

Voices on climate

"It's very odd. I don't see people choosing sides over $e=mc^2$ or any other fundamental facts of science."

—Neil deGrasse Tyson, US astrophysicist

"The destruction of the planet has begun ... These are not times for blame nor accusation. There is a task ahead of all of us to address the outcome of our avarice and sloth."

—Pat Dodson, Yawuru man

"We should be at a stage in this country where climate change is beyond politics."

—Kevin Rudd, 2007

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Saints Alive

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Jesus 'at home' amongst us

Bishop Paul White

I stayed in a friend's flat in Kennington in London on my way to complete the Ignatian 30 day exercises at St Beuno's Spirituality Centre in North Wales. While in Kennington I visited the Church of St John the Divine where I was impressed by the changed position of what had been the Kelham Rood.

The photo here shows what was considered to be the central feature and crowning glory of the Kelham Great Chapel, the one-time training centre for the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM) in the UK. It is a life-size bronze 'Rood' by Charles Sargeant Jagger, completed in 1929. Since the closure of Kelham Great Chapel, the bronzes now reside in the home church of the SSM, St John the Divine, in Kennington, London. The new location of the bronzes can be seen in the newer photos on the following pages, which I took on that recent visit.

Since being brought 'home' or to the birthplace of SSM the enormous, moving, and satisfying difference is that the figures of Christ on the cross flanked by his grieving mother Mary and beloved sorrowing disciple John, are now at ground level, amongst the people. Whether parishioners or visitors, Christians or not, He is there for all.

As told to me by one who knew, when on the Rood Arch in Kelham, the figures were so far away you couldn't even make out their faces. Now, you can touch them, they can touch you; you can feel their pain and



The Kelham Rood in its original location

sorrow, and hope maybe they can feel yours, or at least you can trust they do, and leave your sorrows there.

I had hoped to photograph this Calvary Group on a Sunday morning with the congregation filling the space around them. However, photographic options were limited by the clouds of incense with the sun shining through (yes, it was a sunny Sunday morning in Kennington even though the temperature was -1.7°C). I guess, photographed this way, with no crowd, you'll be able to see more of the figures and perhaps imagine yourself there with Mary and John at the foot of the cross.

As I mentioned, the figures can be said to have come home, not because they were in Kennington originally but because Kennington was the home of SSM. It does remind me, though, that Jesus wants to be at home in us and for us to be at home with him.

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Jesus at home — continued from page 1

Rood - a crucifix, especially one positioned ... on a beam over the entrance to the chancel.

"I like to think that Jesus being at home with us and us with him means he is still at work in us, helping us to be who and what he wants us to be, if we will let him."

When reading about this Calvary Group, I learned that the sculptor had served at the Dardenelles during the war. In his words, he was 'knocked off balance by the whole ghastly business – the waste, the brutality, the appalling suffering.' He said 'I was embittered and puzzled.' He was haunted by 'the question of what human life meant, and whether it meant anything.' Afterwards, he developed a deep desire, a passion, to sculpt a crucifix.

He tells us why. 'One day I was working in the studio when the door opened and someone came in. They often did when I was working, and without turning around I said, "Just sit down for a moment, will you? I'm trying to do something." I went on with my modelling, but I could not get the result I was after; so I dished up the clay with my hands, and turned round to see who it was. It was the Christ! I said to him, not meaning to be rude but just blurting out the thought which filled my mind, "Oh, it's you, is it? Tell me, is this really the best you can make of the world?" He replied, "Let me ask you a question. When you are modelling something, do you always get the result at which you are aiming immediately?" I said "No, in point of fact I suppose I hardly ever get it the first time." "And what," he asked, "do you do in that case?" "Why," said I, "I do what you have just seen me do; I dish up the clay and start all over again, using the same material." He said to me, "There is your answer." '

I like to think that Jesus being at home with us and us with him means he is still at work in us, helping us to be who and what he wants us to be, if we will let him. Please allow the following texts to stimulate reflection and prayer as you seek to follow Jesus, and take up your cross.

Isaiah 64:8

*O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.*

Jeremiah 18:1–6

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 'Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me: 'Can I not do with you ... just as this potter has done?' says the Lord. 'Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand...'

As a recent retiree, I've reflected a lot on the question 'what now?' Fundamental to any answer I might discern or attempt to enact is the reality that I must remain in the potter's hands and I'm in need of much work still. If I ever think of myself as a finished article, sitting on a shelf gathering dust; surely you, along with my wife, will tell me I am mistaken.

It might seem incongruous to say, on the one hand, we are a piece of clay still being worked on, and on the other hand, to ask you to stand, but even unfinished as we are, let's stand with Mary and John at the foot of the cross and look to Jesus; leave our burdens there and let him shape us.



Jesus at home — continued from page 2



The group of bronzes , now among the people, depicts Jesus on the Cross, his grieving mother and his sorrowing disciple, John.

Open now thy gates of beauty

June McKay

Let's open our church to others. Historically churches have provided a safe haven from the troubles of the world. In medieval times, criminals or those fleeing persecution could seek sanctuary in a church for up to forty days, during which time no civil power or other authority could lay hands on them. These days, for one reason or another, most churches present a visage of closed and locked doors most days of the week – they certainly do not appear to be welcoming places to people passing by. Many people assume that a locked church means a permanently closed church, not a church of supportive, committed community. Where do people go now to seek refuge in times of trouble, despair, uncertainty or grief?

The hustle and bustle of life today leaves little time to pause and reflect, let alone to think prayerfully. We experience and enjoy the

spiritual nurturing we receive at worship, so why not offer a sense of that experience to people in our community? We have an opportunity to share our place of worship by inviting our neighbours and passers-by to sit quietly in the presence of God in our church.

At All Saints we are well situated to put out a welcome mat (or an A-frame!). A lot of foot-traffic passes our doors each week – along Walker Street to use the rail crossing, along High Street heading to and from the tram stop or the shops at Westgarth and most importantly visiting the Brotherhood Opp Shop. There are myriad reasons that might prompt people to pop in to our church on a whim of curiosity or with a deeper purpose – quiet reflection, to ponder an issue, search for release from worry, make a desperate plea to God or simply take the chance to sit down for a rest in peace and quiet.

Two Open Church times have been suggested— one on a weekday, perhaps Tuesdays, and one on Saturdays, each for two hours. Please let June know if you may be available to help with this activity.

Saints Alive

Homeless (but by no means hopeless)

Jenifer Watson recalls a period of housing insecurity from her early childhood



From my earliest memories my family had always lived in a house with a front lawn and a nice garden. Mum had been a florist, and was a keen gardener. Dad had a wool-buying business in a country town, and we lived in a rented house in that town.

When my brother Bob and I were still preschoolers, our parents took us to Melbourne to stay with our grandmothers. Mum and Bob went to Mum's mother in Elwood. I went to Dad's mother in Gardenvale. Dad stayed the night with us and went back home the next day, but visited us fairly often. Mum did not drive then. The distance between our grandmothers' homes was two miles. Mum sometimes walked that walk.

The first week of winter arrived with a real chill. The next was equally cold, and that was when Dad arrived to take us home. The others were already in the car, with Oscar, the black cocker spaniel, sitting in the back seat. I climbed in and sat next to Oscar, and could feel his wagging tail vibrating against the seat. He was pleased to see me! After a very long drive, during which the two children in the back seat had fallen asleep several times with Oscar watching over us, we finally reached our home town, but something was wrong. Dad turned into the wrong street, then around a corner and through a large gateway into a backyard and stopped in front of a dog kennel. A door opened and a light turned on. A man appeared and said, "Dora will show you to your rooms. Dinner's in ten minutes." Mum and Dad rushed around grabbing bags and dog and children. Dad quickly fastened Oscar's chain to the kennel; we had already stopped at a butcher's shop in a town we passed through, and fed him there.

We quickly entered a door under a sign that said *Deliveries*. We knew what the sign said because our father read it out as we entered. I said, "This isn't home. You've brought us to the wrong place. If you get back in the car I can show you the way home." Dad said, "Sorry, but this is a hotel where lots of people live. The house we used to live in has been sold. This

will have to be home for now."

We were met by Dora, who took us up the stairs to first floor bedrooms. Mum expressed some concern about my brother, who was only four years old, being at the far end of the passage, a long way from the rest of the family. Dora said he'd be safe because her oldest daughter was in the next room. We were to discover later that nobody was safe from Dora's teenage daughter, Angela. She had been seriously ill and had spent some time in hospital, where she had become familiar with hospital routines and prescription medication. Her parents seemed unaware of the potions and pills she had stashed away in her room. Dora also used this brief moment to remind Mum that Oscar's place in the back yard was strictly trial only. If anyone complained about him, he would have to go.

We washed off the dirt accumulated over many miles of country roads, and rushed downstairs to the dining room where we were shown to our table. It was in the days of six o'clock closing so the bar closed at 6 pm, but they could still serve alcohol with a meal. The dining room was full. After dinner we all went into a large adjoining room called *The Commercial Room*. I never discovered why, but found it confusing, as there was another hotel in the town called 'The Commercial'. I called it 'the lounge' because it reminded me of the lounge room in the house that used to be home. There was a large open fire in a big fireplace that you could sit around and keep warm. There was a radio playing, and also a piano. Sometimes a lady came and played the piano. At seven o'clock the news came on the radio, just like it used to at home. Seven o'clock was always our bedtime and that did not change.

As well as Angela, there was her sister Linda, aged about eight. My brother was four. I was six. There was a shy little girl called Nola in the class below me at school, whose mother worked at the hotel. We had been there about two weeks when a live-in worker called

Homeless—continued

Lois arrived. There were four small ground floor rooms that were sometimes used for live-in staff. The difference with Lois was that she had a baby. Everyone rallied around to help Lois with the baby. Even those of us at school would rush 'home' to give the baby its bottle. I know my mother became a devoted carer, and was still friends with Lois years later.

One afternoon, after school, Linda said to me "We're all going to play in Angela's room today." I followed her, and found Angela in her room waiting for us. Angela said: "We are playing hospitals. You are the patient. Get on the bed." I replied, "I'm not sick. I don't want to play." I don't know exactly what happened but I was pushed down and my eyes were filled with stinging drops and a medicine glass filled with some unidentified liquid was poured down my throat. I was choking and trying to yell. Eventually I must have succeeded, as I could hear banging on the door. Next thing I knew, my mother was there. She was very angry, but not with me.

Mum cleared up all the medications, and found other things that should not have been in Angela's room, including a knife. Mum impressed upon Angela and Linda that it was close to their parents' busiest time of the day, so they shouldn't expect them to come and rescue them from her fury. When Dad arrived home, Mum and Dad went into their room and shut the door. When they came out they announced some changes. My brother would no longer sleep at a distance from us. Dad would sleep there. I would sleep with Mum in the double room and my brother would sleep in Room 1, close by. My parents were worried that Dora might put us out on the street in retaliation for Mum's disciplining her daughter. In the end it was probably the regular income they were getting from us that secured our place there. It was, after all, only a small town, with five pubs in it. It must have required careful management to keep the hotel up to standard and employ the staff.

The hotel had a wide balcony looking out to the main street. About half the bedroom windows opened onto the balcony. My brother and I used to play there, and climb through the open windows and jump onto the beds below.

We were playing there one day, Mum was out on the balcony and I was near her when there was a commotion down the other end. My brother came running to us as Mum passed him and went to where a scantily dressed man was climbing through the window onto the balcony. My brother said to me quietly, "There was someone in the bed."

Mum was apologising profusely to the man coming through the window. The man said, "It's OK. I like kids. I've got two of them back home in the States." He was with one of the United States Forces. They'd arrived in our town during the night and found they could get accommodation and I think some were camping in the parks. We children became friends with him immediately, and we also made friends with another of the Americans.

I don't know how long they were in our town but we cried when they left. The long procession of motor bikes and jeeps and trucks and other vehicles lined up along the two main streets of the town for their big ceremonial departure from our little town. The previous evening the town had staged a concert. Some of the Americans got up and sang *Halls of Montezuma*, their marching song. I do not remember it but my father told me later. Many years later I heard my mother tell someone how the Americans lacked morals. They chatted up all the women, although they had wives and children back home.

We were still part of the community, but were acutely aware of the fact that we did not have a home. When we had a home, Mum was the wife, the child-carer, the cook, the housekeeper, the gardener, the member of local women's groups, and the person you went to when you were attacked by the rough kids down the street. Now her main job was to find a home for us. She was constantly walking around the three estate agents in the town. She knew it was unlikely she would find anything there. They mostly dealt with farming properties. She also scanned the advertisements in the local paper. She asked people she knew, sometimes they knew people who were moving, but their houses were being sold.

"We were still part of the community but were acutely aware of the fact that we did not have a home."

Saints Alive

Homeless—continued

Dad went to the Housing Commission. He came home and said, “They have twenty-eight applications. They are building six houses.” Mum said, “That’s ridiculous. If they actually know they need twenty-eight houses, why aren’t they building twenty-eight houses?”

On Sunday evening the hotel started serving a beautiful trifle with the evening meal. It was made with cake, fruit, fruit juice, jelly, custard and a dollop of cream on top. Strangely it was only on the menu for the staff tables and permanent guests. Although I wanted a home, I thought I would miss that trifle when we eventually had one. Then I remembered something. Vaguely, I remembered Mum making a trifle like this. Lois was serving the trifle. I asked her if my Mum had made it. Lois laughed, then said, “You recognised it! That’s why it’s only on staff and live-in tables. We don’t want to get into trouble with the union. Did your mum tell you she went to see a house today?”

A house! That meant we would have a proper home at last! I was so excited I nearly forgot to eat my trifle. When mum came into the dining room I asked her if it was true. She said, “Well, almost. A lady I met at the church this morning told me she knew about a farming family who bought a house in the town. They wanted to try living in town and driving back and forth to the work on the farm. They found they liked living on the farm better, so they are now moving back and want to rent out the town house. I walked past it today. It has nice, big, shady verandas on three sides.”

The next day Mum and Dad seemed to be very busy, running back and forth. The stock and station agent in town was furious. The vacancy at Number 9 was common knowledge around the district before he knew about it! Anyway, it would not be available for another month. Mum went into worry mode. She knew there were other people in the town who also needed a home. Dad appeared much calmer, but I think it was only a front. He went around the other pubs to pick up the gossip. He came back happier, not entirely

due to the drink. He was confident his record as a tenant was probably better than anyone he would be competing against

I don’t know how long it was from when we first heard about the house to when we started to move in, but everything seemed to have changed. Everyone was behaving differently. Even Oscar seemed more excited when we took him for walks. Our last home had been sold suddenly, without us being warned of the possibility, so this time Mum wanted a lease so we would know we had a home until it expired. The agent said, “A farming family owns this house. They tried living in town and it was definitely a failure for them. This house will always be their permanent rental investment. You don’t need a lease.”

Mum was waiting for me at the school gate on the Friday before we moved. She showed me the way to the new home. I remember her saying, “Not the first street, but the second cross street after you leave the school. Turn left there and keep walking until you come to our new home.” We now lived in a nice house, a real home with children we knew living in neighbouring houses. Mum and Dad seemed to have changed. They were excited, and yet, at times, worried. Mum was often sick. Mum and Dad told us they had a big secret, and would tell us what it was later on, if we were good.

Suddenly, things changed. The phone rang, and I could hear Mum asking the caller to ring when Dad was home. Apparently this was not acceptable to the caller; she started to argue, then the tears took over, and she was crying and hung up the phone. I ran to her, “What’s wrong, Mum?” In between the tears Mum said “You know Mr Thomas, the man who owns this house. Well, he died suddenly last night and his wife wants to move in here straight away. She wants us out by the end of the week.” I replied, “But we took a lot longer than that to move out of the hotel!” Mum said, “Yes, and ... where’s your brother? I haven’t seen him since lunchtime.” I replied, “He’s down the back yard at the

Homeless—continued

chookhouse telling the chooks to lay eggs.” Mum said, “Well, I guess the chooks are just one more thing we have to find a home for. Or we could eat them.” “No! No!” I screamed, “They’re our friends!”

Again Dad and Mum were flat out running around the town and making phone calls. As soon as Dad left each morning, Mrs Thomas would be at the front door, and Mum would be crying. Mum was also sick. One morning, when she was very sick, before Dad left for the store, he said to my brother and me, “We told you we had a secret. I think you should know it now. You are going to get a little baby brother or sister. Mum has been sick often, so you will have to help her. I think you are now old enough to answer the door. When you do, just open the big door. Leave the screen door locked and tell the person you will take a message, thank you.”

Dad phoned a solicitor in another town. Two days later we made the hour and a half drive to that town. We children went with our parents because they did not want to leave us on our own. Mrs Thomas and her two daughters had moved into the town and were living in two rooms at their friends’ home, just around the

corner from us. I was frightened they would go through our home while we were away, and maybe take Oscar and the chooks. Mum was more frightened of what could happen to us if we were there alone. The solicitor said we had to be given three months’ notice. Afterwards I could recite the section of the Act that protected us, and decided I was going to be a lawyer when I grew up.

Dad went on looking for a house. He came home one day and told us he’d found one with four peach trees and two apricot trees in the back yard. This sounded like a fruit eater’s paradise to us. It also had a massive date palm at the front.

Our little sister Isla was born on 24 September and two weeks later we moved into the very ancient fruit eater’s paradise.

It became our home.



A country hotel in the style of the one featured in this memoir of the 1940s

<https://google.com/travel/hotels>

Saints Alive

Becoming a child safe church

Laura Tsakmakis, Child Safe Officer

“...it should not be taken as a sign that the church does not trust the people who serve it.”

Back in April I wrote about the new requirements put in place by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne for lay people in certain positions within their parishes. These requirements can include police checks, Working With Children checks, and a commitment to the Code of Conduct for Child Safety (depending on the nature of the role).

I'm pleased to say that All Saints has responded well and we are very close to being fully compliant with the requirements (and will continue to work until we are fully compliant). Of course, this is just the start of an ongoing process. The Diocese currently requires police checks to be renewed every three years, and Working With Children checks have to be renewed as well. However, the biggest challenge was learning the processes around using the CrimCheck system for the police checks. Now that we have that sorted, it will be ready again in three years' time, or when any new or existing members of All Saints decide to take on a new role here.

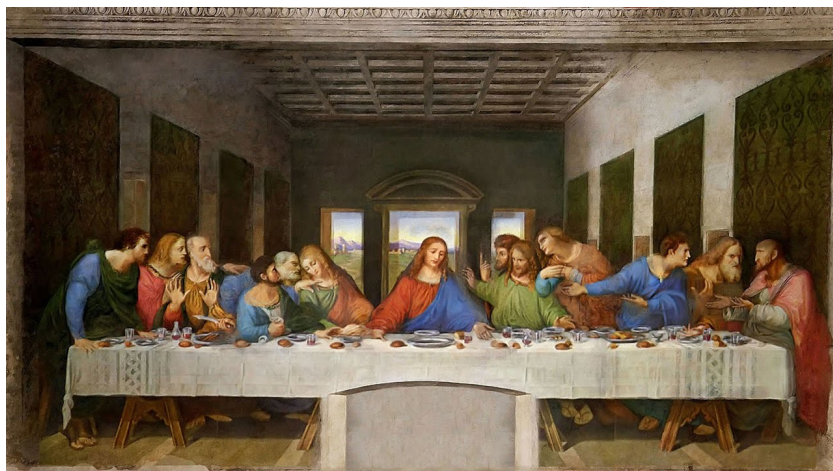
It has been a big cultural change to require background checks for people who have been

faithfully serving their church for many years, but it should not be taken as a sign that the church does not trust the people who serve it. It is simply a reflection of the new legal landscape following the revelations of child sexual abuse in many institutions across Victoria and Australia. We can show our commitment to protecting some of the most vulnerable people in the community by complying with the Code of Conduct and by meeting our obligations.

A reminder as the child safe officer, that if you have any queries or concerns about any issues related to clearances or child safety, you can always talk to me. I can also provide a copy of the Code of Conduct for information or for those who would like to sign a commitment to it. Later this year I will be completing training through the Diocese on family violence, and again you are welcome to talk to me about this.

Finally, a very big 'thank you' to everyone who has been involved in this process. I know it has taken a while and we have all been learning as we go, so I'm very grateful for all your patience and cooperation.

Reflections on a Maundy Thursday Vigil



We sit inside the darkened church
Beside sparse flickering candles.
We sit, echoes of Jesus' disciples
In the garden of Gethsemane.
We sit in near silence:
Inside, the sound of our human sighs;
Outside, muted growls of motorbikes,
screeches of trams.
We sit, beside our teacher, our guide –
And yet He remains alone;
We cannot meet Him in His hour of need.
We sit, and in this dark hour
I find my faith renewed.

Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, 1498
Convent of Santa Maria della Grazia, Milan
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_supper

– Arnaud Gallois, 18 April 2019

Art and Colonial Exchange: *The Mission* (1986)

Bruce Clezy

Throughout history, many sins have been committed in the name of the Father. Wars have been fought; people have died; and millions of children have suffered. Christianity is no exception here. Despite our longing to believe otherwise, if we look at history it's clear that great damage has been done to humanity in the name of Jesus Christ. In the eleventh century it was the crusades. In medieval Europe it was the anti-Jewish pogroms. Even in our own recent Australian history (and here I'm thinking of the Stolen Generations), the Church and church officials have often acted as arms of the state to achieve political and social goals that we now find morally abhorrent. But what about some of the other facets of our religious lives; the more benign aspects such the music, the art and the iconography? Are they so innocent and apolitical; or, like their institutional owners, do they too hide a darker side?

This question as to the role of art in colonialism, forms an interesting sub-theme to the film *The Mission* (1986). Directed by Roland Joffe (*The Killing Fields*) the film recounts historical events surrounding the Treaty of Madrid, in which Spain ceded part of Jesuit Paraguay to Portugal in 1750.

Having successfully established a sanctuary in the jungle, Father Gabriel (Jeremy Irons) is forced to defend his Order, as crucially the land is to be divided precisely on the basis of where the Jesuits have built their missions. Cardinal Altamirano, the Papal Emissary charged with formulating how the division is to take place, must choose between two evils. If he rules in favour of the Portuguese, the Indigenous people of the region, the Guarani, will become enslaved. If he rules in favour of the missions, however, the entire Jesuit Order will be condemned by the colonisers, thus fracturing the European church beyond repair.

As can be expected, Altamirano is under strong pressure to choose the first option, sacrificing the mission of San Carlo, which would have disastrous results for the original Indigenous people and the missionaries.

The film is absolutely stunning. Shot on location in Colombia, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil, with an all-star cast (Jeremy Irons, Robert de Niro and Liam Neeson, to name but a few), *The Mission* also has a haunting soundtrack written and produced by Ennio Morricone. What is interesting about the movie, however, is how the screenwriter Robert Bolt (*A Man for All Seasons*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Dr Zhivago*) and Joffe place religious art as being central to the (Christian) colonising project. Despite being initially resistant to the encroaches of the Jesuits, Father Gabriel 'seduces' the Indigenous inhabitants by the sound of his oboe. We see the Guarani subsequently poring over religious icons, singing beautiful arias, and even constructing exquisite violins once the mission has been established.

The film makes very clear that western art, religious art, lay at the heart of the 'civilising' mission and that, importantly, it did this not for the messages it contained but rather as artefacts, as commodities or as objects of cultural exchange. Art itself was being used as a powerful tool in the domination of Indigenous cultures.

In 1986, Joffe won the Palm D'Or for his film, and was hailed for his artistic and creative triumph. It is perhaps ironic then that despite being a wonderful treatise on the historical ravages of western art and colonialism, *The Mission* was itself a Hollywood blockbuster, which cost \$20 million to produce and brought the same forces to play in South America as those it was trying to elucidate. Indeed, it is hard not to wonder while watching the film, if the Indigenous actors featured in the movie were not simultaneously being oppressed by the film's technology or whether their stories were once again being appropriated for a voracious western audience.

Art will eat itself, yes, but we must not forget that art (and religion) can eat other cultures too.

FILM REVIEW



"With an orchestra the
Jesuits could have
subdued the whole
continent."

Cardinal Altamirano
(Ray McNally)



imdb.com

Robert De Niro plays a penitent former slave trader, transformed by Father Gabriel's mission, and ready to give his life to defend the people he has previously hunted and enslaved.

The *Church Times* lists 50 top religious films, of which this film is ranked No. 1.

Responding to climate change — together

Alma Ryrie-Jones

As you will be aware, we are in the process of preparing for a second social justice forum, in collaboration with friends at St Philip's Collingwood and St Mark's Fitzroy. This a difficult topic because it is so easy for us to be overwhelmed by what is by now an emergency, and to feel only helplessness in the face of the practical, technical and organisational challenges it poses. The problem is complex and global in scale, and it's tempting to think that because it can only be solved globally, we as individuals and as groups can do nothing. We hope that the speakers and information available at our forum later in the year will offer encouragement to practical action and positive engagement with the issues.

There is now no serious debate about the reality of climate change and the role human activity is playing in it. There was a sustained campaign by those with vested interests in industries involving the use of fossil fuels (a major contributor to damaging emissions) to cast doubt on the honesty of scientists and the reliability of science itself. This seems to be on the wane, partly because most industries and large businesses are showing that they don't have any doubts: they are now leading the way in wanting to address the consequences of climate change. You will notice that many industries and large businesses are pressing for a concerted government response in Australia and are calling for energy policy that will support investment in the expansion of alternative sources of energy, for example. Nor do young people believe that scientists have somehow been making things up: they have taken to the streets to call their elders to account about this because it affects them and their futures directly.

Scientists are reluctant to make specific predictions about the future because they proceed scientifically, and they base their views on facts – what can be demonstrated through evidence. But they are agreed, with virtual unanimity across the world, that emissions such as carbon dioxide, methane and other pollutants, caused by the burning of fossil fuels and other practices, are producing a 'greenhouse' effect: an unprecedented rise in

the temperature of the earth's atmosphere (also called global warming). The consequences are less about changes in day to day local weather and more to do with a longer term instability in the earth's capacity to support life. Scientists are also telling us that this change is occurring much faster than expected and appears to be accelerating.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is an international body that gathers all the available science, analyses it and uses it to advise the governments of the world on what is happening and what action needs to be taken. Its 2019 report continued to warn of the dangers of global warming. A rise of 1.5 degrees since the pre-industrial era doesn't sound like a lot, until you understand the risks it creates for all humanity and animal life, land, soil, vegetation and ocean life. We are at this point now, and the IPCC warns that the effects of an increase of 2 degrees would be very dire. This year's report focused closely on land use and agriculture as major sources of emissions, as well as fossil fuel use. As the IPCC has made clear, the consequences of climate change do not lie in some theoretical time in the future. They are with us now, and changes must be made now.

There is a moral dimension to this, in that on the whole the human contribution to climate change has come from the activities and land use of wealthy industrialised nations like ours, yet the impacts will be felt disproportionately by poorer people in countries with fewer resources to draw on. Those who will suffer most have contributed least to the problem.

This is deeply unjust, and as Christians we are called to be as active as we can to prevent further misuse of the land and the seas, to curb our rich and wasteful way of living at the expense of others, and to support every possible practical action to protect and preserve the earth from further harm.

Christians are not alone in wanting to act positively on this issue. The Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC) is a network of religious

Responding to climate change—continued

organisations representing many faiths who share a common commitment to taking action. It strongly urges action from Australian governments.

The ARRCC states:

We recognise that climate change is not only a scientific, environmental, economic and political issue – it is also a profoundly moral and spiritual one: the Earth's ecosystems are intrinsically precious and beautiful and deserve protection; the wellbeing of human beings is dependent on ecological flourishing; and it is the vulnerable people of the world who are most impacted by climate change.

We believe that as people dedicated to the common good, inspired by our beliefs and energized by our spirituality, people of all faiths can and should be at the forefront of creating a safe climate. While celebrating the uniqueness of our different traditions, we stand together in working for an ecologically and socially sustainable future.

On the website of the ARRCC, along with a great deal of useful information, you can read statements on justice and the environment by leaders of the major Christian communities – Anglican, Catholic and Orthodox, the Quakers and Salvation Army – and also statements by Hindu, Islamic, Jewish and Buddhist leaders (www.rrcc.org.au).

The symbol of the ARRCC is the Ark, an image of people on the earth, afloat in water. It conveys the simple truth that we all share one home, one planet, and we are all together in a single common predicament – one that can only be solved by being responsible to each other and for each other and acting now for our children and grandchildren and all who will come after them.

We hope you will participate in this year's forum and help promote it to others, that you will gain positive and useful information from it, and that you will become actively involved.

A prayer for climate justice, from Caritas Australia

God of Creation,

You created night and day.

You separated the sea from the sky.

You gave life to all living creatures and saw that it was good.

Help us to reconnect with the majesty of your creation.

God of Love,

Fill us with your love for all creation.

Empty us of apathy, selfishness and fear.

Inspire us to live simply and in harmony with creation.

Help us to be good stewards, caring for all creation with self-sacrificing and nurturing love.

God of Compassion,

Breathe into us solidarity with all who suffer now

and the future generations who will suffer

because of our environmental irresponsibility.

Help us to put people before profit and 'being' before 'having'.

God of Justice,

Empower us to work together as one global community,

To find creative and just solutions to protect those most

vulnerable in our world, and all of creation for future

generations.

Move us into action for climate justice and to restore your

creation.

Amen.



www.rrcc.org.au



All Saints Anglican Church
Northcote
Parish of South Darebin

12A High Street
NORTHCOTE 3070

LOCUM VICAR

Bishop Paul White
9484 1762

locumpaulwhite@iinet.net.au

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Send or hand to:

Alma Ryrie-Jones

Phone: 0409 339 046

Email: ryrie@ihug.com.au

NEXT ISSUE: December 2019



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.

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 159 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 Bible, 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

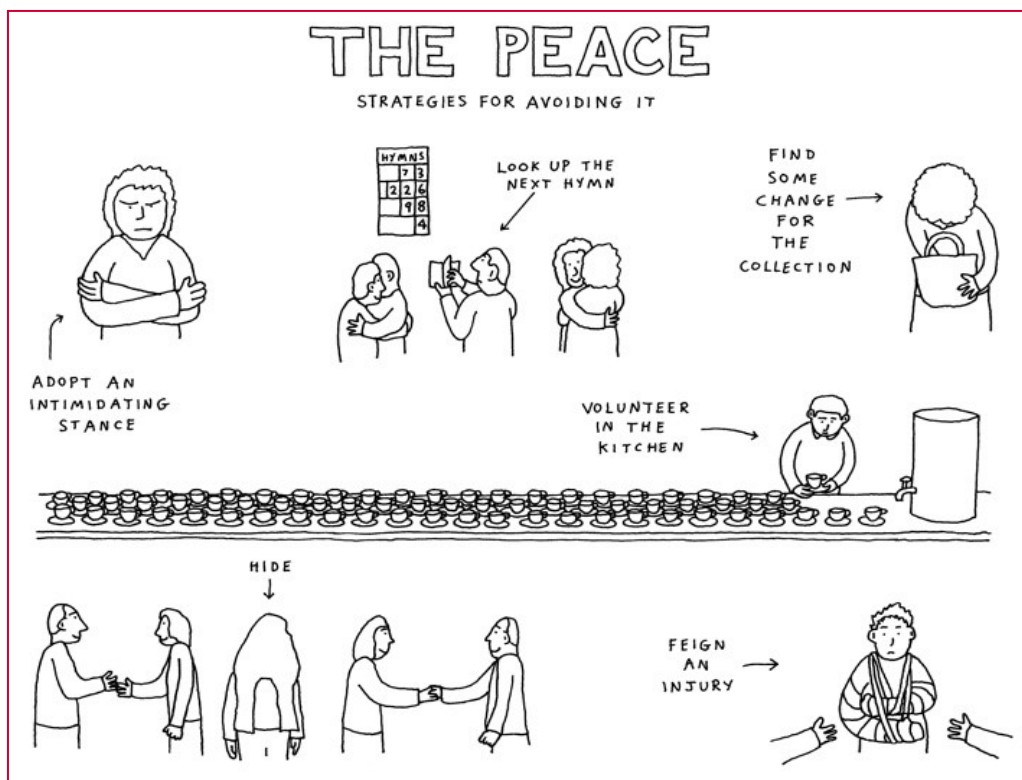
The defining spiritual features of our community are love, tolerance, warmth and inclusiveness. We are less concerned about numbers, money, appearances, power or status than about hospitality, participation, and the gifts each person brings, regardless of their age or abilities or sexual orientation 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



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