

Passionist Family Group Newsletter – 13 September 2026



Reflection:

The readings this week offer us wise and timely guidance—advice that can serve every level of society. When we consider, for example, the situation between Israel and Palestine, we see the immense weight of hatred, injustice, and suffering. There is little room for compromise, and these tensions reach back through generations. The consequences of such hatred are devastating: families become isolated, homes and villages are destroyed, and communities are left deeply wounded.

We also see this division in the widening gap between rich and poor across our world, where policies often offer little consolation to developing nations. We see it in racial and cultural tensions between peoples and within families. We see it, too, at an interpersonal level, as violence within homes continues to grow, often with tragic outcomes. It leaves us asking how such pain takes root and why it continues to persist.

We need to take stock. As difficult as it may be, we are called to lay down our arms—whether literal or symbolic—and choose paths that build up rather than tear down. This means overlooking mistakes and misunderstandings where we can, seeking understanding, and learning to let go. Holding on to anger is damaging to our mental wellbeing and to social cohesion. At times, the wisdom of “turning the other cheek” can be a powerful way of disarming anger and resentment. It takes great energy to hold on; often, it is far more life-giving to release what burdens us.

When anger and resentment are passed on, they fuel hatred and division. Over time, the original cause can become lost, while people continue along a path that justifies bitterness, desperation, and hostility. In the moment, these feelings may be understandable; yet, with reflection, we see that such actions only produce further injustice, deprivation, loss, and grief. Our wounds deepen, and grief, raw as it is, can too easily strike out in anger.

Jesus teaches that the response to division is compassion, forgiveness, and a genuine willingness to see through another person’s eyes. We are invited to choose a path of peace, grounded in hope, respect, and the dignity of every person. When we live as though every person truly matters, we begin to see others more clearly and respond with greater care. Within our Passionist Family Groups, this means supporting coordinators, encouraging fellow members, and standing alongside one another even when life is busy. Each time we support our group, we affirm to others that ‘they matter’; in turn, our own commitment

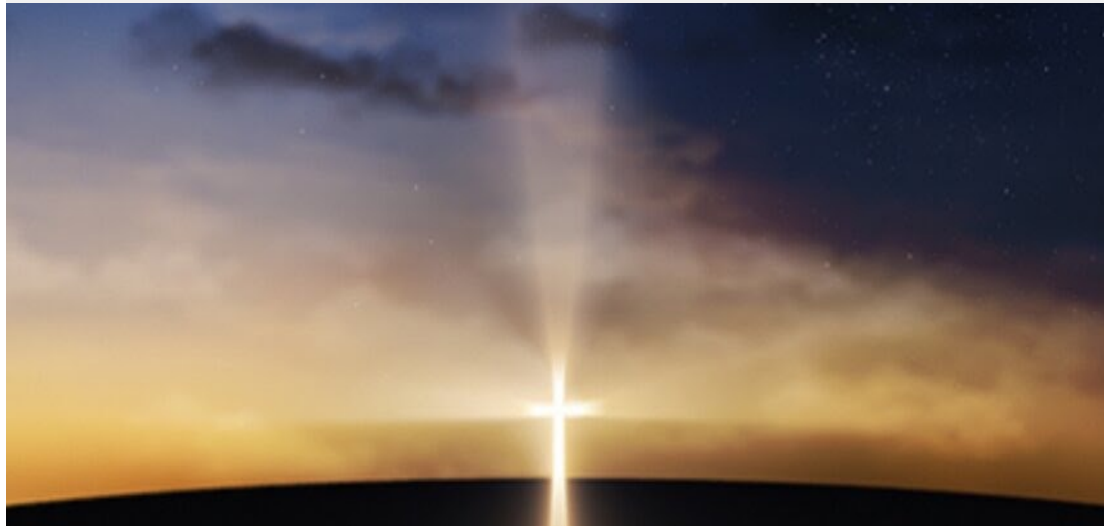
strengthens the bonds of belonging and care. In this way, we witness an alternative way of living—one that breaks down barriers, fosters love and peace, and helps people believe that they are valued. *“To err is human; to forgive, divine.”*

“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He or she who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love.”—Martin Luther King Jr



God go with you,

Paul



Scripture Reflection: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time — 13 September 2026

Lord, how often do I forgive?

Look upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and, that we may feel the working of your mercy, grant that we may serve you with all our heart.

LECTIONARY READINGS

First Reading: Ecclesiasticus 27:30–28:7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 102(103):1–4, 9–12

Second Reading: Romans 14:7–9

Gospel: Matthew 18:21–35

Link to readings — [click here](#)

This Sunday's readings focus on forgiveness, reminding us that there is no limit to God's mercy and unconditional love. We cannot repay God's forgiveness, but we can imitate God's free, unearned mercy by forgiving others with patience and compassion.

The **First Reading** warns against anger and urges us not to keep a record of grievances. Letting go of anger restores peace within us. We are called to live by the commandments, to overlook faults where possible, and to forgive our neighbour. The **Psalmist** praises the depth of the Lord's compassion and mercy, reminding us that God's forgiveness and love are without end.

St Paul, in the **Second Reading**, reminds us that we belong to the Lord in both life and death. Christ died and rose again out of his great love for us. We, too, are called to live not only for ourselves, but for others, showing love, mercy, and compassion.

In the **Gospel**, Jesus teaches about forgiveness through the parable of the servant whose great debt is forgiven by a merciful king, yet who refuses to forgive a much smaller debt owed to him. Jesus reminds us that the mercy we receive from God must be reflected in the mercy we show to others. We are called to forgive generously and wholeheartedly.

This week, we pray for one another and ask for the grace to forgive, welcoming the healing and reconciliation that forgiveness brings. We also remember those who find forgiveness difficult, and all who are affected by war, violence, and unrest throughout the world.

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

www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz

Faith and Life Formation 2026: The Theme for this year's is Nurturing and Nourishment.

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. Email: paulus663@gmail.com or Mobile: 021357933

Formation Bookings: Cambridge - Hamilton October 11; Mt. Maunganui – October 16th, Waihi Paeroa Katikati October 17 & 18, Levin and Otaki November 1st, Havelock North and Hastings November 8th There are parishes that are to confirm dates.



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



Prayer:

1. Please remember Stephanie Butchard, whose husband Joe died suddenly. We hold both the immediate and extended families in prayer as they grieve the loss of a good man.
2. We pray for peace amid renewed tensions and the threat of hostilities between the United States and Iran.
3. We pray for the people of Nepal after the devastating floods and the huge loss of life.
4. We pray for refugees and for all those who have been displaced from their homes.
5. We remember all who are suffering, and we pray that we may act on Pope Leo XIV's call to uphold and preserve 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 that we may be more like Jesus, giving ourselves in service to others by welcoming, connecting, guiding, and leading with care, compassion, and forgiveness.
8. Keep in mind all those who continue to struggle with mental health challenges, and their families who support them in their daily lives.
9. *Please remember in prayer Preston and Jenny's daughter Kate, Pam and Bob Arthurs, Richard Gibbs, Shelley Wards's brother Brett Hanlin. Please keep Jo Moorcroft and family in your prayer. Fr. Litto, Fr Robert Steele PP and family. 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 pray for many members of PFG's in Whakatane who are seriously ill.*

We pray for one another and for all the intentions we hold in our hearts.



Humour:

- "I made a pencil with two erasers. It was pointless."
- "How do you make a Kleenex dance? Put a little boogie in it!"
- "I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down!"
- "Did you hear about the guy who invented the knock-knock joke? He won the 'no-bell' prize."
- "I've got a great joke about construction, but I'm still working on it."
- "I used to hate facial hair...but then it grew on me."
- "I decided to sell my vacuum cleaner—it was just gathering dust!"
- "I had a neck brace fitted years ago and I've never looked back since."
- "You know, people say they pick their nose, but I feel like I was just born with mine."
- "What's brown and sticky? A stick."
- "Why can't you hear a psychiatrist using the bathroom? Because the 'P' is silent."



Wishing everyone a blessed and peaceful week.