Sunday July 2nd. Erick and JD met them at the airport. Despite the flight arriving on Saturday, there was a delay of almost 3 hours for their luggage to come through, so by the time they got home and had some much needed

food, it was 3.30am when they went to bed.

Hai (32), Thang (28) and Cu'ong (27) are mature aged and each of them has each completed a university degree. Hai and Thang are from northern Vietnam and Cu'ong is from Dong Nai, one hundred kilometres from Saigon. They are all musical so we'll look forward to hearing them sing (see the next item in the newsletter) and dance. They are most welcome at Holy Cross and we hope that they will soon feel at home. Our first meal together at lunch on Sunday showed they have some English and they are very keen to use it, but it will take them some time to get accustomed to our accent – and idiom. There will be amusing moments over the coming weeks!

Singing

The three new brothers sang for our much loved Fr General, Fr Joachim, and good friends Sandra and George Johnson, who visited us on Tuesday. JD recorded them singing Joachim's composition 'May the Passion'. It was the first time he had heard it sung in Vietnamese. They also sang 'You Raise Me Up' and '10,000 Reasons'

You Raise Me Up:

<https://youtu.be/HrO8K6x546o>

Tưởng Nhớ Cuộc Thương Khó: <https://youtu.be/SQi372mHGhY>

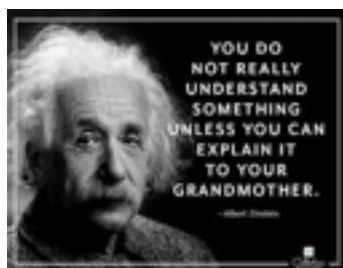
10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord): <https://youtu.be/i3VDZMzs08I>

Learning English



The English Language Studies for Pastoral Ministry (ELSPM) was established ten years ago, initially in Adelaide, as a Passionist ministry. Apart from our own students from PNG and Vietnam, we have had Passionists from other countries come to study English, especially from PASPAC (Our Pacific-Asian brothers) and two Indonesian priests will come to Holy Cross next semester to study at ELSPM before taking up an

appointment in Vanimo, Papua New Guinea. Salesian sister Margaret Bentley FMA is Academic Manager and she is tireless in her pastoral care of the students for which we are most thankful. We are also grateful for the various tutors, some from our wider Holy Cross family, who assist students personally with their learning. The next semester begins on July 17th.



A few years ago we had five young Indonesian Passionist priests over a period of time, learning English, some of them before ELSPM was established, were studying at Box Hill Tafe. Being polite, they did not want to say 'no', so if we checked "do you understand what I just said?" they would always say "Yes, Father". Sometimes it was obvious that they didn't understand. I said one morning to Aven, "Do you understand what I just said?". He replied, "Yes, Father".

I continued, "Do you really understand,?" Again, Aven said, "Yes, Father". I then said, "Can you explain to me?" Aven said, "No Father!" That led to a good laugh.

One day, another Indonesian Passionist, Damianus asked his teacher, how was it possible that the newspaper could report '*a prisoner who had committed a crime will go to jail*'. He tried and tried to understand this and kept objecting that he could not see how a prisoner (who must already be in jail



would be sent to jail (future tense) after his trial. The teacher got exasperated and told him to get his friend, another Passionist, (Basil) to explain it to him, but Damianus insisted, "No, you have to explain this: 'Why the man he commit a crime, he already a prisoner and now he will be sent to jail?'" He could not understand that

if the man was already a prisoner for committing a crime, how or why was she saying, " the prisoner will be sent to jail". Eventually the teacher said to him. "Forget philosophy, you are here to learn English"! Damianus' next challenge was to understand how



someone or something could be 'pretty ugly!' How do you think we went about explaining that!

Where is everyone?

This coming week will be quite different for Holy Cross because four of us, Chris, Erick, Joseph Dominic (JD) and myself will be attending our Provincial Chapter in Sydney. Our five postulants will be resident as will the indomitable, [Jerome](#). That will leave the community without a priest in residence. This will also be the case at Endeavour Hills.

Provincial Chapter

A religious Congregation holds a Chapter of its Province membership every three or four years. For our Province of the Holy Spirit which incorporates Australia, PNG, New Zealand and Vietnam, we hold a Chapter every four years. The task of the Chapter is to review the previous four years, assess what needs to be done in the coming four years and elect a leadership team to guide that task.



The last term has been characterised by COVID-19 so we will be able to draw on the lessons and challenges that came our way. As our number in Vietnam increase we are challenged to be sensitive and appreciative of our cultural gifts and differences. Normally a Provincial leader can serve two four-year consecutive terms.

Because he completed more than two years of Joachim Rego's term, when Joachim was elected General, Tom McDonough has served as Provincial for a little over ten years. It is an heroic effort, and the COVID-19 years were especially challenging for Tom. He cannot take an immediate break because until January 31st Tom is also parish priest of St Brigid's, Marrickville and President of PASPAC (our Pacific-Asia Configuration). The Province is greatly indebted to these years of generous service including the hard work and challenge of the fusion of Vietnam into the Province.

Our 2023 Chapter with the theme '*Time to trim the Sails*' will be held at the Mary McKillop Centre in North Sydney from Monday July 10th til Friday July 14th. We would appreciate your prayers for this important gathering of delegates. In preparation for the Chapter, our discussions across the Province identified issues related to several broad categories (Culture and Identity, Ministry and Mission, Community and Formation, Leadership and Governance, and Finance. Five working



parties were established to identify key issues, express anew our vision and identify particular actions we recommend should be taken.

Culture and Identity



It is no easy task to integrate four different regions into one single Province. Cultural differences exist not only between countries, but also within them.

At the same time, powerful factors unify us and true community is built around the love of difference. Our true base is our shared baptism and our Passionist charism. It is these compelling similarities that allow us to dialogue in a spirit of fraternity and seek an integration that surpasses cooperation.

We are each asked to be a Passionist in our own context but simultaneously acknowledge that we belong to an entity bigger than our specific communities and countries of origin. If someone moves from PNG to Australia or Vietnam he does not stop being Papuan New Guinean but he does move to a community of brothers. In whatever part of the Province we may mission, we do not forego our cultural identity but we do enter into a community whose overriding vision we will share. Vietnam is growing numerically, but the men need time to develop pastoral and administration skills so that they can function with appropriate delegation.

Mission and Ministry

Our first vow (to live and promote the living memory of the Passion) should always provide the appropriate framework for all our mission and ministry. The context in which we mission is constantly changing but the vow does not change.

MISSION
Ministry

To expect our younger brothers to fill in missing gaps caused by ageing denies them the chance to reimagine Passionist life. The Province has to be capable of letting go of historical methods of mission and ministry in order to allow new methods to emerge. A religious congregation is not a group of individuals who cooperate when it

is suitable and forge their own paths when it is not. Some traditional ministries have provided opportune ways to express the Passionist charism and contributed to financial sustainability.

Community and Formation

Community life is central to Passionist identity, mission and charism. Despite the challenges that community life presents, it acts as a witness to our shared vows as Passionist religious.



The intercultural reality of our Province requires a firm commitment to culturally diverse communities which is increasingly the case in Australia, slightly less so in PNG and not so in Vietnam, where language and a lack of suitably aged men from Australia has not made this possible, beyond the founding years.

There is much learning needed for everyone to better understand Vietnamese culture and how this contributes to Passionist life and can be challenged by it. We need to facilitate post-graduate studies for a number of Vietnamese religious. Our model of formation has human development as the principal focus and we aim to have a person ready and capable of self-monitoring and self-motivating at the completion of formal training. It will be an ongoing challenge to find young religious with the skills and willingness to engage in this difficult ministry.

Leadership and Governance

Effective leadership and sound governance are crucial elements in every organisation. We seek a model that offers professed and non-professed members security, participation and direction. The challenges in a culturally diverse and geographically sparse Province cannot be underestimated. Good collaborative leaders and sound frameworks will be vital for the future of our Province.



We want to focus on Listening and Synodality and are preparing for the Chapter on the premise that we are a Province seeking integration not just than cooperation with one another. Our goal is a unitive rather than federal model of Leadership and Governance, so we must provide formation for leaders who are capable of listening, and models of governance that lead to synodality.

Finance

The area of finance is vital for the future planning of our Province. We need income to secure the well-being of the brothers but also for our mission and ministry. We live with the fact that for the most part, our places of work (business) are also our home, and they require expensive maintenance because of their size and age. A

dedicated team are investigating ways in which our current assets can generate more income.



We do not want financial constraints to dampen enthusiasm for new ministries and an increasing presence in Vietnam, but neither should our reimagining be void of an awareness of the financial impact plans will have on the Province.

St Kevin's parish

Congratulations to the Passionist Family Groups who are celebrating 30 years together with 10.00am Mass at St Kevin's on Sunday 30th July followed by coffee and cake...everyone is welcome to this occasion and to join a group.



Jim Kerrigan RIP



Jim Kerrigan passed away less than two months ago. His wife Ria passed away in July 2019. Jim was trained as a first class wood machinist and was employed for seven years in that business. He joined the Passionists in his thirties and was a student in Adelaide when he heard about the furniture that was needed at Holy Cross before it opened in 1968.. He advised the Provincial that with the help of some students (he selected eight) he could design and make the furniture himself. Jim designed the wardrobes, beds, book cases and desks for the 70 individual rooms and the class rooms. Jim did not remain with the Passionists, but his contribution was massive. 90% of that furniture remains in excellent condition and is still in use.

Humour – the cricket

Victoria police quick off the mark





Ground Staff Working Overtime to Clear English Tears in Time for Next Ashes Test



**Car and Driver says 95%
of electric cars are still
on the road. The
remaining 5% made it all
the way home.**



I DON'T ALWAYS CARRY ALL THE GROCERIES ON ONE ARM, BUT WHEN I DO, MY KEYS ARE IN THE WRONG POCKET



GROWING YOUR OWN TOMATOES IS THE BEST WAY TO DEVOTE 3 MONTHS OF YOUR LIFE TO SAVING \$2.17



JELLYFISH HAVE SURVIVED 650 MILLION YEARS, DESPITE NOT HAVING A BRAIN.

THIS GIVES SO MANY PEOPLE HOPE.

Be honest, if people heard what you are thinking half of the time, you would either be in jail or a mental hospital.



Given the current Ashes cricket controversy, some past cricket quotes and comments are worth revisiting

“Geoffrey Boycott is the only fellow I’ve met who fell in love with himself at a young age and has remained faithful ever since”. Dennis Lillee

“The other advantage England have got with Phil Tufnell bowling is that he isn’t fielding”. Ian Chappell

“Being the manager of a touring team is rather like being in charge of a cemetery - lots of people underneath you, but no one is listening”. Wes Hall

“England have nothing to lose here, apart from the Test match”. David Lloyd

“Well, Andrew Strauss is certainly an optimist - he’s come out to bat wearing sunblock”. Australian commentator in the 5th test of the 2006-07, 5-0 series win.

“I can’t say I’m batting badly. I’m not out there long enough to be batting badly”. Greg Chappell

“It’s a catch he would have caught 99 times out of 1,000” - Henry Blofeld

“The hallmark of a great captain is the ability to win the toss”. Richie Benaud

Q. “What is a batsman’s least favourite bird?” A. Duck

Q. What’s common between cricket players and car salesman? A. They’re both good with the pitch

Q. Why is a bad fielder always free of illness? A. Because he doesn’t catch anything

Q. What’s the difference between a poor batsman and Cinderella?

A. Cinderella knew when to leave the ball

A friend of mine is a retired cricket umpire. He doesn’t lift a finger now

In cricket, they first used testicular guards in 1874, followed by helmets in 1974. It’s amazing how it took 100 years for men to realise that the brain is also important

No sport accepts a diverse range of body types like cricket does.... After all, it has fine legs, square legs and short legs

If you had to write a letter of recommendation for a fired employee, here are a few suggested phrases.

For a chronically absent employee.

A man like him is hard to find...or
It seemed her career was just taking off

For a very dishonest employee

This candidate is an unbelievable worker....or
Her true ability was deceiving

For an office drunk

Every hour with him is a happy hour....or
He generally found himself loaded with work to do.

For a lazy employee

You would be very fortunate to get a person like this to work for you....or
He could not care about how many hours he has to put in

For a stupid employee

I enthusiastically recommend this candidate with no qualifications whatever...or
There is nothing you could teach a man like him.

For an employee who is not worth further consideration as a job candidate

All in all, I cannot say enough good things about this candidate or recommend him too highly....or
I can assure you that no person would be better for the job.

Proposed Child Care Centre for Templestowe

We received advice this week that the property across the road from us and adjacent to Bupa (220 Serpells Road) is being assessed for approval as a Child Care Centre. The time for objections if anyone has them, expires on July 19th.

Prayers

We remember [Clare O'Callaghan](#) (wife of John) who passed away on Tuesday.

This week we have added Kevin's Hennesy's two sisters who are both suffering from cancer. Kevin said they would appreciate our prayers.

We remember those whose anniversaries are around this time and their families who grieve for them, especially [Paul Matison](#).



We also remember those in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially Pam Storey, Maree Bartoli, Gerry Bond, Brian Gleeson CP, John Lazzari, Bronwyn Burke, Michael O'Callaghan, Cathy Petrocco's sister, Marissa Gerald Quinn CP, Des Grisell, Lynda Chin, Peter Owen, Alexander Lim, Maeve Reardon, Phil Drew, Helen McLean, Patricia Keeghan, Angelo Vigilante, Jim Monaghan, Marg Casey, Errol Lovett, Greg Agosta, Pam Gartland, Peter DeMarzi, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Chris O'Toole, Peter McNamara, Mary Hackett, Anne Jenkins. Mary and Kate Dunn.

The **Mass link for this Sunday** will be sent by Chris.

Brian