

St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church

Moore Street, Adelaide



An open, welcoming and inclusive community
in the heart of the City of Adelaide

Keeping Community Spiritual Resources & Reflections

Thursday 1 July 2021

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions makes it possible to once again worship on Sunday, when Mass is sung at 10 am. The church is also open for private prayer and public worship on Thursday from 11.30 am to 1 pm, and Mass is offered at 12.10 pm after the Angelus at 12 noon.

The decision to return to worship in community, even for private prayer, is not a straightforward matter, so we will continue to produce these newsletters for now.

In these Thursday newsletters, we offer ideas and opportunities for nourishing our personal and communal spiritual lives.

1. From Fr Gwilym – More COVID Restrictions?

The news that congregational singing is prohibited under the COVID regulations will come as a disappointment to many. I, personally, along with many others, love a good “sing” and having to miss out on my favourite hymns certainly puts a damper on the quality of my experience of worship.

This, coupled with the prohibition of the common cup, seems to be yet another way in which our liturgy is diminished. We are fortunate that (as I write this) there are no other restrictions, and that we are still permitted to meet together to give praise and thanks to God and to share the divine fellowship as the body of Christ.

We are fortunate as well, that our choir, as “performers” will be allowed to provide “hymns and psalms and songs of praise.” And, of course, our Thursday Mass will be enhanced by our Cantor!

However, many churchgoers will reflect that attendance at church during the last year has been knocked about badly by the pandemic. (The current neologism is “impacted”) There are and will be many who are wondering about the present need and future direction for regular gatherings based in a church building. Will Christians have to “work from home” using Zoom, or worship vicariously through recorded celebrations?

It is a serious question, indeed, and one that all faithful Christians need to consider carefully. In this Sunday's gospel, Jesus sends out his followers to work with his authority. That is, he sent them out to continue and extend his ministry. He also “ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics.” (Mark chapter 6, verses 8 and 9) Matthew records this instruction more fully, (Matthew chapter 10, verses 5 to 10), while Luke, in chapter 10, verses 3 and 4, gives another slightly different version.

In the three Gospels, the disciples are sent on their way with the absolute minimum of supplies. Many of the things, like food, clothing and money, which we might consider essentials, must be left behind. The only thing which they are allowed to take with them is a companion for the journey. Mark and Luke says that he sent them out in pairs, two by two. Matthew doesn't say that, but he groups the disciples in pairs; Peter with Andrew his brother, the sons of Zebedee, James with John, Philip with Bartholemew, Thomas with Matthew, James son of Alphaeus with Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanean with Judas Iscariot.

So, when we look at our mission as church and how it seems the circumstances are stripping us to the minimum, it is all the more important that we know what we can do without. According to Jesus, the only thing we cannot do without is a companion on the journey.

Now you may think that I am leading up to promote the Pastoral Care Network, and you'd be quite right. But I am also declaring the importance for each of us to have a companion on our Christian journey. A companion is literally someone with whom we share our bread, so it means someone who shares our food, both literally and spiritually. For example, it might someone who we meet for coffee and cake, someone with whom we can share our life and our faith.

The person can be anyone at all with whom we feel comfortable, someone with whom we can share the basics of who we are. Forget all the food, clothing, money and all the baggage we love to carry. How good it is to be able to find someone who can see beyond that and with whom we can share our soul! I think that is what Jesus wants each one of us to find.

Every blessing on the journey,

Gwilym Henry-Edwards
Locum Priest

2. Daily Prayer

Most Christian denominations have forms for prayer in the morning and the evening, and at other times of the day. Morning and Evening Prayer in the Anglican church's *A Prayer Book for Australia*, are available in either a fixed form (pages 3 – 33) or a different form for each day of the week (pages 383 – 424).

Online Resources

There is a complete online version of Daily Prayer from *A Prayer Book for Australia* for each day available at Australian Daily Prayer <https://dailyprayer.ampers.x10.mx/>. There is also a free app for mobile devices from the App Store or Google Play.

The Church of England provides an online version of its orders for Daily Prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>. This is also available as a free app. The Divine Office of the Catholic Church is available online at www.ibreviary.com and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

Times of Prayer

Many people find it helpful to make a particular time daily for prayer and reflection. One option might be to join your prayer with those of the wider world at some special times during the day. While we cannot attend at the church at the present time, you may like to join the wider community in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

3. Reflections and Meditations

Fr Gwilym and others within our community will continue to prepare Reflections for Sundays and Holy Days for posting on the web page. Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections are presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org/>.

To access these meditations, simply go to the blog and select the "Spirit matters" tab on the top. If you would like to receive an email update when there is a new posting on the blog, whether for a Sunday or weekday service, or for meditations and other supports for prayer, please subscribe to the blog using the box on the right-hand side of the page.

Service booklets as PDF files are still available for Sunday and weekday services on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

4. In the Church's Calendar

This week we celebrate the annual memorials of two mighty figures of the English church, St John Fisher and St Thomas More.

St John Fisher

John Fisher was born in England in 1469. After he was ordained a priest, the royal family appointed him tutor for Prince Henry, who became King Henry VIII. In 1504, Fisher became bishop of Rochester and also chancellor of Cambridge University. Fisher paid special attention to people who were poor. He wrote eight books against heresy, and Henry, then king, was proud to be his friend.

All this changed when Henry sought to divorce Catherine of Aragon. Henry's request for a divorce was refused by the pope, and Bishop Fisher supported this decision. He was strong enough to resist signing a document siding with the King, though all the other bishops of England had signed it.

Six months later, Henry had parliament write another document, the Oath of Supremacy, claiming that Henry was "Supreme Head" of the Church – by which he meant the Roman Catholic Church – in England. Again Bishop Fisher refused to sign. This made the king angry. The bishop was sentenced to prison in 1534 on the charge of high treason. The pope declared the jailed bishop a cardinal. Fisher was kept in prison for 14 months without a trial. In June, 1535, he was condemned to death by beheading.

St Thomas More

Thomas More was born in 1477, the son of a lawyer in London. He planned to become a priest but then entered law school. Besides being a shrewd lawyer, Thomas was a charming, witty man, who won the friendship of the Henry VIII.

As had happened with John Fisher, Henry VIII unsuccessfully sought Thomas's support for his divorce from Catherine of Aragon, and demanded he too sign the Oath of Supremacy. Thomas refused to sign, resigned as chancellor and retired to his country home, only to be arrested and sent to the Tower of London, where he was held for more than a year.

Henry tried hard to make Thomas change his mind, but Thomas stood firm. He knew this stand would mean certain death for him and disgrace for his family, but he followed his conscience.



Finally, after suffering hunger, cold, and loneliness, Thomas was led out to be beheaded on July 6. Seeing that the masked swordsman was quite nervous, Thomas said, "Be not afraid, for you send me to God." Then he said to the crowd, "I die the king's good servant, but God's first."

It may seem odd for Anglicans to honour as martyrs two people who died for their faith when that very faith of the English church would soon see the emergency of Anglicanism as a distinctive expression of Christ's church. We know that Henry VIII was by no means a perfect ruler, and Anglicans as much as any have come to admire those who have the courage to resist the pressure to conform to falsehood, to the broad way, or to popular opinion, when truth and conscience are at stake.



5. Prayer of St Thomas More

Give me the grace, Good Lord:

- To set the world at naught. To set the mind firmly on You and not to hang upon the words of men's mouths.
- To be content to be solitary. Not to long for worldly pleasures. Little by little utterly to cast off the world and rid my mind of all its business.
- Not to long to hear of earthly things, but that the hearing of worldly fancies may be displeasing to me.
- Gladly to be thinking of God, piteously to call for His help. To lean into the comfort of God. Busily to labour to love Him.
- To know my own vileness and wretchedness. To humble myself under the mighty hand of God. To bewail my sins and, for the purging of them, patiently to suffer adversity.
- Gladly to bear my purgatory here. To be joyful in tribulations. To walk the narrow way that leads to life.
- To have the last thing in remembrance. To have ever before my eyes my death that is ever at hand. To make death no stranger to me. To foresee and consider the everlasting fire of Hell. To pray for pardon before the judge comes.
- To have continually in mind the passion that Christ suffered for me. For His benefits unceasingly to give Him thanks.
- To buy the time again that I have lost. To abstain from vain conversations. To shun foolish mirth and gladness. To cut off unnecessary recreations.
- Of worldly substance, friends, liberty, life and all, to set the loss at naught, for the winning of Christ.
- To think my worst enemies my best friends, for the brethren of Joseph could never have done him so much good with their love and favour as they did him with their malice and hatred.

These minds are more to be desired of every man than all the treasures of all the princes and kings, Christian and heathen, were it gathered and laid together all in one heap. Amen.

6. For your prayers

We continue to pray throughout the week for the world and the church. These intentions may be helpful in your private or family prayers.

For the world. The leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

For the church. For all those who are challenged to be church in a different and unfamiliar way. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Colombo (Ceylon). In our national church, pray for the Primate, Archbishop Geoff Smith; and within our own Diocese, for the Parish of Lockleys.

For our local community. For the Collective and its ministry in the local community. For the Magdalene Centre, as it deals with the need to change the way it delivers services in order to safeguard the health of customers, staff and volunteers.

For those in need. For all those who are sick in body, mind or spirit. For all those affected by the COVID-19 coronavirus and all who care for them. For those who are commended to our prayers, especially Paull, Valerie, Sym, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, Fr Gary Priest, Fr Bart O'Donovan, Beth, Linda, and Fr Peter Garland.

For those who have died. For those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; all those who have died recently, those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about this time. ✠ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

For the saints. For the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St Mary Magdalene, St John Fisher, St Thomas More, and holy women and men of every time and place.

This newsletter will normally be distributed weekly on Thursday. Any appropriate items should be emailed to the Parish Office, omarymag@anglicaresa.com.au, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

