

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 191

13th October, 2023

Return to classes

On Monday, **JD, Phi** and **Tri** returned to YTU for the final weeks of the year. For Phi it is the final semester of his theological studies. Classes end on November 3rd and assignments are to be completed by mid-November. At that time, both Phi and Tri will begin an eight week Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) programme.

Rafal, Budi, Hai, Thang and **Cu'ong** also returned on Monday to ELSPM to continue their English studies. Their semester goes through until December 15th.

Professional Standards session

PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS

**Tuesday 17th October, La Velle Room, Holy Cross
2.00pm-3.00pm & cuppa**

Please enter via the **red door** at the top of the ramp at the end of the building.

Those who have any ministry with the Passionists are required to participate in an annual in-service. **Please register with Tina: risk.manager@passionists.com**
If it is not possible to attend, an online session and questionnaire can be requested from Tina.

Memorial Mass: Maree Metcalfe

This Mass is being celebrated at St Joseph's Malvern this Sunday at 10.00am. Both Joseph Liaia and myself will attend.

Marathon



Erick will be running in the 42.195 kms Melbourne marathon this Sunday, starting at 7.00am. The race begins at Batman Ave, 150 metres north of Rod Laver arena and finishes at the MCG. We wish him well. **Pastor** and his brother **Olaf** will run in the 21 kilometre race.

Bro Jerome



Jerome has been struggling over the past two weeks. He had planned to spend most of these two weeks in Benella having a change of scenery and looking after his sister Kate. He is starting to get clearer information from his doctor about the main issue and treatment that has seen him shuffling along, using or pushing a wheelchair and managing intense pain with mild medication. He has arthritis in two discs in his back which

is the immediate focus of attention.

Cards – Maureen Barns



Last Sunday after Mass, Maureen offered some of her ‘home-made’ cards and donated the proceeds to Holy Cross community. Maureen is willing to bring cards regularly and offer them. We won’t make this a heavy demand on her. Perhaps every two weeks?

Semi-retirement



This handsome intelligent man ([Joe Senzo](#)), has been assisting Holy Cross in a variety of ways for a number of years. He has advised that he would like to relinquish one role he has exercised for the past ten years. So we say goodbye to him in that role and offer Joe our thanks.



Feast of Paul of the Cross

This coming [Thursday 19th October](#) we will celebrate the feast of the Passionist founder. There will be Mass at 7.30pm and a simple supper afterwards. You are most welcome to join us.

Coming up



[Oct 20th-22nd](#) Passionist Family Group National Weekend

[Sunday October 22nd](#) Coffee cart after Mass.

[November 19th](#) Mass for all deceased relatives and friends of Holy Cross

Recently deceased



We remember [Sr Robyn Reynolds OLSH](#) who died suddenly on October 1st, as she arrived in Dublin to begin a sabbatical. Robyn lectured at YTU and ‘Heart of Life’. She spent many years living and working with indigenous Australians in remote communities of the Northern Territory. She also spent time in South Africa, in the Philippines and annually since 2016, in Papua New Guinea. Robyn was actively involved with church groups and religious congregations, providing directed group retreats, individual spiritual accompaniment, seminars, and reflection days.



We also remember Kentucky born [Sr Joan Mary Topor CP](#) who died in Adelaide on Wednesday. Joan Mary was a founding member of the

Passionist sisters in Adelaide.

The personality of Paul of the Cross



Paul was frequently described as an extremely robust and impressive person, yet for more than 40 years of his life, he was regularly incapacitated by sickness. He suffered from malaria, rheumatism, sciatica, debilitating headaches, frequent heart palpitations and was forced to use a walking stick from the age of fifty-one. He was often bed-ridden and was a permanent invalid for the last ten years of his life. He lived eighty-one years and remained alert in mind and spirit

to the end.

His letters and writings reflect that in all his sufferings, his deepest desire was to be conformed to Jesus crucified and many people reported that despite his sickness or feebleness he showed the incredible energy he used to establish and care for the new Congregation he founded and he wrote numerous letters.

His writing was always realistic even when speaking of the most spiritual things. In a telling self-description Paul said, "I am a Lombard and what I have in my heart, I have on my tongue". At the same time he noted, "In the pressure of transacting business, I have failed to lose that childlike simplicity which I imbibed in my mother's womb".



His letters indicate that he was good humoured and loved companionship. He was courteous, friendly and uncomplicated. He showed unshakeable courage in his various undertakings. Many times in his letters he describes how he was affected, worried or worn out by the countless difficulties that he constantly faced. In 1736 he wrote to Agnes Grazzi "Oh, if God should inspire me to abandon this Retreat, how gladly I would – nobody knows."

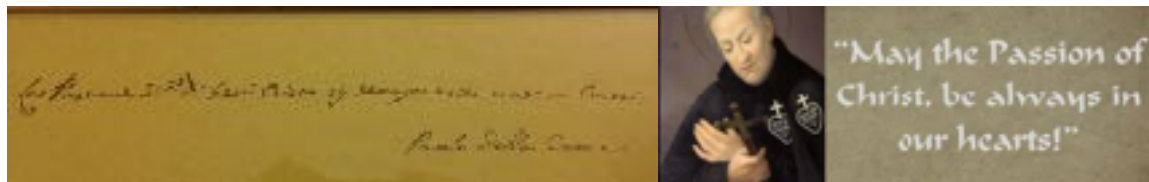


It is to be expected that his spiritual gifts as founder of a Congregation dedicated to the Passion of Jesus would lead Paul to a unique relationship with Jesus crucified. Habitually aware of God's presence, he remarked to one of his religious, "I cannot understand how anyone can be found who does not think of God always." Paul understood that we must accept whatever God permits, not with mere resignation, but with faith and love. "We must bow our heads before the Will of God", he wrote. "This is

the rule for our perfection.” This is a constant theme in his letters. Elsewhere he urges, “we must willingly allow ourselves to be shaped by Him.”

Paul’s persistence is astounding. By the time he was 40, he had failed more often and on a greater scale than most people of his age. Yet, he tried again, and again, and again. Paul managed to balance his determination to carry his dream (which he believed was God’s call) with a total abandonment to how and when this dream might happen. His letters to Cardinal Altieri are masterpieces of self control and abandonment.

Paul recommended that we accept whatever happens as coming from the loving hand of God. He advised, “Don’t give in to ‘spiritual curiosity’. “Often we want to try to find out what God is actually doing; we should stop thinking about our own happiness so as to desire nothing else but what God wants & what pleases Him”.



In the apostle Paul he found an echo of his vocation “to suffer many things for the name of the Lord”, and the mystical value of death to earthly things and of a life hidden in faith. Both Paul’s were gifted mystics of the Passion. Both were preachers and writers of the Word of the Cross. Either of them could have written, “May I never boast of anything but the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! Through it, the world has been crucified to me and I to the world”. (Gal 6:14).



The Synod and Timothy Radcliffe

By Robert Mickens, October 7, 2023



Former Master of the Dominican friars Timothy Radcliffe, set the tone for the two-part "Synod on Synodality" (this year and October 2024), through a three-day retreat before their historic assembly. What a week it has been here in the Eternal City! Lay members, a new venue, and a spiritual retreat

Although the Synod has no authority to make any binding decisions, and is only a consultative body for its president (the Roman Pontiff), it is dramatic that Francis has expanded its membership beyond bishops and other clerics and has named more than 50 women and just as many men as full voting members.



And instead of meeting in the amphitheater-shaped Synod Hall in rows by ecclesiastical rank, the more than 400 participants are gathered in the Paul VI Hall, grouped in small language groups, seated at roundtables. And for the first time in the history of the Synod, an assembly was preceded by a three-day spiritual retreat at a religious house several miles outside of Rome. The man the Jesuit pope asked to lead it was none other than Timothy Radcliffe, the former worldwide head of



the Dominicans.

The 78-year-old Englishman, who was Master of the Order of Preachers from 1992-2001, gave six masterful reflections or conferences in the course of the October 1-3 retreat, using the Transfiguration of Jesus as their touchstone.



"This is the retreat Jesus gives to his closest disciples before they embark on the first synod in the life of the Church, when they walk together (syn-hodos) to Jerusalem," Radcliffe said at the start of his first conference. "This retreat gives them the courage and hope to set off on their journey. It does not always go well. They immediately fail to free the young lad from the evil spirit. They quarrel about who is the greatest. They misunderstand the Lord. But they are on their way with a fragile hope," he said.

"So we too prepare for our synod by going on retreat where, like the disciples, we learn to listen to the Lord. When we set off in three days' time, we shall often be like those disciples, and misunderstand each other and even quarrel.

But the Lord will lead us onwards towards the death and resurrection of the Church," the former Dominican Master said. And this reflection (or "meditation") only became more and more inspiring from that point on – as did the other five, all presented in English, and which you can read or watch, thanks to Vatican News.*



When it was announced last January that the pope had asked Radcliffe to lead the pre-Synod retreat, it was almost like an answer to a prayer. Exactly two years ago, the "Letter from Rome" ("Red hats or little white lies", 22 October 2021) noted that there were rumors that Francis was about to call a consistory to create more cardinals. In the end, these were little white lies. The pope did not give out another batch of reds. That would not happen until August 2022.

But the Letter speculated, nonetheless, on what surprises the Argentine pope might have for the Church at his next consistory. After all, in his previous seven consistories up to that point he had chosen a number of men from places and with positions that had never been led by a cardinal before. "Each time Francis creates new cardinal-electors, there is a chance that one of them could turn out to be his successor," the piece said, while pointing out that not all of them are "viable candidates for papacy". It added that the body of papal electors still would need "at least some who are known for their uncommon wisdom and insight, which can help the other electors discern who among them can best lead the Church at the present moment". This is how that Letter concluded: One such person is Timothy Radcliffe, the 76-year-old former head of the Dominicans.

The British friar was Master of the Order of Preachers from 1992-2001. The author of numerous books and a popular lecturer, Radcliffe possesses numerous gifts, including those of listening and synthesizing, as well as building consensus. He's a creative thinker and theological centrist who has a reverence and love for the Church's "big-T" tradition. And his sense of compassion and respect for the dignity of even those who have been uncharitable and cruel towards him are legendary.



The former Master of the Dominicans has been dealing with some health issues the past few years that probably would disqualify him as papabile (a candidate for pope) if he were to actually be made a member of the College of Cardinals. But the Church could benefit immeasurably if he and more men – and women – like him were to be given a key role in helping to decide who comes next after Francis.



The six meditations that Timothy delivered last week at the pre-Synod retreat, could yet be part of that discernment process in the next conclave (whenever that takes place) just as much as it will be for this month's Synod assembly on the Church's future.

If you long to have your Christian hope rekindled, despite all the divisions and ugliness in our Church and world at this moment in time, do yourself a favor: prayerfully watch (and listen!) to the meditations. They are challenging and inspiring.*

Links to the Six Meditations by Timothy Radcliffe

First Meditation, "Hoping against hope"

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/retreat-day-1-radcliffe-first-meditation.htm>

Second Meditation, "At home in God and God at home in us"

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/retreat-day-1-radcliffe-meditation-2.htm>

Third Meditation, "Friendship":

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/synod-retreat-meditation-friendship.htm>

Fourth Meditation, "Conversation on the way to Emmaus"

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/synod-retreat-meditation-conversation-on-the-way-to-emmaus.htm>

Fifth Meditation, "Authority":

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/synod-retreat-meditation-authority.htm>

Sixth Meditation, "The Spirit of Truth"

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2023-10/synod-retreat-meditation-the-spirit-of-truth-radcliffe.html>

Prayer for Hope

Creator God, we seek to explore what Passionists have always been drawn to, the heart and mind of a merciful and compassionate God. This well of love allows us to draw strength to walk the Passion of Jesus with the soothing oil, of Hope. So often in life we are caught up in the struggles of finding oneself, exploring what we are meant to be here for, to understand our hurts, our disappointments and the effects of life on us. All around us, we experience a world hurting, struggling to find peace but, more so, gripped by fear. May we deepen our sense of hope which is the antidote for fear so that we can rise above the muck of life and carry ourselves and others to the rainbow and cross of hope. We make this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen

Consistent Ethic of Life – update



The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference recently put out a revised version of the Consistent Ethic of Life – first published by them in 1997. John Kleinsman, Director of the Nathaniel Centre for Bio-ethics and a member of our Province Formation Commission for 23 years, recommended it to our newsletter readers. There is much valuable reading on the Nathaniel Centre website: <http://www.nathaniel.org.nz/>

The Consistent Ethic of Life document refers to eight key moral areas, including a new section on information technology and artificial intelligence.

You can access it here: <https://www.catholic.org.nz/news/media-releases/tekahu/>

Is the climate crisis real or not?



On October 4th, the feast of St Francis and the same day as the Synod began in Rome, Pope Francis released a new Apostolic Exhortation, 'Laudato Deum' ('Praise God') which is a follow-up to the well known 2014 Exhortation, 'Laudato Si'. In the second paragraph, of Laudate Deum, Francis says, "*it is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons. We will feel its effects in the areas of healthcare, sources of employment, access to resources, housing, forced migrations, etc.*"

Several weeks before the release of 'Laudate Deum', John Kleinsan (mentioned above) wrote an excellent editorial for August edition of the 'The Nathaniel Report'. National elections are to be held in New Zealand this coming weekend. The article is included in full here with John's permission.

In a *Varian Poll* published 21 August, respondents were asked: “Which of the following issues will be most likely to influence your vote at the [October 2023] election?” As reported, 48% listed Cost of Living; 14% - Crime; 13% - Healthcare; 7% - Climate Change; 6% - Tax Cuts; and 3% Education.



After the year of natural disasters we have experienced in Aotearoa, and in the wake of daily continuous reports of unprecedented wildfires, rising sea and land temperatures and torrential flooding and fatal landslides in other parts of the world. I find it staggering that as few as 7% of people rank climate change as the most important issue. More so considering recent remarks by the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, that “the era of global warming has ended [because] the era of global boiling has arrived.”

Someone who gets it is 26-year-old Ugandan climate activist and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Vanessa Nakate. In her message to the recently held Parliament of the World’s Religions, Nakate writes “demanding our elders stop mortgaging our future for fantasies of economic growth while the planet boils: threatening to collapse the Gulf Stream, glaciers and ice sheets melting faster than predicted, and the oceans reaching unprecedented temperatures.”

While well-known as a climate activist, Nakate is also a woman of faith who talks openly that her “greatest source of strength is [her] abiding faith in God”, something she admits many might find surprising:



They might assume I'd either be indifferent or even opposed to Christianity. I get it: Many of us have found our love for Earth rejected by our faith traditions as paganistic or even immoral. Too often, Christian leaders have told their followers that "real" salvation takes place ... after this life ends; that the world is not ours to cherish or steward but dominate and subdue ... How dare we lay waste to the beautiful planet [God] bequeathed us and which he promised never to destroy!

As things stand, God’s promise never to destroy the earth is morally meaningless because we are causing it to happen by our on-going failure to act.

With Pope Francis announcing that he is now writing a second part to *Laudato si*, and his insistence that “the younger generations have the right to receive a beautiful and liveable world from us, [which] implies that we have a *grave responsibility* towards creation”, one would expect the Catholic Church in Aotearoa to be at the forefront of climate action. Consider also that 17 years ago, 9 years before *Laudato si*, our bishops wrote:

The existence of extreme poverty and environmental

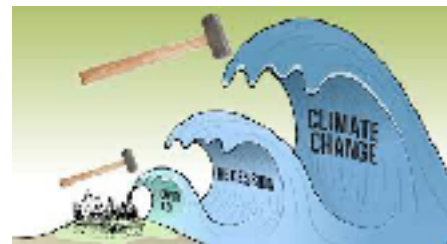


*destruction in our world are not natural forces, nor acts of God, but result from human behaviour. That behaviour is driven by values, priorities and decisions which do not see human life as a paramount concern.*¹

It is further staggering then, that research carried out in Aotearoa in February 2023 by the climate movement, *350.org*, shows concern for the climate crisis isn't something most Aotearoa clergy are working on. Spokesperson for *350.org*, Marilyn Yurjevich, describes the lack of clerical leadership in terms of a disjunction between recognising the duty to care for God's creation but not feeling compelled to speak out or act on environmental matters. But she also adds: "Alternatively, they seem unaware of the severity of the planet's current dire state."²

As the 2023 election looms, I continue to ponder the disjunction between our now well-developed theology of creation and its unequivocal articulation of the "grave responsibility" we have to protect all life versus the inaction of many Catholics, including but by no means limited to those in leadership.

Yurjevich has stated that because of the clergy's disappointing engagement on environmental issues, she's working without them. I still hope that our clergy and others in leadership roles will come to recognise the urgency of the situation. At the same time, the rest of us cannot take the risk of waiting – the "grave responsibility" Pope Francis describes falls on us all.



Returning to the Varian poll, I believe it is a mistake by the pollsters to pose the question in the way they have. Why? Because the concept of 'ranking' perpetuates the idea that the different issues sit alongside each other and can be considered in isolation when, in reality, everything is inter-connected. As the climate crisis worsens, the adverse weather events will only worsen and the consequences will increasingly flow through to the cost of living – food availability and price, insurance, housing and rates and other taxes to repair broken infrastructure – increasing the poverty gap and further negatively impacting people's health and general well-being as a result of the associated physical, emotional, mental, social and financial stresses.



As our Bishops wrote in 2006: "Our world is facing an ecological crisis, which could equally be called an economic crisis, or a poverty crisis. Its public face is the suffering of the poor and the degradation of our environment ..."³

Those of us able to vote have both the power and responsibility to choose the candidates and parties that will give us the best chance of giving our younger and future generations a habitable world that is full of life and diversity

– “beautiful and liveable” as God intended. Everything is connected.



John Kleinsman is director of the Nathaniel Centre for Bioethics

Humour





A doctor on his morning walk, noticed the old lady pictured above. She was sitting on her front step smoking a cigar, he walked up to her and said, "I couldn't help but notice how happy you look! What is your secret?" "I smoke ten cigars a day," she said. "Before I go to bed, I smoke a nice big joint. Apart from that, I drink a whole bottle of Jack Daniels every week, and eat only junk food. On weekends, I pop pills, have sex, and I don't exercise at all. "That is absolutely amazing! How old are you?" "Forty," she replied

- Dad, are we pyromaniacs? Yes, we arson.
- She was only a moonshiner's daughter, but I miss her still.
- What do you call a pig with laryngitis? Disgruntled.
- Why do bees stay in their hives during winter? Swarm.
- Just so everyone is clear, I'm going to put my glasses on.
- A commander walks into a bar and orders everyone around.
- I lost my job as a stage designer. I left without making a scene.
- Never buy flowers from a monk. Only you can prevent florist friars.
- How much did the pirate pay to get his ears pierced? A buccaneer.
- I once worked at a cheap pizza shop to get by. I kneaded the dough.
- I lost my girlfriend's audiobook, and now I'll never hear the end of it.
- Why is 'dark' spelled with a k and not c? Because you can't "c" in the dark.
- Why is it unwise to share your secrets with a clock? Well, time will tell.
- When I told my contractor I didn't want carpeted steps, they gave me a blank stare.
- Bono and The Edge walk into a Dublin bar and the bartender says, "Oh no, not U2 again."
- Scientists got together to study the effects of alcohol on a person's walk, and the result was staggering.
- I'm trying to organize a hide and seek tournament, but good players are really hard to find.
- I got over my addiction to chocolate, marshmallows, and nuts. I won't lie, it was a rocky road.
- What do you say to comfort a friend who's struggling with grammar? There, their, they're.

- I went to the toy store and asked the assistant where the Schwarzenegger dolls are and he replied, "Aisle B, back."
- What did the surgeon say to the patient who insisted on closing up their own incision? Suture self.



Wisdom comes with age.....

<https://www.tiktok.com/@jimmykoala/video/7273803619596520706>

Never Alone (Lady A)

This is a very comforting song. The link was sent to me by **Jo McDade** from our Passionist Youth Retreat Team.

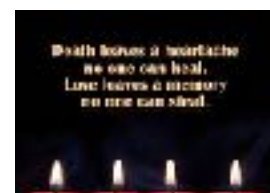
https://youtu.be/U4yRsT_fPic

Prayers

We remember **Sr Joan Mary Topor CP** and **Sr Robyn Reynolds OLSH** mentioned above
 We also remember Kentucky born

We also remember those whose **anniversaries** are around this time and their families, especially:

- Maurice Valmorbida (14th)
- Simon Owen (14th)
- Nathan Lugg (14th)
- Mary Corcoran (18th) and Phyllis O'Loughlin (18th)
- Shirley Hanrahan (19th)
- Bev Cresswell (20th)



We remember all others in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially Pam Storey, Peter McNamara, Jerome Dunn, Peter Owen, Alexander Lim, Maree Bartoli,



Monica and Anthona Hennessy, Gerry Bond, Maeve Reardon Lynda Chin, Bronwyn Burke, , Bernadette Own, Phil Drew, Des Grisell, Michael O'Callaghan, Helen McLean, Greg Agosta, Angelo Vigilante, Mary Hackett, Pam Gartland, Errol Lovett, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Patricia Keeghan, Mary and Kate Dunn, Anne Jenkins, Chris O'Toole, Gerald Quinn CP

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

Brian