

## THE CALL OF HOLY WEEK

Holy Week and Easter, in Melbourne, always mark a changing of the seasons, both liturgically and physically. Our trees turn from green, to red to yellow, then brown. It is a striking image that reflects the liturgical season from ordinary time, to Lent to Easter. It calls us to be aware of our surroundings as well as our internal life. It is a call to prayer, to reflection and to service. During Holy Week the students of ELSPM gathered online to pray the Stations of the Cross together. Each of them had a part to read. Not only was their pronunciation close to perfect but their expression and prayerfulness made it a moving experience for all. To be able to pray in a language other than your own, is a difficult task and I was filled with pride at their efforts. Not being in the classroom together limits the activities that are possible but with a bit of creativity we have been able to achieve a number of significant experiences.

This past week we have also worked on a promotional video for ELSPM and we are hoping that we will be able to distribute it to all the countries where we have contacts. May this Easter season bring you a renewed sense of hope and joy in our troubled world and more than ever a call to serve those most in need.

Sr Margaret Bentley fma

Academic Manager



## FROM ALUMNI FRIENDS

Hello, my dear Sister Margaret!

First of all, congratulations on the new layout of ELSPM bulletin. It was beautiful, modern and practical. Very good!

I am very well. My country has reached to 80% of vaccinated and the life is a little bit better, now. My parish returned many pastoral activities and the people are very happy for meeting another people. Next week, we will start the Holy Week. I will to celebrate in my parish and I will don't forget pray for you, your staff and everyone of ELSPM.

God bless this lovely work in favor of mission around the world.

Fr. José Elias Fadul, SAC (San Paulo, Brazil)





THE PASSION OF JESUS IS TOTALLY THE WORK OF LOVE. YOU SHOULD NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THIS.

At the time of Paul of the Cross, people in his home town had a deep devotion to the Passion of Jesus Christ. However, instead of speaking about God's love through the mystery of the Cross, they spoke about the sufferings of people as being the result of their many sins. Paul of the Cross said that "the world is sliding into a profound forgetfulness of the most bitter sufferings endured by Jesus Christ our true good of our love, while the memory of his most holy Passion is practically extinct in the faithful." (1747 account Paul wrote to present the life and purpose of the Congregation).

For Paul of the Cross, the Passion of Jesus is totally the work of love and so we should never lose sight of this. Indeed, Jesus the Son of the Living God, chose to live a human life: He chose to suffer as we suffer; to die as we die. Many times, I have wondered why Jesus, the Son of God, had to suffer. He is God and He could save us in many ways, not just by suffering and dying.

**One day I found the answer**

One of my friends was involved in an accident while studying at university in Saigon. He was in a coma from that time, for four years before he died. One day, I visited him, I spoke my name and tried to communicate with him.

**He could not answer with a word but he did smile.**

This experience was a great suffering for him. However, the one who suffered the most was not him, but his mother. I spoke with her about my friend, and from my first words she cried many tears. She could not put anything in words, but her tears told me all about her great love for her son. This was the love that began when she bore her son in her womb. This was her love for him when she gave birth, when she cared for him until he grew up; and the love for how she longed for his return when he left home to enter university.

Sadly, he did return. She could not see her son as the one she loved, but only as one who was comatose. She cared for her son and any time she saw him on the bed, the tears rolled down her cheeks. She loved him so deeply, she



bore his suffering. I realised that this is how God loves us, and that is why Jesus suffered.

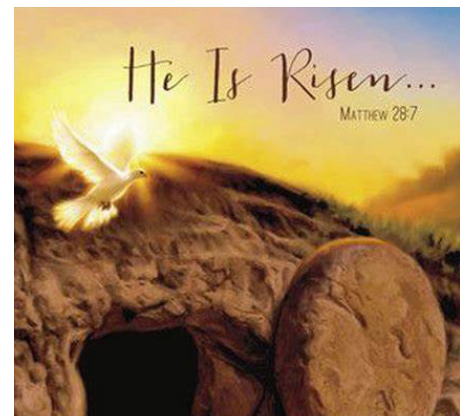
**The one who loves bears the suffering of the one who is loved.**

Over the last two years Covid-19 has caused many millions of people to suffer serious illness. Many people have suffered because their loved ones have died, but they could not care for them; they could not even come close to them or touch them. They too bore the sufferings of their loved ones.

It was because of love that Jesus endured suffering and death. And so, Jesus is there to suffer with those are suffering today, to embrace them and share their burden. This is an invitation for me to stand alongside people. I may not bring any relief to them, but at least

**I can listen to them and show my love and concern for them.**

A reflection by Br Cao Van Tri cp







## FAREWELL TO MARY

At the end of Week 10 we said farewell to Mary, who has been part of the teaching staff at ELSPM since 2015, when the Language Centre first moved to Melbourne.

Mary has taught Beginners, Elementary and Pre Intermediate classes and when needed, added the Intermediate class to her skill set.

Mary has an amazing ability to make English learning fun, adding music, especially Jazz chants to her lessons. Above all she will be remembered for her patience, generosity and hard work.

Mary is taking time to complete her Masters in language learning and we hope she will be back with us soon.

Thank you Mary, for all you have been for us at ELSPM.



## FAREWELL FROM THE STUDENTS

Good morning Mary. I remember the first day I started learning English with you, I was the worst student in your class, but you took great care of me. I think that is why Sister Margaret wanted me to say thank you and goodbye to you. It is also the word everyone wants to tell you.

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for patiently teaching us over the years. When we were lazy and bored in our studies, you helped us to overcome our difficulties. You always carefully guides us in our learning. You also always remind us when someone has not done their homework. Therefore, you are not only an English teacher, but also a friend of us. Because, you helps us to be better every day.

Finally, with all our hearts, we would like to wish you our best regards for your health, happiness in life, and many successes in your future career.

From all the students, online and onsite, that is, all of us, we would like to say thank very much and goodbye to you. We hope you will return to teach us in the near future.



You always carefully guided our learning.  
We give thanks





## MARY'S HIGHLIGHTS OF HER TIME AT ELSPM

I remember my very first day at ELSPM in 2015 when I met my Elementary 'class' – two Holy Spirit sisters Fene and Margareta from Indonesia. They were so keen to learn and it was a delight to teach them. On Friday afternoons we joined the other classes in the common room and played language games like Celebrity Heads and Running Dictation. In those days, like today, everyone worked hard and had fun too. Working with our dedicated team of volunteers was a great experience. They were so generous with their time and talents and the students enjoyed getting to know them. Tuesday liturgies with visiting priests were always special when the YTU community and our ELSPM community joined together in music and prayer to celebrate the eucharist.

Cultural days at ELSPM were eagerly planned for and anticipated. The students wore traditional costumes and performed items. It was great to see them singing, dancing and celebrating their culture. The staff joined in too and the highlights were our performances of 'Shake Your Tail Feathers' from The Blues Brothers film, 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams and 'Give me a Home among the Gumtrees'. The students laughed so much when we made mistakes!

City excursions to IMAX Cinema, Melbourne Museum, The National Gallery and Melbourne Zoo were a highlight. And who could forget the scavenger hunts in teams around the city? It was very competitive as there were prizes! We enjoyed BBQs at Ruffey Lake Park and country excursions to The Dandenongs and Healesville Sanctuary.

I'm sure many students will remember our week at Phillip Island and the special activities like watching the Penguins Parade and visiting historic Churchill Island. When the students returned, they wrote beautiful reflections and poetry about their experiences. I'll never forget the Graduation ceremonies at Holy Cross, Templestowe the end of every semester. There are lots of smiles and always a few tears as we say goodbye to students.



## BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH



Michelle 1st April

Trong 2nd April

Nam 25th April

