

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 28 July 2022

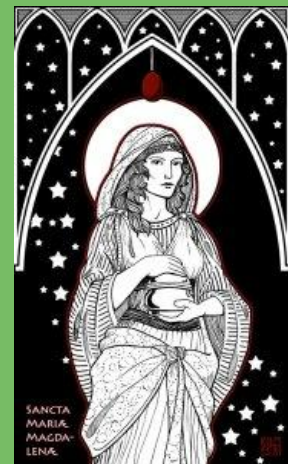
Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions makes it possible to offer the church for private prayer and public worship.

Sunday Mass is sung at 10 am; and on Thursday, the Angelus is said at noon followed by 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 keep our entire community informed on events in the life of the Parish, so we will continue to produce these news bulletins for now.



1. From Fr Steven – In The Beginning ...

Dear parishioners

In the beginning

Genesis 1-11 is a remarkable text. It is about relationships: divine, human, and ecological.

So, then, we begin a four-week course on Genesis 1-11 on Thursdays in August. We will have two groups: Bocelli in the morning and on Zoom at night. The topics cover:

- In the image of God (Gen 1)
- The getting of wisdom (Gen 2-3)
- Sibling rivalry (Gen 4)
- Insidious entitlement (Gen 11:1-9)

The morning group meets at **Bocelli Caffè at 10am in Hutt Street** (free parking in Angas and Hume Streets). With COVID concerns in mind, we can meet on the outside tables, near the heaters. This course will also be held on **Zoom at 7pm in the Evenings**. Please let me know if you would like a **Zoom meeting invitation**. It is okay to 'attend' either or both groups.

In the marketplace

Peter Goers is unique. Over the years, Peter has generously supported my work. He also speaks very well of our parish and its reputation for works of compassion and justice. So, I am back on Radio Adelaide 89.1 at **8:30pm on Tuesday 2 August** discussing an ethic of care, with a focus on the environment. It is a great opportunity for us to be in the marketplace. Where appropriate, this could be a good thing to pass on to interested family and friends

By faith

On Sunday 7 August, I will start a four-part series of Sunday sermons on the theme of faith, using the letter to the Hebrews as a touchstone text.

Fr Steven

2. COVID-19 Update from Tuesday 24 May

The Declaration that enabled COVID-19 related directions to be made was revoked on Tuesday 24 May, but there are still some restrictions on public activities associated with the State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-Safe Plans are no longer required, though everyone is encouraged to follow SA Health guidance about infection control and community safety, especially if there is a risk of over-crowding.

The current increase in cases of COVID-19 in the community have 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 in this cold weather, we have air conditioning, so we won't freeze!—and Facemasks are obvious.

It is worth remembering the advice of the Australian Medical Association that a face masks continue to be an effective way of minimising the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases, especially in crowded or indoor settings, and anyone who wishes to continue to wear a face mask is at liberty to do so. We will continue to make face masks available, along with the other hygienic measures that have been in place for much of the past two years.

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 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 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 the church cannot be open every day, you may like to join the wider community 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 the church has its annual memorials of three figures from the earliest days of the Church: Mary and Martha of Bethany and Joseph of Arimathea; the 16th century priest and religious St Ignatius of Loyola, and the 19th century social reformer William Wilberforce.

Mary and Martha of Bethany, and their brother Lazarus were evidently close friends of Jesus. Jesus came to their home simply as a welcomed guest. The sisters feel free to call on Jesus at their brother's death, even though a return to Judea at that time seems almost certain death.

The meeting of Mary and Martha with Jesus in Luke 10 is a difficult story about the relationship of faith and works. At dinner, Mary sits next to Jesus, listening to him speak, while Martha busies herself with serving the meal—and is none too pleased about being "put upon" to do all the work. Jesus ultimately gives Martha a gentle rebuke, "you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her".



Our faith proposes to us the liberating truth that faith and works are two blades on one pair of scissors. And the heart and soul of a eucharistic faith is that Christ, truly God and truly human, and prayer become incarnate in works of love just as the word became flesh. As Pope Francis puts it with simple elegance: "You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. That's how prayer works."

Joseph of Arimathea is recorded in all four gospels as the one who took responsibility for the burial of Jesus after the crucifixion. The gospels record that he was a person of some eminence and influence, but little more. Over time, many legends accumulated around Joseph. In one account, he was imprisoned for his faith; in others, he was jailed, then miraculously released.



In the Middle Ages, he is associated with the Holy Grail, and another story locates him in England, where one night he set his walking staff on the ground while he slept, only for the staff to take root and grow into a mighty tree – the Glastonbury Thorn. What we do know of Joseph is that he risked himself and his reputation for the sake of Christ.

Ignatius of Loyola was on his way to military fame and fortune when a cannon ball shattered his leg. During his convalescence, Ignatius whiled away the time reading a life of Christ and lives of the saints. His conscience was deeply touched, and a long, painful turning to Christ began.

Having seen the Mother of God in a vision, he made a pilgrimage to her shrine at Montserrat near Barcelona. He remained for almost a year, and it was during this year of conversion that Ignatius began to write down material that later became his greatest work, the *Spiritual Exercises*.

In 1534, at the age of 43, Ignatius and six others—one of whom was Saint Francis Xavier—vowed to live in poverty and chastity and to go to the Holy Land. If this became impossible, they vowed to offer themselves to the apostolic service of the pope. The latter became the only choice. Four years later Ignatius made the association permanent. The new Society of Jesus was approved by Pope Paul III, and Ignatius was elected to serve as the first general.

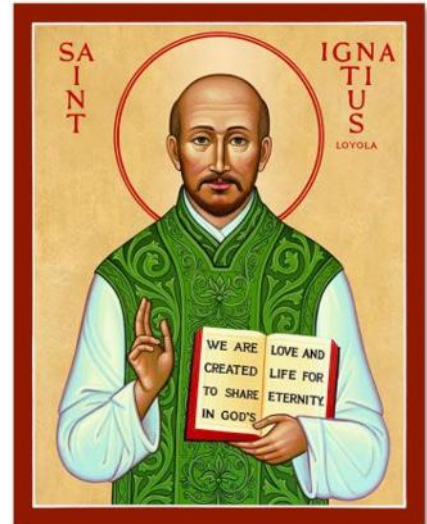
All activity in the order was to be guided by a true love of the Church and unconditional obedience to the Pope, for which reason all professed members took a fourth vow to go wherever the Pope should send them for the salvation of souls. In his concept, obedience was to be prominent, to assure the effectiveness and mobility of the members of the order.

Ignatius was a true mystic. He centred his spiritual life on the essential foundations of Christianity—the Trinity, Christ, the Eucharist.

His spirituality is expressed in the Jesuit motto, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*—"for the greater glory of God."

William Wilberforce (1759-1833) was born into a wealthy family and during his University studies became interested in politics, being elected to Parliament aged just 21. He was evidently a dissolute young man, but changed his lifestyle completely when he embraced evangelical Christianity, rapidly gaining an interest in social reform, particularly the improvement of factory conditions in Britain.

He was a prime mover in the long quest to abolish slavery, and for 18 years he regularly introduced anti-slavery motions in parliament, with legislation finally passed in 1807. The 1807 Act did not free those who were already slaves, and it was not until shortly before his death in 1833 that an act was passed giving freedom to all slaves in the British empire. Wilberforce stands as a magnificent example of undaunted and faithful action alongside a total, radical faith in Christ.



6. St Mary and St Martha - from a sermon by St. Augustine of Hippo

Our Lord's words teach us that though we labour among the many distractions of this world, we should have but one goal. For we are but travellers on a journey without as yet a fixed abode; we are on our way, not yet in our native land; we are in a state of longing, not yet of enjoyment. But let us continue on our way, and continue without sloth or respite, so that we may ultimately arrive at our destination.

Martha and Mary were sisters, related not only by blood but also by religious aspirations. They stayed close to our Lord and both served him harmoniously when he was among them. Martha welcomed him as travellers are welcomed. But in her case, the maidservant received her Lord, the invalid her Savior, the creature her Creator, to serve him bodily food while she was to be fed by the Spirit. For the Lord willed to put on the form of a slave, and under this form to be fed by his own servants, out of condescension and not out of need. For this was indeed condescension, to present himself to be fed; since he was in the flesh he would indeed be hungry and thirsty.

Thus was the Lord received as a guest who *came unto his own and his own received him not; but as many as received him, he gave them the power to become sons of God*, adopting those who were servants and making them his brothers, ransoming the captives and making them his co-heirs. No one of you should say: "Blessed are they who have deserved to receive Christ into their homes!" Do not grieve or complain that you were born in a time when you can no longer see God in the flesh. He did not in fact take this privilege from you. As he says: *Whatever you have done to the least of my brothers, you did to me.*

But you, Martha, If I may say so, are blessed for your good service, and for your labours you seek the reward of peace. Now you are much occupied in nourishing the body, admittedly a holy one. But when you come to the heavenly homeland will you find a traveller to welcome, someone hungry to feed, or thirsty to whom you may give drink, someone ill whom you could visit, or quarrelling whom you could reconcile, or dead whom you could bury?

No, there will be none of these tasks there. What you will find there is what Mary chose. There we shall not feed others, we ourselves shall be fed. Thus what Mary chose in this life will be realized there in all its fullness; she was gathering fragments from that rich banquet, the Word of God. Do you wish to know what we will have there? The Lord himself tells us when he says of his servants, *Amen, I say to you, he will make them recline and passing he will serve them.*

7. St Joseph of Arimathea – from a homily by St Gregory Nazianzen

Let us take our part in the Passover prescribed by the law, not in a literal way, but according to the teaching of the Gospel; not in an imperfect way, but perfectly; not only for a time, but eternally. Let us regard as our home the heavenly Jerusalem, not the earthly one; the city glorified by angels, not the one laid waste by armies.

We must now pass through the first veil and approach the second, turning our eyes toward the Holy of Holies. I will say more: we must sacrifice ourselves to God, each day and in everything we do, accepting all that happens to us for the sake of the Word, imitating his passion by our sufferings, and honouring his blood by shedding our own. We must be ready to be crucified.

If you are a Simon of Cyrene, take up your cross and follow Christ. If you are crucified beside him like one of the thieves, now, like the good thief, acknowledge your God. For your sake, and because of your sin, Christ himself was regarded as a sinner; for his sake, therefore, you must cease to sin. Worship him who was hung on the cross because of you, even if you are hanging

there yourself. Derive some benefit from the very shame; purchase salvation with your death. Enter paradise with Jesus, and discover how far you have fallen. Contemplate the glories there, and leave the other scoffing thief to die outside in his blasphemy.

If you are a Joseph of Arimathea, go to the one who ordered his crucifixion, and ask for Christ's body. Make your own the expiation for the sins of the whole world. If you are a Nicodemus, like the man who worshipped God by night, bring spices and prepare Christ's body for burial. If you are one of the Marys, or Salome, or Joanna, weep in the early morning. Be the first to see the stone rolled back, and even the angels perhaps, and Jesus himself.

8. From the life of Saint Ignatius from his own words by Luis Gonzalez

Put inward experiences to the test to see if they come from God

Ignatius was passionately fond of reading worldly books of fiction and tales of knight-errantry. When he felt he was getting better, he asked for some of these books to pass the time. But no book of that sort could be found in the house; instead they gave him a life of Christ and a collection of the lives of saints written in Spanish.

By constantly reading these books he began to be attracted to what he found narrated there. Sometimes in the midst of his reading he would reflect on what he had read. Yet at other times he would dwell on many of the things which he had been accustomed to dwell on previously. But at this point our Lord came to his assistance, insuring that these thoughts were followed by others which arose from his current reading.

While reading the life of Christ our Lord or the lives of the saints, he would reflect and reason with himself: "What if I should do what Saint Francis or Saint Dominic did?" In this way he let his mind dwell on many thoughts; they lasted a while until other things took their place. Then those vain and worldly images would come into his mind and remain a long time. This sequence of thoughts persisted with him for a long time.

But there was a difference. When Ignatius reflected on worldly thoughts, he felt intense pleasure; but when he gave them up out of weariness, he felt dry and depressed. Yet when he thought of living the rigorous sort of life he knew the saints had lived, he not only experienced pleasure when he actually thought about it, but even after he dismissed these thoughts, he still experienced great joy. Yet he did not pay attention to this, nor did he appreciate it until one day, in a moment of insight, he began to marvel at the difference. Then he understood his experience: thoughts of one kind left him sad, the others full of joy. And this was the first time he applied a process of reasoning to his religious experience. Later on, when he began to formulate his spiritual exercises, he used this experience as an illustration to explain the doctrine he taught his disciples on the discernment of spirits.

9. William Wilberforce and Sanctification

William Wilberforce resolved to daily catalogue his sins along with his acts of faithfulness, just so that he could track his spiritual growth in minute detail. He also made a habit of listing out the daily mercies in his life as he tracked God's good hand of providence. He would identify the main defects he saw in himself, the temptations he faced that day, and the ones to which he had succumbed. Finally, he would often close an entry by humbly recording behaviours that he was grateful to recognise had in some way brought glory to God or advanced the gospel. Through all his journals, it is painstakingly obvious that his goal was to cultivate a taste for heaven:

"To Thee, O God, I fly, through the Saviour; enable me to live more worthy of my holy calling; to be more useful and efficient, that my time may not be frittered away unprofitably to myself and others, but that I really may be of use ... and adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour."

Of all the treasures to be found in Wilberforce's journal, his deep gratitude to God for His provision and providence is also obvious: "What cause to offer thankfulness. Which way soever I look I am heaped up with blessings and mercies of all sorts and sizes. I wish not to spend time in writing, but oh, let me record the loving-kindnesses of the Lord."

On his death bed, not long before he entered the Lord's presence, Wilberforce said, "I hope no man on earth has a stronger sense of sinfulness and untrustworthiness before God than I do." When his son visited him during those final days, Wilberforce asked his son to pray for him. Unsurprisingly, he didn't ask his son to pray for renewed health or comfort during his final days—he asked for increased sanctification: "... join with me in praying that the short remainder of my life hours may be spent in gaining that spirituality of mind which will fit me for heaven."

To the end, Wilberforce desired to be more holy. His dying wish was to be Godlier—more like his Saviour. He understood what every sinner saved by grace knows—that even moments before reaching heaven, no sinner is fit for the kingdom of God. Only Christ can provide the righteousness required for entry into God's presence.

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 Masvingo (Central Africa). In our national church, pray for Anglicare Australia; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Chaplaincy at the Women's and Children's Hospital.

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. For all those who are sick in body, mind or spirit, especially Paull, Sim, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), John Parkes (bishop), Stephan Clark (priest), Mark, Neil, Olivia, Elaine and David,

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 Margaret Banham, and those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time, especially Gillian Boyce, Jonathan Carter and May Edwards. ✠ *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 Mary, St Martha, St Joseph of Arimathea, St Ignatius, 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, StMMAdeelaide.Parish@outlook.com, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

