

**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      Thursday 30 April 2020** **Spiritual Resources & Reflections**

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Dear friends,

One of the ways in which we are able to maintain a community spirit in this time of physical separation is to unite ourselves in acts of prayer and reflection – a “communal solitude” which may well prove to be a seedbed for growth in holiness and wholeness, for communion and connection, for resistance and renewal.

In the suddenly altered pace of our lives, we might discover the stillness we all crave, the stillness from which all true wisdom and justice issue. What we love rather than what we fear may come into sharper focus. In these Thursday newsletters, we plan to offer ideas and opportunities for nourishing our personal and communal spiritual lives in the coming months.

### **1. From Fr Graeme – Praying for people who are sick or in need – and for ourselves**

It is very important to think positively when offering prayer in times of sickness or other adversity. It is not that we are trying to deny sickness or pain because both are real. What we are doing in this sort of prayer is trying to concentrate, not so much on the sickness or pain themselves but rather on God's constant activity in healing, wholeness, vitality and life and applying these to our prayer in the situation.

Part of our prayer, too, can ask the question, “What can we do to help?”

Sometimes we can make a big mistake in our prayer and try to possess a situation so that it works out our way. This is possessive prayer. In authentic prayer which addresses sickness we try to hand the person or ourselves over to God's loving activity; we put the situation into God's hands, aware that God's life is already within, working to bring about wholeness and healing. Whatever God is doing will be sufficient, quite apart from whatever we might be hoping. If God is the focus of our prayer, the strong desire we held, or the fear or pessimism we might have held, can steadily disappear and be replaced by a new calm confidence that God's purpose will be carried out.

Sometimes in difficult situations we can wonder how we can manage. When we pray to God focussing on what God is already doing we can emerge from that prayer confident that we shall be given the strength to manage whatever happens. Such strength removes fear and encourages confidence. In this circumstance an operation, for example, does not necessarily need to be a medical success because we know that we shall be able to cope whatever happens.

Our prayer in sickness or trouble needs to focus on God and the adequacy of God's life to supply our needs.

Part of our prayer, too, can ask the question, “What can I do to help?”

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:

	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>Evening Prayer</b>
Thursday 30 April	Ps 148, 149 Leviticus 25.1-24 John 10.1-18	Ps 144, 150 Exodus 22.20-23.3 1 Corinthians 2.1-11
Friday 1 May St Philip & St James	Ps 27 Job 23.1-12 Acts 2.37-47	Ps 33 Proverbs 4.10-18 John 6.1-14
Saturday 2 May St Athanasius	Ps 5, 6 Leviticus 26.27-45 John 10.31-42	Ps 7, 8 Exodus 23.20-33 1 Corinthians 3.5-17
Sunday 3 May <b>4th Sunday of Easter</b>	Ps 95 Revelation 20.11-15 John 10.1-10	Ps 98 Jeremiah 23.1-8 Revelation 7.9-17
Monday 4 May	Ps 11, 12 Numbers 3,5-13, 40-51 John 11.1-16	Ps 13, 14 Exodus 24 1 Corinthians 3.18 – 4.5
Tuesday 5 May	Ps 15, 16 Numbers 6.1-8, 6.22 – 7.5 John 11.17-37	Ps 17 Exodus 25.1-22 1 Corinthians 4.6-21
Wednesday 6 May	Ps 18.1-31 Numbers 9.15 – 10.10 John 11.38-44	Ps 18.32-52 Exodus 25, 31-40, 27.20-21 1 Corinthians 5
Thursday 7 May	Ps 19 Numbers 10.35 – 11.15 John 11.45-54	Ps 119.1-16 Exodus 28.1-6, 29.1-9 1 Corinthians 6.1-11

### 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](http://www.ibreviary.com) and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

### 3. Sunday and Weekday Mass

You can find the prayers for Sunday and weekday (Tuesday and Thursday) Masses on the web page, along with a copy of the Order of Service for each day.

Sunday Services will also be available on our new blog, [stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org](http://stmarymagdalenesadelaide.org), featuring prayers, readings, reflections and music recorded by members of the congregation.

You can watch live-streams of Sunday and Weekday Masses at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne on its [Facebook page](#) or its [YouTube channel](#). Recordings of past celebrations are also available.

### 4. The Teachers of the Early Church on Easter

Melito was bishop of Sardis (near Izmir in modern Turkey) in the 2nd century. We know from Eusebius that he wrote extensively, but only a single complete document and some fragments were known until the discovery in Egypt of a papyrus scroll, a theological treatise on Easter, first published in 1960. It is probably the most important find of its type in modern times.



From *The Easter praise of Christ*

We should understand, beloved, that the paschal mystery is at once old and new, transitory and eternal, corruptible and incorruptible, mortal and immortal. In terms of the Law it is old, in terms of the Word it is new. In its figure it is passing, in its grace it is eternal. It is corruptible in the sacrifice of the lamb, incorruptible in the eternal life of the Lord. It is mortal in his burial in the earth, immortal in his resurrection from the dead.

The Law indeed is old, but the Word is new. The type is transitory, but grace is eternal. The lamb was corruptible, but the Lord is incorruptible. He was slain as a lamb; he rose again as God. *He was led like a sheep to the slaughter*, yet he was not a sheep. He was silent as a lamb, yet he was not a lamb. The type has passed away; the reality has come. The lamb gives place to God, the sheep gives place to a human, and the human is Christ, who fills the whole of creation. The sacrifice of the lamb, the celebration of the Passover, and the prescriptions of the Law have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Under the old Law, and still more under the new dispensation, everything pointed toward him.

Both the Law and the Word came forth from Zion and Jerusalem, but now the Law has given place to the Word, the old to the new. The commandment has become grace, the type a reality. The lamb has become a Son, the sheep a man, and man, God.

The Lord, though he was God, became human. He suffered for the sake of those who suffer, he was bound for those in bonds, condemned for the guilty, buried for those who lie in the grave; but he rose from the dead, and cried aloud: *Who will contend with me? Let him confront me.* I have freed the condemned, brought the dead back to life, raised men from their graves. Who has anything to say against me? I, he said, am the Christ; I have destroyed death, triumphed over the enemy, trampled hell underfoot, bound the strong one, and taken men up to the heights of heaven: I am the Christ.

Come, then, all you nations, receive forgiveness for the sins that defile you. I am your forgiveness. I am the Passover that brings salvation. I am the lamb who was immolated for you. I am your ransom, your life, your resurrection, your light, I am your salvation and your king. I will bring you to the heights of heaven. With my own right hand I will raise you up, and I will show you the eternal Father.

## 5. Meditations for the Easter Season

Fr Philip Carter has offered a ministry of spirituality for many years, and he has kindly supplied a series of meditations that we offer as reflections during the Easter season. These meditations are on the Beatitudes, the blessings recounted by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

### Preparing for Meditation

- Find a place to sit comfortably. Mobile phone on silent.
- Take your time. Breathe in and out a few times, slowing down ...
- Don't try too hard. Relax. Be open.
- Prayer isn't telling what God should be doing but becoming aware of what God is already doing.
- "The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God and to let that goodness reach right down to your lowest place of need." (Julian of Norwich)
- When you seem ready, begin. You don't have to finish the exercise now, or today. If and when something arrests your attention, stay there. Savour the words. Let them speak to you. That may be enough for the next few minutes.

#### *Embracing our humanity and choosing the values that lead to life*

#### **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.**

Luke begins the Beatitudes with: "Then **Jesus looked up at his disciples** and said." *The individual Beatitudes are the fruit of this looking upon the disciples; they describe what might be called the actual condition of Jesus' disciples"*

*Benedict XVI*

The manner in which Jesus is with his disciples, with us, is the true miracle. Being seen, being recognized, is our deepest need as human beings. As we let him look at us, we might feel his gaze. The will of his Father was that he should be human, fully human and alive. When he gazes on us, we glimpse our own humanity. Being hungry is at the heart of being human: it opens us up to what truly matters to us.

*Our prayer becomes the place where we sort out our desires, and are sorted out by the desires we choose to follow.*

*Ann and Barry Ulanov*

*We "are the only animal aware of lack of finish".*

*W.H. Auden*

*You have made us for Yourself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.*

*St Augustine*

## 6. Reflections and Meditations

Fr Graeme and others within our community will be preparing Reflections for Sundays and Holy Days for posting on the web page.

St Peter's Cathedral is producing videos including reflections and Sunday sermons under the title "Acts of Worship at St Peter's Cathedral in Extraordinary Times". These are available in a variety of formats. You can receive updates by subscribing to the Cathedral's e-news. Visit <http://www.stpeters-cathedral.org.au/community/sign-up-to-eneews/> to register.

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## 7. 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. Volunteers are attending at St Mary Magdalene's most days to ring the church bell while praying, in Easter Time, [Regina Coeli](#) at 9 am, 12 noon and 6 pm; as well as on Friday morning at 8 am, which is a time that is being widely observed by the churches as a time of united prayer for all those affected by COVID-19.

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## 8. The Community Within

*Our friend Sue Franco has supplied the following. We'd be delighted to have the reflections of others.*

This short essay is about drawing meaning from the ordinary experiences around me in the middle of a global pandemic. It could also be about understanding how people in history lived through exploration and immigration, disasters, plagues, also revolutions and wars. This is about our capacity to create and discover from adversity. Our ability to adapt and discover when we feel lost or bereft.

Circumstances are gifts to us to help us to remember and to look forward, like signposts on the road of life. This is like the saying, "That which does not destroy us makes us stronger" We are so fortunate that in this country, Australia, we have been so safe that we can remember that every loss in every family matters, just as the life of every homeless person matters enough that they *can* be provided with a space to live in at this time.

My consciousness is being attuned to recognising the richness of experience around me, rather like going to an open-air market, walking on dirt paths, then seeing the abundance of fresh produce. Like Forrest Gump when he said "Life's like a Box of Chocolates" even though his life was a story of adversity. The sense of hope that comes from within matters as this is where our power is, no matter what is going on around us.

I travelled to Paris last year, and I spent months reading about the history and culture of a place that I expected to be foreign. Once I was there, I experienced French as a friendly and somewhat familiar language and I saw art everywhere, which reflected the history that I had been reading about. Out of the destruction of years of revolution came such thinking as the United Nations Bill of Rights also artists who realised the power of the human spirit and the human form.

It struck me that there is so much to know and yet so much that is familiar, like looking up family history and realising that your ancestors came so far across seas, yet you and they have so many shared experiences in life. History happened at a distant time and yet can seem so

familiar. Our stories are so complex and yet so consistent as well. The stories of our ancestors reach to us across time and circumstance and touch our memories. They are like old friends that we take with us on our journey in life.

All is not what it seems, as I have been discovering during this time of change and limitations. On the one hand, we have been asked to stop doing many things and yet on the other hand the things we are doing are enhanced. To explain, we are asked not to visit each other and yet the conversations we are having are about things that are not normally said. We matter to each other, a conversation is like a pearl and to be appreciated and enjoyed, we have the skills to provide food for ourselves at home, simple things like sharing books or music are a source of inspiration, other people really matter and we can change our lives to be there for each other, our next holidays could be to a country town or to see relatives in places we haven't been to before.

In adversity, we can be moved to think and relate in different ways. Ordinary life is a series of routines and business that prevents us from seeing the importance of simple things in life. This is not to look for adversity, but to give thanks for this and use our creativity with what we have. We have around us the most amazing abundance of material things as well as stories and relationships. We have so much that when we look around us, we cannot see the wealth that we really have. Being human, means in order to see that which we cannot see, we require change and adversity. This can act to tilt our view, so we can see beyond that which we have, to that which we are missing. This is how we can unlock our creativity and create opportunities for discovery.

## 9. In the Church's Calendar

**St Athanasius** (commemorated on 2 May) was born at Alexandria in Egypt in 296. He attended the Council of Nicaea, called in 325 to rebut the heresy of Arius which denied the divinity of Christ. He was elected Bishop of Alexandria in 328. Alexandria was also the home of Arius, and the Arian heresy persisted for many years, even after Arius's death. Athanasius was tireless in combatting the heresy, even though he was exiled five times for his actions. He wrote brilliantly, both in defence of doctrine, and on spiritual matters. The following comes from his Sermon on the Incarnate 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 humanity's 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 man 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 mankind 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 men, 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 humankind to immortality, after it had fallen into corruption, and summon it back from death to life. He utterly destroyed the power death had against humankind - 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 for all humankind.*

*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 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.*

Oratio de Incarnatione Verbi, 8-9, §25, 110-111

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 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, 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.

## 11. 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.* For peace, in the world, in our own hearts and lives, and within our families and communities. 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 all those caught up in war and civic unrest; for the members of the armed forces; and for those impacted by the use of force, especially 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 Moray, Ross & Caithness (Scotland), the Windward Islands (West Indies) and Wondurba (South Sudan). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Tasmania; and within the Diocese, pray for the Parish of Walkerville.

*For our local community.* For the Collective as it considers alternative ways of serving the community while the Drop-In Centre is suspended, and for its guests as they seek other 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, Bishop David McCall, and Sim.

*For those who have died.* For all those who have died recently, including Graham McLean; those who have died as a result of COVID-19; and those whose anniversaries of death occur at about this time. For those who have worked and worshipped in this place before us. ✠ 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 Philip, St James, St Athanasius, 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](mailto:omarymag@anglicaresa.com.au), by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.