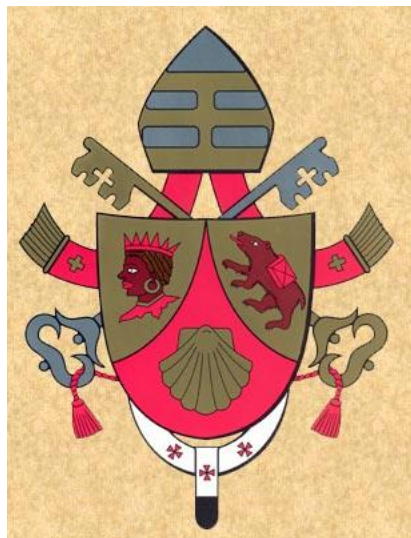




Dear fellow Cursillistas,



After having taken up the gauntlet as editor of the Escarpment, I would like to thank my predecessor, Denise, for all the wonderful work she put into making the Escarpment a most enjoyable read, and I hope I can live up to the task. In writing my first editorial, I take this opportunity of thanking Dianne Garland for accepting my offer when I tentatively raised my hand to have a go at editing The Escarpment.

Happy 2023, everybody! Even though the end of 2022 was tinged with sadness for Catholics, with the sad death of Pope emeritus Benedict XVI, a great scholar, theologian, and humble man of God, we use the new year to bend the knee in prayer for his entry into the life eternal with the Lord who he loved so much during his whole secular and priestly life, and it is his coat of arms which graces the beginning of this editorial. More information on the heraldry of the coat of arms can be viewed at the Vatican website <https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/elezione/documents/stemma-benedict-xvi.html>

It is a coat of arms “rich in heraldry” and the shield contains symbols already in use during his tenure as Archbishop of Munich and Freising from 1977 to 1981, when Pope John Paul II made him prefect of the Doctrine of the Faith. During his time as Archbishop of Munich and Freising Pope Paul VI created him a Cardinal. The shield is in the shape of a chalice: the

most commonly used form in ecclesiastical heraldry. An interesting feature of the shield is the scallop shell – a common symbol in Cursillo, and a symbol which marks the way for pilgrims along the Camino de Santiago. The symbol alludes to the fact that the Church is “a pilgrim people”, a title for the Church which Ratzinger championed at Vatican II when he was a theological adviser to the council. It is in reference to this thought that he included the shell on his coat of arms as Archbishop of Munich and Freising. The shell is said to represent the unfathomable mystery of the Holy Trinity, as St Augustine once meditated on the Trinity while walking along a seashore. The saint saw a boy playing with a shell, using it to pour water into a hole. When Augustine asked the boy what he was doing, the boy responded: “I am emptying the sea into this hole.” This response helped St Augustine understand that we can never fully comprehend the mystery of God. As a younger man, Joseph Ratzinger wrote his dissertation on *The People of God and the House of God in Augustine’s Teaching*, and so the shell held a personal connection to his thoughts on the Church. The shell is also to be found in the insignia of the Schottenkloster in Regensburg, where he taught as a professor of theology.

The use of a Papal Coat of Arms is an 800-year-old tradition and the coat of arms each successor to the throne of St Peter chooses draws special significance from their ideal of life, is reminiscent of past events or experiences in their lives, or elements connected to specific pontifical programmes. The use of the Moor’s head (the dexter corner of the shield), the Vatican website tells us, is “not rare in European heraldry”, appearing in the arms of Sardinia and Corsica, and “various noble families”. The symbol is also common in Bavarian tradition.

It has been a long-held tradition of the Supreme Pontiff to surround his armorial shield with crossed keys, representative of the Keys entrusted to St Peter after Peter recognised him as “Son of the living God”. To which Christ replied: “*Tu es Petrus...*”¹ (“You are Peter...”) (Matt 16:16), and completed his pronouncement a few verses later (Matt 16: 19): “*Et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum...*”² (“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven...”), and then gave the apostles the power to bind and loose. The verse “*Tu es Petrus...*” has been beautifully set to music by composers as diverse as Palestrina (in 1567³), William Byrd (in 1607⁴), and more recently by Scottish composer James MacMillan (in 2010⁵).

Benedict XVI decided not to include the tiara on his coat of arms, electing instead to have a mitre which was not surmounted by a small globe and cross as was the case with the tiara. It does, however, recall the symbol of the tiara by bearing three bands of gold – emblematic of the three powers: Orders, Jurisdiction, Magisterium. He introduced the symbol of the *pallium* – an element missing for at least the pontificates before his – and, yet, a typical symbol of the Roman papacy and also (since the 6th century) of jurisdiction with the Metropolitan Archbishops. Popes in early centuries draped real lambskin over their shoulders as a *pallium*. This was replaced in subsequent centuries by a white woollen stole woven with the wool of specially reared lambs. By the 4th century, the *pallium* had become a liturgical symbol proper to and characteristic of the Pope.

¹ Bonifatius Fisher, Robert Weber. 1994. *Biblia Sacra: luxa Vulgatam Versionem*. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Stuttgart.

² Ibid.

³ Joseph Kerman. 1998. *Write All These Down – Essays on Music*. University of California.

⁴ [https://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Gradualia_II_\(William_Byrd\)](https://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Gradualia_II_(William_Byrd))

⁵ https://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/dw.asp?dc=W14457_GBAJY1397014

Cardinal Ratzinger had chosen the motto *Cooperatores Veritatis* in his episcopal arms, but in accordance with the tradition of several centuries, he chose not to include the motto in his Papal arms.

As we progress into 2023, after having mourned Benedict XVI with the rest of the global community of Catholics, we will be sure to take his work *Caritas in veritate* to the tabernacle of our hearts, and to recall its message whenever we seek to engage with the world.



We also remember George Cardinal Pell, the late Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, who entered into life eternal in the early hours of Tuesday the 10th of January in Rome, Italy. He was ordained a priest in 1966 and served the people of rural Victoria before being called to the episcopate in 1987, serving as an auxiliary Bishop, and then as Archbishop of Melbourne from 1996-2001, when he was named Archbishop of Sydney. He was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2005 and was named as a Cardinal in 2003. He chaired the charity *Caritas Australia* from 1988 to 1997.

In 2019, Pell was the subject of a number of books following his wrongful conviction for child molestation, the most acerbic of which was that of ABC journalist Louise Milligan. He later published a two-volume journal that he kept in prison about his experiences while incarcerated, which was extremely profound and eye-opening (in it, he wrote of using his time as “an extended retreat”, and relayed that he bore his accuser, journalists, judges, prison workers, and those harbouring and expressing outright hatred of him no ill will. Benedict XVI liked to have Cardinal Pell’s prison journal read to him during the last years of his life.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual Light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE

Heavenly Father, your son taught us:

“Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called children of God.”

In this time of great worry, we fervently Pray that your Holy Spirit sustain all the people of Ukraine to be vigilant and dedicated to peace and justice. Grant their leaders wisdom and prudence. Yet may they also have the strength and perseverance to defend their land from all adversity and foreign attacks. Help us all to live according to your Divine Will.

O God, our Father, in the days to come, we beseech you to comfort the suffering, heal the wounded, and accept the souls of the faithfully departed into your Heavenly Kingdom. We ask also that the most Holy Mother of God extend her blessed mantle of protection over our Ukraine.
Amen.

Source: Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine of the Holy Family

FAITH AFTER COVID19 – III

By Frank B.

*God, I thank you for the gift of faith that you have given me Increase my faith
Remove my doubts and help my unbelief
And grant me endurance for my faith journey*

Earlier this week (February 2022), I received an email from my Parish Priest outlining new COVID19 protocols relating to attendance at church. Essentially, all current restrictions such as the wearing of masks, the need to social distance and the use of QR codes were removed and only two restrictions remained, mainly for the protection of older parishioners: continue the use of hand sanitiser and the cleaning of seats after Mass. The removal of restrictions has brought us back pretty much to pre-COVID conditions. This certainly is a significant change to what conditions were a few months ago.

The return to pre-COVID conditions reminded me of an observation by Rowan Williams in his book “Candles In The Dark: Faith, Hope & Love in a Time of Pandemic” that the challenge of faith is to believe at all times - good and bad. In times of difficulty we naturally turn to God (as we should) and pray for his divine providence and to help us cope. In better times, when things are going well for us, we may taper off in our prayer life and feel that we can deal with life's difficulties by ourselves. This ignores the fact that, in reality, we cannot - however hard we try. We ignore God if this is our approach.

Having now accepted that my faith is a lifetime journey, the question I needed to ask myself was “What do I need to do to keep my faith alive?”. It was time for God to get back to me to tell me the answer. One of my favourite readings from the New Testament is the First Letter of Saint James. In quite direct language, James notes that faith without good works is dead - faith is brought to completion by good works. As Saint James notes:

*What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So **faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.** (James 2: 14-17)*

Certainly, this is a call for action on my part. As I write this during the season of Lent, it is easy to say that my involvement in Project Compassion is example of good works on my part. But, Lent is only 40 days – what about the other 325 days in the year?

The answer was not difficult to find. As Catholics, we are asked to daily assist those less fortunate than ourselves through performing charitable works of mercy, acts that enable us to show love and compassion to those who are suffering in any way, whether in mind, body, heart, or soul. There are two types of these charitable works: corporal works of mercy and spiritual works of mercy.

Corporal works of mercy include the following:

- feeding the hungry
- giving drink to the thirsty
- sheltering the homeless
 - clothing the naked
- visiting the sick and imprisoned
 - burying the dead
- giving alms to the poor

Spiritual works of mercy include the following:

- instructing the ignorant
- advising or counselling the doubtful
 - admonishing the sinner
- consoling and comforting the sorrowful
 - forgiving injuries
 - bearing wrongs patiently
- praying for the living and the dead

Practical suggestions for practicing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy are many and endless. Each of the seven corporal works and seven spiritual works offer a wide range of activities by which we can come to the aid of our neighbour. We are further inspired by examples in scripture to act: *“I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?” The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25: 35-40).*

The last line of Matthew is extremely significant for us: we see Christ in all people who are marginalised and, as they suffer, so does Christ.

The importance of performing charitable works is highlighted by Pope Francis who warns us that we need to observe the teaching of Christ who said, *“Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful”* (Luke 6:36), reminding us that it is *“a responsibility that challenges the conscience and actions of every Christian”*. He added, *“it is not enough to experience God’s mercy in one’s life; whoever receives it must also become a sign and instrument for others. Mercy, therefore, is not only reserved for particular moments, but it embraces our entire daily existence.”* (General Audience, 12 October 2016). Pope Francis notes that Jesus *“introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples”* (*Misericordiae Vultus*) and that *“the corporal and spiritual works of mercy continue in our own day to be proof of mercy’s immense positive influence as a social value. Mercy impels us to roll up our sleeves and set about restoring dignity to millions of people; they are our brothers and sisters.”* (*Misericordia et misera*).

Pope Francis further notes: *“The works of mercy affect a person’s entire life. For this reason, we can set in motion a real cultural revolution, beginning with simple gestures capable of*

reaching body and spirit, people's very lives. This is a commitment that the Christian community should take up, in the knowledge that God's word constantly calls us to leave behind the temptation to hide behind indifference and individualism in order to lead a comfortable life free of problems. Jesus tells His disciples: "The poor will always be with you" (Jn 12:8). There is no alibi to justify not engaging with the poor when Jesus has identified

Himself with each of them."

(*Misericordia et misera*). that faith without works is dead

and

Given that Pope Francis implores us to perform charitable works of mercy on a daily basis, then this becomes the way that I can keep my faith and my faith journey alive on a daily basis. The fact that we are now recovering from the effects of COVID19 and the world is returning to a pre-COVID19 normality does not lessen the message of Pope Francis and its impact on my faith and faith journey: people worldwide are still in need of the basics of life such as food, water, clothing and shelter (to highlight a few) and this definitely is the stimulus to act as Christ would want me to. Jesus Christ is quite blunt in our failure to act: “

Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life" (Matthew 25: 41-46).

FINAL WORDS

My aim in writing these three articles on faith was to give myself a better understanding of what faith is, how I make my faith grow, and what is required to keep my faith a living faith. My intention was not to find final answers – but it is my sincere hope that my understanding of faith increases as I travel along my faith journey. In the period between when the first and last articles were written, there was much thinking and learning, aided by what we might call coincidences which led me to new understandings of what faith is; but, to me, it was God acting and leading me to a deeper understanding of faith. After all, faith is a gift from God and it is not something we can acquire by our own efforts. One of my favourite Bible quotes is Mark 11: 24: “*I tell you most solemnly, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours*”. To me, this is testament to the power of faith. It is a gift worth cultivating.

My journey of faith continues.

The following practical suggestions for practising corporal and spiritual works of mercy is taken from the following two websites:

<https://slmedia.org/blog/practical-suggestions-for-practicing-the-corporal-and-spiritual-works-of-mercy>

<https://www.catholicapostolatecenter.org/works-of-mercy.html>

Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the Hungry

- see to the proper nutrition of loved ones
- support and volunteer for food pantries, soup kitchens, and agencies that feed the hungry
- make sandwiches to hand out as you walk through areas where you might encounter people in need
- educate yourself about world hunger
 - avoid wasting food
 - share your meals with others

Give drink to the thirsty

- volunteering at a soup kitchen •
-

Shelter the Homeless

- try not to waste water.

contributing funds to clean water and well projects in underdeveloped countries or even within a family.

be mindful of your own water consumption.

- help neighbours care for their homes and do repairs
 - support and/or volunteer at a homeless shelter
- support ministries that work with the displaced or refugees
- support and/or volunteer for charitable agencies who care for the homeless, build homes, and provide support in the wake of natural disasters
- advocate for public policies and legislation that provide housing for low-income people
 - consider becoming a foster parent.

Clothe the Naked

- go through your drawers and closets and find good-condition clothes and shoes to donate to agencies that provide assistance for those in need
- participate in programs that provide towels and linens for hospitals in distressed areas

- volunteer to work at a clothing drive or at a shelter where clothing is distributed to those in need
 - support the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society

Visit the Sick

- spend quality time with those who are sick or homebound
- take the time to call, send a card or an email to someone who is sick
- volunteer to drive patients to medical appointments and treatment facilities
 - volunteer at a hospital
- assist those who are full-time caregivers for family members
 - cook and delivers meals to the sick and homebound

Visit the Imprisoned

- support and/or participate in ministries to those who are incarcerated
- support programs sponsored by agencies that advocate on behalf of those who are unjustly imprisoned
- support job-training and educational programs designed to rehabilitate prisoners
 - pray for the families of inmates
- support programs that provide holiday gifts for prisoners and their families
 - support efforts that seek the abolition of the death penalty

Give to the Poor

- take some notes or loose change with you to hand out to people you encounter who are in need
 - place your coin change into a jar and periodically donate it to a charity
- make a regular monetary donation to a charity that tends to the needs of the poor •

Bury the Dead

- be faithful about attending wakes/visitations
 - support or volunteer at a hospice
 - participate in a bereavement ministry
 - spend time with widows and widowers
- take friends and relatives to visit the cemetery
- offer daily prayers for those with terminal illnesses and for those who have died
 - send Mass cards to families of those who have died.

Spiritual Works of Mercy Instruct the ignorant

- commit yourself to learning about the Catholic faith and share your understanding of the faith with others and with those who welcome it
- share your insights, knowledge, and skills with others, especially friends, fellow students or co-workers

- take time to tutor those who are just beginning tasks
- read good literature and encourage others to do the same.
- skip a drink, coffee or meal out each week and instead give the money you would have spent to a charitable organization or to put in the church collection basket

Advise the doubtful

- be courageous yet compassionate in calling people and institutions to be faithful to Gospel values
- intervene in situations in which people are clearly doing harm to themselves or others
 - respond to negative and prejudicial comments with positive statements
 - put an end to gossip by walking away; set a good example for others

Console

- work at being optimistic and avoiding cynicism
- respond to cynicism, scepticism, and doubt with hope
 - be articulate about your own hopes
- ask people about their hopes and support them in trying to attain them.

Comfort

- walk with others through their pain
- offer words of encouragement to those who seem discouraged
 -
- offer positive words to fellow students or co-workers who are having a difficult time with their tasks
 -
- be present to those who are struggling or in emotional pain or despair
 -
- offer sympathy to those who are grieving.

Forgive

- pray for those who have wronged you and pray for the courage to forgive
 - ask forgiveness from others
 - let go of grudges
- go out of your way to be positive with someone you are having a difficult time with.

Bearing wrongs patiently

- work at being less critical of others
- overlook minor flaws and mistakes in others
 - give people the benefit of the doubt
- assume that people who may have hurt you did so because they are enduring pain of their own
 - pray for those who have wronged you.
- call a friend whose been feeling down and ask them about their day

- send a card to someone going through a difficult time
- listen to and comfort a friend who needs to vent or cry

Pray for the living and the dead

pray for the repose of their souls of people who have died

ask a friend or family member how you can best pray for them

write down a list of prayer intentions and bring them with you to Mass

offer up your day, work or activities for the needs of those around you

offer up a Mass for a deceased loved one or family member.

• • • • •

Thanks, Frank, for an enlightening series.

School of Leaders

This is a reminder that School of Leaders is held half-an-hour before each Ultreya, and all are welcome.

Ultreya's

Wollongong Ultreya's are held on the 3rd Saturday of each month from 2pm.

The next Ultreya's will be held on the:

18th February 2023

Narellan Vale

Organising group – Camden ladies

Address – St. Clare's Presbytery – 59 Holdsworth Drive Narellan Vale

March 18th

Tahmoor Ladies-Day

St. Anthony's Church

20 Stratford Rd Tahmoor

Venue: The Meeting Room

April 15th

Panania Ladies-Day

Zoom Ultreya Dianne to send Zoom invitation

May 20th

Wollongong Ladies-Day

Zoom Ultreya Dianne to send Zoom invitation

REUNION GROUPS

LOCATION	CONTACT	MEETING
<i>Eagle Vale Ladies - Day</i>	Contact Pauline Ranger	Time and place TBA
<i>Campbelltown Ladies – Night</i>	Contact Margaret French	1 st Tuesday of the month 5.30pm in Campbelltown
<i>Dapto Men's -Night</i>	Contact Matthew Nicholson	Inactive TBA
<i>Camden Ladies - Day</i>	Contact Dianne Garland	2 nd and 4th Thursday of month 10am in Camden/Raby
<i>Tahmoor Ladies - Day</i>	Contact Lesley Wyatt	1 st Mon of the Month 1.30pm in Tahmoor / Buxton
<i>Rosemeadow Men – Night</i>	Contact Lester Smith	Every 2 weeks at 6.30pm. Tuesday or Wednesday Rotating houses.
<i>Wollongong Ladies - Day</i>	Contact Elizabeth Gill	4 th Friday of the month 10am
<i>Bossley Park ladies - Night</i>	Contact Denise D'Amore	1 st Wednesday of each Month 7pm. Rotating houses
<i>Panania Ladies Group – Day</i>	Contact Trish Benn	1 st Tuesday of each Month 11.30am at Panania