

Anam Cara Community



Waterholes: 28 April 2019



Watergardens. Photo: Ross

Byrne

Welcome

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 28th April 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.

Coming Events

1. Ecumenical Vigil in support of the people of Sri Lanka

A public, ecumenical, interfaith vigil for the people of Sri Lanka will be held at the:

Clock Tower in Sale

on **Saturday 4th May at 12 noon.**

Speakers at the event will include a member of the Sri Lankan community, the mayor, Cr Alan Hall, Bishop Richard Treloar and Dr Aafar from the Gippsland Australian Muslim Community Association.

All welcome to join in this ecumenical gathering.

2. A Quiet Winter Day with Dean Susanna...

Saturday 1st June

St Paul's Cathedral, Sale

9.30am - 3.30pm



We take time to reflect on the changing seasons of our faith journey.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven Ecc 1:1

Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Luke [12:27](#)



If you want to identify me, ask me not where I live, or what I like to eat, or how I comb my hair, but ask me what I am living for, in detail, ask me what I think is keeping me from living fully for the thing I want to live for. Thomas Merton

All welcome

RSVP: Jane Macqueen - jemacqueen@gmail.com

Would you like to experience Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual Direction is the gentle art of one person listening to the life experience of another and assisting them to become aware of the presence and love of God in their lives.

Spiritual direction assists people to grow in their relationship with God and commitment to prayer.

Jenny Batten recently moved to Sale from Melbourne and is currently in her third year of formation as a Spiritual Director with the Living Well Centre at the Cheltenham Retreat Centre. The Living Well Program consists of both knowledge input and practical experience of giving direction under supervision. The experience of giving direction under supervision is an essential and integral part of the training where students are required to be seeing directees on a regular basis, in order to develop the skills and practices of a spiritual director, and then to reflect on that experience with a trained supervisor. This is like the intern program in some other professions. All students meet regularly with their own spiritual director and are in supervision with a trained supervisor.

Jenny is looking for people who would like to volunteer to spend time as Directees with her as she completes her final two years of training. Each session is for no more than an hour and there is no remuneration for these sessions. Please contact Jenny for more information.

Jenny is available for sessions at her home, 6 Heron Court, Sale.

CONTACT: [0438213382](tel:0438213382)

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 leadership and ministry throughout the diocese. Leanne, Rachel and Nicholas.

- The Registry staff, Brian, Annette, Sue, Jill, David, Tim and Richard Connelly.
- The people of Sri Lanka, for the bereaved and wounded. For those in leadership in churches and government, to seek ways to promote peace and unity.
- The people of Sale and beyond who will gather for an ecumenical vigil and those who will witness this gathering as they go about their daily business. That the gathering may be a small step in responding to hate with love and growing unity.
- For leaders of churches and nations and for each of us in our daily lives to have conversations that disarm the fear of difference.
- 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, Pat Symonds, Chris Venning, Sue Hopkins and Val Lawrence.
- For all programmes working to bring a change in culture and bring an end to violence against girls and women.
- Carmel and Zena as they prepare to sell Bass Hill Hermitage. For wisdom and peace amidst the sadness of this decision and for their ongoing ministry as they await the sale of the property.
- 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 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

Living God,
 for whom no door is closed,
 no heart is locked:
 draw us beyond our doubts,
 tell we see your Christ
 and touch his wounds where they bleed in others.
 This we ask through Christ our Saviour,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 on God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Reflection

The Very Rev'd Susanna Pain

John 20.19-31

Frederick Buechner writes:

'Imagination was not Thomas' long suit. He called a spade a spade. He was a realist. He didn't believe in fairy tales, and if anything else came up that he didn't believe in or couldn't understand, his questions could be pretty direct.

There was the last time he and the others had dinner with Jesus, for instance. Jesus was talking about dying, and he said he would be leaving them soon, but it wouldn't be forever. He said he'd get things ready for them as soon as he got where he was going, and when their time finally came too, they'd all be together again. They knew the way he was going, he said, and some day they'd be there with him themselves.

Nobody else breathed a word, but Thomas couldn't hold back. When you got right down to it, he said, he personally had no idea where Jesus was going, and he didn't know the way to get there either. "I am the way," was what Jesus said to him (John 14:6), and although Thomas let it go at that, you can't help feeling that he found the answer less than satisfactory. Jesus wasn't a way, he was a man, and it was too bad he so often insisted on talking in riddles.

Then in the next few days all the things that everybody could see were going to happen happened, and Jesus was dead, just as he'd said he'd be. That much Thomas was sure of. He'd been on hand himself. There was no doubt about it. And then the thing that nobody had ever been quite able to believe would happen happened too.

Thomas wasn't around at the time, but all the rest of them were. They were sitting crowded together in a room with the door locked and the shades drawn, scared sick they'd be the ones to get it next, when suddenly Jesus came in. He wasn't a ghost you could see the wallpaper through, and he wasn't just a figment of their imagination because they were all too busy imagining the horrors that were all too likely in store for themselves to imagine anything much about anybody else. He said "Shalom" and then showed them enough of where the Romans had let him have it to convince them he was as real as they were, if not more so. He breathed the Holy Spirit on them, gave them a few instructions to go with it, and then left.

Nobody says where Thomas was at the time. One good thing about not having too much of an imagination is that you're not apt to work yourself up into quite as much of a panic as Thomas's friends had, for example, and maybe he'd gone out for a cup of coffee or just to sit in the park for a while and watch the pigeons. Anyway, when he finally returned and they told him what had happened, his reaction was just about what they might have

expected. He said that unless Jesus came back again so he could not only see the nail marks for himself but actually touch them, he was afraid that, much as he hated to say so, he simply couldn't believe that what they had seen was anything more than the product of wishful thinking or a hallucination of an unusually vivid kind.

Eight days later, when Jesus did come back, Thomas was there and got his wish. Jesus let him see him and hear him and touch him, and not even Thomas could hold out against evidence like that. He had no questions left to ask and not enough energy left to ask them with even if he'd had a couple. All he could say was, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28), and Jesus seemed to consider that under the circumstances that was enough.

Then Jesus asked a question of his own. "Have you believed because you have seen me?" he asked and then added, addressing himself to all the generations that have come since, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (John 20:29).

Even though he said the greater blessing is for those who can believe without seeing, it's hard to imagine that there's a believer anywhere who wouldn't have traded places with Thomas, given the chance, and seen that face and heard that voice and touched those ruined hands. ¹¹

Dear Thomas, am I your twin? You seem so sensible, more scientific, curious, not driven to fantasising and imagination. Maybe I am just getting old, maybe I am weary after Easter but I don't know that I doubt much these days, question much these days, maybe sometimes. My relationship with God feels like a rock or a bed, it's shape fitting my body perfectly. I know Jesus is around, I know in my bones that he is with me every moment of my life. Sometimes God feels closer than my breathing. At other times I don't seem to even be able to sense God. I would love to have been in your shoes, Thomas, to have touched and seen the risen Lord, but my experience is different from that. Of course, I have your story and many other stories to consider. I have my own experience too, more like mist and sunshine than concrete reality. I know other people have different stories. These days, I say morning prayer with Nikolai. I walk around the lake. I meditate. I experience God in the beauty of creation and in the people I meet each day. I sensed God in this Cathedral especially after the night of prayer on Maundy Thursday. I proclaim 'Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, alleluia', yet, mine is not an exuberant faith. It is not happy happy, but more peaceful. That is not to say that I don't enjoy singing and praising and lifting my hands in the air and dancing. I love that way of being too. I sense God in the Eucharist as I offer bread and wine, Jesus' body and blood, and look with love into the eyes of those receiving. I make soup, occasionally, and take it to those who are sick. I anoint those who are dying. I celebrate a marriage. I baptise a baby. All of these, sacred moments, liminal spaces where God seems to be especially present.

'Thomas comes to faith because he first has the chance to voice his doubt and questions and then experiences Jesus for himself.'¹²¹

Dear Thomas, I know your doubt, your faith and your questioning live on today in us. So many here have questions and doubts and I have been with them. Thomas, walk with us, teach us what you know. We are in this together.

WHAT THOMAS WANTS by Andrew King

*Thomas knows all about crucifixion.
Knows the nails driven into the victim
really tear the flesh,
damage the bones.
And he knows that this
is a crucifying world,
with it's violence'
greed and oppressions
still hammering nails into the hands of justice,
still thrusting spears through the ribs of love,
still hanging mercy and kindness to die
and sealing up the tomb.
Thomas knows all about it.
So he knows that any real resurrection
will have to come out of ruin,
will have to come out of suffering,
will have to come out still bearing the scars
inflicted by the unjust world.
Ask him not
if he believes in
merely a God
who is greater than suffering or death;
any God worth the name
would surely prove immortal,
who may be able to pretend our pain
but could never share it in truth.
No, what Thomas wants to see
is the Lord who rises from
death by crucifixion,
who rises
from the worst that our world can do:
who rises
from hells of corruption and cruelty,
who rises*

*from violence and terror and hate,
who rises
from rape and torture and war,
who rises
from hunger and disease and squalor,
who rises
torn and terribly scarred
yet walking among us still,
who will touch us in
our woundedness,
who will hold us in
our brokenness,
who sees in us
the prints left by the nails,
who will put his own hurt hand upon
our heartache, fear and despair
and breathe his healing peace
into our souls.
This is who Thomas wants to see - the only
Lord he wants to believe in.
Thomas just wants to see
Jesus.*

[\[3\]](#)

A little child, Madeleine, is baptised today. She is signed with the sign of the cross, washed in water, anointed with oil, given a candle, welcomed into this community, this community that chooses faith despite, or perhaps because of all that is happening in the world.

Thomas, the doubter, the courageous curious one, the sceptic, the scientist, is your brother. He is a man who speaks out all our doubts and questions and puts them out there to be answered. I hope you too will take a leaf out of his book and not be afraid to ask your questions, to explore, to find your truth.

As a baptised Christian, you are loved unconditionally and your parents and godparents on your behalf have said yes to God. But this does not mean a blind following. It means the possibility of a growing relationship of love and service.

^[1]<http://www.frederickbuechner.com/quote-of-the-day/2018/11/21/thomas>

[\[2\]http://www.davidlose.net/2016/03/easter-2-c-blessed-doubt/](http://www.davidlose.net/2016/03/easter-2-c-blessed-doubt/)

[\[3\]Copyright ©2016 by Andrew King](#)

<https://earth2earth.wordpress.com/2016/03/27/poem-for-the-sunday-lectionary-easter-2-yr-c/>

Photo Reflection



New life from within... Photo, Jane

Macqueen

Further opportunities for Spiritual Nurture

1. Anam Cara Community Dates for 2019

[1st June](#) - Quiet Day - St Paul's Cathedral;

[14th September](#) - Quiet Day - St Mary's Morwell;

23rd November- Thanksgiving Service at the Cathedral

2. 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

3. 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

4. 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 once a month on the **4th Tuesday 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.

5. Bass Hill Hermitage

Thinking about making a silent Retreat?

Carmel and Zena are still taking bookings for retreats at the Hermitage but can only confirm and take deposits 30 days in advance in case of a short settlement.

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

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

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