

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 18 March 2018



Photo Ross

Byrne

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 18th March 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.

Community News

Celtic Quiet Day

We were delighted with the response to our first collaborative Quiet Day with the The Rev'd Ken Parker and the Parish of Bunyip. Around 50 people joined Carol O'Connor and harpist Cath Connelly at St Thomas' .

Cath's beautiful playing included some of her own compositions alongside traditional Irish tunes. Carol encouraged us to not just listen to the notes but to listen to the spaces between them.

Carol shared wisdom from the Celtic Saints and encouraged us to connect with God in our own environments. She reminded us that in the Celtic tradition, *we are deeply shaped by our environment*.

Throughout the day Carol wove in a reflection on the beautiful leadlight window in the Church of the Resurrection at Macedon. This window was designed and created by artist Leonard French for the parish following the Ash Wednesday bush fires when Father Ken was Rector at Macedon. We reflected on the cross reaching up to God, reaching down into the suffering and chaos of humanity and the arms stretched wide in embrace and generosity to others.



Leonard French's stained glass window titled, 'From the fire.'

On this day following St Patricks day I will share the Blessing which Carol began with from John O'Donohue,

'May my mind come alive today
To the invisible geography
That invites me to new frontiers,
To break the dead shells of yesterdays,
To risk being disturbed and changed.'

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 Board of Electors for wisdom and discernment in the selection process for our new Bishop.
- The registry staff, Philip, Brian, Annette, Kellie, Sue and David.
- Associates who have asked for prayer: Norma, June, Chris Venning, Sue Hopkins and Val Lawrence.
- For peacemakers in our world. For political 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, our Redeemer,
in our weakness we have failed
to be your messengers of forgiveness and hope:
renew us by your Holy Spirit,
that we may follow your commands
and proclaim your reign of love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Reflection

5th Sunday in Lent

The Greening of the Self - The Rev'd Nikolai Blasko

What follows is a long preamble to set the context for the notion of the erring heart and its origins, and God's desire to set it right.

I think it is a fallacy to assume that Jesus' death and resurrection was somehow a last-ditch attempt to 'save' the human race from a universal catastrophic disaster. That it came as an after-thought following the collapse of Adam's moral will, incited, of course, by Eve, aided and abetted by the snake, by Satan the fallen Angel.

The Jews of course have never believed in a Fall as such. And there are some Jewish

Midrash stories that pitch the Garden of Eve event as a 'coming of age' story, where the mythical Eve in fact is the hero (driven by maturation, curiosity and wonder) to make the courageous decision to break out of the nest; the one who encourages Adam to grow up with her.

Sally Frank, writing in the Yale University Journal of Law and Feminism, draws on her Jewish tradition. She imagines Eve coming to her as an attorney at law for help. Eve hopes for vindication, that she had a right to eat the apple, by using the precedent of another figure from her time who gained a measure of rehabilitation in the Jewish popular mind in recent years. That precedent is known as Lilith. Lilith is the name given by the Rabbis to the woman in the first biblical creation story ("male and female [God] created them"). The Rabbis said that Lilith had been created in the same way as Adam but had left the Garden of Eden rather than sleep under Adam, because she had insisted on complete equality. For centuries, Lilith had been demonized, viewed as the Queen of Demons who attacked pregnant women and newborn babies, but in recent years, Jewish feminists have viewed her as a heroine for her resistance to subordination.

Eve Was Right to Eat the "Apple": The Importance of Narrative in the Art of Lawyering

Sally Frank, 1995, Volume 8, Issue 1 Yale Journal of Law & Feminism, Yale Journal of Law & Feminism Article 4.

Anda Amir, in her *Four Centuries of Jewish Women's Spirituality* believes that Eve's actions bring sexual knowledge and pleasure to the world, which she sees as a positive change. Phyllis Trible, a renowned feminist Christian theologian and Biblical scholar observes that Woman, by contrast is the "culmination of creation." She argues that the serpent spoke to Eve rather than Adam, because Eve was capable of engaging in philosophic and theological discussions, whereas Adam was not. It's probably not a coincidence that last week we had our reading of the Israelites in the desert looking to a brass serpent wrapped around a brass pole that brought healing and wholeness to a disobedient people, male and female (and not just women) and that this symbol became a sign of Jesus' death on the cross. The ambivalence and the paradox was not lost on Jesus who used the incident to refer to his own ministry in a context where he too was misjudged by his own people, the people of Nazareth, then his family and later the people of Jerusalem and the Roman governing authority, ALL misconstrued him as a magician, a madman, a snake, a servant of Beelzebub, the Lord of the Flies. Trible sees God's response differently that of other commentators. "This statement is not a license for male supremacy, but rather it is a condemnation of that very pattern. Subjugation and supremacy are perversions of creation."

(Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation', 41 J. AM. ACAD. RELIGION 30, 36 (1973).

In Jewish tradition, it is common to argue with and question God. The roots of this practice can be found in the Bible when Abraham argues with God against the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra. God eventually agrees not to destroy the cities if there are ten just people in them. Genesis 18:20-32. The Rabbis later criticized Noah because Noah did not argue with

God when God told him that God would destroy all of humanity. THE MIDRASH SAYS, supra note 6, at 100.

Moses also frequently argued with God, yet he was viewed as the greatest prophet. While God denied entry into the promised land to Moses, God attributed the punishment to Moses's failure to carry out one of God's orders during the wandering in the desert, not to his arguments with God. Numbers 27:12-14. Later Job questioned God, and although God rebuffed his attempts to understand God's ways, Job was ultimately rewarded with a full new life. In later days, many famous Rabbis have argued to God or with God or questioned God's ways. For example, Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev, a major nineteenth-century Hasidic Rabbi, took the opportunity of the Passover Seder to question God about the past and current persecution of the Jews. He noted that at Passover the parent is to explain the story to the child who knows not how to ask about it.

He pleads with God to explain:

'The one who knows not how to ask,' that is myself, Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev. I do not know how to ask you, [God] of the world, and even if I did know, I could not bear to do it. How could I venture to ask you why everything happens as it does, why we are driven from one exile into another, why our foes are allowed to torment us so. But in the Haggadah, the father of him 'who knows not how to ask,' is told: 'It is for you to disclose it to him.' And the Haggadah refers to the Scriptures, in which it is written: 'And thou shalt tell thy [child].' And, [God] of all the world, am I not your son? I do not beg you to reveal to me the secret of your ways-I could not bear it! But show me one thing; show it to me more clearly and more deeply: show me what this, which is happening at this very moment means to me, what it demands of me, what you, [God] of the world, are telling me by way of it. Ah, it is not why I suffer, that I wish to know, but only whether I suffer for your sake.

Sally Frank as Eve's defence lawyer, contends that she did not know good from evil until after she ate the fruit. It was at that point God said she knew the difference. Before Eve ate the fruit, she was like most young children. She was told not to do something but did not understand the difference between right and wrong or good and evil and so she did it anyway. Thus, it is clear that Eve was a young child at the time of this incident, one who could not distinguish right from wrong until after she committed her offense. Eve therefore asks you to find her not guilty of this crime. But this kind of defence is offensive and serves Eve no justice.

James Alison (arguing from a Girardian perspective) sees the incident of the expulsion from the Garden as the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve by God from Paradise, as a story in which there is still an involvement of God in victimizing, on the way towards the understanding that expulsion is a purely human mechanism, and that God is its victim rather than its instigator (John 1:1-18).

Imputing blame and victimization are human traits not divine traits. Blaming Eve and

women for the whole creation going awry is a bit rich. I use the Genesis passage of Adam and Eve's fall from grace as a textual exercise. Without much guidance, the girls, and sometimes the boys before the girls, get that there is an injustice here. Jesus' defence and restoration of women's status is an important point to note. But even this did not come easily to him. He struggles against these cultural mores as much as we have and do. Women have a long history of being treated like children, especially under the law. Under Biblical law, a woman could not be bound by an oath without the approval of her father or husband.

By way of conclusion, the human condition must be understood as such and not a gender or race specific condemnation. We are all implicated, male and female, Jew and Gentile. It is the human heart that must be examined. Jeremiah the prophet could see that:

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord : I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord ', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

And Jesus, prophet priest and king also understood it, as observed by the author of *Hebrews*:

⁵ So also Christ **did not glorify himself** [didn't 'Lord' it over us] in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

'You are my Son,
today I have begotten you';

⁶ as he says also in another place,

'You are a priest for ever,
according to the order of Melchizedek.'

⁷ In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

⁸ Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered;

⁹ and **having been made perfect**, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him...

And then Jesus sets this challenge for us:

Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

What does it mean in practice? This reflection from Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest helps

I think to ground the challenge:

*Among those who are **shedding these old constructs of self** . . . is John Seed, director of the Rainforest Information Centre in Australia. One day . . . I asked him: “You talk about the struggle against the timber companies and politicians to save the remaining rain forests. How do you deal with despair?”*

*He replied, “I try to remember that it’s not me, John Seed, trying to protect the rain forest. Rather, I am part of the rain forest protecting itself. I am that part of the rain forest recently emerged into human thinking.” **This is what I mean by the greening of the self.** It involves a combining of the mystical with the pragmatic, transcending separateness, alienation, and fragmentation. It is . . . **“a spiritual change,” generating a sense of profound interconnectedness with all life.** . . .*

. . . Unless you have some roots in a spiritual practice that holds life sacred and encourages joyful communion with all your fellow beings, facing the enormous challenges ahead becomes nearly impossible. . . .

***By expanding our self-interest** to include other beings in the body of the Earth, the ecological self also widens our window on time. It enlarges our temporal context, freeing us from identifying our goals and rewards solely in terms of our present lifetime. The life pouring through us, pumping our heart and breathing through our lungs, did not begin at our birth or conception. Like every particle in every atom and molecule of our bodies, it goes back through time to the first splitting and spinning of the stars.*

***Thus the greening of the self helps us to reinhabit time and our own story as life on Earth.** We were present in the primal flaring forth, and in the rains that streamed down on this still-molten planet, and in the primordial seas. In our mother’s womb we remembered that journey, wearing vestigial gills and tail and fins for hands. Beneath the outer layer of our neocortex and what we learned in school, that story is in us—**the story of a deep kinship with all life**, bringing strengths that we never imagined. When we claim this story as our innermost sense of who we are, a gladness comes that will help us to survive.*

Richard Rohr Kinship with All Life

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Photo Reflection



A recently fallen and cut river red gum, Sale wetlands Photo Jane Macqueen

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

- **Breathing Space for Lent - 5.30pm - 6.00pm** in the Cathedral, Monday - Thursday. All welcome to pop in for some silent reflection, thanksgiving, intercession.

- **A nourishing feast of Creativity and Fun!**
27-29 April 2018.
With Rod Pattenden and Trish Watts

2pm-5pm Saturday 28 April 2018 "Play with the 5 Freedom Paths- storytelling, movement, singing, silence and connection" \$25

Sunday 8 and 10am Services:

'Sparks of Life': ...sustaining creative lives

Sunday 730pm -9pm: **'Sanctuary': Where heaven touches earth - uplifting & peaceful songs for inspiration, meditation & community joy.** *Entry by donation*

To register interest, contact Susanna: 0418 637 469 Susanna.pain@gmail.com

- **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

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