

Holy Cross Retreat



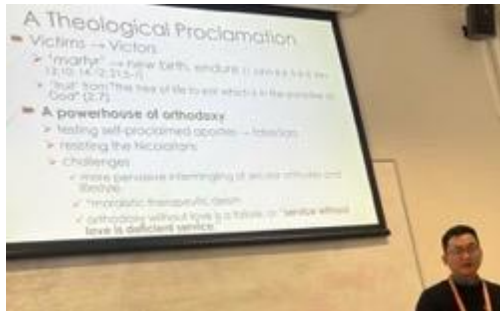
Letter 334

10th July, 2026

Greetings,

Community activities

The community is going through a temporary transition.



JD is still away in Adelaide until Monday. Following his presentation in Adelaide this week he has now been accepted as member of the Australian Catholic Biblical Association. He has done exceptionally well and will continue now to work towards acceptance to study for a doctorate.

Joseph is on holidays in Rabaul, PNG until July 28th.

Tri returned late on Thursday night. It will be good to have him here until July 30th.

Erick left for a Formation seminar in Malang, Indonesia. He was booked on a 7.00am international flight, so that meant leaving Holy Cross at 4.15am. He will be back on July 25th and then after a few days, taking a three-week holiday, travelling to Burundi and Tanzania for two family weddings. He will be back from that trip on August 21st.

Chris is attending the same seminar as Erick, and on Saturday morning, leaving at a similar time to Erick. Chris will be giving a number of presentations at the seminar and to other groups while he is there. He will be back on July 22nd.

I will be away for a week from July 20th, meeting with the local Formation team in Saigon.

Jerome isn't going anywhere. He has told us a few places he is not going to...various aged care homes. When we asked if he was coming to Chris Mithen's 70th ordination celebration last week at Nazareth House, he said he was going, but added *“you blokes will probably leave me there”*

50 years ordained

This Sunday, **Tiernan Doherty** and **John Curtis** will celebrate their 50th ordination with us. Both men served two four year terms as community leaders at Holy Cross, and undertook their formation here. Lunch will follow in the dining room. They may be half a dozen spare seats. Please contact **Joe Curcio** 0419503300

Birthday



It was going to be a quiet birthday, but Erick (with kind intentions) shared the news that I was turning 80 last Saturday. It was wonderful having four of my siblings here for a few days and the acknowledgement at Mass last Sunday was very warm and humbling.

Thank you to everyone who extended greetings personal, by card or email. The community and family shared a meal on Friday night and that was very nice. Erick and I shared a cake made for us. After all that I am a bit behind in my work!



Coffee Cart



There was another large cake on Sunday after Mass to go with the coffee. There was a great atmosphere and a large number of people stayed for a coffee after Mass. Once again, we express thanks for the generous donor who makes these days possible.

Australian Creed

A number of people asked for a copy of the Creed we prayed on Aboriginal Sunday...

I believe in God the Father of us all,
who has given the earth to all people,
and I believe in people as the image of God.

I believe in Jesus Christ,
who came to encourage us and to heal us,
to proclaim the peace of God to humankind.

I believe in the Spirit of God, who works in every man and woman.

I believe in the Church, moved by the Spirit to serve all people.

I believe in Australians
in their courage and spirit of adventure
– in their perseverance and hard work
– in their ordinariness and at-home-ness
– in their black Aboriginal beauty

- in their migrant struggles
- in their search for identity.

I believe in our responsibility for creation

- the trust of every mountain range
- of every forest, of every harbour
- of every city, of every plan to build a future.

I do not believe in the right of the strongest,
nor the power of the oppressors.
I do not believe that I can fight oppression far away
if I tolerate injustice here.

I do not believe that conflict and hunger
are inevitable and peace unattainable.

I do not believe that all suffering is in vain,
Nor that our dreams will remain dreams,
nor that death is the end.

But I dare to believe,
always and in spite of everything in a new humanity;
in God's own dream of a new heaven and a new earth
where justice will flourish, and peace will reign,
in our land, in our world.

*The Australian Creed is taken from the Inclusive Language Project, PO Box 1400,
Toombul Qld.*

Pope uses Spain speech to warn of global 'spiritual and cultural crisis'

*Addressing lawmakers, Leo XIV also highlights migration at a time when Madrid is
bucking European trends (Sam Jones in Madrid. 8th June 2026)*



Pope Leo XIV used an address to the Spanish parliament to warn the world is undergoing “a deep spiritual and cultural crisis” and to urge the international community to tackle the causes and consequences of what he termed “the tragic drama of migration”. In a wide-ranging speech delivered to lawmakers in Madrid, the pontiff also touched on conflict, artificial intelligence, the climate emergency, and the issues of abortion and euthanasia.

“The world is undergoing a deep spiritual and cultural crisis, which manifests itself in multiple forms of violence, polarisation and mutual mistrust,” he said. “Given this context, peace is not just a political aspiration but a true moral need.” The pope told the politicians on Monday that the search for peace would require “diplomatic courage, ethical responsibility” and a determination to solve problems using international law rather than resorting to “the temporary silence” achieved by weapons.

“That is why it is concerning that in various parts of the world – including Europe – rearmament is once again being presented as an almost inevitable response to the fragility of the international landscape,” the pontiff added. “True security, on the other hand, stems from justice, patient dialogue, respect for international law, and a policy capable of prioritising the lives of people over the interests that profit from war.”



Much of his speech, the first such address by a pope to the Spanish parliament, was devoted to migration. Leo intends to highlight the issue on his week-long visit to Spain, which will include meetings in the Canary Islands with people who have taken the perilous route from Africa to Europe.

The pontiff, the first US pope, has already clashed with the Trump administration over its war in Iran and over treatment of migrants. His presence in Spain comes at a



time when the country's socialist-led government is bucking European trends by regularising the status of more than 500,000 undocumented migrants and asylum seekers.

Santiago Abascal, the leader of Spain's far-right Vox party, which last year floated the idea of deporting up to eight million people of foreign origin, including the children of immigrants, has decried the regularisation scheme as part of a government plan to accelerate an immigrant “invasion”.

Vox is currently seeking to enact a “national priority” policy that favours Spaniards over foreign-born people when it comes to housing and benefits, in the regions where it governs in coalition with the conservative People's party.



Leo told Spanish MPs and senators that countries had a moral duty to accept and protect migrants, saying: “The tragic drama of migration ... challenges the conscience of nations and the ethical foundation of the international order. Numerous men, women, and children are forced, often by dramatic circumstances, to leave their communities and abandon loved ones, their histories, and their connections.”

Note: This above image is 'The Eric Drama of Migration' by Jacob Lawrence



Pope Leo added that the “universal principle of the equal dignity of all human beings” was violated if people found themselves discriminated against “because of their national, ethnic, religious or linguistic origin, or because of their economic or social status”.

Leo went on to call for the creation of “safe and legal pathways” and for “real possibilities of integration”. But he also urged the international community to tackle the root causes of migration by working to ensure “that no one has to leave their home because of a lack of peace, security or decent living conditions, because of economic inequalities, or because of the effects of the climate crisis”.

The pontiff, whose address met with a seven-minute ovation, also pointedly reminded his audience of the church’s teaching on the sanctity of human life. “All human life must be recognised and protected from conception to natural death, in every circumstance of its existence,” said Leo. “When this certainty is obscured, the most vulnerable become the first victims, and the law loses its deepest meaning: to serve and protect every person. Therefore, the moral greatness of a nation is shown, above all, in its capacity to accompany, protect, and love those lives that are most fragile.”

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Lampedusa, Italy

Pope Leo walked through the "Door of Europe," an art installation on Italy's southernmost beach dedicated to migrants.

By Anthony Faiola and Stefano Pitrelli



On July 4th, Pope Leo XIV defended the dignity of migrants during a visit to the Italian island of Lampedusa, where the Mediterranean waters beckon as a pathway of hope to a better life in Europe but also have become a graveyard for many who die trying. Leo’s appearance commemorated a landmark visit to Lampedusa on July 8, 2013, by his

predecessor, Pope Francis, who used his first pastoral trip away from Rome to signal the plight of migrants as an increasingly prominent issue for the global Catholic Church.

For Leo, the first U.S.-born pontiff, there was added symbolism in making his own statement about migrants on July 4th — what Vatican officials described as a “counterpoint” to the migrant crackdown in the United States, which Leo has called “inhuman.” Leo laid a bouquet of white and yellow flowers at the simply marked graves of migrants drowned at sea, and held an outdoor Mass, where he invoked the parable of the Good Samaritan and sought to inspire a nation, a continent and a world increasingly weary of mass migration. “The Gospel resounds where peoples meet, people welcome one another, their lives intertwine and different cultures engage in dialogue,” Leo said. “It falls silent, however, when each person makes him or herself an island.”



The pope’s Lampedusa trip on the 250th anniversary of American independence came as the Vatican released a special message from Leo to the U.S., in which he declared that “defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants. In every generation, those who have arrived seeking freedom, opportunity and a place to belong have helped to shape the nation’s character,” Leo said. “To receive them with compassion and generosity is not only an act of charity, but also a recognition of the dignity that belongs to every human person.”

Over the years, Lampedusa became a symbol of mass migration into Europe. In the era of Francis’s trip, Italy more broadly but Lampedusa especially rallied to their cause, so much so that the island’s 6,500 residents were collectively nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize. But Leo has arrived in another age — one in which this island is tiring of migrant waves and Italy and European Union countries have taken an ever-harsher approach toward irregular migration, while President Donald Trump also conducts a major crackdown in the United States.



“Just what do they expect us to do?... Sleep in a barn or something?”

“The logic of reception is getting narrower everywhere,” said Archbishop Alessandro Damiano of Agrigento, which includes Lampedusa. “The logic, today, is rejection.” Italy, under new E.U. rules backed by the country’s right-wing Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, last month began funnelling some migrants who arrive here into “fast track” processing meant to rapidly weed out and deport unsuccessful asylum petitioners.

Controversial deals with Libya and Tunisia — countries with brutal human rights records — have intensified aggressive operations to prevent migrants from ever leaving the African coast, sparking a sharp decline in arrivals.

Meanwhile, increased Italian legal restrictions on nongovernmental aid and advocacy organizations have reduced private rescue operations of migrant boats at sea. On the azure shores and tourist-trekking streets of Lampedusa, about 160 kilometres from the African shore — far closer to Tunisia than to the Italian mainland — migrants for years mingled with locals, using a don't-ask, don't-tell



“hole” in a fence of a holding centre to come and go. That changed during the 2020 pandemic, residents say. Migrants now arrive at a militarized Favalaro Pier, rechristened Saturday by Leo as the “Pope Francis Pier,” and are taken to a camp for fingerprinting and processing. Most are transported off the island within 48 hours.

During an outdoor Mass, Leo drew attention to policies separating tourists, locals and migrants. “It then seems as though an invisible wall has to be erected between the sea of shipwrecked migrants and the vacationers,” Leo said Saturday. “Have the courage to think differently.” The pope also said: “We must choose whether to fuel the mentality of force — even if only through indifference, cynicism, lies or hatred — or to preserve the mindset of peace with truth, moderation, closeness and care.”



Francesca Saccomandi, field coordinator of Mediterranean Hope, a migrant aid charity run by evangelical churches, said the toilets at the pier have not worked for some time, and that migrants are essentially being corralled from the docks to a closed holding centre. “It’s not possible for the people to even clean their hands or to flush the toilet when they first arrive,” Saccomandi said. She added: “What I really hope is that the visit of the Pope can shed a light on this situation, because what we are doing is not welcoming people. We are controlling them. And we are funding the people who push them back, who torture them in Tunisia and Libya. And we are [putting in place] stricter procedures for them in order to make it more difficult for them to come.”

Giusi Nicolini, Lampedusa’s mayor from 2012 to 2017 who became a face of migrant solidarity here and was greeted by President Barack Obama at the White House, lamented what she called a shift away from welcoming attitudes that once prevailed.

“It pains me,” Nicolini said. “But is it not just Lampedusa. The winds have changed.” “The Lampedusans now will welcome the pope ... but they are also convinced they’ve done their duty, and that perhaps it would also be fair if this weight no longer fell on their shoulders,” she added. The new deterrents seem to be working. Through late June, irregular arrivals in Italy had fallen 53 percent compared to last year, to 13,511, although recorded deaths rose by 59 percent, to 863 from 544.

This was largely due to bad weather and fewer, but more overcrowded, boats. although recorded deaths rose by 59 percent, to 863 from 544, largely due to bad weather and fewer, but more overcrowded, boats. The new fast-track system is meant to weed out economic migrants, from countries like Bangladesh and North African



nations, who have very low chances of winning asylum. A day before the pope arrived, the migrant “hot spot” — or holding centre — on Lampedusa contained roughly 120 migrants, far fewer than the average in peak years, and almost all from countries with relatively high rates of asylum approval, including Sudan and Eritrea.



On Lampedusa, a measure of fatigue has built for years. The deputy mayor decried migrant arrivals during a short-lived surge in 2023 as “an invasion.” Ifilippo Mannino, the current centre-right mayor, has defended new rules and tougher national policies. He wants to encourage legal pathways — an approach Leo has also endorsed. “I don’t call it an invasion

because an invasion is like saying, the barbarians want to conquer a territory,” he said. “But it is logical that this island could not manage all of this alone. It is logical that strong help was needed, first and foremost from the national government.”



Inspired by Francis, Italy’s then-centre-left government in 2013 undertook a massive government effort — Mare Nostrum, Our Sea — that saw military vessels actively search out migrant boats and safely bring ashore some 150,000 people, mostly from Africa and the Middle East. Locals opened their homes to the families of dead migrants coming to collect remains and aided in relief and rescue efforts.

Italians remain more tolerant of migrants than some European countries — particularly in Scandinavia, where souring public opinion has been accompanied by increasingly harsh measures. Meloni has also sought to balance efforts to limit irregular migration by pledging hundreds of thousands of legal work visas for industries such as elderly care and agriculture that rely on overseas workers. Ultraconservative former army general, Roberto Vannacci, insists that Meloni and her allies are not tough enough. He has adopted an overtly anti-migrant tone, calling for “remigration.” This is a concept popularized by the Austrian far right, and repeated by Trump, that envisions mass expulsions of migrants as well as naturalized citizens deemed resistant to assimilation.



"People have gotten sick of it," Capello said of the migrant waves. "We are a place of reception, but we also suffer. They are giving too much attention to [migrants] when they should be dealing with lack of proper health care and high prices for the residents of Lampedusa."

'It is the right for each population to defend its own culture and civilization," Vannacci said in an interview with The Washington Post. "You cannot accept that different foreign groups are growing more than a certain percentage, especially if they are coming from a noncompatible culture in your country."

Leo on Saturday echoed the calls by Francis for migrant dignity and reception, but also stressed that they should integrate and rethink irregular trips with traffickers. Francis often voiced similar reasoning, but Leo's words have been interpreted as more nuanced. "Europe is capable of addressing the crisis in a comprehensive manner, integrating immediate relief efforts into a long-term strategic plan capable of receiving, protecting, supporting and integrating migrants," Leo said, "while at the same time assisting developing countries so that no one is forced to emigrate."



At Mass, Leo said that "before any intellectual consideration or ideological conviction, the encounter with those who lie before us, stripped of everything, calls us to be close to them. Those who have lost their lives in this sea are victims both of decisions that were made and of decisions that were not made," the pope said, citing "indifference to the common good and corruption in their countries of origin; a global economic system that generates poverty and exclusion; fear that fuels prejudice and contempt; the belief that such problems do not concern us; the criminal calculations of those who profit from the suffering of others; the slow and difficult transition from mere emergency management to the development of comprehensive and shared policies."

In a letter addressed to the American people and published by the Vatican July 4, unrelated to his visit to Lampedusa, Leo wrote that "defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants, whose hopes, sacrifices and contribution have formed part of the history of this country from its very beginning. In every generation, those who have arrived seeking freedom, opportunity and a place to belong have helped to shape the nation's character," he wrote. "To receive them with compassion and generosity is not only an act of charity, but also a recognition of the dignity that belongs to every human person."

✨ EB FUNDRAISING EVENT 2026 ✨

Supporting Children Living with Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB)

In support of the work of much loved Holy Cross personality, [Milly Mazzei](#)

Event Details

DATE: Saturday, 29th August 2026

LOCATION: Dining Room,
Holy Cross Centre.
207 Serpells Road, Templestowe 3106.

COST: \$25 per person Raffle prizes to be won

TIME: 2pm – 5pm.... a glass of bubbles on arrival

GUEST SPEAKER: 3PM

***Simone Baird** – National Family Coordinator for Debra Australia*

💛 ABOUT MILLY'S WORK

For more than 16 years, Milly Mazzei has dedicated herself to supporting vulnerable children in Vietnam. Her journey began in the South, partnering with Helping Orphans Worldwide to assist orphans and individuals affected by HIV/AIDS, full-blown AIDS, tuberculosis, and other serious health challenges.

Her work later expanded to northern Vietnam through the charity Niem Tin, where she encountered the profound challenges faced by children living with Epidermolysis Bullosa — a rare, painful, and life-limiting skin condition. Together with her friend Jane, Milly has helped transform basic support into an annual program of care, education, and empowerment for EB families.

Your support helps provide essential medical supplies, treatment, and compassionate care for these children.

RSVP by 10 August 2026 to assist with catering requirements and confirm final attendance numbers.

Tina M: 0439 034 116

Email: tinam@ozfam.com.au

Milly M: 0431 212 738

Email: millymazzei@hotmail.com

Every dollar makes a difference — even a little goes a long way.

Humour

1. A police officer in a small town stopped a motorist who was speeding down the Main Street. "Officer, the man began, I can explain....."

"Just be quiet", snapped the officer. "I'm going to let you cool your heels in jail until the chief gets back". "But, officer, I just wanted to say...."

"And I said to be quiet. You're going to wait in jail for the chief".

A few hours later the officer looked in on his prisoner and said, "It's lucky for you that the chief's at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back".

"Don't count on it", answered the prisoner. "I'm the groom".

2. Murphy walked into work with both ears bandaged up.

The boss asked, "What happened to your ears"

Murphy said, "Yesterday I was ironing a shirt when the phone rang, and I accidentally answered the iron."

The boss said, "Well that explains one ear but what happened to your other ear."

Murphy said "I had to call the doctor"

Two prison guards were changing shifts in the morning. "You know that prisoner 185 ran off in the night" said the retiring guard. The other guard sighed, "Ah finally. No more of that damn hammering".

Two windmills were sitting on a hill. One asks the other, "Do you have a favourite song?" The other replies, "Well... all my life I have been a heavy metal fan."

Someone stole my Microsoft Office and they're gonna pay. You have my word.

A Roman legionnaire walked into a bar, held up two fingers and said, "Five beers, please".

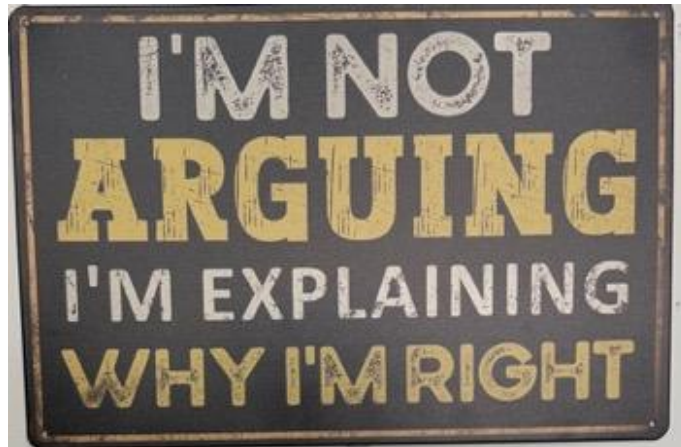
Relationships are like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y? Why did the old man fall down the well? He couldn't see that well.

You know that tingly feeling you get when you love someone? That's common sense leaving your body.

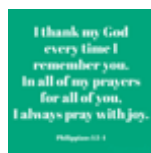
If you think nobody cares whether you're alive, try missing a couple of home loan repayments.

I tried to catch a frog yesterday. Mist.

Working in a mirror factory is something I can totally see myself doing.
 Money talks but all mine says is goodbye.
 Money can't buy happiness, but it keeps the kids in touch.
 Someone stole my mood ring yesterday. I still don't know how I feel about it.



Prayers



We remember that those who have died recently especially We also remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time, especially [Maeve Reardon](#), [Paul Matisons](#) (Gloria's husband), and [Carolyn Thompson](#),

We pray too for members of our Holy Cross family who are coping with illness including many not listed here, and all who care for them:

We remember...

[Nada Atme](#) (Liz Atme's sister -n-law), [Stephen Cogle](#), [Paul Fitzgerald](#), [Pam Storey](#), [Dr Peter Heffernan](#), [Fr Brendan Lane](#), [Nicki Di Giantomasso](#), [Carol Battistella](#), [Fr Chris Mithen](#), [Beth Scott](#), [Max McMahon](#), [Lucia Isgro](#), , [Bernadette Owen](#), [Edward Atme](#), [Marie Spowart Jan Cambrey](#), [Bob Hallam](#), [Alexander Lim](#), [Greg Agosta](#), [David Chai](#), [Nina Conti](#), [Anne Woon](#), [Lisa Iverach](#), [Marilyn Cilmi](#), [Caroline Hagedorn](#), [Jeanelle Bergin](#), [Maureen Barns](#), [Caroline Meade](#), [Doris Castro](#), [Denise Egan](#), [Luke Norden](#), [Anne Burke](#), [Rod Gorfine](#), [Nancy Reynolds](#), [Kate Lenic](#), [Patricia Keeghan](#), [Graham Burke](#), [Pam Gartland](#), [Phil Drew](#), [Peter Barry](#), [Lesley Yang](#), [Anne Jenkins](#). [Julia Cantone](#), [Kate Dunn](#), [Helen McLean](#), and [Errol Lovett](#).



[Chris](#) will record this Sunday's Mass early and he will send the link.

Brian