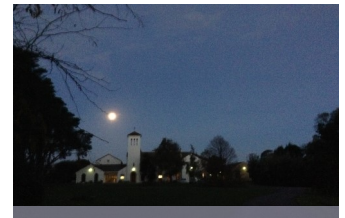




COMMUNITY OF THE HOLY NAME



Winter 2019 Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE...

We celebrate the installation of our new bell and look at what the Angelus bells represent.

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Editor: Liz Johnstone	

The Angelus Bell

Esther House has a new bell, all fitted and working, completing our new convent. We are delighted with the work undertaken by Anton Hasell, Director of Australian Bell Pty Ltd, who combines digital design technologies with traditional art-craft processes. He is best known for the creation of the Federation Bells Carillon, in Birrarung Marr, next to the Melbourne CBD.

At the Community of the Holy Name our bell is rung for the Angelus, which is a prayer recited in honour of the incarnation of God. It sounds at morning, midday and evening and consists of a series of rings which are set electronically.

A bell is an unusual instrument in that it sounds a number of different notes at the same time, with a carefully shaped bell cast in different thicknesses along its length. Bells can be solemn, bells can be happy, but they always claim our attention. The Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, USA, symbolises the nation's independence from Britain and the abolition of slavery. On July 4, 1976,

at 2 pm (EDT), President Gerald Ford rang the Liberty Bell and bells across the country chimed, from electronic carillons to little backyard bells. The ringing united the whole country at one single moment to celebrate 200 years of freedom.

The use of bells for worship can be traced back to the trumpets in the Old Testament, which summoned joyous celebration of praise to God. Early missionaries used small handbells to call people to worship. The large bells were introduced into Christian churches around 400AD by Paulinus, Bishop of Nola in Campania.

Bells mark time. Indeed, the word clock comes from the Latin word *Cloca*, meaning bell. Bells in towers can be heard over a long distance, especially important in a time when clocks were too expensive for ordinary people. Some churches ring their church bells three times a day, at 6:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., summoning the Christian faithful to recite the Lord's Prayer, or the Angelus. This tradition

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Community of the Holy Name

We are a Community of Anglican Sisters who have been living, praying and ministering in Melbourne for more than 125 years. Nowadays, our main ministry is hospitality, offering a place of spiritual renewal and refreshment.

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Left—the new bell waiting to be fitted; right—bell in situ, beside the chapel in Esther House.

Dear friends,

What a joy to have some real rain. Our garden especially the trees were showing signs of distress from lack of water. Now we see green sprouting all around us. However, the deciduous trees are going into a time of rest. Have you ever really just sat and looked at a large oak tree that has lost its leaves? It is an awesome experience.



In his book *Dare to Journey with Henri Nouwen*, Charles Rigma says:

"For it is in everyday life that we must find purpose and direction. It is in our everyday life that we need to experience growth, development, well-being and challenge. It is in our everyday life that we need to express faith. And it is in everyday life that we need to experience that God is with us..... Thus, we need to fully participate in this life. But we don't live only for this life. We also have a future hope. And in this life, we can catch glimpses of what that future may look like."

This experience is what I hope visitors to our Spirituality Centre find, especially as they spend time in our grounds. We are planning a labyrinth to be constructed in the next few weeks, down near the Hermitages, which will enable visitors to meditate within the grounds.

We have hosted two groups from St. Augustine's Mentone.



Youth from St Augustine's Mentone
in the chapel in the Spirituality Centre

On Easter Saturday the young children had an Easter Egg hunt in the garden and then we had the youth group spend an evening learning about the Community and having a tour

before sharing a meal. Candice, the Youth and Family Minister, organised these events.

I think it is difficult for young people today to see the value of the life we sisters lead and I can understand that. It is making the life relevant to their lives but if one does have a true call from God to the life does that matter?

Sister Avrill and I met with members of the Melbourne City Council to discuss the placement of a plaque in Little Lonsdale Street, to commemorate the beginning of the Community. The meeting was positive but there are several things still to be worked out. I am not sure if you know that there is a display in the Melbourne Museum on the history of Melbourne in which Sr. Esther features but a plaque would be another recognition of her beloved Community. We thank Sr. Hilary for this movement as it has been something, she has felt very passionate about for many years but it seems now is the right time.



A little bit of boasting is that I became a great-grandmother on Christmas Eve. Theodore is a very happy healthy baby.

May you all keep well and free of the winter colds.

My love and prayers to you all

Carol CHN .

Sister Lyn's story

I am originally from Bendigo where my family still live and moved to Melbourne to go to university. As an undergraduate, I studied Sociology, Psychology and Philosophy. Some people think my studies and faith are mutually exclusive but I disagree. They certainly challenged my faith, in a good way.

I first felt a call to join a Religious Community when I was at university. I lived in Preston then and did odd jobs nearby. I heard about the Community of the Holy Name in 1979 through my brother, Noel Richards, who is an Oblate. I visited them and joined 3 years later. My reason for joining the Community was their ethos of working with the disadvantaged. When I first came to CHN, I was a Novice alongside Margot and Shirley. I worked in the kitchen and dining room at the Retreat House, where it was my job was to wash the pots and pans.

I went on to the Mission House in Fitzroy with Sister Aileen and undertook training in Gestalt and psychoanalytic therapy. I did my CPE to become a hospital chaplain at the Royal Melbourne and Peter McCallum when I was a Junior Sister, as it was then called.

I then went on to do pastoral care work in hostels through the Kingston Centre. While working at Heatherton Hospital with people affected by alcohol and drug addiction, the occupational therapist put me into running groupwork. I have learnt that Jesus is the 'big rubber' because that was not how I thought my life was going to be! For the next 18 years I worked in group therapy, with 18-20 people a week.

During Maureen Lester's time as Minister of Health, she wanted to close down the hospital. I organised a protest, so we could continue this much-needed work, and the hospital stayed open for another two years. Until Jeff Kennett came along.

After that, I worked at the Community Health Centre in Mentone, then at Maroondah Addictions Recovery Project, counselling people affected by alcohol and drugs, for six years, before moving to Delmont where I did both individual work and psychoanalytic group therapy.

In these group therapy sessions, people identify with each other and challenge one another. It is a powerful experience for the participants. Occasionally I would receive letters from people letting me know they have been clean and sober for many years. One man had written to me after 12 years to tell me he was still on the straight and narrow.



I remember the times when I would suddenly dash out of Community House, with the other Sisters calling out, "Where are you going?". I would race ahead, calling back to them, "Someone's on a bust!"

I have always had a call to the disadvantaged, the emotionally poor, and being a Sister of CHN has empowered me to follow what God has called me to. I have learnt how to balance the contemplative life with the actual work of ministry.

God has worked in me in a very mysterious way. God has given me great insight into the human person and greater knowledge that he's a God of mercy, not of fear. For so many people, addiction is their way of coping with the unknown. They have taught me how to be human, that we all have foibles.

Five years ago, I got a (non-malignant) brain tumour and needed brain surgery, which led to a cerebral haemorrhage (stroke). I had to leave the Community House to move into an aged care facility. I moved to one in Bendigo as it is close by my family. Home is wherever my home is.

I am involved in ministry here at Living Well, with parish visiting and people coming to see me. I'm a kind of 'local drop-in', sometimes having to put a sign on my front door to say 'Please do not disturb'. I also work with the Life Line telephone counselling programme called 'Stand by' for people affected by suicide although I might leave that to work more with those in need at St Mary's Parish, my local church.

My motto these days is to only do what I can do. I don't think God is a hard taskmaster. He's not pushy; he invites us. I try and do the best I can with that. If I manage 1½ hours private prayer and two Offices each day I have done well. We've got to allow for our physical well-being.

The Angelus Bell (continued from front page)

dates back to the Old Testament practice of praying thrice daily (Psalm 55:17, Daniel 6:10). Observant Jews still recite the *Amidah* morning, afternoon and evening, a prayer to which some believe the Lord's Prayer is related.

The Angelus (1857-1859) is also a famous painting... about the well-known prayer. An embroidered copy, created by Madge Hardy, hangs in Esther House. Madge was a CHN Associate and volunteered for many years at Retreat House where she could be found answering the phone, doing the laundry and even peeling apples.

The original painting, by French artist Jean-Francois Millet, depicts two peasants in a potato field, who have stopped work to pray. It was originally commissioned by a wealthy American who failed to collect it. Millet added a steeple and changed the title to *The Angelus*, "The idea...came to me because I remembered that my grandmother, hearing the church bell ringing while we were working in the fields, always made us stop work to say the Angelus prayer."

The influence of *The Angelus* went beyond the brushstrokes. Millet was a peasant's son who struggled for acceptance in the art world, living much of his life in poverty. He sold the original painting for 1,000 francs in 1860, a mere pittance, and when he died in 1875 he left a large family with no financial security. *The Angelus* was resold a few years later for 750,000 francs but his family did not benefit from the windfall profit. An indirect result of this injustice has been changes to the law in several countries, guaranteeing a share of resale value to artists and their families.

The two humble and touching figures of *The Angelus*, silhouetted by the falling dusk, have become the very embodiment of rural devotion. The sound of the Angelus bell reminds us of the Lord's presence and creates a sense of calm and reverence in those who hear it. It reminds us that the Lord is calling us all to follow him.



The Angelus by Jean François Millet (1857-1859)

From the Archives...the beginnings of a new religious community



Left—Sisters Esther (Mother Foundress), Ellen and Christina; Right—Sister Esther plays with some Mission House children.



In 1888, the appalling poverty and suffering in the inner-city slums prompted Bishop Moorhouse to set up the Mission to the Streets and Lanes of Melbourne, the first Anglican welfare agency in the city. In the same year, Emma Silcock (Sister Esther), a novice of the Community of St Mary the Virgin in Wantage, England, came to Australia to recuperate from an accident. Asked to help establish the new Mission, Sister Esther realized that God was calling her to form a new Community. Soon after, she was joined by Emma Okins and Christina Cameron. Emma and Christina were initially Deaconesses, amongst the first in the Australian church.

Drunkenness, violence and prostitution pervaded the streets. The Sisters were concerned for the children and young women and, in 1892 the Sisters opened the House of Mercy in Cheltenham, 'a refuge in the country', for women who sought help. Through their work at three children's courts, many young women were sent to the House, on Probation. There, they learnt housekeeping skills and a disciplined Christian life, enabling them to become employable or 'marriage material' when they left.

The Sisters were concerned that many babies were unwanted, due to the stigma of illegitimacy, with few



Left—Sisters running a soup kitchen; right—Sisters Winifred and Christina giving medical aid



They lived in an old bakery in Little Lonsdale Street, later moving to Spring Street and gave material aid, such as a free medical dispensary and soup kitchen. They visited women at Melbourne gaol, hosted Sunday services, ran a Sunday school, two day schools, a children's choir and various classes for children, factory girls and young women at risk.

opportunities for adoption. So, they opened up the Darling Babies' Home in 1916.

In 1912, the Sisters were granted a Charter as the first Anglican Religious Community in Australia, the Community of the Holy Name.



Left—House of Mercy girls doing the laundry; right—Darling Babies' Home





OBLATES' NEWS

The Revd. Garry Deverell led our Lent Quiet Day this year, on 30th March. Garry is the vicar of St Agnes', Black

Rock, and is a Trawoolway man.

Garry's address in the morning was entitled 'Fear Death by Water', with Scripture references Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22 and Mark 1:9-15, from the lections of the first Sunday of Lent in Year B.

In 1922, T.S. Eliot published the renowned poem 'The Waste Land' which presented a series of scattered images of Europe in the wake of the First World War. It depicted a world in which the coherence of things 'have departed'. Nothing is left, except 'voices singing out of empty cisterns and exhausted wells'. 'Fear death by water', says a clairvoyant to the poet, and by the end the poet is so desperately dry and thirsty in the wasteland of his imagining that he has actually begun to search for the water by which he is convinced he will die.

The images in the Scriptures are not entirely unconnected to what Eliot saw and experienced in London at the end of the War. The Noah story is about a similar cataclysm, which completely did away with the world as it was known.

The Semitic peoples of the ancient world believed that the power of nature, the power of water, signified everything in the universe that could take one's life away. Unlike their pagan neighbours, however, who were constantly seeking deals with the gods to secure their protection against catastrophe, the Hebrew preachers believed that the power beyond all power was essentially both good and gracious, and desired nothing other than the good of people. Thus, their stories about death by water were also stories of LIFE by water. A flood comes to consume the earth and all its wickedness. Yet God preserves the seeds of a new world in an ark that floats upon the receding torrent for 40 days and 40 nights.

The angel of death is sent to destroy all the firstborn of Egypt. Yet God's people are preserved by walking through the depths of the Red sea and trekking, for 40 years, through the wilderness until they cross into

the land of their freedom via the Jordan river. Jesus' life as a carpenter and compliant citizen of the Roman state is put to death in that same river by baptism, that he might rise to live the life ordained for him by God, who claims him as his beloved Son. He receives, at that moment, the Spirit of God, who immediately drives him into the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights, so that he can really learn what it means to do away with one's dreams and embrace the dreams of God. The 40 days and nights of Lent begin with these stories of death by water in order to set our course aright, as we head towards Easter. We look forward to this time because in Jesus' rising is the possibility of our own rising. In Jesus' triumph is the possibility of our own triumph, In Jesus' victory is our won victory. Easter is therefore our goal and our destination. Lent is the process of getting to Easter by a dying to ourselves and a living to God. Lent is designed to kill everything in us that keeps us in chains so that God can free us, can redesign us, and fill our 'empty cisterns' with a new resonance for salvation.



The Revd. Garry Deverell

In the afternoon, Garry spoke on Matthew's Baptism account of Jesus, quoting Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43 and Matthew 3:13-17.

Every culture and people have their foundational stories, telling us who we are, where we belong and what our purpose in life might be. For Christians, Jesus' baptism is a foundational story. John was preaching a baptism of repentance. In his eyes, the Jewish people, particularly the most wealthy and successful, had forgotten about the call of God to live lives characterised by justice, compassion and prayer. So he beckoned them out into the wilderness, to a place where the normal trappings of life were no longer there to support and ensnare. This was a place rich with meaning in Jewish faith which marked the passage of a people from slavery in Egypt to their

DIARY DATES



Thursday 26th – Sunday 29th September Annual Oblates' Retreat & AGM
Arrive at 4:00 pm on Thursday. Retreat ends after lunch on Sunday.
Led by Bishop Garry Weatherill.



OBLATES' NEWS, continued

freedom in the land of promise. "Be baptised in the Jordan," he told them.

"Like the people who crossed this river in ancient times, you cross this river also, Repent! Put off your life of slavery to economic and social demands. Wash away your sins and rise from the waters to pursue the life of freedom that God will give you!"

The word 'baptism' literally means 'to be immersed in water', and the ceremony had been used for Gentiles (non-Jews) to embrace the Jewish faith and community. Stripped naked and immersed in water, the candidates were killing off their former way of life by a symbolic drowning. They were also washing away their sins so that God might lead them in a new, and very different, way of life. John took an established Jewish ritual for Gentiles and applied it to lapsed or lost Jews, Jews who had forgotten what it meant to trust and obey God.

John at first refuses to baptise Jesus. Jesus is not a sinner who had lost his way and needed to be cleansed. But baptism symbolises other things as well: not just the putting away of a life of sin but, more positively, the embrace of an identity and vocation from God. That is why Jesus asks John to baptise him – in order to symbolise and fulfil all that God rightly asks of him.

The waters of baptism should not be regarded as tame, feeding and sustaining life. They are dangerous, designed to take our lives away. Without doing so, they cannot give us a new life. In some icons of Jesus' baptism you can see, under his feet, the terrifying figure of Leviathan, an ancient symbol of water's power to kill and destroy.

The primary agent in baptism is God. It is God who acts in baptism, even though he does so through the agency of his servant. For Jesus that servant was John. For us, it is the church. This symbolises that salvation is not something we can accomplish for ourselves, for even the will to be liberated is a gift from God. It is only by virtue of God's love and grace that we can ever be saved. Yet, a well-informed human will and intention must be present, as it was for Jesus. The word sacrament means 'promise'. In the sacrament of baptism, we hear the love and promises of God. But we also enact our own promises, promises to turn away from evil and embrace the life of Christ not only in word, but in deed also. If we (or, as children, our primary caregivers) can neither understand nor make those promises, then the church has no business baptising us.

As Jesus emerged from the waters of death, the heavens opened and the Spirit descended upon him 'like a dove'. This recalls the messianic passage from

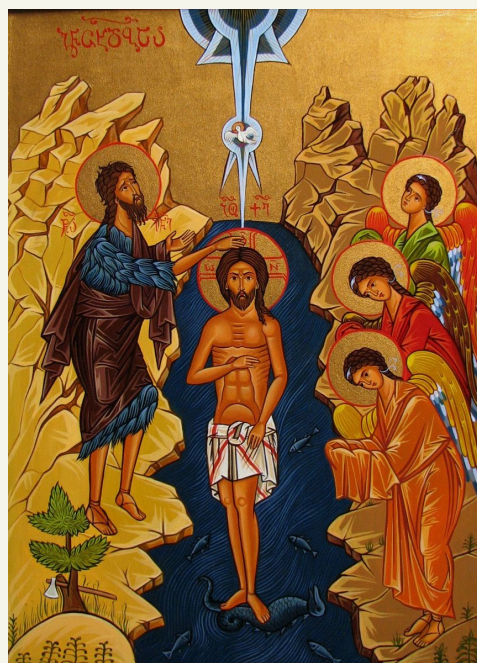
Isaiah where the servant of the Lord is given the Spirit in order to perform his mission – justice for the oppressed, opening the eyes of the blind, being a light for the nations and releasing captives from prison. In the story of Noah, the dove comes as the waters

of the flood recede, a sign that God's new world is beginning to emerge. And so it was for Jesus, and for all who are baptised. The Spirit is a sign or guarantee that there is life after disaster and death, no matter how much we lose in baptism we shall be given, by that same action, blessings and riches beyond measure. The dove: a sign of God's love after the deluge is over.

Then there is the voice from heaven, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.' Here God owns Jesus as his son and messiah, the one by whom salvation will come. Jesus' baptism anoints him to be the messiah.

Jesus' baptism teaches us that 'belief in Jesus Christ' involves (1) leaving behind expectations and loyalties of society; (2) dying to sin and the lostness of our culture; (3) the conferral and gift of a new identity as God's children, the church; (4) a commissioning for mission, anointed with the Spirit as a baptised people, the body of Christ, in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells.

The story of the baptism is thus foundational for the identity and vocation not only of Jesus, but of ourselves as well. As Christ gave himself for the sake of the world, so now we – as his body, the church – are called to join with him in loving the world, for the glory of God. That is what it means to 'believe in Jesus Christ'.



© Tamara Rigishvili,
from tamarapaint.com



ASSOCIATES' NEWS

On 6th April, Bishop Kate Prowd led our Lent Quiet Day with deeply reflective addresses. She began by saying what a special place CHN has always been for her, since the age of 13 when she thought she may have had a vocation to the Religious Life. She explained that the day would be about Lent, Holy Week and being on our journey. We are always on our journey, but more intentionally so during Lent. Quoting Psalm 51 v. 6: "You that desire truth in the inward parts: O teach me wisdom in the secret places of the heart", Bishop Kate said that our purpose is to seek that wisdom, to pray and to listen to God's word for each of us. At the Eucharist we hold out our empty hands hoping, expecting, that God will fill them. We were invited to be conscious of the breath of the Spirit and of our own breath as we breathe in the gifts of the Spirit. And we were invited to reflect on the questions "What do you bring with you this day? What is in your mind and heart?"

Traditionally Ash Wednesday is a time of repentance and mourning. Ash is the residue of something that has been destroyed. The ashes marked as a cross on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday are the previous year's palm crosses reduced to ash. The gesture of marking the cross on our foreheads reminds us of our baptism when we were marked as Christ's with the sign of the cross. Ash is not just a sign of death: it is one of the most fertile nutrients for the soil. The ash on our foreheads is also fertile. It is a sign of our willingness to accept God's invitation to grow, to become more spiritually fertile. There is a parallel with Jesus in the desert, discovering how to live out what God was asking of him, his vocation. We can face and embrace our failings as a sign that God has not finished with us yet.

"Lent" comes from the Old English word for Spring and is a preparation for the great climax of new life bursting out of death (perhaps more obvious in the Northern Hemisphere where Lent is in the season of Spring). Lent is a sweeping as clean as possible of our lives so that new life can come forth. What we are doing in Lent is growing.

God is always merciful and loving. Our job in the world is to be channels for God, channels of justice and healing. In Lent we learn about utter dependence on God. Lent calls us deeper than we may wish to go. It calls us to face our brokenness and find redemption. Our



Bishop Kate Prowd

life's work is to grow into the likeness of Christ. What might we need to do, give up or take up in order to further our spiritual growth – and not just for Lent? What changes might we need to make to accommodate God and grow more fully into his likeness?

Bishop Kate described her homily at Mass (on the Gospel reading – John 12:1-8, Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany) as being about love, God's love for us; Mary's love for Jesus; about wasting our lives on Jesus. Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany occurred shortly before his death. The disciples join Judas in criticising her action, calling it a waste of expensive perfume, but Jesus comes to her defence: "Leave her alone. She bought it (the costly perfume made of pure nard) so that she might keep it for the day of my burial." The anointing of Jesus' feet was a true act of friendship. Feet were dirty and it was customary for a servant to perform that task, but Mary anoints them with her perfume and wipes them with her hair. It was considered improper for a woman to loose her hair in public, but Mary pays no heed to social conventions. She has intuited the costliness of Jesus' own gift. Jesus, knowing his life to be in danger, had retired to comparative safety across the Jordan, but now he comes out of hiding when Lazarus dies. By doing this he made himself vulnerable to the religious authorities. He knows they will be out to get him. He is sacrificing his own life to bring Lazarus back to life. Our devotion to Jesus is also costly.

DIARY DATES



6th – 8th September: Associates' Annual Retreat, led by Val Dyke Th.A., Dip. Pastoral Ministry, B. Theol., Spiritual Director and Retreat Conductor. If you have not yet booked in and would like to, there is still room. Ph. 9583 2097 or email avrilldover@yahoo.com.au for details/bookings.

9th November: Corporate Communion. The program begins with the Eucharist at 12 noon. Celebrant and preacher, Fr. Graeme Brennan. Lunch is provided, so it is essential that you book in at least a week in advance (contact details as above). After lunch our guest speaker will be our Associate Pat Blake who has done some fascinating overseas travel lately.



ASSOCIATES' NEWS, continued

When Mary anoints Jesus' feet, the aroma of the perfume fills the whole house, and the stench of death is replaced by the fragrance of love. Mary's anointing anticipates the foot washing at the Last Supper in which Jesus shows his love for his friends by insisting that he wash their feet. This action is symbolic of the cleansing wrought by the death of Jesus on the cross through which all sin will be wiped away. At the foot washing Jesus asks his disciples to show that same love to one another. Mary gave herself utterly to Jesus just as he will give himself utterly on the cross. Mary's love is what drives her actions. Our discipleship calls us both to serve and be served, to wash the feet of others and to have our feet washed. This is the way we grow into Christ, by doing beautiful acts for him, like Mary. What is the costly perfume we have to offer as a sign of our love for Jesus? To whom do we offer it? Bishop Kate ended her homily by singing the last verse of our opening hymn (TIS 342):

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small:
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Bishop Kate began her second address with the quotation, "We are the aroma of Christ", and asked, "How might you be the aroma of Christ to others?" and "How is the aroma of Christ present in your own life?"

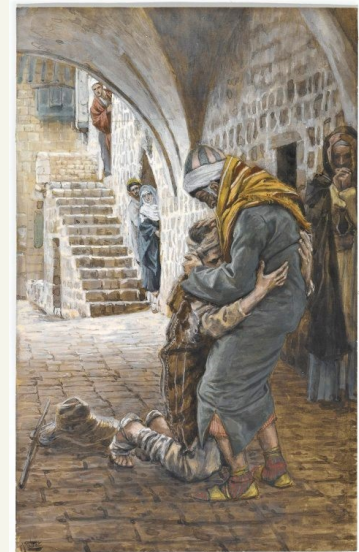
She spoke of how she had been privileged recently to see one of the volumes of the seven-volume hand-copied, illuminated St John's Bible (commissioned in 1998 by St John's Benedictine Abbey, Minnesota, and completed in 2011). The stunning illuminations are a blend of both traditional and modern styles, but the one which most caught Bishop Kate's attention was from the parable of the prodigal son in St Luke's gospel, and showed the father running with outstretched arms to greet his returning son. It was a depiction of utter forgiveness. The "best garment" which he was giving the son was brightly coloured,

reminiscent of the "coat of many colours" which Joseph's father gave him. Joseph too was a favoured younger brother. At the top of the picture, in gold, the colour which represents the divine, were the twin towers of 9/11, on fire, and the artist's comment, "How utterly different the world might have been had America forgiven the terrorists".

Bishop Kate went on to say that we have all heard of another tragedy recently in which 50 died in Christchurch, New

Zealand, while at Friday prayers in two mosques. The response of the world has been very different from that after 9/11. Of course, there's accountability, but this time we have heard words like love, compassion, reconciliation, and the face of this response is New Zealand's Prime Minister, Jacinta Ardern. This is the message of Lent and of the day's Gospel. Only reconciliation overcomes violence.

Bishop Kate concluded by saying that the Word of God cannot be contained in any sacred writings – it leaps out. She asked us, "How is the word of God leaping out at you so that you can grow fully into the person you are called to be, and share this aroma with others? How might this occur?" We are to remember that before we do any acts of love, God, like the prodigal's father, has already made the journey towards us. How has God approached me? We are to inhabit the call we have been given. We don't take God "out there"; rather we join him where he already is. Wherever we go, we will be the aroma of Christ, who is already there.



*The Return of the Prodigal Son
by James Tissot*

R.I.P.

Our Associate June Mullens departed this life on 26.03.2019, at the age of 91, after a life spent faithfully serving God and others. On leaving school she studied nursing and worked in several hospitals before becoming Head Sister and then a tutor at Kingston Centre until her retirement in the early 1990's. C.H.N. was always very important to her, and she had been an Associate for over 21 years, never missing a meeting until frailty prevented her attendance. Born in Melbourne, she lived for a few years in Heywood with her husband Jim and two sons until the family returned to Melbourne where she spent most of the rest of her life apart from a brief spell with family in Brisbane. She is survived by one son and four grandchildren.

May she rest in peace.

Taking to the skies

By Sarah Dowe, Associate, and Sister Avrill C.H.N

Thursday, 24.01.19. 3.45 am. In a car parked outside Esther House a phone call was being made. Yes, it was on! Off we headed for the Sofitel Hotel in Collins Street to meet up with our fellow flyers and receive a short briefing before a much anticipated hot air balloon ride over Melbourne.

On arrival it was still pitch dark beside the hum of the Eastern Freeway. Three other balloons were gathered there for inflation, their baskets lying on their sides behind them. The balloon was pulled out of what looked like a large tent bag on the back of a trailer towed by the minivan. The van drove off, spreading the balloon out on the ground behind it like an immensely long sausage. It was then inflated with cold air by a large fan standing about three metres away. Some walked inside the huge space to encourage inflation by pushing out the sides. Once the basket was attached the burners were lit, and as the air heated, the balloon rose in the air, pulling the basket upright, and we boarded via a couple of foot holes in the side of the basket.

Take-off in the calm of the early morning was so gentle there was no sensation at all. By the time we were at full altitude of 1500 feet the sun was rising, there was a bit of haze on the horizon and we were lucky there was a break

in the cloud for maximum visibility. We looked down on the Exhibition Buildings, skirted the edge of the CBD around the old Abbotsford convent and brewery, floated above the MCG and the General Cemetery and circled around the inner suburbs and the lush setting of Melbourne Zoo before touching down at Royal Park after a tranquil 45 minute flight, which ended in a 3-bump landing, for which we adopted a previously rehearsed brace position.

Throughout the flight, we were all awed by the scenery and busy with our cameras.



What an unforgettable experience!.

Trusting in God: a reflection



Painting in Esther House dining room

Jeremiah 17: 7-8

**Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.**

**They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.**

**It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;**

**in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.**

Pondering the Bible record we find much to inspire, comfort and encourage us as we continue our life journey. We can identify in many ways with the people of Israel and rejoice in the record of God's faithfulness to them, despite their failures and self-centredness. We are their heirs.

Jesus calls us now to follow him. He invites us to follow where he leads. Consider the journey to Emmaus, in Luke 24:13-35.

Jesus is walking with two disciples, so why did they not recognize him? Their minds were closed – "We KNOW that he is dead." Did they know, understand?

Yet their hearts had been stirred as they walked along and listened to him. Finally they recognized him in his action.

This is a picture of the persistence of God on our behalf. When we shut our eyes and ears to him, he persists until we do "see", until we do respond to his gifts of grace, forgiveness, of LIFE.

Watch for the signs of the Holy One in ordinary life, in the normal places, people, events of our life, in the T.V. programmes we watch, the books we read, the experiences other people share with us.

Has God spoken to me? How? How did I respond?

Discipleship is a long journey, a life-long journey.

Jesus invites us to walk with Him, and with all God's pilgrim people, trusting that, in our journeying, we will find an inner joy, the assurance of our worth and purpose, the fulfilment of God's purposes for each of us. We may understand more deeply the love Jesus has for us, and find companionship with other pilgrims on the same journey, sharing in that abundant life which God has prepared for us, now and for eternity.

Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.

**Excerpt from Day of Prayer and Reflection,
March 2019, by Sr. Josephine Margaret, CHN**

Cloud of Unknowing: a reflection

A country priest in France in the 19th century noticed an old peasant/farmer sitting in the church alone and silent every afternoon. He asked him what he was doing. The response was, 'I looks at him and he looks at me.' It's that sort of silent prayer that we are looking at.

The Cloud of Unknowing is a spiritual classic, written in the fourteenth century, in England, by an anonymous author, possibly a priest in a religious order, writing to guide a young disciple in the art of contemplative prayer.

The cloud of unknowing is that which stands between us and God. The author believes that it is impossible to know God fully in this life, and that we must reach out through the darkness into the cloud to seek God. The cloud obscures our sight, our memories, our awareness of everything but God. We need to seek the Giver, not the gifts. 'Want him, and not anything he's made'.

Cloud imagery is used in Scripture to signify and to hide the glory of God, as when Moses ascends the mountain in Exodus 24:15-18, and when Jesus is transfigured in Luke 9:28-36.

But it is also a cloud of unknowing – not knowing anything save God, not being aware of anything save God, not oneself, not people you'd like to pray for, nothing. It is all set to one side as God is allowed to take centre stage.

The darkness has two aspects. The first is the sense of



Moses and Cloud of fire by Edward Rowan of YMI

'being in the dark'. We don't know what is going on in our prayer. This is quite normal and is a sign that we are on the right track. The desire to simply reach out to God is enough. It's important that we stick with this, that we don't give up because it seems that nothing is happening.

The other aspect of darkness is that unwanted stuff can surface; uncomfortable things from the past, truths we'd rather not face. Yet God's will is for our healing, we are created to be whole creatures, made in the image of God. It's important that we let these things surface, painful though it may be, and give consent to God working in our soul. Talking things through with a trusted spiritual friend or spiritual director can be helpful.

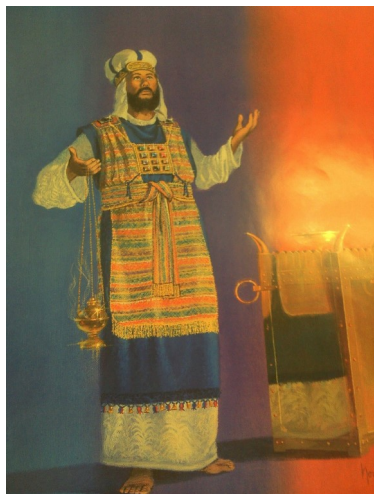
Excerpt from Day of Prayer and Reflection, April 2019, by the Revd. Jill Renison

Prayers of Intercession and Silence: a reflection

Let us look at two aspects of prayer – Intercession and Silence.

Intercession for Christians is a way in which we express our responsibility of love and care for each other and the world we live in.

In what way do we intercede for others? Do we give God a description of the person's condition and what we believe is needed to heal and restore that person to fullness of life? Or can we accept that God knows and loves that person more than we can ever imagine. God also knows what the



Aaron as High Priest by Norm McGary

real need is, which may not at all be what we think it is. Michael Ramsey says the Greek word which we translate as 'intercede' literally means to encounter, to be with someone. He likens 'intercession' as standing, kneeling, sitting, before God 'with the people on your heart', like Aaron 'who went into the holy of holies wearing a breastplate with jewels representing the tribes

of Israel whose priest he was, he went near to God with the people on his heart.' (Exodus 28:29) As you pray for others, be with God with the people on your heart.

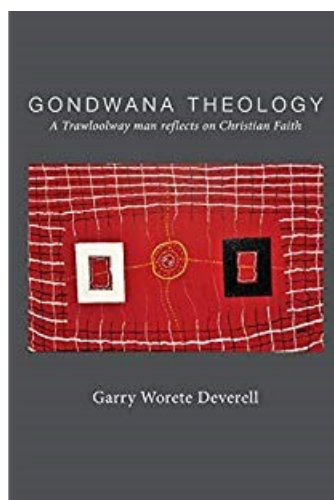
Just as in any relationship, if we speak all the time in prayer, or even fill our minds with words, however holy, we may not be allowing for the silent spaces where God might speak to us. This brings us to the Prayer of Silence – of just being with God, quietly waiting.

Anthony Bloom tells us of a faithful old lady who had told him she had been praying the Jesus Prayer for 14 years almost continually and never perceived God's presence at all. He said, "Well if you have been praying like that all the time, you haven't given God a chance to get a word in! "Go to your room...Just sit, look round, and try to see where you live...then take your knitting and for fifteen minutes knit before the face of God, but I forbid you to say one word of prayer, You just knit and try to enjoy the peace of your room."

She didn't think it was very pious advice but she took it. [As she knitted, she] became more and more aware of the silence... "I perceived that the silence had substance...not absence of something but presence of something...The silence around began to come and meet the silence in me...At the heart of the silence there was Him who is all stillness, all peace, all poise."

Excerpt from Day of Prayer and Reflection, May 2019, by Sr. Valmai, CHN

New in the Library by our Librarian, Philip Harvey



Each one of us is a theologian when we think and talk about God. It is also true that we necessarily speak about God in our own words, via our own traditions, and where we live in the world. Garry Worete Deverell has written an open and sensitive account of his own personal and theological growth in 'Gondwana theology: a Trawlolway man reflects on Christian faith' (Morning Star Publishing, 2018).

This book is sourced deep within our own immediate vicinity, in localities we walk through every day in southern Australia. Bishop Chris McLeod calls Garry's book "an important foundational text in the continued writing of a post-colonial Australian theology." The book opens our eyes to our own history and challenges us to think about faith, hope and love in new ways, in our own context.

The author knows that theology is an Indo-European word and discipline, while asserting that "all over the world theologians from non-European backgrounds are rightly

seeking to transform theology so that it draws more deeply from extra-European wells of imagination and method."

Garry identifies himself as part of this transformation. His voice is his own voice, moving between the working language of Indigenous spirituality, grounded in country, kin, and the Dreaming, and the received language of Christianity, which is also both culturally-bound and eternal. He is happily free of jargon and clichés. His lively, imaginative exploration of this mixed and rich inheritance is an aid to all Australians who live with the same questions.

Garry grants us an introduction to his own Tasmanian spiritual traditions, helping us to appreciate both the negative and positive effects of Christianity. A chapter entitled 'The Unfinished Business of Reconciliation' goes to the heart of Australia's experience of the fatal impact. He shows how the racism, mistreatment and dispossession of Aborigines have been processes where the churches play their own part, while the language and imagination of Scripture and apostolic tradition have been "the greatest ally I have in seeking to survive." The book reaches out to those who need to hear. It expresses a liveliness of spiritual engagement, a direct knowledge of Scripture, and an achieved understanding of worship and liturgy.

One can only agree with Mark Brett's comments, that "we encounter here an Aboriginal voice that none of the churches in Australia can afford to ignore. This is a book that all Australian Christians need to read."

Days of Prayer and Reflection 2019

The Sisters of the Community of the Holy Name Invite you to Days of Prayer and Reflection at the Spirituality Centre, Cheltenham, from 10am—3 pm.

The Eucharist is celebrated at mid-day and there are opportunities to sit quietly, to use our library and to wander in the gardens. Some input is given, and suggestions for using the silence.

BYO lunch. (Tea and coffee are provided.) There is no charge for these days but a donation towards costs is appreciated.

For further information, contact Sister Josephine Margaret, CHN, on 03 9583 2087

REMAINING DATES FOR 2019

4 July
1 August
5 September
3 October
7 November



"Be still and know that I am God."