

## Building up of a better world



**Archbishop Leonard Dawea (centre) with the Bishops of the Anglican Church of Melanesia**

In a radio broadcast from Suva on 22 March 1944, my grandfather Bishop WH Baddeley (the seventh Bishop of Melanesia) spoke of his time in the Solomon Islands during the Japanese occupation and of the challenges that lay ahead.

“Now the war has receded, is receding, from the Solomons: and most of my sphere of Mission activities is now free of the enemy. I hope that before many months have passed, I shall again be able to visit Rabaul and our stations on the South Coast of New Britain.”

“We have got to see this thing through. We’ve got to go on – not getting tired, not wearying of delays, difficulties, disappointments – until ‘this evil thing’ is completely overcome. We are fighting that the world may be a better, healthier, a dearer place where men and women, boys and girls may have the fullest opportunities to live full lives – with bodies that are healthy and strong, fed with good wholesome food, housed in happy, healthy surroundings, with adequate hospital and nursing facilities available for them in times of sickness: with minds that are clean and open and free, developed by education that is open to all, no matter his [sic] race or class: with freedom of opportunity to develop his [sic] spiritual life without let or hindrance...”

“[Before then] we have to rebuild villages, re-establish stations – schools, hospitals, dispensaries, training centres; we have to re-plant gardens, re-stock our sties, our byres, our chicken houses; we have to face a very changed situation – a new mental outlook brought by the war...There are difficult days ahead but *we are all in this together*, Britisher, Australian, American, Solomon Islander; administrator, missionary, planter, trader – all of us will continue to be in this together – for the building up of a better world.”<sup>[1]</sup>

Last weekend I was in the Solomon Islands for the enthronement of the seventh Archbishop of Melanesia. Archbishop Leonard Dawea was enthroned in an overflowing St Barnabas Cathedral to the sound of magnificent Melanesian harmonies and with dancing and speeches...lots of speeches.

The Solomon Islands are very different to the islands my grandfather left 72 years ago and while there is still work to be done with regards to “schools, hospitals, dispensaries and training centres”, there are also new challenges to be faced.

Climate change and rising sea levels are rapidly impacting the low-lying lands of the Solomon Islands, with crops failing and lands disappearing. Whole communities are being displaced from Islands that have been home for generations because rising sea levels make fresh water scarce and prevent traditional food crops from growing. In [some places](#), like the island of Tauba in Lau Lagoon of the

coast of Malaita the land has disappeared beneath the waves all together. I have old photos from my grandfather of Langa Langa lagoon that show far more Islands than exist today!

The [Anglican Church of Melanesia](#) is at the forefront of advocacy and action in the Solomon Islands with regards to climate change but for some communities it is already too late.

The advances of “the enemy” were eventually halted 70 years ago and the Solomon Island communities have rebuilt all that was destroyed during the Second World War. For Archbishop Leonard and the people of the Solomon Islands, and for people in communities all over the world, climate change poses a far more serious threat. If that threat is to be addressed, we need to remember that rallying call of Bishop Baddeley from all those years ago, “We’re all in this together... [and] all of us will continue to be in this together – for the building up of a better world.”

What we do *does* matter and as Anglicans all of us are called through the Five Marks of Mission, “To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.”

We must all consider what we will do for “the building up of a better world.”

[\[1\]](#) Broadcast by The Right Rev'd W.H. Baddeley, DSO, MC, Bishop of Melanesia at Suva, on 22.3.1944

## **Sunday Devotions • Monday 7 October 2019 • By The Rev'd Kay Hart**

### **Sunday Devotion: 13 October 2019, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

**Main readings:** [Jeremiah 29.1, 4-7](#); [Psalm 66.1-11](#); [2 Timothy 2.\(1-7\) 8-15](#); [Luke 17.11-19](#); [[2 Kings 5.1-3,7-15c](#), [Psalm 111](#)]

**Supplementary readings:** [Psalm 85](#); [Luke 20.39-47](#); [Jeremiah 30.1-9](#); [Psalm 111](#); [2 Timothy 2.19-26](#)

“Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him.” ([Luke 17.15-16a](#))

With toddlers, a parent’s common refrain when giving them something is, ‘What do you say?’ and the expected response is ‘Ta’. My mother also instilled in me the habit of sending thank you notes. My sisters and I even sent flowers to the intensive care unit she died in. We have always kept the etiquette of gratitude Mum taught us.

In today’s Gospel reading, the single leper of the ten to return to Jesus and thank him was not, however, just being polite or following social niceties. His actions of gratitude were a spontaneous and humble response to God’s grace. All ten of the lepers received physical healing, but only one turned back to express gratitude, a fruit of his faith. An outcast on two counts, as a Samaritan and a leper, he received more than liberation from his disease – he was made whole through his faith. When he understood he had been accepted and made whole, he could only rejoice.

It is more than etiquette that stirs us to say “Thank you” to Jesus for his blessings. It is a response to the way Christ welcomes us again, and again, no matter who we are. This leads us to ask “who are the ‘outsiders’ we must welcome into our lives and our communities?”

How can we be Christ to people on the margins, and help to bring them wholeness?