

# 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 May 2021

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 Thursday from 11.30 am to 1 pm, and Mass is offered at 12.10 pm after Regina Coeli 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 Gwilym – the Five “Other” Sacraments

There are Seven Sacraments of the Church, two of them, Baptism and Eucharist, were instituted by Jesus himself, while five of them are part of the church tradition derived from and supported by Scripture. The “Other” Sacraments are, Confirmation, Ordination, Penance (Reconciliation), Holy Matrimony and the Anointing of the Sick.

#### Confirmation



In the early church, Baptism and Confirmation were part of the same rite, but since infants are unable to speak for themselves, it was thought wise to wait until the person was ready to make the promises for themselves. Confirmation may be seen as a “coming of age” for Christians, where a person chooses to “confess with their lips that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead” (See Romans 10:9 and following).

In Confirmation a Bishop, representing the Apostles, lays hands on the candidate and prays that they may have the gift of the Holy Spirit. (see Acts 8:14-19.) The symbolic action here is the laying on of hands to show that God’s Holy Spirit is at work in the person who is taking upon themselves the responsibility of mature Christian life.

#### Ordination

In Baptism and Confirmation, all Christians are commissioned for ministry. However, some people are set apart for particular Sacramental ministry within the Church. In Acts 13:1-3, the church in Antioch met for worship, fasting and prayer. This is the appropriate setting for all major decisions in the Church. It is reflected in the process the Anglican Church uses for the

selection of candidates for Ordination, a process called Discernment because the Church always tries to see or discern God's holy Spirit at work. In Acts 13:2, "the Holy Spirit said, 'set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying they laid hands on them and sent them off."



The symbolic action here is the laying on of hands to show that God's Holy Spirit is at work in the Church's decision and in the person who is being given a particular ministry.

### Who can do what?

As a footnote, the sacrament of Baptism is customarily administered by the leader of the local Christian community, usually the Parish Priest. However, any Christian leader, ordained or not, can baptise someone if need arises. The Eucharist (Holy Communion) is administered by someone ordained as a Priest. The Church has, from the earliest times, maintained the custom of ordination by Bishops as a sign of the continuity of community, communion, and ministry. (A later article will deal with this under the heading; "Apostolic Succession".)

The next article will deal with the Sacraments of Penance (Reconciliation), Holy Matrimony and Anointing the Sick.

Gwilym Henry-Edwards  
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).

### 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 we cannot attend at the church at the present time, you may like to join the wider community in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

### 3. Reflections and Meditations

Fr Gwilym 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 are presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelelaide.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. The Ascension of the Lord

Today we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord. This feast, celebrated 40 days after Easter, is one of the great feasts of the church's year, yet it is perhaps the least easily understood.

Rowan Williams, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, has said of this festival:

*We use the language of ascending and descending – up to heaven, down to earth – as a way of trying to make sense of our feeling that there is a distance (maybe even a separation) between us and God: as if we belong here, and God there. Jesus forces us to rethink that idea. For he is both here and there; both with God and with us; both then and now.*

*All the ways we have of understanding how time and space work are simply too small to comprehend how God can be both human and divine. We're confronted with the same problem at the other end of the liturgical year: Ascension and Advent are opposite sides of the same coin. At Advent, we experience a similar knot in our linear understanding of time: we await the arrival of a baby who is simultaneously timeless, present in creation from the beginning of all time; and fixed in human history in first-century Palestine; and eternally present as we await the fulfilment of all time. At Ascension, we see that just as God transcends our understanding of time- past, present and future – so too God transcends our understanding of space – up and down, here and there. There is no division between heaven and earth. God is, was, and ever shall be here. God is, was, and ever shall be one of us: from the beginning of time to its end.*

*Jesus tells his disciples to 'stay here in the city until you are clothed with power on high'. There's that spatial language again. For it is here in the city – this city and every city, the here and now where we live, work, study and rest, among other human beings like ourselves- that we are to work out what it means to be made in the image of God, for our humanity to be transformed by sharing in divinity. It is here, and now, that we are to build the Kingdom and live out the truth of God, until we discover for ourselves what is beyond this life, beyond our current capacity to imagine or comprehend.*

*The disciples of Jesus do not know how they will manage without him. They do not yet know what they can do; and they do not yet realise what it will cost them to do it. But their task is not to wait for Jesus to return at the end of time before they act. It is to begin the work now of transforming the world we live in into the kingdom of heaven. It is not that God belongs there and we belong here. Quite the opposite. There is a human being in heaven: and because there is one, wherever human beings are is also, already, touched with the divine.*

*'Why do you stand looking up into heaven?' It is all around you. There is a human being in heaven. The whole world belongs to God, across every boundary of time or space: and it is here in the city that we are to find him.*

## 5. In the Church's Calendar

This week we celebrate the annual memorial of St Dunstan of Canterbury, one of the great saints of the Anglo Saxon church. He was the pivotal force behind the vigorous promotion of 'reformed' Benedictine monasticism which revitalized the religious life in England during his time, and set in being a life that was destined to endure until the Dissolution of the monasteries six hundred years later.

In addition to his impact on monastic life, Dunstan became a celebrated Archbishop of Canterbury, an advisor to kings, and a minister of state. He greatly influenced early English law on the balance between earthly and spiritual priorities and obligations, particularly the payment of taxes and tithes.

Dunstan's life was of sufficient merit for no fewer than three biographers to write about him in the hundred years after his death. They attributed to him many remarkable stories and extraordinary miracles, not least of him holding the Devil's nose with tongs!



St Dunstan is also the source of the legend, very popular in Irish folklore, of horseshoes bringing good luck. The story goes that the Devil once asked Dunstan (whose skills included being a blacksmith) to re-shoe his horse. Dunstan instead nailed the horseshoe to the Devil's hoof, causing him great pain, and Dunstan only agreed to remove the horseshoe when the Devil agreed never to enter a place where a horseshoe is over the door.

The following "Prayer for Confession and Forgiveness" is attributed to Dunstan:

*O Lord, O King, resplendent in the citadel of heaven, all hail continually; and of Thy clemency upon Thy people still do thou have mercy.*

*Lord, Whom the hosts of cherubim in songs and hymns with praise continually proclaim, do Thou upon us eternally have mercy.*

*The armies aloft, O Lord, do sing high praise to Thee, even they to Whom the seraphim reply, 'do Thou have mercy'.*

*O Christ, enthroned as King above, Whom the nine orders of angels in their beauty praise without ceasing, deign Thou upon us, Thy servants, ever to have mercy.*

*O Christ, Whom Thy one only Church throughout the world doth hymn, O Thou to Whom the sun, and moon, and stars, the land and sea, do service ever, do Thou have mercy.*

*O Christ, Whose holy ones, the heirs of the eternal country, one and all with utter joy proclaim Thee in a most worthy strain, do Thou have mercy upon us.*

*O Lord, O gentle Son of Mary free, O King of kings, Blessed Redeemer, upon those who have been ransomed from the power of death, by Thine own blood, ever have mercy.*

*O noblest unbegotten, yet Begotten Son, having no beginning of age, yet without effort (in the weakness of God) excelling all things, upon this Thy congregation in Thy pity, Lord have mercy.*

*O Sun of Righteousness, in all unclouded glory, supreme Dispenser of Justice, in that great Day when Thou shalt strictly judge all nations, we earnestly beseech Thee, upon this Thy people, who here stand before Thy presence, in Thy pity, Lord, then have mercy upon us.*

Dunstan died, a very old man, on the Feast of the Ascension in 988.

## 6. Saints – or Sinners? Charles Dickens on St Dunstan

The Saints are not universally popular. Charles Dickens, in his little-known *A Child's History of England* (1852), left his readers in no doubt of his opinion of St Dunstan!

*[There] was a monk named DUNSTAN—a clever priest, a little mad, and not a little proud and cruel.*

*Dunstan was ... Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey, whither the body of King Edmund the Magnificent was carried, to be buried. While yet a boy, he had got out of his bed one night (being then in a fever), and walked about Glastonbury Church when it was under repair; and, because he did not tumble off some scaffolds that were there, and break his neck, it was reported that he had been shown over the building by an angel. He had also made a harp that was said to play of itself—which it very likely did, as Æolian Harps, which are played by the wind, and are understood now, always do. For these wonders he had been once denounced by his enemies, who were jealous of his favour with the late King Athelstan, as a magician; and he had been waylaid, bound hand and foot, and thrown into a marsh. But he got out again, somehow, to cause a great deal of trouble yet.*

*The priests of those days were, generally, the only scholars. They were learned in many things. Dunstan ... was one of the most sagacious of these ... He was an ingenious smith, and worked at a forge in a little cell. This cell was made too short to admit of his lying at full length when he went to sleep—as if that did any good to anybody!—and he used to tell the most extraordinary lies about demons and spirits, who, he said, came there to persecute him. For instance, he related that one day when he was at work, the devil looked in at the little window, and tried to tempt him to lead a life of idle pleasure; whereupon, having his pincers in the fire, red hot, he seized the devil by the nose, and put him to such pain, that his bellowings were heard for miles and miles. Some people are inclined to think this nonsense a part of Dunstan's madness (for his head never quite recovered the fever), but I think not. I observe that it induced the ignorant people to consider him a holy man, and that it made him very powerful. Which was exactly what he always wanted.*

*Dunstan ... drove all married priests out of the monasteries and abbeys, and replaced them by solitary monks like himself, of the rigid order called the Benedictines. He made himself Archbishop of Canterbury, for his greater glory ...*

*... Dunstan put Ethelred on the throne, having no one else to put there, and gave him the nickname of THE UNREADY—knowing that he wanted resolution and firmness. About the ninth or tenth year of this reign, Dunstan died. He was growing old then, but was as stern and artful as ever. Two circumstances that happened in connexion with him, in this reign of Ethelred, made a great noise. Once, he was present at a meeting of the Church, when the question was discussed whether priests should have permission to marry; and, as he sat with his head hung*

*down, apparently thinking about it, a voice seemed to come out of a crucifix in the room, and warn the meeting to be of his opinion. This was some juggling of Dunstan's, and was probably his own voice disguised. But he played off a worse juggle than that, soon afterwards; for, another meeting being held on the same subject, and he and his supporters being seated on one side of a great room, and their opponents on the other, he rose and said, 'To Christ himself, as judge, do I commit this cause!' Immediately on these words being spoken, the floor where the opposite party sat gave way, and some were killed and many wounded. You may be pretty sure that it had been weakened under Dunstan's direction, and that it fell at Dunstan's signal. His part of the floor did not go down. No, no. He was too good a workman for that.*

*When he died, the monks settled that he was a Saint, and called him Saint Dunstan ever afterwards. They might just as well have settled that he was a coach-horse, and could just as easily have called him one.*

## 7. For your 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 Diocese of Busan (Korea). In our national church, pray for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Commission; and within our own Diocese, for the Bush Church Aid Society.

*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. 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, Sym, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, Diane, Fr Gary Priest, Fr Bart O'Donovan, Beth, Chris, and Linda Braby.

*For those who have died.* For those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; all those who have died recently, including Bishop David McCall, those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about 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 Dunstan, 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](mailto:omarymag@anglicaresa.com.au), by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

