

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 13 April 2023

Dear friends,

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

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 Regina Caeli noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

The decision to return to worship in community, whether for private prayer, or the public celebration of the Word and Sacraments, is not a straightforward matter.

These newsletters are intended to provide some resources for prayer and reflection: enjoy!



1. The Easter Octave and the Easter Sequence

After the two great festivals of Christmas and Easter, the Church has keeps an “Octave” – eight days, inclusive of the feast – for the following week. This includes some of the ceremonies and special texts from the festival. Today we look at the beautiful Sequence – a hymn sung before the Gospel on great festivals – for Easter Day, sung also throughout the Octave.

The Sequence “Victimae Paschali” – “Paschal Victim” likely dates from the 11th century. It is often attributed to Notker Balbulus, King Robert II of France, and Adam of St Victor, but its most likely author is Wipo of Burgundy (died 1048), a priest, poet and chronicler who was chaplain to the Holy Roman Emperor Conrad II. The Sequence appeared in various medieval Missals, where it was assigned to different days within the Octave of Easter. From 1570 its use was prescribed from Easter Sunday through Easter Saturday.

Here is the Sequence in a prose version.

- 1 To the Paschal Victim, Christians, offer a sacrifice of praise.
- 2 The Lamb has ransomed his sheep;
the innocent Christ has reconciled sinners with the Father.
- 3 Death and life confronted each other in a prodigious battle;
the Prince of life who died, now reigns living.
- 4 Tell us, Mary, what did you see on the way?
- 5 “I saw the sepulchre of the living Christ;
- 6 I saw the glory of the Risen One.
- 7 I saw the angels, his witnesses, the shroud and the garments.
- 8 Christ, my Hope, is risen; he will go before his own into Galilee.”
- 9 We know that Christ is truly risen from the dead; O Victorious King, have mercy on us.

The first two stanzas abound in paradox, which is fitting for a season that celebrates Christ destroying our death by dying, and restoring our life by rising.

The third verse summarizes the fortnight of violent imagery we hear in the scripture readings as Lent deepens, recounting or alluding to the increasing hatred against Jesus Christ and the rising conflict between Jesus and his enemies.

The subject then turns to Saint Mary Magdalene, who delivers the message of Christ's triumph in a lively dialogue in which the faithful question her about the events she had witnessed.

The sequence ends with an affirmation of Christ's resurrection, which we know to be true based in large part on the testimony of St Mary Magdalene. The reference to Christ as Victor brings us full circle to the beginning, where he was described as a Victim. As Saint Augustine notes, Jesus Christ was "both Victor and Victim, and Victor because Victim," and he was "both Priest and Sacrifice, and Priest because Sacrifice."

Early in the 12th century, this Sequence was incorporated into many versions of the *Visitatio sepulchri* (Visit to the tomb), a new genre of liturgical ceremony that was effectively liturgical drama. These went on to generate a huge body of religious medieval plays, and evolve into various genres, including the famed mystery plays. This tradition lasted for about 650 years, until the end of the Reformation.

2. COVID-19 - Where are we now?

The ongoing impact of COVID-19 in the community has been considered by the Parish Council, which has agreed that we will continue to take a conservative approach for the time being, and to encourage precautions including Distancing, Ventilation and Facemasks: **DVM** for short. Distancing means maintaining a sensible distance of 1.5 metres between individuals or family groups; Ventilation means leaving some doors and/or windows open to allow a flow of air—and we have air conditioning, in case of extreme weather!—and Facemasks are obvious.

That being said, it has been decided that the time has come to reintroduce some customs that have been in abeyance.

- The foot-washing was restored to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday. On this occasion it was a token celebration, with two worshippers participating: next year we hope to restore it fully.
- The physical Veneration of the Cross was available on Good Friday.
- The Sprinkling of Holy Water (often called the Asperges, or in Easter time, Vidi Aquam) was restored at Easter, and will now return to the Sunday Mass. During Easter time, the ceremony replaces the Confession and Absolution, as a reminder of the sanctifying power of baptism and its special association with Easter. During the remainder of the year, it occurs as part of the regular prayers of penitence at the beginning of Mass.
- From this week, we will again take up a Collection at the Offertory. Even though most of our community now supports the church by electronic transfer, there are some who do not, some who use envelopes, and of course visitors to the church find themselves uncertain about what to do.

We continue to review the few remaining actions which we have voluntarily chosen to forego during the pandemic. In particular, we are mindful of the desire on the part of some to reintroduce Communion in both kinds, both bread and wine, and will be looking closely at this during Easter time.

3. 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 in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

4. 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://stmarymagdalenesadeladeide.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.

5. This Week in the Calendar

This week is one of the few periods in the Church's year when there are no special commemorations. The March/April period has several of these long gaps, no doubt owing to the likelihood of celebrations being displaced by Holy Week or Easter.

For reflection this week, we offer the special readings from the Church Fathers that are set for the days of the Easter Octave.

Monday in the Octave of Easter - From an Easter homily by Melito of Sardis, bishop

The Easter praise of Christ

We should understand, beloved, that the paschal mystery is at once old and new, transitory and eternal, corruptible and incorruptible, mortal and immortal. In terms of the Law it is old, in terms of the Word it is new. In its figure it is passing, in its grace it is eternal. It is corruptible in the sacrifice of the lamb, incorruptible in the eternal life of the Lord. It is mortal in his burial in the earth, immortal in his resurrection from the dead.

The Law indeed is old, but the Word is new. The type is transitory, but grace is eternal. The lamb was corruptible, but the Lord is incorruptible. He was slain as a lamb; he rose again as God. *He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, yet he was not a sheep. He was silent as a lamb,*

yet he was not a lamb. The type has passed away; the reality has come. The sacrifice of the lamb, the celebration of the Passover, and the prescriptions of the Law have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Under the old Law, and still more under the new dispensation, everything pointed toward him.

Both the Law and the Word came forth from Zion and Jerusalem, but now the Law has given place to the Word, the old to the new. The commandment has become grace, the type a reality.

The Lord, though he was God, became human. He suffered for the sake of those who suffer, he was bound for those in bonds, condemned for the guilty, buried for those who lie in the grave; but he rose from the dead, and cried aloud: *Who will contend with me? Let him confront me.* I have freed the condemned, brought the dead back to life, raised men from their graves. Who has anything to say against me? I, he said, am the Christ; I have destroyed death, triumphed over the enemy, trampled hell underfoot, bound the strong one, and taken the people of the world up to the heights of heaven: I am the Christ.

Come, then, all you nations, receive forgiveness for the sins that defile you. I am your forgiveness. I am the Passover that brings salvation. I am the lamb who was immolated for you. I am your ransom, your life, your resurrection, your light, I am your salvation and your king. I will bring you to the heights of heaven. With my own right hand I will raise you up, and I will show you the eternal Father.

Tuesday in the Octave of Easter - From a discourse by Saint Anastasius of Antioch

It was necessary that Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory

Christ, who has shown by his words and actions that he was truly God and Lord of the universe, said to his disciples as he was about to go up to Jerusalem: *We are going up to Jerusalem now, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the Gentiles and the chief priests and scribes to be scourged and mocked and crucified.*

These words bore out the predictions of the prophets, who had foretold the death he was to die in Jerusalem. From the beginning holy Scripture had foretold Christ's death, the sufferings that would precede it, and what would happen to his body afterward. Scripture also affirmed that these things were going to happen to one who was immortal and incapable of suffering because he was God.

Only by reflecting upon the meaning of the incarnation can we see how it is possible to say with perfect truth both that Christ suffered and that he was incapable of suffering, came to suffer. In fact, we could have been saved in no other way, as Christ alone knew and those to whom he revealed it. For he knows all the secrets of the Father, even as the Spirit penetrates the depths of all mysteries.

It was necessary for Christ to suffer: his passion was absolutely unavoidable. He said so himself when he called his companions dull and slow to believe because they failed to recognise that he had to suffer and so enter into his glory. Leaving behind him the glory that had been his with the Father before the world was made, he had gone forth to save his people. This salvation, however, could be achieved only by the suffering of the author of our life, as Paul taught when he said that *the author of life himself was made perfect through suffering.* Because of us he was deprived of his glory for a little while, the glory that was his as the Father's only-begotten Son, but through the cross this glory is seen to have been restored to him in a certain way in the body that he had assumed. Explaining what water the Saviour referred to when he said: *He that has faith in me shall have rivers of living water flowing from within him,* John says in his gospel that he was speaking of the Holy Spirit which those who

believed in him were to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified. The glorification he meant was his death upon the cross for which the Lord prayed to the Father before undergoing his passion, asking his Father to give him the glory that he had in his presence before the world began.

Wednesday in the Octave of Easter - From an Easter homily by an ancient author

Christ the source of resurrection and life

Saint Paul rejoices in the knowledge that spiritual health has been restored to the human race. *Death entered the world through Adam*, he explains, *but life has been given back to the world through Christ*. Again he says: *The first man, being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven and it is heavenly. As we have borne the image of the earthly, the image of human nature grown old in sin, so let us bear the image of the heavenly: human nature raised up, redeemed, restored and purified in Christ*. We must hold fast to the salvation we have received. *Christ was the first fruits*, says the Apostle; *he is the source of resurrection and life. 'Those who belong to Christ will follow him*. Modelling their lives on his purity, they will be secure in the hope of his resurrection and of enjoying with him the glory promised in heaven. Our Lord himself said so in the gospel: *Whoever follows me will not perish, but will pass from death to life*.

Thus the passion of our Saviour is the salvation of the world. The reason why he desired to die for us was that he wanted us who believe in him to live for ever. In the fullness of time it was his will to become what we are, so that we might inherit the eternity he promised and live with him for ever.

Here, then, is the grace conferred by these heavenly mysteries, the gift which Easter brings, the most longed for feast of the year; here are the beginnings of creatures newly formed: children born from the life giving font of holy Church, born anew with the simplicity of little ones, and crying out with the evidence of a clean conscience. Chaste fathers and inviolate mothers accompany this new family, countless in number, born to new life through faith. As they emerge from the grace giving womb of the font, a blaze of candles burns brightly beneath the tree of faith. The Easter festival brings the grace of holiness from heaven to men. Through the repeated celebration of the sacred mysteries they receive the spiritual nourishment of the sacraments. Fostered at the very heart of holy Church, the fellowship of one community worships the one God, adoring the triple name of his essential holiness, and together with the prophet sings the psalm which belongs to this yearly festival: *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad*. And what is this day? It is the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the author of light, who brings the sunrise and the beginning of life, saying of himself: *I am the light of day; whoever walks in daylight does not stumble*. That is to say, whoever follows Christ in all things will come by this path to the throne of eternal light.

Such was the prayer Christ made to the Father while he was still on earth: *Father, I desire that where I am they also may be, those who have come to believe in me; and that as you are in me and I in you, so they may abide in us*.

Thursday in the Octave of Easter - From the Jerusalem Catecheses

Baptism is a symbol of Christ's passion

You were led down to the font of holy baptism just as Christ was taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb which is before your eyes. Each of you was asked, "Do you believe in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?" You made the profession of faith that brings salvation, you were plunged into the water, and three times you rose again. This symbolised the three days Christ spent in the tomb.

As our Saviour spent three days and three nights in the depths of the earth, so your first rising from the water represented the first day and your first immersion represented the first night. At night you cannot see, but in the day you walk in the light. So when you were immersed in the water it was like night for you and you could not see, but when you rose again it was like coming into broad daylight. In the same instant you died and were born again; the saving water was both your tomb and your mother.

Solomon's phrase in another context is very apposite here. He spoke of *a time to give birth, and a time to die*. For you, however, it was the reverse: a time to die, and a time to be born, although in fact both events took place at the same time and your birth was simultaneous with your death.

This is something amazing and unheard of! It was not we who actually died, were buried and rose again. We only did these things symbolically, but we have been saved in actual fact. It is Christ who was crucified, who was buried and who rose again, and all this has been attributed to us. We share in his sufferings symbolically and gain salvation in reality. What boundless love for men! Christ's undefiled hands were pierced by the nails; he suffered the pain. I experience no pain, no anguish, yet by the share that I have in his sufferings he freely grants me salvation.

Let no one imagine that baptism consists only in the forgiveness of sins and in the grace of adoption. Our baptism is not like the baptism of John, which conferred only the forgiveness of sins. We know perfectly well that baptism, besides washing away our sins and bringing us the gift of the Holy Spirit, is a symbol of the sufferings of Christ. This is why Paul exclaims: *Do you not know that when we were baptised into Christ Jesus we were, by that very action, sharing in his death? By baptism we went with him into the tomb.*

Friday in the Octave of Easter - From the Jerusalem Catecheses

The anointing with the Holy Spirit

When we were baptised into Christ and clothed ourselves in him, we were transformed into the likeness of the Son of God. Having destined us to be his adopted sons, God gave us a likeness to Christ in his glory, and living as we do in communion with Christ, God's anointed, we ourselves are rightly called "the anointed ones." When he said: *Do not touch my anointed ones*, God was speaking of us.

We became "the anointed ones" when we received the sign of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, everything took place in us by means of images, because we ourselves are images of Christ. Christ bathed in the river Jordan, imparting to its waters the fragrance of his divinity, and when he came up from them the Holy Spirit descended upon him, like resting upon like. So we also, after coming up from the sacred waters of baptism, were anointed with chrism, which signifies the Holy Spirit, by whom Christ was anointed and of whom blessed Isaiah prophesied in the name of the Lord: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me. He has sent me to preach good news to the poor.*

Christ's anointing was not by human hands, nor was it with ordinary oil. On the contrary, having destined him to be the Saviour of the whole world, the Father himself anointed him with the Holy Spirit. The words of Peter bear witness to this: *Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit*. And David the prophet proclaimed: *Your throne, O God, shall endure for ever; your royal sceptre is a sceptre of justice. You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above all your fellows.*

The oil of gladness with which Christ was anointed was a spiritual oil; it was in fact the Holy Spirit himself, who is called *the oil of gladness* because he is the source of spiritual joy. But we

too have been anointed with oil, and by this anointing we have entered into fellowship with Christ and have received a share in his life. Beware of thinking that this holy oil is simply ordinary oil and nothing else. After the invocation of the Spirit it is no longer ordinary oil but the gift of Christ, and by the presence of his divinity it becomes the instrument through which we receive the Holy Spirit. While symbolically, on our foreheads and senses, our bodies are anointed with this oil that we see, our souls are sanctified by the holy and life-giving Spirit.

Saturday in the Octave of Easter - From the Jerusalem Catecheses

The bread of Heaven and the cup of salvation

*On the night he was betrayed our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said: "Take, eat: this is my body." He took the cup, gave thanks and said: "Take, drink: this is my blood." Since Christ himself has declared the bread to be his body, who can have any further doubt? Since he himself has said quite categorically, *This is my blood*, who would dare to question it and say that it is not his blood?*

Therefore, it is with complete assurance that we receive the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ. His body is given to us under the symbol of bread, and his blood is given to us under the symbol of wine, in order to make us by receiving them one body and blood with him. Having his body and blood in our members, we become bearers of Christ and sharers, as Saint Peter says, in the divine nature.

Under the old covenant there was showbread, but it came to an end with the old dispensation to which it belonged. Under the new covenant there is bread from heaven and the cup of salvation. These sanctify both soul and body, the bread being adapted to the sanctification of the body, the Word, to the sanctification of the soul.

Do not, then, regard the eucharistic elements as ordinary bread and wine: they are in fact the body and blood of the Lord, as he himself has declared. Whatever your senses may tell you, be strong in faith.

You have been taught and you are firmly convinced that what looks and tastes like bread and wine is not bread and wine but the body and the blood of Christ. You know also how David referred to this long ago when he sang: *Bread gives strength to man's heart and makes his face shine with the oil of gladness*. Strengthen your heart, then, by receiving this bread as spiritual bread, and bring joy to the face of your soul.

May purity of conscience remove the veil from the face of your soul so that by contemplating the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, you may be transformed from glory to glory in Christ Jesus our Lord. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

6. 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 Saskatchewan (Canada). In our national church, pray for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School.

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. Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Olivia, Nance, Neil, Elaine, Edward and Neil.

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, especially Bryan Parnell (priest), Yunupingu, and John Jenner, 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, 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, StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

The Parish relies on the financial support of the community for the majority of its budget. You can assist the Parish by giving electronically, using the following details:

Bank: Bankwest • BSB: 305 122 • Account no: 0324654 • Reference: Your name

Directory

Parish Priest	Revd Dr Steven Ogden ☎ 0408 817 147, ✉ stevengogden@gmail.com (<i>on leave to 26/4/23</i>)
Hon Assisting Priests	Revd Sr Juliana SI, 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	Awaiting Appointment
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks