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 20 April 2023

Spiritual Resources & Reflections

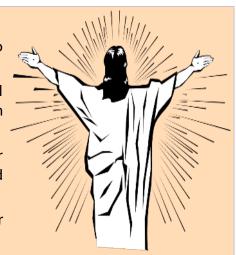
Dear friends,

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

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 Regina Caeli noon and Mass at 12.10 pm.

The decision to return to worship in community, whether for private prayer, or the public celebration of the Word and Sacraments, is not a straightforward matter.

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



1. The Gospels in Easter Time

Early on Easter Day, Mary Magdalene has discovered that Jesus' body is missing from the tomb; the door is open, so it looks as though someone has stolen it. She has seen a man standing near the tomb. When he speaks to her, she recognizes him as Jesus. She has told the disciples: "I have seen the Lord".

On Easter 2, we move forward to later on the same day. Jesus joins the disciples, gathered behind locked doors. He shows them that he is the one who was crucified. Jesus confers on "the disciples" (not including Thomas, but perhaps a group larger than the ten) "peace" and "the Holy Spirit". As God "breathed" life into Adam, so Jesus now breathes the new, spiritual, life of recreated humanity into his followers. Aided by the Spirit, they continue Jesus' judicial role in the world, forgiving the sins of the faithful and holding others blameworthy ("retain",) for their actions. Thomas is expected to believe without having seen, but he demands: show me the evidence! The next week, the community gathers again. Upon seeing, Thomas makes the most complete affirmation of faith of anyone in the gospel. Henceforth the faith of all Christians in all ages will rest on the testimony of the first believers.

On Easter 3, it is again Easter Day, the day on which Mary Magdalene and the other women have discovered the empty tomb. As two of Jesus' followers walk to Emmaus, they talk about the day's news, the recent startling events. Jesus tells them how slow they are to grasp how the Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled in him. Was it not God's plan that Jesus should be crucified and ascend to be with the Father? He interprets his life as a fulfilment of all of Scripture, from "Moses" (meaning the first five books of the Bible) to "all the prophets". The meal seems to be a Eucharist: "he took bread, blessed and broke it". Then, from Jesus' interpretation and their hospitality to this "stranger" "their eyes were opened", i.e. they develop a deeper understanding of who Jesus is, that he is divine. At the Last Supper, Jesus

said he would not again share food with his disciples until God's kingdom came. He has now eaten with the two, so the Kingdom has indeed come. "The Lord has risen indeed ...!"

On the 4th Sunday of Easter, the theme each year is the image of Christ the Good Shepherd. In Palestine, sheep belonging to villagers roamed freely during the day but were confined to a common enclosure at night, to protect them from predators. Each morning, each shepherd called his sheep who followed him to pasture.

While "this figure of speech" is hard for us to understand in detail (as it was for those who heard Jesus), we can get the *drift*. So irate does the metaphor make the leaders that they try to stone him and Jesus flees across the Jordan. As he explains, he is the "gate", so presumably the *thieves and bandits* are the Jewish religious leaders. Jesus, both the "gatekeeper" and the "shepherd" is the true leader. He calls the faithful to follow him; they don't follow a "stranger". The people listen to him and not to the "Pharisees", "all who came before me". He is the only "gate" to eternal "life", to freedom ("come in and go out", a Jewish idiom), and to nourishment beyond measure ("find pasture ... abundantly").

On Easter 5, we return to the time before Jesus's death, when Jesus prepares his disciples for his departure. Belief in God includes belief in him. He is *going*, through resurrection and ascension, to the Father, to prepare a place of permanent fellowship for them. He will return to take them there, a place where there is ample room ("many dwelling places"). While the disciples continue to have some uncertainty, and indeed to actively disbelieve Jesus, his message is that they should trust him on the basis of what he does: you are seeing the Father's "works", including miracles. The faithful will continue these works. (The ones they do will be "greater", because Jesus has nullified sin.) By asking Jesus in prayer ("in my name", God will do whatever the faithful ask.

Jesus continues to prepare his disciples for his departure on the 6th Sunday. He has given them a special commandment: to "love one another" just as he has loved them. Love requires obedience and those who love him are those who obey. Keeping Jesus' commandments makes possible the continuance of their relationship with him – but how? The Father will send them "another" representative of God, also in God, as their "Advocate" or *champion*: one who will support, help and intercede for them. This is the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of truth", of faith, of revealed doctrine. He is neither perceivable nor knowable by unbelievers, so they have no access to him. But "you" both recognize ("know") him, because he will be within you and will remain (*abide*) in you. Jesus will come to you in the Spirit.

On Easter 7, Jesus ends his instructions to his disciples; he has concluded with "In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!" Now he prays to the Father. He summarizes the significance of his life. The time appointed by God for his departure (crucifixion, resurrection and ascension) has come. Glory can be defined as divine heavenly splendour where heaven is the state of ultimate good and love existing outside of time. Looking forward to the time after his departure, Jesus asks the Father to "protect" the disciples from evil influences in the alien "world", that they may have a unity modelled on that of the Father and the Son.

2. COVID-19 - Where are we now?

The ongoing impact of COVID-19 in the community has been considered by the Parish Council, which has agreed that we will continue to take a conservative approach for the time being, and to encourage precautions including Distancing, Ventilation and Facemasks: **DVM** for short. Distancing means maintaining a sensible distance of 1.5 metres between individuals or family

groups; Ventilation means leaving some doors and/or windows open to allow a flow of air—and we have air conditioning, in case of extreme weather!—and Facemasks are obvious.

That being said, it has been decided that the time has come to reintroduce some customs that have been in abeyance.

- The foot-washing was restored to the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday.
 On this occasion it was a token celebration, with two worshippers participating: next year we hope to restore it fully.
- The physical Veneration of the Cross was available on Good Friday.
- The Sprinkling of Holy Water (often called the Asperges, or in Easter time, Vidi Aquam) will now return to the Sunday Mass. During Easter time, the ceremony replaces the Confession and Absolution, as a reminder of the sanctifying power of baptism and its special association with Easter. During the remainder of the year, it occurs as part of the regular prayers of penitence at the beginning of Mass.
- We will again take up a Collection at the Offertory. Even though most of our community now supports the church by electronic transfer, there are some who do not, some who use envelopes, and of course visitors to the church find themselves uncertain about what do to.

We continue to review the few remaining actions which we have voluntarily chosen to forego during the pandemic. In particular, we are mindful of the desire on the part of some to reintroduce Communion in both kinds, both bread and wine, and will be looking closely at this during Easter time.

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 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 in praying the <u>Angelus</u> 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://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. This Week in the Calendar

This week in the Church's calendar we celebrate the medieval bishop and teacher St Anselm (d. 1109), the early church martyr St George, the 20th century martyr Oscar Romero, and St Mark the Evangelist.

Indifferent toward religion in his youth, **St Anselm** (d.1109) became one of the Church's greatest theologians and leaders. His attempt to analyze and illumine the truths of faith with the aid of reason led him to be called the Father of Scholasticism.

At 15, Anselm wanted to enter a monastery, but was refused acceptance because of his father's opposition. Twelve years later, he finally fulfilled his desire to be a monk. He entered the monastery of Bec in Normandy, was elected prior three years later, and 15 years later, was unanimously chosen abbot.

Considered an original and independent thinker, Anselm was admired for his patience, gentleness, and teaching skill. Under his leadership, the Abbey of Bec became a monastic school, influential in philosophical and theological studies.



During these years, at the community's request, Anselm began publishing his theological works, comparable to those of Saint Augustine. His best-known work is the book *Cur Deus Homo* ("Why God Became Man").

His care and concern extended to the very poorest people. Opposing the slave trade, Anselm obtained from the national council at Westminster the passage of a resolution prohibiting the sale of human beings.

Like every true follower of Christ, Anselm had to carry his cross, especially in the form of opposition and conflict with those in political control. Though personally a mild and gentle man and a lover of peace, he would not back off from conflict and persecution when principles were at stake.

St George (d.303) is the object of a vast amount of imagination. There is every reason to believe that he was a real martyr who suffered at Lydda in Palestine, probably before the time of Constantine.

The Church adheres to his memory, but not to the legends surrounding his life. That he was willing to pay the supreme price to follow Christ is what the Church believes. And it is enough.

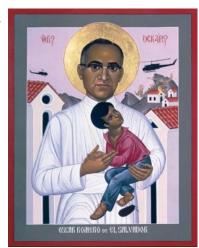
The story of George's slaying the dragon, rescuing the king's daughter, and converting Libya is a 12th-century Italian fable. George was a favourite patron saint of crusaders, as well as of Eastern soldiers in earlier times.



Human nature seems to crave more than cold historical data. The life of Saint Francis of Assisi is inspiring enough, but for centuries the Italians have found his spirit in the legends of the *Fioretti*, too. Santa Claus is the popular extension of the spirit of Saint Nicholas. The legends about Saint George are part of this yearning. Both fact and legend are human ways of illumining the mysterious truth about the One who alone is holy.

Born in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador, in 1917, **Oscar Romero** was trained by his father to be a carpenter, but he went on to the seminary and later studied in Rome for a licentiate in theology. After his ordination there in 1942, Romero returned to El Salvador to serve as a pastor for 20 years, eventually becoming a seminary rector. He served the Salvadoran bishops' conference and directed a fairly conservative archdiocesan newspaper.

On February 23, 1977, Romero was appointed archbishop of San Salvador, much to the relief of the junta government and the aristocracy, who saw him as an ally. The authorities were to be sadly disappointed.



At the time of Romero's appointment, two percent of the population owned 60 percent of the land, and 14 families were said to own the country. Those in power were worried about the rising movement of liberation theology. (Essentially this is a theology that asserts that God has a preferential option for the poor, and that people of faith need to transform social, government, and economic systems that keep people poor.)

A few weeks after Romero was installed as the new archbishop, his friend Father Rutilio Grande, SJ, was brutally killed with companions for organizing Salvadoran peasants. The government failed to investigate. After this stunning experience, Romero then fully committed himself to walk the same path—a major, personal transformation in the Spirit.

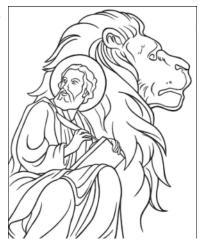
Through sermons, radio broadcasts, processions, and the like, this once-timid archbishop began to denounce the government's rapidly growing violence, building a massive local and global following. By February 1980, Romero wrote to US President Jimmy Carter, strongly urging him to end military support to the Salvadoran junta. His pleas were ignored, and over the next number of years, the Reagan administration would direct roughly a million dollars per day to the military regime. This led to the killing of 100,000 and, some believe, as many as 300,000 Salvadorans—one of the longest and bloodiest conflicts in our hemisphere.

On March 23, 1980, Archbishop Romero delivered a now-famous homily ordering soldiers to stop killing their own countrymen. "It is time to regain your conscience. In the name of God and the name of the suffering people, I implore you, I beg you, I order you, stop the repression!" The very next day, Romero was shot while celebrating Mass, as plotted by military and other local leaders. Forty people were killed by gunfire and explosions at Romero's funeral. Romero was beatified in 2015, and canonised by Pope Francis in 2018.

Most of what we know about **St Mark** comes directly from the New Testament. He is usually identified with the Mark of Acts 12:12. When Saint Peter escaped from prison, he went to the home of Mark's mother.

Paul and Barnabas took him along on the first missionary journey, but for some reason Mark returned alone to Jerusalem. It is evident, from Paul's refusal to let Mark accompany him on the second journey despite Barnabas's insistence, that Mark had displeased Paul.

Because Paul later asks Mark to visit him in prison, we may assume the trouble did not last long.



The oldest and the shortest of the four Gospels, the Gospel of Mark emphasizes Jesus's rejection by humanity while being God's triumphant envoy. Probably written for gentile converts in Rome—after the death of Peter and Paul sometime between A.D. 60 and 70—Mark's Gospel is the gradual manifestation of a "scandal": a crucified Messiah.

Evidently a friend of Mark—calling him "my son"—Peter is only one of this Gospel's sources, others being the Church in Jerusalem (Jewish roots), and the Church at Antioch (largely Gentile).

Like another Gospel writer Luke, Mark was not one of the 12 apostles. We cannot be certain whether he knew Jesus personally. Some scholars feel that the evangelist is speaking of himself when describing the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane: "Now a young man followed him wearing nothing but a linen cloth about his body. They seized him, but he left the cloth behind and ran off naked" (Mark 14:51-52). Others hold Mark to be the first bishop of Alexandria, Egypt. Venice, famous for the Piazza San Marco, claims Mark as its patron saint; the large basilica there is believed to contain his remains.

A winged lion is Mark's symbol. The lion derives from Mark's description of John the Baptist as a "voice of one crying out in the desert" (Mark 1:3), which artists compared to a roaring lion. The wings come from the application of Ezekiel's vision of four winged creatures to the evangelists.

Mark fulfilled in his life what every Christian is called to do: proclaim to all people the Good News that is the source of salvation. In particular, Mark's way was by writing. Others may proclaim the Good News by music, drama, poetry, or by teaching children around a family table.

6. On the Feast of St Anselm - From the Proslogion by St Anselm

Let me know you and love you, so that I may find my joy in you

My soul, have you found what you are looking for? You were looking for God, and you have discovered that he is the supreme being, and that you could not possibly imagine anything more perfect. You have discovered that this supreme being is life itself, light, wisdom, goodness, eternal blessedness and blessed eternity. He is everywhere, and he is timeless.

Lord my God, you gave me life and restored it when I lost it. Tell my soul that so longs for you what else you are besides what it has already understood, so that it may see you clearly. It stands on tiptoe to see more, but apart from what it has seen already, it sees nothing but darkness. Of course it does not really see darkness, because there is no darkness in you, but it sees that it can see no further because of the darkness in itself.

Surely, Lord, inaccessible light is your dwelling place, for no one apart from yourself can enter into it and fully comprehend you. If I fail to see this light it is simply because it is too bright for me. Still, it is by this light that I do see all that I can, even as weak eyes, unable to look straight at the sun, see all that they can by the sun's light.

The light in which you dwell, Lord, is beyond my understanding. It is so brilliant that I cannot bear it, I cannot turn my mind's eye toward it for any length of time. I am dazzled by its brightness, amazed by its grandeur, overwhelmed by its immensity, bewildered by its abundance.

O supreme and inaccessible light, O complete and blessed truth, how far you are from me, even though I am so near to you! How remote you are from my sight, even though I am present to yours! You are everywhere in your entirety, and yet I do not see you; in you I move and have my being, and yet I cannot approach you; you are within me and around me, and yet I do not perceive you.

O God, let me know you and love you so that I may find my joy in you; and if I cannot do so fully in this life, let me at least make some progress every day, until at last that knowledge, love and joy come to me in all their plenitude. While I am here on earth let me learn to know you better, so that in heaven I may know you fully; let my love for you grow deeper here, so that there I may love you fully. On earth then I shall have great joy in hope, and in heaven complete joy in the fulfilment of my hope.

O Lord, through your Son you command us, no, you counsel us to ask, and you promise that you will hear us so that our joy may be complete. Lord, I am making the request that you urge us to make through your Wonder-Counsellor. Give me then what you promise to give through your Truth. You, O God, are faithful; grant that I may receive my request, so that my joy may be complete.

Meanwhile, let this hope of mine be in my thoughts and on my tongue; let my heart be filled with it, my voice speak of it; let my soul hunger for it, my body thirst for it, my whole being yearn for it, until I enter into the joy of the Lord, who is Three in One, blessed for ever. Amen.

7. On the Feast of St George - From a sermon by Saint Peter Damian

Invincibly defended by the banner of the cross

Dear brothers, our joy in today's feast is heightened by our joy in the glory of Easter, just as the splendour of a precious jewel enhances the beauty of its gold setting.

Saint George was a man who abandoned one army for another: he gave up the rank of tribune to enlist as a soldier for Christ. Eager to encounter the enemy, he first stripped away his worldly wealth by giving all he had to the poor. Then, free and unencumbered, bearing the shield of faith, he plunged into the thick of the battle, an ardent soldier for Christ.

Clearly what he did serves to teach us a valuable lesson: if we are afraid to strip ourselves of our worldly possessions, then we are unfit to make a strong defence of the faith.

As for Saint George, he was consumed with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Armed with the invincible standard of the cross, he did battle with an evil king and acquitted himself so well that, in vanquishing the king, he overcame the prince of all wicked spirits, and encouraged other soldiers of Christ to perform brave deeds in his cause.

Of course, the supreme invisible arbiter was there, who sometimes permits evil men to prevail so that his will may be accomplished. And although he surrendered the body of his martyr

into the hands of murderers, yet he continued to take care of his soul, which was supported by the unshakeable defence of its faith.

Dear brothers, let us not only admire the courage of this fighter in heaven's army but follow his example. Let us be inspired to strive for the reward of heavenly glory, keeping in mind his example, so that we will not be swayed from our path, though the world seduce us with its smiles or try to terrify us with naked threats of its trials and tribulations.

We must now cleanse ourselves, as Saint Paul tells us, from all defilement of body and spirit, so that one day we too may deserve to enter that temple of blessedness to which we now aspire.

Anyone who wishes to offer himself to God in the tent of Christ, which is the Church, must first bathe in the spring of holy baptism; then he must put on the various garments of the virtues. As it says in the Scriptures, *Let your priests be clothed in justice*. He who is reborn in baptism is a new man. He may no longer wear the things that signify mortality. He has discarded the old self and must put on the new. He must live continually renewed in his commitment to a holy sojourn in this world.

Truly we must be cleansed of the stains of our past sins and be resplendent in the virtue of our new way of life. Then we can be confident of celebrating Easter worthily and of truly following the example of the blessed martyrs.

8. On the Feast of St Oscar Romero - From an address

In the short period it has fallen to me to guide the Archdiocese of San Salvador, there have been four different governments with distinctive political programs. Over these years other political forces, revolutionary and democratic, have been growing and developing. So the Church has had to go on making judgments about politics from within a changing scene. At the present time the outlook is ambiguous. On the one hand all the projects emanating from the government are collapsing and the possibility of popular liberation is growing.

But rather than listing for you all the fluctuations in the politics of El Salvador, I have chosen to explain what lies at the root of the Church's stance in our explosive sociopolitical world. I have tried to make clear to you the ultimate criterion, one that is theological and historical, for the Church's involvement in the world of the poor. In accordance with her own specific nature the Church will go on supporting one or another political program to the extent that it operates in favour of the poor among the people.

I believe that this is the way to maintain the Church's identity and transcendence. We enter into the real socio-political development of our people. We judge it from the point of view of the poor. We encourage all liberation movements that really lead to justice and peace for the majority of the people. We think this is the way to preserve the transcendence and the identity of the Church because in this way we preserve our faith in God.

Every Christian used to say *Gloria Dei*, *vivens homo* (the glory of God is the living person). We could make this more concrete by saying *Gloria Dei*, *vivens pauper* (the glory of God is the living poor person). From the perspective of the transcendence of the gospel, I believe we can determine what the life of the poor truly is. And I also believe that by putting ourselves alongside the poor and trying to bring life to them, we shall come to know the eternal truth of the gospel.

9. On the Feast of St Mark - From the treatise Against Heresies by Saint Irenaeus

Preaching truth

The Church, which has spread everywhere, even to the ends of the earth, received the faith from the apostles and their disciples. By faith, we believe in one God, the almighty Father "who made heaven and earth and the sea and all that is in them." We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became man for our salvation. And we believe in the Holy Spirit who through the prophets foretold God's plan: the coming of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, his birth from the Virgin, his passion, his resurrection from the dead, his ascension into heaven, and his final coming from heaven in the glory of his Father, to "recapitulate all things" and to raise all men from the dead, so that, by the decree of his invisible Father, he may make a just judgement in all things and so that "every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth" to Jesus Christ our Lord and our God, our Saviour and our King, and "every tongue confess him."

The Church, spread throughout the whole world, received this preaching and this faith and now preserves it carefully, dwelling as it were in one house. Having one soul and one heart, the Church holds this faith, preaches and teaches it consistently as though by a single voice. For though there are different languages, there is but one tradition.

The faith and the tradition of the churches founded in Germany are no different from those founded among the Spanish and the Celts, in the East, in Egypt, in Libya and elsewhere in the Mediterranean world. Just as God's creature, the sun, is one and the same the world over, so also does the Church's preaching shine everywhere to enlighten all men who want to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Now of those who speak with authority in the churches, no preacher however forceful will utter anything different – for no one is above the Master – nor will a less forceful preacher diminish what has been handed down. Since our faith is everywhere the same, no one who can say more augments it, nor can anyone who says less diminish it.

10. 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 Sheffield (England). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of the Riverina; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Assistant Bishops.

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. Pray for all those who are troubled in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Olivia, Nance, Neil, Elaine, Edward and Neil.

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, especially John Jenner, 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 Anselm, St Oscar Romero, St George, St Mark, 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, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

The Parish relies on the financial support of the community for the majority of its budget. You can assist the Parish by giving electronically, using the following details:

Bank: Bankwest • BSB: 305 122 • Account no: 0324654 • Reference: Your name

Directory

Parish Priest Revd Dr Steven Ogden **②** 0408 817 147, **⋈** stevengogden@gmail.com **(on leave to 26/4/23)**

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 ex officio; Catherine Freriks, Alison McAllister, Hamish McLachlan, Peter Turner.

Nomination Committee Awaiting Appointment

Synod Representatives Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks