

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 19 August 2018



Metung. Photo, Ross

Byrne.

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 19th August 2018.

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.

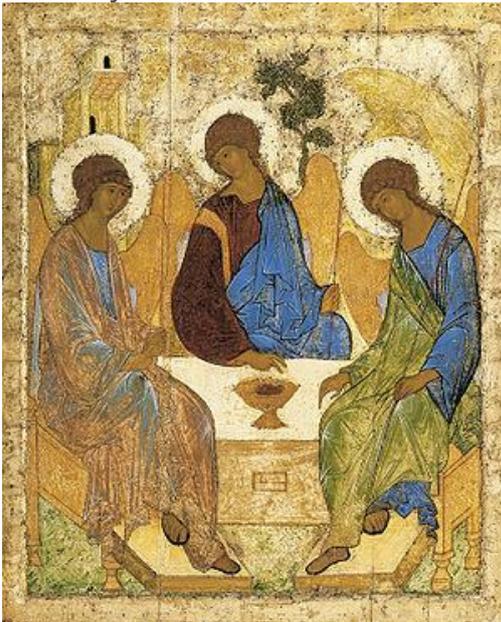
Coming Events

Quiet Day - NEXT SATURDAY!!

"The Divine Dance - Reflections on the Trinity"

Saturday 25th August

St Mary's Morwell



Led by: The Rev'd David Head

David will offer some reflections as a response to his reading of Richard Rohr's book, 'The Divine Dance'.

9.30am cuppa for a 10am start until 3.30pm.

BYO lunch, morning tea provided.

ALL WELCOME

Please RSVP to help us with our planning:

Jane: jemacqueen@gmail.com or 0411316346 or Val: vgl@aussiebb.com.au

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:

- Diocesan Administrator, Philip Muston and the registry staff, Brian, Annette, Sue and David.
- Bishop Richard Treloar, installed yesterday as the 13th Bishop of Gippsland. Prayers for Bishop Richard, his wife Leanne and children Rachel and Nicholas.
- Associates and friends who have asked for prayer: Norma, June, Fiona Barry, Chris Venning and Val Lawrence.
- For all who are suffering as a result of extraordinary weather events, drought, fire, heatwaves.
- For our churches to be places of inclusion, welcome and reconciliation.
- For peacemakers in our world. For world leaders in their discussions and decision making.
- For all who suffer as a result of violence.
- For wise and compassionate counsel and some direction and hope for the future of refugees and asylum seekers across the globe.

Prayer of the day

Everliving God,
your Son, Jesus Christ,
gave himself as living bread for the life of the world:
give us such a knowledge of his presence
that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Seasons of the Spirit prayer:

God of wisdom, God of love,
guide us in your way of peace,
so we may find and nurture healing in our broken world. Amen.

Reflection

13th Sunday after Pentecost

Reflection offered by Dean Susanna

John 6:51-58

The altar was draped, as always, in starched linen and set with silver chalices and patten. The congregation was silent, even somber, as the priest began carefully to read the words of institution in a solemn tone meant to add dignity to the proceedings. And “On [this] occasion,” writes, [Martin Copenhaver](#) “when I repeated Jesus’ familiar words, ‘This is my body, broken for you; this is my blood, shed for you’ a small girl suddenly said in a loud voice, ‘Ew, yuk!’ The congregation looked horrified,” he continues, “as if someone had splattered blood all over the altar — which, in effect, is just what the little girl had done with her exclamation.”^[1]

She called it, like the child in ‘The Emperor’s New Clothes’. This is big stuff that we’re doing here. How do we make sense of it all?

In today’s gospel, we are stuck in the middle of an argument between Jesus and the crowd who was following him about bread from heaven and Jesus’ nearly unintelligible and rather grotesque assertions about eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Behind these verses a controversy rages in the early Church about the nature and import of the Lord’s Supper, Holy Communion, Eucharist, a controversy which John the evangelist is attempting to settle with his record of Jesus’ discourse about giving his own flesh and blood that the world might live.

Eating flesh was forbidden. It was associated with vultures (Ez 39:17) and evildoers (Zech 11:9). Drinking blood was equally offensive. “You shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood,” said Genesis (9:4). “You shall not eat...any blood,” said Leviticus (3:17). “You shall not eat flesh and drink blood,” said Ezekiel (39:17).^[2]

Thus, the crowd listening to Jesus would hear his words, “eat my flesh and drink my blood,” as blasphemy, as an abomination, as a violation of a core belief about the Holy, and our proper relationship with the Holy. These words of Jesus are akin to the words of the snake in the Garden tempting his listeners to eat a forbidden fruit; to violate a God-given commandment; to violate the sacred ordering of creation.

Consider what they said: “*Life is from God alone and belongs to God alone. To ingest fat or blood is to strive to be like God*”!!! What happens when we eat this flesh and drink this blood? John has Jesus saying “... the one who eats this bread will live for ever.” This is

surely to be God-like. Life forever and/or eternal life is repeated three times in these six verses!

We are being called to be God-like, to let go of something of the humanity in us which leads to death.

The scandal of these words from Jesus is so great that at the end of this chapter it seems only the twelve disciples remain with Jesus.

6:66 Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. 67 So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' 68 Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.' 70 Jesus answered them, 'Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil.'

Where is the devil? "Not in Judas," those disciples who turned back might cry, "but in Jesus!" because ... in the Aramaic tradition ... "the eater of flesh" is the title of the devil... The drinking of blood was looked on as an horrendous thing forbidden by God's law... Its transferred, symbolical meaning was that of brutal slaughter (Jer. 46:10)" says Raymond Brown.^[3]

So what's it got to do with us?

What does this talk of flesh and blood and heavenly bread and even with the Lord's Supper really have to do with the ins and outs, the ups and downs, of everyday living? Even with the Installation Service yesterday with all its pomp and ceremony? What does it have to do with the things that really matter, our hopes and fears, loves and hates, our living and our dying? What does it have to do with us, here and now, two thousand years later, struggling just to make ends meet?"

I come to the Biblical text for meaning, not meaning in the sense of answering all my questions, but meaning which makes life worth living. So, what does it all mean?

Jesus responds, "I am telling you the truth," he says, both to the crowd gathered around him in Capernaum and those gathered today. "I am telling you the truth: if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.... For my flesh is the real food; my blood is the real drink."

And then, suddenly, upon hearing these words we realise – the crowd both then and now – we realise that he's serious. He's not being metaphorical or speaking abstractly; he really means it. This one, Jesus, would give us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink.

Upon hearing it the crowd in Capernaum shrinks back because what Jesus is speaking about has always been regarded as an abomination by the law and the prophets. And upon hearing it we shrink back because it doesn't square with our reason, it doesn't fit our sensibilities, and, if we're to be honest, it's just a little gross, sounding closer to cannibalism than it does Christianity. I mean, think about it for a moment. When is the last time you really paid close attention to the words of Jesus we hear at each celebration of the Eucharist?^[4]

For three weeks, now, we have looked at this sixth chapter of *The Gospel According to John* and have connected it to our faith and, particularly, to the sacraments and the way they create and nourish our faith. But now, here, in the fourth week, we finally encounter the heart of it all. In these verses we begin to recognise just what is at stake for Jesus, just how much we are worth to him.

We have read, studied, and struggled to understand what Jesus means by speaking of the bread of life and the food from heaven. Here, now, he makes himself far too plain. In this passage, Jesus gets all too gritty, even base, in his imagery in order to confront us with the claim and promise of the carnal God, the God who becomes incarnate, who takes on flesh, becomes just like us, so that we may one day be like God.

For in Jesus, the Word made flesh, and in the sacraments, the Word given physical, visible form once again, we meet the God who will be satisfied with nothing less than our whole selves. This is why Jesus speaks of giving us his flesh and blood, you see, "flesh and blood" is a Hebrew idiom which refers to the whole person, hearts, minds, spirit, feelings, hopes, dreams, fears, concerns, everything. In Jesus, you see, the whole of God meets us to love, redeem, and sustain the whole of who we are, good, bad, and ugly.

The God who comes for our whole selves.

In one sense, this sums up all of John's testimony to Christ. For throughout the Fourth Gospel we have encountered some of the most familiar images describing the relationship of Jesus and those who believe in him: Jesus is the shepherd and we are the sheep; he is the vine and we are the branches; he abides in God and we abide in him. "In this passage, however," as Copenhaver writes, 'language is pressed to the limits to express the indissoluble union and inextricable participation of one life in another. For those who receive Jesus, the whole Jesus, his life clings to their bones and courses through their veins. He can no more be taken from the believer's life than last Tuesday's breakfast can be plucked from one's body.'^[5]

This is the promise which God makes to us in the Sacraments: to be one with us and for us forever, to stick with us and even *in* us no matter what.

Each and every time we celebrate Holy Communion, God comes to us once again to offer us a promise made so concrete and solid so that we can touch and feel, taste and eat it. For, here, again, in these common physical elements, we have God's promise that God not only cares about our births and deaths, our marriages and our jobs, our successes and our failures, but that God has also joined God's own self to them and to us through Christ, the Word made flesh and given for us.

So come.

Come to eat and drink Jesus' promise.

Come prepared to meet the God who meets us exactly where we are.

Come to receive the real food of Christ's own body, the real drink of Christ's own blood, that we might have support in living in this so very real and difficult world.

Come, finally, to meet the God who offers us, not just meaning, but life itself, life in Christ both now and forever.

Thank you for your work and your words, and blessings on your proclamation of this living Word this week.^[6]

Two become one..

This is wisdom.

Susanna

^[1]<http://www.davidlose.net/2015/08/pentecost-12-b-meeting-the-carnal-god/>

^[2]<https://onemansweb.org/this-terrible-eating-of-bread-john-6-51-58.html>

^[3]The Gospel According to John Vol 1. pp 284 in <https://onemansweb.org/this-terrible-eating-of-bread-john-6-51-58.html>

^[4]David Lose

^[5]<http://www.davidlose.net/2015/08/pentecost-12-b-meeting-the-carnal-god/>

^[6]<http://www.davidlose.net/2015/08/pentecost-12-b-meeting-the-carnal-god/>

Photo Reflection



Sunset, Mt Victoria Blue Mountains NSW. Photo Julie

Brackenreg

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. The Abbey of St Barnabas, Raymond Island

Diocesan Retreat

7-8 September 2018

Retreat Leader

Bishop Garry Weatherill

Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Ballarat

Come on retreat and savour the beauty and peace of The Abbey on Raymond Island.

Bishop Garry is an experienced retreat leader, greatly loved and respected among many who appreciate his teaching and spiritual wisdom.

There will be times for silence, prayer and reflection, times for learning together, times to walk, to share, to create, to be.

ALL ARE WELCOME

5pm Fri 7 September 2018 – 3.30pm Sat 8 September 2018

Cost per person

Residential: incl. dinner Fri, breakfast & lunch Sat

twin/share accommodation: \$135

single accommodation: additional \$35

Non residential: incl. dinner Fri, Breakfast & LunchSat: \$85

To book or further information contact The Abbey

Phone (03)5156 6580 Email: info@theabbey.org.au www.theabbey.org.au

2. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

- **Men's Retreat at your Cathedral of Sale:**

from 9:30am to 3:00pm, on Saturday, September 1, 2018

Cunningham Street SALE, Victoria.

Theme: The Way of the Son into the Far Country

Led by: The Rev'd Nikolai Blaskow

Morning Tea and a simple *Lunch* will be provided (by all means bring your own, if you wish) just let us know of any dietary requirements.

To cover costs, **Registrations** are \$10-\$20 donations for the day.

Contact: nikolai@nikolaiblaskow.com, or ring 0428167724.

- **Christian Meditation**

- [7.45am - 8.15am](#) every [Wednesday](#) AND

- [5.30 - 6.00 pm](#) every [Thursday](#)

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**

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
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Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

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