

# 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

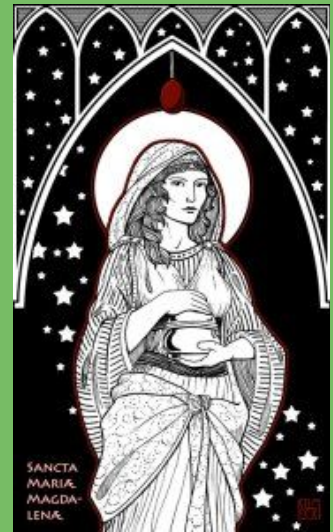
Thursday 29 July 2021

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions means it possible to again 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 the Angelus at 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 keep our entire community informed on events in the life of the Parish: we will continue to produce these news bulletins for now.

We will respond to this challenge as we have done before. Please keep an eye on the [web page](#) and the [blog](#) for further information.



### 1. From Fr Gwilym – Looking for Mary Magdalene



It has been said of the 11th chapter of the second book of Samuel that "there is no chapter more tragic or full of solemn and searching warning than this. It is a terrible story of the abuse of power. King David, seeing Bathsheba at her bath, sends for her and demands sexual favours. It is all for nothing that she is the wife of David's loyal and trustworthy lieutenant, Uriah the Hittite; or that she was menstruating; or that David already had Saul's wives at his beck and call. David wanted her, and what the king wanted, he took.

Bathsheba became pregnant, so David first of all tried to trick Uriah into having sex with her, so that he might seem to be the father of the child, but Uriah steadfastly put his duty to the king and the army before his own personal comfort and pleasure, quite unlike David!

When that didn't work, David sent orders to Joab to ensure that Uriah would be killed in battle. In an act of particular cruelty, Uriah was made to carry, unwittingly, the letter requiring his own death. David has deliberately, and for his own convenience, broken at least six of the Ten Commandments. And this is the man appointed by God to be the anointed King of Israel, and, as we learn from the genealogies in the New Testament, the ancestor of Jesus of Nazareth!

Lord Acton was very perceptive when he wrote "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." The quotation applies today as it did in King David's day. It is always easy to find corrupt and self-serving politicians, and our own country is no exception. There are always people ready to use their power to control and exploit others. This occurs in politics, in business, in sporting clubs and other voluntary societies. The church is not immune and we are conscious of the rise of domestic violence during times of lock-down and other stress.

How wonderful, then to come across someone who has great authority, but refuses to use power to manipulate and control! The prime example we have is, of course, Jesus, son of David. When he saw that the people wanted to make him king by force, he went away by himself. (John 6:15)

Christians are those people whom God chooses to be followers and imitators of Christ. St Paul says that God "chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love." (Eph 1:4) And in his letters, Paul constantly reminds his readers that their response should be to "live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called." (Ephesians 4:1)

Now we know that in this world we will never be perfect, however richly the Spirit of Christ dwells within us. We, all of us, have power to harm others, and we are often tempted to use it. We may not be rich or kingly, but even the poor and subservient have the power to manipulate and control.

Jesus knew only too well the power he had and the harm he could cause if he used it in the way Satan suggested. He refused to take it up and use it, but also, he refused to surrender to the power of others. When he did use his power, it was to give strength to others. Everything he did was to build up others, not himself. He never diminished himself and he never surrendered to the selfish demands of others, but he always responded with generosity and integrity.

Yes, Jesus is certainly a hard act to follow, but he did promise to walk with us always, to the end of time.

Best wishes,

Gwilym Henry-Edwards  
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).

### Online Resources

There is a complete online version of Daily Prayer from *A Prayer Book for Australia* for each day available at Australian Daily Prayer <https://dailyprayer.ampers.x10.mx/>. There is also a free app for mobile devices from the App Store or Google Play.

The Church of England provides an online version of its orders for Daily Prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>. This is also available as a free app. The Divine Office of the Catholic Church is available online at [www.ibreviary.com](http://www.ibreviary.com) and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

### Times of Prayer

Many people find it helpful to make a particular time daily for prayer and reflection. One option might be to join your prayer with those of the wider world at some special times during the day. While we cannot attend at the church at the present time, you may like to join the wider community in praying the Angelus at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm.

### 3. Reflections and Meditations

Fr Gwilym and others within our community will continue to prepare Reflections for Sundays and Holy Days for posting on the web page. Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections are presented on our blog, <https://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org/>.

To access these meditations, simply go to the blog and select the "Spirit matters" tab on the top. If you would like to receive an email update when there is a new posting on the blog, whether for a Sunday or weekday service, or for meditations and other supports for prayer, please subscribe to the blog using the box on the right-hand side of the page.

Service booklets as PDF files are still available for Sunday and weekday services on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

### 4. In the Church's Calendar

In the coming week we celebrate saints from our Lord's time, then the middle ages, and into the modern era.

**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."

**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.

**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.

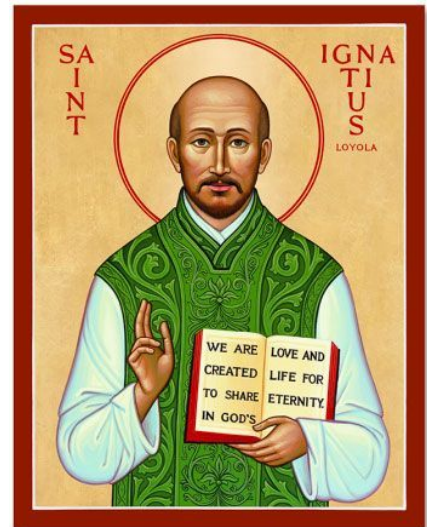
In 1534, at the age of 43, Ignatius and six others—one of whom was Saint Francis Xavier—vowed to live in poverty and chastity and to go to the Holy Land. If this became impossible, they vowed to offer themselves to the apostolic service of the pope. The latter became the only choice. Four years later 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.



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

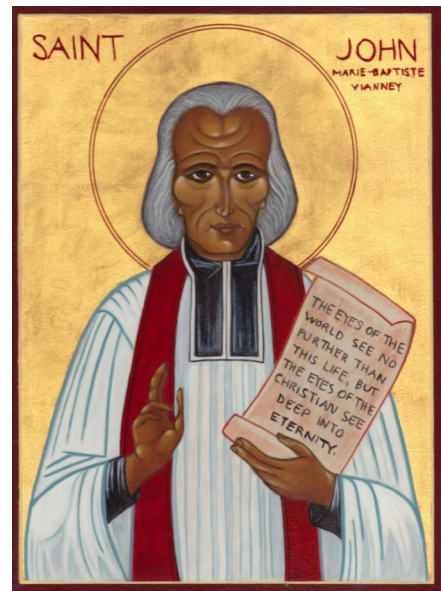
His spirituality is expressed in the Jesuit motto, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*—"for the greater glory of God." In his concept, obedience was to be the prominent virtue, to assure the effectiveness and mobility of his men.

All activity was to be guided by a true love of the Church and unconditional obedience to the Holy Father, for which reason all professed members took a fourth vow to go wherever the pope should send them for the salvation of souls.



**St John Vianney** wanted from his childhood to become a priest. But he had to overcome his meagre formal schooling, which inadequately prepared him for seminary studies. His failure to comprehend Latin lectures forced him to abandon his studies. But his vision of being a priest urged him to seek private tutoring. After a lengthy battle with the books, John was ordained.

As pastor of the parish at Ars, John encountered people who were indifferent and quite comfortable with their style of living. But over the years, his work as a confessor was to become his most remarkable accomplishment. In the winter months he was to spend 11 to 12 hours daily reconciling people with God. In the summer months this time was increased to 16 hours.



Indifference toward religion, coupled with a love for material comfort, seem to be common signs of our times. A person from another planet observing us would not likely judge us to be pilgrim people, on our way to somewhere else. John Vianney on the other hand, was a man on a journey, with his goal before him at all times.

## 5. 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 labors 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.*

## 6. 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.

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## 7. From the Catechetical Instructions by St. John Mary Vianney, priest

*The glorious duty: to pray and to love*

My little children, reflect on these words: the Christian's treasure is not on earth but in heaven. Our thoughts, then ought to be directed to where our treasure is. This is the glorious duty of man: to pray and to love. If you pray and love, that is where a man's happiness lies.

Prayer is nothing else but union with God. When one has a heart that is pure and united with God, he is given a kind of serenity and sweetness that makes him ecstatic, a light that surrounds him with marvelous brightness. In this intimate union, God and the soul are fused together like two bits of wax that no one can ever pull apart. This union of God with a tiny creature is a lovely thing. It is a happiness beyond understanding.

We had become unworthy to pray, but God in his goodness allowed us to speak with him. Our prayer is incense that gives him the greatest pleasure.

My little children, your hearts are small, but prayer stretches them and makes them capable of loving God. Through prayer we receive a foretaste of heaven and something of paradise comes down upon us. Prayer never leaves us without sweetness. It is honey that flows into the soul and makes all things sweet. When we pray properly, sorrows disappear like snow before the sun.

Prayer also makes time pass very quickly and with such great delight that one does not notice its length. Listen: Once when I was a purveyor in Bresse and most of my companions were ill, I had to make a long journey. I prayed to the good God, and believe me, the time did not seem long.

Some men immerse themselves as deeply in prayer as fish in water, because they give themselves totally to God. There is not division in their hearts. O, how I love these noble souls! Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Colette used to see our Lord and talk to him just as we talk to one another.

How unlike them we are! How often we come to church with no idea of what to do or what to ask for. And yet, whenever we go to any human being, we know well enough why we go. And still worse, there are some who seem to speak to the good God like this: "I will only say a couple of things to you, and then I will be rid of you." I often think that when we come to adore the Lord, we would receive everything we ask for, if we would ask with living faith and with a pure heart.

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## 8. For your 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 refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

*For the church.* For all those who are challenged to be church in a different and unfamiliar way. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Diocese of Derry & Raphoe (Ireland). In our national church, pray for Theological Colleges and Religious Communities, especially the Sisters of the Incarnation; and within our own Diocese, for the Parish of Woodville.

*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. 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, Sym, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, Fr Gary Priest, Fr Bart O'Donovan, Beth, Linda, and Fr Peter Garland.

*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 Elly Bechaz, Joyce Walkley (late of Henley Beach), Fr Colin Mason, and Albert Brunstrom (late of Port Adelaide), 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, and holy women and men of every time and place.

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This newsletter will normally be distributed weekly on Thursday. Any appropriate items should be emailed to the Parish Office, [omarymag@anglicaresa.com.au](mailto:omarymag@anglicaresa.com.au), by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

