

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 Thursday 11 June 2020 **Spiritual Resources & Reflections**

Dear friends,

While churches can now re-open in a limited manner for private prayer and public worship, it will be some months before we can resume Sunday worship, and the physical separation of many members of our community will continue.

One of the ways in which we are able to maintain a community spirit in this time of physical separation is to unite ourselves in acts of prayer and reflection – a “communal solitude” which may well prove to be a seedbed for growth in holiness and wholeness, for communion and connection, for resistance and renewal.

In these Thursday newsletters, we offer ideas and opportunities for nourishing our personal and communal spiritual lives.

1. From Fr Graeme – Corpus Christi

The Festival of Corpus Christi, in which we honour and celebrate Christ's gift to us of the Holy Communion, is an echo of Maundy Thursday in Holy Week. When we celebrate Corpus Christi after Trinity Sunday, nearer the middle of the year, we take the celebration out of the emotion and context of Holy Week and place it more in the context of our daily life. Both celebrations are authentic and helpful.

This should not stop us from drawing on Maundy Thursday in our reflections on Holy Communion. Jesus Christ gave us the Holy Communion within a gathering and a meal which was celebrated with love. Christ washed the apostles' feet as part of the meal and gave us the new Commandment, “Love one another as I have loved you.” So when we come to the Mass we come to be loved and as a distinctive sign of our love of God.

We can all benefit from thinking deeply about how we can love each other, because love is not always the first inclination of our behaviour. It is not always easy or romantic or rewarded to love. Yet Jesus' command is simple and clear. Our love is to be basic and down to earth – like the washing of the apostles' feet, including the feet of the betrayer! Most of us would probably think to ourselves, “Well, we can't wash his feet – it just wouldn't be right!” The love we are asked to show makes us all equals.

Corpus Christi therefore celebrates the Mass as a great feast of love. Christ's love has brought us together and as we rejoice over this we are told by Christ to love one another from the depths of our hearts. A resolution can be that we work to bring to an end bitterness and quarrels, and end to strife as we give thanks that Christ our God is there in our midst during the Mass.

All meals are sacramental in some way. When our minds are attuned, an ordinary meal can remind us of the Meal. Every meal can invite us to work at a new atmosphere and understanding for our gatherings at the meal table because where there is love and loving friendship, there God truly lives.

Possible themes for Corpus Christi prayer are

1. Recalling thankfully the love of Christ in the Last Supper and in his subsequent crucifixion.
2. Reflecting gently but powerfully on the new commandment and how it affects us.
3. Visualise people who annoy or trouble us deeply and ask God's help to love them instead of avoiding or hating them. Can we offer forgiveness?
4. Is there some special way in which our home meals can foster a sense of love? Again, ask God for help.

Nest year we can all have the chance to gather together and celebrate Corpus Christi.

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 11 June Corpus Christi	Ps 116 1 Corinthians 10.14-21 Mark 14.12-26	Ps 147 Exodus 16.35 – 17.6 Hebrews 9.11-15
Friday 12 June	Ps 99, 100 2 Chronicles 4.19 – 5.10 Acts 9.10-19a	Ps 103 Deuteronomy 28.1-10 2 Corinthians 10.1012
Saturday 13 June <i>St Antony of Padua</i>	Ps 101, 102.1-11 2 Chronicles 5.11 – 6.11 Acts 9.19b-31	Ps 102.12-28 Deuteronomy 28.58-68 2 Corinthians 10.13 – 11.6
Sunday 14 June The 2nd Sunday after Pentecost	Ps 34 Genesis 18.1-15 Matthew 12.1-8	Ps 100 Genesis 20 Romans 5.10-17
Monday 15 June <i>Evelyn Underhill</i>	Ps 104.1-25 2 Chronicles 6.12-31 Acts 9.32-43	Ps 104.26-37 Proverbs 12.1-14 2 Corinthians 11.7-15
Tuesday 16 June	Ps 105.1-22 2 Chronicles 6.32 – 7.6 Acts 10.1-16	Ps 105.23-45 Proverbs 12.15-28 2 Corinthians 11.16-29
Wednesday 17 June	Ps 106.1-24 2 Chronicles 7.7-22 Acts 10.17-33	Ps 106.25-50 Proverbs 13.1-14 2 Corinthians 11.30 – 12.5
Thursday 18 June	Ps 107.1-22 2 Chronicles 8 Acts 10.34-48	Ps 107.23-43 Proverbs 13.15 – 14.6 2 Corinthians 12.6-13

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. breviary.com and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

3. Sunday and Weekday Mass

Worship on Tuesday and Thursday has resumed with prayers at noon, and Mass at 12.10 pm. Up to 20 people are permitted to be in the church at any one time.

In recognition of the ongoing need for some members of our community to maintain a relatively isolated lifestyle for the time being, we plan to continue posting the prayers for Sunday and weekday Masses on the web page, along with a copy of the Order of Service for each day.

Sunday Services will also be available on our blog, stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org, including prayers, readings, reflections and music recorded by members of the congregation.

You can watch live-streams of Sunday and Weekday Masses at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne on its [Facebook page](#) or its [YouTube channel](#). Recordings of past celebrations are also available.

4. Reflections and Meditations

Fr Graeme and others within our community will be preparing Reflections for Sundays and Holy Days for posting on the web page.

St Peter's Cathedral is producing videos including reflections and Sunday sermons under the title "Acts of Worship at St Peter's Cathedral in Extraordinary Times". These are available in a variety of formats. You can receive updates by subscribing to the Cathedral's e-news. Visit <http://www.stpeters-cathedral.org.au/community/sign-up-to-eneews/> to register.

5. 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; as well as on Friday morning at 8 am, which is a time that is being widely observed by the churches as a time of united prayer for all those affected by COVID-19.

6. Meditations from Fr Philip

Fr Philip Carter has offered a ministry of spirituality for many years, and has kindly supplied a series of meditations on some questions that we may well ask as we consider our life in God. The questions are *What?, How?, What if?, What do I want?, and Can I tell how it is?*

Preparing for Meditation

- Find a place to sit comfortably. Mobile phone on silent.
- Take your time. Breathe in and out a few times, slowing down ...
- Don't try too hard. Relax. Be open.
- Prayer isn't telling what God should be doing but becoming aware of what God is already doing.
- "The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God and to let that goodness reach right down to your lowest place of need." (Julian of Norwich)
- When you seem ready, begin. You don't have to finish the exercise now, or today. If and when something arrests your attention, stay there. Savour the words. Let them speak to you. That may be enough for the next few minutes.

What if?

The slow fire of the impossible is lit by the imagination. (Emily Dickinson)

Imagination is the "human power that opens us up to possibility and promise, the not-yet of the future" (Kathleen Fischer) Made in God's image, we are image makers and image bearers. We form and are formed by images. We deal with reality through our imaginations. "Images are forms of transport. They get us going. They move us on".

Anselm Gruen

The imagination "is always slow to admit that all the facts are in, that all the doors have been tried, and that it is defeated ... it is able to wait, to wait for a moment of vision which is not yet there ..."

William Lynch

How patient are you? How willing are you to admit that "all the facts are not yet in"? How easily are you "hijacked" by a primary negative self-image or feeling? Imagine the offer of the Kingdom as an imaginative, attractive, and alternative reality. What if?

Don't ask where negative images or self-defeating stories that you tell yourself come from: ask where they lead? If they lead away from life, freedom and hope, if they lead to fear or anxiety, then you can be pretty sure they are not of God, and they come from a deep inadequate or insecure part of you.

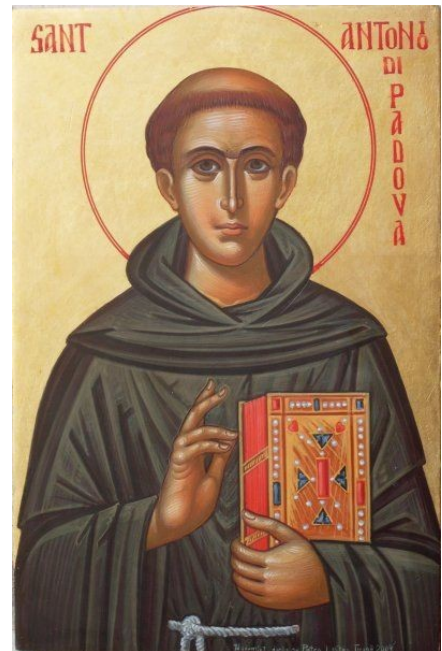
Imagine that you were kissed by God before you were born. We carry this dark secret of being kissed and caressed by hands far gentler than ours. This dark memory acts as a kind of prism through which we see and experience everything that happens to us. We go through life never fully arriving, slightly disappointed, because we have already experienced something infinitely more precious. When we see goodness and beauty and truth it is because they resonate with this dark memory. When we are angry, frustrated or abused it is because these experiences do not match or resonate with this dark memory of being kissed.

7. In the Church's Calendar

This week we we celebrate the annual memorials of St Antony of Padua, and the spiritual writer Evelyn Underhill.

St Antony of Padua is often invoked as a finder of lost things, but he might better be proposed as the patron saint of those who find their lives completely uprooted and set in a new and unexpected direction. He is a perfect example of turning one's life completely over to Christ. God did with Anthony as God pleased—and what God pleased was a life of spiritual power and brilliance that still attracts admiration today.

Anthony's journey as a servant of God began as a very young man when he decided to join the Augustinians in Lisbon in Portugal. He later joined the Franciscans, and after many years of private prayer and study he emerged as one of the great evangelists of his day, teaching theology to his monks, and ministering widely across France and Italy. His sermons are an astounding legacy to the church and the world.



From a Sermon by St Antony of Padua ...

The one who is filled with the Holy Spirit speaks in different languages. These different languages are different ways of witnessing to Christ, such as humility, poverty, patience and obedience; we speak in those languages when we reveal in ourselves these virtues to others. Actions speak louder than words; let your words teach and your actions speak. We are full of words but empty of actions, and therefore are cursed by the Lord, since he himself cursed the fig tree when he found no fruit but only leaves. Gregory says: "A law is laid upon the preacher to practice what he preaches." It is useless for anyone to flaunt their knowledge of the law if he undermines its teaching by his actions.

But the apostles spoke as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. Happy the one whose words issue from the Holy Spirit and not from within! For some speak as their own character dictates, but steal the words of others and present them as their own and claim the credit for them. The Lord refers to such people and others like them in Jeremiah: So, then, I have a quarrel with the prophets that steal my words from each other. I have a quarrel with the prophets, says the Lord, who have only to move their tongues to utter oracles. I have a quarrel with the prophets who make prophecies out of lying dreams, who recount them and lead my people astray with their lies and their pretensions. I certainly never sent them or commissioned them, and they serve no good purpose for this people, says the Lord.

We should speak, then, as the Holy Spirit gives us the gift of speech. Our humble and sincere request to the Spirit for ourselves should be that we may bring the day of Pentecost to fulfilment, insofar as he infuses us with his grace, by using our bodily senses in a perfect manner and by keeping the commandments. Likewise we shall request that we may be filled with a keen sense of sorrow and with fiery tongues for confessing the faith, so that our deserved reward may be to stand in the blazing splendour of the saints and to look upon the triune God. (Sermon I, 226)

Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)

In 1911 an unknown author published a 500 page book on the little known topic of mysticism. Accessible in its writing, it was nonetheless a work of scholarship, based as it was on some one thousand sources. The book, *Mysticism*, was a huge success, and twelve editions appeared.

Because its erudition, the suspicion was that the author, one Evelyn Underhill, must have been a man! Who else would have the academic training or ecclesiastical knowledge to produce such a work? In fact the author was a self-trained writer, wife of a London barrister, one who would go on to write or edit a total of thirty-nine books and some 350 articles and reviews.



In an era when women were unknown in theological circles, she would go on to lecture at the University of Oxford, speak at Canterbury Cathedral, and gain fame as a highly respected as a retreat leader and spiritual advisor.

Few people studied prayer in theory and practice—Christian and non-Christian—to the extent the Evelyn Underhill did. At the end of her life, after having considered many options, she concluded that prayer was about availing oneself to the purposes of God, not invoking the activity of God for either spiritual assurance or earthly benefit, but for conformity to the life and ministry of the one through whom we pray: Jesus Christ, the crucified. This understanding is not popular today, and while Underhill's early writings are still readily available, her later writings are difficult to find. In the world today, what sort of people of prayer would God ask us to be? Ones who strive for spiritual development alone, or ones who offer their lives as living intercessions, empowered by the Spirit, sent by Christ, to do God's will? Might the latter define all of our lives of prayer.

In the Conclusion to *Mysticism*, she writes:

Every person ... who awakens to consciousness of a Reality which transcends the normal world of sense—however small, weak imperfect that consciousness may be—is put upon a road which follows at low levels the path which the mystic treads at high levels. The success with which he follows this way to freedom and full life will depend on the intensity of his love and will, his capacity for self-discipline, his steadfastness and courage. It will depend on the generosity and completeness of his outgoing passion for absolute beauty, absolute goodness, or absolute truth. But if he move at all, he will move through a series of states which are, in their own small way, analogous to those experienced by the greatest contemplative on his journey towards that union with God which is the term of the spirit's ascent towards its home ...

... To be a mystic is simply to participate here and now in that real and eternal life; in the fullest, deepest sense which is possible to man. It is to share, as a free and conscious agent—not a servant, but a son—in the joyous travail of the Universe: its mighty onward sweep through pain and glory towards its home in God. This gift of "sonship," this power of free co-operation in the world-process, is man's greatest honour. The ordered sequence of states, the organic development, whereby his consciousness is detached from illusion and rises to the mystic freedom which conditions instead of being conditioned by, its normal world, is the way he must tread if that sonship is to be realized. Only by this deliberate fostering of his deeper

self, this transmutation of the elements of his character, can he reach those levels of consciousness upon which he hears, and responds to, the measure "whereto the worlds keep time" on their great pilgrimage towards the Father's heart. The mystic act of union, that joyous loss of the transfigured self in God, which is the crown of man's conscious ascent towards the Absolute, is the contribution of the individual to this, the destiny of the Cosmos.

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 Newala (Tanzania), Andaman & Car Nicobar Islands (North India) and Angola (Missionary Diocese, Southern Africa). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Gippsland; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Archdeacon of Sturt, the Ven Dr Ruth Mathieson.

For our local community. For the Collective as it considers alternative ways of serving the community while the Drop-In Centre is suspended, and for its guests as they seek other 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, and John.

For those who have died. For all those who have died recently, especially Raven Baylock; those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about this time. For those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us. ✠ 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 Antony, Evelyn Underhill, 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.

