

**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**

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**Thursday 27 April 2023**

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. Jesus the Good Shepherd**

This coming Sunday is often called “Good Shepherd” Sunday, and in each year of the 3 year lectionary, the theme of the Gospel reading is that of Christ as the Good Shepherd.

Like most people today, chances are we do not know any shepherds. For the first Christians, who were familiar with shepherds, the Good Shepherd was a favourite image to associate with Christ. In fact, the earliest Christian art depicts Christ as the Good Shepherd, not the crucified Saviour. Often he was portrayed as a beardless youth. Perhaps surprisingly, the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is still popular. In fact, early childhood education experts tell us that young children find the concept of a shepherd and his love for his sheep both enchanting and convincing.

In the Old Testament God was called a shepherd, and God's people the flock. God says, “I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest ... The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal” (Ezekiel 34:15-16). And in Psalm 23 – which is also used on this Sunday each year - the psalmist sings that the shepherd leads him to green pastures near refreshing waters. The shepherd guards him in right paths and protects him from evil.

According to the Gospels, Jesus referred to himself as a shepherd. He said, “My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27). A shepherd knows his sheep well. There is a personal relationship between Jesus and his followers. Jesus knows each of us by name. On the other hand, we respond to his voice and do not follow the voice of strangers who may lead us to harm. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). Unlike a hired hand who flees to save his life, Jesus saved his flock from the wolf even though it meant sacrificing his own life.

The parable Jesus told about the lost sheep is a story about Jesus' concern and care for us sinners. He is the loving shepherd who goes to great lengths to search for his lost sheep and when he finds it, carries it back on his shoulders rejoicing.

When Jesus gave Peter the responsibility of leading the church, he again used shepherd imagery. He told Peter, "Feed my lambs ... Tend my sheep ... Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).

Knowing about shepherds sheds light on the image of Jesus as shepherd. The shepherd uses a staff with a hook on the end to guide the sheep and pull back the stray. It is no coincidence that bishops are also known as pastors, the Latin for shepherds. Bishops carry staffs called crosiers. The shepherd has a rod to fend off wild animals that might harm the flock, with a hook to retrieve those who might otherwise be endangered. Jesus saved us from evil.

Jesus restores our souls. Shepherds feed their flocks. Jesus feeds us with the bread of the Eucharist and brings us to living waters: baptism and the Holy Spirit.

The image of shepherds is that they are kind, loving, patient, strong, and self-sacrificing. They are a good image for Jesus. And sheep, who can be rather stupid and foolish creatures, are a good symbol for us!

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want!

## 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. Likewise, the physical Veneration of the Cross was available on Good Friday.
- The Sprinkling of Holy Water 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.
- The proclamation of the Gospel in the midst of the people, with a Gospel procession to the middle of the church, has also been restored.
- 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 visitors to the church find themselves uncertain about what to do.

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](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 in praying 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://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 spiritual teacher St Catherine of Siena, spiritual teacher (d. 1380), the Apostles Philip and James, and the early church teacher St Athanasius (d. 373)

The value **St Catherine** makes central in her short life and which sounds clearly and consistently through her experience is *complete surrender to Christ*. What is most impressive about her is that she learns to view her surrender to her Lord as a goal to be reached through time.

She was the 23rd child of Jacopo and Lapa Benincasa and grew up as an intelligent, cheerful, and intensely religious person. Catherine disappointed her mother by cutting off her hair as a protest against being encouraged to improve her appearance in order to attract a husband. Her father ordered her to be left in peace, and she was given a room of her own for prayer and meditation.



She entered the Dominican Third Order at 18 and spent the next three years in seclusion, prayer, and austerity. Gradually, a group of followers gathered around her—men and women, priests and religious. An active public apostolate grew out of her contemplative life.

Her letters, mostly for spiritual instruction and encouragement of her followers, began to take more and more note of public affairs.

Opposition and slander resulted from her mixing fearlessly with the world and speaking with the candour and authority of one completely committed to Christ. She was cleared of all charges at the Dominican General Chapter of 1374.

Her public influence reached great heights because of her evident holiness, her membership in the Dominican Third Order, and the deep impression she made on the pope. She worked tirelessly for the crusade against the Turks and for peace between Florence and the pope.

In 1378, the “Great Schism” began, splitting the allegiance of Christendom between two, then three, popes and putting even saints on opposing sides. Catherine spent the last two years of her life in Rome, in prayer and pleading on behalf of the cause of Pope Urban VI and the unity of the Church. She offered herself as a victim for the Church in its agony. She died surrounded by her “children” and was canonized in 1461.

Catherine ranks high among the mystics and spiritual writers of the Church. In 1939, she and Francis of Assisi were declared co-patrons of Italy. Pope Paul VI named her and Teresa of Avila doctors of the Church in 1970. Her spiritual testament is found in *The Dialogue*.

Also in the Calendar this week is the **Feast of St Philip and St James** (1 May). As Apostles, these two are celebrated with greater solemnity than St Catherine or St Athanasius, though paradoxically we know much less about them.

Indeed, we know nothing of St James but his name and that he was the son of Alphaeus. He is often titled “James the Less” to distinguish him from James “the Great,” the son of Clopas and “brother” of Jesus, traditionally the author of the Letter of James and a bishop of Jerusalem.

We know more of Philip, from the stories in the New Testament where he repeatedly questions Jesus about his actions.

At the Feeding of the 5,000, for example, he questions how the disciples can possibly by bread for the crowd; after Philip asks Jesus to show the disciples the Father, Jesus replies, “Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

We see in James and Philip two ordinary people who became foundation stones of the Church, and we are reminded again that holiness and its consequent apostolate are entirely the gift of God, not a matter of human achieving. All power is God’s power, even the power of human freedom to accept his gifts. “You will be clothed with power from on high,” Jesus told Philip and the others. Their first commission had been to expel unclean spirits, heal diseases, announce the kingdom. They learned, gradually, that these externals were sacraments of an even greater miracle inside their persons—the divine power to love like God.



**St Athanasius** (commemorated on 2 May) led a tumultuous but dedicated life of service to the Church. He was the great champion of the faith against the widespread heresy of Arianism, the teaching by Arius that Jesus was not truly divine. The vigour of his writings earned him the title of doctor of the Church.

Born of a Christian family in Alexandria, Egypt, and given a classical education, Athanasius became secretary to Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, entered the priesthood and was eventually named bishop himself. His predecessor, Alexander, had been an outspoken critic of Arianism as it emerged as a fast-growing new movement in the East.

When Athanasius assumed his role as bishop of Alexandria, he continued the fight against Arianism. At first, it seemed that the battle would be easily won and that Arianism would be condemned. Such, however, did not prove to be the case. The Council of Tyre was called and for several reasons that are still unclear, the Emperor Constantine exiled Athanasius to northern Gaul.

This was to be the first in a series of travels—and exiles—reminiscent of the life of Saint Paul.

After Constantine died, his son restored Athanasius as bishop. This lasted only a year, however, for he was deposed once again by a coalition of Arian bishops. Athanasius took his case to Rome, and Pope Julius I called a synod to review the case and other related matters.

Five times Athanasius was exiled for his defense of the doctrine of Christ's divinity. During one period of his life, he enjoyed 10 years of relative peace—reading, writing, and promoting the Christian life along the lines of the monastic ideal to which he was greatly devoted. His dogmatic and historical writings are almost all polemic, directed against every aspect of Arianism.

Among his ascetical writings, his *Life of St. Anthony* achieved astonishing popularity and contributed greatly to the establishment of monastic life throughout the Western Christian world.

Athanasius suffered many trials while he was bishop of Alexandria. He was given the grace to remain strong against what probably seemed at times to be insurmountable opposition. Athanasius lived his office as bishop completely. He defended the true faith for his flock, regardless of the cost to himself. In today's world we are experiencing this same call to remain true to our faith, no matter what.



## 6. From the dialogue *On Divine Providence* by Saint Catherine of Siena

*I tasted and I saw*

Eternal God, eternal Trinity, you have made the blood of Christ so precious through his sharing in your divine nature. You are a mystery as deep as the sea; the more I search, the more I find, and the more I find the more I search for you. But I can never be satisfied; what I receive will ever leave me desiring more. When you fill my soul I have an even greater hunger, and I grow more famished for your light. I desire above all to see you, the true light, as you really are.

I have tasted and seen the depth of your mystery and the beauty of your creation with the light of my understanding. I have clothed myself with your likeness and have seen what I shall be. Eternal Father, you have given me a share in your power and the wisdom that Christ claims as his own, and your Holy Spirit has given me the desire to love you. You are my Creator, eternal Trinity, and I am your creature. You have made of me a new creation in the blood of your Son, and I know that you are moved with love at the beauty of your creation, for you have enlightened me.

Eternal Trinity, Godhead, mystery deep as the sea, you could give me no greater gift than the gift of yourself. For you are a fire ever burning and never consumed, which itself consumes all the selfish love that fills my being. Yes, you are a fire that takes away the coldness, illuminates the mind with its light and causes me to know your truth. By this light, reflected as it were in a mirror, I recognise that you are the highest good, one we can neither comprehend nor fathom. And I know that you are beauty and wisdom itself. The food of angels, you gave yourself to your faithful in the fire of your love.

You are the garment which covers our nakedness, and in our hunger you are a satisfying food, for you are sweetness and in you there is no taste of bitterness, O triune God!

## 7. On the Feast of St Philip & St James - From a treatise by Tertullian

*The preaching of the apostles*

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself declared what he was, what he had been, how he was carrying out his Father's will, what obligations he demanded of his followers. This he did during his earthly life, either publicly to the crowds or privately to his disciples. Twelve of these he picked out to be his special companions, appointed to teach the nations.

One of them fell from his place. The remaining eleven were commanded by Christ, as he was leaving the earth to return to the Father after his resurrection, to go and teach the nations and to baptise them into the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The apostles cast lots and added Matthias to their number, in place of Judas, as the twelfth apostle. The authority for this action is to be found in a prophetic psalm of David. After receiving the power of the Holy Spirit which had been promised to them, so that they could work miracles and proclaim the truth, they first bore witness to their faith in Jesus Christ and established churches throughout Judea. They then went out into the whole world and proclaimed to the nations the same doctrinal faith.

They set up churches in every city. Other churches received from them a living transplant of faith and the seed of doctrine, and through this daily process of transplanting they became churches. They therefore qualify as apostolic churches by being the offspring of churches that are apostolic.

Every family has to be traced back to its origins. That is why we can say that all these great churches constitute that one original Church of the apostles; for it is from them that they all come. They are all primitive, all apostolic, because they are all one. They bear witness to this unity by the peace in which they all live, the brotherhood which is their name, the fellowship to which they are pledged. The principle on which these associations are based is common tradition by which they share the same sacramental bond.

The only way in which we can prove what the apostles taught – that is to say, what Christ revealed to them – is through those same churches. They were founded by the apostles themselves, who first preached to them by what is called the living voice and later by means of letters.

The Lord had said clearly in former times: *I have many more things to tell you, but you cannot endure them now.* But he went on to say: *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you into the whole truth.* Thus Christ shows us that the apostles had full knowledge of the truth, for he had promised that they would receive the *whole truth* through the Spirit of truth. His promise was certainly fulfilled, since the Acts of the Apostles prove that the Holy Spirit came down on them.

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## 8. From a discourse by Saint Athanasius

### *On the incarnation of the Word*

The Word of God, incorporeal, incorruptible and immaterial, entered our world. Yet it was not as if he had been remote from it up to that time. For there is no part of the world that was ever without his presence; together with his Father, he continually filled all things and places.

Out of his loving-kindness for us he came to us, and we see this in the way he revealed himself openly to us. Taking pity on our human weakness, and moved by our corruption, he could not stand aside and see death have the mastery over us; he did not want creation to perish and his Father's work in fashioning us to be in vain. He therefore took to himself a body, no different from our own, for he did not wish simply to be in a body or only to be seen.

If he had wanted simply to be seen, he could indeed have taken another, and nobler, body. Instead, he took our body in its reality.

Within the Virgin he built himself a temple, that is, a body; he made it his own instrument in which to dwell and to reveal himself. In this way he received from a human being a body like our own, and, since all were subject to the corruption of death, he delivered this body over to death for all, and with supreme love offered it to the Father. He did so to destroy the law of corruption passed against all people, since all died in him. The law, which had spent its force on the body of the Lord, could no longer have any power over his fellowmen. Moreover, this was the way in which the Word was to restore God's people to immortality, after it had fallen into corruption, and summon it back from death to life. He utterly destroyed the power death had against the world - as fire consumes chaff - by means of the body he had taken and the grace of the resurrection.

This is the reason why the Word assumed a body that could die, so that this body, sharing in the Word who is above all, might satisfy death's requirement in place of all. Because of the Word dwelling in that body, it would remain incorruptible, and all would be freed for ever from corruption by the grace of the resurrection.

In death the Word made a spotless sacrifice and oblation of the body he had taken. By dying for others, he immediately banished death.

In this way the Word of God, who is above all, dedicated and offered his temple, the instrument that was his body, for us all, as he said, and so paid by his own death the debt that was owed. The immortal Son of God, united with all people by likeness of nature, thus fulfilled all justice in restoring humankind to immortality by the promise of the resurrection.

The corruption of death no longer holds any power over humankind, thanks to the Word, who has come to dwell among them through his one body.

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## 9. Intentions for Your Daily Prayers

*We pray throughout the week for the world and the church. These intentions may be helpful in your private or family prayers.*

*For the world.* The leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

*For the church.* In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Singapore (South East Asia). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Willochra; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Archdeaconry of Sturt.

*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, 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 Catherine, St Philip, St James, St Athanasius, 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, [StMMAdeelaide.Parish@outlook.com](mailto:StMMAdeelaide.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

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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	Awaiting Appointment
Synod Representatives	Ashley Durham, Catherine Freriks