



## Letter 26 (August 21<sup>st</sup>)

Greetings as we come close to the official beginning of autumn, but which we can see already is underway. The magnolia tree near the chapel is blossoming beautifully.



Autumn is the season of hope. Everywhere there are sights and scents that delight us and cause us to marvel. Amid the restrictions and other challenges of the COVID pandemic, spring is a reminder that “this too will pass”

## Waiting

Of course for some things to pass, we must wait, and waiting is not always a popular pastime. Waiting and watching too closely, can make time seem to move very slowly whereas if we are engaged and not deliberately watching, time can seem to fly.



Some marathon runners have expressed their frustration with well-meaning supporters encouraging them at the 22 kilometres mark, shouting “keep going, you are more than half-way”. Many runners claim all this does is remind them that they have a long way to go! It could be the same for many of us as we come to a similar mark in Level 4 restrictions. We can keep looking ahead to the time “when this will all be over” or to the time when “we can all get back together again”. The truth is, there is a long way to go!



Alan Joyce, CEO of Qantas announced yesterday that he does not expect international travel to resume until July next year. That is a good barometer I think, for how long it is going to take us to return to what we once thought was normal. What we are seeing all around the world is more outbreaks and new restrictions. It seems we will have to wait for a vaccine This is why we need resilience and patience. We will have to wait. Voltaire cautioned. “We fail to live. We are always waiting to live”.



So while we wait, why not smile.....

## A clever Dad

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and asked his Dad if he could start using the family car.

The Dad said he'd make a deal with his son, "you bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible a little and get a haircut. Then we'll talk about the car".

The boy thought about that for a moment, decided he'd settle for the offer and they agreed on it.

After six weeks, the Dad said, "Son, you're brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut."

The boy said, you know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Sampson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

His Dad replied, "did you also notice that they all walked everywhere they went?"

## Hairdressers



1. The recently retired Chief Medical Officer Brendan Murphy went to have a haircut. The hairdresser's granddaughter aged about 5 saw him and asked him, "How did you get out of the television?"

2. A guy names Joe Senzo went to a hairdresser and explained that he was leaving for Rome the following day. Since there was a good chance he would be meeting the Pope, he wanted a really nice haircut. When he returned from his trip several weeks later, Joe header to the same hairdresser who made no reference to Joe's visit to Rome for a while. Then he asked, "Did you get to meet the Pope?"

"Did I meet the Pope? Joe replied. I sure did, and it was amazing. He was up on the balcony, a long way from me down in the piazza. But in the middle of his speech he paused and said, "aspetta un attimo" ('Wait a minute' Then he disappeared. I wondered what he was doing. A couple of minutes later there was a lot of movement as the crowd parted, and I saw Pope Francis making his way towards me. He came right up to me and said, "Signore che ti ha fatto quel taglio terribile" ('Sir who gave you that terrible haircut?")

## A simple question

Can February march?

The answer of course - No, but April may.

## A few funny thoughts that have appeared on roadway signs

- The mountains nearby are not just funny, they are hill areas.
- In search of fresh vegetable puns. Lettuce know
- The problem with political jokes is that they sometimes get elected
- Feeling a little paranoid? Remember you are not alone
- What I if I told you,  
You may have misread the above line?
- Alcohol is not a problem for chemists; it is a solution
- Turning Vegan would be a big missed steak
- Dogs can't operate MRI scanners but Catscan
- Despite the high cost of living, it remains popular
- To the thief who took my anti-depressants – I hope you're happy
- Life is short, if you can't laugh at yourself, call a friend who will!

## Bees



There is something buzzing around the dam since yesterday. At first glance of this photo you might think an astronaut visited us, but as Templestowe's most recent registered bee keeper, Chris is simply getting into the swing of things. He has established a hive down at the dam and there is warning sign not to get too close. It should be quite a sight to see the bees

take flight over the dam and head out on the daily search!

It is claimed that one worker bee can visit as many as 2,000 flowers a day and one in every three bites of food we eat is derived from plants pollinated by bees. I'm not pollen your leg, even though it sounds unbee-lievable.

## The Outsider

I recently read the book 'The Outsider' by Christopher Lamb. The book highlights the many critics and enemies Pope Francis has within and outside the Church. Of course it is easy for us to overlook that this is exactly the same experience that Jesus had. From the time John the Baptist was executed, we hear constantly that Jesus avoided larger towns.

We hear debates between Jesus and the religious leaders who were scandalised by his familiarity with God and his constant forgiveness of people's sins. Jesus was challenged, "On whose authority do you forgive sins?" Rigid traditionalists have always resented people being forgiven and they are prepared to go to extreme lengths to stifle mercy.

Pope Francis wrote his own book, "The name of God is Mercy". It was translated into English by Oonagh Stransky. In that book Francis explains that his most profound and shaping instruction occurred on the priest's side of the confessional screen, when he was entrusted many hours of 'litanies of suffering, failure, despair, and sin'. "When I heard confessions I always thought about myself, about my own sins, and about my need for mercy, and so I tried to forgive a great deal," he said. This was what he calls "the gift of confession," and it was transforming.

When he was a parish priest in Argentina a woman he knew "had to prostitute herself to provide her children with food." He made sure that she and her children received gifts at Christmastime, but when the woman came to thank him, it was not for that. Rather, she explained that she was grateful "because you never stopped calling me 'Señora.'

In 'The Joy of the Gospel', Francis reminded us that "communion is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak - the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems." In contrast, a well known Australian cardinal wrote in 2014, ""The sooner the wounded, the lukewarm, and the outsiders realise that substantial doctrinal and pastoral changes are impossible, the more the hostile disappointment (which must follow the reassertion of doctrine) will be anticipated and dissipated.

Let us give thanks for Francis' constant concern for the poor and the outsiders, and pray that he can guide the church in the way it needs to move. May he remain at peace despite those who want to prevent him opening the church to it's true purpose - and may we follow his example.



Dalset sent me this photo this afternoon. This is the magnolia tree that is already looking nice, but has much more to reveal.

## Tiernan 70

Those associated with Holy Cross when Tiernan



Doherty was community leader, remember his wide smile, hearty laugh, constant kindness, generous hospitality and deep spirituality.



Tiernan is currently community leader of the Passionist community in Highgate, London. We wish him well as he celebrates his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday on Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>.

## The back lawn



Pastor has continued his work in the garden 'out the back' with new ornament, more plantings and weeding. This week he has continued to varnish the timber cuts mentioned two weeks ago. They need three coats and will become part of the 'Stations of the Cross'. He has gathered more stones to paint for ongoing improvement in the Peace Garden that we might be able to feature next week.



## More newsletter recipients

We welcome a few new readers have joining us this week. There are seven or eight who need the newsletter delivered, because they do not have internet access.

## Those who are unwell

There have been a number of comments made about how many of our community have been or still are unwell. Some have had or are awaiting surgery. Some are in hospitals or rehab centres, some have returned home from these facilities but are still recovering. Some of those who have returned home are living alone and feeling a strong sense of isolation. One person wrote, "shopping is impossible". A couple of people have selflessly asked to be dropped off the sick list because there are so many others, even though they still need our prayers.

Just briefly: **Michael O'Callaghan** has been unwell with UTI for three months and is having a heart procedure today.

**Sergio Mattioli** had successfully surgery for cancer yesterday and after his recovery he will begin treatment.

**Bernadette Owen** also had surgery for cancer a week ago and has to have more radical surgery in a week's time.

**Pat Stubbings** has been in hospital for nearly three weeks. She had two surgeries for cancer and hopes to be allowed home tomorrow.

**Pam Gartland** (sister to John Stretch) has a reoccurrence of cancer.

**Dominic Marasea** (who sings so beautifully for us every Christmas as well as at the Family Masses) is to have a brain procedure on September 4<sup>th</sup>. More about that next week.

**Mary Hackett** has battled a number of physical challenges over the past five years or more and currently suffering from shingles.

**John Chubb** is now past eleven weeks in hospital and apart from serious mobility limitations, John's eyesight has become very poor.

**Patricia Keeghan** is hoping to be released from rehab this week.

Others we request prayers for please are: Maurice Valmorbida, Michael Doyle, John Lazzari, Barry Hanrahan, Don Bertram, Gerry Bond, Kathleen Jordan, Jim Monaghan, Peter Owen, Mary Jones, Pam Storey Errol Lovett, Maeve Reardon, Cathy Petrocco, Maria Coburn and Bronwyn Burke.

**The link for Sunday's Mass** will be sent tomorrow afternoon

God bless....for the community,

Brian