

Holy Cross Retreat

<https://holycrosscentre.com/community/>



15th

March, 2024

Letter 214

Community Leaders meeting

The community leaders of the Province gathered at Holy Cross from late Wednesday afternoon til Friday afternoon (later today) this week. The purpose is to provide mutual support and to agree on Province and community goals that will assist our way of life. Obviously, responding to inter-cultural living and all that entails, is fundamentally important. Denis Travers, our Provincial has called this meeting.

Deacon Phi



It is a great thrill that Phi's parents (Minh and An) his uncle Thien SVD, and aunt Hong LHCDL, and some other relatives will be present for his ordination to the diaconate today, March 22nd at 7.00pm. Phi has been a wonderful presence in Holy Cross community and among the members of our Passionist family. He will be deacon at 10.00am Mass on Palm Sunday.

Livestream

Cu'ong, one of our postulants will livestream the diaconate from the back of the chapel. He will be using one fixed camera, so the 'shots' of some features of the ceremony will be 'from a distance' but it will be adequate, he assures. The link is: https://www.youtube.com/live/lz4cZgO-iPY?si=vA1_-KnDJddJIqS

Concession stamps



Every week, ten of these newsletters are personally delivered by Teresa Lim, and two by Joseph Dominic CP. Three are posted. Postage is soon to increase by 25% to \$1.50 per letter/ There may be a handful of people who could claim concession postage but don't bother. If you are in the position to pass on 5 or 10 concession stamps (they will increase to 60 cents), this would help with the small weekly cost of posting newsletters. Thank you.

Margaret Mangan RIP

Margaret's funeral will be at St Kevin's Templestowe, on Monday March 25th. Her burial will be at Warringal cemetery, Heidelberg at 12.00pm.

Gaza by day and night

Andrew Hamilton SJ (7th March)



By day Gaza is news and images in the media. Perhaps we avoid them. Perhaps we read about the latest deaths and diplomacy, look at the photos, glance at the opinion pieces that justify or criticise Israel and Hamas, or that set the war in the larger geopolitical interests of the various actors, including Australia. But some delicacy, some despair, some suppressed feeling may hold us back from dwelling on it. We concentrate on the business of our daily lives.

But sometimes at night Gaza returns. It becomes personal. For some of us it comes linked to biblical texts such as that of the prophet Jeremiah speaking of the destruction of the Northern kingdom, 'In Ramah a voice was heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not'.

We imagine the mothers in Gaza keening for their children who have been killed, the children who were left maimed and orphaned and who will never again be touched in love, the families scrabbling at rubble desperate not to leave their crushed children unburied, the children crying out for food and water which their parents cannot give them, the children whose last memories of their parents were of gunfire, the children who in another universe could be our children. And we hear the echo of Rachel weeping for for their children who are no more. In night there is no comfort.



During the day we nod as we see the plausibility of all the arguments. Yes, Hamas started this war; Yes, Israel has the right to defend itself. Yes, many Israeli people have died in the war. Yes, their lives are as precious as those of the people of Gaza; Yes, many peoples have a historic claim on the same land. Yes, Israel is a democracy. Yes, Hamas fights and hides hostages among civilians. Yes, a ceasefire is of itself no solution. Yes, there are other players arming each side in the war with their own aims. Yes, more people died in other wars. Yes, it is not in Australia's interests to separate ourselves from our powerful friends. And yet these arguments bring no comfort.



But sometimes at night, we may hear again the voice of lamentation, weeping and great

mourning. We see the cities lie in ruins; the houses, the apartments, the shops, the mosques and market places are now rubble; the hospitals, havens of healing, are now places of death; the delicate network of daily human living is now torn apart. We smell the fear that precedes each drone, each bomb, each shell, each scattering of a family. We see the families who have fled from the city into tents and other cities, and touch their terror as bombs fall close. We taste the bitterness of hunger, the humiliation of fighting one's friends for food. And we look into the eyes of children who know only this as their world. And Rachel weeps for her children who are no more. At night no comfort comes.

By day, we feel for the Jewish and Palestinian communities in our land who grieve for dead relatives, fear for their nations, are enraged at their nations' enemies, and who experience abuse on the grounds of their religion, race and national origin. And perhaps we march for peace and support our friends in these communities. Yet these things bring little comfort. But sometimes at night the voice of lamentation cries out again to us as we look out over a stricken land of our hungry, homeless, humiliated brothers and sisters. We try to imagine the faces of the thirty thousand dead, to look into their eyes one by one, children, women and men. We see also the faces of the millions of people still alive, marked with grief, weariness, anger or despair. And we notice the faces of the many of those living who envy the dead. At night we find no comfort.



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In daytime, we wonder what will become of Gaza and Israel in thirty years' time. By then the surviving children will be adults carrying the memories and the scars of this war.



Will the relationships between the people of Israel and their neighbouring peoples be dominated by fear and hatred magnified by this war and controlled only by military power? And what will serve the interests of other powerful

nations? Such questions bring no comfort.

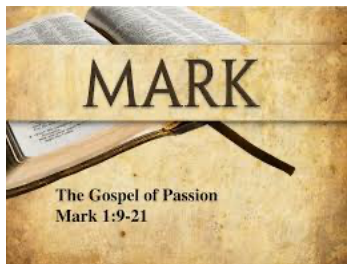
But sometimes at night, if faith has shaped our imagination, we may see the thirty thousand persons who have died in white robes, washed in the blood of the lamb, each valued, each alive. And we may be led to pray for all those whose lives have been blighted by this war – the people who live in fear, hunger, grief and isolation as a result of it - that they might live securely and be free. We may pray also for the leaders responsible for it, the soldiers involved in the killing and devastating, and the people who have supplied the weapons, and all the people of Israel and Gaza, for a change of heart that looks in the eyes of the persons whom their decisions maim and kill, and seeks peace through respect.



Such prayer does not bring comfort. But it may foster hope against hope.

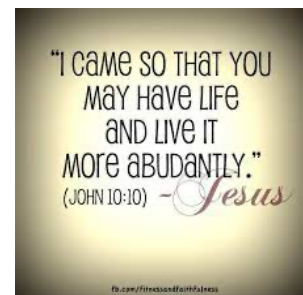
Passion (Palm) Sunday

Brendan Byrne, SJ, FAHA,

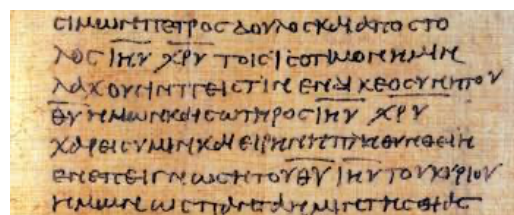


It is generally agreed that St Mark's account of Jesus' **Passion** provided the model for the Passion accounts of all the other Gospels. Mark, then, set the pattern whereby the account of Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trials, ill-treatment and eventual execution by one of the most horrible and painful means human cruelty ever devised, is told as a simple, sparse narrative, totally devoid of sentimentality or religious emotionalism.

We know that the One to whom all this is being done is the Son of God, the One whom 'even the wind and the sea obey' (4:41). We know why this is being allowed to happen: because this is the kind of 'service' that God willed the Messiah to perform: to enter into the sinfulness, pain and suffering of the world, to overcome those things from within, to give his life that the 'many' might have life (cf. 10:45; 14:24).



The way Mark tells the story – a sequence of swiftly changing scenes – sets in dramatic contrast the actions and the motives of the chief players: the priests and scribes, whose



murderous plotting unleashes the whole drama; Judas, deliberately seeking an opportunity to betray; the male disciples abandoning Jesus when he needs them most; the women standing by to the end; Peter, bold in his early protestations, timid when challenged by a servant-girl; Pilate, clad with all the power of Rome, but yielding against his better judgment in the face of pressure from the mob.



In all this catalogue of human failure one figure stands out: the unnamed woman who anoints Jesus' in the last week of his life (14:3-9). As Jesus points out in the face of those who criticise her, she alone of all the disciples does understand where he is going and why – hence her costly, loving gesture. Jesus himself shrinks from 'the cup'

before him in Gethsemane. But once composed he goes through it all with calm dignity, up till the final terrible cry of abandonment just before dying on the cross (15:34). The evangelist leaves this cry hanging there, unadorned, seemingly unanswered by God.

But the moment Jesus dies, the temple curtain splits in two. God is no longer shut up in the Holy of Holies of the temple, inaccessible to all save the high priest. God is here, in this most unholy place of execution, reaching out in reconciliation to the whole world. The Gentile centurion, standing in for all of us, is the first to grasp this and make his act of faith.

Passion Play at Holy Cross



There are two performances of the Melbourne Passion Play

Palm Sunday (March 24th) at 1.30pm

Good Friday (March 29th) at 10.00am

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week begins on **Palm Sunday, March 24th** . It will provide Phi with his first opportunity to minister as a deacon. For those able to do so, we will gather out the front of the chapel for the procession liturgy and then move into the chapel.



After Mass the **Coffee Cart** will be here so we hope for another time of warm fellowship.

We are looking for ways that the contribution for the coffee cart (and the coffee) can be shared. If you have any ideas, please see Tina Minichilli.

Holy Thursday: 7.30pm Mass

Good Friday 10.00am: The Passion Play is being held in the grounds of Holy Cross. Because of that, we are unable to have a communal celebration of the Stations of the Cross.

Good Friday 3.00pm: Commemoration of the Passion. If the weather permits, this will be outside 'under the trees'. If you BYO a chair, that will help us.

Easter Sunday: 6.00am liturgy in the St Gabriele shrine. This will be followed by a **breakfast** (by donation) in the Holy Cross Centre dining room.

Easter Sunday: 10.00am Mass

Humour



1. A frugal Passionist walked into the community retreat panting heavily, and almost completely exhausted. 'What happened, brother?' inquired a fellow community member.

"I had a great new idea for saving money," he gasped. "I ran all the way home from this afternoon's meeting behind the bus, and saved \$2.50."

His brother asked, 'Why didn't you run behind a taxi and you'd have saved\$25?'

2. An Irish woman visited her husband in prison. Before leaving, she told the correction officer; you shouldn't make my husband work like that. He's exhausted! The officer laughed and said, are you kidding? He just eats and sleeps and stays in his cell. The wife replied: rubbish, he just told me he's been digging a tunnel for months!

3. A girl wanted a pet spider for her birthday. So her Mum went to the pet store and picked one out. The owner said, "that'll be \$200 please".

The mother was staggered. \$200!! It'll be cheaper getting one off the web!

4. A student asked his teacher, "Miss, would you punish me for something I didn't do?" "Of course not", she replied. "That's great" he said. "I didn't do my homework".

5. Boas was so good at sleeping he could do it with his eyes closed.

6. Joey told a chemistry joke, but there was no reaction.

7. Erick got hit in the head by a can of Coke. Thank Goodness, it was a soft drink!

Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.

Q. What's the most terrifying word in nuclear physics? A. Oops!

Q What do dentists call their x-rays? A. Tooth pics!

Q What washes up on very small beaches? A. Micro-waves.

Q What do you call a belt with a watch on it? A. A waist of time

Q What did the grape do when it got stepped on? A. It let out a little wine.

Q What causes dry skin? A A towel.

Q What's the best way to catch a fish? A. Have someone throw it to you.

Q What do you call a fly without wings? A. A walk.

Q What's the best way to cook an alligator? A. In a croc-pot.

Q What do you give a thirsty crocodile?

A. Gater-aid

Q What's the difference between a hippo and a zippo?

A One is really heavy and the other's a little lighter.

Prayers

We remember those who have passed away recently, especially and We also remember those whose anniversaries occur around this time, especially:

Terence Maher (30th March) **Julie Ann Pallot** (31st March)

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



Margaret Enriquez, Maree Bartoli, Pam Storey, Tony Tome, Carol Batistella, Peter McNamara, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Alexander Lim, Michael O'Callaghan, Maeve & John Reardon, Shirley Barnes, Bronwyn Burke, Gerry Bond, Helen McLean, Phil Drew, Monique Hardinge, Mary Hackett, Pam Gartland, Greg Agosta, Patricia Keeghan, Anne Jenkins, Errol Lovett, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Kate & Mary Dunn, Chris O'Toole, Gerald Quinn CP, Jeff Foale CP and baby Alfred Theodore in London.

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

Brian