

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 2 November 2023

Dear friends,

This newsletter was developed as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and our ability to gather for worship was so severely challenged. Thanks be to God, we are now able to gather together to celebrate the Word and Sacraments, and to come to church for private prayer. And the demand for and appeal of these newsletters has continued.

Sunday Mass is offered weekly at 10 am, and the church will also be open on Thursday between 11.30 am and 1 pm, with the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

These newsletters are intended to provide some resources for prayer and reflection: enjoy!



1. All Souls Day

The custom of remembering the faithful departed goes back to the early days of the church, when their names were posted in the church so they could be remembered. As early as the 6th century, monasteries held special days of remembrance for the dead from their community and by the 9th century they were commemorating all the faithful departed

All Souls Day is the day each year on which we especially remember, and pray for, those who have died. Like All Saints' Day, this commemoration is tied to the profession in the Apostles' Creed of the communion of saints, which former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams broadly interprets as the "sharing between holy people" or the "sharing of holy things." Based on the spiritual unity of all Christians, those living this earthly life and those who have gone before—the communion is a mystical bond in Christ not broken by death.

The liturgies of this day are very distinctive. In the Daily Office, there are special prayers and readings, and at Mass, the antiphons and readings are those that would be offered at a funeral Mass. In some places—St Mary Magdalene's included—we read out the names of many people associated with the Parish: past bishops of the Diocese and clergy of the Parish, past parishioners who are still remembered here today, and those among our families and friends who are important to us personally.

We will be offering several opportunities for reflection and worship on this special day.

At 10 am, Fr Steven will offer a **contemporary reflection on grief and loss**. Later on, **Requiem Mass will be said at 12.10 pm (as usual on Thursday), then at 7.30 pm**—note the time, it is later than the usual evening Mass time—there will be a sung Requiem, also using the traditional rite, which features solemn music and chant sung only on these occasions.

A list of those whom we have remembered by name in the past is at the back of the church. If you have any amendments to make, please do so. And of course, please add the names of people to be remembered.

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 *A Prayer Book for Australia*, are available in either a fixed form (pp 3-33) or a form for each day of the week (pp 383-424).

Online Resources

There is an 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, especially the [Angelus](#) at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

3. Reflections and Meditations

In addition to Fr Steven's regular reflection in this newsletter, which is uploaded to the web page for wider accessibility, 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. This Week in the Calendar

In the coming week we celebrate All Souls Day, and we also remember the 16th century english theologian Richard Hooker.

All Souls Day - The Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed. The Church has encouraged prayer for the dead from the earliest times as an act of Christian charity. "If we had no care for the dead," Augustine noted, "we would not be in the habit of praying for them." Yet pre-Christian rites for the deceased retained such a strong hold on the superstitious imagination that a liturgical commemoration was not observed until the early Middle Ages, when monastic communities began to mark an annual day of prayer for the departed members.

In the 11th century, Saint Odilo, abbot of Cluny, decreed that his monasteries offer special prayers and sing the Office for the Dead on November 2, the day after the feast of All Saints. The custom spread from Cluny and was finally adopted throughout the Western Church.

The theological underpinning of the feast is the acknowledgment of human frailty. Its bases include the notion of punishment for sin, or bliss for great virtue, and also that after death, there is a kind of purification and healing which matures the soul for communion with God.

The early Church took up these concepts, and in the Western Church they gradually developed into the doctrine of purgatory. This is surely among the most misunderstood elements of western theology, especially when its popular characterisation as a physical place of suffering, a kind of limbo between life and death, emerged in the 12th century.

Superstition easily clung to the observance. Medieval popular belief held that the souls in purgatory could appear on this day in the form of witches, toads or will-o'-the-wisps. In some places there were graveside food offerings, supposedly to ease the rest of the dead.

Observances of a more religious nature have survived. These include public processions or private visits to cemeteries and decorating graves with flowers and lights. This feast is observed with great fervour in some places.

Modern theology has sought to re-imagine purgatory by understanding sin's effects differently. Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams perceptively writes that the resurrection accounts in the Gospels teach us that conversion means accepting one's sin and its consequences in the transforming vision of God's love:

"The Gospel will not ever tell us we are innocent, but it will tell us we are loved; and in asking us to receive and consent to that love, it asks us to identify with, and make our own, love's comprehensive vision of all we are and have been. That is the transformation of desire as it affects our attitude to our own selves—to accept what we have been, so that all of it can be transformed ... Grace will remake but not undo."

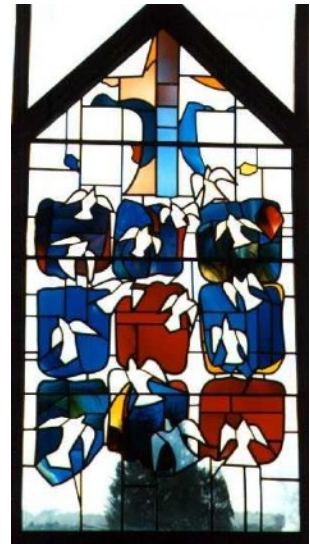
In other words, sin has real consequences which cannot be "taken back," but the sinner can be remade by God's love. Remade, but not undone.

Whether or not one should pray for the dead is one of the great arguments which divide Christians. Appalled by the abuse of indulgences in the Church of his day, Martin Luther rejected the concept of purgatory – though he most certainly offered his own prayers for the dead. Prayer for a loved one who has died is, for the believer, a way of erasing any distance, even death. In prayer we stand in God's presence in the company of someone we love, even if that person has gone before us into death.

* * *

On any list of great English theologians, the name of **Richard Hooker** would appear at or near the top. His masterpiece is *The Laws Of Ecclesiastical Polity*. Its philosophical base is Aristotelian, with a strong emphasis on natural law eternally planted by God in creation. On this foundation, all positive laws of Church and State are developed from Scriptural revelation, ancient tradition, reason, and experience.

The occasion of his writing was the demand of English Puritans for a reformation of Church government. Calvin had established in Geneva a system whereby each congregation was ruled by a commission comprising two thirds laymen elected annually by the congregation and one



third clergy serving for life. The English Puritans (by arguments more curious than convincing) held that no church not so governed could claim to be Christian.

Hooker replies to this assertion, but in the process he raises and considers fundamental questions about the authority and legitimacy of government (religious and secular), about the nature of law, and about various kinds of law, including the laws of physics as well as the laws of England.

In the course of his book he sets forth the Anglican view of the Church, and the Anglican approach to the discovery of religious truth (the so-called *Via Media*, or middle road), and explains how this differs from the position of the Puritans, on the one hand, and the adherents of the Pope, on the other.

He is very heavy reading, but well worth it. (He says, on the first page of Chapter I: "Those unto whom we shall seem tedious are in no wise injured by us, seeing that it lies in their own hands to spare themselves the labour they are unwilling to endure." This translates into modern English as: "If you can't take the intellectual heat, get out of the kitchen. If you can't stand a book that makes you think, go read the funny papers.")

The effect of the book has been considerable. Hooker greatly influenced John Locke, and (both directly and through Locke), American political philosophy in the late 1700's. Although Hooker is unsparing in his censure of what he believes to be the errors of Rome, his contemporary, Pope Clement VIII (died 1605), said of the book: "It has in it such seeds of eternity that it will abide until the last fire shall consume all learning."



5. All Souls Day - from a book on the death of his brother, by St Ambrose of Milan

Let us die with Christ, to live with Christ

We see that death is gain, life is loss. Paul says: "For me life is Christ, and death a gain." What does "Christ" mean but to die in the body, and receive the breath of life? Let us then die with Christ, to live with Christ. We should have a daily familiarity with death, a daily desire for death. By this kind of detachment our soul must learn to free itself from the desires of the body. It must soar above earthly lusts to a place where they cannot come near, to hold it fast. It must take on the likeness of death, to avoid the punishment of death. The law of our fallen nature is at war with the law of our reason and subjects the law of reason to the law of error. What is the remedy? "Who will set me free from this body of death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

We have a doctor to heal us; let us use the remedy he prescribes. The remedy is the grace of Christ, the dead body our own. Let us then be exiles from our body, so as not to be exiles from Christ. Though we are still in the body, let us not give ourselves to the things of the body. We must not reject the natural rights of the body, but we must desire before all else the gifts of grace.

What more need be said? It was by the death of one man that the world was redeemed. Christ did not need to die if he did not want to, but he did not look on death as something to be despised, something to be avoided, and he could have found no better means to save us than by dying. Thus his death is life for all. We are sealed with the sign of his death; when we pray we preach his death; when we offer sacrifice we proclaim his death. His death is victory; his death is a sacred sign; each year his death is celebrated with solemnity by the whole world.

What more should we say about his death since we use this divine example to prove that it was death alone that won freedom from death, and death itself was its own redeemer? Death is then no cause for mourning, for it is the cause of mankind's salvation. Death is not something to be avoided, for the Son of God did not think it beneath his dignity, nor did he seek to escape it.

Above all else, holy David prayed that he might see and gaze on this: "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this I shall pray for: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and to see how gracious is the Lord."

6. "Of Prayer, by Richard Hooker

Between the throne of God in Heaven and his church upon Earth here militant if it be so that Angels have their continual exchange, where should we find the same more verified than in these two ghostly exercises, the one doctrine and the other prayer? For what is the assembling of the church to learn, but the receiving of Angels descended from above? What to pray, but the sending of Angels upward? His Heavenly inspirations and our holy desires are as so many Angels of communication and commerce between God and us. As teaching brings us to know that God is our supreme truth; so prayer testifies that we acknowledge him our sovereign good.

Besides, since on God as the most high all inferior causes in the world are dependent; and the higher any cause is, the more it covets to impart virtue unto all things beneath it; how should any kind of service we do or can do find greater acceptance than prayer, which shows our concurrence with him in desiring that wherewith his very nature doth most delight?

Is not the name of prayer usual to signify even all the service that ever we do unto God? And that for no other cause, as I suppose, but to show that there is in religion no acceptable duty which devout invocation of the name of God doth not either presuppose or infer. Prayers are those "calves of men's lips," those most gracious and sweet odours; those rich presents and gifts, which being carried up to Heaven do best testify our dutiful affection, and are for the purchasing of all favour at the hands of God the most undoubted means we can use.

On others what more easily, and yet what more fruitfully bestowed, than our prayers? If we give counsel, they are the simpler only that need it; if alms, the poor only are relieved; but by prayer we do good to all. And whereas every other duty besides is but to show itself as time and opportunity require, for this all times are convenient: when we are not able to do any other thing for our benefit, when through maliciousness or unkindness they vouchsafe not to accept any other good at our hands, prayer is that which we always have in our power to bestow, and they never in theirs to refuse. Wherefore "God forbid," says Samuel, speaking unto a most unthankful people, a people weary of the benefit of his most virtuous government over them, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, and cease to pray for you." It is the first thing wherewith a righteous life begins, and the last wherewith it doth end.

The knowledge is small which we have on Earth concerning things that are done in Heaven. Notwithstanding thus much we know even of saints in Heaven, that they pray. And therefore prayer being a work common to the church as well triumphant as militant, a work common unto men with Angels, what should we think that but that so much of our lives is celestial and divine as we spend in the exercise of prayer? For which cause we see that the most comfortable visitations, which God hath sent us from above, have taken especially the times of prayer at their most natural opportunities.

7. Intentions for Your Daily Prayers

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

Pray for the world. For the leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenges that beset the international community. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome. For all who work for peace and justice. For reconciliation with the first custodians of this land.

Pray for the church. For all those who are striving to be church in the modern world, that we may be alert to the signs of the times and their interpretation in the light of the Gospel. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Northern Argentina (South America). In our national church, pray for our own Diocese of Adelaide; and in our own Diocese of Adelaide, Ethiopian Orthodox Congregation at Alberton.

Pray for our local community. For the Collective as it manages the delivery of the Saturday Night Mary Mags Dinner. For the Magdalene Centre, its customers, staff and volunteers, as they minister in God's name among those in crisis and in need of support and assistance.

Pray for those in need. Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Nance, Neil, Elaine, Edward, Neil, Hugh, Bart O'Donovan (priest) and Prue O'Donovan (Priest).

Pray for those who have died. Those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; those who have died recently, especially Reg Wynne (priest), and those whose anniversaries of death occur at 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, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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

Directory

Parish Priest	Revd Dr Steven Ogden ☎ 0408 817 147, ✉ stevengogden@gmail.com
Hon Assisting Priests	Revd Sr Juliana SJ, Fr Philip Carter, Fr Graeme Kaines
Churchwardens	Peter Burdon ☎ 0414 471 894, Alison McAllister ☎ 0433 551 267
Parish Council	The Priest and Wardens <i>ex officio</i> ; Catherine Freriks, Alison McAllister, Hamish McLachlan, Peter Turner.
Nomination Committee	John Dow, Catherine Freriks, Annemarie Van Putten
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks