

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 13 August 2020

Spiritual Resources & Reflections

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 – Mary and our Prayer

August is a month of the year when the church has a particular focus on the Blessed Virgin Mary. 15 August is her principal festival, and we have a long custom of keeping that festival on the following Sunday, as we will again in 2020. So it is appropriate to reflect on how Mary can be a really good influence in our times of prayer.

Perhaps the Magnificat, Mary's Song, summarises just how good an influence Mary can be on our thoughts and longing expressed in prayer. The verses of this great succession of sayings, which has become a hymn or canticle over the centuries, alternate between thankfulness and humility. Mary says that her "soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord" and that her "spirit exults in God my saviour."

Then Mary says that God has looked on her own lowliness. But she continues, "Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name." So Mary was lowly but God has worked through her in a marvellous, life-giving way. Mary returns to an awareness of her humanity when she continues that God's mercy has reached from age to age for those who love and are in awe of him.

The Magnificat salutes God's power which he has shown in routing the proud of heart and pulling down princes from their thrones but exalting the lowly. God is the God of justice, too. "The hungry God has filled with good things, the rich he has sent away empty." Finally Mary says that God has come to the help of Israel, mindful of his mercy – in line with the promise God made to Abraham and his descendants for ever.

Mary spoke the Magnificat during the visit she made to her cousin, Elisabeth. It was this visit that revealed to Mary that Elisabeth was indeed pregnant, and this confirmed what the

Archangel, Gabriel, had said to Mary about her own pregnancy, so Mary would have been greatly elevated in spirit during her visit. The Magnificat shows what a marvellous person Mary was.

It is always very good to remain anchored in reality if anyone praises us for some reason. Mary remains anchored despite her euphoria while she is with Elisabeth. All that is good in her comes from God so she praises God for all her goodness and that she has been chosen to be the mother of the Saviour. No whisper of entitlement here! She praises God for all the mercy shown and help given through the ages by God.

Our prayer can, by Mary, be inspired to be thankful to God, aware of God's amazing kindness and help to people including us, asking not to become proud (thinking we are self-sufficient), and bold in our prayer for social justice at all levels.

It is worth noting that Mary's prayer is centred on God rather than centred on her. This is a very important principle on which to work when we pray.

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 13 August <i>Jeremy Taylor</i>	Ps 101, 102.1-11 2 Chronicles 26.1-15 Acts 17.1-14	Ps 102.12-28 Song of Songs 1 Romans 10.5-13
Friday 14 August <i>20th Century Martyrs</i>	Ps 108, 10.20-30 2 Chronicles 26.16 – 27.9 Acts 17.15-21	Ps 119.1-05-128 Song of Songs 2 Romans 10.14-21
Saturday 15 August <i>The Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Ps 138 2 Chronicles 7.1-16 John 2.1-12	Ps 72 Song of Songs 2.8-14 Acts 1.1-14
Sunday 16 August <i>11th Sunday after Pentecost/ The Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Ps 81 Matthew 15.29-39	Ps 67 Genesis 48.8-20 Romans 11.17-28
Monday 17 August	Ps 106.1-24 2 Chronicles 28/16 – 29.11 Acts 18/1-17	Ps 106.25-50 Song of Songs 4 Romans 11.17-28
Tuesday 18 August	Ps 107.1-22 2 Chronicles 29.15-30 Acts 18.18-28	Ps 107.23-43 Song of Songs 5 Romans 11.25-36
Wednesday 19 August	Ps 110, 111 2 Chronicles 29.31 – 30.12 Acts 19.1-20	Ps 112, 113 Song of Songs 6 Romans 12.1-8
Thursday 20 August <i>St Bernard of Clairvaux</i>	Ps 114, 115 2 Chronicles 30.13-27 Acts 19.21-41	Ps 116, 117 Song of Songs 7 Romans 12.9-21

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. 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.

3. Responding to the COVID Challenge: Please Give Us Your Feedback!

We are living in extraordinary and uncertain times – there is no doubt about that. Everyone of us has had to make changes to the way we live, work, and interact with other people. At St Mary Magdalene's we have adapted to the COVID world by introducing some approaches to worship and pastoral care that we envisage will continue for the foreseeable future.

There has been a lot of positive feedback about the way our community has held together, and indeed even been able to flourish, during this difficult time. We are thankful for the abundance of generosity in the extra or different work people have taken on and for the positive and caring relationships that support everyone in the parish.

We are seeking your feedback on the way the parish is supporting you. This will assist with planning for the future and help us to maintain flexibility as we move forward.

Could you please respond to the following three questions in as full and detailed way you are able to.

1. *Tell us about the things the parish is doing that are helpful to you in your worship and in your spiritual life.*
2. *Tell us your ideas for anything that is currently happening that you think could be tweaked to make it work better.*
3. *Keeping in mind the limitations of our parish in personnel and finances, and the limitations of COVID, do you have any suggestions about things we could do to further enrich the life of the parish?*

As a prompt, some things you may like to write about include

- The Sunday and weekday services – how we celebrate, music, communion, COVID distancing rules,
- Hospitality – Sundays after church, ideas for community meals and other activities
- Blog – to support worship and the current move to use it to publish Fr Philip's meditation writings
- The pastoral care network and pastoral care both formal and informal

- Keeping in touch with people who are not able to come on Sundays
- The Art Group

How to give us your feedback

EITHER – send your responses by email to alison.mca@gmail.com

OR – if you prefer to remain anonymous, or don't have access to email, pick up a printed sheet at the back of the church and return it to the marked box

Final date for responses

Please have your responses to us **by Sunday 23 August** so we can have a report ready for Annual Vestry Meeting on 30 August.

4. 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 will in the future be presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org/>. To access the tab, 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.

The blog has provided services for the parish during the COVID lockdown and through to the end of July, when we celebrate our patron saint, Mary Magdalene. We will keep publishing services, but not every Sunday. The plan is to publish one service a month on a special feast day - for example, this Sunday we celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary; in September, the Holy Cross; and in October, the Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church.

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

5. In the Church's Calendar

The coming week in the church's calendar is especially rich in the variety of women and men who are commemorated each year. On 14 August, we celebrate the Twentieth Century Martyrs, represented by a group that includes

St Maximilian Kolbe was a Polish Catholic priest who was imprisoned in Auschwitz during World War II. He volunteered to take the place of a stranger who had been sentenced to death. **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** was a German Lutheran pastor who was a leading Anti-Nazi dissident, eventually being imprisoned in the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp where he died in the last days of the War. **Maria Skobtsova** was a Russian noblewoman, poet, and nun, who became active in the French resistance during the war. She was held captive in the Ravensbrück Concentration Camp where she, like Maximilian Kolbe, took the place of another who had been sentenced to death,

Martin Luther King Jr was the most visible leader in the American Civil Rights movement in the mid 20th century. An inspirational preacher, he advocated for civil rights through non-

violent protest and civil disobedience, and delivered one of the most famous speeches in history, "I have a dream". He was shot and killed in Memphis, Tennessee, in April 1968. **Janani Luwum** was the Anglican Archbishop of Uganda, kidnapped and murdered during the dictatorship of Idi Amin. **St Oscar Romero** was the Catholic Archbishop of San Salvador, who (like Janani Luwum) stood against a corrupt Government: he was shot while celebrating Mass.

These people are representative of the thousands who die every year, who are oppressed or persecuted for their faith. Their numbers continue to grow every day, and the years to come will no doubt see them recognised for their witness to justice and reconciliation. Pope Francis has been very active in acknowledging the heroic virtues of holy women and men of our own time.

15 August each year is the principal festival of the **Blessed Virgin Mary**. This feast day is celebrated in many ways and under many titles – the Assumption of Mary, which holds that Mary's unique role in the history of salvation sees her share in God's divine glory – or the "Falling Asleep" or "Dormition" which celebrate the end of Mary's earthly life and the beginning of a new life in the everlasting kingdom of God.

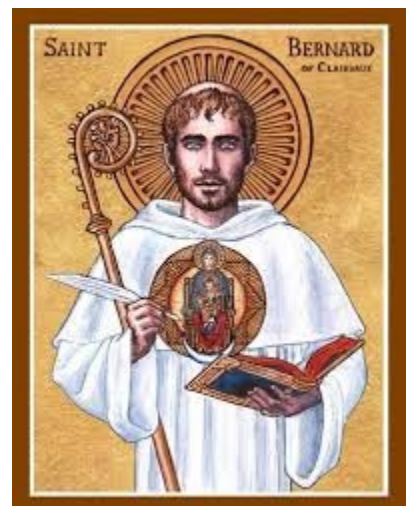


Devotion to Mary has always been a part of the Anglican tradition, from its earliest days in the 16th century. Mary stands before us as an exemplar of faithful obedience, and her "Be it to me according to your word" is the grace-filled response each of us is called to make to God, both personally and communally, as the Church, the body of Christ. It is as figure of the Church, her arms uplifted in prayer and praise, her hands open in receptivity and availability to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that we are one with Mary as she magnifies the Lord. "Surely," Mary declares in her song recorded in the Gospel of Luke, "from this day all generations will call me blessed."

Anglicans, Catholics and the Orthodox share many of the same feasts associated with Mary. It is in the realm of worship that we realise our deepest convergence as we give thanks to God for the Mother of the Lord who is one with us in that vast community of love and prayer we call the Communion of Saints.

St Bernard of Clairvaux had a tremendous impact on the church of his day. He was a zealous reformer and crusader, preaching widely and influentially, but what Bernard is chiefly remembered for today is his mystical writings. His best known work is *On Loving God*, in which he states his purpose at the beginning: "You wish me to tell you why and how God should be loved. My answer is that God himself is the reason he is to be loved."

His other great literary legacy is *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, 86 sermons on the spiritual life that, in fact, only tangentially touch on the biblical text. One passage in particular speaks aptly to Bernard's lifelong passion to know God (and, likely, the temptations that troubled him):



There are some who long to know for the sole purpose of knowing, and that is shameful curiosity; others who long to know in order to become known, and that is shameful vanity. ... There are others still who long for knowledge in order to sell its fruits for money or honours, and this is shameful profiteering; others again who long to know in order to be of service, and this is charity. Finally, there are those who long to know in order to benefit themselves, and this is prudence.

6. From a homily “In Praise of the Virgin Mother” by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux

The whole world awaits Mary’s reply

You have heard, O Virgin, that you will conceive and bear a son; you have heard that it will not be by man but by the Holy Spirit. The angel awaits an answer; it is time for him to return to God who sent him. We too are waiting, O Lady, for your word of compassion; the sentence of condemnation weighs heavily upon us. The price of our salvation is offered to you. We shall be set free at once if you consent. In the eternal Word of God we all came to be, and behold, we die. In your brief response we are to be remade in order to be recalled to life.

Tearful Adam with his sorrowing family begs this of you, O loving Virgin, in their exile from Paradise. Abraham begs it, David begs it. All the other holy patriarchs, your ancestors, ask it of you, as they dwell in the country of the shadow of death. This is what the whole earth waits for, prostrate at your feet. It is right in doing so, for on your word depends comfort for the wretched, ransom for the captive, freedom for the condemned, indeed, salvation for all the sons of Adam, the whole of your race.

Answer quickly, O Virgin. Reply in haste to the angel, or rather through the angel to the Lord. Answer with a word, receive the Word of God. Speak your own word, conceive the divine Word. Breathe a passing word, embrace the eternal Word.

Why do you delay, why are you afraid? Believe, give praise, and receive. Let humility be bold, let modesty be confident. This is no time for virginal simplicity to forget prudence. In this matter alone, O prudent Virgin, do not fear to be presumptuous. Though modest silence is pleasing, dutiful speech is now more necessary. Open your heart to faith, O blessed Virgin, your lips to praise, your womb to the Creator. See, the desired of all nations is at your door, knocking to enter. If he should pass by because of your delay, in sorrow you would begin to seek him afresh, the One whom your soul loves. Arise, hasten, open. Arise in faith, hasten in devotion, open in praise and thanksgiving. Behold the handmaid of the Lord, she says, be it done to me according to your word.

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 Dioceses Okene (Nigeria); Buhiga (Burundi); and

Bujumbura (*Burundi*). In our national church, pray for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Tea Tree Gully.

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 Chris.

For those who have died. For 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. 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, and holy women and men of every time and place.



Maximillian Kolbe, Icon by Peter Wilke

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.