Reflections • Monday 29 April 2019 • By Bishop John Roundhill

Walking the Walk – we can only walk together

Back from just over a week’s walking, there is time to reflect on doing a talking pilgrimage. The walk from Brisbane to Burleigh was just over 160km spaced over eight days with the shortest walk being about 10km and the longest one a touch over 30km. The longest day’s walk started at 7.30am and I finally put my stick down (apart from an interview and a short lunch break) at about 4.15pm. That is a lot of walking and it was a real delight to feel fully physically tired at the end of the day.

My walk took me through Redlands and then across and up into the Tamborine Mountain area before having a few days in the Gold Coast. I had not realised that I was going to experience such contrasting scenery during the different stages. Each was beguilingly beautiful, whether it was the softness of the landscape around Redlands, or the drama of the mountains, or the energy and buzz of a stormy and rainy Gold Coast.

For much of the 160km I had company and I am tremendously grateful to the parish guides who helped me in and out of destinations, particularly to Tamborine Mountain Parish, and who got me up and out without being on too many busy narrow roads. Some companions walked just a few kilometres with me, others much further. I am grateful for all the conversations; walking and talking seems to provide a context for honest sharing.

At other times, I was alone as I walked. Even though this was just an eight-day walk, life had a slightly different rhythm; governed more by hunger and thirst than by a clock. I mostly walked a steady 5km per hour and there was not much I could do to shift that. I was not going to go faster and I actually found it tough to go slower; the walk had its own pace and rhythm that had to be followed.

Help was not just with people escorting me in and out of places, but clergy welcoming me into their rectories and homes – and in Holy Week, one of the busiest weeks in the year! I am tremendously thankful not only to the clergy of these parishes, but also to their spouses who did so much. This is
true for my wife, Frances Thompson, who helped by keeping me stocked with clean clothes. Even though it looked like this was a solo walk, it was in truth a group endeavour.

On Maundy Thursday after a good breakfast at St George’s, Tamborine, I set off with a small group of walkers along Wongawallan Road. The surroundings were stunning and the weather perfect, and when we came upon a break in the trees to the east of us, we were afforded a stunning view of the Gold Coast. My destination for tomorrow was in sight. It was a captivating view, the shining new towers framed by the natural woodland. This pilgrimage provided many such moments when all you could do, should do, was to give thanks.

One reason for doing this are the words from the Ordinal for a Bishop. The archbishop lists many things a bishop should do, including: “you must, therefore, know and be known by them (the people of God and be a good example to all).” It was good to have a simpler structure to my Holy Week and to be seen by congregations when I was tired and sweaty.

In his book *The Crossway*, Guy Stagg recounts that in 1986 fewer than 10 people a year walked the great pilgrimage route the Way of St James, the Camino de Santiago in Spain: “Since then the pilgrimage has been brought back to life and in 2010 a quarter of a million people have completed the distance.” In 2016, according to another source 277,000 people walked the Camino. This is an extraordinary resurgence of an old and nearly forgotten practice. What is drawing people back to pilgrimage?

I had some time to ponder that question; walking has a curious blend of intimacy and isolation. Furthermore walking gets you in touch with the world around us, and its beauty. Lastly, walking a good distance is physically demanding, and can be a good way to connect mind and body. The stripping away of other things can leave you time with God. It is a fitting way to spend Holy Week.

Features • Tuesday 30 April 2019 • By Ian Eckersley

**World Press Freedom Day**

"Democracy Dies in Darkness"

So says the slogan below the masthead of the legendary newspaper *The Washington Post*, the publication most noted for the 1970’s Watergate investigation, which brought down President Richard Nixon. It’s especially relevant and poignant in 2019 with the *Post* among the fiercest critics of autocratic President Donald Trump who defiantly has declared the media “the enemy of the people”.

Having spent around 25 years of my professional life as a working journalist up to 2007 (mainly for ABC TV-News and *The Courier-Mail*), I know and understand the drivers, factors and personal/professional pressures and biases involved in working for the Fourth Estate. For me, it was a wonderful, fascinating and rewarding career – a ‘front row seat to history’ in so many shapes and forms.

Having also spent a decade since then on the other side of the ledger as a media/corporate/PR/policy adviser, I feel I’m uniquely placed to make observations about the importance and relevance of a ‘free press’ in 2019.

Most people have a love-hate relationship with the media, or maybe it’s a case of “can’t live with them, can’t live without them.” We all rely on journalists and the media in some form to provide us with a steady diet of news, reportage, video and audio content and analysis – although increasingly there’s more junk food (sensationalism and trite/trivial content) in the daily diet than nutritious and wholesome information and coverage.
Working for the media can be a deadly exercise – with last year one of the worst on record around the world for deaths, with 94 journalists and media workers dying in targeted killings, bomb attacks and crossfire incidents. The most prominent of those was the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi (Saudi dissident, journalist for The Washington Post and former general manager and editor-in-chief of Al-Arab News Channel) on 2 October 2018 at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, which was perpetrated by agents of the Saudi Arabian government.

Once exposed – by other free and fearless journalists – the murder sparked world outrage and condemnation. While I aspired to be an ABC foreign correspondent – and almost got my dream job – I’m not sure that I was prepared to die for my profession as Khashoggi and others have done. Yet they do so in their commitment to highlighting the truth, exposing corruption and injustice and in many cases, preserving democracy.

Brisbane’s own free press champion, foreign correspondent and academic, Professor Peter Greste – who was jailed for 400 days in an Egyptian jail in 2015 on trumped-up charges – will be guest speaker at the annual Loaves and Fishes charity luncheon at St John’s Cathedral on 14 May. Since his release, he has become a vocal campaigner and advocate for media freedom and has launched the Alliance for Journalists’ Freedom, which promotes media freedom worldwide and the right of journalists to report the news in freedom and safety.

The challenging times for journalists and the media don’t just stop with those basic tenets. In a digitally disrupted commercial landscape where professionally trained working journalists are under siege as they compete with the purveyors of ‘fake news’ (with their own self-serving and usually devious agendas i.e “Russia, if you’re listening…”), citizen journalists and social media influencers. Coupled with the shrinking workforce in traditional newsrooms, this means it has never been tougher to be a member of the free press and to report without fear or favour.

But journalists would contend that their role and professional skills have never been more important and relevant with their ability to search for the truth, filter fact from fiction and present it an engaging and compelling manner.

In his new book Has the Luck Run Out? former editor-in-chief of The Courier-Mail, David Fagan opines that the most powerful media figures in Australia are Facebook, Google, YouTube and even Netflix, with the quality and influence of newspapers rapidly eroding to the point where most won’t be printed in 10 years.

“The worry is there are not many tears being shed about what this will do to the information that so heavily informs our democracy and way of life,” says Fagan. “News now has many homes on social media but without the assurance that someone has professionally checked it first.”

You can argue about the bias, veracity and fact-checking behind stories published in traditional media outlets, but as a working journalist I wouldn’t publish something without applying as much rigour and research as time allowed, to what I was being told or was being spun. While the same applies to a majority of journalists in 2019, an increasing element of the media adopt a “publish and be damned” attitude as major media outlets become more shrill and/or rely on click bait headline-grabbing in online sites to maintain engagement and to keep ‘eyeballs on screens’ to stay commercially viable.

Over the years, a free, independent and fearless media has been transformational for society at different points in history – causing political and social upheaval, overturning autocrats (think ‘The Moonlight State’ investigation, which led to the Fitzgerald Inquiry and in turn the demise of Queensland Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen) and dictators and triggering royal commissions and inquiries. A by-product has been the destabilisation and erosion of public faith in established institutions such as banks and churches.
It was the original expose by *The Boston Globe’s* ‘Spotlight’ investigative team (sensitively portrayed by the 2015 Oscar-winning movie of the same name) into sexual abuse by Catholic Church priests in Massachusetts which tipped the scales towards victims around the world.

While the four-years of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia was most traumatic and painful for survivors and their families, it was also cathartic and exposed significant failings by institutions, including the Anglican and Catholic Churches, to protect children in their care.

While there has been shame, shock and enormous damage to faith and spirituality in churches, it has – in the words of The Most Rev’d Dr Phillip Aspinall, Archbishop of Brisbane – “been a pilgrimage of justice, peace and healing.”

Journalists and those working in the media still serve an important function in the 21st century. Their ability to provide a level of scrutiny and accountability, especially to government and elected officials, most notably around free and fair elections, underpins the future of democracy while the filter they provide as a messenger of matters of public importance should always hold a place in Queensland and broader Australian society.

World Press Freedom Day is on Friday 3 May 2019.

Sunday Devotions • Tuesday 30 April 2019 • By The Rev’d Dr Graham Warren

Sunday Devotion: 12 May 2019, Fourth Sunday of Easter

Main readings:  *Acts* 9.36-43; *Ps* 23; *Revelation* 7.9-17; *John* 10.22-30

Supplementary readings: *Ps* 95; *John* 11.14-27; *Revelation* 2.12-19 (20-24), 25-29; *Ps* 113; *Acts* 10.1-7, 23-28

“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.” (*John* 10.28)

My earliest memory of going into church as a little boy was being told by the grownups to be quiet. I was annoyed by this, as I thought it was boring. I had no idea that this might be a way to reverence the Holy One.

Carl Jung said that it was only in silence that he could recover his balance and go on with his work. Words tired him beyond measure. However, for many of us, silence is something we fear. Is this because it reminds us of death, as reflected in such idioms as ‘deadly silence’ and ‘silent as the tomb’? The truth revealed in all four main readings today is that we have no need to fear death. John records Jesus saying, “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish.”

None of this makes any sense if we have the myopic view that what you see is all that you get. In this narrow and literal worldview, birth to death is nothing but a frantic fear-filled race to meaninglessness. However, we are spiritual beings, enjoying a short but beautiful bodily experience, with the hope of eternity.

The communion of saints knows this as they worship with us time immemorial. We are invited to join them.
Multi-faith community members unite in prayer for Sri Lanka’s Easter Sunday attacks victims

The faith leaders who co-led the 26 April prayer service for the Easter Sunday Sri Lanka attacks victims (L-R) Brother Daniel SSF from St Philip’s Anglican Church, Venerable Gnanaseeha and Venerable Nanda from Sri Lanka Buddhist Monastery, Hindu priest Sailesh Chand Darshan from Sai Saileswara Temple, Ali Kadri and Imam Uzair from Holland Park Mosque, Nav Deep from Guru Nanak Temple, and Brother Donald SSF from St Philip’s Anglican Church

Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh faith leaders co-led a prayer service at St Philip’s Anglican Church, Annerley on Friday night, with over 200 local multi-faith community members coming together to pray for the victims of the Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka.

Each faith leader spoke from the heart about our common humanity and shared desire for peace, as community members mourned the loss of over 250 people who died, and prayed for the more than 500 who were wounded, in the recent Easter Sunday attacks on numerous Christian churches and luxury hotels in Sri Lanka.

Prayer service organiser, The Rev’d Daniel Jayaraj, who is a parish priest at All Saints Anglican Parish, Chermside and a member of the St Philip’s Church Tamil Congregation who hosted the event, said that he was touched by how quickly faith leaders responded to the invitation and by what they shared from the sanctuary during the service.

“There is love and affection between all religions, so it was easy for us to meet at short notice – I strongly felt that there is a religious harmony among us,” Fr Jayaraj said.

“All religion’s motives are the same – to love God and to love others.

“We are called to be part of the global body of Christ, ‘to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation’ and it is our responsibility to raise our prayers and voices for people who are suffering.
“Our diocese is a multicultural diocese, and we do have many Sri Lankan people here.”

The prayer service commenced with an opening prayer from Br Donald Campbell SSF, with each faith leader then lighting a candle at the altar before sharing prayers and singing in their own languages, which were translated into English.

President of the Queensland Council of Imams and Holland Park Mosque Imam Uzair Akbar said that he was moved by how the prayer service offered a way for diverse people to hear from one another and encouraged people of all faiths to focus on what they share in common.

“The highlight of the prayer service was to hear the messages from all different faith leaders and notice the similarity within our messages – it was great to be part of a platform which allows each one of us to hear from one another,” Imam Akbar said.

“The main message shared is that despite our differences, there is a lot more which unites us than divides us, and if we focus on the things that unite, we can truly build a peaceful and harmonious society as God wills us to.”

Venerable IG Nanda Thero from Sri Lanka Buddhist Monastery in Ellen Grove shared similar insights.

“Our main message is to come together as communities of all faiths, regardless of our religious beliefs or practices, to work harmoniously to eliminate terrorism from the world and to convince the attackers that terrorism has no place in the world, but only peace and harmony,” Venerable IG Nanda Thero said.

Hindu priest Sailesh Chand Darshan from Sai Saileshwara Temple in Virginia, who also co-led the prayer service, said that he appreciated how he and his community members were embraced at St Philip’s.

“It was love in action to be welcomed so warmly and being part of a ceremony that allowed prayers after the vigil, prayer service attendees connected over supper in the church hall to support each other and to console grieving Sri Lankans who attended.

Counselling practitioner and Secretary of Pax Christi International Peace Movement Pam Nair, who attended the service, said that the overwhelming sense of solidarity between vigilers, most of who had never met before, demonstrated people’s shared intentions and hopes.

“For me, the highlight of the vigil at St Phillip’s Anglican Church was the coming together of people of goodwill from many religious and cultural backgrounds,” Ms Nair said.

“Fundamentally, we are all striving for a more just and peaceful world and we came together in solidarity, as we are one humanity born into a fabric of relationships.”

Similarly, Rochedale Mosque member Shehnaz Moosa said that people across different faiths need to continue connecting and building relationships, grounded in the knowledge that we are all created by God.

“God in His greatness has created us all differently on the outside, but has given each one of us the capacity to love and forgive,” Mrs Moosa said.

“It is especially at times like this that we must reach out and build understanding, rather than retreat into our separate identities.
"Building understanding requires courage and hard work, and it’s important that members of our different faith communities lead by example and embrace each other despite cowardly acts of violence and hatred."

Immediately following the Easter Sunday attacks, international senior faith leaders publicly called for all to pray for the victims, stand in solidarity with Sri Lankan people and to reject all that would seek to divide us.

In an Easter Sunday statement, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby made such a call to Anglicans.

"Those affected by the appalling and despicable attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka will be in the prayers of millions marking Easter Sunday around the world," Archbishop Welby said.

"On this holy day, let us stand with the people of Sri Lanka in prayer, condolence and solidarity as we reject all violence, all hatred and all division."

A week after the Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka, a lone gunman opened fire on worshippers on the last day of Passover at the Chabad of Poway Synagogue in California, killing one woman and injuring at least three others.

On 15 March, two mosques were attacked in Christchurch by an Australian gunman, leaving more than 50 people dead and dozens injured.

In response to these attacks on places of worship, faith communities locally and internationally have united in a spirit of solidarity and hope to pray with each other; also offering financial, practical and emotional support to victims and their families.

In 2016, the Dalai Lama spoke to the European Parliament in France, asserting that all religions share the values of love, peace and tolerance and that anyone who commits acts of terrorism or violence cannot claim to be a person of faith.

"Buddhist terrorist. Muslim terrorist. That wording is wrong," the Dalai Lama said.

"Any person who wants to indulge in violence is no longer a genuine Buddhist or genuine Muslim, because it is a Muslim teaching that once you are involved in bloodshed, actually you are no longer a genuine practitioner of Islam."

Bishop of the Southern Region, The Right Rev’d John Roundhill, has long demonstrated his commitment to multi-faith dialogue, including through his support of Bendigo and Brisbane mosque Imams and worshippers.

Following the Christchurch, Sri Lankan and Chabad of Poway Synagogue attacks, Bishop Roundhill echoed the call of international faith leaders for us to make friends across all religions.

"It is important that people of faith stand together, as it reflects our common humanity," Bishop Roundhill said.

"An attack on a mosque, temple, synagogue or church is really an attack on all people of faith.

"We can foster better relationships with people of other faiths by making new friends, and secondly by being more open in letting people know that we are Christian and that our faith calls us to support all who are in need, irrespective of race, creed or any other perceived difference."
(L-R) Catholic Mercy Sister Dolores Creevey, The Rev’d Daniel Jayaraj from All Saints Anglican Parish, Chermside and Bronwynne Jettoo from the Sai Saileshwara Temple at supper after the St Philip’s, Annerley multi-faith prayer service for victims of the Sri Lanka Easter Sunday attacks on Friday 26 April.

News • Monday 29 April 2019

Anglicare Australia releases Rental Affordability Snapshot: all parties must commit to affordable housing

Anglicare Australia is calling on Federal and state governments to invest in housing for people on the lowest incomes. The call is made as Anglicare Australia releases its Rental Affordability Snapshot.

The Snapshot surveyed over 69,000 rental listings across Australia and found that there is a chronic shortage of affordable rentals across Australia.

Highlights from the report include:

- 317 rentals were affordable for a single person on the Disability Support Pension
- 75 rentals were affordable for a single parent with one child on Newstart
- 2 rentals were affordable for a single person in a property or share house on Newstart
- 1 rental was affordable for a single person in a property or share house on Youth Allowance
- 0 rentals were affordable for a single person on Newstart or Youth Allowance in any major city or regional centre

Anglicare Australia Executive Director Kasy Chambers said that the rental crisis is getting worse:

"Housing in Australia is broken. Our figures show that affordability is down across the board,” Ms Chambers said.
“There is a huge shortage of secure, affordable rentals. That’s causing record levels of rental stress and even homelessness.

“And now we’re seeing older Australians are getting stuck in expensive and insecure rentals – at a time in their life when they need stability more than ever.

Ms Chambers said Australia has a dire shortage of social housing. Social housing is for people who are on very low incomes. This could include people who have recently experienced homelessness, family violence, have a disability or simply can’t get a home in the private rental market.

“People on the lowest incomes are being squeezed out of the rental market. That’s why it’s urgent that we invest in social housing.

“Our social housing shortfall is massive. We need 300,000 new social properties across Australia.

“We’re calling on all parties to commit to ending this shortfall – and ensure that everyone has a place to call home,” Ms Chambers said.

Features • Friday 26 April 2019 • By Adrian Gibb

The mysterious photo album of a rebel priest

In 2017, while the Records and Archives Centre was still situated at Bowen Hills, we were lucky to have a visit from the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent. They visited to do some research and to drop off some items for the Archives collection. Sister Gillian Gardiner handed me a photograph album that had been in the sisters’ possession for decades. Who it belonged to, where it had come from, and why the SSA had possession of it, was a mystery.

As I went through the very old and fragile album, I found, along with scenes from exotic locations and obvious family photographs, a repeated image of one man, a priest.
He was a bespectacled and thin young man whose attire could have been Anglican or Roman Catholic. I began to realise that this album belonged to whomever this was. As I continued to leaf through the contents, I found a photograph of this man with other priests. Importantly, in this group of priests, I recognised The Rev’d Canon Thomas (Tommy) Jones and The Reverend Canon Arthur Rivers. This placed the mystery priest in our Diocese. I was getting closer!

I knew that Canon Jones died in 1918, and the image seemed quite early, perhaps even turn of the century. So I began trawling through group photographs of clergy, usually taken at the time of Synod, from 1890-1918. The breakthrough occurred while looking at a picture of clergy in the June 1905 issue of *The Church Chronicle*. There I recognised the face that I had seen in the album. I excitedly looked down at the names listed and discovered that the album once belonged to ‘The Rev’d D. Price’.

I consulted a clergy database we use and discovered that The Rev’d Douglas Price had arrived in the Brisbane Diocese, from England, in around 1903. He spent two years as Vice Principal of the Theological College before becoming the incumbent at All Saints Church, Wickham Terrace. So I now knew who owned the album, but why did it end up with the Sisters of the SSA? I had to do some more digging.

In our collection we have a book entitled *All Saints’ Church Brisbane 1862 – 1937*, a history of the parish written by D.L. Kissick. In this history I learned more about The Rev’d Douglas Price. He was born into a Quaker family from Birmingham, but had felt a calling to the priesthood after some time in private industry. He studied at Durham University, came to Brisbane in 1903, and was very much an academic at heart. Severe issues arose, said Kissick, when Archbishop Donaldson began to see having All Saints Church so close to the Cathedral as problematic. He hoped the parish would willingly join the Cathedral congregation and, potentially, the land and Church be sold. Price, guided by his parish, did not acquiesce to this notion at all. Kissick asserts that this led Donaldson, who had been hearing rumours of a ‘modernist’ theology being preached by Price, to ask for some sermons of his to review. He determined that these showed ‘evidence of teaching contrary to the doctrines of the Church’, and asked Price to resign in 1911, which Price complied with.

After briefly leaving Brisbane, he was asked to return by many of his old congregation members and set up a movement called ‘Progressive Christianity’ or ‘The Modernist Movement’. For the next five years, he wrote regular periodicals, gave lectures, wrote three novels, and lived in a house he had built, called ‘Puck’s Palace’ in Highgate Hill according to Kissick.

It was at this house, in 1916, that The Rev’d Douglas Price, at the age of 42, was found dead by a friend who had come to visit. He had always been thin and sickly, but it is **possible that the death was a suicide**. No formal determination was ever reached.

Why did the SSA have the album? On closer inspection of the Kissick book, I found these words, ‘...was chaplain to the Tufnell Home, the Refuge and the Society of the Sacred Advent...’ So I went to a history of the SSA we have in the Archives collection called *One Hundred Years of Ministry*, and found The Rev’d D. Price, listed as Chaplain to the SSA, from 1904-1911. It seems that on his death, with no family in Brisbane, the SSA helped to clear up and preserve some of his possessions. The album came to them, or was bequeathed to them, at this time. The mystery has been solved!

This is a remarkable album for the successful search it engendered, the turn-of-the-century social importance and illustrations it provides, and as a signpost to a remarkable priest who led an eventful life, with an untimely, perhaps even tragic, death.
Is there future in tradition?

I remember when Dad was accepted into theological college when I was eight years old, and the parish we were leaving presented me with my very own prayer book with messages of encouragement written on the inside of what I thought was a very cool black cover, which differentiated it from the ‘boring, ordinary’ green ones that everyone else got on their way into church. I loved that prayer book so much that I wore it out and needed to buy a new one well before the release of our current prayer book, *A Prayer Book for Australia*.

Church music also became a deep love of mine, which began with singing in church choirs and later taking a radical directional change when I joined a Christian band in my early 20s. It was in this time of my life that I began exploring different forms of worship and ‘fresh expressions of church’. I was somewhat co-opted to the Diocesan Liturgy Commission as a token young person with a strong opinion that if we didn’t change we would slowly fade away.

It was in my formation at theological college that I fell back in love with the prayer book and a more traditional or sacred style of worship. I still love informal or contemporary worship, and I’ve been privileged to lead churches where we have had both traditional and informal expressions of worship with only the occasional ‘them and us’ turf war to resolve.

Since coming to Robina, I have been in regular conversation with our church organist and one of our choir members. We meet for Friday Morning Prayer and often ponder what will traditional or sacred worship look like in the years to come. Each of us longs for traditional worship to be vitally embedded in our church, but sometimes wonder how a generation who have grown up without prayer and hymn books can be attracted and engaged to the type of worship we all love and value.

We have been privileged to be able to invite The Rev’d John Bell, an inspiring hymn writer, liturgist and author from the *Iona Community* and *Wild Goose Resource Group* to come and help us explore this question. On Saturday 18 May, John will be the keynote speaker for a one-day conversation: ‘Is there a future in tradition?’ At this conference, John will lead the following two sessions:

**Session 1: The Key Thing About Tradition is...**
In this session we attend to what are the essential features of our church traditions, as distinct from accretions, which may even yet be ‘masquerading’ as tradition.

**Session 2: These things must die...**
The key dynamic of the resurrection is that through Christ, all can be changed and made new. This means that some things will have to be allowed or even encouraged to die, so that God can do a new thing. What might these be?
In both sessions, John Bell will be drawing on good practice, which he has witnessed in churches throughout the world.
I hope you will join us in this difficult, but important conversation, as we allow John to inspire us to explore how we might shape, reshape and hold onto the sacredness and tradition we find within the church.

Please [book online](#). Registration cost is $20 (which includes morning and afternoon tea). ‘Is there a future in tradition?’ one-day conference with The Rev’d John Bell. Saturday 18 May, 9am to 2pm at 186 Robina Town Centre Dr, Robina. Hosted by the Parish of Robina in collaboration with PMC. For more information, please [email](#) the Parish of Robina.
Lady Day: history and origins

(L-R): Diocesan Mothers’ Union President Beverley Perry, Patron Kaye de Jersey and Archbishop Phillip Aspinall at the 2019 Lady Day event at St John’s Cathedral

‘Lady Day’ or to give it its correct title, ‘The Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary’, is usually celebrated by the Church on 25 March each year. In 1897 the Mothers’ Union (MU) formally adopted the feast of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary as its yearly day of prayer, intercession and thanksgiving. “The careful positioning of the work and ministry of the MU – in short, its piety – was part of its immense attraction as a platform where so many women of different church parties could meet.” This has continued to this day and Mothers’ Union, both in Australia and around the world, continue to gather despite theological or other considerations. From province to province, members gather in small groups in village churches and large assemblies in cathedrals from England, through Africa and even closer to home in Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu and New Zealand. Accounts of this day each year are regularly published in worldwide Anglican press, and now extensive use is made of social media to highlight the day.

Given the changing dates of Easter, it can be moved so that it is not held in either Holy Week or Easter Week. It is also quite often celebrated on other days close to its proper date at a more convenient time, as happened this year with the service being held in St John’s Cathedral on Wednesday 3 April. Within our Diocese there were several other services held on 25 March to mark Lady Day for those who find it difficult to travel to the Cathedral.

Attending the celebration in St John’s Cathedral this year was our patron, Mrs Kaye de Jersey with well over 200 members from throughout our Diocese attending. The service was presided over by Archbishop Phillip Aspinall and the preacher was Bishop Jeremy Greaves. Bishop Greaves reflected on the age of Mary when she said her ‘yes’ to God to bear God’s son. She was much the same age as Bishop Greaves’ teenage daughters. He also compared Mary’s courage to that of Rosa Parks, the African-American woman who refused to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama during the bus boycotts, which helped launch the civil rights movement in the United States. Members of Anglican Mothers’ Union Australia (AMUA) processed our Diocesan banner and banners from many parishes throughout our Diocese, which gave a colourful beginning to the liturgy.
At the conclusion of the service the Diocesan President, Mrs Beverley Perry presented The Rev’d Linda McWilliam with a cheque to support Anglicare chaplaincy. The support of Anglicare chaplaincy continues a long-term connection with the caring agencies of the Anglican Church in this Diocese. It was Mothers’ Union at Christ Church, Milton who employed the first community nurse at the beginning of the 20th century. This was to become St Luke’s Nursing Service, which was later absorbed into Anglicare in our Diocese.

Mothers’ Union in this Diocese, as well in other Dioceses in Australia, also supports the work of members in many developing countries including, at present, a Peace and Reconciliation Project in South Sudan that has this year helped bring together members of several Dioceses who have previously been at war. Almost 200 members were flown to Uganda for a retreat and the healing and friendship blossomed. Anglican Mothers’ Union Australia has committed to pay the travel expenses for these members.

Reflections • Friday 26 April 2019 • By The Very Rev’d Dr Peter Catt

The first casualty of war...

_They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:_
_Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn..._

Those lines from _For the Fallen_ by Robert Binyon would be, I am guessing, the best known piece of World War I poetry.

Other well-known poems include _In Flanders Fields_ by John McCrae:

_In Flanders fields the poppies blow_
_Between the crosses, row on row..._

And Rupert Brooke’s _The Soldier:

_If I should die, think only this of me:_
_That there’s some corner of a foreign field_
_That is forever England..._

_The Soldier_ was the poem David Cameron, then PM of the UK, chose to read for a recording honouring the centenary of the commencement of World War I.

All of those poems serve a common purpose in the process of remembering the war and those who died or were wounded in battle. Each poem gives the theme of remembering a reverential awe and expresses a “raging against the dying of the light”, as Dylan Thomas would have it.

We don’t want the dead to have died in vain.

We further this theme by giving the dead white crosses, implying that they have achieved purity through sacrifice. While mere mortals might have “robes washed in the blood of the lamb”, these men have washed their own robes. And washed ours too. Theirs is a salvific sacrifice.

These are the themes and the poetry that dominate our current observance of Anzac Day.

Much of the British poetry of early World War I belongs to this romanticising, hagiographic style. Its production was driven by at least three factors.
Firstly, it is easy to hold a romantic view of war in the days before the bodies begin to pile up. *For the Fallen*, our Ode, was published just three weeks after the war commenced. Secondly, the authorities urged poets to use their art to assist the war effort and, thirdly, poetry was seen as a way of proving the nation’s cultural ascendancy over the barbarians on the other side.

As the war went on, the poetry became more earthy, visceral and complex. This was driven by one aim, the desire for truth-telling. And for that truth-telling to reveal the reality that the authors felt was masked by the nationalistic and sentimentalist poetry.

The question I have been holding as I have re-read some of the poetry is, what if we too told more of the truth on Anzac Day? How would that shape our approach to war and to peacemaking?

The pivotal poem in the shift from sentimentalism to realism and truth-telling was, according to Tim Kendall, *Breakfast* by Wilfred Gibson:

> We ate our breakfast lying on our backs,  
> Because the shells were screeching overhead.  
> I bet a rasher to a loaf of bread  
> That Hull United would beat Halifax  
> When Jimmy Stainthorpe played full-back instead  
> of Billy Bradford. Ginger raised his head  
> And cursed, and took the bet; and dropt back dead.  
> We ate our breakfast lying on our backs,  
> Because the shells were screeching overhead.

No glory; rather, a disturbing banality. A mate is shot in the head — dead — and life moves on; they carry on eating breakfast.

Imagine what Anzac Day would be like if, along with our remembering of the bravery, we also recalled the banality. The waste. The insignificance before the war machine of those who died.

The quest for truth telling was also driven by the fact that the powers that be were not telling the full story and were not calling out dreadful behaviour.

For example, General Haig was a dangerous fool who held a romanticised view of war and of cavalry charges. He was responsible for the war of attrition at The Somme and at Ypres after it. The logic of attrition is that one sends 10,000 men a day to their death in the hope that they will kill 12,000 of the enemy. Haig actually lost more than his men killed. He almost single-handedly lost the war.

In response to this type of deadly farce, Siegfried Sassoon wrote *The General*:

> ‘Good-morning, good-morning!’ the General said  
> When we met him last week on our way to the line.  
> Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of ’em dead,  
> And we’re cursing his staff for incompetent swine.  
> ‘He’s a cheery old card,’ grunted Harry to Jack  
> As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.  
> But he did for them both by his plan of attack.

Sassoon’s use of the working-class voice is a reminder that class played a role in the war; the lower classes tending to make up the cannon fodder.

Imagine what Anzac Day would be like if, along with our remembering of the bravery, we remembered the self-absorbed madness of the leadership. And what if we asked ourselves on Anzac
Day how we might be vigilant to ensure that war is not the plaything of narcissistic madmen and how we might encourage those who serve to be whistle-blowers?

Bishops and politicians also come in for criticism. Sassoon again with They:

*The Bishop tells us: 'When the boys come back*
'They will not be the same; for they'll have fought
'In a just cause: they lead the last attack
‘On Anti-Christ;...
'We're none of us the same!’ the boys reply.
'For George lost both his legs; and Bill’s stone blind;
'Poor Jim’s shot through the lungs and like to die;
'And Bert’s gone syphilitic...
And the Bishop said: 'The ways of God are strange!’

And to the politicians:

*Go round the soldiers’ cemeteries ; and then*
Talk of our noble sacrifice and losses
*To the wooden crosses...*

He also wrote of the “impotent old friends” sitting “snug at the club” talking about how lucky their sons were to be at war.

Imagine what Anzac Day would be like if, along with our remembering of the bravery, we didn't give the battles a religious gloss but read from the Sermon on the Mount, *Blessed are the Peacemakers.*

And what if, on that day, we challenged the idea of the Just War?

And what if we resolved to use war judiciously and to invest in peace-making exercises?

What if we called out sabre rattling as being dangerous and risking a price that is too high to pay?

And what if politicians were to fess up to the times they got it wrong, such as the Iraq war, when we invaded another sovereign nation on the basis of a lie, destabilising a whole region and giving birth to ISIS?

The public are not immune from criticism either:

*You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye*
*Who cheer when soldier lads march by,*
*Sneak home and pray you’ll never know*
*The hell where youth and laughter go.*

So, imagine what Anzac Day would be like if, along with our remembering of the bravery, we admitted our own complicity, and the fact that we get comfort from the smoke screen provided by the elevation of those who died to white robed saints?

Then there are the poems that point to the inability of religion to speak to the situation, and of the silence of God, poems that speak of suicides in the trenches, the execution of deserters, many of whom had what we now call PTSD, and the effect that murdering the deserters had on their mates when they had to shoot them.

Others speak of the inadequacy of memorials and how the living betray the dead and how the returned are abandoned by the society they risked all for.
What if on Anzac Day we spoke of all these things, and of those who died by suicide once home?

And finally, as is nearly always the case, patriarchy tries to "keep women in their place". Many of the early anthologies of World War I poems did not include the work of women. This included, to add insult to injury, the poetry of women who served. The last poem I have chosen deals with this. Ella Wilcox’s poem, *War Mothers*, speaks of the young women who were seduced by those heading for war and by their own:

*secret wish to love and mate*  
*Ere youth and virtue should go quite to waste*  
And who then found themselves pregnant to men who  
*moved on and fought and bled and died;*  
*Honoured and mourned, they are the nation’s pride.*  
*We fought our battles, too, but with the tide*  
*Of our red blood, we gave the world new lives.*  
*Because we were not wives*  
*We are dishonoured. Is it noble, then,*  
*To break God’s laws only by killing men*  
*To save one’s country from destruction?*  
*We took no man’s life but gave our chastity,*  
*And sinned the ancient sin*  
*To plant young trees and fill felled forests in.*

The condemning clergy do not come out well in the last stanza.

Imagine what Anzac Day would be like if, along with our remembering of the bravery, we told the stories of the women: of the destitution and the exploitation, the rape and the hunger, and the fears they held for their children?

And what if, as we attempted to get the balance of all these themes correct in our Anzac Day commemorations, we used Walt Whitman as our guide: *that whole damned war business is about nine hundred and ninety parts diarrhoea to one part glory.*

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Q&A with Erica Skerman, Camp and Young Adult Coordinator

The wonderful Primary Ichthus Leadership Team for 2019 (L-R) Liam Carlton Jones, Pradeep Manickam, Steph Tognola, Mattisse Campbell, Erica Skerman, Sharon Mills, Catherine and The Rev’d Michael Stalley

Erica Skerman has served as the Camp and Young Adult Coordinator in the ACSQ within the Anglican Youth, Children’s, and Families Ministry team for the past three years. She currently worships with her “local community at St Stephen’s in Coorparoo, loves a good coffee with great company, and generally tries to stay out of trouble.”

How long have you been involved in the Anglican Church and in what role?

I have been part of the St Stephen’s, Coorparoo community since 2013, and have been working with the Anglican Youth, Children’s and Families Ministry team at St Francis College, Milton since mid-2015 – first as an Administration Assistant, then as Camps Coordinator and now as Camps and Young Adult Coordinator.

What does your role involve?

In my current role, I run the Ichthus Camping Ministry, which caters for young people from Grades 4 all the way to graduation to encourage and inspire them in their faith. I’m also involved in training, mentoring, and empowering our young adults as leaders of these camps and beyond, ensuring they are connecting into their local parish communities and finding connections with their peers across our Diocese. My role is to ensure that our young people are flourishing as disciples of Christ and are confident in sharing this passion for God within their parishes.
What projects and activities are you currently working on?

This year is a really exciting year for us because we have some great projects that are being introduced this year – one is the Ichthus leaders’ retreat which will invest even more into the young leaders of our Church and the ministries in which they serve. We are also well underway in the planning of our upcoming camps for Senior and Junior Ichthus, in which we hope to inspire our youth to go deeper in their faith and send them back into their parishes excited for more.

What have been the highlights of your role?

So many, and I consider it such a privilege and a blessing that I have such an incredible role working with young people on a regular basis. A big highlight for me is watching young people become excited about their faith but also proactive, with a heart and desire to become leaders and journey with others. It has also been a highlight to get to know the parishes within our Diocese, and the incredible clergy men and women and lay people who lead them. There is so much good stuff happening out there and it’s a huge encouragement to witness it.

What are your plans and goals for the next 12 months?

We have some really exciting new projects in the works, which would be fantastic to see come to fruition over the coming year. One project aims at inviting young people to explore theology and ministry, another working with National Synod to put together a youth program, and a goal of expanding our camping ministry to reach more young people for Christ.

Can you tell us a little about your faith journey?

I’ve experienced many reflections of the Church; Lutheran, Baptist, Pentecostal, ACC, and now Anglican. I have believed in the death and resurrection of Jesus since I was a young teenager, but started to really allow my life to be transformed in my final years at university. I’ve never really doubted the presence of God in my life, but it took time for me to decide that I wanted God at the centre of it and I honestly have no regrets.

How does your faith inspire you and shape your outlook, life choices and character?

My faith inspires me constantly because my relationship with God is so dynamic, speaking different things into different spaces, yet for the common goal of becoming more of who I am in Christ. It has given me an outlook of hope and excitement in life and it has challenged and invited me to be more; more loving, more gracious, more generous, more self-controlled. I find myself making choices as one who is realising more and more how deeply loved she is by God.

What is your favourite scripture and why?

I’m terrible at playing favourites, as I love so much of it! However, picking one of them, I’m going to go with the final chapters of Job 38 to 41. I love these chapters because they are really awe-inspiring to me, deeply humbling, and reminds me that nothing escapes God and his goodness, even amidst great suffering.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

I don’t have someone who has inspired me the most across my life. People come to light in seasons of my life and have an impact on my own journey and each are important to me. Currently, I am inspired by Mother Teresa because of her commitment to Christ and the way she lived life has allowed God to inspire so many others. As someone said of her, “The simple words she spoke were credible because of the life she lived”. How beautiful a description of a life is that?
**What are the primary strengths of the church and what is the best way to make the most of these for the benefit of our communities?**

The church has strength in proclaiming the life of Jesus who never fails to be relevant to the constant shifts in our lives and in our culture, but deeper in that, we are a community in which we can welcome everyone because Jesus welcomes us first. Therefore I believe our benefit lies in stepping out into our local communities, welcoming the strangers and being great, loving neighbours who can offer others the hope found in Christ.

**What are the challenges currently faced by the Church and what can be done to overcome these?**

There are many and because of this, I believe one of our biggest challenges is to stay hopeful, passionate, and zealous (shout out to Romans 12:11) in the face of these challenges. Remembering that small acts of love and kindness go a long way, the best you can give in the moment is enough, and that God is for us and we cannot be separated from such great love (Romans 8:31-39). I think small steps towards God from where we are right now are the best way to overcome anything.

**What is your favourite movie and why?**

One movie I never fail to enjoy is 1999’s *The Mummy* with Brendan Fraser and Rachel Weisz; it’s got action, comedy, romance, great lines and a (now) badly CGI-ed villain. What’s not to love?

**What is your favourite travel destination and why?**

The one I haven’t been to yet. I find great joy in the entire process, the dreaming of where to go, the planning of making it happen, then running around experiencing it all, that feeling of coming home, and the warmth of reminiscing only to start the process all over again! Love it.

**Reflections • Tuesday 23 April 2019 • By The Ven. Valerie Hoare**

**Be a messenger of joy**

“You’ve just got to go and see it. It’s the absolute bestest place in the whole world.”

She was about five years old, and we were walking the Main Track at Carnarvon Gorge and she had just come out of the Moss Garden – a place where drops of crystal-clear water drip from the sandstone walls bringing life support to a living tapestry of mosses and ferns. Her enthusiasm was contagious. I responded to her joy, made the detour and found her to be absolutely right. I’d call it a ‘thin place’ – a place of holy mysticism where living water flows. My soul sang and I, in turn, have become a messenger of joy.

Don’t you now want to go there, too?

That memory came flooding back after our last Mainly Music session for this term. I’d used some of the plastic Resurrection Eggs from the set of a dozen put out by Family Life. It’s an engaging way to walk children through the events of Holy Week. We had started with the egg containing the donkey and now we were onto the last egg – the empty egg signifying the empty tomb. I invited one of the engaging wee poppets to open the egg.

“Oh my, the egg is empty,” I said. “Jesus isn’t in the tomb.”

And the young one flung her arms open with astonishment, turned herself around, looking up, looking down and side to side and she said “but he must be somewhere!”
She ‘got’ the message of joy immediately. Kids seem to, and their joy is contagious – they pass it on.

The whole group of us, people of faith and people of no acknowledged faith all nodded, smiled and felt a sense of shared wonder.

He must, indeed, be somewhere.

I am reminded of Jesus inviting us to abide in him as he abides in us (John 15.4), and then telling us that he has told us these things so that his joy may be in us, and that our joy may be complete (John 15.11).

The USA poet Mary Oliver has some wise words giving ‘Instructions for living a life’ in her longer poem ‘Sometimes.’ They speak to our call to be messengers of God. She writes:

“Pay attention

Be astonished

Tell about it.”

Brighten someone’s day today – be a messenger sharing the joy of life in the freedom of God’s love, as we move towards Heaven’s reality being here on earth.

The Poem ‘Sometimes’ is from Red Bird by Mary Oliver. Published by Beacon Press, 2008.