

# 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 5 November 2020

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 Graeme – Suggestions about Prayers for the Dead

Despite the popular scepticism about God and the Christian Faith, it is clear that many people continue to imagine that their loved ones who have died are “up there” somewhere. Very often when someone speaks of a relative who has died reference is made about the person “looking down” on things, or “approving” or “disapproving” of some activity or other.

When we are considering a good way for people of Christian Faith to pray for the dead, we need, first, to understand both where and how the dead ones are. Very simply and truthfully, we have no clear idea about this. It is a matter about which we shall all discover when we die. Anyone who claims to know definitely about it is being untruthful and basing their claims on their own preconceived notion, be it religious or atheistic.

For people of faith, the Scriptures are fairly clear that life is eternal, and that the resurrection of Christ confirms the notion of new life after death. How we negotiate the passage from this life to the new life remains a mystery until we die, whenever that may be. How then are we to pray for our dead?

It is very important to pray positively. Instinct can tell us that God is merciful and that God understands us perfectly. God knows our weaknesses and our shortcomings or grave mistakes. God wants us all to be saved. It is our own choices which affect our eternal destiny. With this in mind, we can pray that a person who has died will choose to be welcomed into the heavenly presence of God ... and that the opportunities given for a change of heart will be embraced.

This approach may not be necessary for someone who has lived an exemplary life on earth. For such people we need to pray that they enter God's heavenly presence with joy and peace.

Can we hope that the dead can help us who remain in this life? I do not know. I believe that it is God whom we ask for help - but whether or not the dead know the intimate details of our lives is a moot point.

I value the opportunities the Church gives us for being close to our dead ones. In the Mass when we enter our Holy Communion with Christ we also enter a Communion with the dead. We are all united through Christ. When people who have meant much to me have died, I believe that I have drawn close to them at the time of Holy Communion in the Mass. Most of the Church does not shrink from praying for the dead. We do this every time we offer the Mass or at other occasions.

Sometimes prayer can be imagining someone or something as if our prayer had been answered in the way we asked. For example, to pray for a sick person can be us imagining them in good health once again. What we imagine then becomes our prayer to God. Accordingly, we can imagine a dead person in the heavenly presence and this becomes our prayer for this person.

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

	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>Evening Prayer</b>
Thursday 5 November	Ps 15, 16 Nehemiah 10.28 – 11.2 Matthew 21.33-46	Ps 17 Daniel 11.14-28 Revelation 2.8-11
Friday 6 November	Ps 18.1-31 Nehemiah 13.1-14 Matthew 22.1-14	Ps 18.32-52 Daniel 11.29-45 Revelation 2.12-17
Saturday 7 November	Ps 19 Nehemiah 13.15-31 Matthew 22.15-33	Ps 119.1-16 Daniel 12 Revelation 2.18-29
Sunday 8 November <i>23rd Sunday after Pentecost</i>	Ps 96 1 Thessalonians 4.1-8	Ps 63 Judges 2.7-19 Matthew 24.21-35
Monday 9 November	Ps 22.1-22 Jonah 1 Matthew 22.34-46	Ps 22.23-32, 23 Bel and the Dragon 1-22 Revelation 3.1-6
Tuesday 10 November <i>St Leo of Rome</i>	Ps 25 Jonah 2 Matthew 23.1-15	Ps 27 Bel and the Dragon 23-44 Revelation 3.7-13
Wednesday 11 November <i>St Martin of Tours</i>	Ps 28, 29 Jonah 3 Matthew 23.16-28	Ps 30, 32 Wisdom 1.1-15 Revelation 3.14-22
Thursday 12 November <i>Charles Simeon</i>	Ps 33 Jonah 4 Matthew 23.29-39	Ps 31 Wisdom 1.16 – 2.11 Revelation 4

## 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](http://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. Volunteers are attending at St Mary Magdalene's most days to ring the church bell while 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 will in the future be presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org/>. To access the tab, 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, both on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

### 4. In the Church's Calendar

This week in the church's calendar we celebrate the feasts of two titans of the early church, St Leo of Rome and St Martin of Tours, and the 19th century evangelist Charles Simeon.

St Leo of Rome, often called St Leo the Great, was born in the year 400 into an aristocratic Roman family. He was called to Christian ministry in his youth, and by the year 431 was widely known in Rome and further afield for his love for the Lord, intelligence and persuasive nature. He was also gifted in bringing reconciliation between disputing groups of Christians.

Elected Pope in 440, he worked tirelessly to emphasise the pope's total responsibility for the flock of Christ, and to counter heresies when they arose. He responded to doctrinal controversy in the Church in the East with a classic letter setting down the Church's teaching on the two natures of Christ. With strong faith, he also led the defence of Rome against barbarian attack, taking the role of peacemaker.

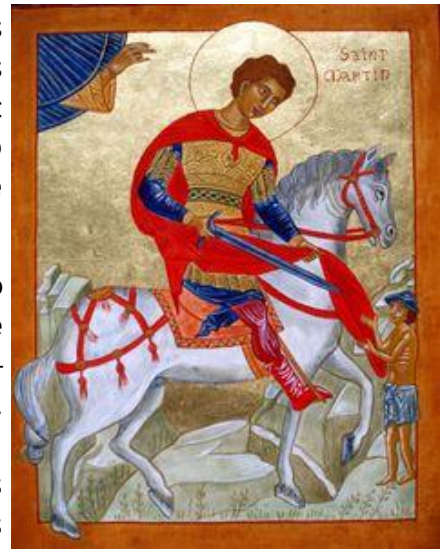


Leo's growth to sainthood has its basis in the spiritual depth with which he approached the pastoral care of his people. He is known for his spiritually profound sermons, which had the ability to reach the everyday needs and interests of his people. It is said of Leo that his true

significance rests in his doctrinal insistence on the mysteries of Christ and the Church and in the supernatural charisms of the spiritual life given to humanity in Christ and in his Body, the Church. Leo died in the year 461.

**St Martin of Tours** (c.316-397) was in turn a conscientious objector who wanted to be a monk; a monk who was persuaded to become a bishop; and a bishop who fought heresy, while pleading for mercy to heretics. He remains to this day one of the most popular of saints - and one of the first not to be a martyr.

After preaching and teaching in Milan, Martin returned to France, where the people of Tours demanded that he become their bishop. Martin was drawn to Tours by a ruse—the need of a sick person—and was brought to the church, where he reluctantly allowed himself to be consecrated bishop. Some of the consecrating bishops thought his rumpled appearance and unkempt hair indicated that he was not dignified enough for the office.



As a bishop, Martin was among the first to establish a system of parishes to manage his diocese. He made a point to visit each parish at least once per year. In addition to his episcopal duties in Tours, he fought boldly against heresy, and passionately and faithfully proclaimed the Gospel. Many miracles were attributed to Martin during his lifetime, and in the years following his death, popular devotion to him grew.

Images of St Martin commonly have him on horseback, cutting his cloak in half with a sword. This is based on a legend of an encounter he had with a beggar, when he was still a soldier. The beggar was unclothed and it was very cold. Martin removed his cloak and with his sword, he cut it in half. He gave this half to the beggar and dressed himself in the remnant.

**Charles Simeon** (1759-1836) showed little interest in religion in his youth, until on Easter Day, 1779, he experienced a profound conversion, taking holy orders and taking a pastoral charge at Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge from 1782 up until his death in 1836. Holy Trinity was a centre of evangelical witness and spiritual life in Cambridge, but Simeon's preaching had a mixed reception there. Some did not like his gospel-centred preaching, and they locked their pews and would refuse to go in protest. The students, however, came in droves.



His ministry had three emphases: the importance of preaching, missions; and the reformation of the church after the example of Jesus - as the Bible records it. Simeon had a threefold criterion for a sermon. He said you can ask these three questions: Does it humble a sinner? Secondly, does it exalt the Saviour? And Thirdly, does it promote holiness? Missions he saw as an essential element of taking the Gospel to every corner of the world. As to reformation, he sought to bring a gospel wakefulness to the church, and to make churchgoers become committed disciples of Christ

## 5. St Leo the Great – remembering dignity

*One of St Leo's greatest writings is his sermon on the Nativity of Christ. In this extract, he urges Christians to remember the dignity that is theirs.*

Dearly beloved, today our Saviour is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: *Glory to God in the highest*, and they proclaim *peace to men of good will* as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvellous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, and *when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ*, so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.

## 6. St Martin of Tours – his encounter with Christ

*Sulpicius Severus was a Christian writer and native of Aquitania in modern-day France. He is known for his chronicle of sacred history, as well as his biography of Saint Martin of Tours.*

At a certain period, when he had nothing except his arms and his simple military dress, in the middle of winter, a winter which had shown itself more severe than ordinary, so that the extreme cold was proving fatal to many, Martin happened to meet at the gate of the city of Amiens a poor man destitute of clothing. He was entreating those that passed by to have compassion upon him, but all passed the wretched man without notice, when Martin, that man full of God, recognized that a being to whom others showed no pity, was, in that respect, left to him. Yet, what should he do? He had nothing except the cloak in which he was clad, for he had already parted with the rest of his garments for similar purposes. Taking, therefore, his sword with which he was girt, he divided his cloak into two equal parts, and gave one part to the poor man, while he again clothed himself with the remainder. Upon this, some of the bystanders laughed, because he was now an unsightly object, and stood out as but partly

dressed. Many, however, who were of sounder understanding, groaned deeply because they themselves had done nothing similar. They especially felt this, because, being possessed of more than Martin, they could have clothed the poor man without reducing themselves to nakedness. In the following night, when Martin had resigned himself to sleep, he had a vision of Christ arrayed in that part of his cloak with which he had clothed the poor man. He contemplated the Lord with the greatest attention, and was told to own as his the robe which he had given. Ere long, he heard Jesus saying with a clear voice to the multitude of angels standing round — *Martin, who is still but a catechumen, clothed me with this robe.* The Lord, truly mindful of his own words (who had said when on earth — Inasmuch as you have done these things to one of the least of these, you have done them unto me), declared that he himself had been clothed in that poor man; and to confirm the testimony he bore to so good a deed, he condescended to show him himself in that very dress which the poor man had received. After this vision the sainted man was not puffed up with human glory, but, acknowledging the goodness of God in what had been done, and being now of the age of twenty years, he hastened to receive baptism. He did not, however, all at once, retire from military service, yielding to the entreaties of his tribune, whom he admitted to be his familiar tent-companion. For the tribune promised that, after the period of his office had expired, he too would retire from the world. Martin, kept back by the expectation of this event, continued, although but in name, to act the part of a soldier, for nearly two years after he had received baptism.

## 7. Continual Repentance – Charles Simeon and personal holiness

Holiness is a mark of the humility that recognises its own frailty and sinfulness. Charles Simeon understood the criteria for all preaching as being ‘Does the sermon humble the sinner, exalt the Saviour and promote holiness?’ As the parable of the Pharisee and the tax gatherer reveals it is only in the place of humility or even humiliation that we can be right before God. Simeon longed to be in this place of ‘dust’, the only safe place for a Christian. He wrote:

Repentance is in every view so desirable, so necessary, so suited to honour God, that I seek that above all. The tender heart, the broken and contrite spirit are to me far above all the joys that I could ever hope for in this vale of tears. I long to be in my proper place, my hand on my mouth and my mouth in the dust. I feel this is safe ground. Here I cannot err.

As each person is ‘ashed’ in the Anglican Ash Wednesday Liturgy, he or she hears the words spoken to them personally ‘Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return, turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.’ As George Herbert (1593-1632), in his poem Love, writes:

Love bade me welcome; but my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.

Holiness is fashioned from this penitent humility. So Simeon can speak of ‘the happy condition of the self-condemning penitent.’ John Donne, poet and Dean of St. Paul’s, writes:

Without humility no man shall hear God speak to his soul. But if God bring thee to that humiliation of soul and body here, he will improve and advance thy sanctification abundantly.

## 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 Dioceses of Rorya (Tanzania); Derry & Raphoe (Ireland); and Dhaka (Bangladesh). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Bathurst; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Golden Grove.

*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, Chris, Clarice, Philip, Phyllis, Dulcie and Jasmin.

*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 Leo, St Martin, Charles Simeon, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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

