

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 9 July 2017



Disused railway bridge, Cavendish. Photo Ross Byrne

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 10th July 2017.

Why this newsletter? This newsletter is one of the ways by which we hope to promote community. The Anam Cara Community is intended to be much more than simply a group of likeminded people. We hope it will continue to grow into a community that is a sign of God's presence in and love for the world, a dispersed community of contemplatives whose lives and action bring peace and healing to all of God's children. We are a Community of Prayer, and believe that as we pray together, God calls us deeper into fellowship with one another.

Who is welcome? The Anam Cara Community is proud to welcome anyone, from any background or faith community (or none!). We are an open and inclusive community that affirms the dignity and worth of all humans, the value of the environment, and seeks to model a way of living with one another and the world that points to the love and care of God for everyone. Individuals who wish to formally join the Community are welcome to become associates.

Coming Events

Dates for your diary:

1. Winter Quiet Day - Saturday 22nd July

RSVP NOW... Only 2 weeks to go...

Music, Christian Spirituality and Scripture

A Personal Journal

Reflection by: The Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding



St Mary's Morwell

9.30am - 3.30pm

BYO Lunch - Donations welcomed nil - \$15 depending on means.

RSVP Jane Macqueen - jemacqueen@gmail.com or David Head - davidrhead51@gmail.com

2. Gippsland Diocesan Retreat - The Abbey of St Barnabas

Winter Earth and Pomegranates

Led by: **The Rev'd Susanna Pain**

5pm Friday 11th August - 3.30pm Saturday 12th August

For your prayers

Part of the joy of the Anam Cara Community is the gift of being called to pray for others. If you would like the Community to pray for you, or for someone else, please email or call Jane ([0411 316 346](tel:0411316346) or jemacqueen@gmail.com) who will add them to the prayer list, and ensure they are included in our roster of prayers.

At present, your prayers are asked for:

- Bishop Kay in her ministry and leadership.
- The registry staff, Brian, Annette, Kellie, Sue and David.
- Associates and Friends who have asked for our prayers:
 - Kate and her mother Letitia.
 - Norma and June.
 - Grace and David as they mourn the death of John.
 - Joan Smith for relief from sciatic pain and discernment as to the most appropriate treatment.
- For all who are suffering and grieving as a result of the actions of terrorists..
- For peacemakers in our world. For political leaders in their discussions and decision making.
- For all refugees and asylum seekers across the globe.
- Christians who raise their voices in advocacy for refugees and asylum seekers, for a stirring in the hearts of politicians and ordinary people.

Prayer of the day.

Almighty God,
your Son Jesus Christ has taught us
that what we do for the least of his brothers and sisters
we do also for him:
give us the will to serve others
as he was the servant of all,
who gave up his life and died for us;
yet lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reflection

The Rev'd Chris Venning

'I will give you rest'

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Today's Gospel is in two parts. The first comes in the context of Jesus praising John the Baptist and criticising the fickleness of their generation. He uses the analogy of children in the marketplaces to underline how people criticised John for not eating and drinking, saying he had a demon, and when Jesus came eating and drinking called him 'a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' (verse 19, NRSV)

In the second part of our Gospel reading Jesus thanks God his Father for hiding 'these things from the wise and intelligent' and revealing them to 'infants' (v25). Presumably 'these things' refers to the coming of God's kingdom, announced by John and embodied in Jesus' life and teaching. Jesus lays claim to a unique relationship with, and mediation of, his Father God – and against this backdrop issues a startling invitation:

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. (v28-30)

This invitation of Jesus finds an appropriate place in the funeral service, but has application in every aspect of life and to every generation. The invitation also finds a place in many hymns, one of the better-known beginning: 'I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'Come unto me and rest; lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast.'" (*Together in Song* 585) The back story of the hymnwriter is interesting. Horatius Bonar was an early defector to the Free Church of Scotland, founded and led by his teacher Thomas Chalmers. Bonar was a popular author and poet and a prodigious hymnwriter. One of his closest friends and colleagues was the prominent minister Robert Murray M'Cheyne, whose biography was written by Bonar's younger brother Andrew (it carried the unfortunate title *The Memoirs and Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne*). Horatius Bonar's time was a tumultuous one for the Scottish Church, and the hymn was obviously written out of his deeply personal experience. In making a break with the Church of Scotland in the Disruption of 1843 Bonar was turning his back on a long family tradition. The Bonars had provided the Church of Scotland with a long line of ministers, together serving a total of 364 years. The Disruption saw 450 Evangelical ministers, including Horatius Bonar, leave the established Church to form the Free Church because of their concerns about the influence on the Church of Scotland of the Enlightenment and the State.

As in Bonar's day, so today many are 'weary and carrying heavy burdens' (v28). The accelerating pace of life leaves many of us feeling weary and with a sense of carrying heavy burdens. When something extra comes along - like the loss of a job, a breakdown in a key

relationship, or the death of a family member or friend – we may experience it as ‘the straw that breaks the camel’s back’. In such a scenario, Jesus’ invitation takes on increased relevance and urgency. There have been times in my own life – life-threatening illness, overwork and stress, death of parents, separation from my wife of 34 years, change of job – when I have felt overwhelmed. This has been especially so when a number of these factors have coincided. At such times Jesus’ invitation was one I gladly accepted. I found help – and ‘rest’, not always as promptly or in the form I imagined – but help and rest, nevertheless. I have always found such situations uncomfortable, conscious I called on God when I was in need, less so when things were going well. I have gained some comfort here in recognising this is a common human reflex, as when the psalmist affirms; ‘My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you’ (Psalm 42:5b, NRSV). For me, writing – especially poetry – has often been therapeutic at such times, helping me to see my concerns within the context of God’s love in Christ. Such as in one of my early sonnets, written in September 1989 when I felt on the edge of burnout.

Pilgrimage and rest (*Sonnet no. 6*)

*Where does a pilgrim shelter in the winter, Lord,
from storm and stress: Inside himself, or thee?
How can he lay aside his staff and sword
when weariness he feels and dangers all around can see:
Yet if he rest not, darker dreams may fly abroad
and threaten equilibrium, and even sanity.
And so he turns to thee, in fear of being ignored,
but casts himself down hopefully.*

*Our God will not abandon us to dark despair,
whether the storms rage ceaselessly, or weather still be fair:
though oft unseen, unfelt, the shelter of God's love is there.
So weary pilgrim, draw aside a while and seek his rest,
knowing that he created you, and he knows best
the healing that you need within yourself to be most blessed.*

Our text continues with Jesus inviting his hearers to take his yoke, and learn from him; he promises they/we will find rest for their/our souls (v29). The image of the yoke is an obviously agricultural one, perhaps having less impact in our age of mechanisation, but the meaning is clear. Interestingly, the yoke usually was fastened to two animals for ploughing or the like. Did Jesus mean us to see ourselves in tandem with himself? Whether or not this is fanciful, he does emphasise that his ‘yoke is easy, and [his] burden is light’ (v30). I’ve always found this a difficult verse, because Christian discipleship does not feel easy to me. Yet, like life, it is not without its joys! I think Jesus’ emphasis here is on the way he will be present to help us in our weariness and with our heavy burdens.

Lord Jesus Christ, in your own words you invite us to bring our weariness and heavy burdens to you, promising you will give us rest. Teach us to take your yoke upon us, and to learn from you, that we may find rest for our souls, and that we may discover that your yoke is indeed easy, and your burden light. Amen

Photo Reflection



Ireland. Photo Jane

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

Contemplative Worship Service

The last Sunday of each month 5.00pm

In the Lady Chapel

Christian Meditation 7.45am - 8.15am every Wednesday

Christian Meditation is a spiritual wisdom and a practice leading from the mind to the heart. It is a way of simplicity, silence, stillness and openness to God. It can be practised by anyone, wherever you are on your life's journey. It is only necessary to begin – and to keep on beginning.

Contact: Susanna Pain susanna.pain@gmail.com

This practice is in the tradition of the World Community for Christian Meditation <http://www.wccm.org/>

Evening Prayer with focus on intercession 5.15pm Mondays

AWAKEN Spring Festival - Speakers with ideas to stretch stimulate and nourish

Saturday 16th September 2pm-5pm

Robyn and Alan Cadwallader

Body and Soul - the conflicts and the gifts of the past

Saturday 21st October 1.30pm - 5pm

The Earth is the Lord's - Listening to God in Scripture and Creation

Graeme Garrett and Jan Morgan

Alice Springs desert retreat for body and soul 24th - 29th September 2017

Details from Susanna Pain

2. The Abbey of St Baranabas

The Abbey Feast

Rev Nikolai Blaskow will be our Chef!

Come and celebrate with other Friends of The Abbey as we enjoy the chef's gourmet creations: 4 course meal with wine.

12 noon,

Saturday 19 August 2017

\$55 per person

Funds raised for The Abbey

Phone: 5156 6580 Email: info@theabbey.org.au. www.theabbey.org.au

3. Meditation - the chapel of St James, Traralgon

A group of people who are exploring the inner journey regularly meet for prayer and meditation together. We meet twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday mornings [at 10 am](#). During the hour we spend together we share the reading of scripture, prayer and music. There is a long period of silent meditation. To sit in silence together before God helps us to recognise God in the complexities of our lives. In the depth of our being there is always a sanctuary filled with God's presence. We can go there in silence to be and to listen. All are welcome.

4. Bass Hill Hermitage

Thinking about making a silent Retreat?

Bass Hill Hermitage is on the Bass Coast, near Phillip Island. The Hermitage has its roots in the traditions of Christian Spirituality. It is a perfect place to reflect, pray and deepen your relationship with God. Beginners, as well as experienced retreatants are welcome. They offer **directed and self-guided retreats as well as on-going Spiritual Direction and Supervision.**

The Hermitage can also be booked for a 'Quiet break' or some 'Time Out'. Visit the informative website:

www.basshillhermitage.com.au for more information.

Support on the journey

The Anam Cara Community's ministry is to be a support to those who are on the inner journey into God. Each person's journey is different, and we recognise that there are some for whom the Christian tradition is difficult or not supportive. We're committed to finding ways to hear the needs of each Associate, and support them as we can.

Contacts:

- *Website:* www.anamcaragippsland.org
- To subscribe to or unsubscribe from the mailing list contact Jane
- *Soul carer (Community Leader):* Jane ([0411 316 346](tel:0411316346) or jemacqueen@gmail.com)
- *Secretary / Librarian:* Sue [03 5182 5542](tel:0351825542)
- *Treasurer:* Kate
- *Postal mail:* Anam Cara Community c/o PO Box 928, Sale, VIC 3850
- *Diocesan Director of Professional Standards (to make complaints or express concerns about our ministries):* Ms Cheryl Russell [0407 563 313](tel:0407563313), cherylr@gippsanglican.org.au

Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

APBA & NRSV portions, TiS hymns 'Reprinted with permission.

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