

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 4 February 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 Tuesday and Thursday from 11.30 am to 1 pm, and Mass is offered at 12.10 pm after the Angelus at 12 noon. **Please note that there will be no weekday Mass on Tuesday 9 February.**

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. Reflection – There's Nothing "Ordinary" about Sunday

With the end of the season of Christmas on the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple on 2 February, the remaining Sundays after the Epiphany until Ash Wednesday (on 17 February this year) and Lent are the first of the periods of "Sunday by Sunday" worship in the church's year. The liturgical colour is green,

These Sundays after Epiphany, like the Sundays "after Pentecost" later in the year, are often called "Sundays in Ordinary Time". These Sundays are "ordinary" not because they are common, or routine, or mundane, but simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are *numbered*.

The Latin word *ordinalis*, which refers to numbers in a series, stems from the Latin word *ordo*, from which we get the English word *order*. Thus, the numbered weeks of Ordinary Time, in fact, represent the ordered life of the Church—the period in which we live our lives neither in feasting (as in the Christmas and Easter seasons) or in more severe penance (as in Advent and Lent), but in watchfulness and expectation of the Second Coming of Christ.

The normal liturgical colour for these days outside the liturgical seasons, when there is no special feast, is green. Green vestments and altar cloths have traditionally been associated with the time after Pentecost, the period in which the Church founded by the risen Christ and enlivened by the Holy Spirit began to grow and to spread the Gospel to all nations. Modern liturgists also speak of green representing hope—like the hope we feel when we see the first buds in springtime. (In reality, the reason might have been much more practical. Ordinary Time is the longest liturgical season, the green vestments get the most use and are therefore wear out more frequently - and green plant dyes have always been one of the most widely available kinds of dyes!)

In any given year, there are either 33 or 34 Sundays in Ordinary Time. Because Easter is a movable feast, and thus the Lent and Easter seasons "float" from year to year, the number of Sundays in each period of Ordinary Time vary from the other period as well as from year to year.

The "green" Sundays may be displaced by a Feast Day of Our Lord (such as the Presentation last week) or of the Saints. The principal feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15 August falls this year on a Sunday, so it will displace the standard celebration. St Mary Magdalene, too, which falls on a Thursday this year will be transferred to the following Sunday.

Like much of our liturgy, the use of green to signify Ordinary Time started as tradition but has now become a rule. Today, the colours of vestments and church decorations reminds us of the passing of the liturgical year and invites us into the mystery of our faith.

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). The Bible readings for each day can be found in *The Australian Lectionary*, and for reference the readings for the coming week are:

	Morning Prayer	Evening Prayer
Thursday 4 February <i>St Anskar</i>	Ps 80 Genesis 21.1-34 Luke 3.1-14	Ps 81 Jeremiah 14.7-16 Philippians 2.1-11
Friday 5 February <i>Martyrs of Japan</i>	Ps 82, 84 Genesis 22.1-24 Luke 3.15-22	Ps 85, 87 Jeremiah 14.7 – 15.9 Philippians 2.12-18
Saturday 6 February	Ps 86 Genesis 23 Luke 3.23-38	Ps 88 Jeremiah 15.10-21 Philippians 2.19-30
Sunday 7 February <i>The 5th Sunday after Epiphany</i>	Ps 139.1-18, 23-24 John 4.43-54	Ps 147.12-20 Genesis 4.1-16 1 John 3.7-14
Monday 8 February	Ps 89.1-18 Genesis 24.1-21 Luke 4.1-15	Ps 89.19-38 Jeremiah 16.1-21 Philippians 3.1-16
Tuesday 9 February	Ps 89.39-53 Genesis 24.22-49 Luke 4.16-30	Ps 91 Jeremiah 17.1-18 Philippians 3.1-16
Wednesday 10 February	Ps 92, 93 Genesis 24.50-67 Luke 4.31-44	Ps 94 Jeremiah 17.19 – 18.12 Philippians 4.8-23
Thursday 11 February	Ps 95, 96 Genesis 25.5-11, 19-34 Luke 5.1-11	Ps 97, 98 Jeremiah 18.12-23 1 Timothy 1.1-11

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 (App Store or Google Play). 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 Graeme 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

The Church's calendar this week we have a single but significant commemoration, the 16th century martyrdom of Christian missionaries in Japan.

The Christian faith reached Japan by the efforts of the Jesuit missionary Francis Xavier (1506-1552). Jesuit outreach to the Japanese continued after his death, and around 200,000 Japanese had entered the Church by 1587.

During 1593, Franciscan missionaries came to Japan from the Philippines by order of Spain's King Philip II. These new arrivals gave themselves zealously to the work of charity and evangelism, but their presence disturbed a delicate situation between the Church and Japanese authorities.

Suspicion against Catholic missionaries grew when a Spanish ship was seized off the Japanese coast and found to be carrying artillery. The empire responded by sentencing 26 Catholics to death by crucifixion and lancing.

The condemned men were first marched some 600 miles to the city of Nagasaki. The group was comprised of priests, brothers, and laymen, Franciscans, Jesuits, and members of the Secular Franciscan Order; there were catechists, doctors, simple artisans, and servants, old men and innocent children—all united in a common faith and love for Jesus and his Church.

Brother Paul Miki, a Jesuit and a native of Japan, has become the best known among the martyrs of Japan. While hanging upon a cross, Paul Miki preached to the people gathered for the execution: "The sentence of judgement says these men came to Japan from the Philippines, but I did not come from any other country. I am a true Japanese. The only reason for my being killed is that I have taught the doctrine of Christ. I certainly did teach the doctrine of Christ. I thank God it is for this reason I die. I believe that I am telling only the



truth before I die. I know you believe me and I want to say to you all once again: Ask Christ to help you to become happy. I obey Christ. After Christ's example I forgive my persecutors. I do not hate them. I ask God to have pity on all, and I hope my blood will fall on my fellow men as a fruitful rain."

When missionaries returned to Japan in the 1860s, at first they found no trace of Christianity. But after establishing themselves they found that thousands of Christians lived around Nagasaki and that they had secretly preserved the faith. Beatified in 1627, the martyrs of Japan were finally canonized in 1862.

Although the number of Christians in Japan is not large, the Church is respected and has total religious freedom. The spread of Christianity in the Far East is slow and difficult. Faith such as that of the 26 martyrs is needed today as much as in 1597.

5. From a contemporary account of the martyrdom of the Martyrs of Japan

You shall be my witnesses

The crosses were set in place. Father Pasio and Father Rodriguez took turns encouraging the victims. Their steadfast behaviour was wonderful to see. The Father Bursar stood motionless, his eyes turned heavenward. Brother Martin gave thanks to God's goodness by singing psalms. Again and again he repeated: "Into your hands, Lord, I entrust my life." Brother Francis Branco also thanked God in a loud voice. Brother Gonsalvo in a very loud voice kept saying the Our Father and Hail Mary.

Our brother, Paul Miki, saw himself standing now in the noblest pulpit he had ever filled. To his "congregation" he began by proclaiming himself a Japanese and a Jesuit. He was dying for the Gospel he preached. He gave thanks to God for this wonderful blessing and he ended his "sermon" with these words: "As I come to this supreme moment of my life, I am sure none of you would suppose I want to deceive you. And so I tell you plainly: there is no way to be saved except the Christian way. My religion teaches me to pardon my enemies and all who have offended me. I do gladly pardon the Emperor and all who have sought my death. I beg them to seek baptism and be Christians themselves."

Then he looked at his comrades and began to encourage them in their final struggle. Joy glowed in all their faces, and in Louis' most of all. When a Christian in the crowd cried out to him that he would soon be in heaven, his hands, his whole body strained upward with such joy that every eye was fixed on him.

Anthony, hanging at Louis' side, looked toward heaven and called upon the holy names – "Jesus, Mary!" He began to sing a psalm: "Praise the Lord, you children!" (He learned it in catechism class in Nagasaki. They take care there to teach the children some psalms to help them learn their catechism).

Others kept repeating "Jesus, Mary!" Their faces were serene. Some of them even took to urging the people standing by to live worthy Christian lives. In these and other ways they showed their readiness to die.

Then, according to Japanese custom, the four executioners began to unsheathe their spears. At this dreadful sight, all the Christians cried out, "Jesus, Mary!" And the storm of anguished weeping then rose to batter the very skies. The executioners killed them one by one. One thrust of the spear, then a second blow. It was over in a very short time.

6. Intentions for Your Daily 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 medical researchers, that they may be granted knowledge and wisdom as they search for a vaccine and cure. 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 Amichi (Nigeria). in our national church, pray for the Diocese of Armidale; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for St Peter's Cathedral.

For our local community. For the Collective as it resumes its ministry to the community in the Drop-In Centre is suspended, and for its guests as they seek places to eat and rest. 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, Bishop David McCall, Sim, Clarice, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, Colette, Diane, Fr Gary Priest, and Chris.

For those who have died. For those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; all those who have died recently, especially Jean Searles; 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 Anskar, St Paul Miki and the Martyrs of Japan, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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.

