

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 16 February 2019



Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 17th February 2019.

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

There are a number of opportunities for reflection and spiritual nourishment available in coming months.

The Anam Cara Community will be facilitating three Quiet Days this year. The first will be led by Bishop Richard on 16th March and the details are below. For your diary the dates for the other Quiet Days are as follows: **1st June** - St Paul's Cathedral; **14th September** - St Mary's Morwell; and the Thanksgiving Service at the Cathedral on **23rd November**.

1. First Quiet Day for 2019

We are delighted that **Bishop Richard** will be leading our reflections for the day.



When: [Saturday 16th](#) March

Where: **Holy Trinity Anglican Church, McFarlane St, Stratford.**

Time: [9.30am](#) - [3.30pm](#)

'Ruminating with Ruth'

The women in this story "bear their own burdens . . . know hardship, danger, insecurity, and . . . risk bold decisions and shocking acts to work out their own salvation in the midst of the alien, the hostile, and the unknown." Phyllis Tribble

All are welcome to join us for an opportunity to meet with others for a gentle day. To worship and to listen to reflections by Bishop Richard. There will be time to sit, to reflect, to read, to rest and to listen to God. Time also to share some fellowship with others... both in periods of corporate silence... and in conversation over lunch.

Bishop Richard suggests that if you have time to read the book of Ruth prior to the day that will be helpful... otherwise there will be time on the day...

What to bring:

Your lunch, pen and notepad.

Tea/coffee/water and morning tea provided.

Donations welcomed: nil - \$15.00 depending on means.

ALL WELCOME!

RSVP's or for further details, contact:

Jane Macqueen: jemacqueen@gmail.com (0411 316 346)

or Val Lawrence: vgl@aussiebb.com.au

Other opportunities for spiritual nurture offered by The Abbey and The Cathedral Parish

1. In the company of St Francis and St Clare

A gathering of The Abbey Dispersed Community

[Saturday 2nd March 2019](#)

[12 noon - 4pm](#)

Sue Fordham is our presenter and conversation host for the day.

Sue will share some thoughts and reflections - encouragement on the journey for the 'Dispersed Abbey Community in the company of Francis and Clare'.

For further information contact The Abbey

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

2. Stations of the Cross Exhibition at St Paul's Cathedral.

Opening by Bishop Richard at 2pm on 31st March.

This exhibition will be open until Easter with local artists having created pieces in various

mediums to form the Stations of the Cross. An opportunity for contemplation.

- there will be Contemplative Quiet Afternoon with the Stations exhibition on Wednesday 3rd April from 2pm - 4 pm.

3. Men's Retreat - Listening to the call

Leader: Nikolai Blaskow

When: April 13th

Where: St Paul's Cathedral, Sale

Theme: The practice of living with purpose

Reflection: Why when God's world is so big did you fall asleep in a prison of all places?

RSVP and for more information: 0428 167 724

Donation: \$20.00 or donation

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 in his ministry throughout the diocese and for his preparations for the Quiet Day.
- For those who are ill, for the dying and those who sit with them.
- 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 are suffering as a result of extraordinary weather events, fire, drought, typhoons, hurricanes, 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

Righteous God,
you challenge the powers that rule this world

and you show favour to the oppressed:
instil in us a true sense of justice,
that we may discern the signs of your kingdom
and strive for right to prevail;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
Amen.

Reflection

The Rev'd Nikolai Blaskow

Jeremiah 17.5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15.12-20; Luke 6.17-26

The Human Heart

Who can understand it?

The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?
I the Lord test the mind
and search the heart
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

Jeremiah

Devious above all else, perverse...the heart...who can understand it? A probing question, dare I say that cuts to the heart—not a truth we like to hear. One of God's hard sayings, like those of Jesus'—who of us can bear them? Who of us will stay and not only hear, but will stay long enough to understand? It doesn't make for comfortable reading: but it does make for character building.

But what is the heart? What is this perversity, this deviousness of which Jeremiah speaks? And more importantly, how are we to understand it? The newspapers, TV and radio are full of it. Our life experience tells us Jeremiah's insights over 2,000 and several hundred years old, are disturbingly true.

Consider the evidence: the Cronulla riots of ten years ago, the anti-racists kicking the racists in the head in a Melbourne park 3 years ago—our violence, our manic dishonesty, the list goes on. How are we to deal with it?

Whatever the problem, it starts with the heart, the inner life, the inner world—what you are thinking, your self-talk. Something Ety Hillesum discovered in times of uncertainty and great danger. A good guide for us today. We'll come back to that at the end of our reflection this afternoon.

I think the only way out of the maze of that perversity, that deviousness of the heart—is by testing it, naming it without being overwhelmed, knowing that God is beside us to help us not only to name it but to overcome it. It's a discipline (after all we are disciples) that will be our daily task every moment, to the end of our lives. And, possibly our burden and joy forever. It must always be an overarching perspective one that takes us above the maze—a big-picture perspective that enables us to see things as they are:

1. one that has us continually coming to the bar of the judgement of reality: beyond categories, beyond pronouncements about good and evil; a place where all beliefs, all convictions, all opinions are purified/tested by fire
2. to reality (ontology) which tests by fire, re-shaping our perceptions to match the truth of things

Jesus' version of the test one might call INVERSION/REVERSAL: the turning of things upside down, the giving of things a good shake.

It's called the beatitudes—which we have here in Luke is a truncated rendering of the fuller version elsewhere in the Gospels.

The context:

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

I like the way it says that Jesus stood “on a level place” (we talk about ‘a level playing field’ don't we?). The test always happens there. You could say it's the great leveller, the place where all of us, regardless of age, or sex, colour of our skin, or sexual orientation, religious and political persuasion without fear or favour become one. There we stand as equals before God, exposed and loved and understood as we are: better than our worst moments, human all too human, all of us ‘ridiculous’ in so many ways, deprived in that “level place” of our favourite past time: the blame game. Here, we can only stand exposed: in need of healing, of wholeness; troubled within, longing for the power that stream of living water that flows from the Christ, the anointed one, to heal us of all our diseases.

Then comes inversion/reversal :

Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.
Blessed are you who weep now,

for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven;

for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich,

for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full now,

for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who are laughing now,

for you will mourn and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

Poverty, hunger, grief, exclusion, misrepresentation/defamation, misfortune even—these are the great levellers that teach us who we truly are—the refiner's fire that exposes and reveals what we are. 'Embrace them', says Jesus, 'make friends with them: they are not your enemies.' Take the long, the high view, fly above like eagles: don't settle for what's happening just now. Let the future break in upon you. Only the misguided can afford to indulge in "Schadenfreude" (rejoicing in the misfortune of others). Only the short-sighted settle for instant gratification.

So, in closing what can Etty Hillesum teach us about the heart?

1. "It has to be learned... A lot of unimportant inner litter and bits and pieces have to be swept out first... One's innermost being is a vast empty plain with none of that treacherous undergrowth to impede the view so something of God can enter you, and something of love too... the love you can apply to small everyday things..." (8th June 1941). There is a really deep well inside me. And in it dwells God. Sometimes I am there too. But more often stones and grit block the well, and God is buried beneath. Then He must be dug out again." (26 August 1941)
2. "The inner world is as real as the outer world: it has its contours, possibilities, its boundless regions... these two worlds are fed by each other. You must not neglect one at the expense of the other." (June 1941) ... "One must keep in touch with the real world and know one's place in it; it is wrong to live with the eternal truths, for then one is apt to end up behaving like an ostrich. To live fully outwardly and inwardly, not to ignore external reality for the sake of the inner life, or the reverse – that's quite a task. (25th March 1941)
3. "... What we have here is organized disorder. So much capital lies scattered about here, so much capital of spiritual and human values, but all it does is lie about badly managed and without any purpose." (8th June 1941)
4. Be gentle with your suffering and it will be gentle with you. It grows with desire and indignation; it is lulled asleep by gentleness, like a little child." (30th October 1941)

5. Cycling through cold dark Lairessestraat- everything I babbled out then... something like this: 'God, take me by your hand, I shall follow you... and not resist too much. I shall evade none of the tempest life has in store for me... and then grant me a short respite... I shall accept all the inevitable tumult and struggle and delight in warmth and security, but I shall not rebel if I have to suffer cold, should you so decree, I shall follow wherever your hand leads me and shall try not to be afraid. I shall try to spread some of the genuine love for others wherever I go... I don't want to be anything special, I only want to be true to that in me, which seeks to fulfil its promise. I long for the seclusion of a monastery, but I know I must seek you among people in the world.'" 25th November 1941

She teaches us by a series of metaphors, that the heart is a well, that all too often it is hardened by grit, littered with debris, blocked up by rocks. Killing, burying God in us so that God has to be dug out. That it's only then when things are cleared out, and God is brought to the surface that something of God and love can enter in us again. Such that in this sad neglected interior state, under God's light, we actually begin to see the capital of spiritual and human values that has lain about in us there, so mismanaged and without purpose for so long.

Like Etty, Jesus stays close to the ground of wisdom: the transformation of human consciousness. Wisdom questions are always challenging: how do we go about losing our little life to find the bigger one? Is it possible to live on this planet with a generosity, abundance, fearlessness and beauty that mirrors the divine Being itself? And more. These are the wisdom questions which reveal the entire field of Jesus' concern. But the single most question remains: What answers will our lived lives embody?

Photo Reflection



Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. The Abbey of St Barnabas, Raymond Island In the company of St Francis and St Clare

A gathering of The Abbey Dispersed Community

[Saturday 2nd March 2019](#)

[12 noon - 4pm](#)

Sue Fordham is our presenter and conversation host for the day.

Sue will share some thoughts and reflections - encouragement on the journey for the 'Dispersed Abbey Community in the company of Francis and Clare'.

For further information contact The Abbey

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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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