

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 March 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.

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 – On Place Holders ...

Thank you for welcoming me as your Locum for the next six months. Perhaps it would be good to let you know what I think that a Locum is!

First of all, it is a shortened form of *Locum Tenens*, a Latin term meaning, quite literally, "Place Holder". It puts me in mind of an old fashioned bookmark, that piece of cardboard or other material, often decorated with pictures and a tassel. Sometimes they are laminated and sometimes they are given out as advertisements for all sorts of things. And they can be home made, hand painted or patterned with cross stitch, a personal reminder of the maker and giver.

I use my bookmark to remind me of my place in the book I am reading just before I go to sleep. I insert the bookmark, close the book, turn out the light and go to sleep. The next night I open the book at the bookmark and continue reading from where I left off. The bookmark leaves no trace of its passage, doesn't harm or change the book, and can be used time and time again in any book, regardless of its content.

I may be a Locum Tenens, a Place Holder, and in some ways I am like a bookmark, but in many other ways I am different. First of all, like a bookmark, I have my own definite personality and history. I am definitely home-made, showing all the love and imperfections of those who have shaped my life and ministry. I am not flat and protected by lamination, but thoroughly three dimensional and vulnerable. The only advertisements which I hope to bring to St Mary Magdalene's are those which promote the Kingdom of God ... and if I have a tassel, I hope it doesn't show!

I hope to be useful, like a bookmark, but in the book of the History of St Mary Magdalene's, I am not just a reminder of the point reached before going to sleep! The book is constantly being written, it is one of God's ongoing projects. So, as Locum Tenens, I am part of that

history; like you, dear reader, I am one of the participants and writers of the story. Together we write the story, describe the characters and develop the plot.

A bookmark does not leave a trace of its passage, nor harm or change the book, but, because I am who I am, it is inevitable that I'll leave my mark. You'll find my signature in many places; in the way I celebrate the Mass, the way I preach and teach, and the way I interact with you and the other writers and characters in the story. As journey together we will learn from each other, I from you and you from me. You will change me as much as I change you. And this will, I trust, be good and life-giving. A good bookmark does not harm the book, but a good *Locum Tenens* can be very good for a Parish.

Thank you for welcoming me into your community, into the sharing of your journey and into the writing of your history.

See you in church!

Fr 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://stmarymagdalenesadelade.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. Journeying Through Lent

Leonie Zadow has encouraged and resourced daily prayers and reflections in Lent during the past few years. We are delighted that she has supplied us with some ideas and suggestions.

There are a number of apps for phones etc., that many people find helpful to use in Lent (and at other times). One is called "Pray as you go". It is an Ignatian resource. There are some terrific aspects to including a daily prayer resource plus a Lent series which has been written by Margaret Silf. Again it is easy to download and to use. The Lenten series they are offering is described in this way:

*Growing Back Better
A Lenten Retreat*

We have all come through a year like no other in living memory, and now we have arrived in a new year, carrying all the hopes and dreams of a new beginning, but also the many fears and troubles of the year just passed. The season of Lent gives us a heaven-sent opportunity to reflect prayerfully on our recent experience and the difficulties and the possibilities it has set before us.

2020 challenged us, individually and collectively, in ways no-one could have imagined. It has confronted us with the question of whether we want to go back to how things were, or to 'grow back better'. It has challenged us to reflect on what kind of people we truly desire to become and what kind of world we hope to pass on to future generations.

The app is easy to download and to use. It is available on the App Store and Google Play.

5. In the Church's Calendar

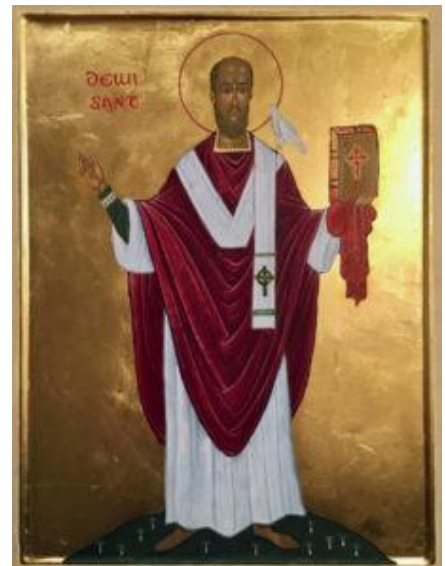
The Church's calendar this week we celebrate the great Welsh saint David, and the martyrs of the early church, St Perpetua and St Felicity, and their companions.

Saint David is the patron saint of Wales and perhaps the most famous of British saints. Ironically, we have little reliable information about him.

It is known that he became a priest, engaged in missionary work, and founded many monasteries, including his principal abbey in southwestern Wales. Many stories and legends sprang up about David and his Welsh monks. Their austerity was extreme. They worked in silence without the help of animals to till the soil. Their food was limited to bread, vegetables and water.

In about the year 550, David attended a synod where his eloquence impressed his fellow monks to such a degree that he was elected primate of the region. The episcopal see was moved to Mynyw, where he had his monastery, now called St. David's.

David's foundation became an important centre for training missionaries for work in Ireland. One of those missionaries was St Patrick, who set off for Ireland from nearby Whitesands Bay. Over the next 4 centuries the monastery was sacked by Norse raiders at least 10 times. Life was never dull for the monks!



David ruled his diocese until he had reached a very old age. His last words to his monks and subjects were: "Be joyful, brothers and sisters. Keep your faith, and do the little things that you have seen and heard with me." Saint David is often pictured standing on a mound with a dove on his shoulder. The legend is that once while he was preaching a dove descended to his shoulder and the earth rose to lift him high above the people so that he could be heard.

Saints Perpetua and Felicity

"When my father in his affection for me was trying to turn me from my purpose by arguments and thus weaken my faith, I said to him, 'Do you see this vessel—waterpot or whatever it may be? Can it be called by any other name than what it is?' 'No,' he replied. 'So also I cannot call myself by any other name than what I am—a Christian.'"

So writes Perpetua: young, beautiful, well-educated, a noblewoman of Carthage in North Africa. Perpetua's mother was a Christian and her father a pagan. He continually pleaded with her to deny her faith. She refused and was imprisoned at 22.



In her diary, Perpetua describes her period of captivity: "What a day of horror! Terrible heat, owing to the crowds! Rough treatment by the soldiers! To crown all, I was tormented with anxiety for my baby ... Such anxieties I suffered for many days, but I obtained leave for my baby to remain in the prison with me, and being relieved of my trouble and anxiety for him, I at once recovered my health, and my prison became a palace to me and I would rather have been there than anywhere else."

Despite threats of persecution and death, Perpetua, Felicity—a slave woman and expectant mother—and three companions, Revocatus, Secundulus and Saturninus, refused to renounce their Christian faith. For their unwillingness, all were sent to the public games in the amphitheater. There Perpetua and Felicity were beheaded, and the others killed by beasts.

Perpetua's record of her trial and imprisonment ends the day before the games. "Of what was done in the games themselves, let him write who will." The diary was finished by an eyewitness.

Persecution for religious beliefs is not confined to Christians in ancient times. Consider Anne Frank, the Jewish girl who with her family, was forced into hiding and later died in Bergen-Belsen, one of Hitler's death camps during World War II. Anne, like Perpetua and Felicity, endured hardship and suffering and finally death because she committed herself to God. In her diary, Anne writes, "It's twice as hard for us young ones to hold our ground, and maintain our opinions, in a time when all ideals are being shattered and destroyed, when people are showing their worst side, and do not know whether to believe in truth and right and God."

6. St David – from a Life of St David by Rhygyferch

The holy Father David prescribed an austere system of monastic observance, requiring every monk to toil daily at manual labour and to lead a common life. So with unflagging zeal they work with hand and foot, they put the yoke to their own shoulders, and in their own holy hands, they bear the tools for labour in the fields. So by their own strength they procure every necessity for the community, while refusing possessions and detesting riches. They make no

use of oxen for ploughing. Everyone is rich to himself and to the brethren, every man is his own ox.

When the field work is done they return to the enclosure of the monastery, to pass their time till evening at reading, writing, or in prayer. Then when the signal is heard for evening prayer everyone leaves what he is at and in silence, without any idle conversation, they make their way to church. When, with heart and voice attuned, they have completed the psalmody, they remain on their knees until stars appearing in the heaven bring day to its close; yet when all have gone, the father remains there alone making his own private prayer for the well-being of the church.

Shedding daily abundance of tears, offering daily his sweet-scented sacrifice of praise, aglow with an intensity of love, he consecrated with pure hands the fitting oblation of the Lord's body, and so, at the conclusion of the morning offices, attaining alone to the converse of angels. Then the whole day was spent undaunted and untired, in teaching, praying, on his knees, caring for the brethren, and for orphans and children, and widows, and everyone in need, for the weak and the sick, for travellers and in feeding many. The rest of this stern way of life would be profitable to imitate, but the shortness of this account forbids our entering upon it, but in every way his life was ordered in imitation of the monks of Egypt.

7. **St Thomas More on Saints Perpetua and Felicity**

From *The English Works of Sir Thomas More*, London, 1557)

Called and chosen for the glory of the Lord

The day of the martyrs' victory dawned. They marched from their cells into the amphitheatre, as if into heaven, with cheerful looks and graceful bearing. If they trembled it was for joy and not for fear.

Perpetua was the first to be thrown down, and she fell prostrate. She got up and, seeing that Felicity was prostrate, went over and reached out her hand to her and lifted her up. Both stood up together. The hostility of the crowd was appeased, and they were ordered to the gate called Sanavivaria. There Perpetua was welcomed by a catechumen named Rusticus. Rousing herself as if from sleep (so deeply had she been in spiritual ecstasy), she began to look around. To everyone's amazement she said: "When are we going to be led to the beast?" When she heard that it had already happened she did not at first believe it until she saw the marks of violence on her body and her clothing. Then she beckoned to her brother and the catechumen, and addressed them in these words: "Stand firm in faith, love one another and do not be tempted to do anything wrong because of our sufferings."

Saturus, too, in another gate, encouraged the soldier Pudens, saying: "Here I am, and just as I thought and foretold I have not yet felt any wild beast. Now believe with your whole heart: I will go there and be killed by the leopard in one bite." And right at the end of the games, when he was thrown to the leopard he was in fact covered with so much blood from one bite that the people cried out to him: "Washed and saved, washed and saved!" And so, giving evidence of a second baptism, he was clearly saved who had been washed in this manner.

Then Saturus said to the soldier Pudens: "Farewell, and remember your faith as well as me; do not let these things frighten you; let them rather strengthen you." At the same time he asked for the little ring from Pudens's finger. After soaking it in his wound he returned it to Pudens as a keepsake, leaving him a pledge and a remembrance of his blood. Half dead, he was thrown along with the others into the usual place of slaughter.

The people, however, had demanded that the martyrs be led to the middle of the amphitheatre. They wanted to see the sword thrust into the bodies of the victims ... Without being asked they went where the people wanted them to go; but first they kissed one another, to complete their witness with the customary kiss of peace.

The others stood motionless and received the deathblow in silence, especially Satorus, who had gone up first and was first to die; he was helping Perpetua. But Perpetua, that she might experience the pain more deeply, rejoiced over her broken body and guided the shaking hand of the inexperienced gladiator to her throat. Such a woman – one before whom the unclean spirit trembled – could not perhaps have been killed, had she herself not willed it.

Bravest and happiest martyrs! You were called and chosen for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

8. 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 Missionary Diocese of Asaba (Nigeria). in our national church, pray for the Diocese of Ballarat; and within our own Diocese, for the Parish of Kangaroo Island.

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, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, Diane, Fr Gary Priest, Fr Bart O'Donovan, 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 Phyllis Joan Cowley; those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about this time, especially Christopher Edwards. ✠ 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 David, St Perpetua, St Felicity, 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.

