

# 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 10 March 2022

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions means it possible to again open the church for private prayer and public worship.

Sunday Mass is offered weekly at 10 am, and during the holy season of Lent, the church will also be open on Wednesday morning for prayers at 7.30 am; Thursday between 11.30 am and 1 pm, with the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm; and for Stations of the Cross on Friday at 6.15 pm.

These newsletters are intended to support the spiritual life of the community as we continue to cope with and respond to the pandemic.



### 1. From Fr Steven – Star Wars, Jesus, and Anglicanism

The *Star Wars* series shaped a generation's thinking. The names *Luke Skywalker*, and *Darth Vader*, as well as phrases like "the force be with you" permeated popular culture. Moreover, its apocalyptic struggle between good and evil struck a deep chord. In particular, the series wrestles with the problem of empire, that is, that overwhelming network of exploitive and violent forces. The problem of empire is perennial. Vladimir Putin, for example, is explicitly building an empire at the expense of the Ukrainians.

The significance of the ministry of Jesus cannot be grasped without considering *empire*. For example, the writer of Luke emphasises the political context of the birth of Jesus. That is, the birth of Jesus follows a census, which was implemented by the emperor Augustus (Luke 2:1-2). On the basis of a census, Rome taxed conquered peoples and distributed its legions.

In marked contrast, the birth of Jesus challenges empire thinking and practice. Mary, the mother of Jesus, understands this, "He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly" (Luke 1:53). This is also how Jesus understood his own ministry, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor" (Luke 4: 16-21).

It is noteworthy that Luke and its partner text Acts both end with trial scenes, where Jesus and Paul respectively are judged by Rome. In the foreground of Luke, then, Jesus is concerned about liberating people from various forms of captivity (e.g., the purity code). In the background, however, the threat of Roman violence was pervasive. Remember, Rome destroyed Jerusalem in 70 CE.

So, Judea was part of the Roman empire. It was a client state. For instance, Rome appointed its chief tax collector and chief priest. Judea survived then because individuals and factions

collaborated with Rome. In contrast, Jesus proclaimed an alternative kingdom (i.e., reign of God). So, in terms of the crucifixion:

- Rome was ultimately in control
- His execution could only be carried out by the Romans
- Crucifixion was a Roman form of execution reserved for deserters, traitors, or rebels

Since the Emperor Constantine corporatized the Church, the Church has wrestled with the problem of empire (e.g., Investiture Contest). Sociologically, empire is the default position of large hierarchical institutions, whether it is a university, a hospital, or a church. As such, the meaning and practice of authority is a litmus test of the health of an institution.

In Anglicanism, authority is shared (dispersed). In practice, this means a Bishop leads in the name of the Apostles, but also, with the people (i.e., Bishop in council). As such, authority is shared for the edification of the whole Church. Power is shared. In this context, authority is positive, and remains so, on the basis of mutual trust. All this is in keeping with the early Church, our Celtic roots, the conciliar tradition, and the Reformation.

In this vein, the crucifixion of Jesus has the final say. Primarily, it means that God loves us unconditionally (Luke 15: 11-32). And this love is transformative. Clearly, this is not empire thinking or practice.

Steven Ogden  
Locum Priest

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## 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](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. While the church cannot be open every day, you may like to join the wider community in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

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## 3. Reflections and Meditations

Reflections for our two weekly newsletters will continue for the time being, and our Thursday "Spiritual Resources" newsletter will continue to be uploaded to the web page. Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections have resumed with a series on the teachings of Julian of Norwich, and 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. **2022 Lenten Study - *In love, in hope, in freedom – In Person and On Line* There's still time to join!**

*There's still time to join the Lenten Study, even if you missed the first session. The study is summarised on the following page.*

*Last Thursday, the Lenten Study got off to a great start. We had 9 participants at the 10 am session at Bocelli Caffè in Hutt Street (free parking Angas Street, Hume Lane, adjacent Parkwynd Hospital East Terrace). We had a further 8 participants at the 7 pm Zoom session.*

*The reading for this Thursday is **Luke 4:16-21** (and if you have time skim Luke and Acts noting references to Rome, or Roman figures, etc.). Send me an email ([stevengogden@gmail.com](mailto:stevengogden@gmail.com)) if you have any questions.*

I will be offering a Lenten Study which will be pursuing the theme of liberation. It consists of a 5-week study, on the Thursdays in March. It will be offered in the morning and the evening, but with different formats. Both sessions will go for about an hour and a quarter. If you miss the morning session at Bocelli's, you can join the evening session on zoom, and vice versa.

So, here is an outline of the Lenten Study. I am happy to take suggestions or make some modifications at this stage.

***Christianity is good news. It is a story of liberation: spiritual, political, and ecological. In this Lenten Study, we use the Gospel of Luke as a platform for finding freedom. The bible, however, is not an end in itself. The key is the discussion, where together we explore and embrace the good news.***

#### **MARCH - 10 FINDING COURAGE** (Text Luke 1:46-55)

The Christian community of Luke lived in the shadow of Rome. As a community, they had to be careful. Rome, like all empires, has a powerful sense of entitlement. This meant the Lucan community was in survival mode. It is no surprise that they saw in Mary, the mother of Jesus, a figure offering hope, spiritually and politically.

**Question: How has Mary been portrayed in our tradition? And how does this measure up with Luke?**

#### **MARCH - 17 DISARMING SHAME** (Text Luke 8:40-56)

Jesus is concerned about the burden of shame. Now, there is a difference between the concepts of shame and guilt. Guilt has its place. Guilt reflects our own values, reminding us of our true selves and our deeper aspirations. Shame is somebody else's problem, which we have internalized to our detriment. In the first century, the purity system - with its concern about clean and unclean - made women, the poor, and the sick feel ashamed. So, the healing of the haemorrhaging woman is the quintessential liberation story.

**Question: What is the social and symbolic significance of blood?**

### MARCH 24 - BASED ON LOVE (Text Luke 23:1-49)

The cross is the central symbol of our faith. So, then, what is the point of the death of Jesus. Traditionally, theories of atonement explain the meaning of the cross (e.g., Jesus as substitute). In some instances, atonement theories have portrayed God as demanding or wrathful, requiring satisfaction. In recent years, I have found an emphasis on love helpful; it represents a shift from what God does in the cross to what God does in the life of Jesus, which culminates in the cross. This is a celebration of the Incarnation.

**Question: What is the significance of the slave woman?**

### MARCH 31 - EVERYDAY MYSTICISM (Text Luke 24:1-12; I Corinthians 15)

The mysteries of the faith are creation, incarnation, and resurrection. Together, they represent a radical affirmation that God is in the world. Specifically, the resurrection changes us, and the way we see the world. It also makes sense of the idea of a sacramental view of life. So, then, God is not a remote despot. Instead, we live, move, and breathe in God. We are a resurrection people. This does not mean we are exempt from suffering, and the vicissitudes of everyday existence. Instead, existence is permeated by the possibility of joy.

**Question: How important is Mary Magdalene?**

## 5. Other Devotions During Lent

Each **Wednesday** in Lent, prayers will be said in the Church at 7.30 am. The format will be a short reading, 20 minutes of silent prayer/meditation, and a song to conclude, finishing promptly at 8 am. All welcome. If you would like to join "remotely" from home, please let Alison McAllister or Leonie Zadow know.

On **Thursday**, in addition to the Lenten study, the regular Thursday Mass will also be said at 12.10 pm, following the Angelus at 12 noon.

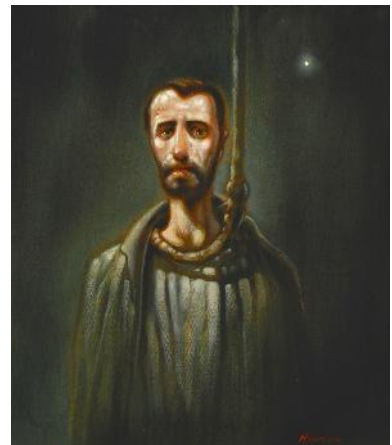
On **Friday**, the Stations of the Cross will be celebrated at 6.15 pm.

## 6. In the Church's Calendar

The week beginning 10 March is one of the rare weeks in the Calendar when there is no commemoration of festivals of Our Lord or the Saints. In the Roman Catholic church, there is, however, the commemoration of St John Ogilvie, a Jesuit priest, martyred for his faith at Glasgow on 10th March 1615. He is the only canonized martyr of the Scottish Reformation.

John Ogilvie's noble Scottish family was partly Catholic and partly Presbyterian. His father raised him as a Calvinist, sending him to the continent to be educated. There, John became interested in the popular debates going on between Catholic and Calvinist scholars. Confused by the arguments of Catholic scholars whom he sought out, he turned to Scripture. Two texts particularly struck him: "God wills all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," and "Come to me all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you."

Slowly, John came to see that the Catholic Church could embrace all kinds of people. He decided to become Catholic and was received into the Church at Louvain, Belgium, in 1596 at the age of 17.



John continued his studies, first with the Benedictines, then as a student at the Jesuit College at Olmutz. He joined the Jesuits and for the next 10 years underwent their rigorous intellectual and spiritual training. At his ordination to the priesthood in France in 1610, John met two Jesuits who had just returned from Scotland after suffering arrest and imprisonment. They saw little hope for any successful work there in view of the tightening of the penal laws. But a fire had been lit within John. For the next two and a half years he pleaded to be placed there as a missionary.

Sent by his superiors, he secretly entered Scotland posing as a horse trader or a soldier returning from the wars in Europe. Unable to do significant work among the relatively few Catholics in Scotland, John made his way back to Paris to consult his superiors. Rebuked for having left his assignment in Scotland, he was sent back. He warmed to the task before him and had some success in making converts and in secretly serving Scottish Catholics. But he was soon betrayed, arrested, and brought before the court.

His trial dragged on until he had been without food for 26 hours. He was imprisoned and deprived of sleep. For eight days and nights he was dragged around, prodded with sharp sticks, his hair pulled out. Still, he refused to reveal the names of Catholics or to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the king in spiritual affairs. He underwent a second and third trial but held firm.

At his final trial, he assured his judges: "In all that concerns the king, I will be slavishly obedient; if any attack his temporal power, I will shed my last drop of blood for him. But in the things of spiritual jurisdiction which a king unjustly seizes I cannot and must not obey."

Condemned to death as a traitor, he was faithful to the end, even when on the scaffold he was offered his freedom and a fine living if he would deny his faith. His courage in prison and in his martyrdom was reported throughout Scotland.

John came of age when neither Catholics nor Protestants were willing to tolerate one another. Turning to Scripture, he found words that enlarged his vision. Although he became a Catholic and died for his faith, he understood the meaning of "small-c catholic," the wide range of believers who embrace Christianity. Even now he undoubtedly rejoices in the ecumenical spirit fostered by the Second Vatican Council and joins us in our prayer for unity with all believers.

## **7. St John Ogilvie – from Cornelius a Lapide's Commentary on Isaiah**

*The reward of the martyrs*

Christ, therefore, in his Passion stood unmoved, unbeaten, unshaken... as a rock against which the waves dashed themselves only to be flung back in foam. He was as the adamant which the blows of iron cannot break, but which shivers the hammer itself. So should we be on Christ's behalf.

Such were the soldiers whom the heavenly Captain used to lead into battle. They were true as steel; they even spurred on their torturers whose hands had tired, for they counted relief but a delay in their path to Christ.

Such also was Ogilvy, a martyr in Scotland, at one time my catechumen at Louvain, and lately of our Society. It is clear from the account of his martyrdom that he astonished the Calvinists, for though unconquered by torture and still bold and ready in debate, he opened not his mouth against his tormentors.

What do deeds such as these mean to us? We praise these men like heroes, we long to be like them. But only at the altar, only in words no further than in penance. Well did John à Kempis

say (as it is put in his life): 'We like to be humble without humiliation, to be obedient without being under authority, to be poor but to lack nothing, to be virtuous without a struggle, to be loved without goodness, to be thought much of without holiness.' But Christ our God did not, nor was this his teaching. He promised heaven to those who do violence to self; he will reward with glory and honour those who endure injury, and he will leave no evil deed unpunished.

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## 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.*

*For the world.* The leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

*For the church.* In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania). In our national church, pray for the Bishop to the Armed Forces, Grant Dibden; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the St Francis congregation at Trinity College, Gawler.

*For our local community.* For the Collective and its ministry in the local community. 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, especially Paull, Sim, Clarice, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest) and Mark.

*For those who have died.* Those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; those who have died as a result of COVID-19 and in other tragic circumstances; those who have died recently, and those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time, especially Julie Hooke. ✠ *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 Polycarp, 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, [StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com](mailto:StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com), by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

