

## Passionist Family Group Newsletter – 5 July 2026



### Reflection

The readings this week remind us that God's generosity is revealed not through domination or brute force, but through gentleness, humility, and mercy. This message speaks directly to the world we are living in. Across many countries, we are seeing a renewed hunger for power, status, and control. Too often, this has led to suspicion of outsiders, hostility toward refugees, and indifference toward people whose homelands have been devastated by war and violence.

The result is a deep imbalance of power and a political culture increasingly marked by polarisation and distrust. Many people are left with homes and lives reduced to rubble, while natural disasters add further suffering and displacement. In other places, the rising cost of living leaves families struggling to make ends meet. At the same time, a small number profit from arms sales, conflict, and the manipulation of markets.

This is our world, and each day we hear cries of loss, disbelief, and sadness. Our hope and faith are tested as we try to understand these powerful forces and our place within them. One temptation is to give up, or to ask where God is, expecting God simply to fix what is broken. Yet we are also challenged to recognise how much of this suffering has been caused by greed, pride, abuse of power, and a dog-eat-dog way of living. Once again in our planet's history, we see the destructive effects of humanity when power is used without humility and responsibility.

It is understandable to feel overwhelmed and lost. So how do we become people of humility and gentleness in such a world? How do we reach into the darkness with open arms and hear again the words of Jesus: "Come to me, all you who are overburdened..."? This is not a call to escape reality. It is a call to hand us over to God and to act in the same spirit with those around us. The path required of us is to live human and loving lives: lives that build others up, affirm that every person matters, reach out in service, and engage with compassion and forgiveness.

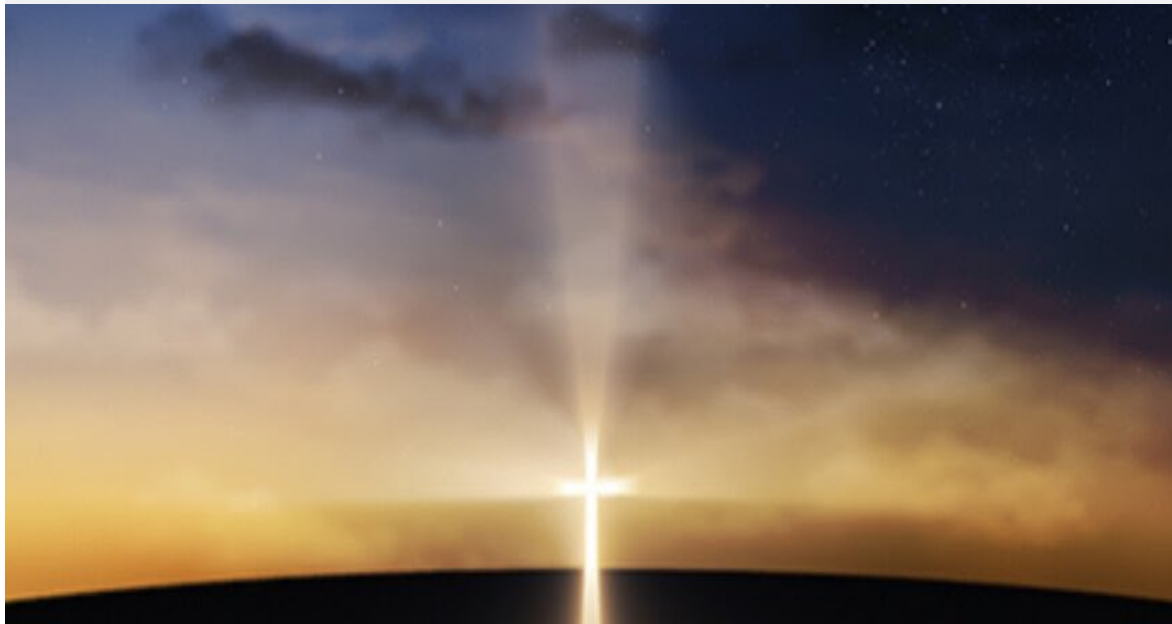
Our humanity may tell us that, while this sounds honourable, we will still be crushed by the powerful. Yet if enough of us choose the way of Jesus, we create the possibility of living and acting differently. We discover that we are not alone, and that gentleness shared by many can become a real force for hope.

The kingship of Jesus—of God—is not built on power or wealth. It is a way of peace, humility, and generosity. It asks us to see what is within us and share it in ways that lift others up. In these words, from Hugh Mackay in his book *The Kindness Revolution* I hear a practical expression of that calling kindness, connection, and attention to others can create hope, strengthen wellbeing, and encourage us to become the best versions of ourselves.

*“The most significant feature of human beings is that we belong to an inherently social species. We’re herd animals. We’re hopeless in isolation. We need each other. We don’t just thrive on our sense of belonging to families, neighbourhoods and all kinds of groups and communities: we utterly depend on our social connections for our emotional and physical security, for our sense of well-being and for that all important sense of belonging; of being accepted and being taken seriously. It’s nothing going too far to say that we are all one, in the sense that we share a common humanity that transcends our individual differences. As the Russian developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky put it: through others we become ourselves.”*

God go with you,

*Paul*



## Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A. July 5, 2026

*Come to me and I will give you rest*



*O God, who in the abasement of your Son have raised up a fallen world, fill your faithful with holy joy, for on those you have rescued from slavery to sin you bestow eternal gladness.*

### LECTIONARY READINGS

**First reading:** Zechariah 9:9-10

**Responsorial psalm:** Ps 144(145):1-2, 8-11, 13-14

**Second reading:** Romans 8:9, 11-13

**Gospel:** Matthew 11:25-30

**Link to readings - [Click here](#)**

**Praise to God, and joy in God's merciful love, justice and peace, are themes which run through the readings for this Sunday.** The **First Reading** from Zechariah describes how God will defeat his enemies and establish himself as king – not through war and aggression, but with humility and peace. The **Psalm** is a great hymn of praise, central to the Jewish faith. It speaks of God's kindness and compassion to all, and offers us the reassurance that the Lord will always be faithful and loving, ready to support and raise us up when we fall.

In the **Second Reading**, Paul reminds the Romans, and ourselves, of what the suffering and death of Jesus has achieved for us. He speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In today's **Gospel**, through his own prayer to his Father in heaven, Jesus reminds us that he is the one who will reveal God to us. Humility and gentleness are the virtues he emphasises; rest and freedom from burdens are the gifts he promises.

This week we pray particularly for all those who feel overwhelmed by the pressures of daily life – whether through ill-health, conflict, poverty, loneliness or isolation. With the help of our prayers and action, may they come to know the love and peace of Christ.

### **Safeguarding: “Working Together for a Safe Church”**

**Any complaints** should be directed through the National Office of Professional Standards (NOPS) or reported directly to the New Zealand Police or Oranga Tamariki.

**Phone:** 03 365 1993 or 0800 114 622. **Email:** [prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz](mailto:prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz)

[www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz](http://www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz)

### **Formation (Adult Faith Education & Spirituality)**

**The Theme for this year’s Formations is Nurturing and Nourishment.** Hugh McKay prefers the term "kindness" because it is the only form of human love that does not depend on affection. It is a response to a need, and it draws on our compassion – the quality that stands out most in Jesus’ life. Jesus chose to mix with and meet outcasts, inviting them to share his table. His fellowship included everyone – a family for all!

*PJ Harding defines nurturing as what fills your cup, whether that is laughter, fresh air, good food or time with loved ones. In Passionist Family Groups our reaching out and being family to each other brings joy, understanding, service, care and support. It’s not just about ‘me’ but the welfare and nourishment we can give to each other through our love, concern and compassion. This nurturing leads to nourishment of the heart.*

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**Formation Bookings:** Palmerston North 28 June `St Hellier’s 26<sup>th</sup> July and 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; East Coast Bays 28<sup>th</sup> July 2026. Ashburton 8 August and Christchurch parishes August 9<sup>th</sup>

#### ***A Blessing for Nurturing***

*May you see your body as a well where water needs to be replenished.*

*May you learn how to balance your self-needs with the needs of others so that you can live in harmony with the world.*

*May you take the time to notice and nurture what your inner wisdom is asking of you.*

*May you find a place in nature where you can be in silence and hear your Creator in the trees, the birds, the wind, and the earth.*

*May you care for all of creation in gratitude, humbleness, and respect.*

— Kaki Grubbs, *Spiritual Literacy Certificates Program, 2024 Cohort*

Belong, Behave, Believe





*Please find attached links for talks which are very good and a positive opportunity to understand and appreciate the Passionist Charism. The weekend was very positive, informative and great to share with members of Passionists, Passionist Companions and PFG's.*

### *Prayer:*

1. We pray for the people of Venezuela who are dealing with the tragedy and devastation due to two earthquakes.
2. We pray for all the people supporting, assisting and helping the people of Venezuela. May they find support, acceptance and comfort due to their loss.
3. We pray for peace and may the talks that are to resume between USA and Iran come to fruition. Let us walk the path of peace.
4. We remember all those who are suffering as a result of wars and injustices.
5. We are reminded by Pope Leo XIV in his first encyclical to stay strong in the preservation of human dignity.
6. We pray with gratitude for all the men, women and children who have contributed to the life and spirit of our Passionist Family Group Movement over the past 38 years.
7. We pray for many members of PFG's in Whakatane who are seriously ill.
8. We pray to be like Jesus, spending ourselves in the service of others- welcoming, guiding and leading people through care, compassion and forgiveness.
9. We pray for all struggling to live due to the constraints globally impacting our world
10. Let us take up the call of Pope Leo to foster a sense of belonging in our communities. Also to be united in Christ – united in Mission
11. We remember that God calls on us, as people of faith, to offer our voices to help those who have none.
12. Keep in mind all those who continue to struggle with mental health challenges, and their families who support them in their daily lives.

*Please remember in prayer Shelley Wards's brother Brett Hansen. Please keep Jo Moorcroft and family in your prayer. Fr Robert Steele PP and family. Leonie Christian, Margaret and Graeme Armstrong, Kev Bryant and family, Tim Walsh, Debbie Cotter; Christine and Derrick Scott; Paul, Deb and Nick Kelly, Norma Bellamy and family.*

*Also, please remember, Pat Carson, Graeme Matthews, Di Buckley, Adrian van de Pas and her sons Robert and Dean, Tim Bartells & family, Linda Darbyshire and family in your prayer, Christine Geoghegan's daughter Kate and extended families;*

*We prayer for each other and our intentions.*



## Humour:

- What's a dog's favourite super hero? Labra-Thor.
- I was walking down the beach when I heard a swimmer yelling for help with a shark circling him. I just laughed....I knew that shark wasn't going to help him.
- What do you call a rabbit with fleas? Bugs Bunny!
- What do you say when a chicken is looking at salad? Chicken sees a salad.
- What do you call a cow with no legs? Ground beef!
- You are on a horse riding full gallop. Next to you is a giraffe at full gallop, and behind you is a lion on your tail. What do you do? Get off the carousel.
- I have a horse named mayo, and mayo neighs.
- What family does the zebra belong to? Can't say, none of the families in our neighbourhood owns a zebra.
- What is the cutest creature in the sea? A cuddlefish.
- What do you call an elephant in a telephone booth? Stuck.
- A man walked into a bar with a parrot on his shoulder. The bartender said, "Does the animal talk?" And the parrot replied, "I don't know."

*Belong, Behave, Believe*



**Have a great week everyone.....**

