

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 329

5th June, 2026

Greetings,

Tri 's Ordination



There were nine professed Vietnamese Passionists who joined us for Tri's ordination last Saturday as well as a large number of religious and diocesan Vietnamese priests. It was our delight to welcome back [Mike](#) from Hobart, [Phi, Vinh and Phuc](#) from Adelaide, as well as [Truc](#) from Brisbane, [Joseph, Cong and Doan](#) from Sydney, and [Tuan Paul](#) from Endeavour Hills. [JD](#) was already here of course. Added to this was our Tanzanian brother [Pastor](#), from Adelaide and locally, [Brendan and Luke](#) from Endeavour Hills [Kevin Hennessy](#), and of course [Denis Travers](#), our Provincial.



The night before the ordination saw a fair group of the professed who came to Holy Cross to attend the ordination, sharing a typical Asian meal (noodles and rice). Erick took this photograph as he often does.

Last Sunday, Tri celebrated his Thanksgiving Mass in a most competent manner. Erick gave a most relevant homily for the feast (of the Trinity – Tri...)

and Tri's ordination. He completed his homily by speaking to Tri's parents in Vietnamese. This was a beautiful and impressive gesture of inclusive hospitality and cultural sensitivity. It would have taken Erick a lot of time to prepare, write and learn what and how he wanted to say. It didn't have to be perfect. It was, as he had stressed in his homily, from the heart.



This is an amusing photo. Soon Luke and Tri will be sharing community life (again) in Endeavour Hills and I guess you could say "that's the long and short of it"!

Tri will return to his village in Vietnam on Sunday June 21st and celebrate a Thanksgiving Mass there and in a few other places, including our Passionist communities. He will return to Holy Cross on July 9th for about two weeks before taking up his new (parish) appointment.

Community activities

After the weekend, the community and Holy Cross Centre hosted a two-day seminar for a significant number of Province employees. Not all were able to attend, but it was an excellent and valuable gathering.

Jerome has received much positive feedback about the series Erick has provided in the newsletter on Jerome's time in PNG. Jerome will celebrate his 60th profession on August 20th this year.

Tri took his parents to Adelaide for a few days this week. He will be back today.

JD celebrated his 38th birthday yesterday, on June 4th

Joseph has been engaged in a 'summary week' before assignment time, and the close of the semester for his spirituality programme at 'Heart of Life'. He has had a leg injury but still undertaking athletic training with Erick on Tuesday nights but on the mid-week runs, he has been biking, while Erick runs!

Erick undertook a lot of preparation for the ordination logistics and for the staff seminar this week.

Chris will head to Adelaide on Sunday to conduct a retreat for priests from the Adelaide Archdiocese.

Come Away Day

The next **Come Away Day** for 2026 will be held at Holy Cross on Wednesday June 24th. The theme of the day is 'Called to embrace the Mystery of the Heart'. There will be further details in next week's newsletter.

Our Field is the World.....Denis Travers CP

This reflection was offered to the Province on May 13th, by our Provincial.

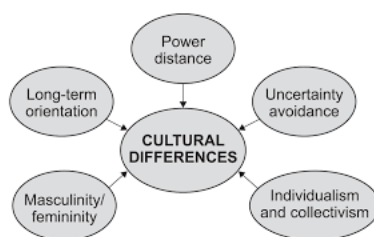
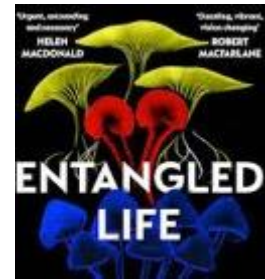
As a timely reminder of our identity and in part as orientation towards our 2007 Chapter preparation work to come, as of this July, I wanted to share these comments with you. I have written on these themes before, but this may be a timely reminder.



As a Province we live, witness and minister in societies that at times look much like tangled balls of string. Whether in Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, or Australia/New Zealand so many 'threads' (issues) that are focused on social movements, traditions, conscious and unconscious cultural imperatives, unabating changes at the technological level, and current social media and AI trends that intersect and act upon us. All are active at any one moment. They get tangled up, and at times we get tangled up in them too!

It is often hard for us to separate each thread so that we might see it in its wholeness and address it, challenge it, or embrace it.

All these threads and a myriad of others (climate changes, migration patterns, economic concerns, social media influences - to name a few) affect our lives and the lives of our people. Life is complex, enmeshed and entangled, so much so that when the Church wants to walk with, and address society, the way to do this is not always clear. Yet this is the “field” in which we live out our faith, and it is here we are invited to follow Jesus the Sower and plant the seed of our witness as Passionist Apostolic Communities.



Our religious lifestyle has its origins in the European context of the Church, and that carries within itself many expectations, systems, laws, and customs that are founded on western Christian practices developed across the ages. Yet, we in Holy Spirit Province live amidst four distinct national and cultural settings – each having numerous sub-cultures – and while each of

our societies is influenced by the ‘West’ none is exclusively, or mono-culturally ‘western’ at its core.

Further, not only are our respective Nations culturally diverse, but we also mirror diversity in our own community life. The majority of communities across the Province have an inter- cultural mix of membership.

Thus, in our Province, whether we turn to look inwardly at our own community life, or whether we turn to look out to our societies, we must be keenly aware of the



totality of the challenge before us. This awareness must become habitual if we are to live and respect our inter-cultural brotherhood and minister to our distinct societies. We must ‘stay awake’, as Jesus often reminded his followers. We cannot live into the future holding on to unexamined assumptions and narrow perspectives, we cannot allow unconscious or conscious attitudes to move us beyond the values of the Gospel.

Every member of the Province is called to be alert to the various influences that have formed us, and which still act upon us. We need to study and appreciate how our individual value systems influence the way we see our world, our societies, and our behaviours. We must appreciate and honour our cultural inheritance of course, but we also need to be aware of how it influences us when we seek to be true to our institutional life and our patrimony.

We are living a time of wonderful challenges – not always felt as ‘wonderful’, I admit. However, we are marshalling our energies to embrace our own diversity within even more widely diversified social systems. This is no easy task; and we are called to build our mission upon a community life that is robustly compassionate in its unity, reflective and appreciative in its diversity, and supportive and focused in its ministry.



All this, so that we may keep alive the memory of the Passion. We are challenged to be creative so that we might carry the Word of God (sow the seed) to our societies

Simplify the complicated
untangle the tangled
follow the threads
to the heart of the matter

and address them in ways that touch the real needs of the people of God. This challenge cannot be met with simple solutions. The way forward is much like trying to untangle the threads – one needs time, patience, and a gentle touch to loosen each thread from the tangled mass, to isolate it, and slowly, carefully to

manoeuvre or re-shape it into a new form.

Each thread of our social and religious experience will call us to adapt our lives and practices so that we might bear witness to society around us. Diverse, complex, and challenging as each may be, these same societies are where God’s Spirit moves and where God’s people reside.



Jerome’s story part 5: Ministry in Villages and Senta Bilong Helpim

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB5DSI7duvU>

Quote of the day: “ One day we were chasing a snake along the veranda and it disappeared into Father Pat Cooper’s bedroom. We never told him. We figured the snake would leave on its own when it wanted food..”

What would happen during a typical day when you travelled to a different village?
We used to call it “going on patrol.” You would arrive in the village, and the headmen would come to welcome you. There would be a lot of polite conversation first. Then the people would bring food, and in return you would give them money or goods, usually black sticks of tobacco, because almost everyone smoked. After the evening meal, once it got dark, it became storytelling time. People would gather, sit down, and listen to stories. As some slowly fell asleep, others would quietly disappear one by one. I became known as a storyteller, so I was quite popular.

What kinds of stories would you tell?



I would tell stories about things they had never seen before, like shopping in Myer or riding elevators. You could make a story like that last an hour because people were fascinated by things they simply could not imagine. The important thing was not whether they fully understood every detail. What mattered was that the stories sparked their imagination and gave them something exciting to dream about.

Could you explain something modern, like a microwave, in Tok Pisin?

You would keep it very simple: “Wanpela machine. Yu putim kai bilong yu insait. Yu pasim doa na pressim button. Bihain liklik taim, kai em i kuk pinis. Machine bai krai na yu opim doa.” That means: “It’s a machine. You put your food inside, close the door, and press a button. After a short time the food is cooked. The machine makes a noise, and then you open the door.” You would never try to explain how the microwave actually worked. Just explain that it cooks food.



Did you live with other Passionists over the years?

Most of the time I was placed on mission stations by myself. I could manage alone. Occasionally other Passionists would come through. One was Timothy O’Toole, but many others only stayed for a short time. Usually they would spend a few months at Kamaratoro learning how to run a mission station before being sent out to their own places. Kambi became a kind of training ground. I was often the one showing them what to expect and how to survive mission life. I did live and work in the novitiate community in Mambudu, in Waramo village near Vanimo, for eleven years.

What sort of advice did you give new missionaries?

You had to warn them about practical things. One important lesson was to be careful when people asked to borrow things. In many cases, “borrowing” really meant “giving.” It felt terrible to say ‘no’, but if you loaned something out, chances were high you would never see it again.” So, be careful about what you loan”.

You mentioned the “Senta Bilong Helpim.” What was that?

Brother James Coucher started it on the coast because there were many children in desperate need of care and treatment.



Hospitals often could not provide what they needed. The important difference was that families stayed there with their children. James could work not only with the sick child but also with the family, teaching them about health, hygiene, and nutrition. That would not have happened in the ordinary government system. The Senta saved many children who otherwise would have died. It is still operating.

What were the main illnesses affecting the children?

Malnutrition was always the biggest problem. Disease came second. Most illnesses were connected to starvation or poor nutrition. Malaria, especially cerebral malaria, was terrible. Cerebral malaria attacks the brain. Sometimes children survived, but with severe brain damage and a very difficult life ahead of them. Still, you had to try to help them.

Did malaria affect you personally?

Yes, I had malaria several times. The first time was horrible. For two days I thought I was going to die. Then for another two days I wished I would die because I felt so terrible. Eventually you recovered. After the first few times, you learned to live with it. Later infections would only put you out of action for a couple of days. My father actually died during an attack of cerebral malaria in Papua New Guinea, so I was always very careful about it.

How did you protect yourself from malaria?

We took anti-malaria drugs, although many of them were hard on the kidneys. Over time, some people developed kidney problems from the medication itself. Mosquito nets were essential. Everywhere you travelled, you slept under a net. Eventually my room at Kamberatoro was mosquito-proofed, so I could spray the room before bed and sleep without a net. That felt like luxury because mosquito nets could feel very claustrophobic.

Did the mosquito nets also protect you from snakes?

Not really. Snakes were everywhere, in the roof, on the veranda, sometimes even in the rooms.



One day we were chasing a snake along the veranda and it disappeared into Father Pat Cooper's bedroom. We never told him. We figured the snake would leave on its own when it wanted food. If we had told him, he probably would not have slept all night. After a while, you simply got used to snakes being around.

Did you ever get bitten by a snake?

Yes. One morning I got out of bed and accidentally stepped on a snake. Naturally, it bit me. Fortunately, it was only a python and not poisonous. It bit me on the leg. You still felt sick and miserable for a couple of days, but it was not life-threatening. That was mission life - you learned very quickly to expect the unexpected.

Time to Say Goodbye

Sung by now 20 year old Ukrainian, Solomia Lukyanets when she was 13-year-old.

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/DTNtFxZxueU>

Photos from Sts John and Paul's Rome....with Tim and Tina

Tim and Tina visited the Passionist Generalate community in Rome, located on the Caelian Hill. The grounds look directly across to the Colosseum. These three photos show them

- 1) wondering which book they should next read, from the extensive library of 44,000 books that date back to the 16th century
- 2) viewing the small chapel dedicated to former Passionist St Vincent Strambi, and
- 3) Tina standing in the community chapel.



New chief for Vatican communications department

EWTN News.....3 June 2026



Maria Montserrat Alvarado, president and chief operating officer of EWTN News, will become the first laywoman to lead a Vatican dicastery after Pope Leo XIV appointed her prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for Communication. A dicastery is an administrative department within the Roman Curia, which is the central governing body of the Catholic Church that assists the Pope.

Since 2023, Ms Alvarado has overseen EWTN News's global and multilingual news operations across television, radio, print, digital, and social media platforms. During her tenure, she helped expand the network's international news presence and deepen collaboration across its multilingual platforms. Before joining *EWTN*, Ms Alvarado spent 14 years in leadership roles at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, where she worked extensively on issues related to religious freedom and human dignity.

The Dicastery for Communication was established by Pope Francis in 2015 as part of his reform of the Roman Curia, bringing together the Holy See's various communications entities, including *Vatican News*, Vatican Radio, *L'Osservatore Romano*, Vatican Media, the Vatican Publishing house and printing press, *Filmoteca Vaticana* (the Vatican Film Library), and the Holy See Press Office.

Appointed for a five-year term, the prefect is responsible for overseeing the entire media network of the Holy See. Ms Alvarado succeeds Paolo Ruffini, appointed by Pope Francis in 2018 as the first lay prefect of a dicastery in the Roman Curia. Pope Francis entrusted a growing number of leadership roles in the Vatican to the lay men and women, and several senior appointments for women religious. Ms Alvarado's appointment, effective November 1, continues that development and marks the first time a woman who has not taken religious vows has been appointed to lead a dicastery of the Holy See.



Eggs



Monday June 8th is a public holiday for the King's Birthday, despite the fact that Charles was born on 14th November!

The normal egg delivery will be delayed from Monday to Wednesday June 10th.

St Francis' Wisdom: an 800-Year-Old Message Echoed in Laudato Si'
 A Parish Pastoral Leadership Team Special Event
 Organized for Our Mission Parishes Community

Join Us — and Bring a Friend — for a Joyful, Informative Evening

Year of Faith Reflection Night

Our session will look at the meaning and th responsibility of living in a world that is interconnected. St Francis had a unique appreciation of the beauty of the natural world ... our spirituality needs now to rise to a new understanding and a new commitment of living, with the awe and reverence for life that St Francis had and that Pope Francis promoted through his 2015 encyclical 'Laudato Si' (Fr Brian Traynor CP)

Presenter: Fr Brian Traynor CP

Venue: MacKillop room at St Anthony's Alphington.
 supper will be provided

11 June
7 PM - 9 PM

me@cothsc.org.au
 03 9484 2907
 adminNT@com.org.au

Fr Brian Traynor CP is a Pastoral Priest, currently leader of the Holy Cross Community, in Templestowe Victoria.

Please Register via the TryBooking Link or QR Code
 Register <https://www.trybooking.com/DMPPZ>

Humour

Jim and Tim saw an advertisement in the daily newspaper and bought a mule for \$100. The farmer agreed to deliver the mule the next day. The next morning the farmer drove up and said, "Sorry, fellows, I have some bad news, the mule died last night.."

Jim replied, "Well, then just give us our money back."
 The farmer said, "Can't do that. I went and spent it already."
 Tim said, "OK then, just bring us the dead mule."
 The farmer asked, "What are you gonna do with a dead mule?"
 Jim said, "We'll raffle him off."
 The farmer said, "You can't raffle off a dead mule!"
 Tim said, "Yes we can! We don't have to tell nobody he's dead!"

A couple of weeks later, the farmer ran into Jim and Tim at the local grocery store and asked. "What'd you fellers ever do with that dead mule?" They said, "We raffled him off like we said. We sold 500 tickets for two dollars each and made a profit of \$898."

The farmer said, "Didn't anyone complain?"

Tim said, "Well, no one except the feller who won. He got upset, so we gave him his two dollars back."

The farmer said, "You fellas ought to work for the government!"

Police have confirmed that the man who tragically fell from the roof of an 18th floor Nightclub Was not a bouncer



👉 Exchange Of Text Messages:

Husband: You are negative.

Wife: And you are stubborn, arrogant, a low life, care about no one but yourself and your friends, all you are interested in is your own self, all your life not fulfilled even one of your promises. It is only I who is putting up with such a miser and insensitive man. You good for nothing, fat, ugly man. Even your hair transplant failed.

Husband: I was just informing you that your Covid test is negative.

Wife: Oh.....sorry!

Mahatma Gandhi said If there is an idiot in power, it means those who elected him are well represented.



MY WIFE ASKED ME WHY I SPOKE SO SOFTLY IN THE HOUSE. I SAID I WAS AFRAID MARK ZUCKERBERG WAS LISTENING! SHE LAUGHED. I LAUGHED. ALEXA LAUGHED. SIRI LAUGHED.



"He was very romantic when we first got married, but you know how men change."

Prayers

I received this wonderful news from the beautiful Dawn Heffernan.

Dear Brian.

Our son Dr Peter Heffernan has been on your “Prayers for the sick “ list for 9 months.

In that time he has had open heart surgery, lymphoma, leukaemia, and recently - melanoma on 4 sites. After chemotherapy, and immunotherapy he had a scan last Wednesday. No cancer!

His convalescence will be slow but hopefully steady.
We are so grateful to your congregation for their prayers.

Sincerely,
Dawn Heffernan.



We remember those who have died recently as well as those whose anniversaries occur at this time, especially [Giovanni Micelotta](#) (Marissa’s father), [Salvatore Rao](#) (Mirella’s father), [Marie Ryan](#) (Diane Baker’s sister-in-law), and [Denis Bergin](#). We pray with thanks that all who have died, have found joy in God’s eternal presence.

We also pray for members of our Holy Cross family who are coping with illness and all who care for them, including:

[Gerry Bond](#), [Mary Cogle](#), [Stephen Cogle](#), [Paul Fitzgerald](#), [Dr Peter Heffernan](#), [Pam Storey](#), [Fr Chris Mithen](#), [Bronwyn Ure](#), [David Chai](#), [Lucia Isgro](#), [Marie Spowart](#), [Nina Conti](#), [Carol Battistella](#), [Max McMahan](#), [Cate Sweeney](#), [Rex & Jan Cambrey](#), [Edward Atme](#), [Bob Hallam](#), [Lisa Iverach](#), [Anne Woon](#), [Kate Lenic](#), [Bernadette Owen](#), [Greg Agosta](#), [Luke Norden](#), [Jeanelle Bergin](#), [Denise Egan](#), [Doris Castro](#), [Rod Gorfine](#), [Marilyn Cilmi](#), [Caroline Hagedorn](#), [Maureen Barns](#), , [Alexander Lim](#), [Nancy Reynolds](#), [Caroline Meade](#), [Anne Burke](#), [Phil Drew](#), [Patricia Keeghan](#), [Kate Dunn](#), [Julia Cantone](#), [Peter Barry](#), [Graham Burke](#), [Lesley Yang](#), [Anne Jenkins](#), [Errol Lovett](#), [Helen McLean](#), and [Pam Gartland](#).



Chris will send the link for next Sunday’s Mass, on Saturday.

Brian