

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 9 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. Joshua and Judges

The vagaries of the Three Year cycle of readings mean that on Sundays throughout the year we hear a lot of some books of the Bible, and less of others. That is not to say there is a hierarchy of importance: far from it. By and large the important themes are picked up in the readings that have been selected, and there are parts of the Bible that are similar. The 1st and 2nd books of Samuel, for example, are identical in many respects to the 1st and 2nd books of Chronicles and clearly derive from the same source documents.

This weekend we have the first of just two appearances of a reading from the Book of Joshua. Joshua is the first book of a sequence Joshua-Judges-Samuel-Kings that is known as the "Deuteronomic History", a tradition of Jewish history and law written during the Babylonian exile. Joshua, in spite of being placed first, actually contains little history, and is widely regarded as having been composed at a later date than the other books in the sequence.

The first reading we hear is the story of the crossing of the River Jordan by the Israelites and God's miraculous intervention – an echo of the reading from the Book of Exodus that we hear at the Easter Vigil. The second, towards the end of the book, when Joshua is now an old man, is a reminder of the covenant between God and the people.

The following week it is Judges, a book which continues the covenant theme through a long examination of the relationship between God and the Israelites - and the tendency of the people to take God for granted. It tells stories of charismatic leaders who warned the people again and again, and likewise delivered them again and again from foreign intervention and other calamities. This particular reading, from Judges 4, recounts the teaching of the judge and prophet Deborah. Its selection is a deliberate action on the part of the compilers of the lectionary to draw attention to the leadership of women as well as men in the Old Testament,

as much as the New. The “Song of Deborah” in Judges 5 – a song of triumph after delivery from danger - is thought by many scholars to be among the oldest parts of scripture, with words and terms drawn from the ancient Canaanite languages as well as Akkadian (the first Mesopotamian empire), dating perhaps as far back as the 12th century BC.

As Advent draws near, we do well to reflect on the covenant relationship that is at the heart of our faith, Christ’s covenant of never-ending faithfulness and love.

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://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. This Week in the Calendar

In the coming week we remember St Leo of Rome, bishop and teacher (d. 461), St Martin, bishop of Tours (d. c 387) and the evangelist Charles Simeon (d. 1836).

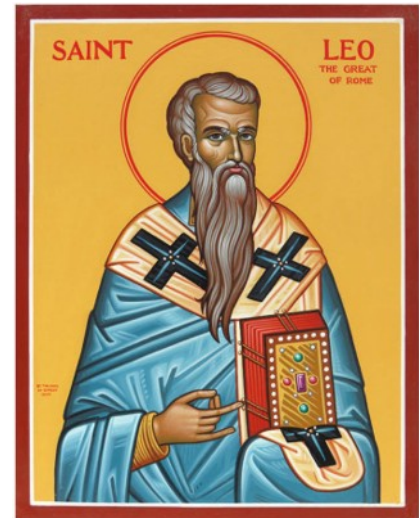
St Leo of Rome, often called St Leo the Great, was born in the year 400 into an aristocratic Roman family. He was called to Christian ministry in his youth, and by the year 431 was widely known in Rome and further afield for his love for the Lord, intelligence and persuasive nature. He was also gifted 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 worked at length to control the heresies of Pelagianism—overemphasizing human freedom—Manichaeism—seeing every-

thing material as evil—and others, placing demands on their followers so as to secure true Christian beliefs

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. He entered King's College, Cambridge, and discovered to his displeasure that he was required to attend Chapel on Easter Day – one of the days of the year on which Holy Communion must be received. But it was there, in the famous Chapel of King's College, that 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 - from a letter of Sulpicius Severus

Martin the poor and humble man

Martin knew long in advance the time of his death and he told his brethren that it was near. Meanwhile, he found himself obliged to make a visitation of the parish of Candes. The clergy of that church were quarrelling, and he wished to reconcile them. Although he knew that his days on earth were few, he did not refuse to undertake the journey for such a purpose, for he believed that he would bring his virtuous life to a good end if by his efforts peace was restored in the church.

He spent some time in Candes, or rather in its church, where he stayed. Peace was restored, and he was planning to return to his monastery when suddenly he began to lose his strength. He summoned his brethren and told them he was dying. All who heard this were overcome with grief. In their sorrow they cried to him with one voice: "Father, why are you deserting us? Who will care for us when you are gone? Savage wolves will attack your flock, and who will save us from their bite when our shepherd is struck down? We know you long to be with Christ, but your reward is certain and will not be any less for being delayed. You will do better to show pity for us, rather than forsake us."

Thereupon he broke into tears, for he was a man in whom the compassion of our Lord was continually revealed. Turning to our Lord, he made this reply to their pleading: "Lord, if your people still need me, I am ready for the task; your will be done."

Here was a man words cannot describe. Death could not defeat him nor toil dismay him. He was quite without a preference of his own; he neither feared to die nor refused to live. With eyes and hands always raised to heaven he never withdrew his unconquered spirit from prayer. It happened that some priests who had gathered at his bedside suggested that he should give his poor body some relief by lying on his other side. He answered: "Allow me, brothers, to look toward heaven rather than at the earth, so that my spirit may set on the right course when the time comes for me to go on my journey to the Lord." As he spoke these words, he saw the devil standing near. "Why do you stand there, you bloodthirsty brute?" he cried. "Murderer, you will not have me for your prey. Abraham is welcoming me into his embrace."

With these words, he gave up his spirit to heaven. Filled with joy, Martin was welcomed by Abraham. Thus he left this life a poor and lowly man and entered heaven rich in God's favour.

7. Charles Simeon: From Memorandum of An Afternoon in Cambridge by Joseph John Gurney (Simeon's friend, brother of the philanthropic saint, Elizabeth Fry)

As we were enjoying our cup of tea, our dear friend [Simeon] continued to converse in his own peculiar manner. We were speaking of the importance of universal kindness :

Simeon: "I am sorry when I hear a religious person say, The world insults me, therefore I will insult the world. They speak evil of me, and deride me, and mock me ; it is with better reason that I do the same towards them. My dear brother, I should say to such a man, You are quite in error ... When the early disciples were persecuted, it was to turn to a testimony for them. So it will be with you : the world will mock and trample on you ; a man shall come and, as it were,

slap you on the face. You rub your face, and say, This is strange work; I like it not, Sir. Never mind ; I say. This is your evidence ; it turns to you for a testimony.”

When we reverted to the subject of suffering for Christ's sake, he said, “My dear brother, we must not mind a little suffering. When I am getting through a hedge, if my head and shoulders are safely through, I can bear the pricking of my legs. Let us rejoice in the remembrance that our holy Head has surmounted all His sufferings and triumphed over death. Let us follow Him patiently; we shall soon be partakers of His victory.”

Simeon: “I could say to a Christian friend, I can tell you what is perfect religion. Can you indeed? Surely it can be no easy matter to define it. I will do it, my brother, in a few simple words : perfect religion is to the soul what the soul is to the body. The soul animates the whole person; it sees through the eye, hears through the ear, tastes through the mouth, handles through the hands, talks through the tongue, reflects through the brain. The whole body is moved and regulated by an impulse from within. Let religion take full possession of the soul, and it will be found to actuate all its movements and direct all its powers. There will be no violent efforts, no stiffness, no awkwardness. All will be natural and easy; an unseen and gentle influence will pervade the whole mind and regulate the whole conduct ; and thus the creature will gradually become conformed to the image of his Creator. This, my brother, is perfect religion.”

We had afterwards some interesting conversation on the right method to be aimed at in the exercise of the Christian Ministry. Although he and I have been accustomed to different views in relation to this subject, I was glad to listen to him, and felt that there was much in the hints he gave me which it would be well for Friends as well as others to observe.

Simeon: “When I compose a sermon, I take a single text, and consider the main subject to which it relates as the warp. The peculiar language in which it is couched supplies me with the woof. The series of cross-threads with which I weave the subject may be handled in various ways. You may take it up by the right-hand corner, or by the left-hand corner, or by a projection in the middle.” (While he said this he was handling a little parcel on the table by way of illustration.) “But you must never wander beyond its true limits, you must not patch up your text by borrowing any extraneous ideas from other passages of Scripture. The ancients used to say, There is a man in every stone. Choose your stone, chisel away its outer covering, and keep to the man which you find in it. Canova would have regarded it as a disgrace to his profession had he patched into a statue even a little finger from a second block! Ministers differ very much from one another in their administration of religion. Some are for ever playing tenor, lifting up their hands with exultation, jingling their shrill bells. Others play nothing but bass, always grumbling and growling. Don't you hear that Eolian harp, my brother, its strings swept by the breeze, its melody gentle yet strong, varied yet harmonious? That is what the Christian Ministry ought to be — the genuine impartial Scripture played upon and applied under a divine influence — under the breath of heaven.”

8. 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 Arochukwu/Ohafia (Nigeria). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Canberra/Goulburn; and in our own Diocese of Adelaide, for the Anglican Tamil Congregation at St Richard's, Lockleys.

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, St Leo, St Martin, 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, StMMAdeelaide.Parish@outlook.com, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

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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