

Holy Cross Retreat

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



Letter 235

9th August, 2024

Tri makes 32



We celebrated Tri's birthday at breakfast on Monday, because he had evening class that day. Following our tradition, Tri received a tee-shirt, extinguished the candles and cut the cake.

Erick led the singing and is now an expert in leading the hip-hip horray. It wasn't always so! The first known use of this cheer was in 1813.

Peter Kennedy – 70



You could not imagine Peter celebrating a milestone without some flamboyance. He is living in retirement in Victor Harbour 85 kilometres south of Adelaide. Peter or PK as he was known to many, exercised a wonderful ministry and was a great community man, capable of laughing at himself and always bringing joy to others. Happy Birthday, Peter.

ELSPM – 10 years



The Passionist English Language Studies for Pastoral Ministry is an outreach ministry of the Passionists. It was founded in Adelaide but moved to the Franciscan house in Box Hill, in Melbourne adjacent to YU. It is dedicated to teaching English to non-native speakers and combines a deep commitment to educational excellence with a compassionate, supportive pastoral environment. Apart from Passionists from Holy Spirit province, over the decade of its existence, other Passionists (male and female), diocesan priests, religious from many other Congregation and some laity, have studied at ELSPM.

Kevin Hennessy CP was a principal agent in establishing ELSPM and has been its Principal Officer for these ten years.

Other significant contributions have been made by Peter Downs CFC, Pat Cronin CFC, wonderful teachers, volunteer tutors, an active and committed Board, and especially Sr Margaret Bently



FMA, Academic Manager since August 2016. Initially focused on providing basic English language skills, the ELSPM offers a range of programmes, including advanced language courses, academic preparation, and specialized classes for various pastoral needs. The curriculum caters for beginners to advanced learners, and incorporates modern teaching methodologies and a vocabulary that assists in pastoral ministry.



ELSPM operates on a very personal approach, a specialty of Sr Margaret, with small class sizes ensuring individual attention and tailored instruction so that students receive the support they need to achieve their language goals effectively. ELSPM fosters an inclusive inter-cultural environment where students from diverse backgrounds can connect and learn.

Congratulations to everyone who has been involved, including the students themselves.

Seeking a Lounge Suite

If you or someone you know is upgrading their lounge suite, we would be grateful to be considered for the donation of the outgoing lounge suite. Ideally we are looking for a generous-sized couch with matching chair/s to fit in a specific area of the Centre. If this might be you or someone you know, please contact Mayrose via email hcc@passionists.com

Church notice in Nonza, Corsica

It is possible that as you enter this church you will hear God's call. However, it is unlikely that God will contact you by phone. Please turn off your phones

If you want to talk to God, come in, choose a quiet place and talk to him, if you want to see him, send a text message while driving...



Harry Fraeme

The Review section of the Weekend Australian (July 27-28) contained an excellent article on a relatively unknown Australian whose life should be celebrated.



Harry Freame was born in 1880 in the Japanese city of Osaka to a samurai clan mother and Australian father. Being fluent in English and Japanese he was sent to England at the age of 15 to further his education. Harry served as a government intelligence officer during the Mexican War but when the Diaz Government collapsed in 1911, Harry became a wanted man. He escaped, making his way via a Chilean port, to Australia.

He enlisted in the AIF at the outbreak of World War 1 and because of his experience, Harry was assigned the crucial role of battalion scout. His knowledge and skill soon became obvious. He modified his uniform by attaching leather pads on elbows, knees and the insides of ankles. This allowed for easy movement when leopard crawling around no man's land. He discarded the standard .303 rifle and opted for a pair of pistols, worn on his hips for the advantage in gave in the close combat of a scout. He kept another pistol hidden in a shoulder pad.

He was among the second group to land ashore at Gallipoli and soon found himself alongside an area nicknamed The Nek, under the command of Lieutenant Shout, who later was awarded both the Victoria and Military Crosses. When called away from his post, Shout left Harry in charge of fourteen men, not knowing that the Turks planned to launch a counterattack later that afternoon. When Shout returned, only Harry had survived.

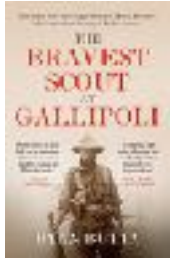


The commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Dobbin lacked information about his men so Harry volunteered to help. He made a steep climb down a valley and found the Turks to be in control. In semi-darkness, Harry made his way slowly towards the stranded men who were exhausted, and parched with thirst. With the help of a Kiwi, Harry descended part way into the valley, obtained water and renegotiated the steep climb, amid Turkish gunfire, and then returned to his fellow soldiers with the much needed refreshment.

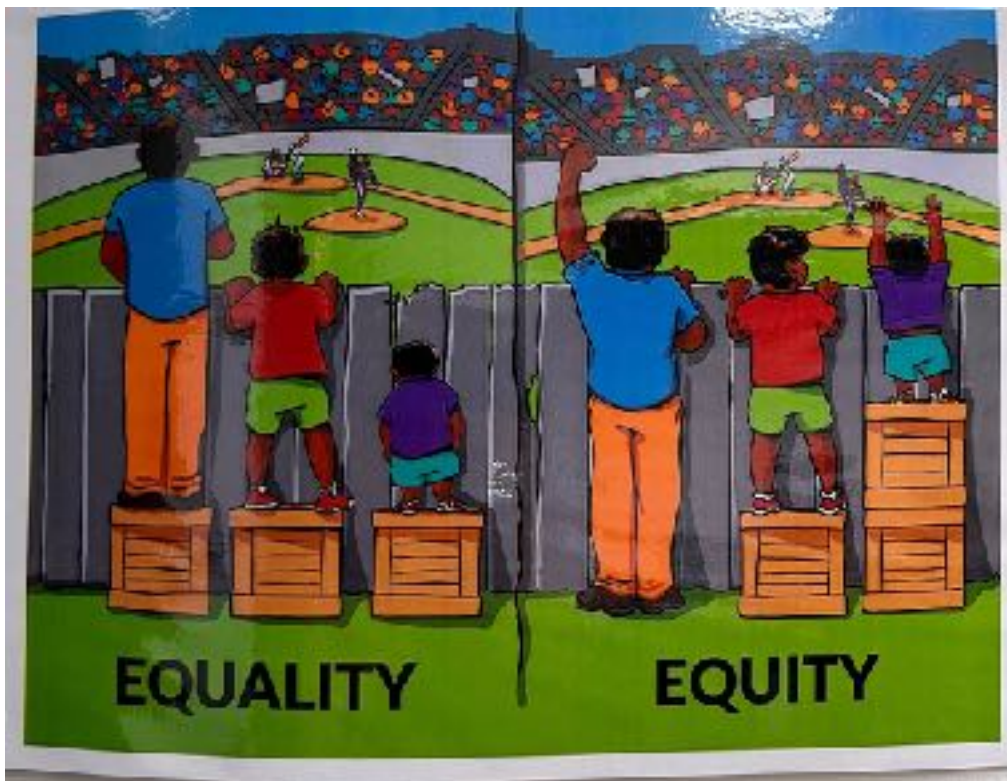


Knowing Dobbin needed the information he had gathered, Harry sprinted down the valley again, amid a hail of rifle and machine-gun fire, drawing a furious hail of Turkish rifle and machine-gun fire as he went. After giving his

report he admitted he had suffered two bullet wounds. He continued to make forays toward the Turkish lines, and was eventually captured, but managed to escape and return to his duties. His escape was made possible because of his modified uniform. He used his two hip pistols and the one in his shoulder pad. Subsequently, Harry suffered a serious gunshot wound and from England he was repatriated to Australia. He moved to Armidale and became an apple-grower.

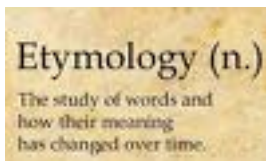


In 1939, at the outbreak of the Second World War, Harry was seconded to again serve his country as an undercover operative. His spying activities were discovered and relayed to Japanese officials. He suffered strangulation and survived only to die an agonising death five weeks later. Harry was reputed to be the most trusted scout on Gallipoli. He was fearless, impulsive and always prepared for the unknown, perhaps shaped by samurai training. He deserves to be better known and appreciated.



We can each contribute to this.

Contextual theology 6



Words develop new meanings over time. The word 'nice' comes from the Latin word 'nescious,' which means ignorant. We only have to think of words like pot, smack, grass and weed to know they have

developed an association that is very different from fifty years ago. Gay has such a different meaning that hardly anyone uses it now in its original sense. Awful used to mean full of awe. Young people often use words like 'sick' or wicked' to mean good, or they use cool when they mean 'hot!

All language is like that. It is open to interpretation. People Biblical times had a very small vocabulary and their images symbols were different from ours. The Bible most of us read been translated from Hebrew to Greek, from Greek to Latin from Latin to English, and there are many different English translations. This means that some words or phrases can different meanings at each point of translation, than we might not readily see.



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We commonly use a phrase such as 'he missed by a mile' when apart from being an over-exaggeration. we haven't even used 'mile' as a measurement in Australia or New Zealand since the 1970's. In fact the person may not have missed by much but no one who understands the expression takes this literally. Words that we read in English, such as 'fear', and 'hate' have quite different meanings in everyday language to how they are expressed in Biblical writing. For example, Proverbs 1:7 says 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and understanding'. This 'fear' refers to sacred respect.

We are familiar with the saying of Jesus, "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven". There have been a variety of explanations for this saying, but increasingly, scholars suggest that a mistake



was made in translating the Greek word 'kamilos' (rope) as 'kamelos' (camel). In describing the needle, Matthew and Mark use the Greek word 'rafic' while Luke uses 'belone'. The former word is used in sewing, and the latter more in surgical procedures that we know as stitching. Perhaps then, the saying meant that it is easier for a rope to go through a needle. Though this would still be difficult to achieve, it would seem to make more sense. Mistranslations are easily possible. We have to keep this in mind.



The Global Language Monitor estimates there are more than one million words in English language today. William Shakespeare alone is credited with adding 1,700 words to the English language, and 2,000 new words were added from French after William the Conqueror became ruler of Britain.



We know words like influencer, meme and homophobic are relatively new, whereas a glovebox has become outdated. We could identify writing from a recent era if we read 'being hip' or 'groovy', and specialists are able to date many documents by identifying the particular language of a time. An example is the 'Donation of Constantine', a forgery exposed in 1440, but claiming to be an original 4th-century document in which the Roman emperor Constantine the Great granted supreme temporal and spiritual power to the Church.

We have far more words today to describe events, experiences and feelings than people had in earlier times. Biblical Hebrew had a vocabulary of just 9000 words. These realities highlight that there are many layers of meaning that we are likely to miss when we read the Bible, so we need to be careful, and educate ourselves to read the Bible properly. There are 46 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament, so the Bible has many authors and many literary forms.



If we looked at our home library and counted seventy-three books, we would probably find novels, poetry, biographies, 'new age', good idea books, cooking books and many more. This is what it is like when opening the Bible. To understand the Bible, we need to appreciate its setting. The whole Bible was not written at the same time or by the same author, and it covers a long period of history, very different from our own. By studying language and dating events it is possible to determine that some events were written well after the original events.



Biblical Jews did not have our modern forms of communication. Most could not read or write, and life expectancy was short (perhaps 45 years of age). They were often overrun by powerful nations and, they sought answers to questions such as why are we here? how did we get here? why do we suffer? why is there evil in the world? why are other people different? what happens when we die, and so on. Their attitudes and writings reflect their changing understanding about these questions.

The first stories in the Bible are concerned with pre-salvation history and they explain why humans needed to be 'saved'. They include the story of Adam and Eve ignoring God's command and foregoing God's promise by seeking to make themselves equal to God. There is story of **Cain's jealousy** and the murder of his brother Abel. This story explained how peoples were separated from each other from God. This eventually led to the destruction of all the people in a flood. Only **Noah** and his family were saved because



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they were 'upright' people. The story of **the tower of Babel** explained how people became divided among themselves and spoke different languages and lived in distant places. The writers knew these external facts so they wrote stories to explain them.

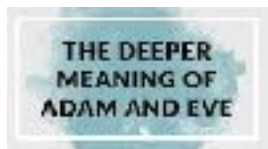
For this reason, we need to read them as they were written, appreciating the truth behind their message rather than focusing on the details. They were written long before there was a scientific explanation for things, and being a story telling culture the writers were concerned with the message or the truth in the story rather than its details.

We know today that some of the stories are not accurate in our sense of literal accuracy.



However, we have been able to learn through various sciences (archaeology, literature, culture etc.) that what the Hebrews wrote was consistent with what surrounding cultures wrote and believed at the time. We know something about the 'big' nations of the time in the Middle-East (Egypt, Babylon, Assyria etc.) and we know there were events in that part of the world, such as the Bible describes. There were huge and devastating floods and huge tower like temples (ziggurats) were built. We know too that some of the Biblical experiences are recorded in the stories of other cultures.

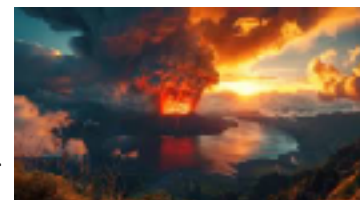
It is the wrong question to ask 'Did these events really occur?' or 'Did these people really exist?' The stories were not written to satisfy a mind that asks such questions. They were written to express beliefs explaining God's action and how humans responded. There were never two people who sat in a garden and ate an apple! There was not even an



apple! There was a time though, when people developed sufficient self-consciousness to become aware that they had acted against the free gift they had been given. There was a time when they grew jealous and then hurt and killed each other, to get what they wanted. There were people with different coloured skin who spoke

different languages. The stories told to explain these realities are potentially everyone's story.

Amazingly, we know from science that the eruption of Mt Toba 74,000 years ago, wiped out nearly all the humans on the planet except perhaps a thousand people, echoing the story of Noah. Perhaps story had been passed on for thousands of years and like other cultures of the time, the people of Israel put their interpretation on this event, in the light of the behaviour saw around them? It was this interpretation that



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eventually led them to the belief that God had called them to act in a proper way, and urged on by their prophets, they believed they had to act with compassion and justice.

Further, while it took some time to understand it, they came to recognize the obligation that flowed from being 'chosen' was to bring 'light' to the rest of the world.



The God that called them to do this was different from any of the other gods that they or other peoples had known. The journey to discover this unique God; to be faithful and trusting of God and to be faithful to this God's demands, took a long time, and the Bible is full of stories of failure in faith. Often the Scriptural authors interpreted defeat by enemies as punishment from God for their unfaithfulness. Later they came to see that God acted through all events, and that in defeat and sorrow they sometimes learned their richest lessons, as do we all.

Every primitive culture has sought to address the fundamental questions of life that they have experienced. People of the land have different interpretations from people 'of the sea'. All of them experience suffering and death and seek to explain it. They live around a natural landscape and seek to explain how it formed. They seek to understand the place of the animals and their relationship with them. They seek to clarify their obligations with another and towards their neighbours (or enemies!). Whenever people such as the Israelites sought to do this in story form, we must look for the deeper truth they knew.



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According to some mathematicians, the ark of Noah would not have been big enough to be a house, so it could not have carried large animals. During the forty days, how did they survive? Who cleaned the ark and what did the animals and humans eat? How did they propagate if they were all related? The Hebrews would never have thought it important to answer such questions, because they were story people. They understood what the story meant and that is what mattered to them. Children listen to stories in this same way.

The people of Israel knew that a rainbow often came after rain so they took this to be a sign God had given when the rain and flooding stopped and that it would not be



repeated. So, what did the story mean? People had rejected God and God punished them, while rewarding the few who were faithful, allowing them to 'start again'. The sign that they could be confident of God's goodness, was the rainbow. It was a constant reminder that God would never destroy the earth

again. They could be confident of this, even if other peoples were not.

We have our own comparisons to this kind of literature in nursery rhymes and cartoons. Nursery Rhymes are a particular type of literature recited to children. If we took all the words literally we would cease this practice. Imagine sending a young child off to sleep with the less than soothing words from the rhyme 'Rock a bye baby' which says, "down will come baby, cradle and all'!

Many of these rhymes originally were political messages, conveyed, like modern day cartoons, in a way that helped avoid charges of libel or treason. Humpty Dumpty is believed to have been, a cannon, used in the Siege of Colchester during the English Civil War (1642-1649). The cannon was reputed to be indestructible, but when the brick wall supporting it collapsed, under enemy fire, the cannon smashed into bits and could not be repaired. Are we better off for knowing these facts? Could we tell those facts to a child and imagine they would be singing about them three hundred and sixty years later? Imagine what the original song must have meant to those who destroyed Humpty Dumpty!



This reminds us that when we read a form of literature that has a unique style, we destroy its true meaning if we take all the words literally, as fundamentalists do. If we do not understand the context in which the original words were written or we fail to appreciate deeper meanings and if we do not know some of the culture and meaning of symbols, words and stories, it is likely that we will misinterpret the message and develop inferior theology.

To be continued



*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the king's horses and all the king's men,
couldn't put Humpty together again.*

This is regarded as the best known English nursery rhyme. It was put to music in 1870, around 80 years after it was first written, with slightly different words.

Humour

A Dad's letter to his son.

Dear Son,

Just a few lines to let you know I'm still alive. I'm writing this letter slowly because I know you can't read fast. We are all doing well. Your Mum was going to write but

she has her arm in a sling. She has tonsillitis.

You won't recognise the house when you come home - we have moved. Your mum read in the newspaper that most accidents happen within 20 kilometres from your home, so we moved 30 kilometres away. I won't be able to send you the address because the last family that lived here took the house numbers when they moved so that they wouldn't have to change their address. The place is really nice. It even has a washing machine. I'm not sure it works so well though. Last week I put a load in, pulled the chain and haven't seen it since.

Your brother Tommy just got a really good job. He's got 500 men under him - cutting the grass at the cemetery. Your sister Mary had a baby this morning but I haven't found out if it's a boy or girl, so I don't know whether you are an auntie or uncle. Your brother Billy is still in the army. He's only been there a short while and they've already made him a court marshal!

Your Uncle Patrick drowned last week in a vat of whiskey in the Dublin Brewery. Some workmates tried to save him but he fought them off bravely. They cremated him and it took three days to put out the fire. I'm sorry to say that your cousin Seamus was arrested while riding his bicycle last week. They are charging him with dole peddling.

I went to the doctor on Thursday and your mother went with me. The doctor put a small tube in my mouth and told me not to talk for ten minutes. I offered to buy it from him. The weather isn't bad here. It only rained twice this week, first for three days and then for four days. Monday was so windy one of the chickens laid the same egg four times. About that coat you wanted me to send you: your Uncle Stanley said it would be too heavy to send in the mail with the buttons on, so we cut them off and put them in one of the pockets. There isn't much more news at this time. Nothing much has happened.

Your Dad

PS I was going to send you some money but I had already sealed the envelope.

Q Why did the monkey put a piece of steak on his head?

A He thought he was a griller.

Q How do you kill a vegetarian vampire?

A With a steak to the heart.

Q What do you get when you cross a duck with cheese?

A Cheese and quackers.

Q What do you call a guy who's really loud? A Mike.

My neighbour knocked on my front door at 3am!!! Luckily I was already up playing the bagpipes.

I hate it when people act all intellectual and talk about Mozart, when they're never even seen one of his paintings.

Did you hear about the frustrated doctor? He lost his patients.

A boy broke an old vase at his rich uncle's house. The uncle got extremely angry and yelled! "Do you even know how old the vase was? It was from the 17th century". The boy sagged in relief. "Oh thanks. That's good, I thought it might be new".

I once submitted 10 puns to a joke competition. I really thought with that many, one was sure to be a winner. Sadly, no pun in ten did.

Political sarcasm and wit

Winston Churchill described former Prime Minister Clement Atlee as "a sheep in sheep's clothing" and "a modest man who has much to be modest about". On another occasion he said, "An empty taxi arrived at 10 Downing Street, and when the door was opened, Atlee got out".

An interjector asked Sir Robert Menzies, "Wotcha gonna do about 'ousing?" Sir Robert replied, "Put a 'h' in front of it"

At a noisy coalminers meeting, someone yelled out, "Tell us all you know, Bob – it won't take long". Sir Robert looked at the man and said, "I will tell you everything we both know and it won't take any longer!"

Tim and Tina

We have been very fortunate with the weather. We are currently on Vancouver Island Victoria, a beautiful picturesque place. Butchart Gardens were magnificent and we are not gardeners at all. We return to Vancouver this afternoon for a couple of days then on the Rocky Mountains train trip.

Prayers

We remember all the recently deceased especially Margaret Enriquez who passed away yesterday. We also remember those whose anniversaries occur this week, especially

John Lazzari (today – first anniversary)

Phyllis Vial (10th August)

Mark Nugent CP - 11th August)

Jean O'Brien - (12th August)

Marisa Martin (Cathy Petrocco's sister- 13th August)

Gwen Bartlett (Helen Tome's mother - 14th August)

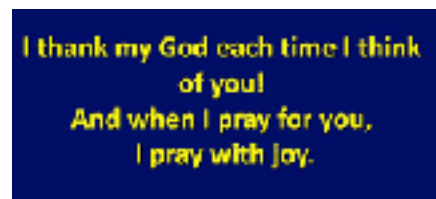
Jerome Crowe CP - (14th August),

Dunstan Mellors CP - (15th August),

John Whyte (15th August),

Mary Corboy (Joan O'Callaghan's mum -16th August)

Eileen Agnes 'Bab's Cogle – Dennis' mum (16th August)



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

Tony Tome, Lorraine Gill, Adrian Woon,

Maree Bartoli, Pam Storey, Michael O'Callaghan

Ann Burke, , Sandra Street, Paul Darbyshire,

Mary Dunn, Luke Norden, Carol Battistella, Monique

Hardinge, Robyn Burns,

John Reardon, Gerry Bond, Ann Burke, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Alexander Lim,

Agnes Mumburi, Greg Agosta, Peter McNamara, Bronwyn Burke,

Helen McLean, Phil Drew, Anne Jenkins, Pam Gartland, Patricia Keeghan,

Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Errol Lovett, Shirley Barnes, Chris O'Toole and baby Alfred

Theodore in London.

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

Thank you

Brian