

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 16 June 2022

Dear friends,

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

The regular schedule of worship is as usual, with the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm (Thursday) and Sung Mass (Sunday at 10 am)

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 – The Work of Love

Today, and this coming Sunday, we celebrate Corpus Christi, the Body of Christ, and give thanks for the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is central. It is Christ's gift to the Church. As such, it is the source of our life and our unity. We may disagree over dogma. We will embody different spiritualities. Our politics will vary. And we will have different views on complex ethical issues. But we share the sacrament. The Eucharist then has profound implications.

On the one hand, the Eucharist is the highlight of the week. It is a centring moment, reminding us about who we are and where we belong. We may have had a dreadful week, but in the Eucharist, from when we enter the nave and until the dismissal, we know deep peace. This is love at work.

On the other hand, the Eucharist reminds us of the divine generosity that creates, sustains, and permeates the universe, yearning to provide daily bread for all creatures. This is love at work, emerging in an array of relationships as care, kindness, and a longing for justice.

All this is premised on one thing. Yes, God is love. This is the Good News. This love is infinite, inclusive, and unconditional. It does not work on the basis of today's economic system, where everything is commodified, and assigned a monetary value.

This Sunday, on the Feast of Corpus Christi, we give thanks and praise for the gift of the sacrament of the Eucharist, reminding us of our identity in Christ and our place in the world. In fact, the Eucharist empowers us to live with courage and compassion in the public square. This too is the work of love.

Fr Steven

2. COVID-19 Update from Tuesday 24 May

The Declaration that enabled COVID-19 related directions to be made was revoked on Tuesday 24 May, but there are still some restrictions on public activities associated with the State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-Safe Plans are no longer required, though everyone is encouraged to follow SA Health guidance about infection control and community safety, especially if there is a risk of over-crowding.

It is worth remembering the advice of the Australian Medical Association that a face masks continue to be an effective way of minimising the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases, especially in crowded or indoor settings, and anyone who wishes to continue to wear a face mask is at liberty to do so. We will continue to make face masks available, along with the other hygienic measures that have been in place for much of the past two years.

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 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 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.

4. 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 are presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.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. Fr Steven's Appointment

The Wardens were delighted to announce on Sunday that the Archbishop has invited Fr Steven Ogden to be our next Parish Priest.

Fr Steven will be commissioned by Bishop Denise Ferguson during Mass on Wednesday 29 June, the Feast of St Peter and St Paul, at 7 pm.

Please remember in your prayers Fr Steven and Anne, and our parish community, as we prepare for this new season of ministry.

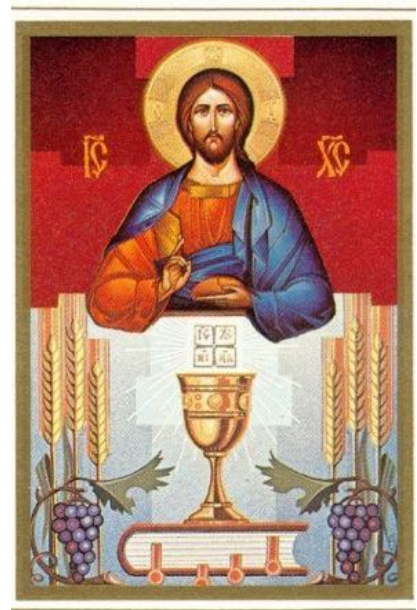
6. This Week in the Calendar

This week we celebrate one of the Church's great festivals of Our Lord, Corpus Christi, and the first British martyr, St Alban. (d. c 209).

The Feast of Corpus Christi, also called the Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Holy Communion, celebrates the real presence of the body (*corpus*) of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. A movable observance, it is observed on the Thursday or the Sunday after Trinity Sunday and is a holy day of obligation in many countries.

The Feast originated in 1246 when Robert de Torote, bishop of Liège, ordered the festival celebrated in his diocese. He was persuaded to initiate the feast by Juliana, prioress of the Augustinian monastery of Mont Cornillon near Liège, who had experienced a vision.

St Juliana was born in Belgium in 1191. She and her sister, Agnes, were orphaned as children and entrusted to the care of Augustinian nuns: Juliana went on to take vows in the order.



At the age of 16, St Juliana began having mystical visions during Eucharistic Adoration in which she would see the moon in its fullness, with a dark stripe across it. Christ later revealed to her that the moon symbolized the life of the Church, and the dark line represented the need for a new liturgical feast dedicated to promoting veneration of the Most Holy Eucharist.

For 20 years, St Juliana kept these visions a secret. When she felt the time was right, she expressed her desire to have such a feast established to the bishop, who after some initial hesitation instituted the Feast of Corpus Christi in his diocese. Several other bishops in the surrounding dioceses followed his lead.

It did not spread until 1261, when Jacques Pantaléon, formerly archdeacon of Liège, became pope as Urban IV. In 1264 he ordered the whole church to observe the feast. Urban's order was confirmed by Pope Clement V at the Council of Vienne in 1311–12. By the mid-14th century the festival was generally accepted, and in the 15th century it became, in effect, one of the principal feasts of the church.

Pope Urban asked one of the greatest theologians in the history of the Catholic Church, St. Thomas Aquinas, to compose the text for the Liturgical Office for this new feast. Of these texts, Pope Benedict XVI said, "They are masterpieces, still in use in the Church today, in which theology and poetry are fused. These texts pluck at the heartstrings in an expression of praise

and gratitude to the Most Holy Sacrament, while the mind, penetrating the mystery with wonder, recognizes in the Eucharist the Living and Real Presence of Jesus"

Included in the texts St. Thomas wrote for Corpus Christi is the hymn Pange Lingua. You will recognize some of the final stanzas of this ancient hymn, which throughout the Western Church are sung at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament:

Tantum ergo Sacramentum	<i>Down in adoration falling,</i>
veneremur cernui:	<i>This great sacrament we hail;</i>
et antiquum documentum	<i>Over ancient forms of worship</i>
novo cedat ritui:	<i>newer rites of grace prevail;</i>
praestet fides supplementum	<i>Faith will tell us Christ is present,</i>
sensuum defectui.	<i>When our human senses fail.</i>

A procession of the Blessed Sacrament became the feast's most prominent feature and was a pageant in which sovereigns and princes took part, as well as magistrates and members of guilds. In the 15th century the procession was customarily followed by the performance by guild members of miracle plays and mystery plays.

The Australian theologian Andrew McGowan has written of Corpus Christi, *"There is a symmetry between this eucharistic feast on a Thursday soon after Pentecost, and the one on a Thursday just before Easter. In the first case, we commemorated the unique historical fact of Christ's gift of self, in the first Eucharist and on the Cross; in this second one, we commemorate the universal reality across time and space of Christ's eucharistic gift of self, echoing the expansive theme of Pentecost. Once, the reality of God was committed to a unique place in space and time, in the incarnation; now, we encounter him in the tabernacles and altars of a million places, where he is with us personally and concretely again, by the power of the Spirit."*

In this feast we are affirming that Christ's eucharistic presence has a quality of unconditional and material gift, like the life commemorated in the first, but also that we encounter him in these signs of bread and wine, not only as a memory of that one presence, or even just during the experience of corporate worship, but as they persist even after it.

The eucharistic Christ is present in his people, as people whose identity has been changed by his presence. He invites us into the same self-offering, the same love, the same vulnerability of his incarnate life, of which this sacrament is a present, material, fragile, reminder.

St Alban was the first known Christian martyr of Britain. Alban lived in the early third century in a Roman city close to where St Alban's Cathedral stands today. One day he gave shelter to a stranger fleeing from persecution. This stranger was a Christian priest: Alban was inspired by how important faith was to the priest and asked to be taught more about Christianity.

The Roman authorities soon caught up with the priest. However, Alban's new-found faith would not allow him to let the authorities arrest the priest. Instead, Alban exchanged clothes with him and was arrested, allowing the priest to escape. Alban refused to renounce his beliefs, declaring, "I worship and adore the true and living God who created all things."



The magistrate ordered that he should receive the punishment intended for the escaped priest. Alban was led out of the city and up the hillside where he was beheaded. His grave on the hillside quickly became a place of pilgrimage. This story of an ordinary person, doing an extraordinary thing has endured and continues to inspire to this day.

7. From a Sermon by St Thomas Aquinas on the Feast of Corpus Christi

O precious and wonderful banquet!

Since it was the will of God's only-begotten Son that men should share in his divinity, he assumed our nature in order that by becoming man he might make men gods. Moreover, when he took our flesh he dedicated the whole of its substance to our salvation. He offered his body to God the Father on the altar of the cross as a sacrifice for our reconciliation. He shed his blood for our ransom and purification, so that we might be redeemed from our wretched state of bondage and cleansed from all sin. But to ensure that the memory of so great a gift would abide with us for ever, he left his body as food and his blood as drink for the faithful to consume in the form of bread and wine.

O precious and wonderful banquet, that brings us salvation and contains all sweetness! Could anything be of more intrinsic value? Under the old law it was the flesh of calves and goats that was offered, but here Christ himself, the true God, is set before us as our food. What could be more wonderful than this? No other sacrament has greater healing power; through it sins are purged away, virtues are increased, and the soul is enriched with an abundance of every spiritual gift. It is offered in the Church for the living and the dead, so that what was instituted for the salvation of all may be for the benefit of all. Yet, in the end, no one can fully express the sweetness of this sacrament, in which spiritual delight is tasted at its very source, and in which we renew the memory of that surpassing love for us which Christ revealed in his passion.

It was to impress the vastness of this love more firmly upon the hearts of the faithful that our Lord instituted this sacrament at the Last Supper. As he was on the point of leaving the world to go to the Father, after celebrating the Passover with his disciples, he left it as a perpetual memorial of his passion. It was the fulfilment of ancient figures and the greatest of all his miracles, while for those who were to experience the sorrow of his departure, it was destined to be a unique and abiding consolation.

8. The Venerable Bede on the Martyrdom of St Alban

"The Passion of St Alban and his companions, who at that time shed their blood for our Lord."

At that time suffered St Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in the Praise of Virgins, where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says: "And fruitful Britain noble Alban rears."

This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when at the bidding of unbelieving rulers all manner of cruelty was practised against the Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain clerk, flying from his persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night; when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart.

The aforesaid clerk having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the impious prince, that a confessor of Christ, to whom a martyr's place had not yet been assigned,

was concealed at Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a strict search after him. When they came to the martyr's hut, St. Alban presently came forth to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was bound and led before the judge.

It happened that the judge, at the time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, dare to put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger on behalf of the guest whom he had harboured, he commanded him to be dragged to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, "Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious man, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you seek to abandon the worship of our religion."

But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the faith, was not at all daunted by the prince's threats, but putting on the armour of spiritual warfare, publicly declared that he would not obey his command. Then said the judge, "Of what family or race are you?" - "What does it concern you," answered Alban, "of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christian, and free to fulfil Christian duties." - "I ask your name," said the judge; "tell me it immediately." "I am called Alban by my parents," replied he; "and I worship ever and adore the true and living God, Who created all things."

Then the judge, filled with anger, said, "If you would enjoy the happiness of eternal life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods." Alban rejoined, "These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the worshippers, nor fulfil the desires and petitions of the suppliants. Rather, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward."

The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners, believing that he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord's sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death.

Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a great multitude of persons of both sexes, and of divers ages and conditions, who were doubtless assembled by Divine inspiration, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so filled the bridge over the river, that he could scarce pass over that evening. In truth, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance.

St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to attain the sooner to martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, whereupon the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had given place and made way for him to pass. Among the rest, the executioner, who should have put him to death, observed this, and moved doubtless by Divine inspiration hastened to meet him at the appointed place of execution, and casting away the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying earnestly that he might rather be accounted worthy to suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him.

Whilst he was thus changed from a persecutor into a companion in the faith and truth, and the other executioners rightly hesitated to take up the sword which was lying on the ground, the holy confessor, accompanied by the multitude, ascended a hill, about half a mile from the arena, beautiful, as was fitting, and of most pleasing appearance, adorned, or rather clothed, everywhere with flowers of many colours, nowhere steep or precipitous or of sheer descent, but with a long, smooth natural slope, like a plain, on its sides, a place altogether worthy from of old, by reason of its native beauty, to be consecrated by the blood of a blessed martyr.

On the top of this hill, St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring, confined in its channel, sprang up at his feet, so that all men acknowledged that even the stream had yielded its service to the martyr. For it was impossible that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should desire it on the top of the hill, unless he thought it fitting. The river then having done service and fulfilled the pious duty, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience.

Here, therefore, the head of the undaunted martyr was struck off, and here he received the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love him. But he who laid impious hands on the holy man's neck was not permitted to rejoice over his dead body; for his eyes dropped upon the ground at the same moment as the blessed martyr's head fell. At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the Divine admonition, refused to strike the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not purified by the waters of baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Then the judge, astonished at the unwonted sight of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, and began to honour the death of the saints, by which he once thought that they might have been turned from their zeal for the Christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the twenty-second day of June, near the city of Verulam [near modern day St Albans] where afterwards, when peaceable Christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and altogether worthy to commemorate his martyrdom, was erected. In which place the cure of sick persons and the frequent working of wonders cease not to this day.

9. 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 Maiduguri (Nigeria). In our national church, pray for our own Diocese of Newcastle; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the parish of Largs Bay.

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, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Neil, Olivia, Elaine and David,

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. ✠ *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 Alban, 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, StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

