

On Advent

'A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes ... and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside, is not a bad picture of Advent.'

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

'Advent increases our hope, a hope which does not disappoint. The Lord never lets us down.'

— Pope Francis

'Into this world, this demented inn in which there is absolutely no room for him at all, Christ comes uninvited.'

—Thomas Merton

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Saints Alive

Newsletter of All Saints Anglican Church
Northcote
Parish of South Darebin

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"It has been a strange day."

Fr Barry Fernley

Many of us during lockdown have been watching a lot more TV, myself included. Some of my favourites have been the old British comedies which always give me a good laugh. On the old British program *Open All Hours* the shop owner Arkwright, played by Ronnie Barker, comes out of his shop, looks up at the sky and says, 'It has been a strange day'. As we reflect on the past year's events these words ring true although we would change the wording to 'year'! A number of people have asked for a 'reset button' on 2020 and one even said he would be asking for a refund on his 2020 diary! A sense of humour still prevails.

In the March 2020 Ad Clerum the Archbishop wrote that *effective from Monday 23 March 2020, regular public services and parish organised group activities are suspended within the Diocese of Melbourne*. The world as we know it was turned upside down as both the community and Church were affected by COVID-19.

We were in the middle of Lent with preparations being made for the Easter celebrations and all of a sudden we were no longer allowed to meet with our Church family. Our Lenten studies on the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer based on a book by Dr Andreas Loewe, Precentor of St Paul's Cathedral, came to an abrupt halt. In a Pastoral letter I sent out to all parishioners on Friday 20 March I said *We are living in a period where life has changed dramatically. Every day brings news of more changes as the impact of COVID-19 on our lives is realised. There is a lot of fear and anxiety in our communities and in our Church community. Some of us may even be experiencing that at a personal level and it can be hard to name the reality of that experience and sense of*

vulnerability ... this fear can be described as "the fear of the unknown" and whilst this feeling is essentially human I am encouraged by the message of the Scriptures where God says to us "Do not fear for I am with you".

During the lockdown I was sent this offering written by Laura Edwards which resonated with me.

If the mountain seems too big today
then climb a hill instead;
If morning brings you sadness
it is okay to stay in bed.

If the day ahead feels heavy
and your plans feel like a curse,
There's no shame in rearranging,
don't make yourself feel worse.

If a shower stings like needles
and a bath feels like you'll drown;
If you haven't washed your hair for days,
don't throw away your crown!

A day is not a lifetime.
A rest is not defeat.
Don't think of it as failure,
Just a quiet, kind retreat.

It's okay to take a moment
From an anxious, fractured mind.
The world will not stop turning
While you get realigned!

The mountain will still be there
When you want to try again
You can climb it in your own time,
Just love yourself till then!

New and creative ways had to be developed to maintain our faith community bonds and strengthen our own personal faith journey. The Archbishop sent out a weekly YouTube message. A number of the larger parishes decided to stream services online that were

*“ Knowing God’s
presence is with us
even to the end of all
ages—in Christ true
freedom is ours.”*

It has been a strange day — continued from page 1

available for all and in a variety of worship styles. As I am not computer or technology proficient I sent out a weekly Pastoral letter that was distributed to parishioners, either by email or a hardcopy delivered to those without computer access, with a reflection on the readings for each Sunday. I also included links to the Diocesan updates, the Archbishop’s YouTube message, Diocesan COVID-19 updates, the online Melbourne Anglican, and Prayer Diary along with other offerings that came across my desk that I thought may be of interest. I also phoned parishioners on a regular basis during the past months. At All Saints, each member of the parish council took upon themselves the responsibility to maintain contact with parishioners by phone and email. Ken put together a modified ‘pew sheet’ with the readings and prayers of the day along with a hymn from YouTube for each Sunday that we could use for our personal worship. During the lockdown period Zoom meetings became the norm and our Parish Council continued to meet this way throughout the past months. We also enjoyed Morning Tea meetings on a number of Sundays where we could gather around our computers with a cup of tea/coffee and chat – it was great to see many familiar faces and enjoy good conversations. It has been a long time coming but we are all finally seeing light at the end of the tunnel – no active cases, no deaths, and no hospitalisations. We are now able to meet together, have friends and family to our homes and church services can recommence, although with some sensible restrictions such as social distancing, handwashing, and masks. Our freedom has returned in response to our respecting the restrictions imposed upon us all.

It could be said that this pandemic and its consequences will change many things in the way of life for many people throughout the whole world for many years ahead. Whilst these changes in living are part of the unknown, the purpose of this article is to answer what is perhaps one of the vital questions which will be asked for some time – what lessons can we learn from this experience to use in our normal life as Christians in this 21st century? Everyone will have different answers to this question but in these thoughts only three will be explored and this article is just the beginning of the conversation.

One of the aspects of life which has been highlighted over the past months is the fact that in Victoria there were 819 deaths linked to COVID-19 and this reminds everyone that death is a part of life. St Benedict in his Rule says that his monks *should always keep death before your eyes*. This ought to affect the way that we look at life and the decisions we make, not just for ourselves but for others. It should also remind us that we are not the centre of the world – it is God’s world and as God’s people we must always seek to value all that is good in our lives as well as in the lives of other people.

It was sad that so many of the people who died were elderly and families were not allowed to be present when their loved one died and in some cases could not attend the funeral in person because of the restrictions in place at the time. I was unable to attend the funeral of a family member in NSW but was able to watch the service on Facebook - it was definitely a poor substitute. The number of deaths was talked about daily, yet in normal times people die every day and unless it affects us personally we take no notice.

COVID-19 has also allowed people to think about *What are the important things in my life that so often we take for granted?* Despite restrictions, or possibly because of them, we have discovered many ways of using our time, whether it be exercise, walking and using various forms of communication in our digital age. I am a person who collects books and could well be called a bibliophile (a lover of books). Libraries and booksellers are to me almost like heaven and we have many bookcases at home. In this digital age both e-books and audio books are delightful ways of spending time with ideas and cultivating the imagination. I have been able to spend time in both prayer and meditation as well as reading and study particularly in the area of interpreting the message of the Bible.

In the various neighbourhoods in which we live many people showed concern and care for their families, neighbours, and friends. Families spent time together and did things such as exercising, playing games, and even eating together which in normal times didn’t happen, with people rushing off in different directions for different activities. It has been important to have someone to talk to about our feelings and to simply listen – despite our own failings God’s love does not let us go.

It has been a strange day — continued from page 2

Unfortunately for some people lockdown led to an escalation of family violence and home was not a place of safety. Organisations were inundated with cries for help from those seeking shelter – a sad reflection of the society that is ours today. Loneliness, boredom, and anxiety were present in many and sometimes led to extreme behaviours and even to suicide in some instances.

Why not pause for a moment and perhaps after a time of reflection, write down answers to the questions *How does death affect the way I live?* and *What are the important things in my life?*

The third thing which is a lesson for us all is the importance of community. For us as Christians *community* means belonging to the Church as a community of faith as the people of God. Physically gathering with people in Church each Sunday was something that many people tell me that they looked forward to and have missed over the past months. Zoom meetings are OK, and we can see each other's faces, but they can be tiring especially if there are several meetings on the same day. We miss the physical presence of the other person, the sense of touch, the body gestures as we talk.

I have recounted this story before but I think it is appropriate. Some years ago, I was speaking with a person who had migrated to Australia from South Africa and I asked him 'What was your first impression of Australia on arrival?' His answer was simple yet profound – 'the smell of freedom'. I'd never thought of that before and freedom is something which in Australia we take for granted. As Christians, through the love and mercy of God, all of us can know freedom. The freedom to be human, freedom to travel, freedom to worship, freedom to forgive self and others – these freedoms come from a faith in God which has sustained us during this restrictive process of lockdown. Knowing God's presence and grace is with us even to the end of all ages – in Christ true freedom is ours.

May God bless you all.

Fr Barry

Fr Barry has been talking recently about the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, the nineteenth century English Catholic priest whose poems were so unconventional that no one would publish them. A convert from Anglicanism, he became a Jesuit priest. His poems express an intense appreciation of the world and of God's creative presence in it. The poems were published long after his death by his friend, Robert Graves.

'Pied Beauty' is from 1877.
Gerard Manley Hopkins: Poems and Prose
(Penguin Classics, 1985)

Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

Saints Alive

Glory restored

Alma Ryrie-Jones

“...most impressive evidence of the love and commitment June and others bring to our church and our community life”

During our months of suspended services, our faithful Property and Grounds group has achieved wonders for All Saints, inside the church and out, led by June McKay, supported by Arnaud Gallois and Fr Ken Cahill, and drawing on the knowledge and practical problem-solving of our technical advisor, Rod Junior. Using funds provided by the Louise Crockett legacy, and an earlier donation in memory of Robert Black, the work has been completed within COVID safe guidelines, and the result is magnificent.

The church interior

After decades of gradually worsening wall and timber surfaces, recent repairs to roof drainage allowed the walls to dry out, ready to be restored. The Chancel and Nave walls have been re-rendered and painted, a crumbling corbel was restored, and the framing of the windows is now fresh and clean. The west wall, facing High Street, was excluded from the project because of the extensive re-rendering it would require and the difficulty of access around the pipe organ in the loft, but this has had little impact on the overall effect. The height of the ceilings was a major challenge and complex scaffolding was required throughout the painting and rendering project.

Other improvements in the church

A number of opportunistic improvements were also undertaken. This included using the scaffolding to access the lights and remove, clean and upgrade the light globes throughout. Necessary repair was carried out on a gas heater; carpet was provided at the back of the altar; some untreated sections of the floor were prepared for sanding and re-varnishing, the PA system was rewired. In addition, a small section of slate on the church roof was replaced, to ensure that no leakage could compromise the wall restoration.

Access for everyone

With our handyman Geoff Masters, Rod has redesigned the floor in the entry, to provide a means for ramped access from one of the porch doors. This will make wheelchair access possible, while retaining the usual safe access

from the other door. We have long wanted to achieve this, to ensure that the church is a fully inclusive place and welcoming to all.

The meeting room building

In preparation for the return of Brotherhood staff and for improved post-lockdown hygiene for all, hot water has been installed in both toilets. On the western side, facing High Street, the window sills have been repaired and protective panels fitted to the base of the toilet and kitchen doors. This side has been painted a crisp grey, which fits in very well with the corporate colours of the BSL store. The work was initiated by June and carried out at no cost to the church, with much-appreciated help from Željko Jurišić and Brad Miles.

The garden

A purpose-designed chain link border fence has been installed to demarcate the Memorial Garden from other parts of the garden and protect it from being walked on. Following sewer repair earlier in the year, the path to the kitchen was re-concreted, and June has replanted the garden beds. Other garden maintenance work has been carried out by Arnaud, with help from Željko.

Much to celebrate, more to be done

There is more to be done, especially in providing long-term protection of the condition of the church, such as repairing and sealing mortar around the church windows. It may be necessary to reconfigure the grounds by relocating the garden shed or putting some new fencing in place, to accommodate different operational arrangements for the store. The noticeboard requires high-grade glass, and so on. Other repairs are in progress.

But the completion of this major project has given us the most impressive evidence of the love and commitment June and others bring to our church and our community life together. The Vestry will consider an appropriate way to acknowledge the legacy of Louise Crockett, which made this work possible. But we will all also need to show, in our individual ways, our appreciation to all

Glory restored—continued from page 4

involved. We have all missed our church, but what an unlooked-for joy it is to find it cared for, improved and refreshed on our return!



These familiar peeling wall surfaces are a thing of the past.



Right: An engineer and a dynamo—Rod and June confer on improvements to the freshly painted Meeting Room and consider garden work in progress.



Poetry unlocked

The Rev'd Philippa was able to turn her COVID-19 exercise into highly productive thinking. Here she writes about the experience of going walking, in two poems in *terza rima*, a very difficult Italian form in tercets (three lines to a stanza) with an intricate rhyming scheme and lines of 11 syllables, generally in the rhythm of iambic pentameter. First used by Dante, many English poets have used the form. Shelley employed it in 'Ode to the West Wind'.

Two in *Terza Rima*

I

Dressed warmly for cool September afternoon,
venturing to walk, but feeling invader,
eager, believing free of pain, none too soon.

Parklands beckon, long unseen, true persuaders,
convinced though winter lost, spring can be unmasked,
summer fires threaten, defying crusaders'

ardent plea, act against global warming, tasked
to multiply trees near brown creek, swift flowing.
Late wattles, golden balls, looking to be asked

if dying time is blest, mother ducks out-throwing
hardy pond explorers under clumpy reeds,
and bark alive with oozing life, leaves blowing.

Daisies in grass, almost hidden among weeds,
letting drop for sprouting, multiples of seeds.

II

New layers, sheaths of bark discarded, falling
unnoticed on well trodden path, life ignored
strong eucalypt reaching ever higher, calling

soundlessly, leaves softly waving, rich life stored
branching out, ebullient, feeling coursed lactation
nourishing sap, into furthest twig outpoured.

Beneath layers of bark revealed, sensation
of minuscule creatures at work with vision
hardly pausing, scrambling, gathering with elation

gum on legs and backs of beetles, no petition
made to cease from labour, siesta, sabbath rest,
small grubs and ants employ distinct cognition

press on, no delay, nor would one dare suggest,
for in winter's cold less energy to invest.

—Philippa Wetherell



Darebin Parklands https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darebin_Creek

Poetry unlocked — continued

River poems, Barmah ForestOn the river:

I float
Under blue sky:
Feels like flying.

Long hot day:

Floating down
Mighty Murray
We swim,
We paddle,
And swim,
And paddle,
And swim.
How will we sleep in the heat?

Before a storm:

Tired from big day,
I do yoga and then
swim with the
Cockatoo Crew.
We play cards:
I am “voted”
vice-president,
then president:
It is the natural
order of things.
But the president doesn’t know how to sleep
in the heat:
Tent fly on or off?
Under tarp or not?
He lies down and admires stars,
Dozes,
Wakes cold,
Layers up.
Then he sees
a sunrise
like no other:
Ethereal trees over majestic Murray,
And above?
Billowing clouds blood red:
Shepherd’s warning.

River runs:

Wind blows
Thunder rumbles
Birds call
Reeds stand sentinel still.
I breathe in,
And out.

Treasure:

Paddle on the water
Admire birds
Sit by river
Dinner by Trangia-light:
These things
I have longed
to do.

Silent float:

facing skyward.
Clouds and treetops drift by:
Celestial spirits.

– Arnaud Gallois



Murray Barmah sunrise Photo by Jaz Uschi

Heart for Haiti

*Megan Lewis
St James, Thornbury*

In 1984 I travelled to Haiti, in the West Indies, for the first time. There I met Johan Smoorenburg, a young Dutch missionary who had established a sponsored foundation called Heart for Haiti, to provide support, education and housing for children and the aged in the capital, Port-au-Prince. I have kept in touch with this project over the years as its work has grown and diversified, and the people of St James have supported Johan's work in times of crisis – especially during the earthquake recovery period in 2010. The foundation that supports Johan's work is based in the Netherlands.

Haiti in the time of COVID 19

On 2 June 2020, Haiti's official figures reported 2,226 infections of COVID-19. There were 102 new cases in 24 hours and a total of 45 deaths. This does not correspond to reality and according to specialists, these figures could easily be multiplied by ten. The current officially reported figure for Haiti is 9,224 cases and 232 deaths but these figures are low compared with estimates by those on the ground. The disease is wreaking havoc there as the social/medical systems are already too stretched to meet the needs of Haiti's citizens.

Getting accurate information is very difficult, and there is evidence of obfuscation and denial of facts much as there was during the dark days of the AIDS epidemic. Some believe that this is a result of the country's inability to mount an efficient testing program and a general unwillingness by government to reveal the truth.

Johan Smoorenburg has written, earlier in the year, in these terms (in translation):

Haiti is totally unprepared for this pandemic, with 200 hospital beds for the entire country, no respirators, no protective clothing. The few emergency facilities that were available were set on fire by the people there, because they do not tolerate coronavirus patients in their environment. Likely, there are also thousands of people with symptoms who do not report for fear of being killed. The virus does not kill them, but their fellow humans do, for fear of the virus.

The government closed schools until at least August, meaning that this school year is a lost year for most students. Churches were also closed and pastors who do not adhere to this are arrested. In the almost 39 years that we have worked here, we have experienced a lot. A revolution, four coups, uprisings, civil war, devastating cyclones and the earthquake that resulted in 250,000 dead. However, this period may be the biggest challenge of our lives. With my 76 years of age and a heart condition, I'm in the danger zone, so I have to be doubly careful, as much as possible.

We are very worried. We do what we can to protect the approximately 250 children, teens and staff who live or work with us. All children remain in the village and the staff have also agreed to stay. The children's village has been completely closed off since the beginning of March. We call the children's village 'The Ark of Pappi Jean'. No one goes out or in. If a person goes out, that person may not come back. If, out of necessity, the village has to be left, the driver and our manager go together; they know exactly what to do. When they return, the car is disinfected as much as possible and they immediately wash their clothes and disinfect themselves. We have food but need to buy it in a month at a time, as we expect to be indoors for months. We pray every day that God will protect us.

The government continues to state that only a small number of people are infected but this is certainly not the case. Dozens of sick people were quarantined but they ran away. They were let down by the nursing staff there: they had no money, no food, and had to take care of themselves. These people are walking quietly among the population.



Heart for Haiti — continued from page 8

There is a lot of ignorance. If people have symptoms and seek help, they are often not helped. They cannot do tests in the hospital, so people are sent away. Nursing staff and doctors no longer come to work because there is no personal protective equipment. There is one laboratory in Port-au-Prince that is allowed to do the tests and it takes four days to get results so people don't wait. In fact, they hide, for fear of being stoned.

Besides the great danger of COVID-19, there is another danger that will also claim many lives and that is hunger. The disease is causing famine in Haiti. We see it happening around us. If you look not just at the children's village, but at the whole country (or even just the city of Port-au-Prince), sometimes you lose heart. I believe that you cannot do everything but must focus on what you can do: you are called for the works 'which God has prepared for you in advance' (Ephesians 2:10). As a foundation that runs on volunteers, we cannot serve all of Port-au-Prince. But when you see hunger happening in the whole country, can you look the other way? We can't do that either. Therefore, we now need a food campaign. To help where we can. As long as we can.

Warm greetings and blessings,
Johan Smoorenburg

From our safe country where we have many luxuries including good health care, please pray for Johan's mission and the people of Haiti. More information about Heart for Haiti can be found at:

www.hartvoorhaiti.nl
www.facebook.com/hartvoorhaiti



Johann is shown on the left, social distancing during a planning meeting

October 29, 2020

'US immigration authorities have radically stepped up deportation flights to Haiti in the weeks before the election, raising concerns over migrants' safety on their return home and the risks of spreading coronavirus in the impoverished Caribbean state.'

The Guardian

On Americana: *Gran Torino* (2008)

“The Lutherans

brought us over. You
can blame them.”

—Sue Lor,

Gran Torino

Film review by Bruce Clezy

There is a lot of religion in *Gran Torino*. The film opens with one Catholic funeral and ends with another. Along the way we see a Buddhist christening, the act of confession, and a young Roman Catholic priest who forms one of the central characters of the film. Yet while the movie contains a lot of religious images and iconography, I don't think it is a particularly spiritual work. It is however a masterful examination of American culture, multiculturalism and an extraordinary attempt to reconcile the 'old' with the 'new'.

Walt Kowalski (Clint Eastwood) is a Polish, ex-factory worker and Korean war veteran. He is also racist, sexist and a bigot. Walt struggles to accept what the country he fought so hard for, has become. His grandchildren are selfish, greedy and disrespectful; the local priest is a fool; and to make matters worse his suburb has been overrun with Asian immigrants – the very people Walt fought during the war. As the film evolves, however, Walt learns that these immigrants are not in fact Koreans, but Hmong – the nationless hill tribes of Northern Vietnam and Laos, who fought with American troops during the Vietnam War.

Much of the movie focuses on this clash of cultures, and Walt's attempt to learn the strange ways of this particular community.

Although extremely resistant, Walt befriends two of his young neighbours Sue (Ahney

Her) and Thao (Bee Vang) who act as cultural informants, opening up their lives to the cranky old man who lives next door. Walt, and we as viewers, learn why you should never touch a Hmong person on the head and why the community places strange gifts on Walt's door. Walt also learns how delicious Hmong food really is. Furthermore, the cultural exchange is not one way. In an hysterical scene at the local Barber's shop, Walt teaches the young Thao how white men talk to each other, trading sharp insults as a sign of affection. Needless to say, the “lesson” does not go exactly according to plan. When Thao tries to recite the exact same greetings as Walt, his position as a young Asian-American man means that the words take on new meanings, quite distinct from what they mean when Walt says them. Meaning is shown to be an effect of age, of skin colour, of religion and of history.

Gran Torino is one of my favourite movies, and it is deeply rewarding to watch it once again during these 'Trumpian' times. The movie makes explicit and even explains much of the polarisation we see going on in America today: between the right and left, black and white, old and young, and even between religions. Indeed, the film even points to a solution to these clashes of cultures. It is a solution with which you might not agree; nevertheless the film is still well worth a good look.

Happy Christmas, dear friends!



Despite the message of the film, in Trumpian times images of Clint Eastwood as Walt have been widely circulated as a representation of an angry white man righteously defending his values and his country. *Gran Torino* is currently streaming on STAN

On the horizon

Laura Tsakmakis

Lay Representative to Melbourne Diocesan Synod

In 2019, the Melbourne Synod resolved to note a discussion paper concerning legislation relating to the appointment of clergy and the Diocesan Tribunal. The legislation being reviewed is focusing on the *Appointments Act 1971* and the *Diocesan Tribunal Act 1963*. The review is part of an ongoing review of all Diocesan legislation that commenced about 10 years ago and has included the *Parish Governance Act 2013* and the *Cathedral Act 2016*.

A consultation paper on the proposed legislation was released in August 2020 and is available on the website of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne at Governance/Clergy Legislation Review. Synod members were invited to register for discussion groups in August and September and to provide written submissions. Submissions have now closed.

General topics being covered by the review include:

- Licensing, age and retirement of clergy
- Employment status and remuneration
- Constitution of, and delays in the work of, the parish nominations committee (a suggested change in name from 'incumbency committee')
- Confirming or extending the tenure of a vicar

- Breakdown in pastoral relations
- Diocesan Tribunal.

Summary papers on these topics are also available on the diocesan website.

One of the specific proposed changes to the current legislation is the introduction of 'intentional interim vicars' which would be appointed in circumstances where it may be beneficial to have a space between one vicar and the next; for example, if the parish is discerning its future. An intentional interim vicar would be more active than a traditional locum vicar, who is expected to 'hold the fort' and not make any changes in a parish.

Another suggested change is the introduction of 'part-time' incumbents (that is, not paid a full stipend). Parishes who cannot pay a full stipend are currently limited to having a Priest-in-Charge. This proposal, if accepted, would extend the benefits of an incumbency to all parishes, not just those who can still afford a full-time priest. Benefits of incumbency may include greater certainty for the parish as an incumbent is appointed for longer than a Priest-in-Charge.

It is expected that progress on the project will be reported to Synod in 2021.



Here's what our Brotherhood store donations should look like...



Image: ppg.com

We don't know yet when our Store will be ready to open for business, but we know that a flow of donations will be needed. These will have to be delivered and handled within COVID-safe guidelines and procedures to protect Store workers and customers. The best practice is to pack any goods you intend to donate, ahead of time, and store them in boxes before delivery. The virus cannot survive for a long time without human or animal contact, and packing them will ensure that the contents are safe. When boxed donations are received, workers will need to store them for a further time, to ensure their safety. If you have any goods ready to give, and the space to store them, please store them boxed and perhaps list the contents for ease of processing.



Brotherhood of St Laurence
Community Stores

Saints Alive

The bodies of Christ

Fr Ken Cahill

During the last few weeks of the lockdown I was very keen to explore which movies were coming and saw the movie called *Corpus Christi*. This is a Polish movie with English subtitles. Normally that could shift it down my list of preferences, not having any idea of the Polish language.

The movie starts in a juvenile detention centre, from which Daniel is about to be released. Daniel has been involved in assisting the centre's priest, Father Tomasz, at the Mass. They have spoken previously about Daniel's wish to study for the priesthood but Fr Tomasz advises that no seminary would take someone with Daniel's criminal conviction.

On the eve of Daniel's departure Fr Tomasz preaches a sermon that clearly impresses itself on him. He is given a train ticket to a small town where there is a sawmill that employs juvenile offenders. It appears that the owner, who is the influential mayor of the town, employs juveniles whose wages are much lower than adults, exploiting the cheapness of their labour to make the sawmill more profitable for himself.

In the brief period before he catches the train, Daniel engages in all available vices. This was confronting and at one level I could not help but be a little disappointed at Daniel's behaviour. I began to wonder if he had been totally discouraged at the news that he would never be accepted into a seminary. Perhaps he had given up all hope.

Reaching the outskirts of the town, he is drawn to the church by the summoning of the bell. He arrives at the end of the Mass where he meets a young woman who teases him about being "sentenced" to the sawmill. He denies this and produces a clerical shirt and dog-collar from his bag, claiming to be an itinerant priest.

When the town's old priest suffers an accident, Daniel is induced to conduct the Mass, just for that day until the priest recovers. But events unfold differently.

There builds a sense that this flawed young man may still be someone special, an emissary sent to the people for this time. The town has suffered a terrible trauma from a recent accident, and their grief continues without any sense of amelioration. There has been blame, ostracism and victimisation, one person having her house disfigured by daubing. There appears to be the turning of a blind eye to the exploitation of young workers in the sawmill. Daniel sees an opportunity to help people with their grief and lack of forgiveness.

The film is imbued with a Catholic perspective, from its title, to the way the story revolves around the coming of a saviour, to the sense that Daniel is also very clearly a sinner. His body is itself daubed and inked by the violence of his early life, with scars he hides. As a priest, he must efface that body, but his whole life has been spent defending it against aggression.

I was left with a sense of how God always hears the cries of his people, and continues to raise up men and women, people with feet of clay, who are called to minister to the needs of his people.



Right

Bartosz Bielenia as Daniel in *Corpus Christi* (*Boże Ciało*), a 2019 film directed by Jan Komasa and written by Mateusz Pacewicz. The film premiered at 2019 Venice Film Festival and shown at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival. Image: en.wikipedia.org

Louise Crockett bequest

Those of us who knew her were saddened to learn of the death of Louise Crockett, late last year. Louise was a parishioner in the 1990s.

We were recently informed that Louise made provision in her Will for a bequest of nearly \$72,000 to the priest at All Saints, to be used for the church. Bp Paul White, who was our locum vicar at the time, has arranged that the funds be made available to us for the purpose of building maintenance and improvement.

Louise was well educated, athletically accomplished, married and the mother of two children. Following the development of serious depression she underwent a number of treatments, with little success, in a Tasmanian hospital. She was brought to a major Melbourne hospital for neurosurgery, then returned to Launceston, where she collapsed from post-surgical infection. In hospital in Tasmania, her condition was not properly investigated and was misdiagnosed as psychiatric in nature. As a result she suffered irreversible brain damage. This left her unable to care for her children or relate to her family, unable to hold memories, physically disabled, and with permanent intermittent pain. She lived with the tragedy of being able to remember the past, and appreciate what she had lost, but was unable to recall recent events,

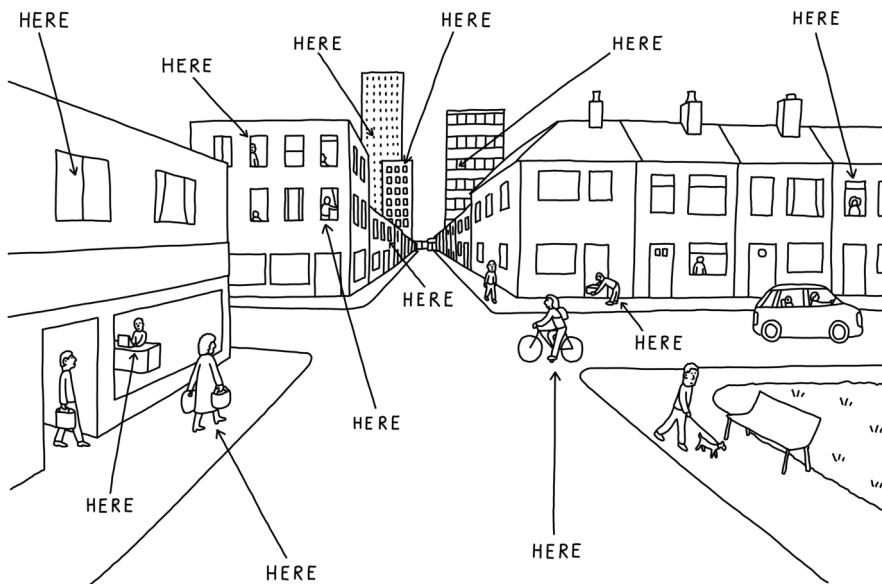
As an All Saints parishioner she connected with our priest and people, looked forward to church services, formed friendships with some of us, and enjoyed a regular cigarette just outside the meeting room door, where Betty always had a chair ready for her. She particularly appreciated the sermons of our Vicar at that time, Fr Stuart Gardiner.

In 2002, after a long and complex legal process, Louise successfully sued two public hospitals and was awarded a large sum in damages. This provided for her future care, housing security and medical expenses.

For us, her unexpected gift could not have come at a better time, and Vestry members have reflected on what a hopeful and encouraging sign it is for us. In due course we hope to honour Louise's memory and acknowledge her generosity.



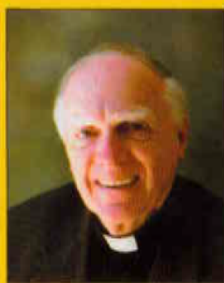
WHERE THE CHURCH IS



Cartoon by Dave Walker
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Saints Alive

The wisdom of Harlin Butterley



At All Saints we have been well served by Locum priests over the years. Many will recall a period in the care of the Very Reverend Harlin Butterley, a distinguished cleric who spent some time as our locum before the appointment of Fr Andrew. He had been a military chaplain and was Dean of Hobart during the 1970s. He was a delightfully gentle and positive man and an insightful preacher. In retirement he wrote a number of books. Here are two extracts from *Murder in the Pulpit and Other Encouraging Essays* (Timothy J Scollary, publisher).

Advent—Sleepers awake

I had lunch with a friend a few days ago and in the course of the meal he told me some of the things in the past year that had caused him stress and concern. A daughter had married, and another didn't get married though she wanted to; his business went into sudden decline and the bank became difficult. He weathered the storm and adopted positive thinking, but it all seemed too much for his wife who was finding sleep difficult, and was beginning to watch TV at two in the morning! So we discussed sleep, its blessings and its difficulties.

I am reconciled to the fact that those of mature age sleep less. My sundry spare parts, on my hip and my knee, have meant less arthritic pain, but other joints tend to ache spasmodically through the night, and add more complications to my troubled slumbers.

How much our lives revolve around sleep, or the lack of it. My daughter rings, exhausted because the baby was awake half the night with an infected ear. My son rings and sounds exhausted because he is on night duty at the ambulance station, and finds it difficult to catch up on sleep during the day.

I heard an opera singer say that Friday night audiences are often difficult because after an exhausting week of work some find it impossible to stay awake, and go to sleep during the performance.

Sleep—it is now a major industry. Universities run sleep clinics, exploring the problems of

those who sleep too little or too much. Gadgets are sold to overcome the blight of snoring, and Ear, Nose and Throat specialists grow rich by operating to quieten the nocturnal grunts and groans of their patients. Pharmacists dispense millions of sleeping pills while health shops proclaim the evils of such pills and the value of natural remedies.

Sleep is also an essential part of language. We sleep like logs; we sleep like the dead; we sleep with one eye open; we take forty winks; we sleep, perchance to dream. It is a picture of peace, of death, of restoration, a time of quiet, a time for nightmares. And, very recently, power naps are definitely in vogue.

The first recorded operation is in Genesis, when Adam was anaesthetised through deep sleep and from his rib was created Eve. Those who died were said to be asleep in the Lord, while God himself was seen as the One who neither slumbered nor slept.

Last week's Gospel told the story of the five foolish maidens who slept as the bridegroom arrived, while the Garden of Gethsemane gives the picture of apostles who were heavy with sleep when their Lord needed them most. And we are reminded in the Epistle, of the Advent message, 'Let us not fall asleep, but let us keep awake, for we are children of the light.'

Strangely, my mind goes back to elocution classes in form one at Sydney Grammar. A rather exotic teacher made us all recite poetry in unison, and his favourite was from Coleridge. 'O sleep it is a blessed thing, beloved from pole to pole. To Mary Queen the praise be given! She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, that slid into my soul.'

It was not until much later that I understood its significance and experienced the reality of that gentle sleep.

How do you end your day? Tonight, try praying: 'Save us, Lord, waking, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.'

The wisdom of Harlin Butterley—continued from page 14

Christmas— more than just wishful thinking

...

A few years ago a Milk company conducted a competition termed a 'Christmas Wishathon'. It was cashing in on the Christmas nostalgia, wishing for the Christmas of our youth, wishing for joyful times long gone. Or maybe, wishing for bigger gifts, more money and greater festivity.

Wishing—we all indulge ourselves. I'm almost ashamed to admit that my favourite TV series have always been those with good witches who grant wishes by the twitch of a nose, and those with genies to whom one's wish is their command. But Christmas, is it really a time for wishing?

It is, I believe, more a time to see wishes realised. The people who sat in darkness, how they must have wished! If only their God could do something, rescue them, reveal Himself, prove Himself superior to the multitude of heathen deities. In fact, the Old Testament is a veritable wishing well with hopes and prayers and "if only's"...

In three days we will hear those familiar readings and those carols with their stress on 'tidings of great joy'. And what are those tidings? That in Christ wishes were to be realised. The New Testament, in contrast to the Old, is no record of wishful thinking, but rather it is faith asserting "I know"; and we can see, over the Manger, wishes pricked like bubbles and replaced by reality. So at Christmas "I wish" becomes "I believe".

Sleepers awake. In the great 1566 painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Census at Bethlehem*, 'Bethlehem' is shown as a busy Flemish town, with everyone going about their work or play. In the foreground a man leads a woman riding on a donkey, towards an overcrowded inn. Too taken up with other things, everyone's back is turned, and no one even notices them arrive—not even the chickens. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-census-at-bethlehem>





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1860 — 2020

*We acknowledge the
Wurundjeri people as the
traditional owners of the land
on which our church stands,
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

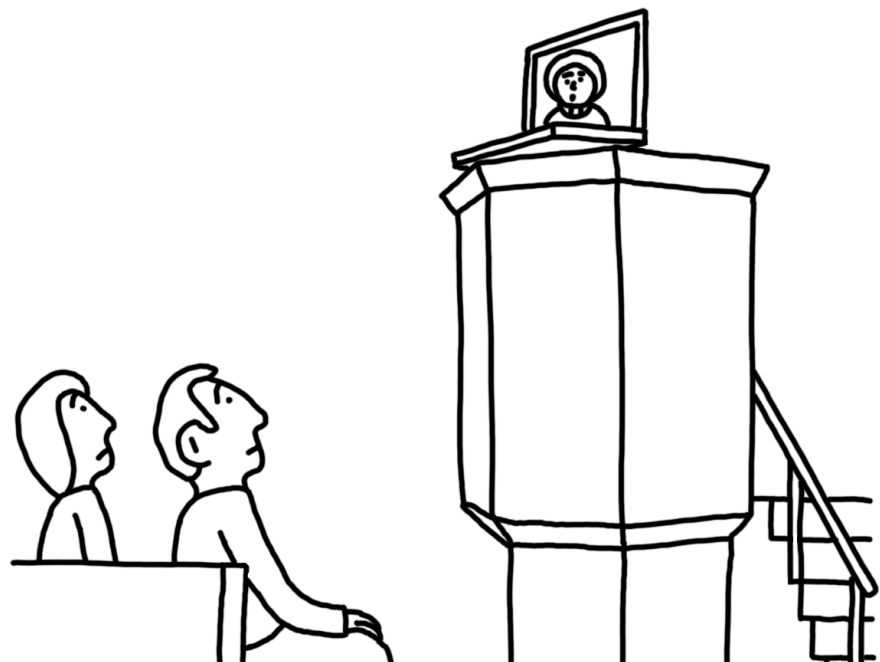
The defining spiritual features of our community are love, tolerance, warmth and inclusiveness. We are less concerned about numbers, money, appearances, power or status than about hospitality, participation, and the gifts each person brings, regardless of their age or abilities or sexual orientation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