

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 24 November 2018



Watersmeet... the meeting of the Wannon and Glenelg Rivers, Casterton. Photo, Ross Byrne

A place of meeting and flowing into something new, as we prepare to move into a new liturgical year and the Season of Advent.

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 25th November 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.

Upcoming events

An invitation from The Abbey:

Bishop Richard Treloar, Anglican Bishop of Gippsland and Bishop Pat O'Regan, Catholic Bishop of Sale invite you to join them for an:

Advent Conversation, a seasonal Study of Luke.

Thursday 6th December

10.30am - 3.30pm

The Conversation will be led by Biblical Scholars from University of Divinity, Melbourne:

Dorothy Lee, Frank Woods Research Professor in New Testament at Trinity College and

Frank Moloney Senior Professorial Fellow at the Catholic Theological College.

A light lunch will be served



RSVP: [3 December 2018](#). Booking essential for catering purposes.

Please advise of any dietary requirements.

Phone: The Abbey on [\(03\) 5156 6580](tel:0351566580) or **Email:** info@theabbey.org.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:

- Bishop Richard, Leanne and Rachel and Nicholas.
- The registry staff, Brian, Annette, Sue and David.
- 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 programmes working to bring a change in culture and bring an end to violence against girls and women.
- For political leaders to form governments that are committed to justice, inclusion and compassion.
- For all who suffer as a result of conflict and war. For peacemakers and peacekeepers.
- For all who are suffering as a result of extraordinary weather events, fire, drought, typhoons, hurricanes, heatwaves. The people of California.
- 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

Everlasting God,
whose will is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son,
our Lord and King:
grant that the people of earth,
now divided and enslaved by sin,
may be freed and brought together under his gentle and loving rule;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Seasons of the Spirit Prayer

Holy God,
your reign weds justice and love,

grace and truth, wisdom and compassion.

Help us to listen for your voice that claims us within your reign.

From such grace of belonging,

launch us to bear witness to your realm

with the whole of our lives. **Amen**

Reflection

The Rev'd Heather Toms

2 Samuel 23.1-7; Psalm 132.1-12(13-18) or Ps 93; Revelation 1.4b-8; John 18.33-37

Christ the King brings the Christian year to a conclusion and is the last Sunday after Pentecost. In the Christian year, it begins with Advent, preparation for the birth of Jesus; and then the celebration of his birth at Christmas, and then his appearances to the wise men, at the wedding, in the transfiguration at Epiphany and then he sets his face toward Jerusalem and we are plunged into the days of Lent, suffering, sacrifice and self-denial, the betrayal and death of Holy week, the silence of Holy Saturday, but then the miracle of resurrection at Easter, and the prayer over fifty days, for the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.

And then the church moves through ordinary time, and we are called to reflect on the Kingdom of God in everyday life, but all of it moving toward the conclusion. You can see it in the imagery of the Book of Revelation and in our hymns: death and eternal life, the communion of the saints, the return and reign of the Lord, the completion of the Creation the City of God.

Last Sunday after Pentecost is about the Reign of Christ, His Lordship. In the words of the Revelation to John, he is the 'ruler of the kings of the earth.' And yet there is a clear distinction in the passage from the Gospel of John between the rule or reign of the leaders and God's vision. 'My kingdom is not of this world,' Jesus says. Jesus *did* come upon the earth to establish a kingdom. It is just not what we were expecting.

In the Gospel of John, we see Jesus appearing before Pilate, the Roman governor, after having been accused by his enemies of trying to set himself up as king. In the conversation that follows, Jesus admits to being a king, but says that his kingdom is not of this world.

Reflecting on this text, Is Jesus really a king? If so, what does that mean? What is a king, and in what way is Jesus a king?

Those questions caused some reflection on what I know about kings. My limited knowledge of kings tended to reflect on the kings of England, which is a tad ironic since

England, or, more correctly, the United Kingdom has not had a king for more than half a century. Queen Elizabeth became queen in 1952 and continues to reign throughout my lifetime. Sometimes it appears as if she will go on forever. Poor Prince Charles cannot have the role until his mother dies and what an unpleasant sort of dilemma.

However, being a king or queen today does not mean what it used to. Queen Elizabeth certainly enjoys a privileged life, with castles and servants and money. When she travels, one imagines that she does not remove her shoes before walking through the metal detector that buzzes loudly if we leave our keys in our pocket. Queens and kings travel by private plane, or by Rolls, or Bentley, or Mercedes. They have servants who send instructions to those who would host the king or queen, 'the king prefers this brand of bottled water', and 'the queen prefers this kind of mattress'. That sort of thing!

But the kings and queens of history enjoyed even greater power. A king typically had the power of life and death over people within his realm. Kings lived in grand palaces and commanded imposing armies.

That does not sound much like Jesus. As he told, 'one would be follower':

'Foxes have holes,
and the birds of the air have nests,
but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'

{Matthew 8:20}

Jesus did not live in a palace. He did not have lots of money. His 'army' consisted of ordinary people who brought the family to see the visiting teacher. It would be pretty hard to imagine those mothers and fathers and children as any kind of threat to Rome.

But Pilate could not take a chance. People had reported Jesus as an enemy of Rome, as a man who would be king, as a potential challenger to the emperor. Pilate had no choice but to find out what was going on here with this Jesus. If he ignored it and trouble broke out, it would be Pilate's head on the chopping block and that was not an option.

So Pilate took time to interview Jesus to talk with him one on one. Pilate has a bad reputation for his handling of Jesus' trial, but we need to acknowledge that he handled this questioning well. He took Jesus aside so the crowd could not interfere, and he asked Jesus three questions:

First, he asked, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' That was the right question. If Jesus was trying to set himself up as a king, Pilate needed to stop him. Pilate did not dance around the Mulberry bush. He headed right to the heart of the matter 'Are you the King of the Jews?' One suspects that there was a bit of incredulity in his voice. Looking at this

ordinary man, he asked, 'Are you the King of the Jews? You have to be joking!'

Then Pilate noted that important people had fingered Jesus as a trouble maker. Pilate asked, 'What have you done?'

Once more exactly the right question. Jesus had powerful enemies who had asked Pilate to crucify Jesus. But Pilate did not understand what was going on. He had the power of life or death over Jesus, and he took that power seriously. He did not want to condemn an innocent man just to settle a Jewish dispute. Jesus must have done something to cause all this trouble. So Pilate asked, 'What have you done?'

And then Pilate asked, 'Are you a King then?' Jesus had said that his kingdom was not of this world, so apparently he saw himself as a King. So Pilate asked, 'Are you a King then?'

We know the rest of the story, of course. In frustration, Pilate eventually washed his hands of the matter and allowed Jesus to be condemned. He did not make it happen, but he allowed it to happen.

But Pilate was not a foolish man, he knew that he was being used, and he did not like it. He had his soldiers nail a plaque to the cross that said, 'JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS'. It was his way of acknowledge and standing his ground. Jesus' enemies said, 'do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but'he said, I am King of the Jews'. But Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written'.

Was Jesus a king? That was the question that Pilate needed to answer. Is Jesus a king? That is the question that we need to answer. What would it mean if Jesus were king? How would it affect our lives? Would it affect our lives?

The New Testament certainly sees Jesus as king. It calls him 'King of kings and Lord of lords' {1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 19:16}.

Paul talks about Jesus as coming down from heaven to be born as a baby and to die on a cross. Then Paul says:

'Therefore God also highly exalted Jesus,
and gave Him the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father' {Philippians 2:9-11}

Certainly sounds like a king.

Do we see Jesus as the king in our lives? And if Jesus is the king in our lives, what difference does it make. What difference does it make for our family, for our friends, for our employer? Does it indeed make a difference?

When Jesus is king in our lives we are trying to do what he wants us to do, however we do not do it perfectly. One can attest to that: not perfectly obedient to Christ. It is not a matter of obeying Jesus perfectly, however, are we trying and are we giving Jesus our best?

Some years ago, it was popular for people to wear bracelets that said WWJD? What Would Jesus Do? The idea behind the bracelets was to remind us, when faced with a decision, any decision, to ask 'What would Jesus do?' and to let the answer help us to make the right decision to help us do what Jesus would have us do.

What would Jesus do? How would he spend our money? The late Billy Graham commented:

'Tell me what you think about money,
and I can tell you what you think about God,
for these two are closely related.
A person's heart is closer to his or her wallet
than almost anything else.

Most of us think that we do not have enough money. We might have fewer financial struggles though, if we would ask, 'What would Jesus do?' before deciding how to earn our money and how to spend it.

What would Jesus do? How would he have us spend our life? That Jesus would have everyone become a preacher. Hardly! But some vocations serve human needs better than others. There are a number of positions that undermine lives rather than building them up and hurt people instead of helping them. To work for a dishonest company no way. The reason is simply that Jesus has something for each of us to do when we listen to His voice.

Bill Gates has not been someone that I have warmed to over the years however, for several years he has been focused more on giving than receiving and on solving huge problems for people, such as trying to eradicate malaria.

Nelson Mandela and President de Klerk were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work toward dismantling *apartheid* in South Africa. After Mandela's release from

prison, he negotiated with President F W de Klerk toward the country's first multiracial elections.

Pastor Doug Nicholls together with his wife Lady Gladys Nicholls played a pivotal role in fighting for the rights of Aboriginal people in Australia.

As Christ the King in our lives what will we do, how would He have us spend our life?

Remember above all else that Christ our King comes, Himself wounded, not expecting us to be whole and unhurt. He comes looking to find precisely in our injuries, a royal triumph and the source of a life eternal like his own. **Amen**

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. The Abbey of St Barnabas, Raymond Island

For further information contact The Abbey

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

2. St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

- 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), cherylrussell1@bigpond.com
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Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

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