

## Holy Cross Retreat

<https://holycrosscentre.com/community/>



Letter 230

5th July, 2024

### Provincial Visitation



Every year of a Provincial's four year term, except his last year, he makes an official fraternal visit to each local community. This enables him to offer encouragement and guidance as needed and ascertain that Passionist life is being lived faithfully in each community. Denis Travers will make such a visit from next Tuesday and he will remain until Saturday so as to receive Tri's lifelong commitment to Passionist life on Friday evening.

Denis will be warmly welcomed.

### Property Consultation



Thank you again for your interest in the Province search for funding through the use of our properties. While we will continue to gather ideas, it is the task of our Province Finance Committee and Provincial Council to explore, advise and decide. Obviously that will not happen overnight. Other ideas related to the everyday income at Holy Cross are welcome. We are deeply grateful for the generosity extended to us, and we do not want to be 'talking about money'. The gospel and our community is our priority. At the same time we will cautiously enquire and explore whether a tap and go machine is what we want.

A suggestion has been that people might consider a bequest with the Passionist Province or specifically for Holy Cross. We will provide some information about this in case someone does want to consider this.



Another suggestion has been an annual [car-boot sale](#) (in warmer weather) and other fundraising ideas that involve community building as well. The Coffee Cart is



on hold until late August. There is some dialogue going on as to the best way to continue this popular practice and keep it being funded. A related suggestion was that there be an open invitation to meet (pay as you go) for coffee. So we'll try it at [Melissa Cakes Café Bar](#),

65 Parker St, Lower Templestowe on Thursday July 25 at 10.30am. Just turn up and get to know some others a little better.

**Erick – 36**



**Erick** celebrated his birthday on Monday. We didn't have a 6 to go on the cake, so consistent with the number on the shirt he was wearing, (300), we gave him 3 and 4 + 2.

You will note that he was given (by Tri) a very delicate knife with which to cut the cake and he did an excellent job.

Genesis says that Enoch lived for 365 days, so Erick's on his way. He arrived in Australia aged 17. I reminded him that he has now doubled his age since then (almost exactly). The next time he does that, he will be 72, and the time after that, 144. Then he getting into Enoch territory!

**Tri**



**Tri** will make his final profession as a Passionist next Friday, July 12<sup>th</sup> at Holy Cross, 7.30pm. If you have not witnessed a profession ceremony, it is very moving

liturgy so come along.

We are still awaiting word that a second application by his parents for a visa has been successful. You can see that Templestowe will be a world away for Tri's farmer-mother.



## Where science meets religion:

Pope Francis advocates for theology to evolve through dialogue with various fields of knowledge. Michelangelo's fresco, *The Last Judgment*, exemplifies this by integrating scientific and philosophical insights of his time, notably those of Copernicus, with Christian doctrine.

By Dr. Christopher Longhurst - Aotearoa

June 27th, 2024



Pope Francis has called for theology to develop in dialogue with “other scientific, philosophical, humanistic and artistic knowledge.” (*To promote Theology*, 9)

One of the best examples of this approach must be Michelangelo’s cosmic design in *The Last Judgment*, a fresco covering the entire altar wall of the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City. The Last Judgment is a key tenet of Christian doctrine and a defining theme in Western Christian art. But in 1541, Michelangelo’s deviation from the traditional hierarchical scheme was startling. He meshed the scientific discoveries of the day with ancient Greek philosophy to not only progress Catholic thought but also to correct it.



Traditional versions of the Last Judgment depict static horizontal layers, with Christ in heaven at the top and the devil in hell at the bottom. Various ranks of humans, saints, and angels were layered in between. The “Good” go up to heaven, and the “Bad” go down to hell.





But Michelangelo's version was a stunning turning point not only in Christian doctrine but in the prevailing cosmological perception of the universe. He challenged the established ideas of the time by using a wide rotary movement in a spherical design that warps into traditional Last Judgment features. Christ was not at the top. Rather, he was in the centre with unranked naked human bodies, saints without halos, and wingless angels twisting and turning in orbit on every axis around him.

More intriguingly, Christ was not depicted as the usual Jesus, judge, and saviour of the world. Instead, Michelangelo portrayed him as the beardless Greek sun god Helios, Apollo in the Roman pantheon, with the solar orb's golden aura surrounding him. The arms of this Pagan-Christian Sun-Christ set everything in motion, orchestrating a wide three-dimensional rotary movement with the main circles of figures arranged in inner and outer spheres. The complete design is not static and layered like traditional versions but dynamic and spherical.



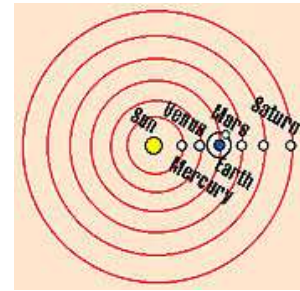
Its correspondence with scientific sources and the revolutionary ideas of the time, such as Nicolaus Copernicus' heliocentrism, is obvious. Charles de Tolnay, a leading art historian and expert on Michelangelo, wrote in 1960: "By means of the central place which Michelangelo reserved in his composition for the Sun (Christ-Apollo), the artist came of himself to a vision of the universe which surprisingly corresponds to that of his contemporary Copernicus." (V. Shrimplin)

By introducing Copernicus's astro-model, which positioned the sun at the centre of the universe, motionless, with Earth and other planets orbiting around it in circular pathways, Michelangelo challenged the Church's cosmological view. While the influence of Copernicus's ideas on Michelangelo's design cannot be disputed, this agreement was originally dismissed by art historians because Copernicus's tract *De Revolutionibus*, in which he explained his heliocentric ideas, was not published until two years after Michelangelo's fresco was completed.



But Michelangelo would have already known about Copernicus's work before it was published and the fresco would have been heavily influenced by the ideas developed by Copernicus, despite the timing factor. Further, the publication date of *De Revolutionibus* had little to do with the origins of heliocentrism.

Some 1800 years earlier, Aristarchus of Samos, an ancient Greek astronomer and mathematician, presented a model that placed the sun at the centre of the known universe with the earth revolving around it. Also, centuries beforehand, Vedic philosophers and Muslim astronomers had proposed theories of a sun-centred universe. However, Copernicus moved heliocentrism from philosophical speculation to predictive geometrical astronomy.



Back to theology, references to Christ as the sun and his role as judge on Judgment Day are quite common. They exist in the bible (Malachi 4:2, Matthew 17:2, Revelation 1:16, 10:1, 21:23) and in early Christian iconography (*Christus Helios* mosaic on the ceiling of the Julii tomb in the Vatican Necropolis).

However, over a thousand years after early Christians christianised the pagan gods to convert the Romans, Michelangelo returned to pagan mythology to educate the clergy. He reinforced the Renaissance’s literary tradition by analogizing Christ not only to the sun but to the sun as a symbol of “the Good” from Plato’s rediscovered *Republica* (Book 6). The Maori would say, “Ka Mua Ka Muri” (“walking backward into the future”).

More influential for Michelangelo’s Sun-Christ would have been *De Sole*, a tract written by his teacher Ficino, whose Neoplatonism linked the sun to the source of knowledge and wisdom: “The Sun will give you clear signs. Who will dare to say that the Sun is false?” Ficino also alluded to the role of Christ as the sun at the time of judgment when he will awaken the dead, “like the new sun awakens the world each spring.” (V. Shrimplin)



While the Roman Catholic practice of clothing theological ideas with metaphors has abated today under Francis’s recent call for a more contextual theology, unquestionably Michelangelo’s *Last Judgment* “grasps itself as embedded in a web of relationships with other disciplines and knowledge.” (*To Promote Theology 5*) Features of the traditional scheme remain, but Michelangelo’s work is an outstanding example of the current Pope’s transdisciplinary approach to knowledge.

The *Last Judgment* absorbs within itself not only aspects of the great heritage of the classical world but also the wisdom of contemporary science. Whether we see this artwork through the eyes of faith or reason, we come up against it as an example of immense transdisciplinary knowledge.



Religion and science speak to us, and we can see, as it were, a significant point of intersection between them. This is something that happens to everyone, irrespective of religious belief or worldview.

What we are learning about the beginnings of the universe and the evolving of life to ever more complex forms, has to inform and deepen our understanding of God and give us new understandings of faith. The more answers science gives us, the greater the mystery and more marvellous, is the wonder of life.

### 42 Laws of Maat under Kemet Law

During our evening meal a week ago, Erick said he had learned about the 42 laws the Egyptians had, and that having been raised as an Egyptian, Moses would likely have been familiar with these laws and it might be argued that they are reflected in most of the 10 commandments, especially because like the laws of Maat, the commandments are expressed in the negative ('You shall not').

We know from their surviving writings that the native African people of the country now known as Egypt called themselves Kemet. The surviving artifacts of the Kemet senior government officials and scribes provide evidence that Kemet rule of law was "Maat," and it contained the observing of 'the 42 Laws of Maat'.



Creation stories from the Kemet people report that in the beginning Atum emerged from the chaos of primordial waters. This of course is similar to the opening words of Genesis, "the earth was formless and empty". Within Kemet cosmology, Ma'at was the one that kept the stars in motion, the seasons changing and maintained the order of Heaven and Earth. The opposing force of this balance was chaos. The iconography for Maat in hieroglyphs, depict a single ostrich feather (Shu), worn atop Goddess Maat's head.



During the reign of Pharaoh Menes, around 2925 B.C.E, archaeological evidence including coffin texts and funerary papyri, reveals administration of the 42 Laws of Maat among the Kemet people. According to Egyptian religion, a dead person's soul was weighed against a feather on the scale

of Maat. Only those whose hearts were free from evil were spared negative judgment. In Chapter 125 of The Papyrus of Ani, the petitioner pronounces the 42 declarations.

1. I have not committed sin.
2. I have not committed robbery with violence.
3. I have not stolen.
4. I have not slain men or women.
5. I have not stolen food.
6. I have not swindled offerings.
7. I have not stolen from God/Goddess.
8. I have not told lies.
9. I have not carried away food.
10. I have not cursed.
11. I have not closed my ears to truth.
12. I have not committed adultery.
13. I have not made anyone cry.
14. I have not felt sorrow without reason.
15. I have not assaulted anyone.
16. I am not deceitful.
17. I have not stolen anyone's land.
18. I have not been an eavesdropper.
19. I have not falsely accused anyone.
20. I have not been angry without reason.
21. I have not seduced anyone's wife.
22. I have not polluted myself.
23. I have not terrorized anyone.
24. I have not disobeyed the Law.
25. I have not been exclusively angry.
26. I have not cursed God/Goddess.
27. I have not behaved with violence.
28. I have not caused disruption of peace.
29. I have not acted hastily or without thought.
30. I have not overstepped my boundaries of concern.
31. I have not exaggerated my words when speaking.
32. I have not worked evil.
33. I have not used evil thoughts, words or deeds.
34. I have not polluted the water.
35. I have not spoken angrily or arrogantly.
36. I have not cursed anyone in thought, word or deeds.
37. I have not placed myself on a pedestal.
38. I have not stolen what belongs to God/Goddess.
39. I have not stolen from or disrespected the deceased.
40. I have not taken food from a child.
41. I have not acted with insolence.
42. I have not destroyed property belonging to God/Goddess.



It is not surprising that across the ancient near-east there are many creation stories and moral codes. Through trade and tourism, people from different cultures were exposed to the belief systems and moral codes of surrounding cultures. These would have been brought back and discussed. In other cases one culture conquered another and the inhabitants were forced to adopt their captors laws, customs and regulations.

In what is known as the axial period from the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE (and especially around 500 BCE, to the third century CE, the philosophy behind the world's major religions emerged, led by popular religious figures who promoted a special focus on social justice. Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Hellenism, Buddhism, Hinduism, the Judaic prophets, Taoism etc.



So, although it is likely that Moses knew of the 42 laws of Maat, it can't be determined that he extracted some and created a few extra, to form the decalogue. We can see a relationship between 'The Last Judgment' painting and the 42 laws of Maat. There is an Arab saying that "People resemble the times they live in, more than their parents". This has never been more true than in our current times. News of events travel instantly around the globe and the accompanying images allow people in distant countries to see how people dress, what sort of houses they live in, what kind of music they listen to and how their country operates.



This also goes to show that an interesting learning shared over dinner can lead to extensive reading and reflecting!

## Humour

I once submitted 10 puns to a joke competition. I really thought with that many, one was sure to be a winner. Sadly, no pun in ten did.

Why did the old man fall down the well? He couldn't see that well.

Today at the bank, an old lady asked me to check her balance... So I pushed her over.



What is the difference between a piano, a tuna, and a pot of glue?

Me: I don't know.

Dad: You can tuna piano but you can't piano a tuna.

I got an A on my origami assignment when I turned my paper into my teacher.

How many storm troopers does it take to change a lightbulb? None, because they are all on the dark side.

If your house is cold, just stand in the corner. It's always 90 degrees there.

When Grandpa put the new car in reverse, he said, "Ah, this takes me back."

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Many people are facing mental health issues from being isolated for too long after they retire. In fact, I have been discussing this with the microwave and toaster during coffee break and we all agreed that things are getting hot.

I spoke with my apartment windows this morning cos they were very open about it. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything. Certainly not to the fridge as he has been acting very cold and distant. The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked for his opinion. He didn't say anything but the doorknob told me to get a grip.

The eaves said they had been dropping and the roof said it was on top of everything. The carpet said not to worry things were covered. I was too embarrassed to look at the cupboard because it was bare.

The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me to pull myself together. I tried to talk to the mirror as well but it asked me to go reflect on myself first. The vacuum cleaner was very unsympathetic and told me to just suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over. In the end, the iron straightened me out. She said everything will be fine and no situation is too pressing! Luckily didn't talk to the television or it will be news for everybody.

**Horse racing can excite a dog**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxw-65GTtSE>

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Sunday July 7th



**Pentecost painting** by Magda Lee, Gracie Mosquito and Imelda Gugamen from the small community in Western Australia that is linked with both the Great Sandy Desert and the Tanami Desert.

The four circles in the corners of painting represent the four communities: Wirrimanu, Mulan, Kurrurungku and Ringer Soak. The leaders are represented through the horse shoes located around the circle. The different colours represent different people.

The stars represent the different flowers in our area. The dots represent people all over the world and the people coming together for Church. People are also represented through the horse shoes on the right of the painting.

Wirrimanu is located in the top left hand corner, Mulan in the top right hand corner, Ringer Soak in the bottom right hand corner and Kurrurungku in the bottom left hand corner.

The Holy Spirit is located in the centre of the painting. It is the Spirit working in all of our communities.

*The theme for NAIDOC week is 'Keep the Fire Burning'. This theme echoes the enduring flame of First Nations cultures, shining brightly through adversity and celebrating the richness of First Nations heritage.*

### From church bulletins

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Scouts are saving aluminium cans, bottles and other items to be recycled.

Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

The sermon this afternoon will be: 'Jesus Walks on the Water'

The sermon tonight will be : 'Searching for Jesus'

The topic for next week's sermon will be "what is hell". Come and listen to our choir practice

Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. We know that they need all the help they can get.

Ms Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again' last Sunday, giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

### Prayers

We remember all the recently deceased especially **Reina Marie Bernaldez Casenas** and those whose anniversaries occur this week, especially, **Gilbert Lim** (6<sup>th</sup> July) **George Barnes** (7<sup>th</sup>), **Dima Moscattini** (8<sup>th</sup>), and **Carolyn Thompson** 12th)

We also remember all others in our Holy Cross family who are unwell, especially.



Maeve Reardon, Lorraine Gill, Adrian Woon, Margaret Enriquez, Ann Burke, Tony Tome, Maree Bartoli, Pam Storey, Mary Dunn, Luke Norden, Paul Darbyshire, Carol Battistella, Monique Hardinge, Robyn Burns, John Reardon, Gerry Bond, Ann Burke, Peter & Bernadette Owen, Alexander Lim, Michael O'Callaghan, Peter McNamara, Greg Agosta, Bronwyn Burke, Helen McLean,

Phil Drew, Pam Gartland, Patricia Keeghan, Anne Jenkins, Sr Gen Walsh RSC, Errol Lovett, Shirley Barnes, Chris O'Toole and baby Alfred Theodore in London.

The **Mass link** for this Sunday will be sent on Saturday afternoon by Chris.

Thank you

Brian

**THE PASSIONISTS OF  
HOLY SPIRIT PROVINCE**



*Warmly invite you to*

**The Perpetual Profession of  
Br. Cao Van Tri, CP**

July  
Friday **12** 7:30 PM  
2024

**Holy Cross Retreat  
207 Serpells road, Templestowe, VIC 3106**

*Refreshments to follow in the dining hall*

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**Please RSVP for catering purposes by 5th July 2024  
to [f.xcaovantri@gmail.com](mailto:f.xcaovantri@gmail.com) or 0468 865 574**



Holy Cross as it looked in 1965

