

St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church

Moore Street, Adelaide



An open, welcoming and inclusive community
in the heart of the City of Adelaide

Keeping Community Thursday 31 December 2020

Spiritual Resources & Reflections

Dear friends,

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions makes it possible to once again worship on Sunday, when Mass is sung at 10 am. The church is also open for private prayer and public worship on Tuesday and Thursday from 11.30 am to 1 pm, and Mass is offered at 12.10 pm after the Angelus at 12 noon.

The decision to return to worship in community, even for private prayer, is not a straightforward matter, so we will continue to produce these newsletters for now.

In these Thursday newsletters, we offer ideas and opportunities for nourishing our personal and communal spiritual lives.

1. From Fr Graeme – Praying in the new Civil Year

Any time can be valid for making a resolution, but the beginning of the civil year is a well-used time for doing just that. As the new year begins to unfold during January, we shall see as well just how much the liturgical provisions for the Epiphany and afterwards help our resolution thinking.

Those who pray regularly will doubtless bring new year resolutions into their prayerful thinking. A helpful approach to such resolutions is to answer the question, "What would I like to see different in my life this coming year?" To refine that a little further, we could wonder how different we may wish ourselves to be by this time in 2022. This may permit more gradual and thorough change.

Some of us may know at once how we need to change. Others of us may not be as quick to assess such a matter. Perhaps the first part of our prayer may need to be that we be open to change in 2021. Then we can ask the prior question.

Parishioners of St Mary Magdalene's have needed to be resilient and determined over the years. We have enjoyed periods of stability and relative certainty and we have lived through times of stressful uncertainty. Those who have remained faithful are an inspiration as are those who have come to join us.

Our prayer needs to match whatever we happen to be going through. At present there is a little stability with priestly ministry, and our debt to the Diocese is being repaid. Some urgent repairs and maintenance have been carried out, and our liturgical music continues to be of high standard. The Parish Council is gradually working through the Parish Feedback survey suggestions, and action has begun and will continue to be taken in implementing some ideas in weeks and months to come.

Our prayer about our own futures can spring from a certain confidence about our church. It is easier to pray for openness to personal change when we are in a fairly good situation. Our prayer does not have to spring from any desperation. There is no need for panic. I cannot know your own circumstances and what you may bring from them to your prayer. For our prayer to be honest everything needs to be included. We are speaking or thinking with God, after all.

A Prayer which may be helpful.

Come, Lord God, change us and we shall be changed.

Come, increase our awareness of your presence.

Come, strengthen our love for you.

Come, fill our hearts with holiness.

Come, awaken us to be ready and watchful for your coming.

Come, Lord God, change us and we shall be changed.

Fr Graeme Kaines

Locum Priest

2. Daily Prayer

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

| | Morning Prayer | Evening Prayer |
|--|---|--|
| Thursday 31 December <i>John Wycliff</i> | Ps 83.1-18 Isaiah 31 John 2.13-25 | Ps 11 Isaiah 65.17-25 Luke 21.25-36 |
| Friday 1 January <i>Naming & Circumcision</i> | Ps 113 Genesis 17.1-13 Colossians 3.12-17 | Ps 115 Exodus 3.13-17 Colossians 2.8-15 |
| Saturday 2 January <i>St Basil; Eliza Hassall</i> | Ps 5, 6 Isaiah 32 John 3.1-21 | Ps 19 2 Samuel 22.47-51 Romans 15.8-21 |
| Sunday 3 January <i>The Epiphany of Our Lord</i> | Ps 87 Numbers 24.12-17a Matthew 12.14-23 | Ps 104.11-24 Baruch 4.36 – 5.9 Ephesians 4.1-16 |
| Monday 4 January | Ps 11, 12 Isaiah 33.17-24 John 4.1-14 | Ps 13, 14 Isaiah 65.1-16 Ephesians 3.1-13 |
| Tuesday 5 January | Ps 15, 16 Isaiah 35 John 4.13-26 | Ps 17.1-16 Isaiah 66.1-11 Ephesians 3.14-21 |
| Wednesday 6 January | Ps 18.1-31 Isaiah 38.9-20 John 4.27-38 | Ps 18.32-52 Isaiah 66.12-23 Ephesians 4.1-16 |
| Thursday 7 January | Ps 19 Song of Songs 1.1-11 John 4.39-54 | Ps 119.1-16 Song of Songs 1.12 – 2.7 Ephesians 4.17-28 |

Online Resources

There is a complete online version of Daily Prayer from *A Prayer Book for Australia* for each day available at Australian Daily Prayer <https://dailyprayer.ampers.x10.mx/>. There is also a free app for mobile devices from the App Store or Google Play. The Church of England provides an online version of its orders for Daily Prayer at <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>. This is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play). The Divine Office of the Catholic Church is available online at www.ibreviary.com and is also available as a free app (App Store or Google Play).

Times of Prayer

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

3. Reflections and Meditations

Fr Graeme and others within our community will continue to prepare Reflections for Sundays and Holy Days for posting on the web page. Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections 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, both on the web site and on the Parish's Facebook page.

4. In the Church's Calendar

The Church's calendar in the first week of the year includes one of the earliest feasts of Our Lord, the Naming and Circumcision of Jesus; the early church father St Basil of Caesarea; and the pioneer of missionary training in Australia, Eliza Hassall.

In the Christian church, the **Feast of the Naming and Circumcision** was celebrated on the 8th day after Christmas, which itself began to be celebrated on December 25 from at least the fourth century. The book of Genesis records that when Abraham was 99 years old, God made a covenant with him, promising to multiply his offspring and to give them the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. Circumcision was a sign of that covenant, which was reinforced by the giving of a new name, from Abram to Abraham.

Our Lord's circumcision thus manifests that he is truly human, born into the Jewish nation, whom he had come to redeem. God had chosen his people of the Old Testament to prepare the way for the Incarnation of his Son, who would be their Messiah, their anointed one, who would free them from their sins and establish a new and definitive covenant with them.

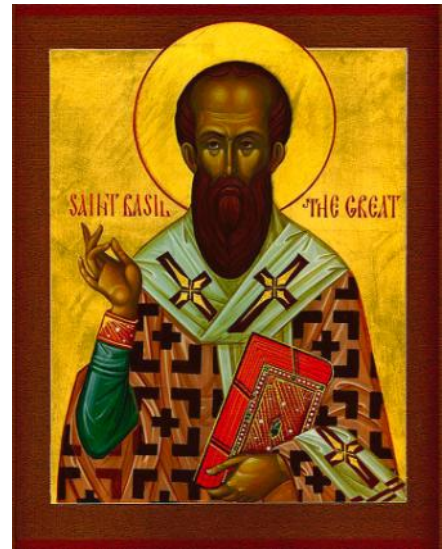


When Christ was circumcised, he was given the name Jesus, which the angel had announced both to Joseph and to Mary. The name Jesus means "Saviour" and so the angel had told Joseph that the child was to be named Jesus "for he will save his people from their sins".

St Basil was on his way to becoming a famous teacher when he decided to begin a religious life of gospel poverty. After studying various modes of religious life, he founded what was probably the first monastery in Asia Minor. He is to monks of the East what Saint Benedict is to the West, and Basil's principles influence Eastern monasticism today.

He was ordained a priest, assisted the bishop of Caesarea—now southeastern Turkey—and ultimately became its bishop himself, in spite of opposition from some of the bishops under him, probably because they foresaw coming reforms.

With St Athanasius, Basil was a staunch defender of the faith in the face of the heresies that abounded in the early church.



Basil was tireless in pastoral care. As a youth he had organised famine relief and worked in a soup kitchen, while as priest and bishop, he preached twice a day to huge crowds, and among his many achievements built a hospital that was called a wonder of the world.

Basil was best known as an orator. Though not recognised greatly in his lifetime, his writings rightly place him among the great teachers of the Church. Seventy-two years after his death, the Council of Chalcedon described him as "the great Basil, minister of grace who has expounded the truth to the whole earth."

Basil faced the same problems as modern Christians. Sainthood meant trying to preserve the spirit of Christ in such perplexing and painful problems as reform, organisation, fighting for the poor, maintaining balance and peace in misunderstanding.

Eliza Marsden Hassall (1834-1917) was born at Denbigh, Cobbity, New South Wales, seventh of eight children of one of the early colonial chaplains, Rev Thomas Hassall.

She showed a strong missionary spirit from an early age, ministering to the families of the estate's tradesmen and tenants.

Her older sisters married. She did not, devoting her life to helping her father and her eldest brother Rev. James Hassall, caring for her widowed mother and finally promoting overseas missions.

In 1855 her father wrote of her taking up 'so earnestly' the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In July 1880 she helped to found the NSW branch of the Young People's Scripture Union, of which she became secretary.



In July 1892 the Church Missionary Association of New South Wales was formed, reflecting unprecedented interest in evangelical missions. It set its own policies and recruited its own missionaries, although the parent committee retained ultimate control over their placement.

About 1893 Eliza bought a house in suburban Sydney to be used as a training home for women missionaries. Its first recruit, her niece Amy Isabel Oxley, went to China in 1896.

Almost three-quarters of Australian missionaries overseas in Eliza's time were women. She had contributed significantly to their recruitment in Sydney.

5. The Church Fathers on St Basil

From a sermon by Saint Gregory Nazianzen, bishop

Two bodies, but a single spirit

Basil and I were both in Athens. We had come, like streams of a river, from the same source in our native land, had separated from each other in pursuit of learning, and were now united again as if by plan, for God so arranged it.

I was not alone at that time in my regard for my friend, the great Basil. I knew his irreproachable conduct, and the maturity and wisdom of his conversation. I sought to persuade others, to whom he was less well known, to have the same regard for him. Many fell immediately under his spell, for they had already heard of him by reputation and hearsay.

What was the outcome? Almost alone of those who had come to Athens to study he was exempted from the customary ceremonies of initiation for he was held in higher honour than his status as a first-year student seemed to warrant.

Such was the prelude to our friendship, the kindling of that flame that was to bind us together. In this way we began to feel affection for each other. When, in the course of time, we acknowledged our friendship and recognized that our ambition was a life of true wisdom, we became everything to each other: we shared the same lodging, the same table, the same desires, the same goal. Our love for each other grew daily warmer and deeper.

The same hope inspired us: the pursuit of learning. This is an ambition especially subject to envy. Yet between us there was no envy. On the contrary, we made capital out of our rivalry. Our rivalry consisted, not in seeking the first place for oneself but in yielding it to the other, for we each looked on the other's success as his own.

We seemed to be two bodies with a single spirit. Though we cannot believe those who claim that "everything is contained in everything," yet you must believe that in our case each of us was in the other and with the other.

Our single object and ambition was virtue, and a life of hope in the blessings that are to come; we wanted to withdraw from this world before we departed from it. With this end in view we ordered our lives and all our actions. We followed the guidance of God's law and spurred each other on to virtue. If it is not too boastful to say, we found in each other a standard and rule for discerning right from wrong.

Different men have different names, which they owe to their parents or to themselves, that is, to their own pursuits and achievements. But our great pursuit, the great name we wanted, was to be Christians, to be called Christians.

6. Intentions for Your Daily Prayers

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

For the world. The leaders of the world as they seek to respond to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. For medical researchers, that they may be granted knowledge and wisdom as they search for a vaccine and cure. For refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

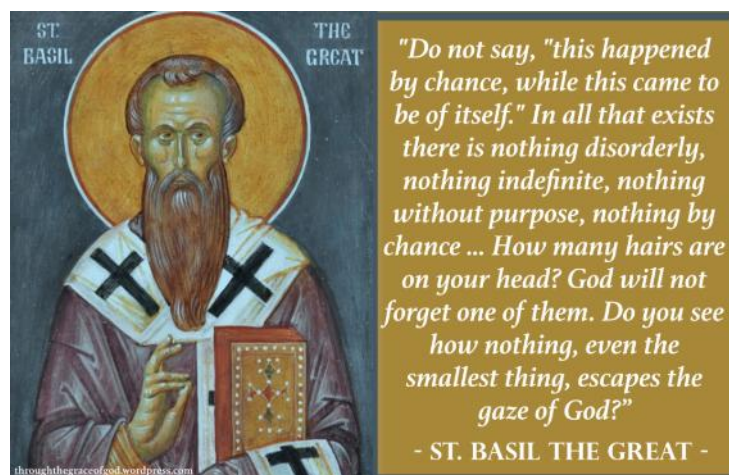
For the church. For all those who are challenged to be church in a different and unfamiliar way. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Dioceses of Gasabo (Rwanda); and Gboko (Nigeria). in our national church, pray for the National Council of Churches in Australia; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for Anglicare SA.

For our local community. For the Collective as it resumes its ministry to the community in the Drop-In Centre is suspended, and for its guests as they seek places to eat and rest. For the Magdalene Centre, as it deals with the need to change the way it delivers services in order to safeguard the health of customers, staff and volunteers.

For those in need. For all those who are sick in body, mind or spirit. For all those affected by the COVID-19 coronavirus and all who care for them. For those who are commended to our prayers, especially Paull, Valerie, David, Sim, Chris, Clarice, Philip, Phyllis, Dulcie, Jasmin and Henry.

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

For the saints. For the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Joseph, St Mary Magdalene, St Basil, and holy women and men of every time and place.



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

