

What is it that anchors us?



I recently went back to Adelaide to preach at St Peter's Cathedral as part of the 150th Anniversary celebrations there. Despite growing up in Adelaide, and being ordained in St Peter's Cathedral, I had never preached in the cathedral before, so I was happy to accept the invitation.

Returning to Adelaide there is always a comfortable familiarity that sits alongside the sense that it is no longer home: it is nearly twenty years since we left to go

to Ceduna for my first appointment as parish priest. And yet, I will always have a deep sense of connection to the place. I was very aware of this as I stood in the pulpit, the fourth generation of clergy in my family to stand in that spot and to try and make sense of the gospel for their particular time.

The only sermon of my great-grandfather's that I was able to find in preparation for my visit was one that called with great passion for temperance, a sermon that was "so well received that it was printed and distributed widely throughout the city." It was a brave sermon in the 'city of churches' where there have always been more pubs than churches, but it cannot have put too many people offside – Bishop Thomas went on to be Bishop of Adelaide for 34 years.

Thinking about him reminds me of a story told by English priest and writer, Mark Oakley – he writes of visiting his aunt in rural England and of noticing an old shepherd leaning on his crook in the field behind her house. He wandered over to the shepherd and to strike up conversation, pointed at the crook and said, "My boss has one of those...do you use yours to bring the sheep into line and round up the strays?" The shepherd looked at him from underneath his battered cap and said, "No, I plant it in the ground as securely as I can and then hold onto it as tightly as I can so that I can stay as still as I can until the sheep learn to trust me."

It is not a bad thing for a bishop to hear, or for all of us to think about. What is it that anchors us? What are the deep roots that hold us firm when all around us the world shifts and changes? St Augustine of Hippo famously wrote in his *Confessions*, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."

It seems to me that no matter how far we travel from the places we once called home, if we can make the space to stop...to pause in the busyness of our lives...we might find that place of rest, and know the peace of mind and peace of heart that are available when we truly open ourselves to God.

Holy Rood's Mainly Music program reaches double digits



Mainly Music team members Len and Richard showing Grace, Sam and Grayson how to build a tower

The Mainly Music Team at Holy Rood, Oxenford recently celebrated its 10th birthday.

Mainly Music began in New Zealand in 1990 and the program has gradually spread around the globe. [It is designed to be](#) "a fun music group for parents or primary caregivers to enjoy together with their young children. Each group is associated with, and is run by volunteers from, a local church. Children are introduced to music, creativity and more."

Back in July 2009, one of our parishioners, Glenda Murrell, gathered a team of volunteers to deliver this program in the parish.

During the ten years since Mainly Music began at Oxenford, hundreds of littlies from birth to five years have come through the doors each Thursday morning during term time. The team, with lots of donations from other parishioners, has provided snacks for the children and tea, coffee and delicious food for the adults. A period of social activity is followed by a half hour of Mainly Music's structured music and movement program.

The catchy songs and rhymes often involve counting, body parts, colours, movements, shakers, claves, coloured scarves and stuffed toys. Once the music gets underway, the joy on the faces of the children is quite special to behold. In a recent survey, one of the mums said that she values the "early learning appreciation for music and movement in a non-threatening Christian environment."

The group has seen lifelong friendships develop between the parents and children who attend. Team members are often viewed as substitute grandparents and they provide a listening ear for those going through tough times. A 'teapot', with an adjacent notepad and pencil, provides an opportunity for people to make specific prayer requests.

Some of the parents attend churches of different Christian denominations, while some have begun to attend one of the local Anglican churches because of the contact with the Mainly Music program. For others, Thursday mornings is their only opportunity to encounter Christianity in action.

Five steps to running a successful Mainly Music program:

- Contact [Mainly Music](#) to find out what's involved in setting up a group
- Be organised
- Have faith that it will go well
- Show care and concern for every child and adult who comes through the door
- Come together for a team prayer before each session begins