

On Easter

Let every man and woman count himself immortal. Let him catch the revelation of Jesus in his resurrection. Let him say not merely, 'Christ is risen', but 'I shall rise'.

—Phillips Brooks

A man who was completely innocent offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act.

—Mahatma Gandhi

Never abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song.

—Pope John Paul II

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Saints Alive

Newsletter of All Saints Anglican Church
Northcote
Parish of South Darebin

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Vicar's farewell message

The Venerable Andrew Oddy

This is the last contribution I will make to 'Saints Alive'. As I write I am leading a Quiet Day for the Parish at the Community of the Holy Name at Cheltenham, and the Parish is about to enter Holy Week and Easter. When asked to foreshadow what path the Quiet Day would follow I answered that I would be doing what I did most often, reading through the scriptures, verse by verse, looking for surprises and working to see what insights could be found.

Maybe it is because of my legal training as a teenager, but this has been my delight throughout my time as a cleric. Always, given the time, I would work on each passage of the scriptures, usually the Gospel set for the Sunday Eucharist, to walk down each 'alleyway and turning' until something stood out which would fire the imagination and help me to understand what the passage was saying. I could then frame a sermon in an endeavour to make sense of this understanding.

At the very least, the scriptures had to make sense. It was not a case of forcing the Bible into some test of what I could find reasonable. Often, I had to change my outlook before things 'made sense'. However, once this was achieved, I could endeavour to explain, to share what I had discovered.

I am reminded of one of my teachers who was accustomed to meet with some of his congregation, week by week, to discuss the Gospel passage set for the Sunday. This was part of his sermon preparation. The advantage he found was that he could talk to a group of people who came to the passage 'for the first time'. Often preachers become so familiar with the Bible that we fail to see the things that need explanation.



**Fr Andrew on his ordination day at
St Paul's Cathedral, 1977**

This has been my nourishment throughout more than forty years of ordained life.

Of course, all of this needs a congregation. I firmly believe that there is no priesthood without a congregation and for the past decade and more, you have provided the context in which all of this has taken place and I am very grateful to have taken my place among you. Moreover, preaching is not the full story of any priesthood. Life in the community must reflect the insights gained, or the congregation will see only shallowness in what is being proclaimed. The evaluation of this can only come from you.

For my part, you have welcomed me and my family and we have a certain sadness that this will all end with my retirement in May. Thank you especially for the kindness and support throughout my recent heart surgery. I will go

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Vicar's message — continued from page 1

with good memories but with the knowledge that I have failed some of you from time to time. I have every confidence that it has all been worth it and that there is a good future for the Parish.

Thank you for all your support and good wishes. I had a great time during my Long Service Leave praying for you in some of the great cathedral churches in Europe. Doubtless this will continue as we move to our little home in Brunswick.

Fr Andrew took up his tenure in the parish of South Darebin in late 2005. After such a long and successful ministry, parting with him and Pamela will be hard for us all. As a community we will want to be with them at his last service with us, on 12 May, and at a social occasion shortly after that. Information about these arrangements will follow.

— Churchwardens and Vestry



The All Saints Easter message
Design by Sign & Fitouts, Preston

Queen of Feasts

The Rev'd Philippa Wetherell reflects on the glories of the Easter season

This glorious Season of fifty days beginning on Easter Day, including the Ascension, and culminating on Pentecost, allows us in the Christian Church to fully celebrate the mystery of the Resurrection of Jesus our Redeemer. What joy this is, as one of our Easter hymns has it: 'This joyful Eastertide, away with sin and sorrow'. For the forty days of Lent we have been unable to sing the *Gloria* or a single Alleluia. now with this 'Queen of Seasons' as another Easter hymn calls it, we should be burning to sing Alleluias, and many of them, on every one of the seven Sundays of Eastertide.

One of the best known and loved of Easter hymns celebrating Jesus as our heavenly king, and sung at the first Eucharist of the Day, allows an Alleluia at the end of each of its twelve lines: 'Jesus Christ is risen today' (*Together in Song*, 362). Jesus' triumphant victory over death and the grave is a cause for extended rejoicing, as Charles Wesley tells us that 'Love's redeeming work is done', and gives us four Alleluias in the first

verse of his joyous Easter hymn (*TIS* 370). A 20th century hymn from James Quinn, encompassing the whole redemptive act, proclaims that 'Easter glory fills the sky', and has us singing an Alleluia at the end of every one of its 32 lines (*TIS* 388).

The Liturgical cycle gives us six Sundays of Easter before the celebration of the Ascension on Holy Thursday, this year on 30 May, then one more Sunday to bring us to Pentecost. This seventh Sunday allows for a proper celebration of our Lord's Ascension as, sadly, the feast is often overlooked on the day itself. The Gospel writers do not make it easy for liturgists with their differing accounts of the Ascension. Matthew has Jesus giving a final command to the eleven apostles on a mountain in Galilee, conferring authority on them to 'make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Trinity'. Luke's final words in his Gospel depict Jesus leaving the disciples from Bethany on the day of Resurrection itself where, after blessing them, 'he withdrew from them and was

carried up into heaven'. Not at all sad at his going, 'they returned to Jerusalem with great joy'. But for Luke this is only the beginning and in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles a more dramatic scene is enacted, forty days after the Resurrection. As the apostles watch, Jesus is lifted up and a cloud takes him out of their sight. Both Mark and John are silent on the manner of Jesus' leaving.

Charles Wesley wrote a number of hymns honouring the Ascension, celebrating Jesus' return to the Father as the King of Glory, the crucified one who, claiming his rightful throne, reigns supreme in Heaven. One speaks of the role of Jesus as intercessor who, as our great high priest, 'pleads his passion on the tree, he shows himself to God for me' (TIS 374). The best known and loved Ascension hymn is surely that which begins 'The head that once was crowned with thorns, is crowned with glory now' (TIS 378). Eastertide, in one sense, concludes with the Ascension. In the words of Evelyn Underhill, eminent Anglican spiritual writer of the 20th century: 'Easter to Ascension marks the end of the historical manifestation of the Word Incarnate, and the beginning of his hidden life within the Church ... as members of the Body of Christ we are all required to take part in that hidden life.' At the celebration of the Ascension the Paschal candle that has burned for every Eucharist since Easter Day is extinguished, to be lit again only for Baptisms.

However, as we know, the end of Jesus' earthly life does not leave us bereft. It is a beginning, as Evelyn Underhill suggested for, as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit came upon the Church, so as the culmination of Eastertide the Church celebrates Pentecost. The name *Pentecost* has its origin in Judaism, being the Greek name for the Jewish feast of Weeks, fifty days after Passover. In the English church the name *Whitsun* is still commonly used of Pentecost, referring to the white robes worn by the newly baptised on that day. The Acts of the Apostles records in Chapter 2 the dramatic event of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles with wind and fire, and Peter testifies to the astounded Jews that God 'has poured out this that you both see and hear'.

At Pentecost in the Church white vestments are laid aside and glorious red is everywhere seen, not the red of Good Friday, symbolic of blood, but the red of fire, symbol of the power given by God to the Church. And what wonderful hymns we have to celebrate the

coming of the Holy Spirit! There are those addressing the church, calling the Spirit to 'revive your church with life and power' (TIS 409), and another asking: 'like wind and fire with life among us move, till we are known as Christ's, and Christians prove' (TIS 411). Then there are the more intimate and personal hymns that ask the Holy Spirit to 'kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart' (TIS 572) or give me 'true lowliness of heart which takes the humbler part, and for its own shortcomings weeps with loathing' (TIS 398).

At All Saints we sing a contemporary hymn that speaks of the Holy Spirit as 'she', mothering creation, waiting to give birth to all the Word will say (TIS 418).



*"She sits like a bird,
brooding on the waters,
hovering on the chaos of
the world's first day; she
sighs and she sings,
mothering creation,
waiting to give birth to all
the Word will say."*

— J Bell & G Maule

It is right to remind ourselves that the Feast of the Holy Spirit, the Feast we call Pentecost, is the second great Festival in the Church's year. Some may think that Christmas ranks second, but the feast of the Incarnation is only the beginning of God's great work in the world in bringing his Kingdom to birth. Easter is the Queen of Feasts.

Saints Alive

My Uncle Charles

Jenifer Watson relates another episode in her colourful family history

Uncle Charles was my great uncle, my father's uncle. He was born on the Orkney Island of Hoy, as were his brothers and sisters. Grandfather, Bob, and his brother Ned, married sisters Ethel and Charlotte (Charnes) Paterson, from the Melbourne area, and migrated to Australia. Charles and his sister Mary moved to Canada, where he opened wool scouring works, and other businesses. The Canadian marriage records show his occupation as Textile Designer.

Grandfather Bob died suddenly, leaving a wife and six children, aged roughly ten to twenty. Uncle Charles and his wife Aunt Kate invited my father to stay with them in Canada. Dad had been named Robert, after his father, but his family always called him 'Sandy'.

The ship to Canada was a cargo ship but there were also several passengers. Apart from Dad, there was an Australian businessman from Geelong, Mr Smith, and his wife. Mr Smith knew the wool business from the sheep's back to the catwalk. He also knew Uncle Charles, and had had business dealings with him.

In the era before computers and mobile phones the camera was an essential for the traveller. Dad certainly had a camera and used it on the long sea voyage, and in Canada.

The long tiring journey finally ended in the town of Oakville, Ontario, where he found his way to Uncle Charles' and Aunt Kate's home. As he started up the long driveway a large car passed him. He recognised Mr and Mrs Smith in the car.

With his camera still in his hands, he walked through the massive garden towards the house, a photographer's delight. As he raised his eyes from the garden, he heard someone call his name. His eyes locked on to the eyes of the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. Some person seemed to be introducing them, 'This is your cousin Shelagh. She will show you your room. Then you can come and taste your Aunt Kate's famous strawberry shortcake.'

Dad was taken to his room by Shelagh, and then to the garden setting where the strawberry shortcake was being served. The strawberries on the cake were the largest Dad had ever seen, and the cake was perfect.

Uncle Charles said, 'What do you think of Kate's strawberry shortcake? She is famous for it.'

Mr Smith looked at his plate and said, 'Yes, very nice. But the strawberries are a bit small aren't they? Of course, in Australia we have our coconut strawberry. Your nephew Sandy will show you how large they are.'

Dad put his hands together to resemble a coconut shape. Aunt Kate looked bewildered. She had been to the market and selected the very best and largest strawberries available. Now, it appeared, Australia had a huge native strawberry the size of a coconut. Kate retained her position of best cake maker when her speciality was tasted by all present, but for many years, the Australian side of the family kept up the coconut strawberry joke.

During the next few months, Dad came to know his three cousins, Shelagh, Muriel and Dunbar, very well. Especially Shelagh. The summer, with its beautiful gardens, faded away, and the winter snow came. My father and Shelagh wanted to get married. They went to Uncle Charles and my father formally asked for his daughter in marriage. Uncle Charles was furious. He said that first cousins should not marry.

He had been employing Dad in wool scouring and training him for other work in textiles. He promptly put Dad out of his house and out of his employ. Dad managed to rent a tiny attic room to live in. Uncle Charles then bought each of them a train ticket to the end of the line – in opposite directions.

Uncle Charles was not as hard as he sounds. He went to see the attic Dad was living in, and next day a pure wool winter-weight coat arrived for Dad. Although now known as 'the wicked uncle', Uncle Charles could not let

My Uncle Charles—continued

Dad go without a coat in the Canadian winter. All could have been fine between uncle and nephew, but nephew now saw an answer to his Christmas financial crisis. He sold the coat to buy Christmas gifts for the family back home!

Shelagh moved to the frozen north and married a fur trader. Perhaps that was where her train ticket took her.

Uncle Charles visited Australia when I was a baby. For many years I had a silver baptism mug with rolled top and my initials engraved on the side. That was a gift from Uncle Charles, although I was too young to remember him. My mother, who was no blood relation to Uncle Charles, met him and seems to have got along well with him. Unfortunately I had to sell the mug after my husband died, when I had two boys to provide for. I now consider it to have been a gift for the welfare of my children.

More recently, when checking the family tree, I looked up my great grandmother in Orkney, Mary Traill, and found that she was also the great grandmother of Aunt Kate. That is, my father's uncle (Charles) and his father (Bob) were also grandchildren of Mary Traill.

So it turns out that in marrying Aunt Kate, Uncle Charles had married his first cousin.



**The Australian coconut strawberry
(Shown to scale)**



Social enterprises

Social enterprises are businesses set up to achieve certain social goals, also producing social benefits in the process. For example, the Brotherhood of St Laurence's 20 stores across Melbourne, with more than 25,000 customers a week, raise income that is essential for supporting individuals and families as they build better lives. But they also offer benefits to those who work and shop there. The stores offer a place for community connection in the areas where they operate, and provide work experience for students, including placements for young job seekers from the Brotherhood's youth transition programs. In providing a recycling service, the stores also contribute to a more environmentally sustainable approach, discouraging people from throwing away quality clothes and other goods that can be useful to others.

All Saints is proud to partner and support the community store at Northcote.

Brotherhood Books, Australia's first charity online bookstore, continues to grow with the support of its loyal customers, dedicated volunteers and the public's generous donations of quality books. The store offers more than 100,000 books, from fiction through to rare and collectibles. It is run by a team of 40 dedicated volunteers, who catalogue and process donated books for sale to a rapidly growing online customer base.

The Brotherhood appreciates the donation of quality furniture and whitegoods and will collect them from you. To have large items picked up, phone 1300DONATE (1300 366 283)

Saints Alive

Men Friends

Fr Ken Cahill

I was struck by two films I have seen recently. At first I thought they were simply well executed 'feel good' movies, gently comedic throughout. But as I reflected on them I realised that they have some strong messages concerning a number of issues around the surprise and impact of our relationships.

Green Book

In the 1962-set *Green Book*, based on a true story, Viggo Mortensen plays a nightclub bouncer, Tony 'Lip' Vallelonga, who is hired to drive a virtuoso concert pianist, Dr Don Shirley (Mahershala Ali) on tour in the deep south. Tony is a tough-talking bouncer from an Italian-American neighbourhood in the Bronx and his street style contrasts with Don's refined nature.

The director, Peter Farrelly, agonised over the title *Green Book* and various other racial aspects of the film and received resounding approval from his African-American colleagues to go for it. In real life the book was called *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, and was a guide to hotels and restaurants in the segregated south where people of colour would be accepted. The further into the south the characters travel, the disparity in the quality of the hotels they can stay at increases, with Tony staying in high-quality hotels while Don is relegated to cheap motels where he is confronted with his feelings of disconnection from many other African Americans.

The film is, at times, a benign odd-couple comedy about a black concert pianist and his

casually racist white driver, chatting and sparring and eating fried chicken and anything else that Tony can get his hands on.

Despite their differences, the two men soon develop an unexpected bond while confronting danger in an era of appalling racial discrimination. The film portrays, at times, a father-son aspect to their relationship, with Don teaching Tony life lessons of right and wrong, and later teaching him to write letters that more clearly express his love and feeling for his wife back home.

What *Green Book* does well is convey the corrosiveness of daily humiliation and intrusive racism. You can't eat in this restaurant, you can't try on this jacket in a tailor's shop, you can't be out after dark in a so-called Sundowner town, you can't use a toilet inside this house: these daily slights are pointers to the more insidious racist extremes of the period. Tony struggles to imagine why Don undertakes this trip in the first place, knowing that he will be confronted with such attitudes. He cannot understand the smiles that Don offers in the face of such entrenched bigotry and is impressed by the bottle of whisky that he polishes off each evening to dampen his feelings.

At first Don says he is employing Tony for his "people and public relations skills" but the lesson that Tony teaches Don is something far greater. Tony's surprising, ready acceptance of Don, with all his differences, helps forge a great and lasting friendship.

Viggo Mortensen and Mahershala Ali star in *Green Book*, released by Universal Pictures. The film was awarded the 2019 Oscar for best picture, and Ali received the Oscar for best supporting actor

Universalpictures.com



Men Friends—continued

Stan and Ollie

Starring Steve Coogan and John C Reilly, *Stan and Ollie* is the heartwarming story of the movie icons of the 1930s. We first see them at the height of their career in 1937 and then later when Laurel and Hardy set out on a variety hall tour of Britain and Ireland in 1953.

Despite the pressures of a hectic schedule, and with the support of their wives Lucille (Shirley Henderson) and Ida (Nina Arianda) – a formidable double act in their own right – the pair's love of performing for their audiences, as well as for each other, endures as they attempt to secure again their place in the hearts of their public.

Diminished by age and with their golden era as the kings of Hollywood comedy now behind them, they set out, crisscrossing England and Ireland. They have always been able to make each other laugh and as the charm and innocence of their performances shines through they re-connect with legions of adoring fans, old and new.

The film delightfully portrays some of their classic comedic routines which Stan has choreographed and which plays on the joy and naturalness of their relationship and balances humour and pathos, laughter and tears. Throughout the film, there is an intriguing interplay between the performers' real and fictional personae. Reality and performance are delightfully blurred when Stan trips over his cases checking into a guesthouse or the pair

drop a trunk down a long flight of stairs at a railway station. More subtly, the finger-twiddling gestures that Stan used to hilarious effect on screen make a subtle appearance during wheedling negotiations with his producer.

A portrait of the most tender and poignant of creative relationships begins to unfold as the duo, aware that they may be approaching their swansong, rediscover just how much they mean to each other.

For us, we journey through Lent with a purpose of uncovering more of the stuff within us that holds us back from experiencing a full relationship with the God revealed in the person of Jesus. We are made for this and our sense of fulfilment is in this relationship.

We are reminded again that God, like the father of the prodigal, has been keeping watch and alert, looking for us to return. Easter shouts that all that is required for this has been done and that we are reconciled and made one, and our lives begin again.

**Steve Coogan and John C Reilly
delight in *Stan and Ollie*, BBC
Films. Both actors received
Golden Globe and British
Academy Award nominations**
www.skiddle.com



Saints Alive

Raising the standard

Laura Tsakmakis

Child Safe Officer at All Saints

The exposure of child abuse in a number of organisations in recent years resulted in investigations at both a state and federal level. The Victorian Parliament held an Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non-Government Organisations (the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry), and there was a nation-wide Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The findings and recommendations arising out of these investigations have had significant repercussions for the Anglican Church (among others). This article sets out the most significant changes that all members of the Melbourne Anglican Church should be aware of.

Most recently, you have probably heard me talking about police checks for a number of positions at All Saints. In May last year the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (the Diocese) circulated a table of prescribed clearances which details the lay positions within a church that need police checks and/or Working With Children checks. As a result, we are currently processing police checks for the Wardens, members of Vestry, acolytes, organists, and members of the electoral and incumbency committees. None of these positions at All Saints require Working With Children checks. However, some members already have these through work or other organisations and are welcome to include the Diocese as an organisation. Including the church as an

organisation on these checks is a way of promoting a child safe church.

The Betrayal of Trust Inquiry resulted in the introduction of Child Safe Standards. These standards require organisations to take certain actions to protect children from harm; for example, having a child safe policy, code of conduct, and processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

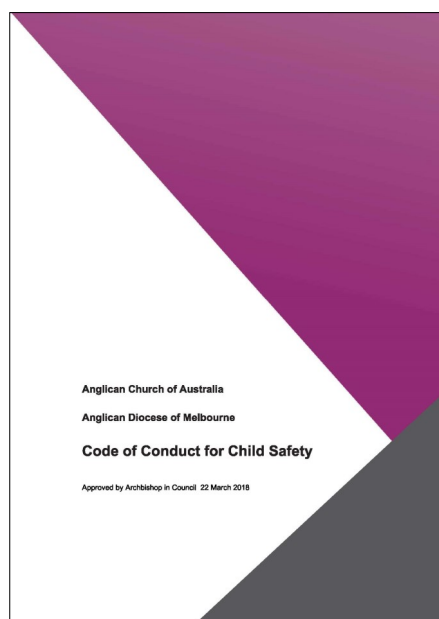
People in the positions at All Saints that are subject to police checks are also required to read and agree to be bound by the *Code of Conduct for Child Safety* issued by the Diocese. The Code of Conduct is extensive and a copy can be made available to you if you wish to read it. You are also welcome to voluntarily sign a copy if you would like to. Included in the Code of Conduct is a requirement that all child related activities be conducted in areas which are open and can be observed by other adults and with no fewer than two adults present at all times. Because of this requirement our children's programs are no longer held in the Meeting Room during Sunday services.

The Diocese has also issued a Child Safe Policy. The policy outlines different types of child abuse, as well as actions to be taken to minimise the risk of this happening. Copies are available in the Narthex to borrow and read. On the last page of the policy, you will see that I have been appointed the Child Safe Officer for All Saints, meaning you can speak to me if you have any questions or concerns.

New criminal offences have also been created in Victoria in response to this inquiry. Since 2014, every Victorian of 18 years or over is required to report to police if they have a reasonable belief that a child has been sexually abused or groomed. There is also an offence of 'failing to protect'. This makes it an offence for any church worker who knows of a substantial risk of child abuse by someone associated with the organisation to negligently fail to reduce or remove that risk where they have power or responsibility to do so.

Thank you to everyone for helping to ensure that All Saints is a safe and welcoming environment for people of all ages.

People in leadership positions must read and sign the Code of Conduct for Child Safety; others are encouraged to read it and sign it as well. Copies are available in the Narthex.



On identity: *The Good Lie* (2014)

From Indonesia, Bruce Clezy sends this film review

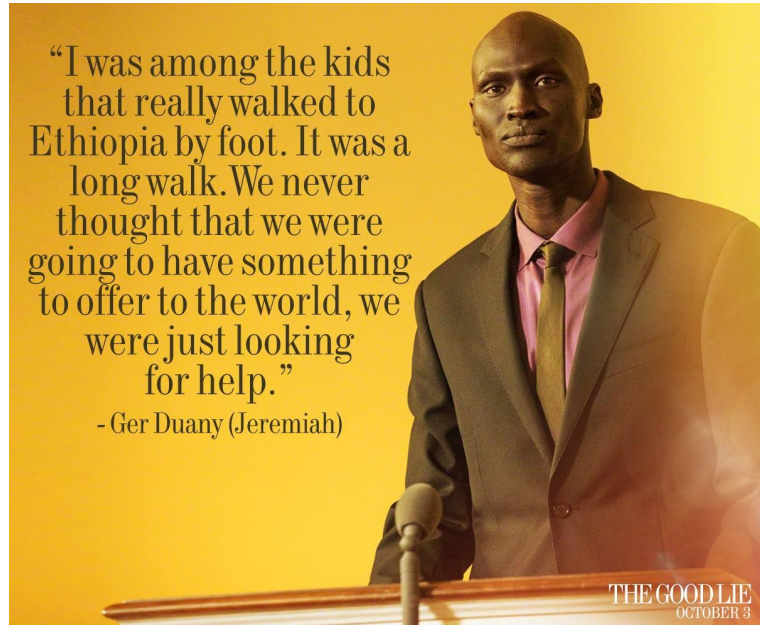
'You're not a doctor ... You're not Theo ... We are in America now; and in America we are nothing... You think you are so smart; that we want all that you want ... We don't ... I don't... I don't want this! I don't want to work so I can be white ... be alone ... be nobody.'

– Paul, in *The Good Lie*

Identity is an amazing thing. We think of ourselves as being so constant, so present. But the truth is, 'who we are' often depends on 'where we are' and 'whom we are with'. Yes, identity is a complex nexus between where we were born, the colour of our skin, our gender and even our profession. But identity is also fragile; it can be lost in the blink of an eye.

This question of identity, of who we are, lies very much at the heart of the film *The Good Lie* (2014). Based on the events surrounding the Second Sudanese War of 1985–2005, the film re-enacts the story of the so called 'lost boys of Sudan' – a brutal period in Sudan's history which saw the mass migration of some 20,000 young children (mostly boys) to refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya. While many of these orphans were eventually resettled in America, some also came to Australia and now form much of the basis of our own Sudanese community here in Melbourne.

Briefly, *The Good Lie* tells the story of siblings Mamere, Paul, Jeremiah, Theo, Daniel and Abital. We see the siblings flee to safety, but also their struggles to adapt to a new culture (now as adults) as they rebuild their lives in a new land. Indeed, life in America is made to appear strange and absurd as the refugees struggle to find work and adapt to their new surroundings. Why is that Americans must smile all the time, ask the young men. Is this not a kind of lie if people are not happy? Similarly, why dispose of unwanted food from a grocery store, when there are people who go hungry every day? Couldn't we just give it to those who need it, ask the boys, rather than throw the food away? It is in this sense that the refugees and the film perform a kind of double dissolution of identity. It is not just the boys who have lost their identity and their culture through the horrors of war and forced migration: white American identity is also drawn into question and shown to be fleeting. Identity, according to the logic of the film, is



actually a kind of chimera – something we all take for granted and consider 'normal', even though sometimes it is nothing more than social convention. What's worse is that often we perform this identity to our own detriment, as Paul's speech (above) makes perfectly clear.

Interestingly, much of the undermining of Western identity comes from the strong Christian convictions held by the film's main protagonists. The siblings are often shown to have more faith, more courage and more integrity than many of the Americans who have taken them in. And in an interesting twist on the conventional Hollywood movie, the film also very cleverly undermines its own star. Reece Witherspoon, who headlines the cast, only appears in the second half of the movie, and in a relatively minor role as the siblings' employment agent.

The Good Lie is an engaging movie about a period in recent history that had far reaching implications but is still not that well known or understood. It is a powerful rumination on the fragility of life and the horrors of war. It is also a gentle reminder of the fleeting nature of our own lives which, all too often, we in the West take for granted.

Via *The Good Lie* Facebook page

Saints Alive

Upholding public housing tenants

Alma Ryrie-Jones

Almost exactly a year after our first ever social justice forum, held in March last year on the topic of housing, All Saints hosted a packed public meeting held by the Save Public Housing collective—a drawing together of six grass-roots action organisations, all advocates for public housing as the strongest model for providing desperately-needed housing. All are opponents of the transfer of ownership and use of public housing estates to developments that will result in mostly private ownership, and will involve the transfer of what are now public housing tenants to community housing associations, which operate under different guidelines, in partnership with private developers.

We were not the organisers of this meeting, but we supported it by providing hospitality and by publicising the meeting in our local area, including of course the Walker Street estate immediately opposite us. This local estate is gradually being emptied of its current tenants prior to demolition and replacement by a slightly increased number of small one-bedroom apartments, and more than double that number again of apartments for private rental or ownership. In spreading information about the meeting, we made our support clear by adding a statement of endorsement, along with images of people from the church holding the message 'Save public housing'.

The meeting was addressed by researchers from RMIT and Deakin University, who made clear the distinction between community housing and public housing, and the nature of the objections to the privatisation process inherent in the Victorian government's model of 'renewal' of the eleven estates identified by the current program.

A representative of the Federation of Community Legal Centres, which offers advice to public housing tenants and community housing tenants, and may represent them in legal processes and actions, outlined to the meeting the key differences in rights held by public tenants in comparison with community housing tenants. The transfer of status was represented as a significant erosion of public tenants' rights and protections.



Two aspects of the gathering were very significant. One was that it represented a coming together of action groups from different areas and estates, to identify and work towards a common goal. Although there may be different viewpoints, each group sees the value of operating as a collective. The second is that the meeting heard the strength of the voices of public tenants identifying the issues and expressing the seriousness of issues faced not only by themselves, but by the community, through the loss of public assets, the destruction of local neighbourhoods and communities, and the dislocation of families, who have little hope of returning to an area to which they feel they belong. They also spoke of the weakness of the government's policy both in terms of social outcomes and impact on the growing housing crisis, and in terms of its economic justification.

In this tenants received the strong endorsement of researchers, who pointed to the recent findings of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) that, to the surprise of some, the best use of federal funding in the long term is not to outsource the problem to private agencies,

but to invest directly in building new public housing.

There was strong agreement at the meeting that this issue is not just a state matter. Although the support groups are jointly opposing the actions of the Victorian government, other state governments are engaged in similar programs, and federal funding is involved. So the groups resolved on action to bring attention to this issue during the federal election campaign. It is important to note that these groups are not aligned with any political party and are seeking to persuade parties of all stripes to adopt pro-public housing policies. They now call on the leaders of the major parties, particularly, to recognise this as a moment for a new vision. It is easy in the hurly-burly of political life to miss the opportunities to stop, reconsider, and take action that will have a genuine long-term impact on a problem and for which generations to come will have reason to be grateful.

Public investment in low-cost housing began as long ago as the 1890s, when governments first began to see that the operations of the private market fail to provide enough housing at a price that poorer people can afford, and that some public intervention is therefore necessary. The

great expansion took place after the second world war. Governments have exhibited highly variable performance in maintaining and renewing large housing infrastructure projects since then, let alone investing in anything that would begin to address people's needs. At present in Australia, construction of new public housing dwellings is at its lowest level in 40 years and this area of housing is severely underfunded. Only about 4 per cent of all dwellings in Australia are publicly owned. In Denmark it is 20 per cent; in France, 46 per cent is low-rent housing; at its peak in Britain, public housing reached 50 per cent.

The tenants and advocacy groups agreed that this issue is not a short-term, site-specific one. Those tenants who are immediately affected are not just concerned about themselves: they want to keep fighting for public housing as the best way to house the 83,000 people in Victoria, including 25,000 children, who continue to be on the waiting list, and who are finding it impossible to house themselves properly in the private rental market. So the intention is to keep going and to build awareness across all public housing estates.

I was very proud to see so many people from All Saints there, and proud of the hospitality that we were able to show to our neighbours.

David Kelly of Deakin University addresses the March meeting at All Saints





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Welcome!

We seek to share with others our experience of God and to make of All Saints Northcote a place of permanent welcome, a refuge and anchor for the human spirit.

Welcome the Lord – worship

Reverence for liturgy and joy in music are central to our worship. The observance of season and feast has continued in unbroken service in this place for 157 years. We seek to be close to God in the celebration of Baptism and in the breaking of the bread, and to draw others into a sense of the sacred. We hold to a middle way, resisting extremes, allowing for difference and listening to new ideas, but always anchored in prayer book and hymnal, in parish and Diocese, and in the great Anglican tradition. In practising our faith here, we acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the church is built, and respect their spiritual connection to country.

Welcome the stranger – relationship

The defining spiritual features of our community are love, tolerance, warmth and inclusiveness. We are less concerned about numbers, money, appearances, power or status than about hospitality, participation, and the gifts each person brings, regardless of their age or abilities or sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic. We love children and young people. We treat outcasts and fringe dwellers compassionately and support church agencies of social action. We look for opportunities to support reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and actively oppose racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination.

Welcome the friend – partnership

We are enriched by our connection with St Paul's Fairfield and St James the Great Thornbury as part of a united parish, and we respect the different identities of each community. We are active participants in ecumenical exchange and inter-faith activity. We value our relationship with St Philip's Collingwood and St Mark's Fitzroy. We view our partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence as an essential part of our mission. We seek to reduce our environmental footprint through energy conservation and sustainable practices.

allsaintsnorthcote.org.au

Saints Alive is published on our website along with other information about All Saints



1860 — 2019

We acknowledge the
Wurundjeri people as the
traditional custodians of the
land on which our church was
built, and pay our respects to
their Elders, past, present and
emerging.

CLIMATE CHANGE



MOST RESPONSIBLE

LEAST VULNERABLE



LEAST RESPONSIBLE

MOST VULNERABLE

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