

Holy Cross Retreat



Letter 347

9th October 2026

Greetings,

Community life for us has returned to a regular routine for the next month after a two week 'break' from formal commitments, for Erick, Joseph and Chris.

Erick has recommenced his counselling placement at St John's Dandenong on Mondays and Tuesdays each week, with an overnight stay with our community in Endeavour Hills until October 30th

Joseph has returned to 'Heart of Life' (approx. 9am-5pm) Monday to Friday.

Chris has returned to YTU Monday to Friday (to continue his role as President and lecturer. On Mondays and Wednesdays, Chris has a 6pm-9pm lecture. One of Chris' favourite sayings is "no one cares how much you know until they know how much you care". It is well known that Chris is a 'very keen' North Melbourne supporter. The first quote the recently appointed new Kangaroo's coach Jaymie Graham used was....you guessed it. Maybe Chris will get a chaplain's job?

JD is continuing his guided studies towards admission to Doctoral studies.

Jerome admits his world has shrunk owing to ageing and health but he is still cheery and positive, headed for 88. Sorting out coins is a bit demanding now.

Mayrose began her holiday on Monday.

Cecilia will be in the office Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10.00am-2.30pm and **Sr Margaret** will be in the office on Wednesdays.

To note:

The next **Coffee Cart** will be after 10.00am Mass on Sunday October 25th

The annual Mass to remember **deceased associates of Holy Cross** will be celebrated at 10.00am on Sunday November 15th

The next **Come Away Day** will be on Wednesday November 25th

Senta Bilong Helpim



St. Gemma's Senta Bilong Helpim (Care Centre) in Vanimo, PNG is for children with disabilities was established in Waromo in 1994. The goal has been to provide relief for vulnerable children with physical and mental disabilities. Prior to SBH being established children with significant disabilities would be ostracised by their communities and not receive medical treatment or even basic human compassion.



Through the care and compassion offered at SBH hundreds of children have experienced a significantly improved quality of life and dignity. Some, who in the past would have been excluded from their communities, have gone on to lead fulfilling and productive lives. In addition to providing care at SBH there have been occasions where pro bono surgery has been organised through Australian surgeons to assist, save or improve the lives of some of the worst affected children.

The Senta is in continuous need for assistance and a decision has been taken to raise \$300,000 to help build a new home for children with disabilities. The new Senta will provide essential care, rehabilitation, medical support, therapy spaces, accessible facilities, training areas and a safe environment for vulnerable children living with physical and mental disabilities in Vanimo, Sandaun Province, Papua New Guinea. It will be a safe place for children and young people to learn, participate and belong.

The Senta is run by the Passionists, through the Passionist Heart Foundation

Every donation, no matter the amount, will make a difference and contribute towards the ambitious but much desired goal. If you are unable to donate you might still help by sharing the campaign with family, friends, parish, school, workplace or community. Together, it is hoped that we can build a new Santa Bilong Helpim, and give children and their families renewed hope.

You can donate by scanning the QR code or visit: gofund.me/8efeb9045



All donations are tax deductible



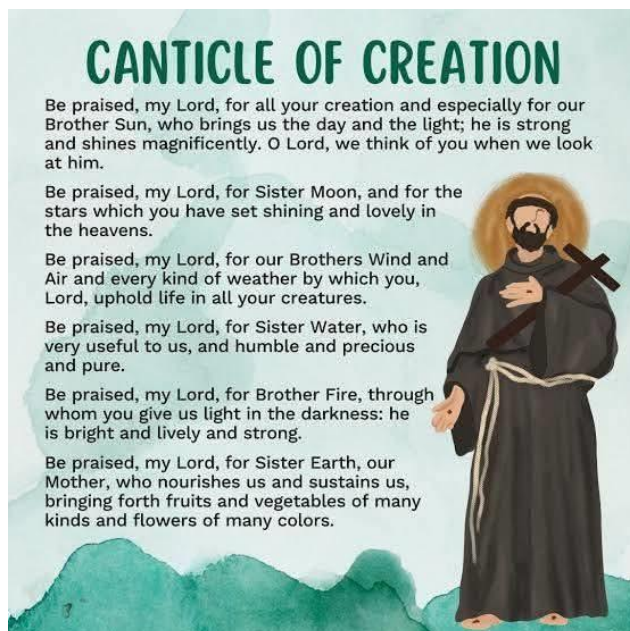
Help Build a New Home for Children with Disability

Organized by
Province Centre



Homily for last Sunday....feast of St Francis of Assisi

This is the homily Tri gave last Sunday and I thought it well worth sharing because Sunday marked the end of the 'Season of Creation'. **Bold text** is Tri's work.



Today, the 27th Sunday of Ordinary time, and we also honour St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of creation. And in a beautiful way, all our readings today remind us of one thing: **we have been entrusted with God's creation.** We are not the owners. We are the stewards.

St. Francis of Assisi is famous for seeing all of creation as one family under God. He did not look at nature simply as something we could use. He called the creatures and the elements his brothers and sisters.

In his *Canticle of the Creatures*, written near the end of his life, St. Francis praises God through creation: **Brother Sun, Sister Moon, Brother Wind, Sister Water, Brother Fire, and Mother Earth.** For St. Francis, creation was a beautiful gift from God, connected to us and pointing us back to the Creator.

Francis' life later became one of the great inspirations for Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, on the care of our common home. I remember that, about ten months after *Laudato Si'* was published, a terrible ecological disaster happened in Vietnam. It became known as the **2016 Formosa Environmental Disaster.**



The water along the coast of Central Vietnam turned red. Huge numbers of dead fish washed up along about 200 kilometres of coastline, from Hà Tĩnh through Quảng Bình and Quảng Trị to Thừa Thiên–Huế (4 different provinces). The disaster was linked to toxic industrial wastewater discharged into the sea by the Formosa steel plant.

More than 100 tons of marine life, thousands of fish and marine animals died, large areas of coral reef were destroyed, and many fishing communities lost their



livelihoods. Overnight, hundreds of thousands of fishermen, salt farmers, and workers were affected. Families lost their income. Communities were shaken. This is exactly the kind of reality that *Laudato Si'* asks us to look at. Pope Francis reminds us that the earth is our **common home**. When we damage the environment, the damage does not stop with nature. It reaches human

beings, especially the poor and the vulnerable.

The first reading asks us a very uncomfortable question: **What have we done with what God has given us?** God planted a vineyard on a fertile hill. He dug it, cleared away the stones, planted the best vines, built a watchtower, and prepared a winepress. God did everything. And that vineyard is a powerful image of creation. In Genesis, God creates the world out of chaos. He brings order, beauty, and life. He fills the sky with light, the earth with plants, the sea with creatures, and the land with animals.

And finally, God creates us. Then God places creation into human hands—not simply to use it, but to **cultivate it, care for it, and protect it**.

A quote on a green background with a small sun icon in the bottom left corner. The text reads: "Our Mother Earth is crying out for help. As her stewards, we must take responsibility for caring for nature without dominating it. Let us cultivate, protect, and preserve her."

"Our Mother Earth is crying out for help. As her stewards, we must take responsibility for caring for nature without dominating it. Let us cultivate, protect, and preserve her."

But look at what happened to the vineyard. God expected justice but found bloodshed. God expected righteousness but heard a cry. And we have to ask ourselves: **What have we done?** The beautiful world God created has become deeply wounded. Pollution is rising. The planet is warming. Forests are disappearing. Habitats are being destroyed.

And the consequences are not just numbers on a screen. Millions of people struggle to find clean water. Families suffer because of polluted air. Many people live with the fear of floods, fires, rising seas, and losing their homes. So we have to ask again: **What the hell have we done to the earth?**

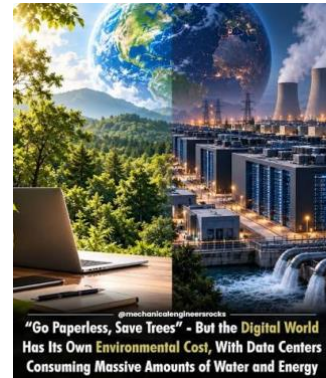
A quote on a dark, textured background. The text reads: "The Earth does not belong to us: we belong to the Earth. Chief Seattle".

The Earth does not belong to us: we belong to the Earth.
Chief Seattle

Today's Gospel shows us what happens when we forget that we are caretakers. The tenants were given the vineyard to look after. They worked in it. They endured the heat and the rain. They waited for the harvest. Their work mattered. But they forgot one important thing: **the vineyard had been entrusted to them. It did not belong to them.**

When the owner sent his servants, they beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Why? Because those servants reminded them of something they did not want to hear: **“This vineyard is not yours.”** And that is where we can fall into the same trap. We can begin to treat the earth as if it belongs to us. But creation is not our private possession.

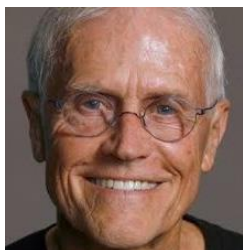
God has entrusted it to us so that it can produce good fruit—not only for us, but for others, for the poor, and for generations still to come. We can see this challenge right here in Australia. As the demand for artificial intelligence and digital technology grows, huge data centres are being built. These centres need enormous amounts of electricity and, in many cases, large amounts of water for cooling. Technology gives us many good things. But it also has a cost.



So perhaps today we need to ask ourselves a personal question: **What is my response to this crisis?** Do I live like an arrogant tenant—consuming without thinking, always wanting more energy, more convenience, more digital luxury, without asking what it costs our common home? Or will I choose the way of St. Francis? Can I live with a little more restraint? Can I use what I have more responsibly? Can I care for creation not as its owner, but as its servant? Because one day, the vineyard will be returned to the Master. And the question will not simply be, **“What did you have?”** The question will be: **“What did you do with what I entrusted to you?”**



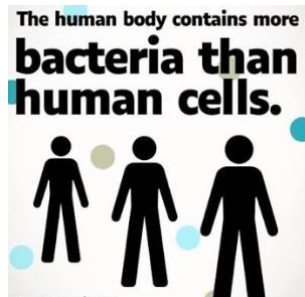
Life is a miracle



Environmental scientist Paul Hawken In his 2009 commencement address to the University of Portland, stating, “Class of 2009: you are going to have to figure out what it means to be a human being on earth at a time when every living system is declining, and the rate of decline is accelerating. Kind of a mind-boggling situation... but not one peer-reviewed paper published in the last thirty years can refute that statement.

Basically, civilization needs a new operating system, you are the programmers, and we need it within a few decades. This planet came with a set of instructions, but we seem to have misplaced them.

Important rules like don't poison water so il, or air, don't let the earth get overcrowded, and don't touch the thermostat have been broken. Systems theorist, designer and inventor Buckminster Fuller, said that spaceship earth was so ingeniously designed that no one has a clue that we are on one, flying through the universe at a million miles per hour, with no need for seatbelts, lots of room in coach, and really good food-but all that is changing.



Hawken noted that "Within each of us are 1,000,000,000,000,000 (one quadrillion) cells, 90% of which are not human cells! Each of our bodies is a community, and without the other microorganisms, we would perish in hours. Each human cell has four hundred billion molecules conducting millions of processes between trillions of atoms. The total cellular activity in one human body is a staggering, one septillion - that is....

1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000. Every millisecond, our body undergoes ten times more processes than there are stars in the universe.

Life is a miracle every moment of your existence".

Limiting our thinking and appreciating to 'what we understand' denies the reality that we understand very little of life's mysteries. It is not uncommon when a person is in palliative care at home, that their pet dog outside the house will begin howling at the moment of death! What do they sense?



Owners of dogs who have a definite routine have often been puzzled as to how their pet dog knows the exact time to await the master's return or when their meal is due. Without a clock or the capacity to 'read the time', they can do so as accurately as any human. In some palliative care homes a 'therapy' cat will climb on to the bed of patient in the last hours before they pass away. How do they know?

It was documented that during the 2004 Indonesian tsunami, animals fled well in advance of the big waves. They knew something was about to happen, and that they needed to flee to higher ground. What sort of intelligence and communication is at work among animal species? When a period of drought is coming, kangaroos know not to breed. How? Some breed of butterflies have learned to mimic the 'talk' of ants. While in their cocoon, they are able to 'tell' the ants outside, how and when to extract them.



During the 1920's, fresh supplies of milk began to be delivered in Britain, to people's doorsteps. Varieties of birds began to steal the cream by removing the caps and drinking from the tops of the bottles. Despite the fact that blue tits do not travel far from their nesting place, after the initial reporting in Southampton, England, there were reports of blue tits engaging in identical activity from all over Britain. There were also reports from Sweden, Denmark and Holland.



In Holland, milk deliveries stopped during the war, but in 1947, blue tits began again their search for cream. Interestingly, what seems to have stopped this practice is the change to non-cream milk. The tits were after the cream, not the milk!



In 1985, some sheep in Wales overcame fake cattle grids by rolling over them. This rolling over technique occurred in the same year in Sweden. Twelve years later, sheep in Hampshire began to use this technique and in 2004, some sheep in Yorkshire also adopted this technique.



When the European Cuckoo is hatched, it never sees its parents. It is reared by birds of other species. The adult birds migrate to their other home in Southern Africa. One month later, the young cuckoos get together and without the aids humans would use, migrate across the Sahara Desert to Southern Africa, where they join their elders!

There is so much for us to be in awe of. How can a baby mountain goat learn within a few days to undertake steep climbs without fear? Bats can fly through complex wiring at full speed, without sight. Young spiders know how to spin webs. The fearsome roar of a lion can travel eight kilometres. Hummingbirds can fly backwards. Termites can build incredibly complex air-conditioned mounds despite having no eyesight.

Scientist Robert Sheldrake claims *"the idea of mysterious telepathy-type interconnections between organisms and of collective memories within species"* can also be observed in flocks of birds who can commonly change direction, or in schools of fish. Some of them even change colour in the same instant. The massive murmuration of starlings in Europe see ten million birds move in unison with no apparent leader.

Are we appreciators of life, or do the everyday miracles pass us by?

Watch a murmuration over Rome.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVko9jyAkQg>

Civilisation will end not with a bang, but with Attachment B

(‘Pearls and Irritations’).....Jeffrey Braithwaite September 11, 2026

(The views expressed in this article may or may not reflect those of ‘Pearls and Irritations’.



Somewhere in the near future, our civilisation will collapse not from war, famine, or asteroid impact, but from a Change Management Framework Checklist. Future archaeologists will not find our ruins buried beneath ash. They will find them secreted away under Attachment B, Schedule 4, Version 12 (Track Changes Enabled), and conclude, correctly, that we all died waiting for sign-off.

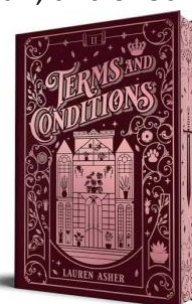
We once built cathedrals in a single generation. Now it takes a generation just to approve the risk assessment. Somewhere between “let’s do something” and “the thing gets done”, an entire shadow society has emerged whose sole purpose is to ensure nobody ever quite does the thing. And to produce, in v.82, a record to demonstrate that due diligence was exercised in the not-doing.

The hospital cured of common sense



Take the modern hospital, an institution so committed to patient safety that it has become saturated with documentation about it. Somewhere in every hospital sits a swathe of clinical guidelines each running to roughly 200 pages, most of which exist to protect the hospital from the two-hundred-and-first page, which is the one where someone got sued.

Alongside those is an eye-watering range of policies and procedures. To administer a paracetamol tablet now requires everyone to have done the training module, a competency framework, a checklist, a double-sign-off, a barcode scan, and should the patient so much as sneeze afterwards, an incident report describing the sneeze in a structured taxonomy of harm severity (Category 3: Moderate atmospheric disturbance, patient induced). The great irony of clinical governance is that the guidelines and policies meant to reduce risk have become a risk in themselves. Nobody has read all 200 pages, let alone the more than 2,000 policies with accompanying standard operational procedures.



But everybody has signed to say they have, and the actual clinical wisdom of the ward – which boils down to four steps: “watch the patient, use your judgement, do something if needed, call someone senior if it looks bad” – survives underground, whispered nurse to nurse like a folk remedy.

Universities, meanwhile, have achieved something remarkable: they have out-bureaucratized the hospitals.



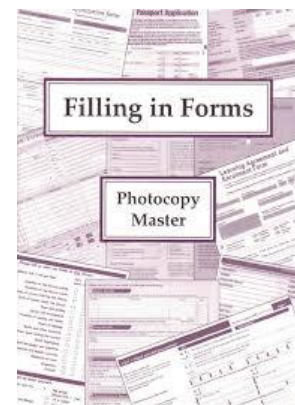
This is an institution, not so long ago, whose entire purpose was



the free exchange of ideas. Somewhere on every campus sits a pro vice-chancellor (Compliance,

Assurance, Policy Opportunity Enhancement and Strategic Risk), a title with more syllables than most PhD theses, whose office produces the “Policy on Policies”. That’s a document explaining how future policies must be formatted, consulted upon, reviewed, and endorsed by a committee of 30 faculty professors. And if one professor is away sick and another is overseas, it is, as they quaintly say, “inquorate”.

To hire a casual tutor now requires a position description, a merit-based selection panel, an equity checklist, a probity declaration, and sign-off from someone who has never met the tutor and never will. The tutor must then be onboarded and complete 17 learning modules covering everything from student risk and human ethics to software installation, classroom etiquette, plagiarism detection, and the unforgettable *Five-step plan for contributing to a positive culture*. Meanwhile, academics, the theoretical custodians of critical thinking, spend so much of their week filling in forms attesting to their critical thinking that little time remains to do any.



The ethics committee needs a review



Nowhere has bureaucracy achieved a purer form than in the university research ethics committee, established to protect human subjects from harm but now largely devoted to protecting itself from audit. To ask 12 consenting adults whether they prefer tea or coffee before a focus group, a researcher must produce a protocol, risk assessment (categorising the tea-versus-coffee question by likelihood and consequence of harm), a participant information sheet

longer than the survey itself, data management plan, and consent form warning that participation is not entirely risk-free.

This being, admittedly, the most evidence-based claim in the document. 12 weeks, and five committee meetings later, approval arrives, subject to amendments governing the storage of anonymised tea preferences for seven years, in case anyone ever needs to know who requested Earl Grey.

The IT upgrade eclipsed by legalese

As if it couldn't get any worse, there's the IT upgrade, a project in which the terms-of-service riders, licensing schedules, data-sovereignty addenda, and change-



advisory-board minutes will, by volume, exceed the code itself by several hundred times. Nobody has read the end-user licence agreement since Bill Clinton was president. We click "I Agree" the way medieval peasants made the sign of the cross: quickly, sincerely, and with no real understanding of what we have just agreed to. Somewhere, a

vendor's legal team has spent longer drafting the liability-limitation clause than the engineers spent writing the software it protects.

A modest proposal



It's time for a solution. The obvious one is a taskforce to cut red tape. This would need to submit a charter, a terms of reference, a stakeholder consultation plan, and a risk register identifying "excessive process" as a risk to be managed through the establishment

of a Red Tape Reduction Steering Committee (the RTRSC). It would meet quarterly, produce minutes, and eventually recommend the formation of a working group. But not before commissioning itself a logo. After all, every committee as important as the RTRSC needs more than just a *plan*, it needs a *brand*.

This is not a design flaw. It is the system working exactly as intended, if the intention was never efficiency but plausible deniability in a world so thoroughly papered over that no single human can ever quite be blamed for anything. Because everyone is, after all, just following the guideline, the policy, the protocol, and the terms and conditions, which somebody, somewhere, definitely read.



Future civilisations may marvel that we built the internet, sequenced the genome, and put a rover on Mars, only to bury ourselves a few decades later beneath a digital nightmare of our own design, sustained largely by our willingness to put up with it.

PII COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR AUSTRALIA

1. WHAT COUNTS AS PII IN AUSTRALIA

Broad Definition under Privacy Act 1988: Any info or opinion that can identify an individual, even combinations!

- Full Name
- Address
- IP Address
- Bank Details
- DOB, TIN or Tax Number
- Biometrics
- Medicare/Passport No. Photos
- Driver's Licence/Passport

SENSITIVE INFORMATION (Stricter Obligations!)

Health Records, Racial/Ethnic Origin, Political Opinions, Religious Beliefs, Criminal Records, Biometric Data.

REQUIRES EXPLICIT CONSENT!

Business data can become personal info! Drivel is key!

Combined data is key!

2. WHICH LAWS AND STANDARDS APPLY

PRIVACY ACT 1988 & APPs (Australian Privacy Principles)

- Applies to Govt Agencies & Private Sector (Turnover >\$3M + some small businesses like health services).
- 13 APPs govern collection, use, disclosure, storage, access, income, notifiable data breaches (NDB) scheme (notify within 30 days).

SECTOR-SPECIFIC & INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

- TPB Code (Tax Practitioners).
- AUSTRAC AM/CTF Reform (Accountants, Lawyers from 2020).
- GDPR (for EU clients).
- DON'T IGNORE!

3. ACTIONABLE STEPS FOR COMPLIANCE (Step-by-Step Comic Strip)

STEP 1. MAP AND MINIMISE YOUR DATA

BUILD A DATA INVENTORY: List systems, data types, purpose, retention, access (e.g., CRM, Email, Storage).

APPLY DATA MINIMISATION: Cut what you don't need! APP 3: Collect only REASONABLY NECESSARY info. Delete raw sensitive data after verification.

"Run a free IdentityCheck trial to manage sensitive data securely!"

STEP 2. LOCK DOWN ACCESS AND STORAGE

CONTROL ACCESS: Principle of Least Privilege & Role-Based Access Controls (RBAC). Review annually.

SECURE STORAGE: Encryption at rest & in transit. Set RETENTION LIMITS & Automated Deletion (e.g., Tax records: 5-7 years, not full ID scans).

STEP 3. HANDLE REQUESTS, BREACHES, AND AUDITS

RESPOND TO REQUESTS (APP 12/13): Access & Correction within 30 days. Log requests!

NOTIFY & DOCUMENT BREACHES (NDB): Notify OAC & affected individuals for serious harm risks. Keep a breach log.

PREPARE FOR AUDITS: Keep data inventory, access logs, breach records current. Review regularly.

NEXT STEPS

ONGOING ATTENTION: Not a one-time project! Build habits into operations. Focus on SENSITIVE DATA (IDs, Biometrics) – NEVER in unsecured locations!

Source: stackgo.io

Our society will not end with a bang, but with a form (Attachment B, Schedule 4, Version 12 (Track Changes Enabled)), filled out correctly, filed in multiple MS Teams and Dropbox folders, then never read again.

Attachment B: Document list

Humour



Humour continued

Dave "Do you want the winner of the next race?"

Bob: "No thanks mate. Our backyard is too small."

Bob and Dave found 3 hand grenades and decided to take them to the police station. Dave asked "What if one explodes before we get there?" Bob replied "We'll say we only found two!"

A bus load of tourists were on a mystery tour and they decided to run a sweepstake to guess where they were going. The driver won \$52!

Bob found a sandwich with two wires sticking out of it. He phoned the police and says "I've just found a sandwich that looks like a bomb." The operator asked "Is it tickin'?" Bob said "No, I think it's beef"

Bob says to Dave, "Christmas is on a Friday this year"

Dave says "Let's hope it's not the 13th."

Bob 's in the bathroom and Murphy shouts to him. "Did you find the shampoo?"

Bob says, "I did, but it's for dry hair and I've just wet mine."

I heard a joke about paper today. It was tearable.

Q. Why does a Moon rock taste better than an Earth rock? A. It's a little meteor.

Q. How much do rainbows weigh? A. Not much. They're actually pretty light.

Q. What is the most popular fish in the ocean? A. A starfish.

Q. Why did Beethoven get rid of his chickens?

A. All they ever said was, Bach, Bach, Bach!

Q. Why shouldn't you fundraise for marathons?

A. They just take the money and run. (Take note Erick!)

Q. What's the difference between the bird flu and the swine flu?

A. One requires tweetment and the other oinkment.

Q. What kind of job can you get at a bicycle factory? A. spokesperson

Q. What does a condiment wizard perform? A. Saucery.

Q. What do you call a happy cowboy? A. A jolly rancher.

Q. What's the difference between a \$20 steak and a \$55 steak? A. February 14th!

Q. Why did the American gridiron coach yell at the vending machine.

A. He wanted his quarter back!

Q. What's the difference between spring rolls and summer rolls?

A. Their seasoning.

Q. What's the difference between Iron Man and Aluminium Man?

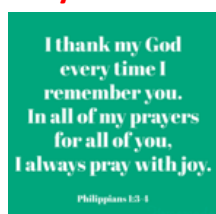
A. Iron Man stops the bad guy. Aluminium Man foils their plans.

A slice of apple pie costs \$2.50 in Jamaica, \$3.75 in Bermuda and \$3 in the Bahamas. Those are the pie-rates in the Caribbean.

Farewell

Chris very kindly visited the Alfred hospital on Tuesday following advice that Rosa Secatore was 'low'. Chris anointed Rosa who died shortly before he arrived. We express our sympathy to Lidio and Lina and the San Gabrielle family.

Prayers



We remember that those who have died recently, especially [Rosa Secatore](#), and whose anniversaries occur at this time, especially [Maurice Valmorbida](#), [Frank Mandile](#) (Cathy Hardinge's father), [John Sheehan](#), [Simon Owen](#) (Bernadette's son) [Mario Spinosa](#).

We pray also 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...

[Dawn Heffernan](#), [Daphne Chamberlain](#), [Christine Storey](#), [Kathy Shady](#), [Nada Atme](#), [Marie Spowart](#), [Paul Fitzgerald](#), [Stephen Cogle](#), [Joan O'Callaghan](#), [Teresa Lim](#), [Pam Storey](#), [Peter Heffernan](#), [Carol Battistella](#), [Bernadette Owen](#), [George Hall](#), [Graham Burke](#), [George Ryan](#), [David Chai](#), [Lucia Isgro](#), [Fr. Brendan Lane](#), [Beth Scott](#), [Max McMahon](#), [Edward Atme](#), [Rod Gorfine](#), [Maureen Barns](#), [Kate Lenic](#), [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