



Greetings,

Province Assembly

Thirty-two professed Passionists gathered at Holy Cross this week to explore our life and mission, and look ahead to our Provincial Chapter in July next year. In 2027. These Chapters are held every four years to make decisions around the issues we face, and to elect a Provincial and Council to respond to initiatives mandated or advised by the Chapter.

There have been massive changes in recent years, and this is highlighted by the fact that there are 22 ordained Australian Passionists and 20 (plus one deacon) ordained Vietnamese Passionists. This is not to mention the number of Vietnamese in formation. Any projection of five years from the time of 2031 Chapter will see a very different make up of our membership. To achieve what is required will involve suitable mentoring, financial resources that at this stage beyond what we at this stage, as well as brave thinking, planning and action.

It is clear that the men of the Province believe they are 'up for it'. Another group of a similar number met in Saigon last week to consider the same issues and they identified as we have, a number of challenges, but they, like us this week, have great faith and confidence that we can respond with generous and faith-filled hearts.

The setting for this Assembly (see next page) was created by Pam Storey, with the generous support of Rosealee Davey's husband, John (Telescope) and Len Watson (Binoculars). The Theme is: ***Towards New Horizons*** and liturgically and in reflection the gospel story of the ***Wedding Feast at Cana*** offers some focus and insight into the work of the Assembly. The setting takes the symbolic style of a triptych, opening up three stages of reflection that intermingle during the Assembly.

While the following is descriptive, it is true that symbols speak to the mind and heart of each individual, offering fresh insights. Make aspects of the setting personal and meaningful for you.

Firstly to the left, is a symbolic setting focusing on the Wedding Feast at Cana and the interventions that produced different effects. Following Mary's advice, the disciples ask Jesus to provide wine for the distraught couple and even though Jesus considers, he responds to his mother's request. This TRANSACTIONAL situation ... the need for wine ... is symbolised by the WHITE flowing from the urn.



This becomes a **TRANSITIONAL** moment of Mary's intervention and in Jesus working his first public miracle. ... symbolised by the **BLUE** flowing from the urn. Ultimately this opens up the **TRANSCENDENTAL** elements of Jesus' public ministry ... beginning by turning water into wine at Cana and ending on the Cross when Jesus gives the last of his blood and water flows, symbolised by the **RED** flowing from the urn. One Urn ... three movements and ... outcomes These three aspects invite reflection as we consider our Province life moving ***Towards New Horizons.***

The centre of the setting is dominated by the Passionist Mission Cross, that which we keep before our eyes at all times and broaden our awareness to all who stand in its shadow. The telescope invites reflection on what we need to see in the distance, always through the lens of Christ Crucified. The Passionist Emblem leans on this awareness. Flowers symbolise our Province Emblem and remind us of who we are and where we come from ... though many we are all one... Water again reminds us of both service and blessing .

The third part of the setting holds the Passionist Madonna Icon and we hear the echoes of Cana at our Assembly ... ***'Do whatever He tells you'.*** The **FOUR CANDLES** symbolise our Province countries called to respond to Mary's request, both in unity with each other and specific to their countries' needs.

These words should not be understood simply as a call to immediate action. They invite us first to notice, listen, contemplate and trust, so that our necessary daily work and the transitions we face may open us to the deeper transformation God desires for our Province. The Binoculars invite us to bring such awarenesses into sharper focus, again through the person of Jesus

The future holds times of transaction, transition and transformation for our Province. What are our hopes, dreams, expectations, fears, concerns ... Listen with both the head and the eyes and ears of the heart .. the Holy Spirit is with us. Be not afraid, for Christ Crucified is always with us. Mary our Mother hears our needs. Together we can distil and produce a great variety of outcomes, transactional, transformational and transcendent, which embrace our theme: ***Towards New Horizons.***

Come Away Day



A **Come Away Day** will be held at Holy Cross this coming **Wednesday September 16th.**

The theme of the day is '***Come To The Waters ...***'

Anyone and everyone is welcome...just '***Come as you are***'.

Registration is from 9.30am in the Holy Cross dining room. The programme concludes with Eucharist and a departure time before **3pm.**

The suggested cost is \$30.00 or a donation according to your means. Please BYO lunch. For any further details please contact Sr Brigid CP: bridget.m64@gmail.com Please consider inviting a friend along to share the 'Come Away Day' experience.

Safeguarding Sunday, 13 September 2026



This Sunday is Safeguarding Sunday throughout the Catholic dioceses of Australia. It is a day to remember in our prayer anyone and everyone who have experienced abuse or harm, to be supportive of their healing, and to commit ourselves to creating communities where every person is welcomed, respected and safe. Throughout the gospels, Jesus showed particular care for those who were vulnerable and he called those who follow him to do the same.

With this awareness it is important that Safeguarding is not just a policy or a

**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**

procedure; it is a Christian responsibility that recognises and promotes the dignity of every person and a shared commitment to be attentive and supportive of those who are vulnerable, because it is they who easily can become victims.

We share a corporate responsibility to learn from the past so as to ensure young and vulnerable people are kept safe. This Sunday especially, let us pray for all who continue to journey towards healing, give thanks for those who serve in safeguarding ministry, and recommit ourselves to building communities where trust, compassion and care are evident in all we do.

Feast of Holy Cross - Monday 14th September

There will be Mass at Holy Cross this day at 10.00am. All welcome, for **Mass and a cuppa** afterwards in the dining room.



The feast is officially named 'the exaltation of the Cross. It is related to Jesus' claim, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people^[a] to myself." (John 12:32)

Most kings in history have been admired for their military success, for bravery, for building monuments or cities, for leadership or governance. Few are praised for kindness.

This feast was established to highlight the superiority of Jesus to any earthly ruler., not because of his earthly power, but because he revealed God. We are told in the gospels that when the crowds wanted to make Jesus a king, he disappeared! He did not seek popularity or political leadership. He had a special love for the powerless. In fact his understanding of power was humility and service, and his idea of a kingdom was not of conquest and victories, but of love and fellowship The greatest law for him was compassion and the greatest virtue was forgiveness. He deferred any real power to God whom he experienced as an abba, father, full of mercy and compassion, who wanted to draw all people, not just those who seemed worthy or righteous, into a universal fellowship that included all of the outsiders and outcasts of his day.



Imagine hearing that news if you were a leper? A prostitute or tax-collector? Imagine hearing that news if you were crippled or blind? Imagine hearing that news if you were divorced or even

an admiring Samaritan? It didn't matter. This good news was for you – for everyone. People who had been heavily burdened, were freed. People who had lost hope were excited and overjoyed. No wonder some people wanted to make him king. They said, this man teaches with authority, not like our official religious leaders? Yet his authority did not come with a sense of superiority or harsh demands, but with the conviction of God's mercy. When he wanted to give his principal disciples a lesson in leadership he washed their feet! "Be humble, be a servant", he said.

Was he a king? "Yes", he said....this was his purpose. His kingdom was not comprised of property and buildings, nor of land and animals. It was not comprised of military battles or overcoming other nations. His kingdom existed wherever people joined hearts as brothers and sisters, despite their differences, and they lived in true 'shalom'. When Pilate challenged him, his answer was clear. "Yes I am a king, but my kingdom is not earthly; it is a kingdom of hearts".



So in celebrating this feast we want to give thanks that we experience the kingdom at, around and from Holy Cross, and each week we take the fellowship of forgiveness, compassion, care, concern, love and mercy to our families, friends and workplaces, and strive to bring about God's kingdom – right here, right now. Jesus is the king of our hearts; the king of our lives. The king of our fellowship. That is worth celebrating!



***Your Word Is Fire: The Hasidic Masters on Contemplative Prayer* edited by Arthur Green and Barry W. Holtz**

"Take special care to guard your tongue before the morning prayer. Even greeting your fellow, we are told,

can be harmful at that hour.
A person who wakes up in the morning is
like a new creation.
Begin your day with unkind words,
or even trivial matters —
even though you may later turn to prayer,
you have not been true to your Creation.
All of your words each day
are related to one another.
All of them are rooted
in the first words that you speak."

Catholic school reopening in Gaza

'a reminder that 'hope is stronger than fear,' bishop says
Junno Arocho Esteves - OSV News, September 1, 2026



As children worldwide head back to classrooms this fall, students in Gaza are returning to a vastly different reality as the school at Holy Family Parish reopens for the first time since the start of Israel's military campaign. For Auxiliary Bishop William Shomali, patriarchal vicar for Jerusalem and Palestine, the resumption of classes at the parish compound offers a small but significant step toward normalcy for dozens of children living amid ongoing

conflict and destruction.

"Reopening the school is itself a form of care,"

Bishop Shomali said in an interview with OSV News Aug. 28. "The situation in Gaza remains far from normal — the conflict is ongoing, and we would not suggest otherwise. But precisely within that reality, giving children a safe place with familiar routines and trusted teachers offers them something dependable to hold onto for a few hours each day."

The school at the only Catholic parish in Gaza is welcoming approximately 1,000 students at the start of the school year, with 180 enrolled in the patriarchate's kindergarten and the remaining 820 in the primary school, Bishop Shomali noted.



His focus on the importance of reopening echoed a pastoral letter published Aug. 26 by Cardinal Pizzaballa, the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, to mark the start of the academic year in which he noted that "in some parts of the Holy Land, returning to school can no

longer be taken for granted.

“There are children whose classrooms no longer stand and communities in which the joy of a new school year is overshadowed by death, displacement and destruction,” the cardinal wrote. “Our Christian schools are far more than educational institutions. They are a cornerstone of the Christian presence in the Holy Land. They also welcome many students and families from different religious traditions and educate generations in coexistence, mutual respect and acceptance of the other.”



According to an Aug. 24 report by the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 73,000 people, including 21,283 children, have died in Gaza. The report added that roughly 1.98 million people — about 94% of the population — are displaced, while an estimated 637,475 school-age children lack sustained access to formal education.



Since the war began in October 2023, the Holy Family compound has served as a vital sanctuary for displaced families. In 2025, the church compound was struck by Israeli tank fire, leaving three people dead and nine injured, including the parish pastor, Father Gabriel Romanelli. Bishop Shomali said that while the parish continues to shelter displaced civilians, some families “have been able to return to their homes, even though many of these homes remain damaged and in poor condition.” Despite severe challenges, he added, Father Romanelli and parish staff have gradually repaired the school buildings.

“This process has been carefully organized to ensure that the needs of both students and displaced families are addressed,” Bishop Shomali said. “The spaces required for teaching have been made available while continuing to accommodate those families who still have no safe place to return to.”

Providing education and sheltering vulnerable families are two responsibilities the Latin Patriarchate views as “inseparable,” he added. Additionally, security remains a primary concern. When asked about safety



protocols, Bishop Shomali noted that precautions include student transportation when possible and clear emergency procedures, while acknowledging the grim reality on the ground. “In the current circumstances, no institution in Gaza can offer absolute guarantees of safety,” he said.

“Like all Palestinians, we continue to place our trust in God’s providence while doing everything humanly possible to protect those entrusted to our care.” Bishop Shomali added that staying home also carries risk, as “many residential areas have been affected by the conflict, and the risks are not limited to schools alone.”



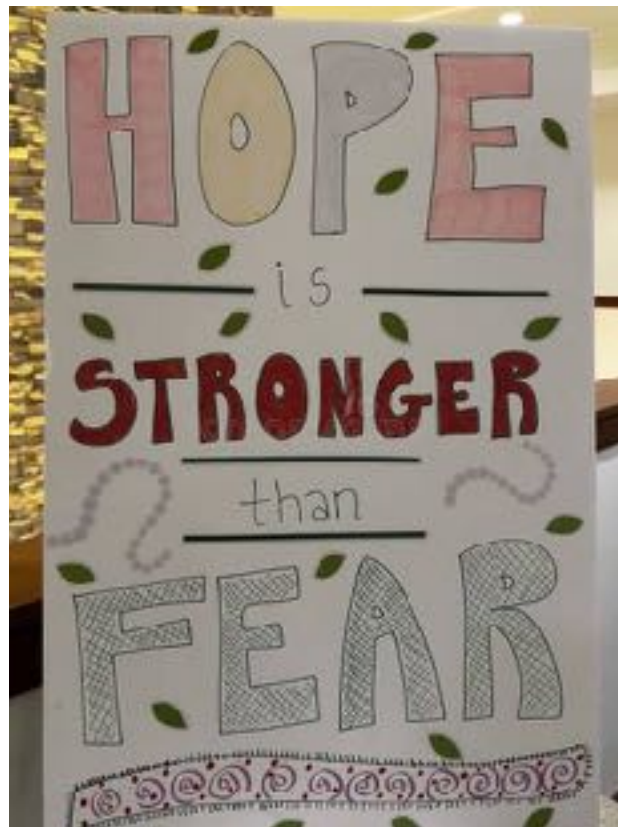
Along with academic instruction, the patriarchate is providing psychological support for students and teachers navigating severe trauma, as well as material and moral support for educators. “We deeply appreciate their commitment to their students and their willingness to continue serving despite the hardships they themselves face,” Bishop Shomali said. “Their perseverance is a powerful testimony to the importance of education.”

The bishop also acknowledged that hardship extends across the region, noting that Christian families in the West Bank face Israeli settler attacks, nightly military incursions and movement checkpoints that disrupt daily life. Those attacks prompted an appeal from Pope Leo XIV Aug. 16 calling for an end “to the repeated acts of violence against the Palestinian population of the West Bank.” Despite the difficulties and challenges, for Bishop Shomali, the reopening of the school in Gaza serves as a “powerful message of hope, resilience and solidarity.”



“Through this school, the Church is telling local Christian families that they are not forgotten and will not be abandoned during what is arguably one of the most difficult periods in their recent history. Education is far more than a social service; it is an act of faith in the future and a concrete commitment to strengthening the Christian presence in the land where Christianity was born,” he added. “Every child who enters this school is a reminder that hope is stronger than fear and that the Church remains dedicated to

building a future of dignity, opportunity, and peace.”



Recommended book

'The Priest who stayed in Gaza'

by Fr Gabriel Romanelli with Guillaume Di Dieuleveuly

A PRAYER FOR PEACE IN GAZA AND FOR THE STARVING CHILDREN

Heavenly Father,
Source of all life and love,
We lift our hearts to You with sorrow and hope,
As we remember Your children in Gaza—
Innocent souls who hunger not only for bread,
But for safety, for kindness, and for peace.

Lord Jesus,
Who said, "Let the little children come to me,"
Hold close in Your tender arms
Every child who suffers from the pains of hunger,
Who sleeps beneath the echo of bombs,
Who cries with no one to comfort them.
May their tears stir the hearts of the world.

Holy Spirit,
Breath of peace and justice,
Move through the hardened places of this earth.
Inspire leaders with compassion,
Break the chains of hatred and revenge,
And guide us all to be instruments of Your mercy.

Bless the peacemakers, Lord.
Give courage to those who deliver aid,
Wisdom to those who speak for justice,
And strength to those who care for the broken.

Mother Mary, Queen of Peace,
Wrap Gaza in your mantle.
Intercede for every child who goes to sleep hungry.
And every parent who feels helpless.

Bring comfort, healing, and above all, peace.

AMEN.



Remembering: The Spirit of New York's Greatest Tragedy 9/11 – 2001

Barbara Lunnon, Davidson, NSW

First flag raising ceremony at Ground Zero



People everywhere will soon be reflecting and remembering exactly where they were when they learned of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center – 11th September 2001. The day that changed not only America, but the whole world. It is now 25 years since that tragic day. Memories are being recounted by media everywhere of this significant anniversary. A time when the Spirit of NYC became so very evident.

There still remains a connection our Passionist Family Groups with one special member of FDNY who was there that terrible day: -

The connection with **Chief Dan Daly, FDNY and Father Peter McGrath CP** came about just a few days before 9/11. Fr Peter was a guest at the Passionist Riverdale Retreat Center when Chief Dan and his FDNY crew came by for a routine inspection to check that the Center was in proper working order.

Since that day they became life-long mates. Both good men told a multitude of stories arising from, and after, 9/11. I hope you may have heard them in person. There are too many to write about here.



Chief Dan Daly on left – Father Peter centre

After 9/11 the **Passionist Family**

Group Movement (PFGM) sponsored a trip for Chief Dan Daly to Australia. Dan accepted and gave a very powerful presentation at St. Anthony's Terrey Hills, based on his raw experience of 9/11 - the destruction, pain and death from which came his message of hope and survival. (just what the world needs today!) After St. Anthony's, Dan travelled throughout the major cities of Australia speaking before many Passionist Family Groups, parishes, media and various organisations. Dan brought a CD with him of a very emotional song written right after 9/11. The link is here for you to play, sung beautifully by a young Irish woman.

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

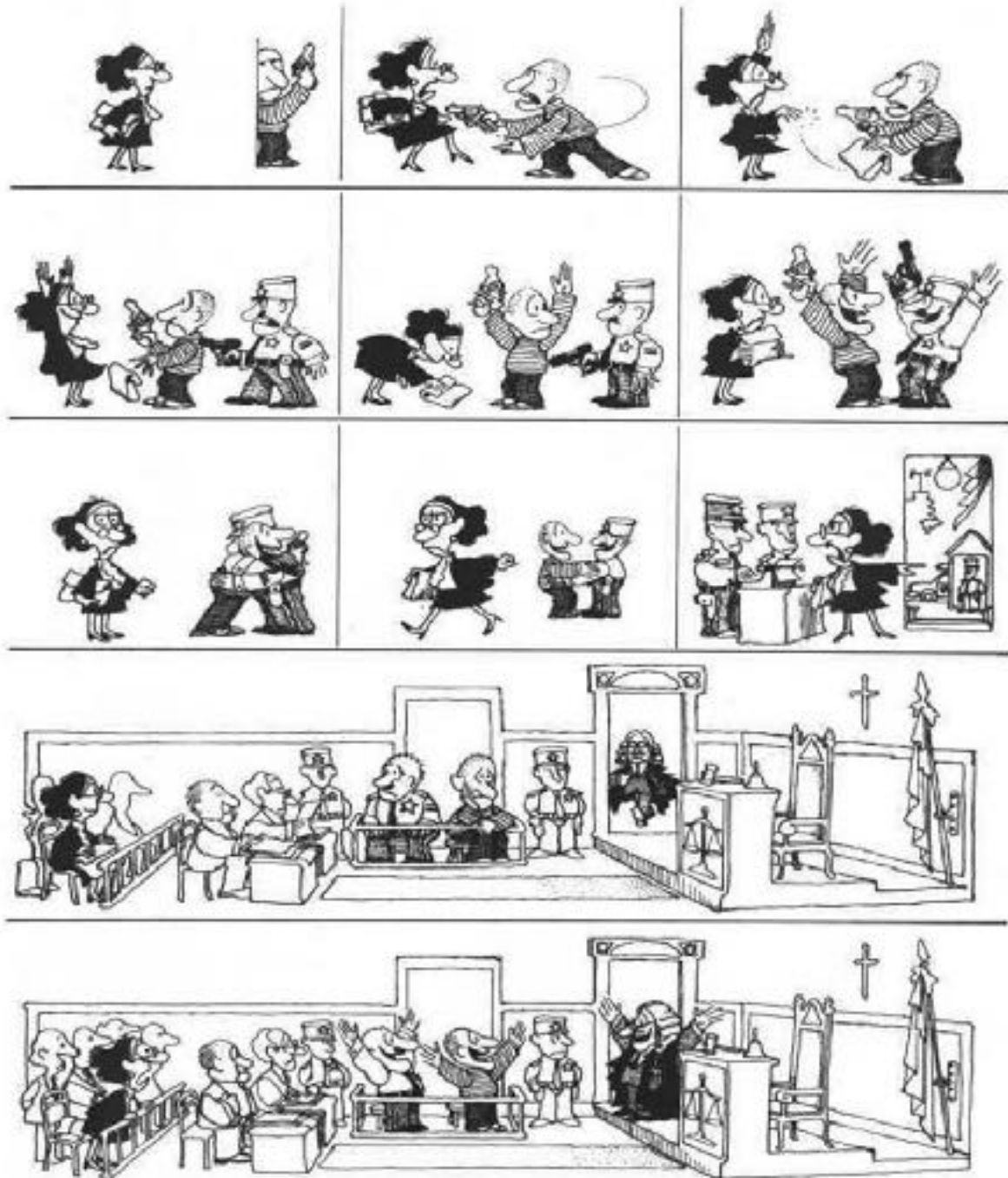
Another Family Group connection with 9/11 comes from **Brunswick, Maine**. Family Group member, **Karin Congleton**, a schoolteacher, worked with 120 Second Grade students to help with her quilt of the US Flag which measured 1.5m x 2.5m. She first taught a lesson about peace, then asked 50 of the students to draw themselves in the stars, reaching out to each other in friendship. The remaining students drew pictures of what peace meant to them; placing their drawings in the white stripes.



Today those students are 32 years old, and this quilt of 9/11 history is on display at the Maine State Capitol of Augusta. I can only wonder what memories the students will have? Perhaps some will stand before the quilted flag remembering the peace they drew, the hands they held – Still longing for Peace.



Humour
Friends in the right places.....



Important to have friends . . .

I could swear he is doing it wrong,
but since I dont own a boat, Im
going to keep my opinion to myself!



HIS PACEMAKER KEEPS OPENING
AND SHUTTING THE GARAGE DOOR



Thanks for explaining
the word 'many' to me, it
means alot.

PLINY THE ELDER - 100 AD

A man died today when
a pile of books fell on him.

He only had
his shelf to blame.

PLINY THE ELDER - 100 AD

I'm Not Lazy,



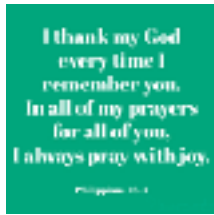
I'm On Energy
Saving Mode.



1. Harry's wife took up gardening (see photo above right). He's wondering what she is going to plant!
2. Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were so chilly that they lit a fire in their craft. Not surprisingly it sank. Proving that you can't have you kayak and heat it too
3. Mary asked Dad, "if money doesn't grow on trees why do banks have branches?"
4. "Madam, when we asked everyone in the flight to turn off their devices, we didn't mean you to turn off your husband's pacemaker".
5. Replace W with T in What, Where and When, and get the answer to each of them!
 - Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!
 - A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
 - I used to be a banker, but I lost interest.
 - Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.
 - England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
 - I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
 - They told me I had type -A blood, but it was a Typo.
 - I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
 - How does Moses explain he made tea? Hebrews it.
 - I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
 - Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
 - I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
 - When cannibals ate a missionary they got a taste of religion
 - A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering
 - Two silkworms had a race. They ended up in a tie
 - How do you get off a non-stop flight?
 - Why don't we ever see a headline "Psychic wins Lottery"?
 - Do twins ever realise that one of them was unplanned?



Prayers



We remember that those who have died recently especially We also remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time, especially: John Gill, Brett Daly, Abraham Lim, Kumar Fernando, Frank Trimboli, Tony O'Brien, Felicita and Angelo Baggio and Carmela (Nina) Barbado.

We pray 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...

Christine Storey, Marie Spowart, Kathy Shady, Stephen Cogle, Paul Fitzgerald, Joan O'Callaghan, Nada Atme, Graham Burke, Peter Heffernan, Dawn Herrefrnan, Pam Storey, David Chai, Lucia Isgro, Kate Lenic, Nina Conti, Carol Battistella, Max McMahon, Beth Scott, Fr. Brendan Lane, Edward Atme, Bernadette Owen, Rod Gorfine, Maureen Barns, Luke Norden, Denise Egan, Caroline Hagedorn, Alexander Lim, Marilyn Cilmi, Julia Cantone, Pam Gartland, Anne Woon, Doris Castro, Anne Jenkins and Helen McLean.



Chris will send the link for this Sunday's Mass on Saturday afternoon.

Brian