

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 31 March 2022

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 during the holy season of Lent, the church will also be open on Wednesday morning for prayers at 7.30 am; Thursday between 11.30 am and 1 pm, with the Angelus at noon and Mass at 12.10 pm; and for Stations of the Cross on Friday at 6.15 pm.

These newsletters are intended to support the spiritual life of the community as we continue to cope with and respond to the pandemic.



1. From Fr Steven – The earth as sacrament

In anticipation of Holy Week, I want to suggest that Jesus died at the hands of the Romans in the name of love. In this, he loved one and all. And he loved the earth.

In this vein, Holy Week cultivates within in us a disposition of openness to deeper transformation. So, Easter is not just a special day; it is also the season where we celebrate and experience our re-creation in Christ. But what does this renewal look like?

The new creation is an earthy thing. That is, being Christian is not about being religious, looking at the sky expecting lightning, thunder, and revelations. The action is here and now on *terra firma*. What is more, our renewal is linked to the renewal of the earth itself.

In Christianity, God loves the earth and through the risen Christ, God seeks to renew the earth. In fact, in our tradition, the doctrine of the Incarnation is not only a statement about the significance of Jesus the Christ, but it is also a declaration about God's intimate relationship with us and the earth itself. With incarnational theology, the earth is a sacrament. In the first century, however, this kind of understanding was under threat.

In the first century, several religious groups emerged who shared a similar pattern of belief. One of the features was contempt for the earth. For Gnostics, for instance, there were two realms: the divine and the earthly. The divine realm was good. The earthly realm was evil. The material world could not to be trusted. This included the human body. Thus, the soul was a divine spark, which was held captive within the body.

The word *Gnostic* comes from the Greek word for knowledge (*gnosis*). This was special (esoteric) knowledge that possessed saving power, which could enable the soul to escape the body in order to return the divine realm. Gnostic groups are then keepers of the secrets. In this

case, their secret is inside-knowledge about God and God's redeemer. In contrast, the Gospel of John presents an open alternative to the forerunners of Gnosticism.

In John 3:16, we see that God loves the world. In John 1:14, God embraces the world through the Word, because the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. So, unlike Gnosticism, the world is not disdained. On the contrary, the world is embraced through the Incarnation and transformed through the resurrection of Christ.

As Christians, we affirm that the risen Christ is among us. His reality is ours. His presence is doing the work of re-creation. In fact, the Spirit of Christ is yearning to re-create the earth. For the earth is sacred. It is a divine gift. This means that ecological concern is part of the saving work of God. Nevertheless, we cannot do this single-handed.

For example, we cannot address climate change by ourselves. But we can do our bit. We can learn more. Support environmental organisations. Invest ethically. Encourage governments. Yes, we can start locally, with everything from recycling to solar panels and, eventually, even electric cars. Above all, we can pray together for the healing of God's holy earth.

Steven Ogden
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 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.

3. Reflections and Meditations

Reflections for our two weekly newsletters will continue for the time being, and our Thursday "Spiritual Resources" newsletter will continue to be uploaded to the web page. Fr Philip Carter's meditations and spiritual reflections have resumed with a series on the teachings of Julian of Norwich, and 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. Devotions During Lent

Each **Wednesday** in Lent, prayers will be said in the Church at 7.30 am. The format will be a short reading, 20 minutes of silent prayer/meditation, and a song to conclude, finishing promptly at 8 am.

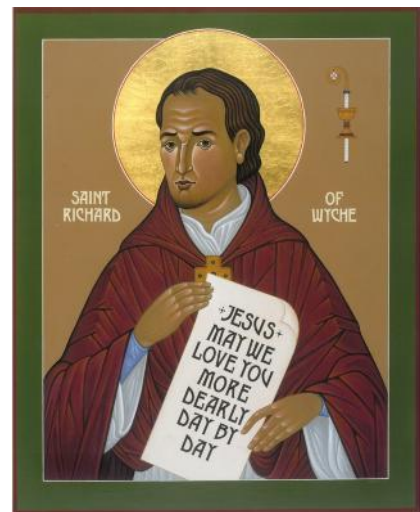
On **Thursday**, in addition to the Lenten study, the regular Thursday Mass will also be said at 12.10 pm, following the Angelus at 12 noon.

On **Friday**, the Stations of the Cross will be celebrated at 6.15 pm.

5. In the Church's Calendar

This week the church commemorates the 13th century English bishop St Richard of Chichester, and Frederic Barker, the 2nd Anglican bishop of Sydney, who pioneered theological education in Australia.

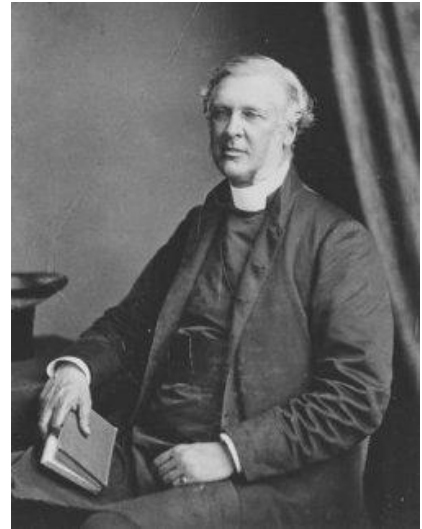
St Richard was born in Worcestershire, England, to a wealthy family. He was orphaned while still young, but managed to regain his fortune which had been mismanaged by others, and received an excellent education at Oxford, Paris, and Bologna, Italy, where he earned a doctorate in law. He was appointed chancellor of Oxford in 1235 and then chancellor to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Rich. After accompanying Edmund into retirement at the Cistercian abbey of Pontigny, France, he departed the community upon Edmund's death, taught at the Dominican house in Orkans, and was ordained there in 1243. Upon returning to England, he was named chancellor to Edmund's successor as Archbishop of Canterbury, Boniface of Savoy.



When King Henry III appointed Ralph Neville to the see of Chichester in 1244, Archbishop Boniface declared the nomination invalid and named Richard to the post, an act which caused an uproar in the kingdom. Finally, in 1245, Pope Innocent IV found in Richard's favour, but Richard was prevented from entering his palace by the machinations of the King. Only after Henry was threatened with excommunication was Richard able to take up his duties.

He insisted upon strict adherence to discipline among the clergy, aided the poor, and fearlessly denounced the corruption and vices of the contemporary Church and the royal court. His death came at Dover, in a home for poor priests, while delivering a plea for a crusade. Richard was canonized in 1262, and his tomb became a popular shrine noted for its miracles until the Reformation in England.

Frederic Barker (1808-1882) was the second Bishop of Sydney. He came to Australia from England in 1855 and in the 27 years of his episcopate, he was instrumental in promoting theological education not only in his own diocese but in the many new dioceses formed during his tenure. In Sydney, he founded a Theological College in 1856 named for Thomas Moore, an early settler who left a considerable sum to the Church of England to train people for ministry.



Barker was also a believer in synodal governance, though his views were not without opposition by other evangelicals who felt that a deliberate connection to the State, as in England, was something of a safeguard against Anglo-Catholicism. However, Diocesan synods emerged during the 1850s and 1860s – the first was in Adelaide in 1855 – and in 1872 the first General Synod was held.

Barker built the Diocese of Sydney into an evangelical stronghold utilising principled pragmatism and a firm strategic vision. While he was tolerant in personal relations with the very small number of moderate or high church clergy in the Diocese – all but 6 of the 98 clergy in the Diocese at the end of his episcopate were firm evangelicals – he was inflexible in public opposition to other schools of churchmanship. His nickname (of which he disapproved) “the High Priest” was as much a comment on his low churchmanship as on his great height, 6 ft 5½ inches. He is commemorated in the Calendar for the Anglican Church of Australia on 6 April, the date of his death.

6. **St Richard – from Butler’s *Lives of the Saints* (1894)**

RICHARD was born, 1197, in the little town of Wyche, eight miles from Worcester, England. He and his elder brother were left orphans when young, and Richard gave up the studies which he loved, to farm his brother's impoverished estate. His brother, in gratitude for Richard's successful care, proposed to make over to him all his lands; but he refused both the estate and the offer of a brilliant marriage, to study for the priesthood at Oxford.

In 1235 he was appointed, for his learning and piety, chancellor of that University, and afterwards, by St. Edmund of Canterbury, chancellor of his diocese. He stood by that Saint in his long contest with the king, and accompanied him into exile.

After St. Edmund's death Richard returned to England to toil as a simple curate, but was soon elected Bishop of Chichester in preference to the worthless nominee of Henry III. The king in revenge refused to recognize the election, and seized the revenues of the see. Thus Richard found himself fighting the same battle in which St. Edmund had died. He went to Lyons, was there consecrated by Innocent IV in 1245, and returning to England, in spite of his poverty and the king's hostility, exercised fully his episcopal rights, and thoroughly reformed his see. After two years his revenues were restored.

Young and old loved St. Richard. He gave all he had, and worked miracles, to feed the poor and heal the sick; but when the rights or purity of the Church were concerned he was inexorable. A priest of noble blood polluted his office by sin; Richard deprived him of his benefice, and refused the king's petition in his favour. On the other hand, when a knight violently put a priest in prison, Richard compelled the knight to walk round the priest's church with the same log of wood on his neck to which he had chained the priest; and when the

people of Lewes tore a criminal from the church and hanged him, Richard made them dig up the body from its unconsecrated grave, and bear it back to the sanctuary they had violated. Richard died in 1253, while preaching, at the Pope's command, a crusade against the Saracens.

As a brother, as chancellor, and as bishop, St. Richard faithfully performed each duty of his state without a thought of his own interests. Neglect of duty is the first sign of that self-love which ends with the loss of grace.

The prayer attributed to him on his death-bed, known as the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester, remains a much-loved devotion to this day.

*Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits thou hast given me,
for all the pains and insults thou hast borne for me.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,
and follow thee more nearly, day by day.
Amen.*

7. 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 Barrackpore (North India). In our national church, pray for the National Council of Churches; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the Parish of Toorak Gardens.

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, Clarice, Dulcie, Jasmin, Henry, John Edwards (priest), Peter Garland (priest), Robert Whalley (priest), Mark, Neil, Olivia and Elaine.

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 Ossy Grotto, and those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time, especially Julie Hooke. ✠ *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 Richard, 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.

