

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 5 November 2017



Ireland. Photo Jane Macqueen

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 5th 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

The Anam Cara Community's *Annual Thanksgiving Service*



**will be held at
St Mary's Anglican Church, Morwell
on: Saturday 25th November**

- Service [at 11.00am](#).
- Everyone is welcome, especially Associates and their friends.
- A simple lunch will be provided after the Service.
- Bishop Kay will lead a reflection during the service.
- This will be an opportunity for us to give thanks for the blessings of the past year.

- And to give thanks for Bishop Kay's ministry amongst us.

RSVP to Jane jemacqueen@gmail.com - [0411 316 346](tel:0411316346)

Thank you to those who have already sent me their RSVP's. These are very helpful as we are having the lunch catered for by the catering team at St Mary's. We are aware that there is an unfortunate clash with the Ecospirituality Day with the Labyrinth at the Cathedral but this was the only time when Bishop Kay was able to join us. What a positive thing it is that there are many opportunities for spiritual reflection occurring across the diocese!

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 jemaqueen@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, giving thanks for her ministry amongst us and for her calling to be Archbishop of Perth.
- The registry staff, Brian, Annette, Kellie, Sue and David.
- Thanksgiving and prayers for the ministries of locum priests in our diocese, particularly remembering Heather Toms at Lakes Entrance, Ken Parker at Bunyip, Heather Cahill at Croajingalong, Bishop Jeff at Tambo, Bevill Lunson at Orbost and visiting locums at Heyfield.
- Associates who have asked for prayer: Norma, June, Chris Venning and Val Lawrence.
- Anne Turner as she spends time with family on the first anniversary of Brian's death on Wednesday 8th November. For Anne and son David and boys as they travel to Sale for a short, quiet visit and time of reflection next weekend.
- For those grieving and experiencing suffering as result of senseless violence.
- For peacemakers in our world. For political leaders in their discussions and decision making.
- For the men left in limbo on Manus Island, for wise and compassionate counsel and some direction and hope for their future. For all refugees and asylum seekers across the globe.

Prayer of the day for All Saints.

Eternal God,
neither death nor life can separate us from your love:
grant that we may serve you faithfully here on earth,
and in heaven rejoice with all your saints
who ceaselessly proclaim your glory'
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reflection

With thanks to Nikolai Blaskow who stepped in with this reflection when I had made an error in my roster!

Saints, Souls and Sinners

A story about distance and closeness:

An excursion into the far country: who is the saint, who is the sinner?

I'm about to go to Rwanda. Last time I was in Africa, it was during the Apartheid regime in 1973. Seeing black, coloureds and whites going through separate turnstiles, was deeply shocking. What a contrast with my experience on Réunion Island near Mauritius and one of our youth leaders who liked to be called *Minuit* (midnight, because when he stood against a black backdrop you only knew he was there by the whites of his eyes). And then there was my visit to Soweto, and the anger. The Zulu youth were so angry—not surprising that the riots broke out a year later. And then there is Rwanda and *that* photo...the woman with the severed arm and the man who had hacked it off with a machete. What a reconciliation that was!

So today in the wake of All Saints and All Souls, this reflection starts with Desmond Tutu, who in my mind through his Truth commissions is a veritable saint who prevented a blood bath in South Africa.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in South Africa, often played the jester during the days of apartheid. He once told this joke:

A drunk, so the story goes, crossed the street to accost a perplexed pedestrian and asked, "I shay, which is the other shide of the street?" Nonplussed, the pedestrian replied, "That side of course!" "Shtrange," said the drunk, "when I wash [on] that shide, they shaid it was thish shide."

Here then is the riddle in the joke: when is this side the other side?

And with this innocent little puzzle, Tutu melts the solidity of the world. He interrupts the rigid definitions of sides that so shaped South Africa during apartheid. And he scrambles all of our deep assumptions about the notion of "sides": who's in and who's out/ who belongs?—whether in South Africa or here in Australia, in Sale.

The simple fact is, there's no solving Tutu's riddle. Rather, we simply have to live into a new and different world. A world without rigid "sides."

A world in which the rigid theologies and ideologies that divide us begin to melt.

Jesus too was the great riddler often choosing heroes either hated or despised by his own culture.

The friend of sinners. The friend of the outsiders. The defender of foreigners.

Let the story of the Prodigal Father and the Prodigal Son raise the question in a different way: who is the saint, who is the sinner—the older or the younger brother in the story?

Here is the reading in the guise of this powerful modern English paraphrase.

Luke 15:11-32 The Message (MSG)

The Story of the Lost Son

¹¹⁻¹² Then he said, “There was once a man who had two sons. The younger said to his father, ‘Father, I want right now what’s coming to me.’

¹²⁻¹⁶ “So the father divided the property between them. It wasn’t long before the younger son packed his bags and left for a distant country. There, undisciplined and dissipated, he wasted everything he had. After he had gone through all his money, there was a bad famine all through that country and he began to hurt. He signed on with a citizen there who assigned him to his fields to slop the pigs. He was so hungry he would have eaten the corncobs in the pig slop, but no one would give him any.

¹⁷⁻²⁰ “That brought him to his senses. He said, ‘All those farmhands working for my father sit down to three meals a day, and here I am starving to death. I’m going back to my father. I’ll say to him, Father, I’ve sinned against God, I’ve sinned before you; I don’t deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a hired hand.’ He got right up and went home to his father.

²⁰⁻²¹ “When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him. The son started his speech: ‘Father, I’ve sinned against God, I’ve sinned before you; I don’t deserve to be called your son ever again.’

²²⁻²⁴ “But the father wasn’t listening. He was calling to the servants, ‘Quick. Bring a clean set of clothes and dress him. Put the family ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Then get a grain-fed heifer and roast it. We’re going to feast! We’re going to have a wonderful time! My son is here—given up for dead and now alive! Given up for lost and now found!’ And they began to have a wonderful time.

²⁵⁻²⁷ “All this time his older son was out in the field. When the day’s work was done he came in. As he approached the house, he heard the music and dancing. Calling over one of the houseboys, he asked what was going on. He told him, ‘Your brother came home. Your father has ordered a feast—barbecued beef!—because he has him home safe and sound.’

²⁸⁻³⁰ “The older brother stalked off in an angry sulk and refused to join in. His father came out and tried to talk to him, but he wouldn’t listen. The son said, ‘Look how many years I’ve stayed here serving you, never giving you one moment of grief, but have you ever thrown a party for me and my friends? Then this son of yours who has thrown away your money on whores shows up and you go all out with a feast!’

³¹⁻³² “His father said, ‘Son, you don’t understand. You’re with me all the time, and everything that is mine is yours—but this is a wonderful time, and we had to celebrate. This brother of yours was

dead, and he's alive! He was lost, and he's found!"

Jesus' story rams Desmond Tutu's riddle home so powerfully.

With God there is no distance, there is no separation, there is no in and no out. We're all in. All included. All loved. God knows we are better than our worst moments. God is into restorative justice, not punitive justice. God knows that given the right environment, the right circumstances, the right timing we can live our best moments all the time.

The prodigal father, the wasteful foolishly generous father would be waiting for them to change their minds, the way they think the way they feel. That same Father stands waiting for you and for me. Always trusting, always expecting the best. God's patience is infinite, God's love inexhaustible. God's hopes and dreams for you and for me in Jesus Christ... unimaginable.

We're not only shining brightly as the sun, as suggested by Thomas Merton, our life, as St Paul writes, is hidden with Christ in God. You don't have to fight for an inheritance, like my step uncles who thought they had to fight their small parcel of land so many years ago when I was 12 on Christmas Eve 1958. Hopefully, in the presence of their heavenly Father they they know differently now.

The inheritance is already yours. Waiting for you and me. We don't have to claw and grasp after it. It's already ours. We don't have to make grand speeches to convince God to love us and to forgive us. God's not waiting with a can of petrol to dowse us with every time we disagree with him. We don't have to bathe and wash. God just embraces us as we are, pig slops and all. Knows us through and through. Loves us dearly and has great plans for us. This is the party God.

Ironically, only those too close find that hard to believe. Like the older brother: far away so close. Even the Father had a hard time getting him to understand.

It's the distance people, the sinners, the outcasts, the drunkards, the outsiders who understand.

Do you understand? Do I really understand?

It's never too late.

Today's a good time.

Remember we're all suns...AND saints. Not in the grand style, but as Malcolm Guite's poem captures nicely...

A LAST BEATITUDE

And blessèd are the ones we overlook;

The faithful servers on the coffee rota,

The ones who hold no candle, bell or book
But keep the books and tally up the quota,
The gentle souls who come to 'do the flowers',
The quiet ones who organise the fete,
Church sitters who give up their weekday hours,
Doorkeepers who may open heaven's gate.
God knows the depths that often go unspoken
Amongst the shy, the quiet, and the kind,
Or the slow healing of a heart long broken
Placing each flower so for a year's mind.
Invisible on earth, without a voice,
In heaven their angels glory and rejoice.

Photo Reflection



Living steps at the Community of the Holy Name garden, Cheltenham. Ross Byrne

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

ROBIN MANN Concert

[Wednesday 22 November at 7.30pm](#) in the Cathedral...

Robin's been leading and writing songs for over 40 years, and he hopes to do some more yet. While he's best known for songs like *Father welcomes*, *Comfort comfort* and *May the feet of God walk with you* (and more recent ones *God. Version 1.0* and *For you, deep stillness*), he also performs some 'non-singalong' songs, especially for groups who didn't get the 'community singing' gene.

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

2. 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.

3. 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.**

NEW OPPORTUNITY: Zena will soon be offering Spiritual Direction and Supervision from the Anglican Church in Drouin. Contact Zena via the website below.

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

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

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