

**St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church**  
Moore Street, Adelaide

**An open, welcoming and inclusive community  
in the heart of the City of Adelaide**



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**Keeping Community**  
**Spiritual Resources & Reflections**

**Thursday 17 August 2023**

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Dear friends,

This newsletter was developed as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and our ability to gather for worship was so severely challenged. Thanks be to God, we are now able to gather together to celebrate the Word and Sacraments, and to come to church for private prayer. But the demand for and appeal of these newsletters has continued.

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 the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

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



**1. Baptism - and Baptismal Living**

This coming Sunday we will baptise Hamish and Duncan Munro, the children of Ginny and James. We have already baptised their three older children, and James also, and it is always a time of celebration when others are brought into communion with God and the church in this special way.

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, on a visit to Australia some years ago, gave [two lectures](#) on Sacramental Living. The first was entitled Living Baptismally, the second Living Eucharistically. Bishop Rowan makes many interesting observations: here are some extracts from his lecture.

“I think that it is very important that, as Christians, we remember that the sacraments are not simply events. They are such; but they are events because they are also manifestations of those underlying contours of the life of discipleship. Treat them primarily as events themselves, and you end up with some of those (frankly not very edifying) controversies about sacramental theology that have not only taken up the energies of many people who could have used their energies better, but have divided and embittered the life of the church. But go through to the contours of discipleship which they manifest, and perhaps it looks a little different.

In ancient times, baptism was frequently seen in terms and imagery first seen in Genesis: once again, watery chaos is addressed by God. The Word descends into the chaos and, under the overseeing and overshadowing of the Spirit, something is brought to birth. And the something that is brought to birth, in this case, is the vocation of Jesus to live out his innermost identity as God's beloved child. When he comes up out of the water there is no longer chaos, there is the voice of calling from above.

So, living baptismally—if it has something to do with that particular image of baptism, which in turn has its roots in scriptural language itself—is living through that process of chaos, a descent of the Spirit, an emergence into new identity. Baptismal identity is most deeply thought about, quite clearly, as identity in and with Jesus. But that, in turn, is an identity which *restores the identity* of the first creation. In baptism, God remakes out of chaos. And in our birth in baptism into the kinship of Jesus, we return to something that was lost at the very beginning of the human story and is restored in Jesus Christ. And it is a reminder that chaos is not resolved or organised by fear, by a word from a divine distance, but organised, shaped, given (even) beauty, by the involvement of God.

Whereas we might read the first Genesis story in terms of a word addressed from a distance—although you would be wrong to do so—it is impossible to read *this* ‘Genesis story’ as about a word (or Word) that comes from a distance. *This* recapitulation of Genesis is about the naked Jesus, up to his neck in watery chaos and only there and from there, hearing fully and finally the voice which addresses him as God’s beloved child and which empowers him to go forward in ministry and death and resurrection.

In the third chapter of St Matthew’s Gospel, there is strange little encounter between Jesus and John the Baptist, where the Baptist says, as people have said ever since, ‘Why do you come to me?’ And Jesus’ enigmatic answer effectively says, ‘That’s what I am here for. To be contaminated by baptism. To be affected by the need, the chaos, the darkness of the world.’(Matt. 3:13-15.) And that is the paradox that runs through our baptismal living, our whole sense of holiness. Proximity to Jesus, yes; proximity to those that Jesus is in the neighbourhood of, yes. And therefore an understanding of our identity as itself with Jesus, and in Jesus, an unceasing, unyielding mission to those we might be tempted to regard as contaminating, those whose neighbourhood makes us feel awkward.

Baptismal living is living in the proximity of Jesus and therefore in the neighbourhood of those to whom Jesus is near. Those to whom Jesus is near will be very surprising to us and there is no way round that. And living in that proximity is living in a wounded body—that is, a body whose defences are very unsafe. Living in the proximity of Jesus is living in some sort of derived reality, some sort of reflection of his messiahship. And therefore, living prophetically, living in a priestly way and living in a royal way—but only as those are given content by the story of Jesus and the identity of Jesus.

## 2. Fr Steven is on Study Leave from, 8 - 19 August

Fr Steven is on study leave. In his absence, please direct any inquiries to Peter Burdon (tel 0414 471 894), who are able to answer your questions and to arrange for pastoral support if needed. Our thanks to Fr Graeme Kaines who is saying the Thursday and Sunday Masses during this period.

## 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](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, especially 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://stmarymagdalenesadelaiide.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.

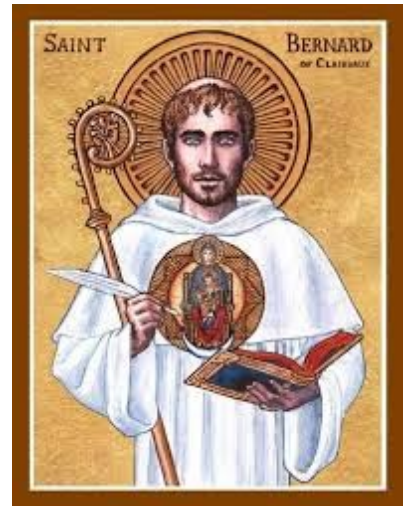
Service booklets as PDF files are still available for Sunday and weekday services on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

## 5. This Week in the Calendar

In the coming week we celebrate the medieval monk and mystic St Bernard of Clairvaux.

Man of the century! Woman of the century! You see such terms applied to so many today—"golfer of the century," "composer of the century," "right tackle of the century"—that the line no longer has any punch. But Western Europe's "man of the twelfth century," without doubt or controversy, had to be Bernard of Clairvaux.

Adviser of popes, preacher of the Second Crusade, defender of the faith, healer of a schism, reformer of a monastic Order, Scripture scholar, theologian, and eloquent preacher: any one of these titles would distinguish an ordinary man. Yet Bernard was all of these—and he still retained a burning desire to return to the hidden monastic life of his younger days.



In the year 1111, at the age of 20, Bernard left his home to join the monastic community of Citeaux. His five brothers, two uncles, and some 30 young friends followed him into the monastery. Within four years, a dying community had recovered enough vitality to establish a new house in the nearby valley of Wormwoods, with Bernard as abbot. The zealous young man was quite demanding, though more on himself than others. A slight breakdown of health taught him to be more patient and understanding. The valley was soon renamed Clairvaux, the valley of light.

His ability as arbitrator and counsellor became widely known. More and more he was lured away from the monastery to settle long-standing disputes. On several of these occasions, he apparently stepped on some sensitive toes in Rome. Bernard was completely dedicated to the primacy of the Roman See. But to a letter of warning from Rome, he replied that the good

fathers in Rome had enough to do to keep the Church in one piece. If any matters arose that warranted their interest, he would be the first to let them know.

The Holy See prevailed on Bernard to preach the Second Crusade throughout Europe. His eloquence was so overwhelming that a great army was assembled and the success of the crusade seemed assured. The ideals of the men and their leaders, however, were not those of Abbot Bernard, and the project ended as a complete military and moral disaster.

Bernard felt responsible in some way for the degenerative effects of the crusade. This heavy burden possibly hastened his death, which came August 20, 1153.

Bernard's life in the Church was more active than we can imagine possible today. His efforts produced far-reaching results. But he knew that they would have availed little without the many hours of prayer and contemplation that brought him strength and heavenly direction. His life was characterized by a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. His sermons and books about Mary are still the standard of Marian theology.

We know little about **St Bartholomew**. He is mentioned only in the lists of the apostles. Some scholars identify him with Nathanael, a man of Cana in Galilee who was summoned to Jesus by Philip. Jesus paid him a great compliment: "Here is a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him" (John 1:47b). When Nathanael asked how Jesus knew him, Jesus said, "I saw you under the fig tree" (John 1:48b). Whatever amazing revelation this involved, it brought Nathanael to exclaim, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel" But Jesus countered with, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than this" (John 1:49-50).



Nathanael did see greater things. He was one of those to whom Jesus appeared on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias after his resurrection (see John 21:1-14). They had been fishing all night without success. In the morning, they saw someone standing on the shore though no one knew it was Jesus. He told them to cast their net again, and they made so great a catch that they could not haul the net in. Then John cried out to Peter, "It is the Lord."

Bartholomew or Nathanael? We are confronted again with the fact that we know almost nothing about most of the apostles. Yet the unknown ones were also foundation stones, the twelve pillars of the new Israel whose twelve tribes now encompass the whole earth. Their personalities were secondary—without thereby being demeaned—to their great office of bearing tradition from their firsthand experience, speaking in the name of Jesus, putting the Word Made Flesh into human words for the enlightenment of the world. Their holiness was not an introverted contemplation of their status before God. It was a gift that they had to share with others. The Good News was that all are called to the holiness of being Christ's members, by the gracious gift of God.

The simple fact is that humanity is totally meaningless unless God is its total concern. Then humanity, made holy with God's own holiness, becomes the most precious creation of God.

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## 6. From a sermon by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux

### *I love because I love. I love that I may love*

Love is sufficient of itself, it gives pleasure by itself and because of itself. It is its own merit, its own reward. Love looks for no cause outside itself, no effect beyond itself. Its profit lies in its practice. I love because I love, I love that I may love. Love is a great thing so long as it continually returns to its fountainhead, flows back to its source, always drawing from there the water which constantly replenishes it. Of all the movements, sensations and feelings of the soul, love is the only one in which the creature can respond to the Creator and make some sort of similar return however unequal though it be. For when God loves, all he desires is to be loved in return; the sole purpose of his love is to be loved, in the knowledge that those who love him are made happy by their love of him.

The Bridegroom's love, or rather the love which is the Bridegroom, asks in return nothing but faithful love. Let the beloved, then, love in return. Should not a bride love, and above all, Love's bride? Could it be that Love not be loved?

Rightly then does she give up all other feelings and give herself wholly to love alone; in giving love back, all she can do is to respond to love. And when she has poured out her whole being in love, what is that in comparison with the unceasing torrent of that original source? Clearly, lover and Love, soul and Word, bride and Bridegroom, creature and Creator do not flow with the same volume; one might as well equate a thirsty man with the fountain.

What then of the bride's hope, her aching desire, her passionate love, her confident assurance? Is all this to wilt just because she cannot match stride for stride with her giant, any more than she can vie with honey for sweetness, rival the lamb for gentleness, show herself as white as the lily, burn as bright as the sun, be equal in love with him who is Love? No. It is true that the creature loves less because she is less. But if she loves with her whole being, nothing is lacking where everything is given. To love so ardently then is to share the marriage bond; she cannot love so much and not be totally loved, and it is in the perfect union of two hearts that complete and total marriage consists. Or are we to doubt that the soul is loved by the Word first and with a greater love?

## 7. 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.*

*Pray for the world.* For the leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenges that beset the international community. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome. For all who work for peace and justice. For reconciliation with the first custodians of this land.

*Pray for the church.* For all those who are striving to be church in the modern world, that we may be alert to the signs of the times and their interpretation in the light of the Gospel. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Wusasa (Nigeria). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of North Queensland; and in our own Diocese of Adelaide, for the Assistant Bishops.

*Pray for our local community.* For the Collective as it manages the delivery of the Saturday Night Mary Mags Dinner. For the Magdalene Centre, its customers, staff and volunteers, as they minister in God's name among those in crisis and in need of support and assistance.

*Pray for those in need.* Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan

Clark (priest), Mark, Nance, Neil, Elaine, Edward, Neil, Hugh, Bart O'Donovan (priest) and Prue O'Donovan (Priest).

*Pray for those who have died.* Those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; those who have died alone or in tragic circumstances; those who have died recently, especially Alison Cobbett, Robert Whalley (priest), 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 Bernard, 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](mailto:StMMAdelaide.Parish@outlook.com), by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

#### Directory

Parish Priest	Revd Dr Steven Ogden ☎ 0408 817 147, ✉ <a href="mailto:stevengogden@gmail.com">stevengogden@gmail.com</a> ( <i>on leave 8-19 August</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	John Dow, Catherine Freriks, Annemarie Van Putten
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks