

Holy Cross Retreat

Letter 335

17th July, 2026



Greetings,

Community activities

The community has been small this week. **Tri** returned late on Thursday night so after Chris left for Indonesia at 4.15am on Saturday, only Tri, Jerome and myself were resident. We did have though, Tiernan Doherty arrive that afternoon, and John Curtis had arrived on Thursday. **JD** returned on Monday this week, the same day John left to return to Sydney. Tiernan left the following day.

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

Chris (as a presenter) and **Erick** (as a participant) are attending a Passionist Formation seminar in Malang, Indonesia for PASPAC formators (Passionists within Asian Pacific countries).



On Monday this coming week I will head to Saigon for a meeting with our local formator who return from Indonesia the same day. That will leave only Jerome, JD and Tri at home until Chris returns on Wednesday.

50 years ordained

Last Sunday it was very special to have **Tiernan Doherty** and **John Curtis** celebrate 10.00am Mass on the occasion of their 50th anniversary of ordination. John's homily reflected on the reckless (prodigal) love of God expressed so beautifully by Jesus in the parable of the sower. Many commented on John's homily as a testament to his priestly life. Having grown up on a farm in Coolamon, in the Riverina district, John knows how precious seed is and how careful a farmer is where he sows. For him then, to reflect on a farmer casting seed far and wide where some fell among thorns, pathways and rocky ground, immediately challenges common practice.

Just as the farmer in Jesus' famous parable cared little where the seed fell, so God's love is spread everywhere and although it will sometimes result in a smaller harvest than if it all were planted in rich soil, God is happy with whatever growth results. That is a most valuable lesson for us to reflect on personally and to apply to those we might consider 'less productive' in terms of faith.

Likewise, many people were impressed by the way Tiernan prayerfully led the Eucharistic celebration and in particular by the contemplative way he prayed the wonderful Prayer of St Bonaventure, after communion. This prayer is printed below, on the left. Both Tiernan and John have served as parish priests, community leaders and spiritual guides. Both have served outside Australia (John in Papua New Guinea, and Tiernan in London). Our Province salutes their service both inside and beyond the communities in which they have lived and from which they have ministered.

PRAYER OF SAINT BONAVENTURE

St. Bonaventure

When we pray, the voice of the heart must be heard more than that proceeding from the mouth.

Christ on the Cross bows His head,
waiting for you,
that He may kiss you;
He stretches out His arms,
that He may embrace you;
His hands are open,
that He may enrich you;
His body is spread out,
that He may give Himself totally;
His feet are nailed,
that He may stay there;
His side is open for you,
that He may let you enter there.

Pierce, Lord Jesus, my inmost soul with the most joyous and healing wound of your love, and with true, calm and holy apostolic charity, that my soul may always languish and melt with entire love and longing for You, may yearn for You and may long to be dissolved and to be with You.

Grant that my soul may hunger after You, the Bread of Angels, the refreshment of holy souls, our daily and super substantial bread, savour every delightful taste.

May my heart ever hunger after and feed upon You, and may my inmost soul be filled with your sweetness; may it ever thirst for You, the fountain of life, the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure, the

fullness of the house of God; may it ever compass You, seek You, find You, run to You, come up to You; meditate on You speak of You, and do all for the praise and glory of Your name, with humility and discretion, with love and delight, with ease and affection, with perseverance to the end; and may You alone ever my hope, my entire confidence, my riches, my delight, my pleasure, my joy, my rest and tranquility, my peace, my sweetness, my food, my refreshment, my refuge, my help,

my wisdom, my portion, my possession, my treasure; in Whom may my mind and my heart be ever fixed and firm and rooted immovably. Amen.

Master List

Tim keeps a master list of names, email addresses and phone numbers, which is helpful at time for us when we need to contact someone. If you would like your name added, could you contact Tim, because he is updating the list. Thank you.

Tim Horlock: horlocktim1@gmail.com

Tree removal



Thanks to Peter Norman's sharp eye, we were able to identify the danger one of our pine trees posed to a neighbour's house at the back of Bali Hi Blvd.

On Saturday morning the tree was felled with amazing precision. The lower part of the trunk was chain-sawed into 30 centimetre cuts, and

Maurice Molan and Andrew Concannon have offered to cut up the remaining limbs.



I don't know how I finished up in the photo below, with the two arborists, since all I did was observe, but we were glad to have them photographed after they did such a great job at short notice.

We have two fire officers at Holy Cross, - Chris (who is in Indonesia), and Vince Celistino. Vince offered to burn the huge pile of tree branches we have gathered over the past six months. See the photo on the next page, which Tri took on Wednesday morning. The big pile is gone! Vince has also burned the



‘leftovers’ from the recently fallen tree.



A bit of a curve

A comment was made last week, that it might be possible to arrange our chapel chairs with a bit of a curve. New ideas deserve consideration, so I thought ‘let’s try it’. The photo below shows what it is like, so the next thing will be to see what people think of it on Sunday. Please let us know.



Pope Leo’s strategy for overcoming a binary world (Joseph Borg)

Philosophically, a binary world refers to "binary thinking"—the human tendency to eliminate grey areas and split complex ideas into rigid opposites Pope Leo urges the world to move beyond binary readings of history and social realities, advocating a culture of dialogue and relationship-building as the path to peace and shared prosperity. July 9, 2026

I would rather have questions
that can't be answered than
answers that can't be questioned.

From migration to governance, from national memory to the daily ethics of public life, from armed conflicts to appeals for peace, from racism to multiculturalism, from conservative to liberal positions, the world is confronted by questions that defy easy answers. The ethnocentric and nativist right-wing forces – often, unfortunately, masquerading as the paladins of Christianity – battle against a “woke” mentality that generally treats tradition with disdain and often scapegoats Christianity in a reductionist reading of history. Populism is the ever-growing solution many political leaders offer.

Public conversation too often collapses these complex questions into binaries: for or against, loyal or disloyal, progress or decline, ‘with us’ or ‘against us’. Contemporary culture is increasingly becoming an either/or culture that confronts and excludes, rather than one that dialogues and includes. A glance at the current battleground, aka social media, is enough. There is no middle ground. On every issue, each side claims to hold the “right” and “only” solution. In the midst of this noise, Pope Leo — speaking in Madrid, Spain — offered a different strategy, one that cuts through the habit of binaries.

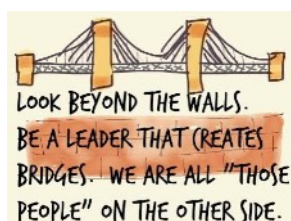


What he told diplomats and political leaders on June 6 at the royal palace could just as easily have been addressed to the rest of the world, because his words address an international malady. “For the love of truth, I invite everyone to set aside the divisive and polarizing narratives of your societal reality and history, so as to overcome sterile simplifications through the fruitful appreciation of complexity.” His warning was simple yet forceful: simplifications are sterile.

Societies that reduce every question to a slogan lose the ability to understand themselves. This, to a certain extent, recalls political philosopher Isaiah Berlin’s (1909-1997) image of hedgehog societies — those that cling to one big idea, one big fear, and one big enemy, while ignoring the many-layered reality before them. Appreciating and studying complexity, learning not to deny it but to embrace it as a blessing, and fleeing from identity-based approaches that seem to explain everything yet only fill the world with ‘ghosts’ and enemies are the tasks of those who are heirs to a great history.”

In the cacophony of contrasting voices — parallel monologues without dialogue — how many are ready to listen, reflect, and act on the Pope’s address?

One of the main obstacles to progress is that many people often prioritize the argument over the person making it. This turns reality and living together upside down. We accord people the dignity we believe their arguments deserve — not the other way around.

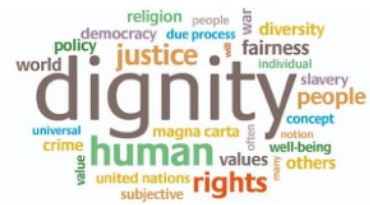


If an argument is not, in our view, dignified, then the person making it is not dignified either. In such a scenario, people build walls, not bridges; a silo, not an agora.

“In Magnifica Humanitas, Leo states that every generation must choose whether to shape history toward dignity, justice, and fraternity or to allow fear and simplification to shape it for us. Which option will

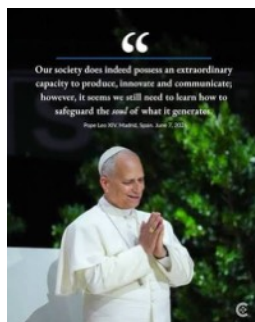
Church members choose?” A person’s mistakes (and by ‘mistakes’ many understand ‘something we do not like’) should not define that person’s dignity. Dignity belongs to every human being simply by the fact of

“having been willed, created, and loved by God,” Leo told prisoners in Barcelona.



He raised the stakes further when addressing parliamentarians in Madrid: the dignity of the person “precedes any concession of the State” and cannot depend on shifting majorities. At the Movistar Arena in Madrid, Leo proposed a method to

“overcome sterile simplifications through the fruitful appreciation of complexity.”



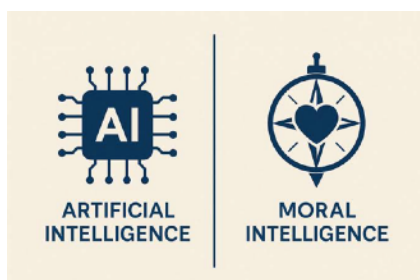
He said, “Dear friends: I invite you, then, to become new protagonists in weaving new networks that harmonize all areas of life. To weave a renewed society in which time is imbued with eternity, culture safeguards memory and fosters dialogue, education promotes the search for truth with a critical spirit, art awakens wonder and generates noble emotions, business recognizes the dignity of the person, and work remains a source of hope.”

Easy? Definitely not. But the alternative would be disastrous.



It is a paradox that the technology meant to unite us separates us into opposing silos. New technologies have become a dominant environment where prejudice is inflamed and critical thought weakens. In Madrid, he said, “New technologies have created an artificial environment in which our fundamental choices are put to the test, prejudices are magnified, critical thinking is weakened, and dominating interests spread death wishes.”

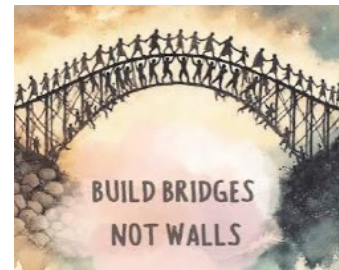
He explained the risk in his recent encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, published on



May 25. “Each generation inherits the task of shaping its own era, of guiding history toward a world where the dignity of every person is safeguarded, justice is promoted, and fraternity is made possible. Yet every era also runs the risk of creating an inhumane and more unjust world” (para. 1).

Pope Leo's analysis and strategy offer us a dignified path forward. Nations cannot afford to keep navigating their future with the blunt tools of suspicion, tribalism, and instant certainty. The challenges before humanity — demographic, cultural, ethical, and technological — demand a deeper moral intelligence than the dictates of the algorithm or the uncouth instincts of the crowd.

The Pope's strategy for the fruitful appreciation of complexity is not an abstract ideal; it is the only way forward for humanity to flourish. Church members need to embrace this strategy by prioritizing people over positions, dignity over disagreement, and truth over tribe. It asks Church members to build bridges where habit tells them and those around them to build walls.



In *Magnifica Humanitas*, Leo states that every generation must choose whether to shape history toward dignity, justice, and fraternity or to allow fear and simplification to shape it for us. Which option will Church members choose?

Editors' note: This op-ed was first published in the Sunday Times of Malta and has been revised and adapted by the author for Global Catholic.

Vacare Deo: The papal vacation and the lost art of rest

Pope Leo XIV's plans for summer retreat offer a profound lesson: true vacation is not an escape from life but a spiritual practice that restores body, mind, and soul to God.

Antonio Spadaro SJ

On Sunday, July 5, only hours after returning from Lampedusa, Leo XIV appeared on the balcony of the Apostolic Palace in Castel Gandolfo and told the faithful gathered in Piazza della Libertà that he would spend the coming weeks with “a little rest, a little prayer, a little reading, and, we hope, a little sport.” That fourfold “a little” deserves attention. It is neither the rhetoric of heroic withdrawal nor the rhetoric of productivity disguised as a pause. It is a grammar of measure: rest as a composition of elements—body, mind, and spirit—none of them made absolute.

Pope Francis always lived it in his own way: listening to music, meeting people, and reading. This suited his rhythm. And it was precisely in that rest that the ideas, intuitions, and inspirations of his ministry ripened. A Latin word illuminates all of this: *vacare*, from which comes ‘vacation.’ *Vacare* means to be empty, free, and available. The monks spoke of *vacare Deo*: to be free for God.

Authentic vacation, then, is not a time filled with distractions, but a time emptied out so that something—or Someone—can dwell in it. The seventh day of creation is not an appendix to creation: it is its fulfilment. God rests, and in that rest he gives the world its final form. The Sabbath does not celebrate exhaustion but contemplation: the world is good; one can stop



God instituted the Sabbath that it might be a day of cessation from labor, a day of rest and peace in which to contemplate God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth.

producing it.



Jesus himself says to his disciples, after their mission:

“Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a little” (Mark 6:31). Here, too, a “little.” And here, too, rest is not flight: it is a return to the origin, a being with Him, and a recovery of identity before activity. We know

how the scene ends: the crowd arrives ahead of them, and compassion wins out over the plan.

Christian rest is never a fortress. But it remains a demand, almost a commandment: whoever cannot stop ends up believing that the world depends on them. Rest is an act of theological humility. Experience is a form of breathing: we inhale the world around us and give it back transformed into visions and understandings. Vacation is the exhalation of a life that for months has done nothing but inhale. Whoever never exhales suffocates. Spirituality does not inhabit a time set apart from ordinary life: it inhabits rhythm, alternation, and the pause that gives shape to sound, as in music. This is why rest is not the opposite of spiritual life: it is one of its essential syllables.

Our era, however, has a specific problem with rest. We live in a digital environment—vacations become content to post about; free time is measured, tracked, and



optimized. The algorithm knows no Sabbath. *Magnifica Humanitas*, Leo XIV’s encyclical on artificial intelligence, reminds us that the human exceeds all calculation. Rest may be the most incalculable experience we have left: it produces nothing, yields nothing, and measures nothing. For precisely that reason, it is

precious and must be defended. To unplug is not to desert the world: it is to refuse to let the world reduce us to a function. A vacation without some form of disconnection risks becoming merely low-intensity work.

And then there is the body. Leo XIV spoke of sport, and we know of his passion for swimming and tennis. Christian faith is faith in the Incarnation: the body is not the container of the soul but the place where the spirit expresses itself.

Vacation restores the body to its truth that it is not a performance machine but a threshold of wonder.



Finally, there is reading, the third element of the papal program. To read on vacation is not to kill time: it is to dilate it. A novel, a poem, opens rooms in us that the calendar had kept shut. Culture is not an ornament of rest: it is rest made fruitful, the highest sense of *otium*, the Latin word denoting the time Romans deliberately set aside from business and

public life. From this word comes negotiation, *negotium*, used in business. *Otium* comes first; work is its negation, not the other way around. We have forgotten this.

Castel Gandolfo, with its volcanic lake and gardens, will be, for three weeks, the visible sign of all this. A Pope who plays sports, reads, and prays tells the world that a person is not defined by what he produces. In a time of wars and technological acceleration, this “little rest” is not a parenthesis but, in its own way, a prophecy: to empty time a little, so that life may come to inhabit it again.



Sugar origins



Rebecca Dzombak reported in the The New York Times that a sugar molecule has been detected in interstellar space, providing an important clue about the origins of sugar on Earth and possibly the rise of life. Sugar’s origins on Earth are mysterious. Scientists know it must have been present very early on, because it is a necessity for life to arise. But lab experiments to recreate the necessary chemical conditions have repeatedly failed to create these molecules. So how did sugar get here?

Scientists think it could have been delivered to Earth by asteroid and comet impacts early in the planet’s history, because several kinds of sugars, including glucose and ribose, have been found on asteroids and meteorites. The question of where these sugars came from before that, went unanswered. In recent years there has been reason for optimism. The most recent find has discovered a sugar found in raspberries.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8TmwkxkFxc>

Fundraiser Event (August 29th)

Supporting Children Living with Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB)

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

DATE: Saturday, **29th August 2026**

LOCATION: Dining Room, Holy Cross

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

TIME: 2.00pm – 5.00pm.... a glass of bubbles on arrival

GUEST SPEAKER: 3PM

Simone Baird – National Family Coordinator for Debra Australia

MILLY'S WORK

For more than 16 years, Milly Mazzei has dedicated herself to supporting vulnerable children in Vietnam. She has partnered with 'Helping Orphans Worldwide' assisting orphans and individuals affected by HIV/AIDS, fullblown AIDS, TB and other serious health issues.

In northern Vietnam through the charity 'Niem Tin', Milly she encountered children living with Epidermolysis Bullosa — a rare, painful, and lifelimiting skin condition. She has helped transform basic support into an annual program of care, education, and empowerment for EB families.

Our support will 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

CTC Invitation



On Saturday, 25 July, Catholic Theological College will open its doors to the public as part of the 2026 Open House Melbourne Weekend from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm,

The theme this year is *Generous City—Places that give more than they take*. Generous City invites us to open doors, welcome everyone, and share spaces, knowledge, and opportunities. All public areas (Level 2 and 3 Foyer, Bluestone hallways and stairwell to the Chapel), the Treacy Boardroom, Chapel, Mannix Library and the internal garden areas will be open to the public

Humour

- Billy asked, "Dad, are we pyromaniacs?" Dad replied, "Yes, we arson"
- What do you call a pig with laryngitis? Disgruntled
- Why do bees stay in their hives during winter? Swarm
- If you're bad at haggling, you'll end up paying the price
- Just so everyone was clear, Betty put her glasses on
- A commander walked into a bar and ordered everyone around
- Mary lost my job as a stage designer. She left without making a scene
- Never buy flowers from a monk. Only you can prevent florist friars
- How much did the pirate pay to get his ears pierced? A buccaneer
- The best way to get back on your feet is to miss two car repayments

- Never trust an electrician with no eyebrows.
- Bruno just burned 1,200 calories. He forgot the pizza in the oven.
- Tony relabelled all of the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet, but the thyme is cumin.

Richard asked a supermarket employee where they kept the canned peaches. He said, "I'll see" and he walked away. He asked another and she also said, "I'll see" and she walked away. In the end, Richard gave up and found them in aisle C.

A guy walked into a lumberyard and asked for some 4 x 2's. The clerk said, how long do you want them? The guy answers, a long time, we're going to build a house.

Jack told his physical therapist that he broke my arm in two (2) places. The therapist told me to stop going to those places.

When Suzy was a kid, she used to watch the Wizard of Oz and wondered how someone could talk if they didn't have a brain. Then she got Facebook!

Driver: What am I supposed to do with this speeding ticket?

Officer: Keep it. When you collect four of them, you get a bicycle.

Joe went to see the doctor about his short-term memory loss. The first thing the doctor did was made Joe pay in advance!

A guest ordering at a restaurant asked the waiter, "Do you think you could bring me what that gentleman over there is having?" The waiter looked at him sternly and said, "No sir, I'm sure he wants to eat it himself".

In a Chinese restaurant: a man pointed at the menu and asked. "Sorry, how do you pronounce that?" The Chinese waiter replied. "Number 37".

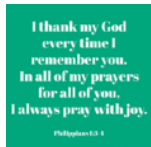
Joseph celebrating the feast of Pete Te Rot on July 7th, with Cardinal John Ribat



Happy Birthday

Gerald Quinn turns 88 tomorrow...congratulations.

Prayers



We remember that those who have died recently especially We also remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time, especially [John Mignone \(Tony's father\)](#), [Maree Metcalfe \(Bernard's wife\)](#), [Concetta Minichilli \(Maria's mother & Tina's grandmother\)](#), [Simon Raffin](#), [Nola Bennetto](#), [Marjorie Flew](#), and [Tina Southwell \(Stephen Malcher's partner\)](#),

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 \(Liz Atme's sister -in-law\)](#), [Stephen Cogle](#), [Paul Fitzgerald](#), [Pam Storey](#), [Greg Turney](#), [Dr Peter Heffernan](#), [Fr Brendan Lane](#), [Nicki Di Giantomasso](#), [Beth Scott](#), [Carol Battistella](#), [Fr Chris Mithen](#), [Max McMahon](#), [Lucia Isgro](#), [Bernadette Owen](#), [Edward Atme](#), [Marie Spowart](#), [Jan Cambrey](#), [Bob Hallam](#), [Alexander Lim](#), [Nina Conti](#), [Greg Agosta](#), [David Chai](#), [Anne Woon](#), [Lisa Iverach](#), [Marilyn Cilmi](#), [Doris Castro](#), [Caroline Hagedorn](#), [Jeanelle Bergin](#), [Maureen Barns](#), [Caroline Meade](#), [Denise Egan](#), [Luke Norden](#), [Anne Burke](#), [Rod Gorfine](#), [Nancy Reynolds](#), [Patricia Keeghan](#), [Kate Lenic](#), [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