

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 204

11th January, 2024

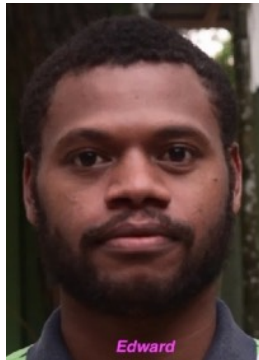
Greetings,

Erick and the three postulants (**Hai, Thang and Cu'ong**) returned from Adelaide yesterday. **Tuan Paul** (serving as a deacon at Endeavour Hills returned with Erick and Co and will head back to Endeavour Hills this afternoon. **Chris will** return tomorrow after house sitting his brother Michael and Cathy's home in Mentone. Chris is still on holidays.

Phi and **Tri** have two weeks more to complete their CPE course. It has been demanding to begin this course immediately after completing a year of academic studies.

Rose (on Monday) and **Mayrose** (on Tuesday) returned to work although Rose is facing much needed surgery on her knee on January 18th.

Jeff Foale's sister **Marie Foale RSJ**, passed away in Adelaide on Sunday. **Jeff** himself is quite unwell and has been hospitalized this week.



Next Monday two of our Papua New Guinean men, **Chris Kaire** and **Edward Liden** will take first vows. It has been a long wait, first to begin postulancy, then to begin novitiate, all of this affected by COVID and our lack of a formator and then a lack of Melanesian novice master until John Auram took up the role this past twelve months.



Chris and Edward have been with us for five years. Both are from Napapar, 25 kilometres south of Rabaul, in East New Britten Province and both are 27 years old. **Chris** is the second of seven children. **Edward** is the third of eight children. Sadly, his father passed away in 2018. We congratulate them both and ask for prayers to support them in their vocation. We also congratulate John Auram on serving this term as novice master and our brothers **John Curtis** and **Pat McIndoe** who have been such a support for the formation of our PNG candidates.

Two former students **Billy Varage** and **Jerome Mangaurei** have been re-admitted to postulancy in Boroko, PNG. Jerome joined initially with Edward and Chris. This is an

encouraging time for the men there, as a third candidate for postulancy, **Alfred Komau** from Rabaul, has completed his aspirancy.

Phi's grandparents

They know how to dress up and celebrate in Vietnam. This is a photo of extended family from the 70th wedding celebration of Phi's grandparents.





Hope against all hope....La Croix

"I believe that this profound human thirst for infinite happiness, which we all feel at times, is the most real thing there is. To hope for it is to live in the real world," insists Timothy Radcliffe, the former Master of the Dominican Order (1992-2001) who is now a best-selling spiritual writer and preacher.



Pope Francis selected 78-year-old Dominican Timothy Radcliffe to lead a retreat last October for the 363 members of the Synod assembly just before they began their deliberation on synodality and the future of the Catholic Church. The theme he chose for that retreat was "Hope against all hope". In an exclusive interview with La Croix's Christopher Henning, Friar Timothy explains why - even in our perilous times - there is reason for hope as we begin 2024.

La Croix: Q How would you define hope?

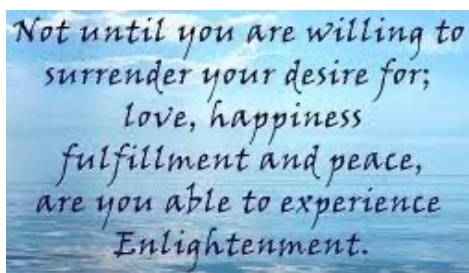
TR: During the general chapters of the Dominican Order to which I belong, we have always noticed a fascinating difference between "Latin" and "Anglo-Saxon" cultures. Latin cultures generally begin a discussion by defining terms. We Anglo-Saxons find it more fruitful to let the full meaning of words emerge gradually. So, I am delighted that you are faithful to your French cultural heritage!

And, out of courtesy, I must propose something: for a Christian, hope consists of believing that we will attain the fullness of the happiness we aspire to, namely God.

Q. During the retreat you gave last October to the members of the Synod assembly you meditated on the phrase "Hope against all hope". Isn't that a bit crazy, reckless, and audacious to hope against all hope?

CRAZY

TR. On the contrary, I would say it would be strange - even crazy - NOT to hope for this infinite happiness. Human beings are sometimes touched by the thirst for limitless, unconditional love. If we reject this as an illusion, then we are saying that at the core of our humanity, there is deception. I believe that this profound human thirst for infinite happiness, which we all feel at times, is the most real thing there is.



*Not until you are willing to
surrender your desire for;
love, happiness
fulfillment and peace,
are you able to experience
Enlightenment.*

To hope for it is to live in the real world. Children know this. I hope that education does not destroy this hope, which is the secret core of our humanity.

Q. The world is currently being shaken by conflicts in Palestine and Ukraine. How can one not be worried and affected by this climate of war? One cannot remain indifferent...

Of course not! It would be scandalous to remain indifferent. The difficulty is that we so often see violence in the media that it is easy to escape its reality and think that



all of this is just a game, as if the world's wars were harmless baseball games. If only we could catch a glimpse of the true horror of war, we would weep deeply and strive for peace. I saw a video of a young Russian soldier being hunted by a drone. He realized it was the end and shot himself in the mouth. I cried for an hour.

Q. The reasons to worry are also related to the climate crisis. Can humanity still save our planet?

That deserves a very long answer! I would simply say that one of the causes of our destructive behaviour is the myth that we must pursue endless growth. That is an illusion.



We need a new model of a healthy economy. The second problem is that politics and business focus on the short term - the next elections, the year-end financial report. To

get elected, politicians are forced to promise what they cannot deliver. Every politician is therefore a failed messiah. In Britain, the major political parties always insist that the other party is not trustworthy. So, it's not surprising that we are witnessing the rise of authoritarian regimes. We certainly need a renewal of responsible local democracy, in which we are trained in mutual responsibility.

Q. How do we avoid fear in a world gripped by violence?



It is natural to be afraid in a dangerous world. Courage does not consist of not being afraid but of not being a prisoner of fear. Some of the bravest people I know are those who are afraid but still do what needs to be done. I think of a Canadian Dominican, Yvon Pomerleau, who dared to return to Rwanda during the genocide at the risk of his life. The army came to our community to look for him: all the brothers had to lie on the ground, interrogated to reveal his whereabouts. He told me that he was there, trembling with fear, but he did not run away. That is true courage.



The Dominican theologian Herbert McCabe said, "If you love, you will be hurt and even killed. If you don't love, you are already dead." Yes, we will be hurt, but the risen Lord appeared to the disciples and showed them his wounds. We are the brothers and sisters of our wounded Lord, and our wounds are a sign that we dared to live and share his hope.

Q. How can we trust in the face of an uncertain future?

"Trust" is a beautiful word. It literally means "to believe together" - con-fidens in Latin. We do not hope alone but in the community of faith. When I have doubts, another person may have the confidence to support me. When they lose hope, I may be able to help them. So, the more perilous the future, the more urgent it is for us to seek the common good together and not to lock ourselves into our own survival.



Q. Is placing one's trust in God a refuge or an escape?



I have had the great privilege of living with people like Blessed Pierre Claverie, who was martyred in Algeria in 1996. He devoted his life to dialogue with his Muslim friends.

He knew he was going to be killed, but he faced the future with confidence in God, and he gave us, his brothers, sisters, and friends,

confidence. I also think of Albert Nolan, a Dominican who courageously fought against apartheid at the risk of his life in South Africa. It is also so encouraging to live with people who face terrible diseases and ultimately death with courage and joy.

Q. Where can we find hope? From prayer? Meeting others? Reading the Gospel?



Everything can contribute to it! Saint Oscar Romero was afraid of dying, but he was not defeated by that fear because he was a man of deep and silent prayer with the Lord. It was the foundation of his life. Everything he said stemmed from it. With our closest friends, we can be silent and thus speak more deeply and be led to an even

deeper silence. Some of my most precious memories are moments spent with friends in silence, in the presence of beauty, perhaps with a glass in hand!

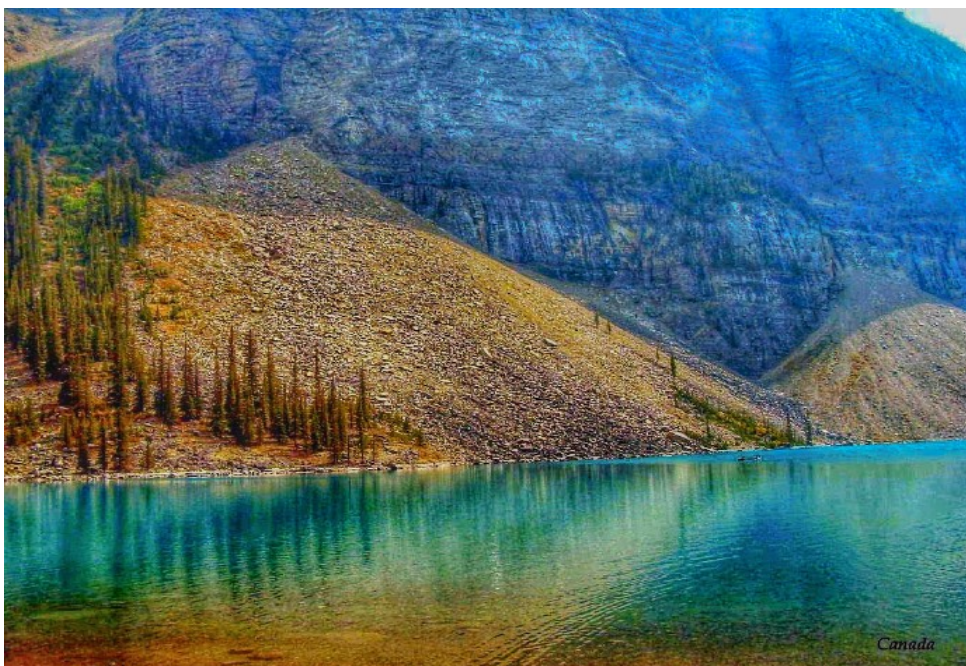
Q. What are your New Year's resolutions?



I would like to listen to more music. I am convinced that music is essential in our search for peace and harmony. It opens the door to transcendence. My life has often been a frantic race, where I tried to do a hundred things. I should devote more time to music. It is also good preparation for eternity, which is

probably not so far away!

Beautiful scenery from Canada



An invitation to see more

"Crabbit Old Woman" Phyllis McCormack

What do you see, what do you see?
Are you thinking, when you look at me-
A crabbit old woman, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes,
Who dribbles her food and makes no reply
When you say in a loud voice,
I do wish you'd try.

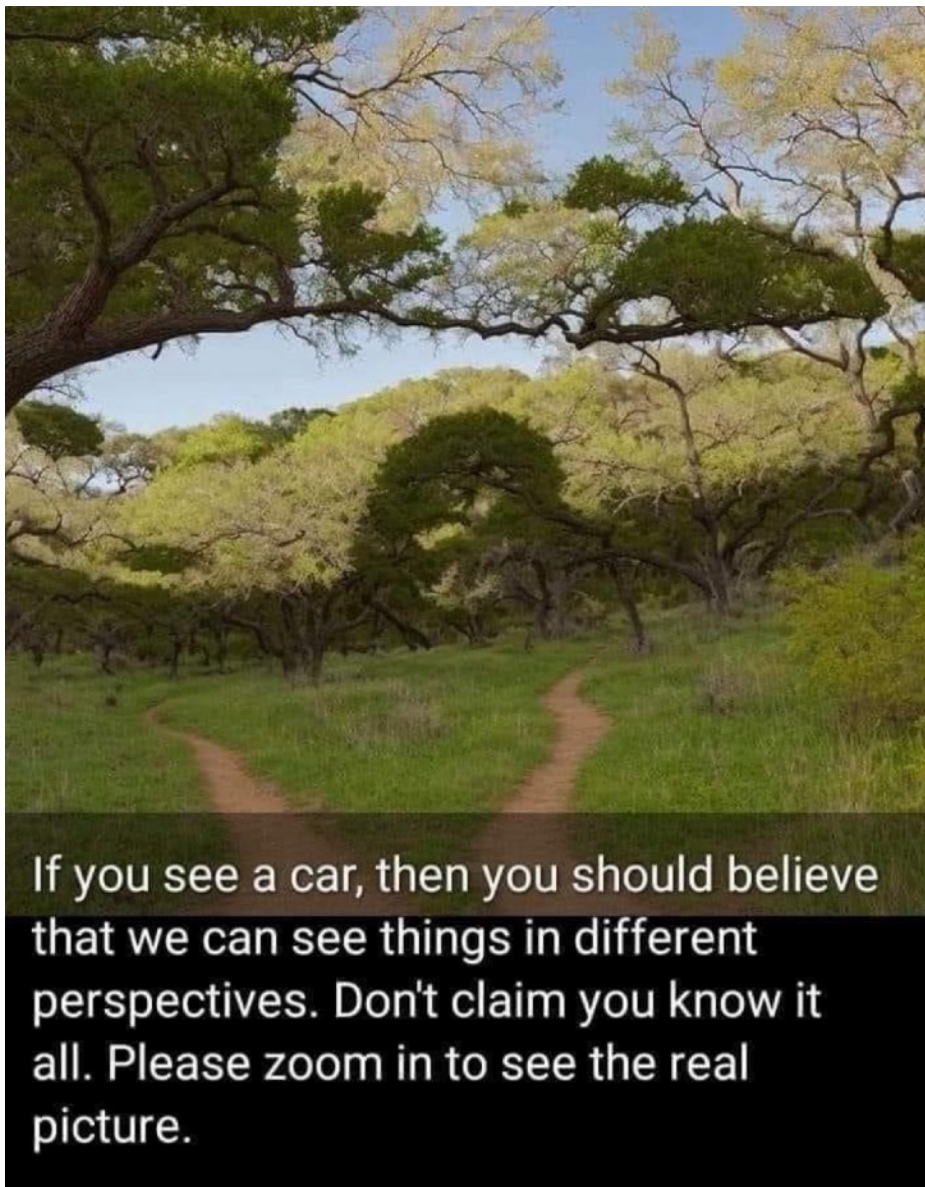
Who seems not to notice the things that you do
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe.
Who, unresisting or not; lets you do as you will
With bathing and feeding the long day to fill.
Is that what you're thinking,
Is that what you see?
Then open your eyes,
nurse, you're not looking at me.

I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still!
As I rise at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of 10 with a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters, who love one another-
A young girl of 16 with wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet,
A bride soon at 20- my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.

At 25 now I have young of my own
Who need me to build a secure happy home;
A woman of 30, my young now grow fast,
Bound to each other with ties that should last;
At 40, my young sons have grown and are gone,
But my man's beside me to see I don't mourn;
At 50 once more babes play 'round my knee,
Again we know children, my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead.

I look at the future, I shudder with dread,
For my young are all rearing young of their own.
And I think of the years and the love that I've known;

I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel-
Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.
The body is crumbled, grace and vigour depart,
There may seem a stone where I once had a heart,
But inside this old carcass, a young girl still dwells,
And now and again my battered heart swells,
I remember the joy, I remember the pain,
And I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years all too few- gone too fast.
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last-
So open your eyes, nurse, open and see,
Not a crabbit old woman, look closer-
See Me.



If you see a car, then you should believe that we can see things in different perspectives. Don't claim you know it all. Please zoom in to see the real picture.

Humour

Tony just finished reading a book about the world's greatest basement.... It was a best cellar.

It was Joe's first week working at the bicycle factory and they already made him a spokesperson.

Horses have lower divorce rebates. It's because they are in stable relationships.

Suzie's laptop caught pneumonia, apparently because she left windows open.

John thought swimming with dolphins was expensive until he went swimming with sharks..... it cost me an arm and a leg.

It's pretty obvious that if you run in front of a car you will get tired but if you run behind a car you will get exhausted.

Marg's teachers told her she'd never amount to much because she procrastinate so much. She told them to 'just wait'.

90% of bald people still own a comb; they just can't part with it.

Always trust a nudist..... they have nothing to hide

Des has been experimenting with breeding racing deer. People have accused him of just trying to make a fast buck.

What do you call a row of rabbits hopping backwards? A receding hare line.

The word incorrectly is spelled incorrectly in very dictionary.

A couple in their nineties were both having problems remembering things. During a check-up, the doctor told them that they were physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember. Later that night, while watching TV, the old man got up from his chair 'Want anything while I'm in the kitchen?' he asked.

'Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?' she replied

'Sure.' he said.

'Don't you think you should write it down so you can remember it?' she asked.

'No, I can remember it.' He said

'Well, I'd like some strawberries on top, too. Maybe you should write it down, so as not to forget it?' she suggested.

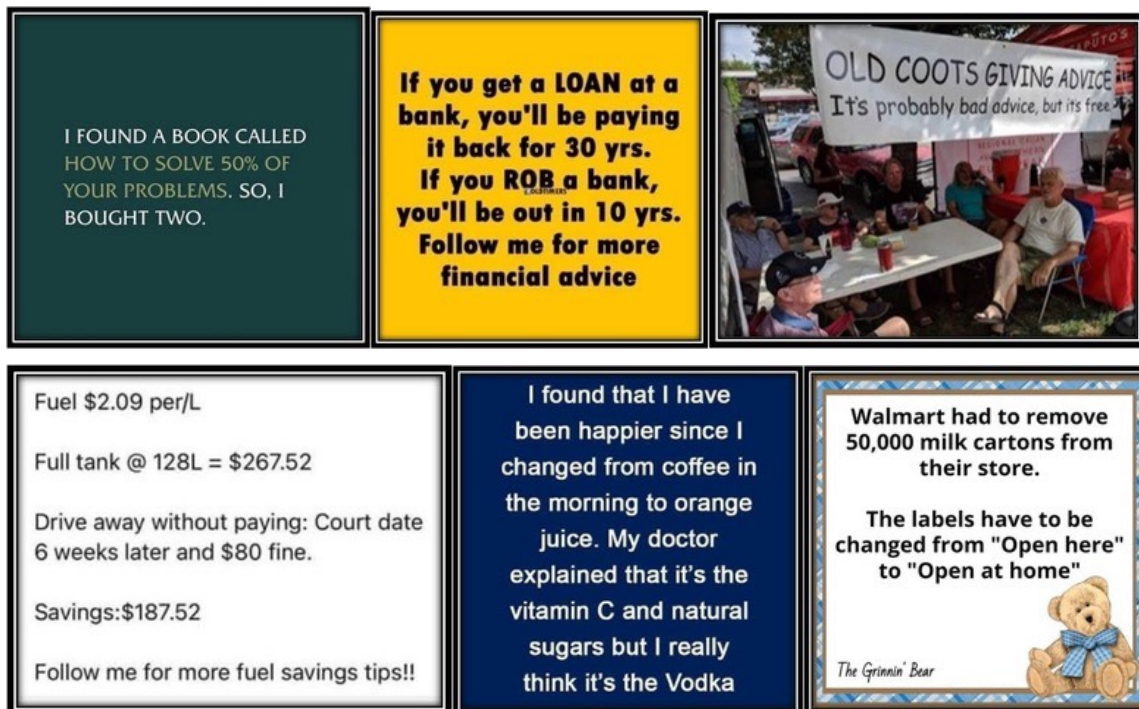
He said, 'I can remember that. You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries.'

'I'd also like whipped cream. I'm certain you'll forget that, write it down?' she asked.

Irritated, he said, 'I don't need to write it down, I can remember it! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream - I got it, for goodness sake!'

Then he toddled into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes, the old man returned from the kitchen and handed his wife a plate of bacon and eggs.

She stared at the plate for a moment and asked, 'Where's my toast?'



Elizabeth Prout feast day

Yesterday was the feast of the foundress of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion. Venerable Elizabeth Prout. Srs Brigid and Karen have put together a 'Gratitude Litany' video for this occasion. It is timely to acknowledge the 'new ground' Srs Anne, Joan, Brigid and Karen have been breaking through in their ministry and presence. The link is: <https://youtu.be/LLdsbggVV0Y>.

Eggs

Dominic will be back on duty from Monday for those ordering eggs

Shirley Barnes

Our next door neighbour **Shirley** broke her arm 13 weeks ago ,and learned on Tuesday that it has not healed and is in fact still broken! This is a most unfortunate setback for her.

Prayers

A memorial was held yesterday at Holy Cross for **Julie Duncan**. Julie passed away from pancreatic cancer after a very short time from diagnosis to death. Her death was a shock. She is a beloved sister of John Hogan.

Carmel King, mother of David King CP, has suffered a stroke and is in a critical condition.

Gary Perritt CP has had 40% of one lung removed and is five weeks into a very demanding recovery. He has at least another two months of recovery ahead of him.

Prayers

We remember Jeff Foale's sister **Marie Foale RSJ** who died in Adelaide on Sunday and **Michele Salerno** a relative of Luisa Mignone, who died last Thursday. We also remember those whose anniversaries occur around this week, especially 16 (18th Jan)



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

Jeff Foale CP, Paul Geogeghan, Maree Bartoli, Tony Tome, Pam Storey, Peter McNamara, Michael O'Callaghan, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Alexander Lim, Dawn Heffernan, Gerry Bond, Maeve & John Reardon, Greg Agosta, John Goold, Phil Drew, Bronwyn Burke, Helen McLean, Mary Hackett,

Pam Gartland, Monique Hardinge, Patricia Keeghan, Anne Jenkins, Errol Lovett, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Kate and Mary Dunn, Chris O'Toole, and Gerald Quinn CP.

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

Brian