

# 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 18 March 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 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 Gwilym – The Sign of the Cross – God's Signature



#### † **A Signature is a Sign of Commitment**

Every time we make a major commitment, people insist that we Sign our names.

#### † **The Cross is God's Signature of commitment to us**

The Cross is the Sign of God's absolute commitment to Creation. Jesus sealed God's commitment of love by dying on the Cross for us. The Cross has therefore become the symbol of God's love - it is the way God Signs his name to a total commitment to Creation.

#### † **We accept God's commitment and we live by it**

We say 'yes' to all the love that God has shown us. We put the love of God at the heart of everything we are and do.

#### † **The Cross is the Signature of God's People**

When we make the Sign of the cross we show, not only that we accept what God has given us, but also that we ourselves are committed to offering that love in return - to God and to Creation.

#### † **The Sign of the Cross at Baptism**

Whenever we make the Sign of the Cross, we renew the promises made at our Baptism, and accept anew the gift of God's love for us. When we enter or leave a Church, we use baptismal water to make the Sign of the Cross as an added reminder of our Baptism.

† **The Sign of the Cross as a Prayer**

The Sign of the Cross is the loveliest prayer gesture we can make: sometimes slowly and carefully; sometimes with great devotion and sometimes hurriedly. The Sign of the Cross, even in a hurry, comes from a heart wanting to love God

† **The Sign of the Cross to bless**

This is really a way of saying "this belongs to God" or "we are going to use this for the love of God".

† **The Sign of the Cross to Absolve**

The Cross tells us that God forgives us utterly and completely, and wants us to be totally free from everything that damages us.

† **The Sign of the Cross to Unite us**

Nothing can divide those who Sign their lives with the Cross of Christ.

† **The Sign of the Cross in Worship**

It is appropriate to make the Sign of the Cross at various times during worship. Making the Sign connects us to that particular place in the liturgy – it "keeps us up to speed". We don't always need to use words to take part in the conversation.

For example, when the Priest says the Absolution to declare our sins forgiven, the Sign says, "Through Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, my sins are forgiven".

And at the Blessing at the end of Mass, the Sign says, "I am truly blessed, and I can be a blessing to others".

May you be a blessing to all those you meet.

Fr Gwilym Henry-Edwards

Locum Priest

*\* Originally written by Fr Mike Nixon for St Luke's Church, Enmore and adapted by Gwilym Henry-Edwards.*

## 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://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.

### 4. Veiling Crosses and Images in Lent

In many places throughout the world, Crosses and Images of Our Lord and the Saints are veiled for all or part of the season of Lent. The duration of such veiling varies from place to place. The custom in many places is to veil from before first vespers or the vigil Mass of the Fifth Sunday of Lent while others limit this veiling from after the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.

The veils are usually made of lightweight purple cloth without any decoration. Crosses are unveiled after the Good Friday ceremonies. All other images are unveiled shortly before the Mass of the Easter Vigil. Fixtures such as Stations of the Cross and stained glass windows are not veiled.

The custom of veiling the images during the last two weeks of Lent hails from the old One Year liturgical calendar in which the Passion was read on the Fifth Sunday of Lent (hence called "Passion Sunday") as well as on Palm Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, and Good Friday. For this reason the period following the Fifth Sunday of Lent was formerly called "Passiontide".

The historical origin of the practice of veiling crosses and images is contested, but probably derives from a custom, noted in Germany from the 9th century, of extending a large cloth before the altar from the beginning of Lent. This cloth hid the altar entirely during Lent and was not removed until during the reading of the Passion on Holy Wednesday at the words "the veil of the temple was torn in two."

As Bishop Peter Elliott, a retired assistant bishop in the Catholic Diocese of Melbourne and a renowned liturgical scholar remarks, "The custom of veiling crosses and images ... has much to commend it in terms of religious psychology, because it helps us to concentrate on the great essentials of Christ's work of Redemption."

The custom of Lenten veils (like the related practice of removing the *Alleluia* during Lent) most obviously underlines the penitential character of Lent. The earliest sources make a connection between the Lenten veils and the grief and penitence of Lent. From this perspective, the Lenten veils function something like sackcloth and ashes, symbols of mourning and penance.

The Lenten veils also dramatize the separation of sin. A veil before the altar would be an especially stark symbol of the rupture in communion brought about by sin. For the altar is where the faithful are nourished in their union with the Lord Jesus, where the people of God eat together with God. A screen before the altar would make visible the breach of relationship wrought by sin and, thereby, call the faithful to contrition. A mute signal: "See what you've done!" In hiding the site of Holy Communion, the veil also obliquely draws attention to the goal of all penitence, namely, the restoration of fellowship with God and neighbour.

Lenten veiling, we might say further, suggests the shroud of sin, its deception and shame. The veil recalls the fig leaves of Adam and Eve; their fear to stand naked before their Creator; the first sign of the devastation of the goodness of creation. The veil sets before us the distorting deception of sin, and mirrors our capacity for self-deceit. The veil suggests our discomfort before the truth, especially before the judgement of the Cross.

Or perhaps the veil conceals a glory we are not yet able to bear. Like the veil over the face of Moses come from speaking with the Lord. Like whatever kept the disciples on the road to Emmaus from recognizing the risen Jesus. Like the glass in which we now see darkly.

Why veil crosses during Lent? Perhaps to train us to perceive the glory of the Cross. Perhaps so we can learn to sing with joy, "Behold the wood of the Cross, on which was hung the world's salvation." Perhaps because we come to see the Cross clearly through the light of the Resurrection.

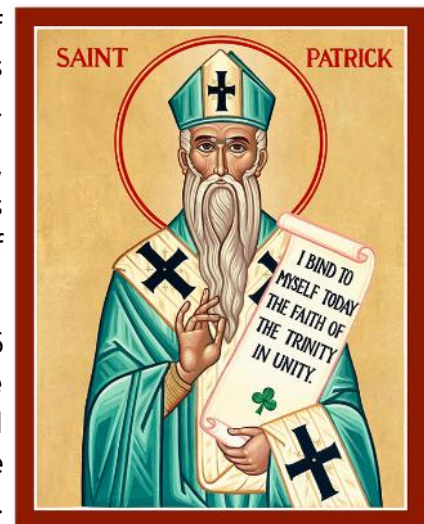
## 5. In the Church's Calendar

The Church's calendar this week we celebrate a rich diversity of holy women and men dating back to the very time of Our Lord, and into the 20th century.

St Patrick (d. 461), the patron saint of Ireland, is one of Christianity's most widely known figures. But for all of his prevalence in culture, his life remains somewhat of a mystery.

Many of the stories traditionally associated with St. Patrick, including the famous account of his banishing all the snakes from Ireland, are the products of hundreds of years of exaggerated storytelling.

For a start, he was not Irish. Born in Britain, at the age of 16 he was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who were attacking his family's estate. They transported him to Ireland where he spent six years in captivity. During this time, he worked as a shepherd, outdoors and away from people. Lonely and afraid, he turned to his religion for solace, becoming a devout Christian.



After escaping and returning to Britain, Patrick reported that he experienced a second revelation—an angel in a dream tells him to return to Ireland as a missionary. Soon after, Patrick began religious training, a course of study that lasted more than 15 years. After his ordination as a priest, he was sent to Ireland with a dual mission: to minister to Christians already living in Ireland and to begin to convert the Irish.

Familiar with the Irish language and culture, Patrick chose to incorporate traditional ritual into his lessons of Christianity instead of attempting to eradicate native Irish beliefs. For instance, he used bonfires to celebrate Easter since the Irish were used to honouring their gods with fire. He also superimposed the sun, a powerful Irish symbol, onto the Christian cross to create what is now called a Celtic cross, so that veneration of the symbol would seem more natural to the Irish. With the revival of interest in Celtic spirituality, it has become one of the best-known Christian symbols.

St Joseph. The Bible pays Joseph the highest compliment: he was a “just” man. The quality meant a lot more than faithfulness in paying debts.

When the Bible speaks of God “justifying” someone, it means that God, the all-holy or “righteous” one, so transforms a person that the individual shares somehow in God’s own holiness, and hence it is really “right” for God to love him or her. In other words, God is not playing games, acting as if we were lovable when we are not.

By saying Joseph was “just,” the Bible means that he was one who was completely open to all that God wanted to do for him. He became holy by opening himself totally to God.

The rest we can easily surmise. Think of the kind of love with which he wooed and won Mary, and the depth of the love they shared during their marriage.

It is no contradiction of Joseph’s holiness that he decided to divorce Mary when she was found to be with child. The important words of the Bible are that he planned to do this “quietly” because he was “a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame” (Matthew 1:19).

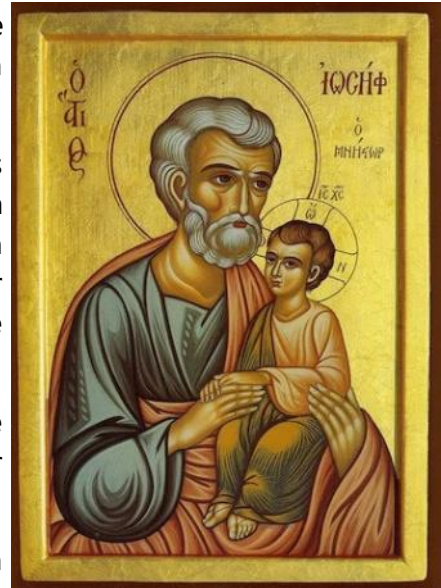
The just man was simply, joyfully, wholeheartedly obedient to God—in marrying Mary, in naming Jesus, in shepherding the precious pair to Egypt, in bringing them to Nazareth, in a life of quiet faith and courage.

St Cuthbert (634-687) was bishop of the great Benedictine abbey of Lindisfarne (or Holy Island) one of the most venerated English saints, who evangelized Northumbria and was posthumously hailed as a wonder-worker.

After a divine vision, Cuthbert, a shepherd, entered a monastery but in 661, the region was struck by the plague, afflicting Cuthbert and killing the prior, whom he succeeded. Thereafter, he aided plague victims while missioning throughout the countryside, reportedly performing miracles.

In 684 he was appointed bishop of Hexham, a see that he exchanged in 685 for that of Lindisfarne. In 687 he retired, and a small 14th-century chapel stands on the site of his final hermitage. He was buried at Lindisfarne, but his body was removed in 875 to protect it from Viking raids.

After many moves in northeastern England, Cuthbert’s relics were finally deposited in Durham towards the end of the 10th century, and in 1104 were moved into the newly-built Norman Cathedral. A shrine to his memory was built, made of marble studded with jewels and semi-precious stones. During the Middle Ages it became a centre of pilgrimage, where huge numbers of people flocked to seek the saint’s blessing and healing powers. The shrine was destroyed by King Henry VIII in 1538, and was replaced in 1542 by the simple marble slab marked ‘Cuthbertus’. The stones around the slab are part of the original construction.



Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) had a career in education at Cambridge University prior to his ordination in 1523. A plague forced Cranmer to leave Cambridge for Essex. He came to the attention of Henry VIII, who was staying nearby. The king and his councillors found Cranmer a willing advocate for Henry's desired divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Cranmer argued the case as part of the embassy to Rome in 1530, and in 1532 became ambassador to Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.



Cranmer was later sent to Germany to learn more about Lutheranism. Here he met Margaret Oslander, the niece of a Lutheran reformer, who he married. In 1533, Cranmer was chosen to be archbishop of Canterbury and forced (for a time) to hide his married state.

Once his appointment was approved by the pope, Cranmer declared Henry's marriage to Catherine void, and four months later married him to Anne Boleyn. With Thomas Cromwell, he supported the translation of the bible into English. In 1545, he wrote a litany that is still used in the church. Under the reign of Edward VI, Cranmer was allowed to make the doctrinal changes he thought necessary to the church. In 1549, he helped complete the Book of Common Prayer.

After Edward VI's death, Cranmer supported Lady Jane Grey as successor. Her nine-day reign was followed by the Roman Catholic Mary I, who tried him for treason. After a long trial and imprisonment, he was forced to proclaim to the public his error in the support of Protestantism, an act designed to discourage followers of the religion. Despite this, Cranmer was sentenced to be burnt to death in Oxford on 21 March 1556. He dramatically stuck his right hand, with which he had signed his recantation, into the fire first.

Cranmer's great legacy is the Book of Common Prayer, the basis of every Anglican liturgy world-wide, and an unquestioned literary masterpiece, profoundly embedded into English culture, with many of its turns of phrase deeply imprinted into every English speaking person worldwide.

In the course of his lifetime Thomas Ken (1637-1711) was both rewarded and punished for his firm adherence to principle. He became a priest and served for a year at the Hague as chaplain to Princess Mary, niece of King Charles II of England and wife of the Dutch King William of Orange. During this year he publicly rebuked King William for his treatment of his wife Queen Mary, which may be why he was chaplain there for only a year.

Upon his return to England, he was made Royal Chaplain to King Charles, who appointed him bishop of Bath and Wells. When Charles was on his deathbed, it was Ken whom he asked to be with him and prepare him for death.



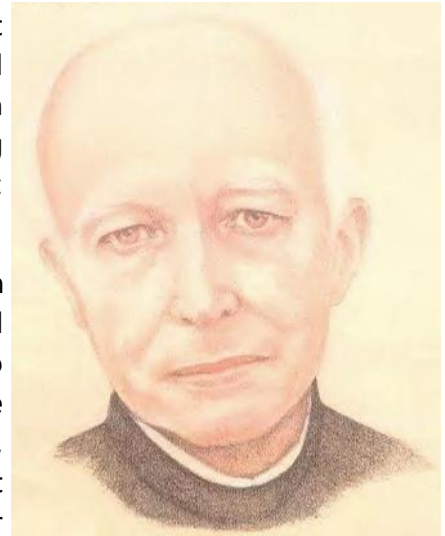
Ken subsequently fell foul of the Catholic James II, a dispute that became considerably more complex when the crown was later offered to William and Mary. He resigned his bishopric, became a private tutor, and spent the rest of his life in retirement.

Today, Ken is best known for many hymns, including a verse that continues to be sung week by week in practically every corner of the world:

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Paul Couturier (1881-1953) was a French Catholic priest whose It was 1923. Thousands of Russian refugees had fled to the French city of Lyon in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. They had lost so much, but there was one thing they all held onto as they huddled in their makeshift camp: their Orthodox faith.

In the midst of this distressing environment came an unassuming Catholic priest named Paul Couturier. He helped them find shelter, employment, food, and schooling. He also forged close friendships with them and grew to love the beauty and strength of their faith. So it was, in a quiet, hidden way, that the seeds of a groundbreaking movement were sown—a movement that has shaped the Church ever since.



In 1932, he spent a month with the Monks of Unity, a group initiated by Pope Pius XI to promote Christian unity. During his retreat, Couturier read the work of James Wattson, an Anglican convert to Catholicism who wanted all Anglicans to reunite with Rome. Reading Wattson in light of his own grassroots work, Couturier saw that unity could not be simply an intellectual, theological achievement. People's hearts needed to be touched just as deeply as their minds. Couturier called this "spiritual ecumenism": the conviction that relationships could progress without full theological communion and perhaps one day would lead to it.

Coutourier's legacy continues to influence ecumenical activity to the present day.

## 6. From the Confession of St Patrick

*Through me many peoples have been reborn in God*

I give unceasing thanks to my God, who kept me faithful *in the day of my testing*. Today I can offer him sacrifice with confidence, giving myself as *a living victim* to Christ, my Lord, *who kept me safe through all my trials*. I can say now: *Who am I, Lord*, and what is my calling, that you worked through me with such divine power? You did all this so that today *among the Gentiles* I might constantly *rejoice* and glorify your name wherever I may be, both in prosperity and in adversity. You did it so that, whatever happened to me, I might accept good and evil equally, always giving thanks to God. God showed me how to have faith in him for ever, as one who is never to be doubted. He answered my prayer in such a way that *in the last days*, ignorant though I am, I might be bold enough to take up so holy and so wonderful a task, and

imitate in some degree those whom the Lord had so long ago foretold as heralds of his Gospel, *bearing witness to all nations*.

*How did I get this wisdom, that was not mine before? I did not know the number of my days, or have knowledge of God. How did so great and salutary a gift come to me, the gift of knowing and loving God, though at the cost of homeland and family? I came to the Irish peoples to preach the Gospel and endure the taunts of unbelievers, putting up with reproaches about my earthly pilgrimage, suffering many persecutions, even bondage, and losing my birthright of freedom for the benefit of others.*

If I am worthy, *I am ready* also to give up *my life*, without hesitation and most willingly, for his name. I want to *spend myself* in that country, *even in death*, if the Lord should grant me this favour. I am deeply in his debt, for he gave me the great grace that through me many peoples should be reborn in God, and then made perfect by confirmation and everywhere among them clergy ordained for a people so recently coming to believe, one people gathered by the Lord *from the ends of the earth*. As God had prophesied of old through the prophets: *The nations shall come to you from the ends of the earth, and say: "How false are the idols made by our fathers: they are useless."* In another prophecy he said: *I have set you as a light among the nations, to bring salvation to the ends of the earth.*

It is among that people that I want to *wait for the promise* made by him, who assuredly never tells a lie. He makes this promise in the Gospel: *They shall come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*. This is our faith: believers are to come from the whole world.

## **7. St Joseph – from a Sermon by St Bernadine of Siena**

### *The faithful foster-father and guardian*

There is a general rule concerning all special graces granted to any human being. Whenever the divine favour chooses someone to receive a special grace, or to accept a lofty vocation, God adorns the person chosen with all the gifts of the Spirit needed to fulfil the task at hand.

This general rule is especially verified in the case of Saint Joseph, the foster-father of our Lord and the husband of the Queen of our world, enthroned above the angels. He was chosen by the eternal Father as the trustworthy guardian and protector of his greatest treasures, namely, his divine Son and Mary, Joseph's wife. He carried out this vocation with complete fidelity until at last God called him, saying: "Good and faithful servant enter into the joy of your Lord".

What then is Joseph's position in the whole Church of Christ? Is he not chosen and set apart? Through him and, yes, under him, Christ was fittingly and honourably introduced into the world. Holy Church in its entirety is indebted to the Virgin Mother because through her it was judged worthy to receive Christ. But after her we undoubtedly owe special gratitude and reverence to Saint Joseph.

In him the Old Testament finds its fitting close. He brought the noble line of patriarchs and prophets to its promised fulfilment. What the divine goodness had offered as a promise to them, he held in his arms.

Obviously, Christ does not now deny to Joseph that intimacy, reverence and very high honour which he gave him on earth, as a son to his father. Rather we must say that in heaven Christ completes and perfects all that he gave at Nazareth.



Now we can see how the last summoning words of the Lord appropriately apply to Saint Joseph: "Enter into the joy of your Lord". In fact, although the joy of eternal happiness enters into the soul of a man, the Lord preferred to say to Joseph: "Enter into joy". His intention was that the words should have a hidden spiritual meaning for us. They convey not only that this holy man possesses an inward joy, but also that it surrounds him and engulfs him like an infinite abyss.

Remember us, Saint Joseph, and plead for us to Christ. Ask your most holy bride, the Virgin Mary, to look kindly upon us, since she is the mother of him who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns eternally. Amen.

## 8. 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 Diocese of Awori (Nigeria). in our national church, pray for the Diocese of North West Australia; and within our own Diocese, for the Parish of Plympton.

*For our local community.* For the Collective as it resumes its ministry to the community in the Drop-In Centre is suspended, and for its guests as they seek 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, 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; those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about this time, especially Julie Hooke. ✠ 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 Patrick, St Joseph, St Cuthbert, Thomas Cranmer, Thomas Ken, Paul Coutourier, 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.

