

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 189

28th September, 2023

Coffee cart

The coffee cart was a great hit last Sunday. A high percentage of people stayed and mixed after Mass. Sincere thanks to the donor and to the helpers who were involved in preparations including parking and the cake and biscuit makers. We plan to hold these Coffee Sundays once a month. The next three will be after 10.00am Mass:

[October 22nd](#), [November 26th](#) and [December 17th](#).

Below are a few photos taken on the day









Ellen

Ross





Semester break



Our students are half-way through semester holidays, but the YTU students will tell you that this is only a break from classes, since they have to complete assignments through the two weeks break. Certainly they have been working hard, and we wondered what had happened to one or two of them, when they hadn't come out of their rooms as frequently as usual!

North Sydney Bears



I was very grateful for the 'good wishes' given for Sunday afternoon's grand-final match against South Sydney. The Bears last won a premiership in 1922. The old saying used to be "most clubs have a bad season, but North Sydney had a bad century". That joke became true last year (2022) the joke came true. The past 24 years of those 100 years have been outside top

division without grand final success.. The Bears were playing the South Sydney Rabbitohs who had not lost a game since July 8th. The Bears were leading on Sunday, until Souths scored with four and a half minutes to go. What can you say?

Happy Birthday



Jerome turned 84 on Tuesday and we celebrated with a very healthy cake enabling Jerome to avoid blood sugar readings for 12 hours! We have a custom of gifting a community member with a tee shirt on their birthday which is carefully wrapped in a second hand plastic bag! Jerome is enjoying the warmer weather (it is never hot enough for him) because he able to get out in the garden for 5-6 hours a day. Jerome is a highly valued member of our community and the fifth oldest member of our Province.

Vince Celestino celebrated his birthday Last Sunday, September 24th

Pam Storey celebrates her birthday tomorrow, September 30th

Daylight saving



We need to put our clocks forward one hour by 2.00am on Sunday morning. We can expect that most of us will be in bed by then. There will be more light in the afternoon.

Funeral for Fr Rob Egar

This will take place in Adelaide on Tuesday October 3rd at 11.30am (AEST)

The funeral will be live-streamed via: <https://www.siebert.com.au>

Admitted to the bar



Last week I mentioned my nephew **Sam** was admitted to the bar. Here is a photo of Sam on the day. As his father, Paul said, "It takes a village to raise a child", and he is grateful for all the people who have been a part of Sam reaching this significant milestone. We'll wait to see what is next.

John Qi

We received this lovely email from John on Tuesday



G'day mates, How's going?

Is Brian still busy with tons of emails? Is Chris slaving away for his students? the Holy Cross bees? any more stings? Is Jerome ready to dive in the rose garden? How about the churchgoers? Are they happy with the Sunday

bread (after Mass)? Oh, Shirley, I miss your cooking and desserts. I'm getting a little low on blood sugar over here.

I am very glad that God has called me to be a Passionist priest, like you, to proclaim the Passion of Jesus Christ faithfully and to serve the people of God in the priesthood. My journey through the Australian Passionist Church was a gracious plan of God. In that happy time, God prepared me with His call and equipped me with His grace. So that when I serve His people today, I say to Him, "Yes, I do."



Before I was ordained, I was swamped. I was preparing for this, preparing for that, preparing for everything just so that this event would go smoothly and successfully. My brothers and parishioners have been of great help. When I look back, I find that God prepares everything for my day. It has been raining heavily and persistently since the 15th of Sep and is still raining today. Only two of those days were sunny and not a single raindrop fell. It was the day I was ordained on the 21st and the day of my Thanksgiving Mass on the 22nd. God fulfils me and surprises me. Everything's going so well with God's blessing.

On the 24th, my mum and dad and my younger sister's family arrived at their hometown safe and sound. I eventually slept peacefully for two days after all my friends, and guests had left.



All the best my dearest brothers and sisters.

I have to go to sleep, ready to dream about your letters. God bless.

Again, our sincere congratulations to John and our prayers for him as he undertakes Passionist priestly ministry in his own land.

We're going nuts, why wouldn't we?

By Richard Hil, Sep 10, 2023 (From 'Pears and Irritations')

"It is no measure of health to be well adjusted in a profoundly sick society" – Jiddu Krishnamurti



It's one of the most revealing ironies of our time, namely, the obsession with health and wellbeing while we, in wealthy nations, have never been so sick. Soul sick. There's nothing new about this. James Hillman in his 1993



book, *We've had a hundred years of psychotherapy, and the world's getting worse*, noted the proliferation of psy-complex experts – psychotherapists, psychiatrists, assorted counsellors, healers, therapists etc – plying their trade in rich nations weighed down by social misery. Hillman was particularly scathing about mainstream psy-professions for their apparent failure to grasp the deep origins of societal anguish, arguing that the focus on fixing individual emotional problems was in most instances, destined to fail.

Hillman encouraged us to “wake up to the insanity of how we have structured ourselves” through an adherence to material values and disconnection from nature, each other and ourselves. He urged a “growing down” into a reconnection with the earth and the rituals and myths that sustain human life. The “exaggeration of me in our psyches”, said Hillman, has removed us from the sources of contentment that make life worthwhile.

The Austrian philosopher and social critic Ivan Illich was equally familiar with this problem, observing that many diagnoses, taxonomic categorisations and treatments of mental disorders invariably missed the point about the societal conditions that lead to emotional and spiritual malaise. Quick fixes in the form of pharmaceuticals or problem-solving therapies, Illich argued, obviated the capacity of individuals to work within their social and community networks to address the complex causes of human misery.



More recently, James Davies in *Sedated: How modern capitalism created the mental health crisis*, makes the point that while the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, which now groans with over 800 ill-defined conditions (opening the door to Big Pharma super profits), there's no subduing the soul crisis. Indeed, as Davies notes in an earlier book, *Cracked: The unhappy truth about psychiatry*, it appears that the more pharmaceuticals are administered to the wretched of modern capitalism, the worse they seem to get. No matter, as long as money circulates and corporate profits boom – which they do.



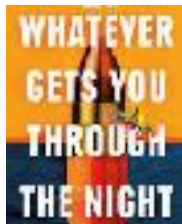
So, what's behind all this? Davies points to the rampant individualism, fragmentation of communities, hyper consumerism, lust for money and toxic work cultures that so characterise the neoliberal order, an ideological regime promulgated in the early 1980s by the likes of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan backed by dour 'free market' economists like Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman.

The upshot has been, as Johan Hari points out in

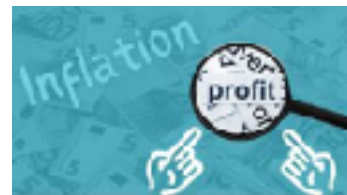


‘Lost Connections’, the creation of societies riven with loneliness and despair in which the fundamental bonds of human connection have been eroded by material values, weakened communities and the faux promise of hyperconnectivity. If the dominant credo of a neoliberal ideology has been ‘greed is good’, ‘there’s no such thing as society’ and so forth, is it any wonder where this might lead?

Remember, the vast majority of young people have known nothing other than neoliberal capitalism, a system that has propelled them into debt, isolation and loneliness. It’s not only young people who struggle. Evidence of human misery is everywhere, in the escalating rates of depression and anxiety, the use of antidepressants (one in four Australian adults) and opioids, rising rates of suicide, and numerous whatever-gets-you-through-the-night addictions. It’s a scenario made worse by the Covid pandemic and more recently, the so-called ‘cost of living’ crisis (a crisis fuelled in large part by corporate profiteering).



While there’s evidence that some people in lockdown enjoyed a temporary reprieve from soul-destroying workplaces and meaningless jobs, others felt cut-off from social contact and therefore became more despondent. The profit-price spiral and high levels of indebtedness, made worse by interest rate hikes, have made the everyday lives of ‘ordinary families’ far more difficult, putting the brakes on the very activities that made life bearable. Young people view all this with a sense of bewilderment and dread – especially when it comes to the climate emergency.



It’s one thing not being able to buy a house or pay off a student loan, but another entirely if, as looks likely, we’re being catapulted toward self-destruction. As one climate school strike banner read: “The climate emergency is worse than homework”. While some nations are making increasingly vain attempts to reduce greenhouse gasses, its nowhere near enough. Toxic pollutants are on the rise, and fossil fuel extraction continues on a grand scale, with plans for 116 new coal, gas and oil projects in Australia alone.



Like the rest of us, or at least for those who care, young people have borne witness to all this and led the resistance to reckless governments and corporations seemingly hellbent on sending us over the precipice. They view the failed global efforts to reduce greenhouse gasses with justifiable rage. Its why growing numbers of young people are now choosing to join more radical direct-action activist groups who, with all the moral justification in the world, are focused on ending the aberrant practices that are killing the planet.

For many young people, fear of what the future holds has fused with a sense of being locked out of opportunities afforded to previous generations. Precarious work, indebtedness and the absence of social supports has made life barely tolerable. They feel let down and angry, stuck in the in-between of dashed hopes and an uncertain future.



Empirical findings on mental health ‘disorders’ only scrape the surface of the soul crisis. Data produced in 2021 by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show escalating rates of “psychological distress” among young people, with one in five experiencing “high or very high levels of psychological distress”, around one in five with a mental health disorder, and suicides of those aged 15- 24 on the rise. Climate trauma has compounded an already troubling picture. According to a study in April of this year by Mission Australia, Origen, along with the University of Melbourne, one in four Australians aged 15 to 19 are “very or extremely concerned” about climate change, with 3 in 5 experiencing “high psychological distress”. Witnessing extreme weather events around the world – now a daily occurrence – has only raised anxiety levels.

A recent national poll of 2000 Australians conducted by the Climate Council, also reported pervasive climate trauma across communities, with over 80 percent of Australians having experienced an extreme weather event resulting, in many cases, in acute mental health problems, a situation more evident in rural and regional areas and particularly acute among young people.



Such findings, repeated over and over again, are the tell-tale signs of a society in deep crisis. For growing numbers of young people, the tired modernist stories of certainty, growth and progress no longer hold. The idea of the good life is viewed with disdain. The ravaging of the earth by cannibal capitalists tells of a system of selfishness, moral betrayal and nihilism that utterly repels. Young people now have to face the world as it is, and the future as it is likely to unfold.



As Jem Bendell points out in his latest book, *Breaking together – A freedom loving response to collapse*, the old stories of wealth accumulation, endless expansion and extraction are terminally fractured, to be replaced, one hopes, with Indigenous-inspired narratives of

reconnection and regeneration. Reaching out to others, building solidarities, relearning skills for survival and cooperation, sharing thoughts and feelings, being still and contemplative rather than dashing into action, all this and more will be needed as we confront the realities of climate nihilism.

Young people, like the rest of us, are soul sick for a reason. Its origins can be found in the greed and heartlessness of a system that is eagerly consuming itself.

Food for thought

If you boil a funny bone, it becomes a laughing stock. Now that's humerus.

I was struggling to understand how lightning works and then it struck me.
Can you cry under water?

How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?

Why do you have to 'put your two cents in'... but it's only a 'penny for your thoughts'? What's that extra penny going to?

Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck wearing the clothes you were buried in for eternity?

Why does a round pizza come in a square box?

What disease did cured ham actually have?

How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?

Why is it that people say they 'slept like a baby' when babies wake up it seems every two hours?

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

Why are you IN a movie, but you're ON TV?

Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?

Why do doctors leave the room while you change?
They're going to see you naked anyway...

Why do toasters always have a setting that burns the toast to a horrible crisp, which no decent human would eat?

If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a stupid song about him?

If the professor on Gilligan's Island can make a radio out of a coconut, why can't he fix a hole in a boat?

If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, what is baby oil made from?

Humour

An lawyer phoned to speak with a client who was a wealthy art collector.

"Anthony, I have some good news and some bad news."

The client replied, "I've had an awful day, Jack, so let's hear the good news first."

The lawyer said, "Well, I met with your wife today, and she informed me that she has invested only \$5,000 in two very nice pictures that she thinks will bring somewhere between \$15 and \$20 million. I think she could be right."

Anthony, replied enthusiastically, "Wow! Well done! My wife is a brilliant businesswoman. You've just made my day. Now, I know I can handle the bad news. What is the bad news?" The lawyer replied, "The pictures are of you and your secretary."



**If you get a LOAN at a bank, you'll be paying it back for 30 yrs.
If you ROB a bank, you'll be out in 10 yrs.
Follow me for more financial advice**

When we're young, we sneak out of our house to go to parties. When we're old, we sneak out of parties to go home.

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM COWS, BUFFALOS AND ELEPHANTS??

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO REDUCE WEIGHT BY EATING GREEN GRASS AND SALADS AND WALKING.

The Humor League

Sir, please understand, to buy an anti-depressant pill, you need a proper prescription...Simply showing your marriage certificate & wife's picture is not enough...



WE DON'T EAT EGGS, MEAT, FISH, DAIRY, OR GLUTEN. WHAT WOULD YOU RECOMMEND?

A TAXI.



He had over 2000 Facebook friends. I was expecting a bigger turnout.





For your diary

Sat & Sun November 25th-26th: Passionist Institute

This weekend will reflect on contemporary aspects of the Passionist charism. Some people from interstate and NZ are intending to join us at Holy Cross.

If you are interested in this option, please contact Gerard Daly asap:

gerard.daly23@bigpond.com

For those not attending in person, you can participate by Zoom either at home or with a local Passionist community and/or Companions, More details to come.

Saturday: 11.00am-2.45pm AEST (at Holy Cross or online)

Sunday: 1.30pm-5.30pm AEST (at Holy Cross or online)

Magician

<https://www.facebook.com/BritainsGotTalent/videos/magical-bones-powerful-performance-has-judges-stunned-unforgettable-audition-bri/386328773098800/>

From our communal celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick



A number of people have expressed their gratitude for **Liz Ralph** sharing her personal story from 46 years ago towards the end of the Anointing Mass. It was a powerful testimony that inspired so many of us.

Prayers

We remember those whose **anniversaries** are around this time and their families, especially: Bro **Charles Merceica** (30th Sept)



We also remember those anointed last week at Holy Cross



We remember all others in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially Peter Owen, Alexander Lim, Gerry Bond, Pam Storey, Maree Bartoli, Monica and Anthona Hennessy, Lynda Chin, Bronwyn Burke, Maeve Reardon, Des Grisell, Helen McLean, Phil Drew, Michael O'Callaghan, Bernadette Own, Greg Agosta, Peter McNamara, Angelo Vigilante, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Mary Hackett, Pam Gartland, Errol Lovett, Patricia Keeghan, Anne

Jenkins. Chris O'Toole, Mary and Kate Dunn, Gerald Quinn CP and 'our' London unborn baby

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

Brian

