

Holy Cross Retreat

Letter 200



15th December, 2023

Greetings,

" every day somewhere in the world the nativity scene is alive."



Christmas has been cancelled in Bethlehem this year

This will also be the case in Gaza, Jerusalem, Nazareth and Amman, This is an act of solidarity for all the children who have been killed in the current war. The crib in

the Lutheran church (see below) is made from rubble. The baby Jesus is amid the rubble and all the other characters including the baby's parents are in the perimeter, looking for him amid the rubble.



Ingrid

Last Sunday, Ingrid Whitehorn had a suspected heart attack during Mass and was taken by ambulance to the Alfred hospital. Following some tests she was discharged in the evening and has been recommended to see her cardiologist.

Christmas cards



Thanks to Maureen Barns for her home-made Christmas cards sold after Mass last Sunday. Maureen has donated all proceeds to Holy Cross.

Looking ahead

The **Coffee Cart** will be in operation this **Sunday November 17th**, and then again on **Sunday February 11th**

The **Holy Cross Office** will be closed from December 20th til January 8th.

Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent will be at 10.00am on Sunday December 24th

Christmas Eve Mass will be on **Sunday 24th December at 7.00pm**. As usual this will be preceded by Christmas Carols from 6.15pm, and weather permitting, will take place 'under the trees' (parking on the oval). You are welcome to bring your dinner, and if possible, please BYO chair.

Christmas Day Mass will be at **10.00am** on **Monday December 15th**.

Our helpers

Last week we acknowledged our liturgical helpers. This week we want to acknowledge those who particularly assist the home community and the wider Holy Cross family.

Mayrose Abraham manager of the Holy Cross Centre and the Office

Rose Cincotta our finance manager

Ann Rabot assists in the Office once a fortnight

Tim Horlock organises the Liturgy Rosters, takes communion to several people and does so many other things for us)

Tina Minichilli our Risk Management Officer and key supporter of so many when they are unwell.

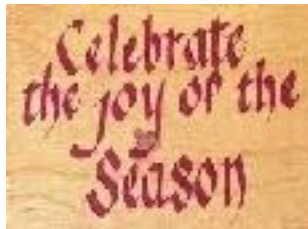
Shirley Barnes cooks for the community voluntarily each Monday and Wednesday. Shirley has had a broken wrist for several weeks)

Teresa Lim cooks voluntarily for the community one per fortnight and is another key supporter of so many when they are unwell.



For those concerned, the next delivery day for eggs is **Monday December 18th** and following that, not until **Monday January 15th 2024**.

Advent 3 - Joy



Christmas does not interrupt life. In fact, sadness is greater when a family member dies or falls ill when everyone around us wants to be happy. We are not celebrating happiness at Christmas and it is not what we focus on this Sunday which is known as 'Gaudete' (Rejoice) day. We will celebrate the gift of joy; a joy that comes from having Jesus in our life. 'Happiness' is mentioned 30 times in the Bible. Joy is mentioned 300 times!

It is common for spiritual writers to advise us to focus on 'today' or on 'this' moment. This should not surprise us because Jesus said, "do not worry about tomorrow; each day has enough worries of its own'. Despite that advice, many people do worry continually about yesterday or tomorrow.

In his excellent book, "The Power of Now", Eckart Tolle warns that if we worry too much about tomorrow, we will become anxious and if we worry too much about yesterday, we will become depressed. We cannot relive yesterday and we cannot live tomorrow until it comes, so we should focus on today and despite the challenges, remember to be grateful and to celebrate this day – this moment!



What brings us joy, brings us sorrow – when it is absent. Kahlil Gibran wrote: *"When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight"*. Gibran recognised that joy and sorrow are inseparable. *"Together they come"* he said, *"and when one sits alone with you at your board (table), remember that the other is asleep upon your bed"*.

It is for this reason that happiness is not sustained through sorrow, but joy is. When we daily give thanks for what brings us joy, we become grateful and aware. When we go about expressing our gratitude by being generous towards others, we experience the joy of giving. This is God's secret. God does not hold back; Jesus did not hold back; the spirit does not hold back. True followers of Jesus do not hold back. The result is abundant joy!

There will be pain and loss in our lives. This will sometimes interrupt the good things that happen on the same day or in the same week. There will be disappointment and sometimes even disillusionment. There will be periods of testing, but we can



still smile; laugh; give and love. We can be thankful to see and feel the beauty of life.

The message of the Good King Wenceslaus carol is clear.

“Therefore, Christians all, be sure, wealth or rank possessing, Ye who now will bless the poor, shall yourselves find blessing”

St Francis put it another way – *it is in giving that we receive.*



Let us commit ourselves to being women and men who live the joy of TODAY and recognise that we are called to reflect our gratitude by the way we live, including the expression on our face, for what has been given to us – **everything**. That is reason enough to be joyful!

Tongue-twisters

Soar saw See, which made Soar sore. Had Soar seen See's saw before See sawed Sboar's seesaw, See's saw would not have sawed Soar's seesaw. So See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw, which made it sad to see Soar so sore just because See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw.

Silly Simon is shining Sally's shoes in the shoe shop. He smiles as he shines shoes because she shines Simon's shoes too

She sells seashells by the seashore

The sixth sick sheikh's sixth sheep's sick

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

A certain young fellow named Beebee
Wished to marry a lady named Phoebe
"But," he said. "I must see
What the minister's fee will be
Before Phoebe be Phoebe Beebee

If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, How many pickled peppers would Peter Piper pick?

I thought a thought. But the thought I thought wasn't the thought I thought I thought. If the thought I thought I thought had been the thought I thought, I wouldn't have thought so much.

Achilles heel

We are often explaining sayings and idiom to our men who are learning English. One that came up recently was I 'Achilles heel means.



Most of us know that in one Greek myth, Achilles was a man of war and considered to be invincible – (he was not vulnerable). He believed the reason he had survived many battles was because when he was a baby, his mother had washed him in river believed to have magical powers. However she held him in the water by his heel and that part did not touch the water. One day, a poisonous arrow was shot at him and struck him in his heel and he died soon afterwards.

This myth highlighted the weakness of the tendon that connects the heel with the calf muscle in our lower leg. It has become known as 'the Achilles heel'. This tendon is the largest and strongest tendon in a human body. If we bend or stretch our calf muscle, the Achilles tendon pulls on the heel. This movement allows us to stand on our toes when we walk, run or jump.

Although it is strong, the Achilles tendon is vulnerable to injury, due to its limited blood supply and the high pressure caused by stretching and when it is injured we experience great pain and we are unable to walk



also

This makes it a good image for human vulnerability, because a person may have many gifts, or a lot of money, but a small weakness in his or her personality may mean they are not able to achieve their goals. It is common to hear people say, "He's very gifted, but his Achilles heel is...." By that they mean, "he is very gifted, but one particular fault brings him undone".

Advent is a good time to identify and reflect on 'my' Achilles heel.

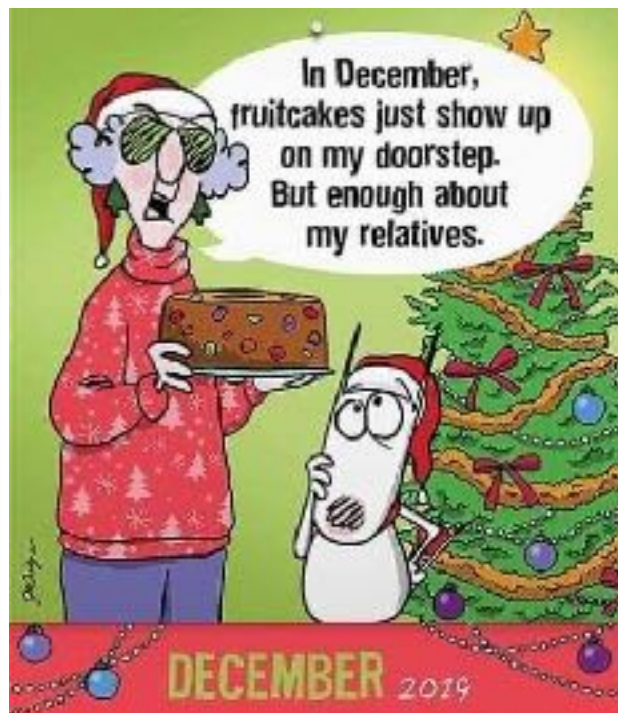


Humour



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Some people have an incredible ability to predict what's inside a wrapped present. It's just a gift they have been given!

Knock knock!
Who's there?
Tree?
Tree who?

Tree wise men

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"Money can't buy happiness, but if I had a big house, fancy car and a giant plasma TV, I wouldn't mind being unhappy."



- How do oysters call their friends? On shell phones.
- How did the alien break its phone? He Saturn it.
- Why didn't the skeleton need a cell phone? He had no body to talk with
- Why did the pineapple's phone die? It needed juice.
- What is a phone's favourite TV show? Game of Phones.
- When does a horse talk on the phone? Whinny wants to.
- What do you get if you cross a phone and a lobster? Snappy talk.
- How does a pirate communicate? With his eye phone.
- Why was the cell phone scared to go to the dentist?
He didn't want him to remove his blue tooth.
- A fashion designer was on the phone while driving and nearly had a car accident? It was a clothes call.
- What is a phone's favourite TV show? Game of Phones.

- **What's my iPhone without me?** Phone.
- **How did the telephone propose to the lady?** It gave her a ring.
- **Why are dogs like phones?** Because they have collar IDs.
- **What does a phone do when it wants to sleep?** It downloads a nap.
- **What noise does a bird's phone make?** Wing wing.
- **Why was the turtle looking at her phone?** She wanted to take a shellfie.
- **How does a barber make phone calls?** He usually cuts them short.
- **Why don't skeletons have a mobile?** They don't have any body to talk to.
- **How can someone tell if a bee is on their phone?** They'll get a buzzy signal.
- **How does a skeleton call his friends?** On the tele-bone.
- **What did the phone say to begin the race?** On your marks, handset, go.

- Q What did one Christmas tree say to another? A Lighten up.
- Q What did the salt say to the pepper on Christmas? A Seasons greetings.
- Q Where would you find a snowman dancing? A At a snowball.
- Q what did Adam say on the day before Christmas? A It's Christmas Eve!
- Q What's every parent's favourite Christmas carol? A Silent Night.
- Q What is Santa's dog's name? A Santa Paws!
- Q How did the elves clean Santa's sleigh on the day after Christmas?
- A They used Santa-tizer.
- Q Why are Christmas Trees so bad at sewing?
- A They are always dropping their needles.



Prayers

We remember **Bill Docherty** who died on Tuesday December 12th and those whose anniversaries occur around this week, especially

Anna Maria Facciolo (16th Dec)

Anne Tobin (18th Dec)

William Finnigan (20th Dec)

Fr Tim O'Toole CP (22nd Dec)

Cathy Hardinge reports some good news. Her daughter **Monique** is out of ICU and baby Leah has managed everything very well. There are still some challenges, but so far so good.

We remember all others in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially..



Marie Foale RSJ. Jeff Foale CP, Monique Hardinge, Mary Dunn, Paul Geogeghan, Tony Tome, Maree Bartoli, Pam Storey, Peter McNamara, Gerry Bond, Michael O'Callaghan, Phil Drew Peter & Bernadette Owen, Dawn Heffernan, Alexander Lim, Maeve Reardon, Greg Agosta, Bronwyn Burke, Helen McLean, Mary Hackett, Pam Gartland, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Errol Lovett, Patricia Keeghan, Kate Dunn, Anne Jenkins, Chris O'Toole, Gerald

Quinn CP and Peter and Debbie's unborn grandson

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

Brian

