



To be on earth the Heart of God



KIT @ Kippax

If you don't know how far you have come, look back to where you have been.



## Time out for reflection

### Some simple but urgent guidance to get us through these next months...

I awoke on Saturday, September 19, with three sources in my mind for guidance: Etty Hillesum (1914 – 1943), the young Jewish woman who suffered much more injustice in the concentration camp than we are suffering now; Psalm 62, which must have been written in a time of a major oppression of the Jewish people; and the Irish Poet, W.B. Yeats (1865 – 1939), who wrote his “Second Coming” during the horrors of the World War I and the Spanish Flu pandemic.

These three sources form the core of my invitation. Read each one slowly as your first practice. Let us begin with Etty:

There is a really deep well inside me. And in it dwells God. Sometimes I am there, too ... And that is all we can manage these days and also all that really matters: that we safeguard that little piece of You, God, in ourselves.

Etty Hillesum, Westerbork transit camp

Note her second-person usage, talking to “You, God” quite directly and personally. There is a Presence with her, even as she is surrounded by so much suffering.

Then, the perennial classic wisdom of the Psalms:

In God alone is my soul at rest.  
 God is the source of my hope.  
 In God I find shelter, my rock, and my safety.  
 Men are but a puff of wind,  
 Men who think themselves important are a delusion.  
 Put them on a scale,  
 They are gone in a puff of wind.

Psalm 62:5–9

What could it mean to find rest like this in a world such as ours? Every day more and more people are facing the catastrophe of extreme weather. The neurotic news cycle is increasingly driven by a single narcissistic leader whose words and deeds incite hatred, sow discord, and amplify the

daily chaos. The pandemic that seems to be returning in waves continues to wreak suffering and disorder with no end in sight, and there is no guarantee of the future in an economy designed to protect the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor and those subsisting at the margins of society.

It's no wonder the mental and emotional health among a large portion of the American population is in tangible decline! We have wholesale abandoned any sense of truth, objectivity, science or religion in civil conversation; we now recognize we are living with the catastrophic results of several centuries of what philosophers call *nihilism* or post-modernism (nothing means anything, there are no universal patterns).

We are without doubt in an apocalyptic time (the Latin word *apocalypsis* refers to an urgent unveiling of an ultimate state of affairs). Yeats' oft-quoted poem “The Second Coming” then feels like a direct prophecy. See if you do not agree:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
 Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
 Are full of passionate intensity.

Somehow our occupation and vocation as believers in this sad time must be to first restore the Divine Centre by holding it and fully occupying it ourselves. If contemplation means anything, it means that we can “safeguard that little piece of You, God,” as Etty Hillesum describes it. What other power do we have now? All else is tearing us apart, inside and out, no matter who wins the election or who is on the Supreme Court. We cannot abide in such a place for any length of time or it will become our prison.

God cannot abide with us in a place of fear.

God cannot abide with us in a place of ill will or hatred.

God cannot abide with us inside a nonstop volley of claim and counterclaim.

God cannot abide with us in an endless flow of online punditry and analysis.

God cannot speak inside of so much angry noise and conscious deceit.

God cannot be found when all sides are so far from “the Falconer.”

God cannot be born except in a womb of Love.

So offer God that womb.

Stand as a sentry at the door of your senses for these coming months, so “the blood-dimmed tide” cannot make its way into your soul.

If you allow it for too long, it will become who you are, and you will no longer have natural access to the “really deep well” that Etty Hillesum returned to so often and that held so much vitality and freedom for her.

If you will allow, I recommend for your spiritual practice for the next four months that you impose a moratorium on exactly how much news you are subject to—hopefully not more than an hour a day of television, social media, internet news, magazine and newspaper commentary, and/or political discussions. It will only tear you apart and pull you into the dualistic world of opinion and counter-opinion, not Divine Truth, which is always found in a bigger place.

Instead, I suggest that you use this time for some form of public service, volunteerism, mystical reading from the masters, prayer—or, preferably, all of the above.

You have much to gain now and nothing to lose.  
Nothing at all.

And the world—with you as a stable centre—has nothing to lose.

And everything to gain.

Richard Rohr, 19 September 2020

Submitted by Di Bruce

## A Creed to Live by

Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others;

it is because we are different that each of us is special.

Don't set your goals by what other people deem important;

only you know what is best for you.

Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart.

Cling to them as you would your life – for without them life is meaningless.

Don't let life slip through your fingers, by living in the past or for the future.

By living your life one day at a time, you live all the days of your life.

Don't give up when you still have something to give;

nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying.

Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect;

it is the fragile thread that binds us to each other.

Don't be afraid to encounter risks;

it is by taking chances that we learn how to be brave.

Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find;

the quickest way to receive love is to give love.

The fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly,

And the best way to keep love is to give it wings.

Don't dismiss your dreams;

to be without dreams is to be without hope,  
to be without hope is to be without purpose.

Don't run through life so fast that you forget – not only where you've been, but also where you're going.

Life is not a race, but a journey to be savoured each step of the way.

Submitted by Louise Niven

# HEARTS IN ACTION

## Vinnies Update



Vinnies will start organising their list of people for Christmas Hampers. Our parish has always been very generous in support of the Vinnies Christmas Hampers.

Closer to the date Vinnies will need volunteers to sort, pack and deliver the hampers.



**Vinnies**  
good works

## SJACare

Supporting parishioners  
in our community

SJACare held a reflection morning for Carers on Thursday 24 September. The theme of the reflection was "Come away and rest awhile".

Jan Biggs, Jan Kilby, Maresa Laird, Margaret Ohlin, Joe Ots and Ann Reynolds, are some of the ministers of care who attended along with the members of the SJACare team, Helen Kennedy [Chair], Bob Raadts Manel Samarshinghe, and Marian England. Below is a poem from the prayer for the reflection morning.

### Invitation

Oh do you have time to linger  
for just a little while out of your busy  
and very important day  
for the goldfinches  
that have gathered in a field of thistles  
for a musical battle,  
to see who can sing the highest note,  
or the lowest,  
or the most expressive of mirth,  
or the most tender?

Their strong, blunt beaks  
drink the air as they strive melodiously  
not for your sake and not for mine  
and not for the sake of winning  
but for sheer delight and gratitude –  
believe us, they say,  
it is a serious thing just to be alive  
on this fresh morning in the broken world.

I beg of you,  
do not walk by without pausing  
to attend to this rather ridiculous  
performance.  
It could mean something.  
It could mean everything.  
It could be what Rilke meant, when he wrote:  
You must change your life.

Mary Oliver

# Social Justice News

## OCTOBER CALENDAR

<b>11-17 Oct</b>	Anti-Poverty Week
<b>11 Oct</b>	International day of the Girl Child
<b>15 Oct</b>	International Day of Rural Women
<b>16 Oct</b>	World Food Day
<b>24-30 Oct</b>	World Disarmament Week
<b>31 Oct</b>	World Cities Day

### 11-17 OCT Anti-Poverty Week

Anti-Poverty Week aims to strengthen public awareness and understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty in Australia and internationally. Poverty and severe hardship affect more than a million Australians and more than a billion people around the world are desperately poor.

This year the focus is on affordable housing for all as the best solution to reducing poverty.

Last year, ACTCOSS estimated that in the ACT:

- Almost 40,000 people live in households that are among the most disadvantaged in Australia
- Over 37,000 people live in low-income households, including almost 8,000 children
- Almost 26,000 people are living below the poverty line
- Over 25,000 people in low-income households are experiencing food stress
- Over a third (33.8%) of low-income rental households are in rental stress
- Over 10,000 people are living on Newstart, Youth Allowance or other working-age allowances.

Because the ACT has higher than average levels of income, employment and education, disadvantage tends to be hidden. And costs tend to be high here – particularly for rent. In fact, Canberra's cost of living in Canberra is more expensive than in 80% of cities in the world.

ACTCOSS have produced a brief: *Fixing Canberra's housing crisis* for the ACT Government, which include amongst their requests:

- Increase effective land transfers to ACT community housing providers and empower them to build more community and affordable housing
- Provide further investment in additional public housing and renewal of current stock
- Re-establish and fund an advocacy voice for tenants in the ACT
- Develop an Indigenous Housing Strategy for the ACT including a pathway to a community controlled Aboriginal housing organisation
- Establish a specialist youth homelessness service
- Implement long-term housing solutions for detainees leaving the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC).

### 15 OCT International Day of Rural Women

This year, International Day of Rural Women looks at the vital role that rural women play in agriculture.

Women account for a substantial proportion of the agricultural labour force, including informal work, and perform the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work within families and households in rural areas. They make significant contributions to agricultural production, food security and nutrition, land and the management of natural resources. But women and girls in rural areas suffer disproportionately from poverty.





Women farmers may be as productive and enterprising as their male counterparts, but are less able to access land, credit, markets, and tend to obtain lower prices for their crops. Around the world, every gender and development indicator reveals that rural women fare worse than rural men and urban women, and they disproportionately experience poverty, exclusion and the effects of climate change.

At the first International Day in 2008, the United Nations urged member States to:

- Pursue the political and socio-economic empowerment of rural women, and support their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels;
- Ensure that the perspectives of rural women are taken into account, and that they participate in the design and implementation of policies and activities related to emergencies, such as natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction;
- Promote programmes to enable rural women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and childcare responsibilities.

**There are many social justice issues currently not being addressed by the parish community because we no longer have a committee. If anyone is interested in meeting every few months, please contact us.**

For more information on social justice issues, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council's website: <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au> contains a large amount of information in the form of statements, monthly briefings & leaflets.

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## 16 OCT World Food Day

The event aims to build awareness about hunger issues facing people throughout the world. And because food is an essential part of life, it can have devastating consequences when people can't access it. Food is seen as a basic human right, and yet one in nine people globally experience chronic hunger.

### How we can observe world food day

- Donate food to a local Charity or food bank, or money to a Charity which helps feed those in third world countries;
- Shop locally and support family farms. And local food is fresher, as food that travels long distances is often picked before it's ripe. Buying locally produced food means less money spent on fossil fuels to transport the food.

### Why world food day is important

- It's a reminder hunger can be ended: our planet currently produces enough food to feed every person. However, 1.3 billion tons of food is lost or wasted annually (that's roughly 20% of the food produced).
- It brings attention to eating mindfully. World Food Day serves as a reminder to refrain from overeating and to make choices that are ecologically sustainable.

## 31 OCT World Cities Day

This year's theme is:

### Valuing our communities and cities

In 2013, the UN passed a resolution stressing the importance of cities and human settlements to be inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. However, this is not always the case and, according to the UN, inequalities in cities have grown since 1980. The largest cities are also where you often find the greatest differences between people.

World Cities Day aims to highlight the role of urbanisation to provide the potential for new forms of social inclusion. These include greater equality, access to services, and added diversity. This way cities can be designed to create opportunities, enable connection and interaction, and facilitate sustainable use of shared resources.



## Happy as a bird

To maintain a merry mood,  
I can take my cue  
from the sweet chirping  
of the little birds  
as they usher in  
the morning.

Tweeting their tunes in the trees,  
they seem very pleased  
to thank their Maker  
for the gift of life,  
and for the sun  
that ends the night.

And so I sing a sweet song  
as I walk along,  
for thanks to God's Word  
I am free from fear  
and can be happy  
as a bird.

SHANE MURTAGH

# Parishioner's *Stories*

## How different is 2020 for you??

When you posed this question and asked for responses from parishioners, I was at first reluctant to put my thoughts on paper... but then I reflected that my feelings are possibly those of many of our Parishioners who have not returned to a physical presence within the Church but cannot put forward a defining reason why not.

My childhood revolved around a Catholic education from kindergarten through to the time I completed my secondary education. Similarly, my two younger brothers. A family of five, my mother converted to Catholicism upon her marriage to my father. We weren't a wealthy family, my father served in New Guinea during World War 11, we didn't have a car and we lived a mile from our local Parish and primary school. We walked everywhere, school, shopping, Sunday Mass, school fetes, sporting fixtures ... The Easter Triduum became an endurance test for us kids but with two altar boys in the family and a 'convert' mother, it was just 'what we did'.

*So, how come someone who treasures her faith, has hardly ever missed a Sunday or special Mass in 70 plus years, not been to Mass since March?*

I'm scared? No....but everything is different, and I find change hard. My dear sister-in-law died ... funeral in Brisbane, could not go. New baby in the family - Baptism ... could not attend. Last week a parishioner died - didn't apply to go to Requiem as I felt family needed priority, Sunday Mass - have always sat in the same pew, with same friends, not now guaranteed, etc., etc.

'Kit', the weekly recording of Sunday Mass, and 'Compact' have been my lifeline, and I congratulate all within our Parish Council for such innovations, but now is the time to come out from hiding, and face the 'new world' of being a Catholic. I want to, I just have to take that first step ... first booking!!

**Original St. John the Apostle parishioner – name withheld by request.**

Reserved for  
your story....

Sometimes I get a little frustrated with all the rules of the COVID-19 program but I am aware how important they are to rid our world of this pandemic.

I turn to searching for ideas (new) of things I'd like to know. We are advised that an EXAM at the end of the day will help in our prayer and relationship with God. James Martin SJ wrote a book titled, The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything a Spirituality for real life. In it he recalls a meditation by Fr. Pedro Arrupe SJ, who was at one time the Jesuit Order Superior General. He spoke around twelve languages and was a very humble priest. He had a stroke and could only remember his own language which he accepted without complaining and with the grace of God. His EXAM while not strictly adhering to the Ignatian rule attracts me and is ongoing.

**Ann Reynolds**



## Learning to be a lector – a change of pace

Proclaiming the Word as a lector is a humbling and enriching experience. The more you do it, the more you realise that you're allowing the Lord to speak through you. And like any good instrument in His hands, you want to yield yourself to His inspiration. One way to achieve this is to vary the tempo at which you read.

Recently, we were given the challenge of proclaiming Chapter 11, verses 33-36 of Paul's letter to the Romans, which begins as follows:

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways!

In preparing for this reading, one should ask: **How** am I going to deliver these lines? Clearly, Paul's exclamations are nothing less than an explosion of praise. And if you're spontaneously praising God, it's likely you'll be speaking excitedly and joyfully. So here's my follow-up question: What tempo of speech would naturally reflect this enthusiasm? For most of us, the answer would be at least a moderate tempo and probably a fast one.

Of course, if you choose to read at a fast tempo, you'll need to rehearse well to ensure a clear and accurate delivery, letting the Spirit lead the way. There's no need to be afraid of speaking quickly, either, if it is appropriate and if you are able. Granted, if you're accustomed to speaking slowly, this will be a risk. But it is a risk well worth taking, in my view. And if you make a mistake, don't worry; simply pause and reread the line.

As Paul's letter to the Romans continues, you can moderate your pace a little and insert pauses when asking,

For who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counsellor? Or who has given a gift to him to receive a gift in return?

Leaving some silence after each question will allow your listeners time for reflection, and for the Spirit to move. As we reach the conclusion of the letter, ask yourself at what tempo you would proclaim the following:

**For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.**

If you answered slowly, then I think you've judged wisely. Remember to also leave some silence at the end of your reading as you did at the beginning.

There are many variables involved in an effective reading, including good breathing and diction, a solid stance, voice projection and modulation, the stressing of key words, the insertion of silence, and eye contact. As for tempo, it's a variable we normally associate with music. There we use the terms *adagio*/*andante*, *moderato*, and *allegro* (slow, medium, and fast) to describe it. A piece of music often includes changes in tempo; so does our speech with its own cadence or rhythm, reflecting our alternating thoughts and emotions. Of course, the voice itself is an instrument, and it can be the most beautiful of all.

In the realm of reading, we should therefore consider the tempo that best suits a particular phrase, sentence or passage. This will take good judgement and prayerful preparation. By speaking slowly we can highlight key words, and by speaking moderately and quickly at times, we can fluently convey other parts of a text.

Overall, we need to engage our sisters and brothers by clearly proclaiming the Word. To that end, if our reading flows naturally with a varied tempo, then we will stimulate our listeners' minds and touch their hearts. And by doing so, we will serve our Lord well.

**Shane Murtagh**



The candidates were going to have their feet washed on Holy Thursday at the mass of the Last Supper.

Finally, after five months of waiting, on Sunday 20 September at the 10:00am mass four of our five RCIA candidates were welcomed into full communion with the Catholic Church in our community.

Due to be received at Easter, the five candidates: Louise Bulfin, David Graham, Iain Forsyth, Rebecca Neiberding and Jennifer Wheatley had to wait until the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions on the celebration of mass before their desire for full communion would be realised.

David Graham was Baptised and received into full communion on Pentecost Sunday 2020.



**FROM LEFT** Iain Forsyth [holding Micah], Jennifer Wheatley, Louise Bulfin, Rebecca Neiberding.



## Xavier Munoz

1 December 1955–13 September 2020

Xavier known as 'Bing' to his family, was the son Andres and Dolly and spent his early childhood in Manila, Philippines.

Growing up in the 60's in Manila was filled with both fun excitement and surrounded by family and friends on special occasions and weekends. When the family immigrated to Australia in 1967, Bing discovered Cadbury chocolate. His Uncle Bill described him peeling a family sized dairy milk chocolate bar as a 'banana' and then proceeded to consume it all. This love for chocolate continued during his high school years when after school he would entice Dolores his sister (by paying her 20c) to walk down to Higgins shops and buy him chocolate

Sport was a big part of his growing up in Manila. Softball and baseball played a big part in his life and from the early age of 7 he would be at the local park playing with a group of children and of course, his cousins. His passion for baseball continued after his playing years were over and he stayed involved as an umpire for the ACT League. In high school he was elected 'school prefect' and excelled in discus and shot put at school athletics carnivals.

Bing was always willing to help his siblings in so many ways for instance he would spend time working over the busy Christmas period at Andy, his brother's butcher shop, he would swap recipes, take orders for Christmas hams and just generally assist in his own special way. Customers grew fond of Bing being in the butcher shop.

### Words of Remembrance

Jay Horton, Dolores Horton, and Vicki Cotter (Xavier's Family) and Sabina Van Rooy

His nieces and nephews remember Xavier as an uncle who took the time to listen to music we liked or learn games we liked to play so he would connect with us. Bing would go to the extra effort to make special occasions for us memorable. Like birthday cakes from the *Australian Women's Weekly Cookbook*. My favourite cake to this day is the dressing room cake that he managed to make.

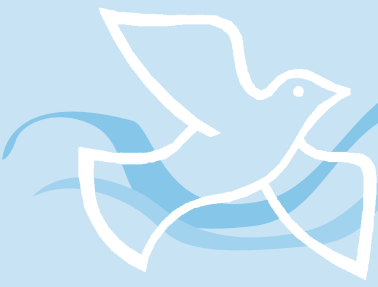
Xavier was always dedicated to the church and his belief in Christianity. At his Requiem Mass on Tuesday 22 September, Fr Gerard in this homily described Xavier as a pillar of St John of the Apostle Parish community. He played a role in many parish ministries and will be especially remembered for his many years of service to the Liturgy Team. Xavier was always there to assist others on the team and prepared well of the major Liturgy celebrations around Christmas and Easter. For many years we remember him as the coordinator of the Good Friday Service and prepared the Easter fire outside the church for the Easter Vigil.

Xavier was in the first group of acolytes serving at the altar and he served at the Saturday Evening Vigil Mass and was also a member of the parish choir. In his later years he was the Powerpoint operator at the Saturday evening Vigil Mass and would bring his mother Dolly with him.... always arriving an hour before hand to ensure everything was set up for Masses.

Xavier would also arrive each Monday morning at the parish office to collect the money for banking and after returning to the parish would enjoy a cuppa with the priests and Sharon and Marian in the parish office.

We remember Bing for his good humour and especially his devoted care of his mother, Dolly.

May Xavier now Rest in Peace.



# September Baptisms

We welcome into the SJA Community of the Body of Christ the following children baptised during the month of September.

*Fletcher Brown* Son of Anthony and Catherine

*Oliver Brown* Son of Peter and Laura

*Harvey Sterner* Son of Karel and Monique

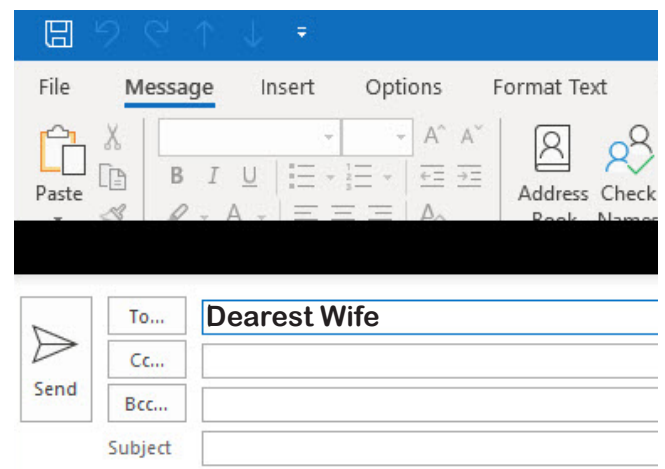
## On a lighter note...

After being nearly snowbound for two weeks, a Seattle man departed for his vacation in Miami Beach, where he was to meet his wife the next day at the conclusion of her business trip to Minneapolis. They were looking forward to pleasant weather and a nice time together. Unfortunately, there was some sort of mix up at the boarding gate, and the man was told he would have to wait for a later flight. He tried to appeal to a supervisor but was told the airline was not responsible for the problem and it would do no good to complain.

Upon arrival at the hotel the next day, he discovered that Miami Beach was having a heat wave, and its weather was almost as uncomfortably hot as Seattle's was cold. The desk clerk gave him a message that his wife would arrive as planned. He could hardly wait to get to the pool area to cool off, and quickly sent his wife an e-mail, but due to his haste, he made an error in the e-mail address.

His message therefore arrived at the home of an elderly preacher's wife whose even older husband had died only the day before.

When the grieving widow opened her e-mail, she took one look at the monitor, let out an anguished scream, and fell to the floor dead. Her family rushed to her room where they saw this message on the screen:



**Departed yesterday as you know.**

**Just now got checked in.**

**Some confusion at the gate.**

**Appeal was denied.**

**Received confirmation of your arrival tomorrow.**

**Your loving husband.**

**P.S. Things are not as we thought.  
You're going to be surprised at how hot it is down here.**

## KIT@Kippax

is produced for the St John the Apostle Catholic Community from contributions submitted by parishioners.

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