



Keeping Community Spiritual Resources & Reflections

Thursday 7 May 2020

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 offer ideas and opportunities for nourishing our personal and communal spiritual lives.

1. From Fr Graeme – Principles and Love

I have been thinking about principles. We sometimes speak of “Christian principles”. Christians are often thought of as “principled people.” A principle is to hold a definite position about something. A principle is a conviction with a clearly defined boundary. When Jesus describes how he hopes we shall follow him, he does not include the notion of living by principle. He does, however, bring love mightily into his notion of the Christian life. Love is far less rigid than principle. Allowances can be made with love, excesses of love are common, and love can make reconciliation possible far more easily than principle.

Principles, if they are held rigidly, can set one person against another. Principles can give rise to self-satisfaction and a sense of superiority. Neither self-satisfaction nor superiority are of love. Principles can make us unbending and difficult to deal with. The principles may be good ones – even correct – but are they to be the ultimate influence on our behaviour?

Principles can be misused. A principle can lead to treachery against another person. Principled treachery is a powerful weapon in human interaction because it makes us feel we are doing what is right. Tightly held principles can make it impossible to agree with someone or to reach any compromise.

It would be good if love became a principle. Love can temper principle and lead us to modify or suspend a principle sometimes. Many parents have needed to suspend their principles in order to accommodate their adult children's decisions. Do I value my child's close relationship more than my principle? Many a wedding or baptism has been held with parents participating in spite of their principles. In these instances it seems that love (or self-preservation) has become the guiding principle.

It is obvious that God does not deal with us primarily as a principled deity. Most of us would have been ousted from God's sphere long ago had God's love been bound by principle. In fact God's love is prodigal and it flows in unbelievable proportions all over us. The crucifixion of Christ demonstrated this for all time.

The resurrection of Christ gives us the grace to live and love as God loves us. It is possible to love without principle especially if we love as God loves. God seems to work on a good principle that no one needs love more than someone who does not deserve it.

During this Eastertide we can look at ourselves and wonder about our principles. Do they set us apart from other people in a questionable way? Which of our principles are really good and do they enable us to show love easily? Principles are not wrong in themselves but can they be held too rigidly?

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 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
Friday 8 May Julian of Norwich	Ps 20, 21 Numbers 11.16-33 John 11.55- 12.8	Ps 24, 26 Exodus 29.38 – 30.8 1 Corinthians 6.12-20
Saturday 9 May	Ps 22.1-22 Numbers 12 John 12.9-19	Ps 22.23-32, 23 Exodus 31 1 Corinthians 7.1-11
Sunday 10 May 5th Sunday of Easter	Ps 116 Revelation 21.1-2, 9-14 John 14.1-14	Ps 135.1-4, 13-21 Acts 8.1b-13 Revelation 10
Monday 11 May	Ps 28, 29 Numbers 13.1-3, 17-29 John 12.20-33	Ps 30, 32 Exodus 32.1-14 1 Corinthians 7.12-24
Tuesday 12 May	Ps 33 Numbers 13.30 – 14.25 John 12.34-43	Ps 31 Exodus 32.15-35 1 Corinthians 7.25-35
Wednesday 13 May	Ps 35.1-17 Numbers 14.26-45 John 12.44-50	Ps 35.18-29, 36 Exodus 33.1-17 1 Corinthians 7.36-40
Thursday 14 May	Ps 34 Numbers 16.-19 John 13.1-11	Ps 119.17-40 Exodus 33.18 – 34.10 1 Corinthians 8

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).

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, 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. International Day of Prayer, May 14

In February 2019, Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, Ahmed el-Tayib, signed a document on Human Fraternity, a joint statement calling for the reconciliation of people of goodwill in service of universal peace. A reference group, the Higher Committee on Human Fraternity, has been established, comprising religious, educational and cultural leaders in Islam, Christianity and Judaism, with an aspiration to have an impact at a global scale.

The Higher Committee has called on believers of all religions to observe a day of fasting and prayer on Thursday May 14 to ask God to rid the world of the Covid-19 pandemic and pray that vaccines may be developed with all speed.

"Each one, from wherever they are and according to the teachings of their religion, faith, or sect, should appeal to God to lift this pandemic off us and the entire world, to rescue us all from this adversity," the committee said in a statement.

It also called on people to ask God "to inspire scientists to find a cure that can turn back this disease, and to save the whole world from the health, economic, and human repercussions of this serious pandemic."

It further urged people to respond to this call in order to "help us overcome this pandemic, to restore security, stability, healthiness, and prosperity, so that, after this pandemic is over, our world will become a better place for humanity and fraternity than ever before."

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.

Finding my identity in God and seeing everyone as my sister and brother

Blessed are merciful for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Mercy and peace are ours by pure gift: we are simply the New Creation – implying the re-creation in the depths of our being. Knowing ourselves means knowing God: to discover myself is to discover myself with the stranger and at the same time in the core of my being. We are to go inwards and outwards, a double movement.

The Beatitudes are **not prescriptions, telling us what we have to do, but descriptions, of a way of being and relating that leads to life**, freedom, peace, compassion, justice and hope.

Peace and love are always in us, living and working, but we are not always in peace and love.

Julian of Norwich

My fall into inconsistency was nothing but the revelation of what I am. I am thrown into contradiction: to realize it is mercy, to accept it is love, to help others do the same is compassion.

Thomas Merton

The Beatitudes are *eight conditions or circumstances which we commonly find either hard to accept or difficult to achieve [and] are reinterpreted as basic stuff to be embraced in Kingdom of God living.*

Eugene Peterson

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.

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.

8. Church as Community

Our friend Sue Franco has supplied the following but way of a follow up to her item from last week, The Community Within.

A Social Worker asked Ravi if she could take him to a five-star hotel for 30 days and Ravi said "This is my five-star hotel".

A sense of freedom as it exists in time and place.

A reaching within and without for a sense of existence.

A place of belonging where love dwells in experience.

A place where memories and histories are observed and respected.

An expression of God's love - any place and any time.

A universal concept of tolerance, acceptance and encompassing love.

An expression that does not restrict or judge.

Where expectation and discovery exist and seek expression in the world.

A place that is not about worldliness - but about humanity.

Expressing God's love that transcends humanity's limits in all its forms.

A sense of universal existence that nurtures the young and vulnerable.

Church reminds us of this when it does not seem to exist.

Church is striving for a world view among diversity on the planet

An institution that bases itself in the diversity of human experience.

Prayer - recognising a moment of reaching and receiving God's love.

Nature as the cathedral of the church.

Worship a sense of moment in reflection.

Consciousness of the best that we have to offer

A sense of honouring our birth, life and death as universal.

A paradox of defining life - and being open to the mysteries of life.

Seeking an alternative daily existence - from the mundane to the profound.

A place where acceptance is everything, and where buildings serve people.

The core of worship is the sharing of common humanity.

A community of love where reflection, respect and compassion are shared.

A community where openness to self and others is church.

9. In the Church's Calendar

This week we celebrate the annual memorial of Julian of Norwich, the 14th century English mystic. Julian was an anchorite, which meant that she lived enclosed permanently in a room (called an anchor-hold or anchorage) attached to a church with one window facing the altar and another window facing the world outside.

During an extreme illness, she experienced a kind of near-death experience in the form of sixteen visions, which she called "Showings." She wrote about these visions and understood them as revelations from God. While receiving these divine revelations, Julian was not simply a passive recipient but rather an engaged participant, praying boldly, seeking God's face, asking questions, not holding anything back. And Christ seemed to appreciate this and continued to draw her deeper into his love, encouraging her to pray with all that was within her. In one vision, Christ spoke to her and said, "Pray *interly*."

To pray *interly* means to pray inwardly or interiorly, with all of the emotions and questions of the inner life. And praying *interly* also means praying entirely, with the whole self, with the body, with the physical life. When Christ said to Julian "Pray *interly*" he was saying, "Pray entirely, wholeheartedly, earnestly, even if you feel nothing. Bring that nothingness to me in prayer. If you're feeling dry, barren, empty, weak or sick, bring all those parts of yourself to me. I want it all."

Julian invites us all to pray *interly*, pray entirely, wholeheartedly, with our whole selves, our physical bodies, our doubts, our questions, and our emotions. Whether we're feeling sick or bored or frustrated or disappointed, we are invited to give it all to God in prayer. If we have big, burning questions about the the problem of suffering or about heartless governments or about the future of the church or about difficulties in our own personal lives and families, Julian's example encourages us to bring all of that to God. Although we might not get the rational, watertight answers that we might be seeking or expecting, we *will* get *revelations of love*. As the 20th century Anglican philosopher Austin Farrer put it: "God does not give us explanations; God gives up a Son."



10. 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 refugees and asylum seekers, that they may find places of safety and welcome.

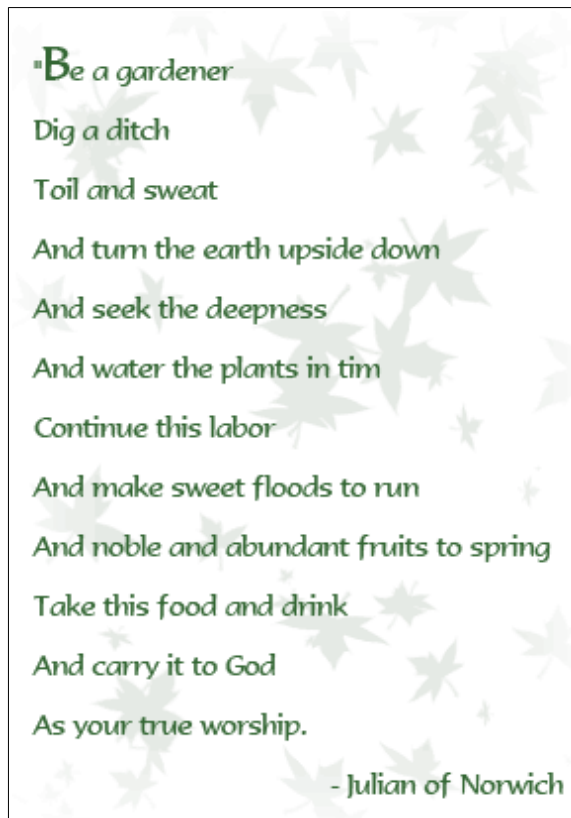
For the church. For all those who are challenged to be church in a different and unfamiliar way. In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for the Dioceses of Mumias (Kenya), Yola (Nigeria) and York (England). In our national church, pray for the Diocese of Brisbane; and within the Diocese of Adelaide, for the chaplaincy to the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

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, by Tuesday evening at 5 pm.

