

Monty & Eltham

The Catholic Parishes of St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.

Hell on Earth

Fancy in the modern era the possibility of describing a real 'HELL ON EARTH' and I'm not referring to Melbourne or Sydney, or even anything to do with this awful Coronavirus, but this last week of August in Afghanistan - in particular Kabul. The fear, the panic, the crowds and the violence - and the almost impossible position to get a flight out of this sad country.

I truly hate this Covid19 and the limited way of life in Melbourne at the moment, but the thought of being caught in a country that lives on violence and a place where death is ever present - no more so than this last week - would for me be a true place of hell. Every hour the world media hears of threatening news of random ISIL attacks on the airport and the citizens of Afghanistan including people desperately wanting to leave this country. As we go to print - the international Kabul Airport is somewhat controlled by American Military Forces to support airlines from around the world and the coalition airforces to evacuate citizens and international personnel, always under the cloud of violence. What a terrible state of affairs - what a Hell to be in.

I'm not sure if our experience of the Coronavirus in Australia is a priority in places like this - but it can only help make social distancing worse! Chaos reigns at every level.

Whatever the immediate outcome of the terrible last few days of August 2021 in Kabul, I hope that the Australian Federal Government opens up it's arms of hospitality and life long friendships to the people of Afghanistan - a huge Humanitarian response is required. Now is the time to open our hearts to these people. Surely Australia could easily take 20,000 refugees from Afghanistan and in cooperation with the world communities - many hundreds of thousands of Afghans could be helped to realise a new world and a new way of life.

I pray and hope that the terrorist threats do not come to any effect.

Beauty and Life abound throughout this Diamond Valley in a natural way. Blossom and Wattle are emerging in lovely colours around the gardens and public walks - and it looks amazing. Spring has already started in our area and it is beautiful to see! **Michael**

This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.

For more information visit pol.org.au/eltham or pol.org.au/montmorency.

We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.



PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



Parish Priests

Terry Kean - Pastor in Solidum

terry.kean@cam.org.au

Michael Sierakowski - Moderator

michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au

Barry Caldwell

Parish Office

86 Mayona Road

9435 4742

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

montmorency@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

eltham@cam.org.au

Peter Williams:

Child Safety Officer

SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au

Website:

www.pol.org.au/montmorency

www.pol.org.au/eltham

(pol stands for Parish OnLine)

Facebook:

St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

eltham@cam.org.au

Schools

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Acting Principal: Therese Stewart: 9439 7824

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au



Collections: 22 August 2021—LOCKDOWN

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
OLHC		
SFX		



Please help our parish continue our important pastoral activities.

You can give an offering online today with CDFpay.

Find our parish by visiting:

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayEltham> or <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMontmorency>



Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...

Montmorency

For the recently deceased:

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

Bernie Kelly, Kevin Pritchard

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert), Kate Lagerewskij, Estelle Levy

Eltham

For the recently deceased:

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

Robert Lord

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Violetta, Lucy Bibby, Denice Donnellan, Lidia Marazzato, Tom Nolan, Paul O'Dell, Les Robertson, Christine Scott, Rosemary Scully, Barbara Snopkowski Ibszyk Wojciechowski, Sylvek Zyleviczcz

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House

9435 4742 or eltham@cam.org.au.

RECONCILIATION

available upon request

please call the Parish Office 9435 4742

Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

Saturday 28

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED

Montmorency

Sunday 29

8:30am Mass - CANCELLED

Montmorency

10:00am Mass - CANCELLED

Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms - CANCELLED

Montmorency

Tuesday 31

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED

Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group - CANCELLED

Montmorency

Wednesday 1 SEPTEMBER

6:30am Meditation - CANCELLED

Montmorency

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED

Eltham

11:00am Small Church Community - CANCELLED

Montmorency

Thursday 2

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC - CANCELLED

Montmorency

Friday 3

9:30am Mass - to be advised

Eltham

Saturday 4

9:30am Mass - to be advised

Montmorency

Sunday 5 - Father's Day

8:30am Mass - to be advised

Montmorency

10:00am Mass - to be advised

Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms - to be advised

Montmorency

Tuesday 7

9:30am Mass - to be advised

Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group - to be advised

Montmorency

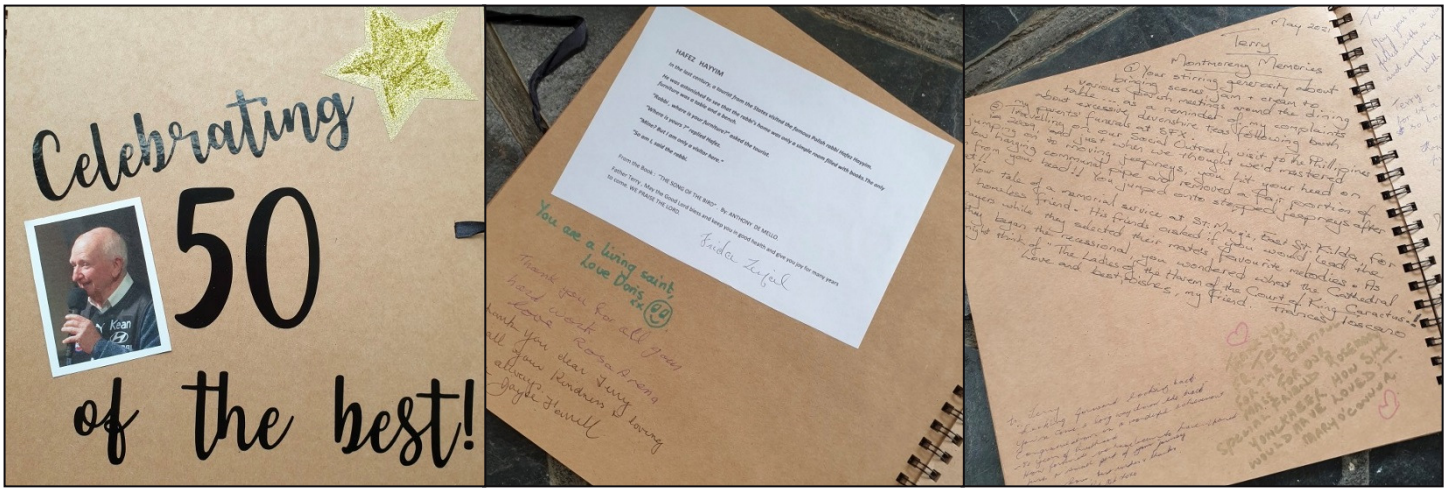
11:00am Prayer Shawl - to be advised

Eltham

Wednesday 8

6:30am Meditation - to be advised

Montmorency



From 50th Anniversary to Farewell

THE BOOK

We have a book, a fine book, in which some of you have already placed messages, wishes, memories or photos. We do not know when we may be able to return to our Churches, but let us not be thwarted in our farewell endeavours for Fr Terry by Covid-19 setbacks. Before we are out of time here is how you may place your contribution into the Book, with plenty of scope for imagination here!

- Write or print a copy of your words, memories, poems, photos cards, jokes, well-wishes and place them in the Parish Letter Box, 86 Mayona Road, (marked Fr Terry's Book) we will place them in The Book for your; or
- Email your contribution to: kate.kogler@cam.org.au or patsy_skipper@hotmail.com it will be printed and also placed in The Book for you.

These Covid-19 times make the simplest of tasks more difficult but I am sure with some effort and working together we can make this project work. Let us see how we go! Stay loving, connected, safe and well. God Bless all.



Ever since his election to the Chair of St Peter, Pope Francis has been calling for a synodal Church. But his plea has often fallen on deaf ears and most bishops' conferences have been slow to respond. However, one small group of Catholic women has enthusiastically seized the idea / by Joanna Moorhead

The women who are turning the Church upside down

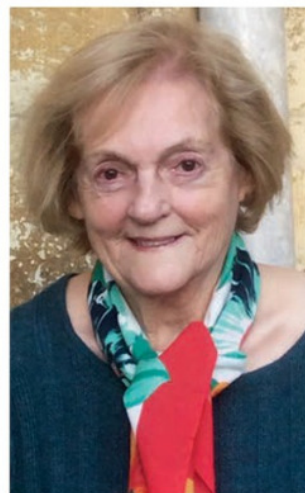
Everyone wants their lifetime to leave the world at least a tiny bit changed, and for the better; and it is possible that a piece I wrote for *The Tablet* in January 2020 could yield me my footnote. I wrote the piece in a pretty exasperated mood, fed up with the fact that Pope Francis says all the right things about women, and yet has done next to nothing to put our talents to use in leadership roles in the Church.

Catholicism, I argued, has its back to the wall and desperately needs to emancipate its women. In a world where women are at least legally entitled to parity at all levels (they may not always have it in practice, but that is another issue), where democracy is widely held up as the best form of rule and where girls are raised with every expectation that they can aspire to anything their male classmates can aspire to, it makes no sense to exclude them from a more equal role in the way the Catholic Church is run.

What was needed, I argued, was a synod. "A synod that, instead of ending with women [as the Vatican synods on young people and the Amazon both did], starts with them. And focuses on them. A synod that ends with not just the right sort of words but with a proper commitment to make change, inside the Church, centre stage."

A Few Weeks later, at a meeting of the pressure group, Catholic Women's Ordination, historian Penelope Middelboe was keeping her head down. "I was lying low, because I've been working for change for so many years and I'd begun to think nothing is ever going to happen," she says. "But then, someone mentioned your piece. And then one of our group, Mary Ring, said: 'We should do something about this. We should try to make it happen.' They started asking for volunteers, and I thought, you know what? I'm going to give it one more go."

Middelboe joined Ring; and a third campaigner, Pamela Perry, also put her hand up. Since then, the three women have been working tirelessly - through lockdown, on Zoom, meeting in person - to plan a lay-led, women-centred synod which will take place on 5-12 September, in Bristol and online. The vision has



Mary Ring, left, Penelope Middelboe and Pamela Perry

expanded to include other issues as well as the women question; and the original three are certainly no longer on their own. More than 900 others have signed up to be involved with the organisation they have founded, Root & Branch. Equally excitingly, they have teamed up with similar lay-led organisations in other parts of the world, and the Bristol synod will include contributions from like-minded Catholics in the United States, Australia, India, France and Austria, among others.

The Bristol synod, explains Ring, is taking its lead from Pope Francis, who has promoted the idea of synodality throughout his papacy, and who has intimated that he would encourage those who want to see change in the Church to take up the challenge, and make it happen. "The problem for Francis is that he's trapped, because the Church doesn't have a listening mechanism," says Ring. "It has a teaching mechanism and it knows how to tell us what we should believe, but it doesn't have the structures to allow lively debate amongst the people, and to take those forward."

It is not only the Pope, says Ring: priests, bishops and other clerical leaders are stuck in the same quandary; many are convinced that opening up dialogue with laypeople and giving them more traction in the way decisions are made about the Church's future is the only way forward in the twenty-first century.

"We've had a bishop or two, and many

priests, get in touch with us and say privately that they're very interested to see what happens in Bristol," says Ring. "One problem is that there's a terrible fear amongst many ordained clerics about supporting an initiative like our publicly. We'd love to have one brave bishop there in the hall in Bristol - not wearing his robes, much better to have him there in his jeans, sitting amongst us as one of us, and listening to what's being said."

One of the most forceful voices at the Bristol synod will be that of Mary McAleese, who for many represents the lay leader the Catholic Church desperately needs. Like many other campaigners for change, McAleese, who studied for a doctorate in canon law at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University after 14 years as president of Ireland, is critical of the official top-down synodal process that will begin in October, when dioceses across the world have been asked to consult with laypeople in the run-up to the next Synod of Bishops in Rome in October 2023.

As Reported in *The Tablet* last week, the vision of the bishops of England and Wales for the synodal process reserves discernment around what topics should be taken forward from the parish level to the global synod to the bishops alone. While all members of the Church have the right to speak, they also have "the obligation to allow those charged with the work of discernment the freedom to do so". This means, Ring says, that the

bishops' voice can "trump" that of the layperson. In other words, Rome's idea of synodality falls at the first hurdle, in that it gives laypeople the right to express themselves in name only; because it's bishops, not laypeople, who decide what issues and points of view go forward.

McAleese is characteristically straightforward in her summation of this process: it will, she says, give laypeople a nominal or at best negligible role. Bishops will make all the important decisions - just as they have done for hundreds of years. "It's the twenty-first century, but the Catholic Church is still in the Middle Ages when it comes to democracy in its own processes," she says. "The Church champions democracy in other contexts, but it's still operating as an imperial power, in a world where the imperial system has broken down: it's drained of all validity, and by sticking with it, the Church is running out of juice."

In speaking out as he has done on synodality, and in seeming to encourage freedom of speech and a more equal decision-making within the Church, the Pope, according to McAleese, has "opened a Pandora's box" that he isn't going to be able to close. Synods in Germany and Ireland where laypeople alongside clerics have alarmed Francis, McAleese believes; he saw a "synod on synodality" as a way of mopping up the enthusiasm his words had sparked, but which he realized too late would be dangerous for Rome's authority.

"Francis is a populist, and after his election in 2013 there was a mood for something to happen, and he quickly started talking about synodality. In other Churches, like the Church of England, synodality means all the faithful speaking together - and indeed in the Early Church that's how decisions were made," says McAleese. But Francis hadn't got a proper plan - "he's undisciplined, he's not a strategist" - even though his words tapped into a zeitgeist in the Catholic West that felt its pressing concerns, such as the inequality of women, homophobia in the Church and forbidding divorced people to remarry, were not being properly addressed by the powers that be in Rome in and bishops' conferences.

"The horse has bolted, and he can't stop it now," says McAleese. "In Germany, in Ireland, and now in Bristol, laypeople are taking matters into their own hands - this is a wake-up call for the hierarchy. But they're not good at listening: they hear our voices as shrill, not as loving critics. They tend to respond in a martyred tone, or with a deaf ear. But if they don't hear us now, the Church is in danger of becoming a largely irrelevant cult."

What chance is there, though, of success for the women at the heart of Root & Branch, given that there is no requirement for Rome or the hierarchy to share power? Another speaker at the Bristol synod is American author James Carroll, formerly a priest, who has argued that the priesthood must be

dismantled to "return the Church to the people". He says he takes his sustenance from the events that led to the end of the Cold War in the 1980s. "All the experts said a violent cataclysm was inevitable, but along came a grass-roots movement that ignited people to demand change, and change happened. What the Church needs now is a Mikhail Gorbachev figure who will work out a humane way to end a corrupt, authoritarian system that's in a state of internal collapse."

Penelope Middelboe, Mary Ring and Pamela Perry hope that their eight-day "Inclusive Synod", which starts with evening online events and culminates in weekend sessions that are open to both in-person and virtual participants, will open a new pathway for laypeople in the Church. Their event will culminate with "The Bristol text", which will cover issues such as diversity, moral theology, the role of women and the role of authority in the Church. They hope to take their findings to Rome. No one who has met the women behind Root & Branch will have any doubts: these hopeful, committed individuals will make their voices heard. And if you're a bishop reading this, I'd be so bold as to say, it's very much in the interests of the Church that you listen to what they say.

Full information on the Inclusive Synod can be found at rootandbranchsynod.org

Joanna Moorhead is The Tablet's Arts editor and will chair the Rethinking Moral Theology panel at the synod on 7 September.



*Pope Francis wants
a Synodal Church that
listens deeply.*



22nd SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 2021

How's it going in these days and weeks of lockdown? Are we close to easing of restrictions? Who knows?

A week or two ago I came across a beautiful reflection by writer, Ilia Delio. She wrote about the 'Art of Un-Doing'. She invites her readers to slow down and learn the art of un-doing. This should be easy for so many of us who have so much time on our hands, but it's not as easy as it sounds. Let me share some of her words.

"Today is our future; tomorrow is our hope; love is our now. We can change the world by never moving from a place of rest, simply being our truest selves, living in the freedom of our own skin, loving the good of our lives. Did you ever see a grove of trees vying one another for space or scrambling their roots back and forth to claim their turf... On its own, a tree does nothing more than be a tree and in being a tree gives glory to God. We must be like the trees, content with the incompleteness and ambiguity of not knowing what the next moment will bring, because we are alive and free in our beingness."

Ilia Delio then addresses the pandemic situation and she writes:

"I hope you see my point. Looking into the pandemic mirror, we are not going to make it far into the future as we are. Of course we will continue to discover new things, biomedical breakthroughs, new planets, new technologies, but the earth may not cooperate with our deified wills. We need days, perhaps weeks of undoing... We insist on doing things our way, what we consider to be 'normal'. We truly are the silliest of all species: Jesus might have said 'blind fools'. Perhaps if schools close their doors again, we might sit quietly on a porch and listen to what nature teaches us about life."

What do you think of Ilia Delio's words? Here in Melbourne we are in lockdown where our schools are closed. And many of us are struggling with the un-doing of our lives. To think of this time as a chance to learn a different way of being, to look at the trees now blossoming with the air of springtime and to learn from them is not something that comes easily to most of us. Yet maybe Ilia has a point. The pandemic gives us a chance to really focus on what's important about life.

"Blind fools", that what Jesus called the scribes and Pharisees. They had lost the plot. In today's Gospel we listen to Jesus' criticism of how they were focussed on the rituals of washing and cleansing, not only of themselves but also the cups and pots and bronze dishes.

Now the pandemic is certainly asking for our making sure of washing our hands and attending carefully to the rituals of cleansing. Surely the Christ Jesus today would support such rituals.

However there's a deeper meaning to all this. See the scribes and the Pharisees were following the rules but they were missing the point. They were concerned with all the externals but they were not following the way of love and compassion.

In fact in this Gospel of Mark Jesus called them hypocrites and quoted the prophet Isaiah:

"This people honours me only with lip service, while their hearts are far from me."

What might this Gospel be saying to us in these pandemic times? Surely the Christ would look for the way of compassion and love in our lives. But maybe he would also ask us to learn the art of undoing, to befriend the quiet, look at the blossoms, sensing the earth is asking our attention.

Remember what Ilia Delio says to us: *"We must be like the trees, content with the incompleteness and ambiguity of not knowing what the next moment will bring, because we are alive and free in our own beingness."*

Terry



Gospel - Mark 7:1-8, 14, 15, 21-23

The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered round Jesus, and they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. For the Pharisees, and the Jews in general, follow the tradition of the elders and never eat without washing their arms as far as the elbow; and on returning from the market place they never eat without first sprinkling themselves. There are also many other observances which have been handed down to them concerning the washing of cups and pots and bronze dishes. So these Pharisees and scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not respect the tradition of the elders but eat their food with unclean hands?' He answered, 'It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture:

This people honours me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me. The worship they offer me is worthless, the doctrines they teach are only human regulations. You put aside the commandment of God to cling to human traditions.'

He called the people to him again and said, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean; it is the things that come out of a man that make him unclean. For it is from within, from men's hearts, that evil intentions emerge: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and make a man unclean.'



Prayers of the Faithful for 29 August 2021 Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leader: Brothers and sisters, with confidence in God's love and mercy let us intercede for the world.

That with a pure heart, the Church will observe the commandments of the Lord.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That governments will be guided by God's law and promote justice and fairness.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That those who live through deceit and dishonesty will change their ways and live in the truth.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That victims of evil and abuse will be shown kindness and compassion.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That the people of Afghanistan will be blessed by God as they endure these times of fear and instability.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

On this Social Justice Sunday, we pray that we will be attentive to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor and respond in whatever ways we can.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That the sick will find healing and comfort, including all those mentioned in our bulletin.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That we will remove obstacles that prevent us from conforming our lives to Jesus Christ.

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

That the faithful departed will reach their eternal reward. We also remember those whose anniversaries are at this time: *Bernie Kelly, Robert Lord and Kevin Pritchard.*

Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of justice and mercy, your law guides our hearts in the path of holiness. Hear our prayers and may our words be matched by our loving deeds. We make this prayer in Jesus' name.

All: **Amen**