

**Anam Cara Community**



## ***Waterholes: 12 May 2019***



Iona. Photo: Jane

Macqueen

### **Welcome**

Welcome to Waterholes, the Anam Cara Community newsletter for the week beginning 12th May 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.

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## Coming Events

### 1. A Quiet Winter Day with Dean Susanna...

**Saturday 1st June**  
**St Paul's Cathedral, Sale**  
**9.30am - 3.30p**

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](mailto:jemacqueen@gmail.com)

## **2. Pilgrimage Retreat at the Abbey with Ken Parker**

**5.00pm Friday 28th June - 3.30pm Saturday 29th June**

Further details below, following the photo reflection...

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## **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](mailto: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 preparations for Synod.
- The Registry staff, Brian, Annette, Sue and David with all they do to support the smooth running of Synod.
- Dean Susanna and the Cathedral parish in their preparations and hospitality.
- For all Synod members, for words and actions soaked in wisdom, clarity, courage, kindness, grace and love.
- For all who will vote in our Federal Election.
- 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.
- 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**

Gracious God,  
you sent Jesus, the good shepherd,  
to gather us together:  
may we not wander from his flock,  
but follow wherever he leads us,  
listening for his voice and staying near him,  
until we are safely in your fold,  
to live with you for ever;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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### **Prayers for Synod**

People from around the Gippsland Diocese gather next weekend, 17th - 19th May, for the Diocesan Synod. I invite friends and Associates of the Anam Cara Community to hold in prayer those who will gather in Sale. The Synod Eucharist will take place on Friday evening and Bishop Richard will deliver his Presidential Address on Saturday morning followed by a number of Synod Sitting sessions.

Below is the prayer for Synod that you may wish to use as you sit, perhaps with a candle lit, for a time of prayer for Bishop Richard and all Synod representatives. May their words and actions be bathed with wisdom, clarity, courage, kindness, grace and love.

### **Prayer for Synod**

Almighty and everliving God,  
give wisdom and understanding,  
to the members of the Synod of  
the Diocese of Gippsland.  
Teach them in all things  
to seek first your honour and glory.  
May they perceive what is right  
have courage to pursue it

and grace to accomplish it,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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## Reflection

The Very Rev'd Susanna Pain

### **John 10.22-30**

I've just come back from a storytelling workshop, and a book launch. At the workshop, we were asked, 'If you were to write the gospel according to yourself, what would your first sentence be?

I fumbled a bit, and tried:

'He came and embodied God'

Then

'In him I saw God'

Or maybe I'd start with a question,

'What is the good news?'

Or how about:

'Today, let me tell you what I know'..

The person sitting next to me wrote: 'It is a story within a story within a story within a story within a story..'

How would you begin?

It's a cold Winter's day in Jerusalem. Jesus is walking in the portico of Solomon, an old and revered part of the Temple, and as usual, he's drawing a crowd. This time, the people gathered around him have come to celebrate the Feast of the Dedication (better known to us as Hanukkah), a festival honouring the rededication of the Temple after its defilement by the Syrian Greeks in 164 BCE.

The people have come with a question. Perhaps they've heard one of Jesus's enigmatic parables, or witnessed one of his miracles. Or maybe they just want to trap him into saying something they consider blasphemous.

Whatever the motive, the question they pose is a clanger:

"How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."<sup>[1]</sup>

And Jesus didn't answer, not in any satisfactory way. He was a bit like that, always Stories and riddles... Tell it plain let us know!

I wonder what good would it have done if he'd stood up in the temple at their insistence and yelled,

"Yes! Yes, in fact, I am the Christ!"

Would anything have changed?

Suddenly, would his parables, his countercultural teachings, and his strange miracles have coalesced into a neat package his listeners could tuck under their arms and carry home? I doubt it.

Jesus was a storytelling rabbi — far more interested in formation than in formula.<sup>[2]</sup>

How *does* Jesus respond?

"I have told you, and you do not believe,"

he says with a discernible impatience in his voice. And then the icy clincher:

"You do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep."

Ouch. He sounds cross.

"I've been telling you. Look at me, look at what I've been doing. You don't get it. You're not in. You don't belong."

Boy, that sounds harsh.

What can such a stark, cut-and-dry pronouncement mean?

Surely it doesn't apply to me??

But, when I ask Jesus to stop keeping me in suspense, when I insist that he speak plainly, what I'm really saying is:

"I can't trust you.

I trust neither your willingness to speak to me, nor my capacity to hear your voice.

You're supposed to be my Good Shepherd.

I'm supposed to know your voice, but I very often don't.

So what now?"

Loader writes:

'Since the beginning of this chapter in John's gospel, the focus has been on leadership and its competitors. The real sheep will not listen to rogue shepherds. John is speaking to first century Christians.

It is imagery of conflict and pain. The shepherd had long been an image for rulers, Pharaohs, kings, and is perhaps best known to us in the shepherd king, David.

Ezekiel arraigns the political leaders of his day, the shepherds, who were neglecting the flock (Ezek 34).

The shepherd messiah would rule in justice and peace (34:23-24).

The hungry sheep would be fed.

The lost sheep would be restored.

Jesus used the imagery of his own activity, of God's activity, through the parable of the 99 sheep.

Shepherding was a big metaphor which could encompass the vision of the reign of God with the full range of political, social, and personal dimensions which that entails. It is much bigger than pastoral care, and the gentle images of the 23rd psalm.

To acclaim someone as the shepherd is to make a statement about counter claims and competitors. Acclaiming the reign of God the shepherd calls into question all other claims to authority.

It is dangerous and leaves one vulnerable to expedient discounting by those who recognise threat or find such alternatives as subversive or just untidy and bothersome. Some or all of these responses killed Jesus. He would give his life for the sheep.<sup>[3]</sup>

Jesus words present no compelling argument, but only a life.. They are **presentation and invitation**, implying a huge claim: that here is the Son offering life from the Father. The Son is giving the sheep that life, the life he lived'.<sup>[4]</sup>

At first glance, Jesus's reply might appear to suggest that belonging to him depends on believing in him. But in fact, what Jesus says is *exactly the opposite*: you struggle to believe because you don't choose to belong. In other words, belief doesn't come first. It *can't* come first. Belonging does.<sup>[5]</sup>

And therein lies our hope and our consolation. According to this text, whatever belief I arrive at in this life will not come from the ups and downs of my own emotional life. It will not come from a creed, a doctrine, or a cleverly worded sermon. Rather it will come from the daily, hourly business of belonging to Jesus's flock — of walking in the footsteps of the Shepherd, living in the company of fellow sheep, and listening in real time for the voice of the one whose classroom is rocky hills, hidden pastures, and deeply shadowed valleys.

If I won't follow him into those layered places — places of both tranquility and treachery, trust and doubt — I will never belong to him at all.

Maybe, by refusing to "speak plainly," Jesus was honouring human life for the incredibly complicated thing it is.

After all, one doesn't "speak plainly" about the greatest mysteries of the universe.

Jesus came to teach us about truth, about love, and about eternal life.

One doesn't simply profess belief in such weighty and mysterious things—

one lives into them,  
questions into them,  
believes into them,  
grows into them.

One wrestles — and even in the wrestling, *belongs*.

Living as we do on this side of the Resurrection, we know that even the greatest miracle in human history was not enough to stop Jesus's followers from asking searing questions.

Even the first eyewitnesses to the empty tomb struggled to believe.

Why should we — their heirs — be superior in any way?

We are a wondering species, a wandering species, a species prone to stumbling all over ourselves.

I suspect that Jesus's answer was not what the people in the temple that day wanted to hear. They wanted to believe from the outside.  
They wanted a version of proof that would not require them to step into the smelly sheep pen and muck around with the other sheep.  
They wanted certainty without risk.  
Truth without trust.  
A Messiah who would provide but not provoke.  
*That* kind of "plain telling," Jesus said, is not available.

The only knowing on offer is an incarnational knowing.  
A knowing that happens *within* and *among* the fold.  
To "believe" in the Gospel sense means to trust, to lean, to depend, to throw my lot in with.  
It's an orientation of the heart and the gut.  
A willingness to stake everything I've got on the person, the character, the life, the death, and the resurrection of God's Son. It's not abstract.  
It's learned and earned through relationship.

Frederick Buechner makes the point this way:

"It is not objective proof of God's existence that we want but, whether we use religious language for it or not, the experience of God's presence.  
That is the miracle that we are really after. And that is also, I think, the miracle that we really get."<sup>[6]</sup>

There is no belonging from the outside; Christianity is not a spectator sport.  
*Belong*, Jesus says.  
Consent to belong.  
Belief will follow.<sup>[7]</sup>

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<sup>[1]</sup>Debie Thomas: debie.thomas1@gmail.com  
<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=919>

<sup>[2]</sup>Debie Thomas: debie.thomas1@gmail.com  
<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=919>

<sup>[3]</sup><http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/LkEaster4.htm>

<sup>[4]</sup><http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/LkEaster4.htm>

<sup>[5]</sup>Debie Thomas: debie.thomas1@gmail.com  
<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=919>

<sup>[6]</sup>In, Debie Thomas: debie.thomas1@gmail.com  
<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=919>

✉ Debie Thomas: [debie.thomas1@gmail.com](mailto:debie.thomas1@gmail.com)

<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/lectionary-essays/current-essay?id=919>

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## Photo Reflection



Sheepfold, Iona. Photo, Jane

Macqueen

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## 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

**Pilgrimage Retreat at the Abbey with Ken Parker**

**'WE SHALL NOT CEASE FROM EXPLORATION'**

*'We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time'* T.S. Eliot

Ken Parker will lead a retreat on the theme of pilgrimage, inspired in part by T.S. Eliot's words on exploration which end the long term poem 'The Four Quartets'. Equal inspiration comes from Sebastian Smee's recent and provocative Quarterly Essay, 'The Inner Life in the Digital Age'. We will hear of physical pilgrimages and there will also be the encouragement to participants to do the important work of reflecting on their inner journeying.

[5pm Friday 28 June - 3.30pm Saturday 29 June 2019](#)

#### **Cost per person**

**Residential:** Inc [Dinner Friday, Breakfast](#) & [Lunch Saturday](#)

twin/share accommodation: \$135.00

single accommodation: additional \$35.00

**Non Residential:** Including [Dinner Friday, Breakfast](#) & [Lunch Saturday](#): \$85.00

**RSVP:** [Monday 24 June 2019](#)

For all bookings and further information phone The Abbey on [\(03\) 5156 6580](tel:0351566580) or email [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@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](mailto: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 5.30pm Monday - Wednesday

### **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](http://www.basshillhermitage.com.au) for more information.

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## 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:cherylrussell1@bigpond.com)
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Love and prayers

Jane Macqueen

On behalf of the Servant Leaders

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