

**Anam Cara Community**



## ***Waterholes: 29 September 2018***



Take time to gaze at the weathered log... Metung. Photo, Ross Byrne.

### **Welcome**

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 30th September 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.

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## 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](mailto: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 Richard, Leanne and Rachel and Nicholas as they continue to settle in to their new home, community, workplaces and school.
- The registry staff, Brian, Annette, Sue and David.
- Anam Cara Community Servant leaders who will meet for future planning next Saturday 6th October.
- Philip and Cathrine Muston and the parish of Lakes Entrance for their new beginnings following Philip's recent induction.
- Tracey Lauersen, husband Sven and Abby and Freya as they prepare to leave Melbourne for the parish of Warragul.
- For locums and lay readers in their ministries in parishes without clergy.
- 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, typhoon, hurricanes, drought, fire, heatwaves. The people of Sulawesi following the earthquake and tsunami.
- 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

O God,  
your Son has taught us  
that those who give a cup of water in his name  
will not lose their reward:  
open our eyes to see those who are in need,  
and teach us to set no store by riches and earthly rewards,  
so that, in surrendering ourselves to serve you  
in your children,  
we may labour for the treasure that endures;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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## Reflection

19th Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev'd Chris Venning

### TEMPTATIONS TO SIN

Esther 7.1-6, 9-10; 9.20-22  
50

Psalm 124

James 5.13-20

Mark 9.38-

Today's lectionary readings are an interesting group. Each addresses a particular Jewish context.

The Esther passage is set in the Persian capital of Susa in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (486-465 BC). The book takes its name from a beautiful Jewish girl King Ahasuerus chose as his queen. A peculiarity of the book is that God's name is not mentioned, but God's care for his chosen people Israel is a major theme. Esther's position and personality enables her adoptive father Mordecai and their fellow-countrymen to be saved from the machinations of Haman who hated the Jews and plotted to destroy them. The Jewish feast of Purim celebrates this salvation event.

Psalm 124, attributed to King David, mirrors the theme of Esther in its celebration and thanksgiving for the LORD's deliverance of Israel from its enemies.

James 5:13-20 is the last part of a letter traditionally attributed to the Lord's brother who, after initial antagonism to Jesus' ministry, became pastor and leader of the Jerusalem church. It is written to the scattered Jewish Christians of the Diaspora or Dispersion (1.1) facing trial and temptation.

It is this theme of 'temptations to sin' that our Gospel mainly addresses. This passage contains some of the 'hard sayings' so common in the Gospels' record of the teachings of Jesus. Even allowing for hyperbole, the literary exaggeration so common in rabbinic

teaching – and certainly in that of Jesus – this passage is confronting, as is the whole area of temptation. Perhaps this is one of the reasons we find it easier to tell jokes about sin and temptation than to discuss them seriously. Like Oscar Wilde: ‘I can resist anything except temptation!’ Or one of my favourite stories about a London priest and parking inspector. The priest double parked, leaving a note which read: ‘Have been around the square ten times. Am late for an appointment. Forgive us our trespasses!’ When he returned he found a parking ticket, and a note which read: ‘Have been around the square ten years. If I don’t book you I’ll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation.’

There is something disturbingly contemporary about Mark 9.42 (NRSV): ‘If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea.’ This verse came alive for me in Jerusalem in 2005, when I saw a small kitten sitting on a huge millstone in the sun. Verses 43-48 read like the script of a horror movie. Again, the hyperbole makes its point – a severed hand and foot, a torn-out eye! But I must admit it is the images of ‘Gehenna’ (or ‘hell’, NRSV) that I find even more unsettling: ‘the unquenchable fire’ (v45) and ‘where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched’ (v48). Gehenna referred to the Valley of the son of Hinnom, where some of the early kings and people of Judah had sacrificed sons and daughters to Baal by burning them (Jeremiah 7.31; 19.2-6).

How do we read such passages? At the very least they are a graphic warning against sin. Are they the actual words of Jesus, or do they represent, rather, the mind of the Church? If they represent an accurate record of Jesus’ words, did he mean us to take them literally? Or are both the images and even the concepts they convey an extension of the hyperbole, meant to forcibly remind us of the awfulness of sin and the importance of Jesus’ teaching? Perhaps in a manner not unlike the cult of animal sacrifice in the Hebrew Scriptures pointing to the seriousness of sin, and the sacrifice that would be offered in the Divine act of love by God the Father/Parent and Son? These are some of the questions I find myself wrestling with as I read ‘hard sayings’ such as we find in today’s Gospel.

***Lord, by your Spirit guide us into a greater understanding of the mysteries we meet in the Scriptures and the Christian life. And help us to follow closely in Christ’s footsteps, bringing both heart and mind to our worship of you and our journey of faith. Amen.***

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## Photo Reflection



Contemplate these weathered rocks (with waterhole) in the Grampians... Photo Ross Byrne

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## Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

### 1. The Abbey of St Barnabas, Raymond Island

- Tree Planting 2018

#### ***Enjoy some time at The Abbey and help with The 2018 Planting***

We have around 900 plants to put in the ground, so we'd love some help!

Come when you can, stay as long as you are able.

BYO lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Families and friends, young and old.

Tuesday 2 October: 11am-3pm

Wednesday 3 October: 11am-3pm

Thursday 4 October: 11am-3pm

For further information contact The Abbey

Phone (03)5156 6580 Email: [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au) [www.theabbey.org.au](http://www.theabbey.org.au)

## 2. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

- Contemplative Quiet Afternoon at the Gallery

1.30pm- 4.00pm

Sunday 30 September

Gippsland Art Gallery, Foster Street, Sale

Spend a contemplative quiet Sunday afternoon at the Gallery. We will gather in the Wayput Room upstairs for a short reflection, then spend time with the art in the gallery, then return to share something of our experience and insights. Led by Susanna Pain, priest, poet, dancer

To register interest: contact Susanna Pain [susanna.pain@gmail.com](mailto:susanna.pain@gmail.com) 048637469  
Cost; by donation to the Gallery

- 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](mailto: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](http://www.basshillhermitage.com.au) for more information.

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## 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](http://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](mailto: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), [cherylrussell1@bigpond.com](mailto:cherylrussell1@bigpond.com)
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Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

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