

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 345

25th September, 2026

Greetings,

Happy Birthday

Jerome will turn 87 this Saturday September 27th

Retreat

Chris has been away in Queenscliff this week (Wednesday-Friday) offering a retreat as part of a sabbatical programme for some religious Sisters. He will also be away most of next week, in Sydney, with the Provincial Council.

Erick has a break from his counselling duties at St John's Dandenong, and **Joseph** has a break from 'Heart of Life' in line with the YTU and school holidays.

Tim Horlock



Last Saturday night, Tim was a guest in Sydney of 'Invocare,' the company who owns and operates La Pine funerals for whom Tim has worked for 26 years. Tim was awarded recognition for his 25 years of service. Tim has been able to



assist so many people as a funeral director and/or as a celebrant, and this has been a gift to so many people who appreciate his genuine pastoral care. Congratulations, Tim. It seems they did not offer Tim a warm jumper. Perhaps they had heard he does not need one!

Holidays

Mayrose will begin much needed holidays on Friday October 1st. We extend our hope for a relaxing time away from the multi challenges of her role at Holy Cross.

Football

There is great interest in both AFL and NRL finals. This Saturday **Fremantle** and **Brisbane** will battle out the AFL Grand Final at the MCG in front of nearly 100,000 people, and this weekend the **Knights** will play the **Panthers** and the **Dolphins** will play the **Roosters** to determine the Grand Finalist to play week on October 3rd)

A Team



Last Friday, some members of the A Team erected trellis near the area known now as 'Cogle Corner' where there are eight tables with seats.

Coffee Cart

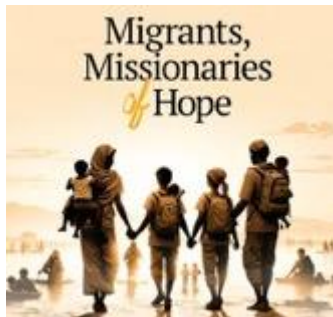


Last week I wrote "Next Sunday Ross will be back with his coffee cart". Many people brought cakes to go with the coffee, and Bruno arrived at 9.00am to help set up everything. Unfortunately, 'next Sunday' did not mean 'this Sunday'. This is a common difficulty, that would have been helped had I

included the date. So this newsletter is giving notice that **This Sunday (September 27th)** Ross will be back with his coffee cart. Cakes and biscuits are welcome and we encourage you to put on a name tag to help our community become more friendly which that is the purpose of these Sundays. One again we thank our special donor providing the coffee, and all those who help set up or contribute in other ways.

Migrant Sunday

Andrew Hamilton SJ suggests *"in Australia, as in many other nations today, many people are hostile to refugees and to migrants. That is not surprising. People who struggle to find accommodation or to keep work can easily be led to see people coming to Australia as threats. They believe that governments should solve local problems first and only then admit others to Australia. Such opinions may not make economic sense and be self-centred, but they are understandable"*.



"In these times" Andrew says, "there is little point in entering into arguments about refugees. We do better to reach out to come to know and to help them. We can keep in our hearts all the persons who are doing it hard, and not lump them together in groups in which they are not as persons. It is right to reflect on the hardships which many people who live in Australia must bear, to feel compassion for them, and to argue for change in our unequal economy.

That should then help us to open our hearts to the stories of people who have been forced from their homes and who seek protection and a new life in Australia. Australians doing it hard, and refugees and immigrants are not competitors but are all our brothers and sisters."

Pope Leo has invited Catholics and all people of goodwill to hear the stories of young people affected by migration and forced displacement, and respond with compassion and solidarity. "Minors are the most vulnerable group within the global movements of migration" the Pope has said, stressing that behind migration statistics are children whose lives have been shaped by war, poverty, violence, environmental disasters and family separation. At the same time, he points to signs of hope in the witness of families, educators, volunteers and faith communities who accompany and support young migrants and refugees.



Pope suggests Rome Diocese might do less, but better **By CathNews New Zealand (September 22nd, 2026)**

Addressing the Diocesan Assembly at the Basilica of St John Lateran on September 18, Pope Leo said he was not presenting a new pastoral programme but proposing a shared method of "pastoral evaluation". The process, he explained, means stopping to reread what has happened, recognising what has borne fruit, understanding what has not worked and seeking together the reasons why. It should involve the whole ecclesial community and, where possible, also listening to those who do not regularly participate in Church life.



Pope Leo noted that the proposed process should not become another burden for priests and pastoral workers. "The art of pastoral evaluation," he said, "does not ask you to do more"; rather, it gives the Church permission to "do less and do it better".

**"LESS,
but
BETTER."**

He called priests to listen before responding and discern before deciding, while recognising the charisms and responsibilities of lay people. "Presiding does not mean doing everything", he said, but generating communion and enabling the gifts of others.

The Pope identified three principal areas for the Diocese's examination of its pastoral life. The first is "meeting Christ and helping others to meet him". Activities should be assessed not only by their organisation or participation, but by whether they genuinely lead people to Christ and connect the Gospel with their lives.



The second is "generating community". Christian communities should offer relationships in which people feel welcomed, accompanied, valued and responsible. Pope Leo made particular mention of the need to offer young people time and attentive listening.

The third is "inhabiting and serving the city". Rome, Pope Leo said, is not simply the backdrop for the Church's activities but the place of its mission. The Church is called to share the city's expectations, fragilities and questions and to recognise where the Gospel can offer an answer.

A fourth concern that cuts across all three is the formation of the People of God. Thus, explaining that pastoral activities must help people grow in faith, become missionary disciples, assume ecclesial responsibilities and develop a mature faith capable of being translated into concrete choices of life and service, the Pope reminded those present that **pastoral activities may always foster mature faith, missionary discipleship and responsibility within the Church.**

School reopens in Gaza church after three-year hiatus

The Tablet.....September 22nd, 2026



Fr Gabriel Romanelli IVE, priest of Gaza's only Roman Catholic parish, told Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) that the reopening of the school would be "like a light in the darkness for the local community that has experienced so much suffering". More than 450 people were living in the school, seeking shelter from the Israeli strikes that followed the Hamas attacks, but now that many of them have been able to return to their

homes or to seek alternative shelter, the school is able to reopen its doors.

Holy Family School serves not only the local parish, but also the wider community, enabling Muslim and Christian pupils to learn side by side. Before the war, five Christian schools operated in Gaza – three Catholic, one Orthodox and one Evangelical – but Holy Family School is so far the only one to have reopened, so all Christian pupils will attend this school, making up around 13 per cent of the student body.

George Akroush, director of the Project Development Office of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, told ACN that this will create “a strong sense of community” and show the children “that the Church remains close to them, accompanying them in the midst of all they are going through”. Fr Romanelli said, “There is almost nowhere in Gaza that has not been destroyed. Destruction is all around. “But we have worked hard to make the school a safe environment, where the children – who have been through so much – can feel safe. For the students and the families, re-opening the school will bring some sense of normality . . . even though nothing is normal in Gaza.”



Fr Romanelli told ACN that the curriculum had been redesigned to take into account the level of trauma that both the pupils and the teachers are suffering.

A United Nations report this year said that the war had “destroyed the very essence of childhood” in Gaza, killing at least 20,179 children and injuring 44,143. The territory has the largest number of child amputees in the world.

Fr Romanelli was in Bethlehem when war erupted after the horrific attacks by Hamas on October 2023. He was not able to return to his parish in Gaza until May 2024. He has been there continually ever since, declaring that he will not leave while there is still one person there who needs his pastoral care.

AI continues to create news.....

Data Centres

Every time you ask ChatGPT a question or stream your favourite show, large data centres full of servers are consuming huge amounts of electricity.

Australia's \$150 billion gamble on data centres (2nd September, 2026)

(Eureka Street) David James is a finance and business journalist.



The politics around the establishment of data centres is becoming heated, and it will intensify. The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) reports that data centres currently use 3 per cent of the country's electricity generation and estimates that the figure could jump to 13 per cent over the next ten years. By 2036, data centres are predicted to consume as

much power as all the homes in New South Wales and Victoria combined.

Australia is expected to attract \$150 billion in investment for the centres, about a quarter of the expected global outlay. That is about three times Australia's annual foreign direct investment. There are currently around 160–165 operating centres in the country, with broader counts of facilities, including proposed and developmental ones, approaching 280. Future project pipelines are set to be four times current capacity. All this has received a mixed welcome. Many local residents fear that the demand for energy and water will affect their power and water bills, and that the noise will affect their quality of life.

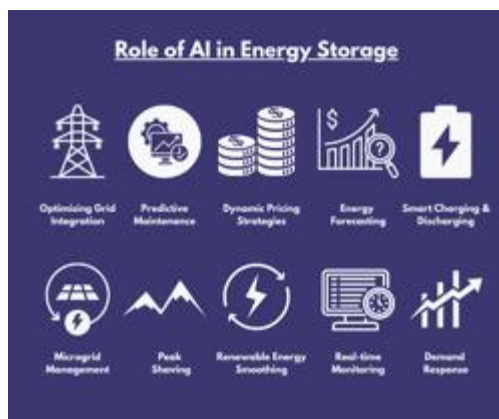


Beyond that, much of the debate has centred on how these facilities will be powered. Their energy requirements vary considerably, but a large hyperscale data



centre can consume as much electricity as tens of thousands of homes, and in some cases, more than many suburbs. The federal government initially proposed requiring new data centres to be powered by additional renewable energy. That position produced a clash at National Cabinet in August, when Queensland and the

Northern Territory resisted a renewables-only model and argued that they should be allowed to draw on coal and gas. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese ultimately accepted a more flexible framework recognising the different energy systems of the states and territories, although the federal government maintains that non-renewable proposals will be subject to tests concerning cost and grid stability.



The original renewables-led proposal runs counter to the approach being pursued in the United States, where multiple energy sources are being considered. When Bill Gates, who had been a strong proponent of climate change policy, last year called for a strategic pivot away from an absolute focus on carbon emission caps, his intervention reflected the growing recognition that the energy requirements of artificial intelligence (AI) will complicate existing emissions targets.

Nuclear power is one such alternative being explored overseas. The Unity Nuclear Battery, an Australian-linked small modular reactor concept developed with the involvement of Australian engineers connected to work at the Lucas Heights facility, has been taken up by the US company Deployable Energy for potential use in data centres and military applications. It is designed to produce around 1 megawatt of power, run for several years before refuelling, fit within a compact, container-scale package and require less cooling than conventional reactors.

It could not be developed and commercialised in Australia because of the blanket ban on nuclear power.

The investment in data centres may take some of the financial pressure off Australia's energy providers, which are under severe stress due to the uptake of residential rooftop solar. This has sharply reduced profit margins and disrupted the business models of both large-scale generators and retail providers. The increased demand for power will have an effect, but it will be patchy.



Under the federal government's proposed framework, fossil-fuel generators hoping that data centres will buy their excess capacity will need to demonstrate that their proposals can reduce costs and contribute to grid stability. Data centres will not simply be permitted to plug into the existing grid and absorb cheap daytime solar without contributing to the additional generation and infrastructure required to support them.

The system-wide effects could nevertheless be significant. Data-centre demand could soak up excess rooftop solar during midday peaks and make it easier to find buyers for stranded renewable projects. And because data centres impose continuous, flat industrial loads, gas providers may also be needed to provide baseload capacity.



These energy-policy decisions rest on the assumption that the data centre boom will produce economic returns commensurate with its enormous infrastructure demands. Yet while the effects on Australia's electricity system are already becoming clear, the revenues required to justify the global

investment in AI remain far more uncertain. This is where the energy debate meets the larger financial risk.

Australia is preparing to reshape parts of its electricity system around an industry sustained by extraordinary investment, aggressive forecasts and the expectation that AI applications will eventually generate trillions of dollars in revenue. The hype around AI is some of the worst business propaganda ever seen, while the financial risks being taken resemble the excesses that led to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) in 2008.



The soothsayers of AI, who claim that it threatens human civilisation or nearly all forms of employment, are engaged in a form of fear-based marketing. Always missing from these predictions is a detailed explanation of how this is supposed to happen. My personal favourite is Elon Musk claiming that in six years all music will be produced by AI. Maybe seven. And he knows this how? From his extensive understanding of music?

It is becoming evident that many jobs supposedly vulnerable to AI are not as susceptible as previously thought because they involve much more than data-driven deduction. Worse, the quality of the data is often so poor that a human being is required to double-check everything, defeating the promised efficiency gains.

Cloudy With a Loss of Spending Control: How Data Centers Are Endangering State Budgets

Then there are the financial issues. The revenue required to justify the enormous capital expenditure on data centres is not there. Harris Kupperman, founder and chief investment officer of Praetorian Capital Management, puts it this way: 'There just isn't enough revenue and

there never can be enough revenue. The world just doesn't have the ability to pay for this much AI.' It is estimated that there is a US\$600 billion annual revenue gap.

To keep the ball rolling, the big AI companies are playing the kind of financial games seen before the GFC: combining massive debt with the extensive use of financial instruments called derivatives, which are essentially financial bets.

According to *Nikkei Asia*, the five biggest tech giants in the US are carrying \$1.65 trillion in debt that does not appear on their balance sheets. That may be defensible under existing rules governing how assets and liabilities are accounted for, but the wider use of derivatives adds another layer of risk.. Credit default swaps (CDS), derivatives that act as insurance policies against a company defaulting on its debt, are being heavily used. Such instruments played a central role in the GFC. Banks that have lent heavily to technology firms are using CDS instruments to offload risk, much as financial institutions believed they could offload the risk of housing defaults before 2008.



Wall Street has also begun financialising the physical chips themselves through futures contracts, allowing financial exposure to chip prices and demand to be transferred or deferred. And there are other financial merry-go-rounds of dizzying complexity. The entire edifice depends on the assumption that AI applications will eventually generate trillions of dollars in revenue to service the interest on the

debt. That is not going to happen.

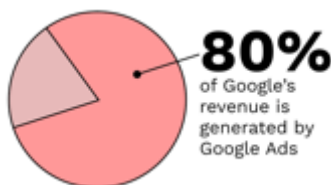
When the markets eventually acknowledge that, the biggest problem for ordinary people may not be high energy and water prices. It will be the financial health of the whole system.

What is the environmental cost of AI....Matt Tutt...UK



Google AI Overviews are AI-generated summaries that appear at the top of Google search results to provide quick answers. The system uses Google's Gemini models to read multiple web pages and write a direct answer. Each summary includes visible links to the source websites used to build the answer. You can select "Show more" or type follow-up questions to chat and dive deeper into the topic

As a consumer I would probably agree that the AI Overviews are quite handy - but - knowing a little around the added environmental costs of this feature, I don't feel the benefits outweigh those costs. And that's before jumping into the ethical considerations of how Google (and AI in general) have literally stolen the content that humans have written, and have basically monetised it in the process. Google might not be selling access to its AI Overview feature, but of course its main product is its search engine - so improving searcher satisfaction is a key goal for them - which likely helps to grow their market share and keep their shareholders happy.



Most of Google's (their parent company is Alphabet) revenue comes from advertising and other channels anyway. It remains to be seen how they will monetise AI (will they allow advertisers to feature here in the Overviews at some point?)

What are the environmental costs of running a Google AI Overview search?

Disclaimer: I have not seen any officially confirmed figures on this matter. Perhaps they will only come if someone at Google ever releases this data publicly.

Speaking to people within the environmental and sustainability tech sector, estimates put AI Overview searches as being ten times more

costly than a traditional search result. For context - an average (traditional) Google search query is responsible for 0.192g EqCO₂ (gram equivalent of CO₂) according to a Greenspector study in 2020 (via the brilliant [Gerry McGovern](#)).

Search by URL without going through the search results!

- On average, a URL search consumes **35%** less carbon footprint than a basic search through the results page.



GREENSPECTOR, 2020

Gerry continues that for traditional Google queries "this is the equivalent carbon emissions of a 1 metre journey in a light vehicle".

That alone might not sound much - but when Google gets over 80,000 requests per second, that's the carbon equivalent of a 6.7 million km journey (1,325 tons of CO2 every day!) So, if we scale up accordingly for Google's AI Oversearch feature, each search query would have an estimated carbon of 1.92g CO2. This is a huge increase for every single query made using AI. For fun* I asked Google: **What is the estimated environmental cost of Google's ai overview searches, in terms of carbon and water?** and below is the AI Overview response I got:



Google's AI overview searches, like those using generative AI, have a significant environmental impact. They contribute to increased carbon emissions due to the energy-intensive nature of AI model training and operation. Additionally, AI's power requirements necessitate substantial water consumption for cooling data centers. While specific numbers for AI overview searches are difficult to isolate, Google's overall emissions have risen significantly due to AI.

Carbon Emissions:

AI models require immense computing power to run, leading to higher electricity consumption and increased greenhouse gas emissions. Researchers have estimated that one ChatGPT query consumes roughly as much electricity as a light bulb for 20 minutes, and this adds up exponentially with millions of users.

Water Consumption:

Data centres need large amounts of water to cool down servers, and the increasing demand for AI processing is driving up water use. Google's data centres in the US alone consumed billions of litres of fresh water in 2021 for cooling.

Google's Overall Emissions:

Google's own reports indicate that AI is a major contributor to the company's increased greenhouse gas emissions, with a 48% rise since 2019. This highlights the broader impact of AI's energy needs on the environment.

**I will plant some trees later to compensate for carrying out this AI search!*

And when considering water usage, which is now a massive environmental consideration for all forms of AI usage, we can likely extrapolate based on the estimated costs of other AI LLMs including ChatGPT. It is commonly believed on the web that one query on ChatGPT uses over 500 milliliters of water (over half a litre!) but this figure has since been disputed. It is likely to be far less than this for individual queries made on ChatGPT, although that shouldn't make it's usage environmentally sound.



So, it's hard to determine the exact water cost here for Google's AI Overview feature - it's unlikely to be as high as 0.5 litres of water per search query - and if I can find a reliable figure to cite here, I will. Water usage is required for

AI usage because the data centres used to power these calculations use up a lot of energy, and this produces a lot of heat, and so water is used as a cooling mechanism. Sometimes this water is being taken from local communities, being diverted from agricultural usage or from drinking water for humans - and all for what - helping users in the Global North (eg people like me) to get the answer to their question faster, saving them clicking-through to a website to read the answer for themselves? Is it really all worth it?

How do we disable Google's AI Overview search feature?

If you add -ai to the end of your query it should prevent AI results from being returned. So - your Google query should read "*how to boil an egg -ai*". Adam Bastock of Small99 shared this tip recently on LinkedIn. What's frustrating for Google users is that there's not a more UX friendly way of disabling or opting out of AI powered search results.



Maybe there should be a public campaign aimed at getting Google to allow us to disable it permanently if we want to? Perhaps if enough people start adding -ai to the end of their search results Google will start getting the idea.

As someone who is quite strongly against most usage of AI - the most frustrating element is that the use of AI is being widely forced upon us - there is no kind of easy opt

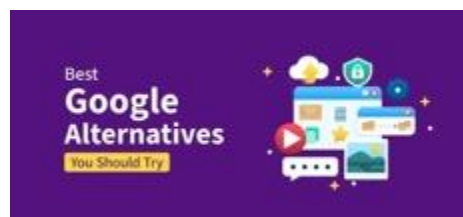
out here - and when you are aware of the massive environmental costs of AI (compared to the minimal gains received), you can probably understand the frustration many users have. Perhaps this is a great time to find a better, more privacy-focused and ethical alternative to Google? A few more ethical Google alternatives here would be:

Brave - a popular privacy-focused search engine

Ecosia (they plant trees based on the profits - this appears to be powered by Yahoo)

DuckDuckGo - again, very privacy focused and no search personalisation

Qwant - another privacy focused search engine.



Final thoughts - What is the real (hidden) cost of our AI adoption?

I don't like how the environmental costs of AI usage are being purposely obscured from the end user. I think it is incredibly irresponsible for tech companies, especially those that are used by billions of people around the world on a daily basis, to



suddenly implement such a feature without the ability to disable it. I'm hoping that when people become aware of these energy and water usage costs associated with AI - and this applies to ChatGPT and other AI

tools - that they either curb their usage or find alternative ways of doing what they want to do.

For many that might mean finally making the switch to a more ethical search engine and browser - one which doesn't force it's users into adopting AI search results.



The ABC reported on 11th September that Advocacy group Data Centre Australia published a report saying Australia had 162 data centres with a combined IT capacity of 1.5 gigawatts as of March of this year.

The combined capacity of the approved, but unbuilt, 29 data centres is at least 3.38 gigawatts, based on each company's statements of computing power and the state planning-approved energy capacity. Data centres are increasingly bigger and will use more electricity and water. Dozens of approved but yet-to-be-built AI data centre projects will escape the federal government's proposed restrictions around energy and water use because the new rules are not expected to be retrospective.

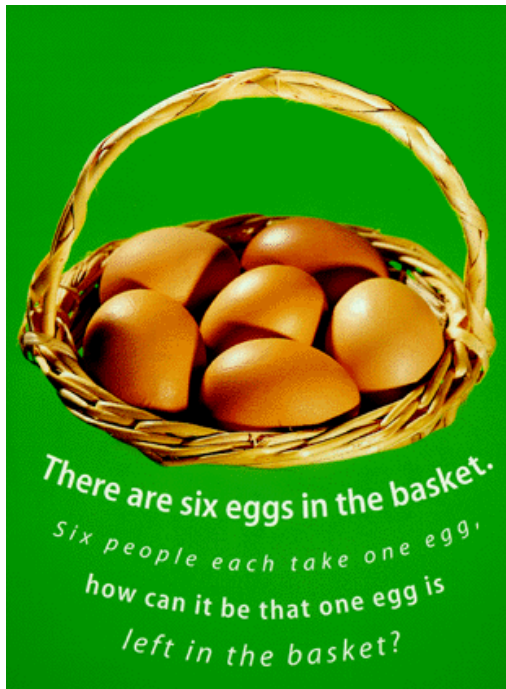
Humour

Three friends from a nearby parish discussed , "When you're in your coffin, and family, friends and parishioners are mourning over you, what would you like them to say?" Artie said, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful husband, a fine spiritual leader, and a great family man."

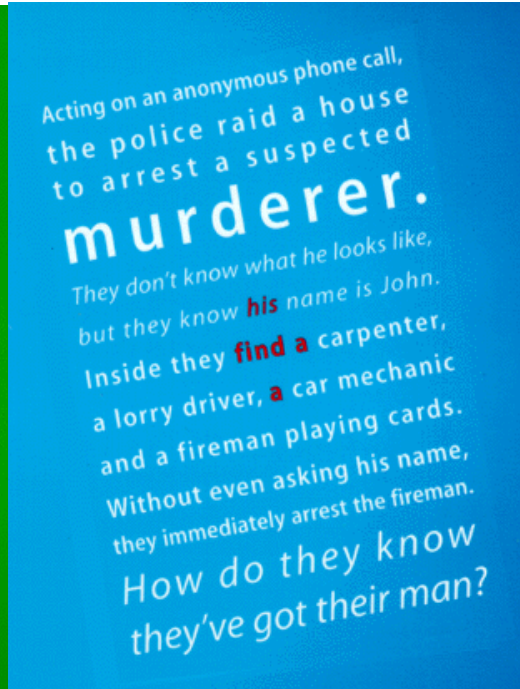
Eugene commented, "I would like them to say I was a wonderful teacher and servant of God who made a huge difference in people's lives.." Alan said, "I'd like them to say, 'Look, he's moving!'"

4 Puzzles

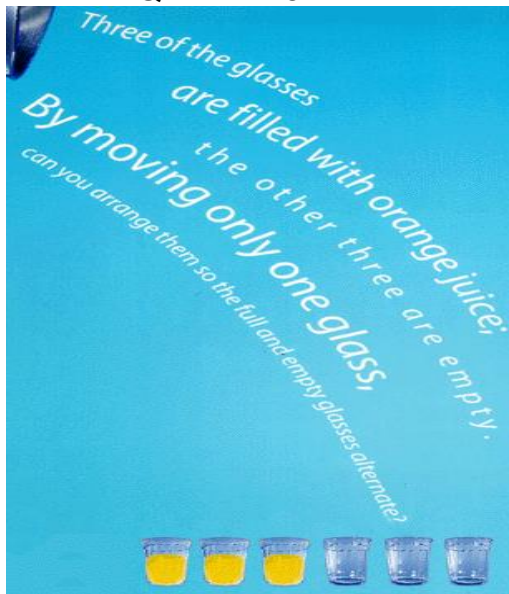
Question 1



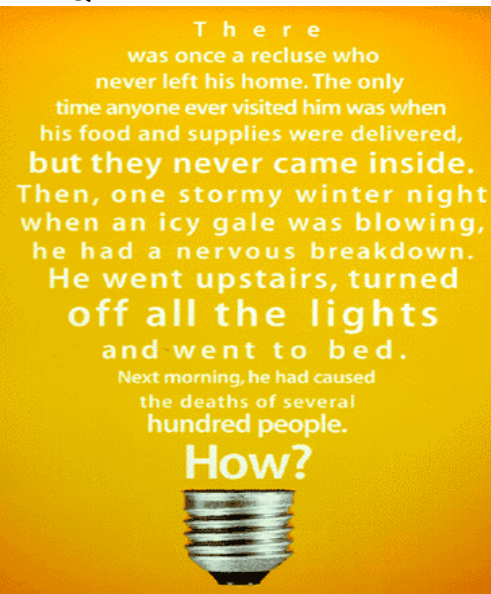
Question 2



Question 3



Question 4



More Humour

Q. What did Alexander the Great and Winnie the Pooh have in common?

A. The same middle name.

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: My name is Susan!

ATTORNEY: What is your date of birth?

WITNESS: July 18th.

ATTORNEY: What year?

WITNESS: Every year.

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess

Bill and his wife Judy went to the local fair every year. Every year, Bill would say, "Judy, I'd like to ride in that helicopter." Judy always replied, "I know Bill, but that helicopter ride is fifty dollars, and fifty dollars is fifty dollars"

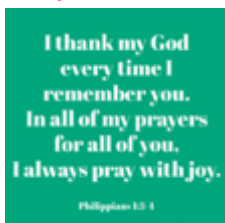
Years went by and Judy and Bill went to the fair again. Bill said, Judy, I'm 89 years old now and if I don't ride that helicopter now, I might never get another chance. "Judy replied, Bill, that helicopter ride is fifty dollars, and fifty dollars is fifty dollars"

The pilot overheard the couple. He said, "folks I'll make you a deal. I'll take both of you for a ride. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride and not say a word, I won't charge you! But if you say one word, it will be \$50."

Bill and Judy agreed, and up they went. The pilot did all kinds of fancy manoeuvres, but not a word was heard. He did his daredevil tricks over and over again, but still no word. When they landed, the pilot turned to Bill. He said, "by golly, I did everything I could to get you to yell out, but you didn't. I'm very impressed!"

Bill replied, "well I was going to say something when Judy fell out, but fifty bucks is fifty bucks!"

Prayers



We remember that those who have died recently especially **Leonie Casey** (Paul's sister).

We also remember those whose anniversaries occur at this time, especially: **Salvatore Musumeci, Frank Ryan, and Peter Vigilante**

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...

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



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

Brian