

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 26 November 2020

Spiritual Resources & Reflections

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 Tuesday and 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 Graeme – Making the most of Benediction as a devotion

For those who are accustomed to relating the Sacrament of the Eucharist - consecrated Bread and Wine - to the celebration of Holy Communion alone, the service of Benediction, which we celebrated at the end of Mass last Sunday, might come as a surprise – though not at St Mary Magdalene's, where it is a long-standing part of our devotional tradition.

It is clear that Christ ordained the Sacrament of Holy Communion to nourish us spiritually, as a great help in daily life, and as a special way of encountering us regularly. "An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace" as our Catechism puts it.

Benediction is a devotion which calls us to recognise and acknowledge the presence of Christ in the Sacrament - reinforcing what we believe about Holy Communion. While it was not ordained to be "gazed upon or carried about" (as the *39 Articles of Religion* put it), it was never forbidden by the Church to do this - as long as it was under strictly organised circumstances such as Benediction.

Some years ago I worked out a positive way of using Benediction as a helpful devotion personally. The words of Christ in John 12:32, "And when I am lifted up from the earth I shall draw all people to myself" were the inspiration for my thoughts.

Benediction ultimately involves lifting the Sacrament and blessing the people. The actual lifting of the Sacrament made me think of all people in a steady (if somewhat erratic) way making their ways to an elevated Christ, waiting for us all. This is normal life. All people in this throng are equal, and no one has a privileged path to Christ. Accordingly, we can look to left and right and possibly see family, friends, neighbours, people we dislike or despise, as well as those who have deeply offended us. Some of the crowd may seem to be a little off-course, but in their own ways and time they will make it. We can look at all of them and take to heart that we are

all on our way to Christ, and not one of us is better than another. We all make grave mistakes, and we all manage really good deeds.

In this way, Benediction has helped me with the way I regard other human beings. When I am furious with someone or heartily disagree with someone, I remember that throng of us all making our ways to Christ who is lifted up in glory. This thought soften my feelings of anger and affects the prayer that I offer about them.

It is also a way of thinking when the Sacrament is raised at Mass - at the conclusion of the Great Thanksgiving or Eucharistic Prayer. In that moment, we can think and pray very positively for various people in our lives.

We are very fortunate to have the Sacraments in our worship at church, because they offer so much to us which can affect us helpfully in daily life.

Fr Graeme Kaines

Locum Priest

2. Daily Prayer

Most Christian denominations have forms for prayer in the morning and the evening, and at other times of the day. Morning and Evening Prayer in the Anglican church's *A Prayer Book for Australia*, are available in either a fixed form (pages 3 – 33) or a different form for each day of the week (pages 383 – 424). The Bible readings for each day can be found in *The Australian Lectionary*, and for reference the readings for the coming week are:

	Morning Prayer	Evening Prayer
Thursday 26 November	Ps 65, 70 Malachi 2.1-16 Mark 3.18 – 3.6	Ps 66 Wisdom 11.15 – 12.2 Revelation 12.7-18
Friday 27 November	Ps 68.1-20 Malachi 2.17 – 3.12 Mark 3.7-19a	Ps 68.21-35 Wisdom 12.12-21 Revelation 13.1-10
Saturday 28 November	Ps 71 Malachi 3.13 – 4.6 Mark 3.19b-35	Ps 119.65-88 Wisdom 18.14-24 Revelation 13.11-18
Sunday 29 November <i>The First Sunday of Advent</i>	Ps 11 1 Corinthians 3.10-15	Ps 12 Isaiah 1.1-9 Luke 12.35-48
Monday 30 November <i>St Andrew</i>	Ps 147 Isaiah 49.1-9a John 1.35-42	Ps 48 Zechariah 8.20-23 John 12.20-32
Tuesday 1 December	Ps 74 Isaiah 2.1-18 Mark 4.21-41	Ps 75, 76 Isaiah 40.18-31 1 Thessalonians 2.1-12
Wednesday 2 December <i>Frances Perry</i>	Ps 77 Isaiah 2.19 – 3.12 Mark 5.1-20	Ps 78.1-15 Isaiah 41.1-16 1 Thessalonians 2.13-20
Thursday 3 December <i>St Frances Xavier</i>	Ps 78.16-38 Isaiah 3.13 – 4.6 Mark 5.21-43	Ps 78.39-70 Isaiah 41.17-29 1 Thessalonians 3

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 (App Store or Google Play). 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 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 Graeme 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 will in the future be presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org/>. To access the tab, 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, both on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

4. In the Church's Calendar

This week in the church's calendar we celebrate the feasts of three very different holy people. The apostle and martyr St Andrew; Frances Perry, the founder of the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne; and the priest and missionary St Francis Xavier.

We know little about **St Andrew**. In St Matthew's gospel, he and his brother Peter are called by Jesus to leave their work as fishermen with the famous phrase "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." (Matthew 4:20).

In St John's Gospel, Andrew is a disciple of John the Baptist. When Jesus walked by one day, John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." Andrew and another disciple followed Jesus. "Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come, and you will see.' So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day" (John 1:38-39a).



Before the miraculous multiplication of the loaves, it was Andrew who spoke up about the boy who had the barley loaves and fishes. When the Gentiles went to see Jesus, they came to Philip, but Philip then had recourse to Andrew.

As in the case of all the apostles except Peter and John, the Gospels give us little about the holiness of Andrew. He was an apostle. That is enough. He was called personally by Jesus to proclaim the Good News, to heal with Jesus' power and to share his life and death. Holiness today is no different. It is a gift that includes a call to be concerned about the Kingdom, an outgoing attitude that wants nothing more than to share the riches of Christ with all people.

Legend has it that Andrew preached the Good News in what is now modern Greece and Turkey and was crucified at Patras on an X-shaped cross.

Frances (Fanny) Perry (1814-1892) was born in England and came to Australia in 1847 when her husband, Charles Perry, was appointed as the first Bishop of Melbourne.

On the long voyage from England, while the bishop led services and taught his clergy Greek, Mrs Perry took Scripture classes for the women and practised her benevolence on the steerage passengers.

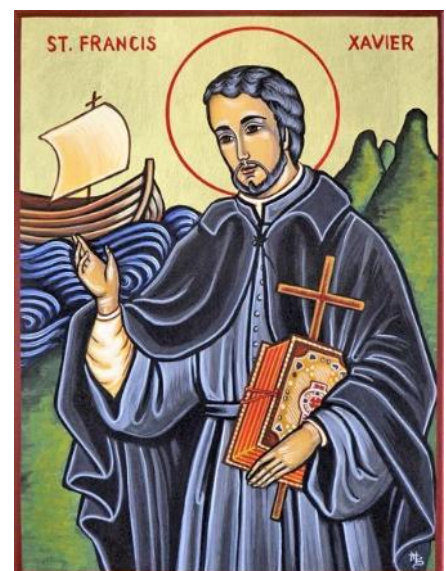
In addition to the genteel expectations of the Bishop's wife, along with the arduous work of accompanying him in his journeys, Mrs Perry took a great interest in the people and landscapes she encountered and published a collection of colourful letters under the pseudonym 'Richard Perry' as *Contributions to an Amateur Magazine in Prose and Verse* (London, 1857). She took leading roles in the Governesses' Home, the Carlton Refuge, and the Melbourne Orphan Asylum.

Her chief work, however, was as head of the committee that founded the Melbourne Lying-in Hospital – later the Royal Women's Hospital. She was first president from 1856 until Bishop Perry's retirement in 1874. Her memory is preserved in Frances Perry House at the Royal Women's Hospital.

St Francis Xavier (1506-1552).

Jesus asked, "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Matthew 16:26a).

The words were repeated to Francis Xavier, then a young teacher of philosophy who had a highly promising academic career before him, by his good friend Ignatius López de Oñaz – whom we know as St Ignatius of Loyola. Xavier did not heed these words at once, but Ignatius' persistence eventually won him over. Francis joined Ignatius's emerging religious community, the Society of Jesus. Together at Montmartre they vowed poverty, chastity, obedience, and apostolic service according to the directions of the pope.



From Venice, where he was ordained a priest in 1537, Xavier went on to Lisbon and from there sailed to the East Indies, landing at Goa, on the west coast of India. For the next 10 years he undertook many missionary journeys, and served as provincial of the newly established Jesuit province of India.

Wherever he went, Xavier lived with the poorest people, sharing their food and rough accommodations. He spent countless hours ministering to the sick and the poor, particularly to lepers. Very often he had no time to sleep or even to say his daily prayers but, as we know from his letters, he was filled always with joy.

Xavier went through the islands of Malaysia, then up to Japan. He learned enough Japanese to preach to simple folk, to instruct, and to baptize, and to establish missions for those who were to follow him. From Japan he had dreams of going to China, but this plan was never realized. Before reaching the mainland, he died. His remains are enshrined in the Church of Good Jesus in Goa.

All of us are called to “go and preach to all nations”. Our preaching is not necessarily on distant shores but to our families, our children, our husband or wife, our coworkers. And we are called to preach not with words, but by our everyday lives. Only by sacrifice, the giving up of all selfish gain, could Francis Xavier be free to bear the Good News to the world. Sacrifice is leaving yourself behind at times for a greater good, the good of prayer, the good of helping someone in need, the good of just listening to another. The greatest gift we have is our time. Francis Xavier gave his to others.

5. Advent Reflection Group

As we turn toward the season of Advent in this very strange year, our parishioner Leonie Zadow has decided to take some “affirmative action” and invite members of the Parish community to join her in pondering THIS advent season together – its invitations and challenges, its promise and visions.

The resource for the reflections will be Richard Rohr’s little primer *Preparing for Christmas*, a book of daily readings following the liturgical and biblical calendar, with a short daily exposition from him and a question to ponder each day. (It is available from various online sites, though it may not get to you before Advent this year!)

It is intended to take one reading each week, with the biblical reference and the question he poses, and make it available as an email attachment. You can use this as the basis of a weekly pondering -knowing that you will be accompanied by a number of folk within the parish community – and perhaps a few beyond.

On Wednesday nights there will be an opportunity to meet via the video-conferencing application Zoom for an hour to 90 minutes (depending on numbers) from 7.30 pm. This will be a chance to be together in prayer, and to offer a small reflection from our own ponderings.

It is intended to keep this tight, both because of the need to use the unfamiliar video-conferencing technology, and also the broad offer to participate, so while this will not be a place to discuss with each other at any length, rather there will be an opportunity for each person to express something that has been meaningful around the text or question and to know the community holds them as THEY ponder on.

The Zoom technology ought not present a problem, even if you are not technologically adept. You do not need to have the program installed on your computer, rather you simply click on a

link that will be supplied. Alternatively, if you aren't confident to try it alone, maybe there are some people who might share a Zoom meeting together in one place.

If you wish to join in, with just the readings, or with the readings and the Zoom meetings on Wednesdays, please let Leonie Zadow know by Friday 27 November. Leonie's email is leonie@redirt.com.au and her phone is 0409 691 651.

6. St Francis Xavier writes to St Ignatius

Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel

We have visited the villages of the new converts who accepted the Christian religion a few years ago. No Portuguese live here the country is so utterly barren and poor. The native Christians have no priests. They know only that they are Christians. There is nobody to say Mass for them; nobody to teach them the Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Commandments of God's Law.

I have not stopped since the day I arrived. I conscientiously made the rounds of the villages. I bathed in the sacred waters all the children who had not yet been baptised. This means that I have purified a very large number of children so young that, as the saying goes, they could not tell their right hand from their left. The older children would not let me say my Office or eat or sleep until I taught them one prayer or another. Then I began to understand: "The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

I could not refuse so devout a request without failing in devotion myself. I taught them, first the confession of faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, then the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father and Hail Mary. I noticed among them persons of great intelligence. If only someone could educate them in the Christian way of life, I have no doubt that they would make excellent Christians.

Many, many people hereabouts are not becoming Christians for one reason only: there is nobody to make them Christians. Again and again I have thought of going round the universities of Europe, especially Paris, and everywhere crying out like a madman, riveting the attention of those with more learning than charity: "What a tragedy: how many souls are being shut out of heaven and falling into hell, thanks to you!"

I wish they would work as hard at this as they do at their books, and so settle their account with God for their learning and the talents entrusted to them.

This thought would certainly stir most of them to meditate on spiritual realities, to listen actively to what God is saying to them. They would forget their own desires, their human affairs, and give themselves over entirely to God's will and his choice. They would cry out with all their heart: *Lord, I am here! What do you want me to do?* Send me anywhere you like – even to India.

7. 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 Dioceses of Saskatchewan (Canada); East Ruwenzori (Uganda); and East Tennessee (USA). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Wangaratta; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Prospect.

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, David, Sim, Chris, Clarice, Philip, Phyllis, Dulcie and Jasmin.

For those who have died. For those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us; all those who have died recently, especially Anne Eleanor Dow; those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about this time;. ✠ Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

For the saints. For the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St Mary Magdalene, St Andrew, Frances Perry, St Francis Xavier, 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, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

