

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 7 January 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 Graeme – Prayer for the Epiphany

The Epiphany (from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, meaning manifestation or appearance) is an important festival of Christmas which tends to become overlooked and, even if remembered, underplayed. We, as did most churches, celebrated the Epiphany last Sunday in order to maximise the numbers of people who might attend. The actual festival itself was yesterday, 6 January. In the coming weeks, until Ash Wednesday on 14 February and the season of Lent, the Sundays are called Sundays after the Epiphany. And in particular, until 2 February, the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, this title will serve to remind us that we are still in the season of Christmas.

So how can our prayers be influenced by the Epiphany? First we need to establish a basis on which to build our Christmas prayer. Is this a good time to begin focussing more on the Christmas Crib rather than continue the emphasis on the birth of a baby? That emphasis on a birth has strong sentimental appeal but there may be stronger themes for our prayer.

The Crib is where the Seed is placed for the redemption of the world. This in itself could be a more prayerfully productive approach. We all know the account of Jesus' growth into adulthood. He was initially a child, then a toddler but then later, still at a young age, he was able to challenge the religious leaders over matters of Jewish belief and practice. Later he grew into carpentry as an early occupation, assisting Joseph. After some time he presented himself for baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. This was the beginning of his work as the Messiah. The Seed had grown steadily!

In our relationships and as a society and world we all need growth and change. Is it possible to imagine prayerfully, the family, our neighbours or the world, as the crib in which you place a seed for change and growth? We know from the story of Jesus that such a seed may eventually

find growth difficult, and need much fertilizer or weeding. But if the seed is good and the growth encouraging, the end result has every chance of fulfilment.

The Epiphany is a stage in the growth of the Seed. This is an event which marked the recognition of Jesus outside the local Jewish community. For our own seeds in prayer, the Epiphany can mean that our dream or seed may one day gain recognition or agreement from another party. This will be part of its growth. The growth will continue as we trace the early years of Jesus's life on earth as one of us. Our prayer could be a thanksgiving for this and the hope for growth in change and peace in our own lives.

Clearly this approach to the Epiphany is one which rightly is suitable for all of Christmas. If we make our focus the Crib in future, we can set about our prayers with this in mind. However, it is not too late to do this now.

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:

| | Morning Prayer | Evening Prayer |
|--|---|--|
| Thursday 7 January | Ps 19 Song of Songs 1.1-11 John 4.39-54 | Ps 119.1-16 Song of Songs 1.12 – 2.7 Ephesians 4.17-28 |
| Friday 8 January | Ps 20, 21 Song of Songs 2.8-17 John 5.1-18 | Ps 24, 26 Song of Songs 3 Ephesians 4.29 – 5.5 |
| Saturday 9 January | Ps 22.1-22 Song of Songs 4.1-8 John 5.19-29 | Ps 63 Joshua 3 Mark 10.32-45 |
| Sunday 10 January <i>The Baptism of the Lord</i> | Ps 111 Romans 6.1-11 | Ps 2 Ezekiel 47.1-12 John 1.19-34 |
| Monday 11 January | Ps 28, 29 Genesis 1.1-19 John 6.28-40 | Ps 30, 32 Jeremiah 1 Colossians 1.1-8 |
| Tuesday 12 January | Ps 33 Genesis 1.20 – 2.3 John 6.41-59 | Ps 31 Jeremiah 2.1-19 Colossians 1.9-20 |
| Wednesday 13 January <i>St Hilary of Poitiers</i> | Ps 35.1-17 Genesis 2.4-35 John 6.60-71 | Ps 35.18-29, 36 Jeremiah 2.20-37 Colossians 1.21-29 |
| Thursday 14 January <i>St Sava</i> | Ps 34 Genesis 3.1-19 John 7.1-13 | Ps 119.17-40 Jeremiah 3.1-23 Colossians 2.1-7 |

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://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.

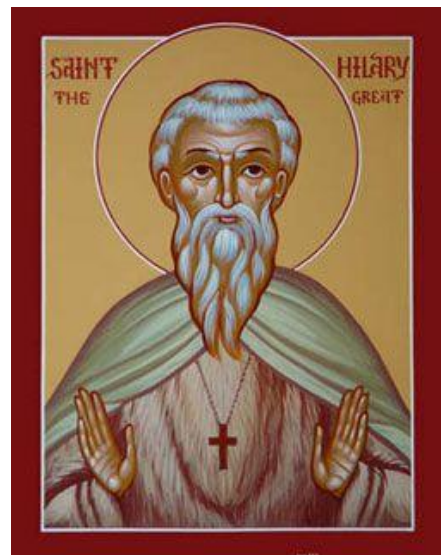
Service booklets as PDF files are still available for Sunday and weekday services, both on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

4. In the Church's Calendar

The Church's calendar this week we celebrate the early church bishop and teacher St Hilary of Poitiers, and the first archbishop of the Serbian Church, St Sava.

St Hilary (c.310-c.367) was a staunch defender of the divinity of Christ. His writings include some of the greatest theology on the Trinity, and while he was well regarded as a wise and gentle soul, he was, like his Master, labeled a "disturber of the peace."

Raised a pagan, he was converted to Christianity when he met his God of nature in the Scriptures. His wife was still living when he was chosen, against his will, to be the bishop of Poitiers in France. He was soon taken up with battling what became the scourge of the fourth century, Arianism, which denied the divinity of Christ. The heresy spread rapidly. Saint Jerome said "The world groaned and marvelled to find that it was Arian."

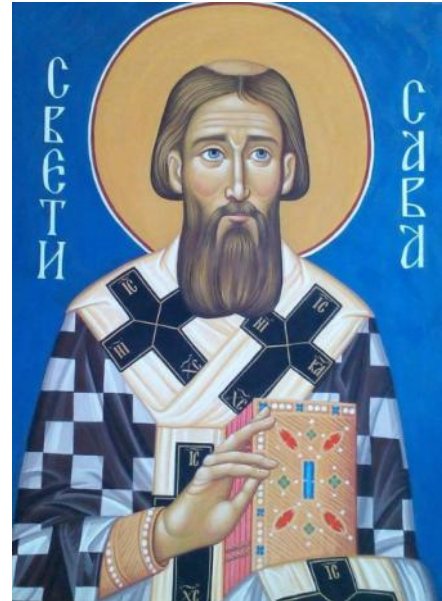


When Emperor Constantius ordered all the bishops of the West to sign a condemnation of Athanasius, the great defender of the faith in the East, Hilary refused and was banished from France to far off Phrygia. While writing in exile, he was invited by some semi-Arians (hoping for

reconciliation) to a council the emperor called to counteract the Council of Nicea. But Hilary predictably defended the Church, and when he sought public debate with the heretical bishop who had exiled him, the Arians, dreading the meeting and its outcome, pleaded with the emperor to send this troublemaker back home. Hilary was welcomed by his people.

Christ said his coming would bring not peace but a sword (see Matthew 10:34). The Gospels offer no support for us if we fantasize about a sunlit holiness that knows no problems. Christ did *not* escape at the last moment, though he did live happily ever after—after a life of controversy, problems, pain and frustration. Hilary, like all saints, simply had more of the same.

St Sava (1174-1236). Nobly born, Sava travelled at a young age to Mount Athos in Greece to lead a monastic life. There he was later joined by his father who assisted him in establishing a monastery which became a focal point of medieval Serbian culture and ecclesiastical leadership. In about 1208 he returned to Serbia to become superior of the monastery of Studenica, a centre of influence in the emerging Serbian church.



The southern part of the Serbian nation wavered for long periods in their ecclesiastical allegiance between Rome and Constantinople, and the matter came to a head when in 1217, Sava's brother Stefan was appointed king of the Serbian nation by the Pope. To counter the affinity to the Roman Catholic Church, Sava travelled in 1219 to Nicae, the refuge of the exiled patriarch of Constantinople, where he received the title of autocephalous archbishop of Serbia. Upon his return to Serbia, he crowned his brother again.

Sava organized the Serbian church into bishoprics headed by his former monastic colleagues and students. He then embarked on a cultural and ecclesiastical renaissance that included the establishment of schools and the beginnings of a medieval Serbian literature.

Having finished his work in his native land, the saint appointed a successor, then set off on a journey of no return, desiring "to end his days as a wanderer in a foreign land." He passed through Palestine, Syria and Persia, Babylon, Egypt and Anatolia, everywhere visiting the holy places, conversing with great ascetics, and collecting the holy relics of saints. Sava finished his wanderings at Trnovo in Bulgaria, where he died in 1237. The legacy of Saint Sava lives on in the Orthodox Church traditions of the Slavic nations.

5. St Hilary of Poitiers on the Holy Trinity

May I serve you by making you known

I am well aware, almighty God and Father, that in my life I owe you a most particular duty. It is to make my every thought and word speak of you.

In fact, you have conferred on me this gift of speech, and it can yield no greater return than to be at your service. It is for making you known as Father, the Father of the only-begotten God, and preaching this to the world that knows you not and to the heretics who refuse to believe in you.

In this matter the declaration of my intention is only of limited value. For the rest, I need to pray for the gift of your help and your mercy. As we spread our sails of trusting faith and public avowal before you, fill them with the breath of your Spirit, to drive us on as we begin this course of proclaiming your truth. We have been promised, and he who made the promise is trustworthy: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Yes, in our poverty we will pray for our needs. We will study the sayings of your prophets and apostles with unflagging attention, and knock for admittance wherever the gift of understanding is safely kept. But yours it is, Lord, to grant our petitions, to be present when we seek you and to open when we knock.

There is an inertia in our nature that makes us dull; and in our attempt to penetrate your truth we are held within the bounds of ignorance by the weakness of our minds. Yet we do comprehend divine ideas by earnest attention to your teaching and by obedience to the faith which carries us beyond mere human apprehension.

So we trust in you to inspire the beginnings of this ambitious venture, to strengthen its progress, and to call us into a partnership in the spirit with the prophets and the apostles. To that end, may we grasp precisely what they meant to say, taking each word in its real and authentic sense. For we are about to say what they already have declared as part of the mystery of revelation: that you are the eternal God, the Father of the eternal, only-begotten God; that you are one and not born from another; and that the Lord Jesus is also one, born of you from all eternity. We must not proclaim a change in truth regarding the number of gods. We must not deny that he is begotten of you who are the one God; nor must we assert that he is other than the true God, born of you who are truly God the Father.

Impart to us, then, the meaning of the words of Scripture and the light to understand it, with reverence for the doctrine and confidence in its truth. Grant that we may express what we believe. Through the prophets and apostles we know about you, the one God the Father, and the one Lord Jesus Christ. May we have the grace, in the face of heretics who deny you, to honour you as God, who is not alone, and to proclaim this as truth.

6. Hymn to St Sava

The first "Life of St Sava" written by Domentijan tells us that a disciple of St Sava named Atanasije delivered a eulogic hymn to the Saint on the occasion of the return of his relics from Trnovo to the Monastery Mileševa in Raška where the commander of the Ottoman army ordered his bones to be burnt, in the hope that the emerging desire for Serbian freedom might be extinguished.

*O divine, O beloved,
O sweet and most holy voice,
O God-glorifying Sava,
you have firmly promised
to be with us until the end of this world,
O divinely-adorned Sava,
and we, your beloved children,
who have you as our strength
and our divinely inspired hope,
are rejoicing now.*

*O what a wonder, brethren,
 more splendid than any other wonder,
 awesome and filled with ineffable amazement.
 O, great is the power of God
 and ineffable are His wonders,
 so that one who loves God
 and abides by His will
 cannot be destroyed even by the grave
 and the earth cannot imprison him.*

7. 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 Accra (West Africa). in our national church, pray for the Diocese of Bunbury; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Woodville.

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, David, Sim, Chris, Clarice, Philip, Phyllis, Dulcie, Jasmin and Henry.

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 Hilary, St Sava, 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.

